

WELS Historical Institute

Journal

Volume 25, Number 1
April 2007

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JUN 20 2007



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The Cover
Fritz Otto Reuter

**Proceedings
of the
Twenty-second Convention
of the
German Evangelical Lutheran Synod
of
Wisconsin and Other States**

**held in the German Evangelical Lutheran
Friedens Congregation
in Oshkosh, Wisconsin
from May 30 to June 4, 1872
(Part II continued from Volume 24, Number 2)**

C. Business Sessions

1. President's Report.

Committee report: The committee assigned to report on the president's report takes the liberty, after having thoroughly examined the same, to recommend to the synod the following resolutions:

1. that it unanimously and happily endorses the excellent and well-explained thoughts in the president's report concerning the work in the kingdom of God;
2. that it instruct its delegation to the Synodical Conference, to obtain a more exact statement on the confessional stance and practices of the Synod of Illinois, and in case it is satisfied with the response to the delegation, that the delegation give its happy approval for the acceptance of the same into the Synodical Conference;
3. that it express its approval to the official actions of the president, and pronounce its grateful recognition of his faithfulness and of his industry in the performance of his office. The remaining matters in the president's report the committee believes it could pass up because these are all assigned to special committees for reports.

Pastors: Ph. Koehler, C. Gausewitz, C.F. Goldammer

Delegates: Geo. Gamm, C. Christgau

The recommendations in the above report will be elevated to resolutions after future discussion, especially of No. 2.

2. Acceptance of New Pastors.

Recommended by the appointed committee (No. 2) to report on the acceptance of new pastors, Prof. Theo Brohm and Pastors Heinr. Hoops, Joh. Koehler, Jul. Haase, Eduard Jonas, and Conrad Diehlmann were accepted as members of the synod.

At this occasion the president announced that the congregation in Kenosha, previously a member of the synod, has penitently returned to the synod with the request that

it be reaccepted into membership. Upon resolution the congregation called Pastor C. Popp from Oshkosh to be its soul caretaker. Pastor Popp accepted the call and is now serving in his new field. Because of the agreement between the Synods of Missouri and Wisconsin he is seeking acceptance into our synod, it was resolved that Pastor C. Popp be recognized as a member of our synod as soon as he presents our president a peaceful release from his present synod membership.

Note: This has taken place.

3. Acceptance of New Congregations.

Recommended by Committee No. 3, the following congregations were accepted into synodical membership:

1. The German Ev. Lutheran Congregation in Fort Atkinson, Jefferson Co., Wis.
2. The Ev. Luth. St. John Congregation at Bostvic Valley, La Crosse Co.
3. The Ev. Luth. St. Peter's Congregation at Freedom, Outagamie Co.
4. The Ev. Luth. Trinity Congregation in Menasha
5. The Ev. Luth. St. Paul's Congregation at Dartford, Green Lake Co.
6. The Ev. Luth. St. John Congregation in Mayville, Dodge Co.
7. The Ev. Luth. St. Peter's Congregation at Kekoskee, Dodge Co.
8. The Ev. Luth. Bethany Congregation at Hustisford, Dodge Co.

The re-acceptance of the Ev. Luth. Congregation in Kenosha can only be considered after the request for re-acceptance into synod membership is presented by the church council on the basis of a congregational resolution.

In reference to the re-acceptance of the Ev. Luth. Congregation in Beaver Dam it was resolved to postpone such an action until a committee is sent to Beaver Dam to take up this matter in a congregational meeting; should it result that the lodge partners are not the ruling element in the congregation, the president of the synod is authorized to consider them as accepted into synod membership.

4. Congregations and Pastors Leaving the Synod.

Committee report: the committee assigned to report on the departure of congregations and pastors from the synod takes the liberty to inform the Hon. synod of the following:

1. The synod can't get away from showing its displeasure that the Ev. Luth. Congregation in Town Farmington, Washington Co., has left the synod without giving any reasons and therefore its name will be stricken from the synod roster.
2. The synod expresses its regret that Pastors Streissguth and Thiele have left the area of our synod. It remembers with joy the sincere work of these brothers within the synod and wishes them God's grace and richest blessing in their new fields of work.
Past. Th. Gensike, A. Kluge, A. Liefeld
Deleg. C. Nitschke, H. Heidtke

Was elevated to a resolution without further discussion.

5. Excuses of Absent Pastors.

Committee report: The committee on excuses of absent pastors recommends to the Hon. synod:

1. That the excuses of Pastors Spehr, Kleinhaus, Opitz, Zuberbier and Hass be accepted;

2. that the excuse of Pastor Strube not be accepted;
3. that the transportation costs of Pastor Sauer to the next convention be brought up.
Past. C. G. Reim, K. Oppen, J. Ph. Sprengling
Deleg. O. Hilimann, Aug. Abraham

All three items were brought up for consideration and disposed of.

6. Delegates to the Synodical Conference.

Committee 6, which was directed to check how many delegates the synod could send to the upcoming Synodical-Convention, reports as follows:

- A. 1. that our synod, according to §6 of the Constitution of the Synodical Conference, is allowed six voting members, namely three from the ministerial and three from the laity portion, since it numbers 110 voting members.
2. it is taking the privilege to remind the Hon. synod of the further provision that all standing members of the particular synod and the specific congregational representatives can be advisory delegates at the Conference.
- B. Takes the privilege therefore for implementing this to recommend:
 1. not only to select the specific six delegates to the Synodical Conference, but also
 2. to encourage the remaining members to participate seriously at the next session of the named conference in Milwaukee.

In connection with this, the Nomination-Committee (No. 11) recommended these eligible candidates as representatives to the upcoming Synodical-Conference: a. Pastors Bading, Hoenecke, Prof. Ernst, Brockmann, Quehl and Spehr; and b. Messrs. G. Geiger from Milwaukee, Waegner from Ridgeville, D. Kusel from Watertown, Fr. Nagel from Sheboygan, Siering from Milwaukee and Ebenau from Ohkosh.

As representatives the following were elected: Pres. Bading, Past. Hoenecke, Prof. Ernst, and Messrs. Fr. Nagel, D. Kusel and G. Geiger.

As substitutes: Pastors Vice pres. Quehl, Spehr, Brockmann and Messrs. Waegner, Ebernau, Siering.

7. Relationship of our Synod to the Synod of Minnesota.

With the increase in size of our institutions, it was necessary to add a new professor. Even though our congregations are bearing a proportionately heavy load in the support of our educational institutions, it would have been unwise to raise their offerings some more. In order to obtain a competent teaching force in our institutions without an additional burden on our congregations, Pastor Bading, president of the synod and Prof. Ernst, president of the institutions had a meeting with the Hon. Synod of Minnesota to show it that it must have a great interest in having a competent and complete teaching staff so that its students receive the proper preparation for the holy preaching office in Watertown: The result of the meeting was the following, from the Synod of Minnesota based on its discussion at its last year's meeting:

Proposals for the joint operations of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Minnesota with that of Wisconsin.

- I. Joint operation with regard to the educational institution at Watertown and the education of pastors.

a. The Synod of Wisc. gives the Synod of Minn. all rights and privileges in the institution at Watertown which the Synod of Missouri has, namely: free education of its future pastors, free dormitory for them, moderate charges for food by them and participation in the enjoyment of charitable and other gifts which are received by the institution.

In addition. Furthermore the Synod of Wisconsin is obligating itself to see to it that the students of the Synod of Minnesota receive the same rights in St. Louis as those of the Wisconsin Synod.

b. For this the Synod of Minnesota has obligated itself to send a professor to the institution in Watertown at a salary of \$500.00 and to support him.

In addition. The Synod of Wisconsin promises to raise this salary in addition to a free home and other special gifts, so that a strong teaching force can be won and maintained with the addition of this person.

II. Joint work in connection with a church periodical.

a. The Synod of Wisc. will grant the Synod of Minn. participation with the *Gemeindeblatt* in this manner, that a member of the Synod of Minn., who may be elected by it, serve on the editorial committee, and from the proceeds of the *Gemeindeblatt* a specific amount be given to the Synod of Minnesota. The amount to the Synod of Minnesota from the proceeds will be determined by the relationship of the subscribers in the Synod of Minnesota to those in the Wisconsin Synod.

III. Implementation.

Since right now there is possible a capable teaching staff with the proportionately small offerings, which will bring about a great blessing for the church, it is thus urgently hoped for, that the implementation of the above motions, if the Hon. Synod of Minn. accepts them, can be instituted on September 1, 1871. The arrangement can be resolved by the Board of Trustees, according to previous ratification etc.

Joh. Bading, Pres. of the synod, Aug. Ernst, Pres. of the institutions

Committee report. The undersigned committee learned from documents distributed among them, that in the past synodical year a proposal concerning the participation of the Hon. Minn. Synod in our educational institution and with the *Gemeindeblatt* was made privately by us.

This proposal according to the synodical Proceedings of 1871 was accepted with thanks by the Hon. Synod of Minn., and then through the praesidium of the Hon. Synod of Minn. it authorized our Hon. Board of Trustees to call a professor for the college at Watertown in the name of the Minn. Synod.

Such a call was sent. Also in the person of the president of the Hon. Minn. Synod, a valuable coworker joined the editorial committee of the *Gemeindeblatt*. The evident blessing of such a joint activity by both synods in regard to the institution in Watertown and our *Gemeindeblatt* caused the committee to recommend to the Hon. synod that the proposal for joint activity with the Hon. Synod of Minn., originating with us and adopted by them, be ratified as a legally established agreement.

Respectfully,

Past. M. H. Quehl, B. Ungrodt, C. Mayerhoff
Deleg. C. Spiegelberg, F. Roese, Ch. Fr. Straubel

The above committee report was accepted and then came the discussion, comparing it with the printed minutes of the Hon. Synod of Minnesota.

Point I. a. of the matter was adopted; the "in addition" however was stricken as not being relevant in this case. Point I. b. adopted, but with the remark, that in the printed copy of the minutes of the Synod of Minn. under the sentence: "what is lacking will be taken care of by the Wisconsin Synod" cannot be understood as meaning anything else but dormitory and food; besides that the Synod of Wisconsin retains the right of calling the particular professor. Point II. a. and b. adopted. Point III. Shown to have taken place. Now the entire proposal came up for vote and was adopted with the suggested corrections and interpretation. Likewise also the committee report.

8. Educational Institutions in Watertown

Annual Report of the Board of Control of Our Educational Institutions in Watertown.

Dear Brothers!

As you know we were able to enter the past synodical year with a joy and confidence, not known before. The development of the institution as also the proportionately favorable position of our finances gave us a satisfactory attitude in our look into the future. The Lord our God did not let us be ruined with this confidence. Unforeseen difficult cares appeared which developed from the temporary, in fact complete lack of support, because of the fire damage in the northern portion of our synodical congregations and the charitable contributions of our other congregations directed to them. There was sorrow and suffering in that we especially had to reckon with the severe and lasting illness of Prof. Meumann, whose physical suffering as well as another cross in the home brought on our sincere participation. But the gracious and merciful Savior, in whose household the cross always finds a place, does not tempt us beyond what we are able to bear, but permitted the temptation such an ending that we were able to bear it.

On the request of the Hon. president to virtually all of our pastors and their respective congregations, from quite a number the gifts came to us so richly that the worry-stone, even if it did not fall out of the heart completely, at least became considerably lighter. Also concerning the suffering of Prof. Meumann, with His help it turned for the better, so that we with humble and joyful thanks could, with a look upwards to Him, close off the year. Turning now to the teacher personnel we must above all express our regret over the fact that the theological professorship in St. Louis has not as yet been able to be filled since Pastor Hoenecke has definitely declined the call as theological professor. As a result the Board of Control has sent a call to Pastor K. Ernst of Hannover. He has declared his willingness to come here in order to bring this matter to a definite conclusion. He has also established his moving here about Easter time, but unfortunately arrived in New York with a severe eye problem which befell him shortly before he departed. Now since the treatment by the doctor in the named city did not produce the desired result, more so the doctors could see no early healing from the suffering, we most likely must forget about this hoped for solution.

The teaching personnel of our institutions consists of six German and three English professors. The following changes have taken place: In place of Professor Thomsen who resigned, Prof. Theodor Brohm stepped in and was installed by the Hon. president. Likewise Professor Easterday came, who, as a result of our private agreement with the Minnesota Synod, is for the most part paid by it. With him our institution received a new strength; for, not only in instructing, but also in discipline is his help of great worth.

Finally concerning the shortness of money and the weak resources of the synod, amounting to about \$5800.00 which we (including that for the theological professor for St. Louis) need, and according to the prediction that in the course of two years a reduction in the size of the faculty, without considerable damage to the institution, can take place, Prof. Meumann was advised to accept a call into the public ministry, as soon as he receives one such. Following this advice, he recently returned to the parish ministry. The instructors work with strong loyalty, great industry and brotherly harmony, for which reason also the results of their work is satisfactory overall. Religion instruction, and also instruction in the English language is given by Pastor Adelberg, to whom we offer our sincere thanks for his time and effort.

The number of students in the past year increased to 111, of which 32 from our synod attend the Gymnasium, the average in attendance was 105. Since the room for sleeping was filled, a new sleeping area in the upper story of the institution's building was set up, the cost of which for the most part was taken care of by funds remaining from earlier new construction. For the next school year a large number of students have already enrolled, who unfortunately cannot be housed because of a lack of room. Two students to our regret had to be rejected. In a third case the father, upon urgent wish of the teachers' conference, removed his son. In the case of one of the rejected students, he was not a student of the institution, but only attended the instruction. The other two dismissed students even before they were sent to the institution, showed their misbehaviors in other circumstances, so that it warranted very little hope. However this was not told the teachers college at their entry, so that this would become clear through the pitiful experiences about the moral character of the youths. It is extremely desirable that such type of situation not be repeated, and the teachers-college sees it necessary, in order to avoid similar experiences, to consider most seriously the acceptance of students.

In school money \$770.50 came in; \$55.00 is still due from the last term, so that makes a total income of \$832.50; this is \$69.50 more than last year. To this add the sum of the scholarships totaling 40 complete terms. - Concerning the financial position of the household nothing definite has as yet been said; but if all the outstanding funds come in, as is the custom, a deficit is not in sight. With a number of school rights owners advantageous settlements were effected.

The health situation of the students was generally favorable during the course of the year. Only one student was seriously ill and for quite a while. Bu he was already sickly when he came to the institution and had to earlier interrupt his studies because of illness. This gift of God demands from us sincere thanks to the Lord more so because Wassertown this past winter suffered heavily from small pox, to which many people fell victims. On our part the necessary care was practiced and means of prevention were employed, and thus the institution, was spared from the plague by the protecting hand of the Lord. But this was bad for the institution in regard to the attendance because so many students stayed home. Also we have reasons on the whole to be happy about the industry and the deportment of the students, as well as of the good spirit that prevailed in the institution.

Unfortunately the skillful and faithful house-father, G. Markworth, who was assigned, under the leadership of the inspector of the institute, to lead the housekeeping in a profitable manner for the institute, had to give up his office because of old age difficulties and sickness. The Board of Control called Pastor Mayerhoff to be inspector and house-father for the institute. At first he was inclined to accept the call, but later declined it; and we have at present engaged Mrs. Piper as housekeeper; with her we have,

as it seems in this short a time of activity, found a considerate and diligent housemother.

How we managed with the institute's treasury will be reported to us in the annual reports of the particular treasurers, whom we now let follow us:

Annual report of the treasurer Geo. Brumder

presented in the synodical session in Oshkosh on May 31, 1872.

Receipts

Received from freewill offerings, etc.	\$2,872.73
Received for the theological Professor in St. Louis	258.50
Received from Geo. Brumder the portion from the synod coming from the sale of the hymnal produced by the Wisc. Synod in 1870-71.	<u>137.75</u>
Total	\$3,268.98

Disbursements.

Salaries of professors, which we still owed at the last synodical meeting for the school year 1870-71	\$440.00
Salaries for professors this year, 1871-1872	2,321.65
Support of our students in St. Louis	262.13
For construction of sleeping quarters in the top story of the institution's building	165.18
Insurance for frame building, 1 year	21.25
Misc.: travel expenses, postage, etc	<u>33.56</u>
Total	\$3,243.77

Compilation.

Total income	\$3,268.98
Total disbursements	<u>3,243.77</u>
Surplus	25.21
Deficit in the treasury on June 8 1871	<u>10.65</u>
Cash on hand in treasury May 31, 1872	14.56

Before the end of this school term July 1, we will need for salaries for those professors who are paid from this treasury, \$391.66
Geo. Brumder, treasurer

Annual report of the treasurer Geo. Gamm

from June 1, 1871 to May 31, 1872.

Receipts.

Funds	\$513.50
School money	860.25
Interest	<u>52.10</u>
Total	\$1,425.85

	Disbursements.
Professor salaries	\$1155.02
Interest	139.80
Delivered to treasurer Geo. Brumder	75.00
Misc.	<u>4.25</u>
Total	\$1374.07
	Recapitulation.
Total receipts	\$1425.85
Total expenditures	<u>1374.07</u>
Surplus	51.78

Watertown, Wisc., May 1872
Geo. Gamm, treasurer

If we can picture ourselves, dear brothers, taking a peek on the whole into the prosperous position of our treasury matters at the end of the synodical year, at the great difficulty in which the Board of Control found itself in late Fall, we can do nothing else but with thanks and praise reflect on the faithfulness and wonderful help of our God: "The Lord has done great things; let us rejoice therein!" But we do not want to forget to express herewith our sincere thanks to the pastors and congregations who took the necessities and needs of our institutions to heart, and through abundant house collections, mostly in severe winter months helped remove the difficulty. As a result of such experiences which prove to us that the hand of the Lord has not been shortened and that brotherly love has not died, we move forward with restored energy with our institutions into a new synodical year. We are positive that they stand there as a memorial of his mercy; the work, which will be effected in him and through him is his work and has no other purpose than to build and extend his kingdom of grace among sinners. This knowledgeable statement: "The matter and glory, Lord Jesus Christ, is not ours but yours" helps our belief, that he will not let his work lie fallow, nor can he. It reminds us also not to be inattentive to this work, and it demands from us sincere intercession and loving support. In these matters we want, dear brothers, to be found and to be co-workers, in accordance with the strength which He has endowed each one; thus will His grace rule over him and His blessings rest upon him.

In the name of the Board of Control Johannes Bading, President, B. Ungrodt.

Committee report. The committee on the board's report takes the liberty to inform the Hon. synod:

1. That the synod has great cause to join with the Board of Control in offering thanks, that, although cases of care and sorrow also were not lacking this year, our faithful God has so graciously helped us, so that resolutions to new hopes can be made.
2. In joyful recognition of all which till now has occurred and with thanks to God, to lay on the hearts of all pastors and congregations, to continue to use their right through prayer and support to improve the continuance and welfare of our institutions and in that manner work for the increase of the kingdom of God also in our synod, so that if possible an emergency call as in the past year will never be necessary again.
3. The committee regrets that it did not work out for the synod in spite of all efforts to

place a theol. professor in St. Louis and it requests that all steps be taken to fulfill this obligation as soon as possible.

4. The committee recommends furthermore:

- a. To approve the change in the teaching personnel;
- b. To express the thankful appreciation for their demonstrated faithfulness to the entire faculty as well as to Prof. Meumann who has returned to pastoral duties and to Mr. Markworth;
- c. If possible, to help in a fitting manner with the shortage of room in the institute.

Past: J. H. Brockmann, J. Killian, H. Hoffmann, P. Lukas

Deleg. Fr. Haase, B. Franz, Chr. Daluge

Number 1 of this report was adopted, likewise No. 2. Adding to that it was mentioned that we indeed have cause to thank God, in that he has made many pastors willing to support in rich measure the continuance of our institutions. But it can't be kept silent, that several pastors and congregations think more of other branches for Christian charity than for the institutions. In return others were indeed ready with help in times of need, but soon forgot the institutions. If the complaints about shortages and need should come to an end, the institutions have to be borne by all the pastors and all congregations with prayerful and giving hearts and the work of support be carried on systematically. For this to be successful it is necessary that interest for this be aroused in the congregations, and where it is present, to continue it energetically and deftly. In regard to this our congregational delegates could give the pastors much help, in that they show their congregations the support of the institutions as work for spreading the kingdom of God, and they offer through house collections active help, etc.

Numbers 3 and 4 a. and b. are adopted.

To give support to Number 4 c. Prof. Ernst, president of the institutions gave added information about the lack of satisfactory room space in the institution. Some enlarging was done, but in spite of squeezing into the available space as much as possible, need for dormitory space is very great. Add to this, that for the new school year already a large number of students have enrolled, and still another greater thing lies before us, in that under present conditions housing them will be very difficult. In order to gain the necessary room, it becomes most necessary to build two professor residences; then the entire institution building can be used in part for instruction and in part for student residences. Interest payments for the loan for the money borrowed for this purpose could indeed be covered by the rent of the proposed professor residences. In order to avoid high interest payments the money could indeed be brought up by freewill loans from members of our congregations. The synod accepted this plan and resolved to ask the members of the congregations to offer money for the construction of two professor homes through loans payable in five years or earlier with low interest rates, which loans can gradually be repaid from the proceeds of the *Gemeindeblatt* treasury. In regard to the building material used for the construction, it was resolved that the half of the structure be brick and half frame and built on the property owned by the institution. In regard to the size, style, etc. it was resolved that the Board of Trustees counsel with knowledgeable men and use their best judgment.

9. Revision of the books of the various treasurers.

The committee report (9) was without further discussion resolved, as follows:

The committee on the revision of the books and vouchers of the various treasurers takes the liberty to present to the Hon. synod the following report:

1. That the books and vouchers of the various treasurers were examined and found to be in good order and correct. From them we receive the happy fact that in all treasuries there is a surplus. In the synodical treasury

receipts	\$331.85
disbursements	<u>317.40</u>
surplus	\$14.45

is found \$14.45; in the widows treasury \$81.94; and in the treasury of the *Gemeindeblatt* \$185.10 not including money in arrears, which at present comes to nearly \$1000.00. For professor salaries \$391.65 is still needed by July 1 of this year.

2. That due thanks of the synod be expressed to the treasurers: President Bading, Pastor Conrad, Mr. G. Brumder and Mr. G. Gamm for their faithfulness in office, and also Pastor Adelberg for his effort and work in the office of the *Gemeindeblatt*.

10. Care of pastors' widows and orphans.

Committee report. The committee to report on the care of pastors' widows recommends the Hon. synod to resolve the following: for the coming synodical year

1. for Mrs. Muehlhaeuser to continue the same support at our institution in Watertown for the second son consisting of payment for board,
 2. for Mrs. Braun the same support of \$200.00,
 3. for Mrs. Bartelt to continue the support of \$100.00,
 4. but raise the support for Mrs. Wiese to \$200.00.
- Pastors C. Mayerhoff, C. Wagner, J. H. Brockmann
Delegates: H. Erdmann, W. Waegner

The report was brought up for discussion and No. 1 was adopted; No. 4 was amended to read that the present support for Mrs. Wiese be raised to \$150.00. If this is not sufficient the president is empowered to raise it to \$200.00.

11. Election of Trustees.

Since the terms of three members of the Board or Control have expired, namely Pastors Meyerhoff and Gausewitz and Mr. G. Brumder, the nominations committee (11) recommends as capable candidates for this office: Pastors Hoenecke, Mayerhoff, Gausewitz, Gensike and Messrs. H. Lisch and Dube from Milwaukee. Elected as trustees were: Pastors Hoenecke and Mayerhoff and Mr. Lisch.

12. Election of Visitors.

To carry out the visitations the entire synod was divided into three districts and in such a manner that of the six conferences each district will consist of two conferences.

- A. Southern District, consisting of the Southern and Dodge-Washington Conferences;
- B. Northern District, consisting of the Northern and Northwestern Conferences;
- C. Western District, consisting of the Central and Mississippi Conferences.

The nominations committee (12) recommends for this office as capable candidates
a. for the Southern District: Pastors Hoenecke and Gausewitz; b. for the Northern Dis-

trict: Pastors Brenner and Goldammer; c. for the Western District: Pastors Brockmann and Adelberg.

Elected as Visitors were: a. Southern District: Pastor Hoenecke; Northern District: Pastor Brenner; Western District: Pastor Adelberg.

13. Teachers of the Parochial Schools.

During the course of the convention the teachers of our congregational schools who attended the convention handed in the following petition:

We, the undersigned teachers, in attendance at the present convention, direct to the Hon. synod the petition to be accepted into membership of the synod. Furthermore we request the Hon. synod to organize teacher conferences and to require the teachers of the synod to participate in these conferences.

A. Warnecke, Milwaukee; C. Nitschke, Racine; C. Brenner, Hustisford; H. Rissmann, Milwaukee; E. Oberdorsten, Jefferson; J. Denninger, Oshkosh

This petition was given to a committee, which presented the following report:

1. That the six undersigned teachers be accepted as members of the synod, and are placing before the synod, whether a colloquy be held prior to that with the same.
2. The committee expresses the wish for the synod to resolve: that the synod work within its congregations to have the teachers of their schools become members of the synod.
3. The committee is of the opinion that the accepted teachers have the same rights and obligations as the pastors with the exception of voting.
4. In regard to the desire of having teacher conferences, the committee recommends that the synod await from its teachers the establishing of teacher conferences as soon as possible, and that they are well attended.

Respectfully,

Pastor Ph. Brenner, Pastor Th. Jaekel, Pastor F. Wahl, Delegate M. Schroeder

The committee report on hand was taken up for discussion.

No. 1. It was pointed out that this was an important office placed into the hands of the teachers, namely the educating of our children on the basis of the pure and unadulterated word of God; a call no less important than that of a pastor. Therefore—as with the pastor, before he is entrusted with a congregation, he must give accountability of his position to the confessional writings of our church, and before he is accepted as a member of synod must undergo a duplicate colloquy before a committee appointed for that purpose—the teachers in our synod should be treated in the same way. It was resolved that our pastors with their congregations are held responsible to hold a colloquy with the teacher covering the teaching qualifications and confessional positions of the teachers if the latter are not recommended by teacher seminarians as being faithful believing teachers. The colloquy if possible should be attended by neighboring pastors. It was then resolved that the same committee which had the charge to colloquize pastors also prepare a colloquy for the particular teachers.

No. 2. adopted; likewise No. 3 with the understanding that the teacher members of our synod possess the same rights as the professors, and the pastors who serve no synodical congregation.

No. 4. adopted with the specific direction that the teachers hold a joint teacher conference annually and also a district conference. For a fitting time the vacation periods

could be used. After the examination committee (2) had reported that the attending teachers A. Warnecke, H. Rissmann, C. Brenner, E. Oberdorsten, J. Denninger and C. Nitschke had been examined and that the results of this examination were satisfactory and that they were being recommended for acceptance into synod membership, it was resolved that the above named teachers be accepted into synod membership.

Gemeindeblatt.

The editorial committee of the *Gemeindeblatt* presents the following report:

Pastor Hoenicke, who with the undersigned from the synod was entrusted with the editing of the *Gemeindeblatt*, at the end of last year resigned his position to our regret.

As a result of the offer of the president of our synod made to the Minnesota synod and accepted by them, by which the Minnesota Synod would also consider the *Gemeindeblatt* to be its synod's official organ, would spread its circulation among its members and for that reason also elected a member for the editorial committee and a person who in that synod would receive the net proceeds of the periodical in accordance with the number of subscriptions, Pres. Sieker was elected to the editorial staff and has proven himself to be an energetic and capable coworker.

With the last issue of last year we took over the editing of the periodical and since the business office of the periodical moved to Watertown at the decision of the synod, it appeared of utmost necessity also to have it printed there which was also in agreement with the Board of Control of our institutions.

A list of 2010 subscribers was given to us by the former business manager of the periodical, of which about 300 were dropped. Through new subscribers the number of subscriptions came to 2085, among those are 312 from the Synod of Minnesota.

The treasury report is as follow:

Receipts for years I to VI	\$370.05
Disbursements for years I to VI	<u>352.62</u>
Surplus	\$17.53
Receipts for year VII	\$1,161.59
Disbursements for year VII	<u>976.49</u>
Surplus	\$185.10

Under the disbursements for years I to VI is included \$250.00 for physical instruments for the institutions, and \$241.00 for the theological professor. The portion for the Minnesota Synod from the profit of this year No. 7 is \$25.75 and our gain is \$467. 98, while about \$1000.00 for the current year is still in arrears.

We close our report by expressing our sincere thanks for the friendly forbearance which we experienced, and for the diligent and very worthy joint working-together of the various brothers.

Oshkosh, June 1, 1872

R. Adelberg, A. Ernst

This report was given to the Revisions Committee which has reported this under No. 9. Furthermore it was resolved that Pastor Hoenecke, who was elected last year as a member of the editorial committee, but resigned a bit later, re-enter into the editing.

15. Meeting of the Congregational Delegates.

The debate about the lack of support for the institutions by a number of pastors and congregations caused the congregational delegates to meet on Saturday after the close of the afternoon session for a discussion. The result was the following report as presented to the synod and adopted by it:

The undersigned committee elected at the delegate meeting on June 1 takes the liberty in the name of all the delegates to present to the Hon. Synod of Wisconsin the following:

1. We believe and hold fast that it is the duty of each member of the synod to support the institutions according to their ability. If there are cases where support is weak in our congregations, to work for the purpose of making it stronger.
2. We have seen with joy, that from a large part of our pastors and congregations the institutions of synod are carried in warm and active hearts.
3. We cannot avoid but speak out our dismay over the fact that many pastors and congregations, as the proceedings have indicated, perform their obligations towards the institutions in meager and insufficient amounts for which many perplexities increase for the synod.
4. In order to avoid such bad situations in the future, the committee in the name of the delegates requests the Hon. synod to urge each and everyone of its pastors, if nothing else is possible to hold annually a house collection for the institutions. To accomplish this the pastor, if he feels it necessary, can make use of one or more capable men from the council to help him.
5. The often used reason that many congregations are too small and poor to participate in this work of helpful love we do not find valid, since according to Paul's words no more is demanded from anyone than that which he can afford. We believe it is a sad case in a congregation if the pastor, whom the synod bore with loving hearts in its institutions, cannot awaken love for the same within his congregation; from this type of love the joy of giving would flow by itself.
6. That such pastors and congregations, which do not want to fulfill their obligations to the synod: a. be named openly at the synodical convention, and b. forced to give their reasons why they are moved to such action.

The undersigned committee:

F. Nagel, Fr. Roese, C. Nitschke, Ch. Sieker, W. Waegner, A. Erdmann

16. Filling of Vacancies in Congregations and Finding a Traveling Preacher.

After several pastors spoke in favor of soon filling vacancies in several congregations, it was resolved to recommend the three students awaiting placement, Bergholz, Althof, and Hodtwolker, if their examinations indicate their readiness to take over a parish, for election to the congregation needing them the most. In regard to Peshtigo and area it was pointed out that for Peshtigo and neighboring areas a traveling pastor would be needed. For the placement of a traveling preacher however there is no chance for the time being.

17. Miscellaneous.

Pastor R. Adelberg was elected delegate to the coming meeting of the Hon. Synod of Minnesota.

The portion for the synod from the sale of the hymnals produced by and from Mr. G. Brumder for the past synodical year amounts to \$124.75.

18. Next Synodical Convention.

Pastor C. Rein [Reim] brought a friendly invitation of his congregation to hold the next year's synodal convention in their midst, for which reason it was resolved that we meet on the first Thursday after Trinity 1873 in the Ev. Luth. congregation at La Crosse.

19. Synodal reports.

Moved to print 600 copies of this year's synodical reports and sell them at a cost of 10 cents.

20. Close.

After it was resolved that the congregation in Oshkosh be sincerely thanked by the synod at the evening's worship service for the enjoyed guest friendship, the synod adjourned to Tuesday afternoon, 3 p.m., with a prayer by the Hon. president.

To the Lord be praise and thanks for his gracious help hitherto; may he remain in the future the guardian and protector of our congregations and institutions and our support and hope in life and death. Amen!

For the accuracy of the above proceedings:
Friedrich Schug, secretary of the synod
Burlington, Wis. June 28, 1872 A.D.

Worship services during the synodical convention. in the Ev. Luth. Friedens Congregation Thursday morning: synodical sermon on Rev. of John 3:11

Sunday morning: sermon by Past. C. Diehlmann on Luke 16:14-24.
confession by Pastor Th. Jaekel.

Sunday afternoon: Past. C. Conrad on I John 4:10-21.

Monday evening: Mission sermon by P. C. Gausewitz on Mark 16:15.

Tuesday evening: Past. H. Hoffmann on James 1:16-21

In the congregation's school.

Sunday morning: Prof. Ernst on Ezek. 31:31.

Sunday afternoon: Past. C. Gausewitz on Rom. 14:16-18.

Taken from the statistical reports is the following

51 pastors

2 professors

115 congregations

63 parochial schools

The History of the Seminary Chorus 75 Years - Singing New Songs to the Lord

by James P. Tiefel

It's an organization somewhat unsure of its name. The group's roots lie with a group of singers Prof. Johannes Koehler calls the Seminary Chorus in his *History of the Wisconsin Synod*, but this is not the choir we know today. The Seminary Choral Society, born in 1931, was renamed the Seminary Male Chorus in 1939 with the thought that the chorus would be more closely identified with its sponsoring school.¹ By 1963 the group was ready for another name change, at least in the minds of some of its leaders, and the choir became The Male Chorus of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The present name was adopted in 1985, although it is more accurate to say the name was imposed. Although his stay in Saginaw made him well aware that WELS supports two seminaries, the director *hoc tempore* supposed the average WELS member would associate seminary almost exclusively with the Mequon school and concluded the juxtaposition of "male" and the Mequon seminary was certainly superfluous. Truth be told, the moniker is borrowed, but not from the choir's roots (of which the present director had no knowledge in 1985): the well known student choir at Concordia Seminary had been called the Seminary Chorus for decades. It seems, however, that whatever its official name, people call the group what they please. To be sure, the choir lacks the name recognition of, say, the New York Yankees or even the St. Olaf Choir.

The organization is also somewhat unsure of its history. It is a matter of record—both in the synodical archives and in the archives of *The Milwaukee Journal*—that the choir's first public concert was presented at Grace Church in Milwaukee on April 19, 1931.² Faithful librarians and archivists collected concert programs; the synodical archives contain almost a complete set reaching back to 1931. It would be possible to assemble a list of all the churches and schools that have hosted the choir on its major tours and to prepare a data base of all the anthems presented by the chorus on its tours and at its Christmas concerts. An interested historian could gather the names of all the students who participated in the group over 75 years and could mention the names of all the officers. But there is no official history of the Seminary Chorus such as Joseph Shaw's 700-page *The St. Olaf Choir: A Narrative* (1997). Johannes Koehler gives some insights into musical training at the seminary between 1890 and 1915 in *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, but the scant information he offers pre-dates the formation of the chorus. As his senior church history paper, Paul Prange, now President of Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, produced *The History of the Seminary Chorus* in 1988. This essay is especially valuable since it contains first person information about the actual founding of the Choral Society from men who were key players in 1931. Had Prange not interviewed these men, that history may never have been recorded, since all of the early founders have now passed to glory. Prange admits, however, that his primary purpose is "to fill the gaps of knowledge in the area of the earlier years of the Seminary Chorus."³ Nor is it possible to interview past directors to gain insights and recollections. All have passed from the scene—interestingly, all during the tenure of the present director. Unfortunately, the present director did not take the opportunity to interview these men when they all gathered for the 1987 Commencement Concert at which all but Prof. Hilton Oswald (by that time a member of the LCMS) directed an anthem. When the chorus was a student-led organization, secretaries kept minutes, and the early minutes

are illustrative and interesting. After 1962, however, minutes are sketchy and, after 1985, non-existent. References in faculty and governing board minutes are scarce and likely provide little more than information known via other sources. Another researcher may be willing to commit the time someday (faculty minutes are in German until 1952) to find something of value in those minutes, but the present author is not willing.

While the history of the Seminary Chorus may not have been thoroughly researched and may not even be able to be assembled in any sort of thorough way, the fact remains that every fall since 1931 students at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary have gathered to volunteer for service as members of the choir. At least over the past several decades unmarried juniors arrive in greater numbers than married seniors. It's an exception when the choir is perfectly balanced by voice; pure first tenors and second basses are rare, and the lack of both is a perennial problem. (Prange records that the choir was cut before the 1932 tour to achieve a better balance.⁴) Some of the students who offer themselves have extensive choral experience from high school and college; a few even have professional voice training. Others have not sung in an ensemble since elementary school either because they were not skilled enough to be selected for high school and college choirs or because they simply didn't care about singing when they were younger. There tends to be a monotone in every choir who is carefully placed between strong singers and encouraged to sing softly in harmony and not at all in unison. In any given year, neither choir members nor directors are able to be certain what the size or the skill of the Seminary Chorus will be.

An uncertain name, an uncertain history, uncertain skills—but the men of the Seminary Chorus have never been uncertain about their purpose. The 1962 constitution states “the purpose of this organization shall be to cultivate music *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*.”⁵ The 2006 seminary catalogue expands on that concept: “By its public concerts and appearances the Seminary Chorus represents the seminary in the synod and seeks to set a standard for confessional church music.”⁶ While the group and its directors have worked hard to achieve excellence in musical performance, the message of the Seminary Chorus has always been more important than the musical medium. As students studying for the ministry and as representatives of the seminary, the Seminary Chorus sees as its primary purpose to announce the good news of Jesus Christ in song.

Often without knowing the connection, the chorus remembers the founding of the Seminary Choral Society at its annual appearance at Grace Church, Milwaukee, in the last of the year's midweek Lenten services. In 2001 the chorus observed its 70th anniversary at Grace Church, and senior Jonathan Bergemann, grandson of the first director S. J. Bergemann, directed the hymn the chorus had sung to open the first concert, “Jehovah, Let Me Now Adore Thee” (although not the Bach setting that actually opened the 1931 concert). The 2006 Grace concert was held on April 5, only 14 days removed from the date of the first performance, and the anniversary was noted. The founding date was also remembered at Fount of Life Lutheran Church in Colorado Springs, CO, where the choir appeared in concert on April 19 (interestingly in a high school auditorium, a far different ambiance than the site of its initial concert). The major celebration was reserved for May so that more pastors might attend the anniversary concert. A festival concert was presented to almost 1,000 guests in the campus auditorium on Wednesday, May 24, 2006. More than 60 past members of the choir, now serving in or retired from the ministry, rehearsed in advance and joined their voices to the 54 voices of the existing choir. Twelve pastors formed a brass ensemble, and several others assisted as accompanists. Highlights of the evening, besides the sound of over one hundred male

voices, included a PowerPoint® presentation telling the history of the chorus and the introduction of the families of all past directors. Taking the podium near the end of the concert was Dr. Arnold Lehmann, age 92, who directed his arrangement of “The Church's One Foundation,” sung for many years by his Northwestern College Choir and now sung regularly by the Seminary Chorus. Included in the program was a setting for male voices, organ, and brass of “In Trembling Hands,” commissioned especially for the anniversary tour by Prof. Robert C. Potratz. The tune of the hymn was composed by Prof. Martin Albrecht, who directed the chorus for 32 years.

The intention of this presentation is not to look at the present choir or to chart its future. The purpose of this essay is to summarize the history of the chorus. To relate the early history I cannot improve on what Paul Prange produced in 1988. A fair amount of what follows is based on Prange's research and is presented in his essay.

The Seminary Chorus and Prof. Johannes Ph. Koehler

Since he was interested in music and the arts, Professor Johannes Ph. Koehler took the lead in offering musical instruction to seminary students after his arrival on campus in 1900. Koehler's history mentions that music had been a part of the students' training before he arrived.⁷ William Boeppler was a Reformed preacher who came to Milwaukee and established himself as a music instructor. He founded a choir made up of Lutheran school teachers and named it the A Cappella Choir of Milwaukee. Boeppler also taught at the Milwaukee Conservatory and at the Wauwatosa seminary. When Boeppler left for Chicago, he was succeeded as director of the A Cappella Choir by Franz Salbach, a vocal teacher trained in Germany, who also taught music at the seminary, at Northwestern in Watertown, and at the Lutheran High School in Milwaukee.

One gathers that seminary students were often involved as tenors and basses in the A Cappella Choir even before Koehler arrived on the scene. Koehler records that seminary Director Adolph Hoenecke asked him to become involved with the A Cappella Choir as a steadying influence, and one assumes Hoenecke made this request for the sake of the seminary and not for the general musical good of the city. Apparently the group prospered for a short time with Koehler as its president and Salbach as director; the choir prepared and performed many of the Lutheran chorales as well as the St. Matthew Passion. But Salbach's deficiencies apparently could not be overcome, and the A Cappella Choir dissolved. Koehler volunteered to resurrect a music program of some sort, primarily, it seems, for the sake of the seminary students.

“Seminary Chorus” is a name which the common man has very quickly coined for a loose connection of singers in Milwaukee that has rallied around the person of its director or around the songs that they sing. In 1909 I was entrusted by the managing Board of the Theological Seminary in Wauwatosa, at my own request, to care for the musical part of the instruction of the students...I thought it important then that students be involved in the actual practical work...In order to sing numbers in their original form, a mixed choir was necessary. I looked for a boys choir, and then a choir of women, but nothing came of that...and so I was satisfied with a male chorus of students. In the fall of 1910, circumstances were finally good for forming a mixed chorus. The women came from the Lutheran high school, and we sang at Christmas first at Pastor Kionka's congregation and then at Pastor Dietz'.⁸

Koehler's intention for this choir almost certainly was to acquaint first seminarians

and then the local Lutheran population with the original rhythmic versions of the Lutheran chorales. These had been championed in the Missouri Synod by C.F.W. Walther, and Koehler would have come under that influence while he was a student at Concordia Seminary. Koehler put a great deal of work into gathering scores for these chorales and other Reformation-era anthems, and the group was ready for its first concert at the Milwaukee Auditorium in 1911. At this and subsequent concerts Koehler presented informational essays on the Lutheran chorales. He "explained the history, text, and music and brought home to the audience the beauty of the chorale, acknowledged by the world's historians as the gems of all musical literature." As far as the singers were concerned, Koehler notes:

They were induced by their director to devote themselves to church music and in part to early church music. In a very short time the director succeeded in turning these raw recruits into technically proficient singers, resulting in a noticeable improvement in the church music of our congregations throughout the state.⁹

It isn't difficult to imagine that even a man with as strong a personality as Koehler would not have been able to maintain a commitment to this kind of group for very long. Koehler also notes that synodical politics interfered with the choir's work. There is no mention of the group after 1915 when Koehler says he was still looking for original chorale scores. But Koehler had his lectures in print and a captive audience of seminary students. The 1928-1929 seminary catalogue seems to be reflecting usual custom when it states that Prof. Koehler conducts "practice in choir singing" under the discipline of liturgics.¹⁰ This was known as the "Singstunde" and was held during a regular class period at which all students were expected.¹¹

The Seminary Choral Society

Prof. Koehler's relationship with other members of the Wauwatosa faculty is well known, as is his role in the Protes'tant Controversy. The 1929-1930 catalog lists him as "on leave of absence," with Prof. August Pieper as acting president. Pieper did not succeed Koehler as liturgics professor, however; that course was given to the new man on campus, Prof. Max Lehninger. Not surprisingly, Lehninger did not continue Koehler's hymn lectures or the "Singstunde." According to a man who was a student at that time, the only remnant of Koehler's class was a student body rehearsal¹² of the TTBB hymns that students were to sing in chapel the following week. These hymns were unaccompanied; the chapel piano only supplied the opening key. The student body elected student directors to lead these rehearsals, but the situation wasn't a happy one. Directors resigned and students skipped.¹³ It seems that no faculty member was able to fill the breach Koehler left as far as musical instruction was concerned.

The better singers and more musically gifted students took the lead in an effort to change the situation. A document from the time states: "During the first term of the school year 1930-31 a considerable amount of dissatisfaction prevailed among the students in regard to the curricular singing period. While the student body was attempting to improve conditions, it became obvious that the idea of a seminary chorus would meet with the approval of a great number of students."¹⁴ In January 1931 the student body elected a committee to study the matter more completely. Members of the committee were Heinrich Vogel, Neelak Tjernagel, and Hans Meyer.¹⁵ The group had three responsibilities: to investigate the possibility of organizing a chorus, to gain the sanction of the faculty for such an endeavor, and to secure an experienced director.

The committee met with quick success. From a student body of 67, 40 students indicated interest in participating in a choir. One member of the body added:

The urge to sing beyond the preparation for chapel singing took refuge in this organization. Nobody at the Sem had a job. We were all together in the dormitory. Nobody had a wife and family to take care of. So we had time!¹⁶

The faculty also expressed its complete support and approval.¹⁷ The last objective of the committee was to secure a competent director, and to this task first year student Erwin Scharf brought his recommendation that Mr. S. J. Bergemann would serve well. Scharf had become acquainted with Bergemann while the two had worked in Fond du Lac, Scharf at the newly-formed Winnebago Lutheran Academy and Bergemann at St. Peter School. Bergemann had recently accepted a call to Jordan, West Allis, and was close enough to Thiensville to take on the position.¹⁸

On January 14, 1931, 38 students attended a meeting called specifically to form a choir. These 38 became charter members of the Seminary Choral Society. They elected Neelak Tjernagel as president; Gilbert Thiele as vice-president; and Erwin Scharf as secretary. (A list of the charter members is added at the end of this essay.) The charter members agreed that each member would seed a treasury with \$1.50 for music and the director's honorarium.¹⁹

Several days later a group of students went to visit Mr. Bergemann in West Allis and invited him to serve as the director of the new group. The society offered him \$3.40 for each rehearsal.²⁰ Bergemann accepted and agreed to come to the seminary one evening each week. He remembered those events in a letter to Paul Prange 57 years later:

Though I had led mixed choruses for some twelve years and had been a member of two male quartets, I now had a male chorus! What a challenge and genuine pleasure that became! The society was serious about its work. The singers were enthusiastic and cooperative. In our first rehearsal in January of 1931 (Tuesday, January 20), we studied two or three pieces. When I returned a week later and proceeded to further study, the men had memorized them! With such spirit there was no problem in preparing for a concert in the spring of that year.²¹

After several months of rehearsing, the chorus was ready for its first performance. On April 18, 1931, the following announcement appeared in *The Milwaukee Journal*:

Students' Chorus in Sacred Concert

The students' chorus of the theological seminary of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod at Thiensville, under the direction of S. J. Bergemann, will appear for the first time in a sacred concert Sunday at 8:00 p.m. in Grace Lutheran Church, Broadway and East Juneau Avenue. Several organ numbers will be given by Gilbert Glaeser, organist at Grace Church.

The program from that concert lists ten anthems performed by the choir. Mr. Gilbert Glaeser, organist at Grace Church, provided an interlude of six pieces. The opening anthem, a setting sung in German by Johann Sebastian Bach of "Jehovah, Let Me Now Adore Thee" was repeated in English as the opening anthem of the 75th anniversary program.

The first concert didn't come off without a hitch, however. At 9:00 p.m. the regular whistle of the Blatz Brewery, located across Juneau Avenue from Grace Church, blew and got itself stuck.²² Neither the society minutes nor Paul Prange record if the whistle ever became unstuck before the end of the concert. It seems as though the choir was forced to endure the whistle as it now endures sirens and traffic rumblings in its appearances at Grace.

As the 38 members of the choral society rehearsed the ten anthems for the opening concert, a committee of five prepared the organization's first constitution: Fritz Reuter, Martin Franzmann, Hilton Oswald, Alfred von Rohr Sauer, and Waldemar Pless. The committee completed its work, and the society ratified the constitution on April 27, 1931.²³

A Touring Choir

When the new school year began in the fall of 1931, 39 of the seminary's 71 students became members of the Choral Society. The group's first appearance that year was on November 12, at the dedication of Calvary Church in Thiensville. Interestingly, the present chorus appeared at Calvary on November 12, 2006, as the congregation observed its 75th anniversary. The first Christmas concerts were held at St. Lucas, Milwaukee on December 13, Jerusalem, Milwaukee on December 15, and Trinity, Freistadt (LCMS) on December 17.²⁴

As 1932 arrived, the society was beginning to sense its value as an agent and representative of the seminary. Invitations began to arrive from local congregations, and the members of the chorus were eager to accept them.²⁵ Erwin Scharf became the group's president when Neelak Tjernagel resigned, and immediately began planning a spring choir tour. For the next 54 years, the officers and members of the chorus would take the lead in planning and organizing the tours. Scharf and his committee arranged for concerts in Beaver Dam, Waterloo, Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Manitowoc, Green Bay, Appleton, Fond du Lac, Thiensville, and West Allis.²⁶ The tour extended over two weekends and the intervening week. Travel was by motor coach driven by a driver named Percy. The tour program consisted of 15 anthems, four arranged by Bach (including "Jehovah, Let Me Now Adore Thee" in German) and a new arrangement of the old gospel hymn "Softly and Tenderly."²⁷ This anthem was also repeated on the 2006 anniversary program, but without the negative reaction it received in 1932—people at several congregations walked out as the anthem was sung! At the end of the year, the society agreed to sing at the graduation service, an innovation then that continues to this day.

The 1932-33 school year brought another first: for the first time the Christmas Concert was presented on campus in the chapel. Students planned another tour, this one to take place on four weekends in May and June. This tour is notable because of a tragic event that took place on a warm Sunday afternoon after the chorus returned. Two students, Arnold Gatz, a member of the choir, and Chester Bender, who was not a choir member, were the first of a group of students who ran down to the Milwaukee River for a swim. Not realizing the strength of the current, they dove in and drowned. The society carried out its obligations to the congregations at which it had scheduled concerts, but undoubtedly did so with heavy hearts.²⁸

The Seminary Quartet

Paul Prange's essay includes several pages about the first notable seminary quar-

ter.²⁹ This is an interesting story, but concerns the general history of the chorus in only one way.

The original members of the group were Alfred Schewe, Paul Heyn, and Otto Engel. They had sung together at Northwestern College, but came to the seminary looking for a second bass. They found one in Erwin Scharf who agreed to join the group.³⁰ Programs indicate that this quartet regularly performed in concerts during their time as members of the choral society.

The Great Depression was ravaging work opportunities, and the four found themselves without jobs for the summer of 1933. With some encouragement from Prof. John Meyer, the four set out to tour WELS congregations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Michigan, and Ohio. They began their concert tour on June 13 and ended it on July 22, with only a five day reprieve in Niagara Falls.

What is notable, however, is that the group needed an organist to play interludes and accompaniments. Once again Erwin Scharf suggested a Fond du Lac connection, a young teacher assigned in 1929 to service at Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Martin Albrecht. Albrecht's association with the choir began in the fall of 1934 and didn't end until 1985 when he retired after serving as the director of the chorus for 32 of its 75 years!

The Albrecht Choir: 1934-1943

As the 1933-1934 school year began, the Seminary Choral Society was back in action with S. J. Bergemann as its director. A group of 31 choir members presented the annual Christmas concert in the seminary chapel and participated in a spring tour of congregations in eastern Wisconsin. As the year came to an end, however, Mr. Bergemann informed the society that he had accepted a call to St. Mark Church in Watertown and would be obligated to resign as director of the choir.

It is not possible to report here when and why Martin Albrecht decided to come to the seminary to study for the pastoral ministry. As a graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, he lacked the prerequisite language training ordinarily required for enrollment at the seminary. He served as a pastor for only four years, from 1940-43 and was certainly a teacher at heart and in attitude, even in the pulpit. Did his thoughts begin to turn toward the pastoral office through the influence of his friends in the seminary quartet? Would he have come to Thiensville in the fall of 1934 had Mr. Bergemann not resigned as director?

Martin Albrecht was born in 1909, the son of Richard Albrecht and Selma nee Zielke. After serving as a Lutheran elementary school teacher at St. Mark, Watertown, and Jerusalem, Milwaukee, Richard Albrecht accepted a call in 1917 to teach pedagogics and German at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm. Martin attended the parish school in New Ulm and took piano and organ lessons from Prof. Emil Backer who had married his sister Erna. He displayed his musical abilities as a singer and performer but also as a leader, being appointed as the director of the college band. He was assigned to the Fond du Lac academy upon his graduation in 1929.³¹

Especially in Fond du Lac Albrecht was influenced by the a cappella choral movement that was beginning to sweep across the United States in the mid-1930s. He himself gives credit for this influence to Hans Schlei, a high school teacher from Sheboygan and son-in-law of the well known Fond du Lac pastor and synodical president, G. E. Bergemann.³² This is the same movement that F. Melius Christiansen was championing at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, and which moved Lutheran choral singing away from the orchestrally accompanied Wagnerian and Mendelssohnian choruses that were so

prevalent in America and Europe in the 19th century. Through Schlei's influence and with his own study, Albrecht had come to see that even high school students could learn to sing the "straight" tones that were essential in the a cappella tradition.

Albrecht's musical ability was recognized by the seminary students and his leadership was accepted. Though he was a fellow student, chorale society members gave him gifts of appreciation.³³ Already during these years he displayed his talent for arranging SATB choral music for TTBB voices. He added new entries to the home-made hymnal that students used for their a cappella chapel singing and was able to include on concert programs some of the great choral works he had arranged for male voices. While all were not arranged during this tenure as director, the chorus files contain TTBB settings of over 200 hymns from *The Lutheran Hymnal* as well as dozens of arrangements of classic choral works such as Pachelbel's "On God and Not on Human Trust" and "Now Thank We All Our God" and Gretchaninoff's "Our Father." Picking up on a program addition Mr. Bergemann had made in the 1934 tour program, Albrecht began placing "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" as the opening anthem of every spring concert. This custom continued for twenty years until the mid-1950s and then began again when Albrecht returned to the seminary in 1962.

Upon his graduation from the seminary, Albrecht was reassigned to Winnebago Lutheran Academy, but was asked to continue to serve as director of the Choral Society. One senses there were a few discipline problems during those years as Albrecht tried to control the choir from afar.³⁴ Perhaps a few church leaders understood the difficulty involved in this arrangement, because in 1940 Albrecht was called to serve as pastor and upper grades teacher at Calvary Church in Thiensville. Obviously, he continued as director of the chorus.

In 1943 Martin Albrecht was called to join the faculty at Dr. Martin Luther College where he served for the next 19 years as organ instructor, choir and band director, and professor of religion and liturgics. It was during these years that he worked with his brother-in-law, Prof. Emil Backer, to develop and edit the DMLC choir series, used by hundreds of WELS choirs. He also developed a music curriculum and singing course for Lutheran elementary schools. He was well known as a strict disciplinarian. Upon the sudden death of Prof. Backer in 1958, Albrecht essentially took over the leadership of the entire DMLC music program.³⁵ Since he had experience as a parish pastor, he was also called upon to start a new congregation in New Ulm, St. John Lutheran Church.

Upon Albrecht's departure from Calvary, Thiensville, the Seminary Male Chorus (newly named in 1938³⁶) began to search for a new director. The choir began the year with a student director, Henry Paustian, who directed the choir in several congregational appearances and prepared the group for the 1943 Christmas concert. In December of that year the president of the choir, Walter Schumann, invited Mr. Emmanuel Arndt, a teacher at Christ Lutheran School in Milwaukee, to serve as director.³⁷ Arndt was the formal director from January 1944 to March 1945, although there is an indication that students carried on much of the regular work of rehearsing and planning. For example, the students set out to edit the chapel hymnal and selected as chair of the project a young student musician whose name would reappear both at the seminary and on the WELS musical scene in general, Kurt J. Eggert.³⁸

Prof. Hilton Oswald at Northwestern and the Seminary, 1945 – 1960

For many years there had been a general recognition that music instruction for pastoral students was not all it could be.³⁹ In 1941 the Northwestern Board of Control re-

ported to the synod convention in Saginaw its desire to provide better instruction at Northwestern and the seminary. The convention resolved that the board of the two schools should be authorized to call a man to serve both schools.⁴⁰ When the boards met in the summer of 1943, they noted the responsibilities they hoped to cover:

At Northwestern to

Conduct the male chorus, the mixed chorus, and the band
Give courses in elementary music in the preparatory department
Give optional courses in music on the college level

At the seminary to

Acquaint the students with music appropriate for use in the congregation
Teach the relation of the music to the text of hymns
Give a course in the history of church music
Direct the Seminary Male Chorus⁴¹

From every possible point of view, this was an unrealistic expectation. That one man could handle the music instruction of primarily male students across the ages of 14 to 25 was preposterous—and then that the schools he served would be 45 miles apart. The *Northwestern Lutheran* gave evidence to this in a September 1943 notice:

The Seminary and Northwestern College Boards met in joint sessions on September 29 to call a professor of music. After a lengthy discussion it was resolved to postpone the selection.⁴²

Hilton C. Oswald was a charter member of the Seminary Choral Society in 1931, and after graduation had served as a pastor in South Dakota. So highly did Northwestern consider Oswald's language gifts that the school called him to serve as professor of English and Latin in 1939. Remembering that he had played an instrument, the board also called him to direct the college band. When Prof. Bolle died several years later, Oswald also took on the campus choirs. This was the man called in 1945 to endure the joint position. Oswald declined the call at least once, pleading insufficient preparation in the music field.⁴³ The Board, and especially NWC President Kowalke, were persistent, however, and Oswald was persuaded. Prange summarized the fascinating story as Prof. Oswald himself related it in a 1988 letter:

Then the hard work began. I took courses in organ, music history, ear-training and sight-singing, harmony, counterpoint, musical form and analysis, and whatever else in the Milwaukee conservatory offerings I thought I could use. World War II was in full flower with its gas rationing, and after a car accident on a Sunday morning preaching mission I was suddenly without transportation because repairs were not to be had. So once a week I got on the train in Watertown at 7 in the morning, did my several lessons at the Conservatory in the forenoon, and caught the Interurban from Milwaukee to Thiensville, arriving just in time for the last period in the morning. In addition to the prescribed three-year cycle of courses, part of the period was used to rehearse chapel singing. Then came a free dinner for me with the students, and then chorus rehearsal. This was all pure joy, on my part at least. I returned to Watertown on the Pioneer Limited at 1:00 a.m. The Lord hovered over all of this with his miracle-laden care for some 15 years.⁴⁴

Prof. Oswald served faithfully under very difficult circumstances. It was during his tenure as music director that the Northwestern sports teams reached their zenith, first in basketball and then in football. The choral interest that was so evident in the 1930s couldn't hold up as the student focus turned to winning sports teams. Bruce Backer remembers that the sports fellows who did sing weren't minded to get too serious over musical training!⁴⁵ These were also the years during which the battle between the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods raged, and the liturgical arts were too often connected by naïve students (and some professors) with extreme positions in Missouri. More students were beginning to find work after World War II ended, and some were married. Add to this that the young men arriving in Thiensville already had sung under Prof. Oswald over the span of eight years and that his style tended to be long on precision and short on passion,⁴⁶ and it doesn't surprise that membership in the Seminary Male Chorus dwindled. Membership in the fall of 1958 was 12. Student directors such as Bruce Backer and Wayne Schmidt⁴⁷ prepared these smaller groups in some notable presentations,⁴⁸ but generally the outlook for the Seminary Male Chorus was glum as the 1960s dawned.

We can't pass the Oswald era, however, without noting some very positive contributions. Since Oswald was also involved in touring with the Northwestern Choir, the custom of touring in alternate years became a standard practice that remains. In 1949 Mrs. Charlotte Sperling of Watertown, SD, gifted the seminary with a ten rank Wicks pipe organ, and for the first time in the seminary's history students began singing the melody line of hymns accompanied by the organ. In 1955 copies of *The Lutheran Hymnal* appeared in the pews.⁴⁹ In 1953 the chorus appeared for the first time in choir robes: black gowns with white satin collars and short choir stoles.⁵⁰

The Interregnum: Kurt Eggert, 1960-1962

Prof. Oswald detected a loss of hearing during the late 1950s and in 1960 accepted a call issued from Concordia Publishing House to serve as one of the editors for the American Edition of *Luther's Works*. And so Prof. Oswald returned to languages, his first love. In Prange's opinion, it was at this time that the chorus came as close as it ever did to disbanding.⁵¹ He credits Warren Widmann for keeping a small group of singers active at the seminary. But in October a small note appeared in the minutes: "Pastor Kurt Eggert is the new choir director. Things are looking up."⁵²

Kurt Eggert had a well deserved reputation on the WELS music and worship scene. In 1955 he and Northwestern's Ralph Gehrke began publishing *Viva Vox*, a small pamphlet focusing on worship and church music. His influence on those who knew him was deep. David Valleskey, an upper classman and student director during Eggert's tenure, remembers being very impressed with Eggert, "not just with his directing, but with his whole approach to music and worship. He was the one who instilled in me what has turned out to be a lifelong interest in worship."⁵³ Eggert picked up where Oswald had left off, directing the choir and teaching the course in church music. His concert programs at the seminary display the same creativity that marked his work with the Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee over 34 years. Eggert saw to the purchase of a grand piano used for the first time at the chorus' Christmas concert in 1961 (built by the Chase Company and still in use). He also featured the chorus in a television venture on Milwaukee's WITI-TV.⁴³

When Northwestern College moved to call a music director for exclusive service on its own campus in 1962, the seminary board realized it could not stand idle. President

Carl Lawrenz relinquished his courses in education in order to carry out administrative duties, and the board saw fit to authorize a call for church music and Christian education. Since Eggert was serving already and seemed to possess the necessary gifts, many assumed he would receive the call. Synodical lore has it that a notable member of the seminary board disallowed the call, however, opining that Eggert's preference for the cassock and surplice made him "unsafe"⁵⁵—not a surprising reaction in the liturgically charged atmosphere of the early 1960s.

The Albrecht Years: 1962-1985

The board turned to a man it knew and trusted, a man who had served already as the longest tenured director of the choir, Prof. Martin Albrecht. The move to Mequon was not an easy one for Albrecht. He had deep roots in New Ulm, familiarly and professionally. His six daughters attended the college and its preparatory department, and the move left parents and children separated by many miles. For five years he and his wife Zelma were obligated to live in an off-campus home since no campus housing was available. And the discipline that he so easily carried out in college classrooms and rehearsals simply didn't work at the seminary. At the end of the first quarter of his first year in the classroom, he distributed a test. Seminary students were not at all used to being tested in that era, and they unceremoniously handed the unfinished tests back to him!

Albrecht experienced greater success with the chorus. Fred Fallen, the secretary of the 1962-63 choir, records, "There were backslaps and handshakes all around as forty (40!!!) members were present for the first meeting."⁵⁶ The officers of the choir planned a tour to congregations in western Wisconsin in the spring of 1963. The second tour in the spring of 1964 was much more notable. The choir planned a trip to Arizona and California where they presented concerts in Tucson, Tempe, Glendale, Phoenix, and Flagstaff, AZ, and in Los Angeles and Pomona, CA, as well as in congregations on the way there and back. Highlighting this tour were two appearances in congregations on the Apache Indian Reservation. To mark this notable event, Albrecht programmed a musical setting of a text written by missionary pioneer Dr. Francis Uplegger and prepared the chorus to sing it: "Ihidna! Ihidna!"—"Life, True Life." The concert program was entitled *Cantate Domino*, and the chorus sang the anthem by the same name composed by Hans Leo Hassler. When the choir returned to the reservation in 1995, that same Hassler anthem appeared on the program. This was a first (1964): the first time a synodical school choir had traveled outside the Midwest and would prove to be the first of many such tours as the synod expanded its boundaries beyond Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan.

Another long tour in 1966 carried the choir to congregations in Washington and Oregon with stops along the way in the Dakotas, Montana, and Minnesota. A recording was made of this concert program, and the profits helped keep the choir on a solid financial footing. In 1968 the choir headed for the Dakotas and then toured congregations in Florida in 1970. In 1972 the choir traveled to Arizona and California again (apparently with a smaller ensemble⁵⁷). The 1974 choir arranged for its first "foreign" destination, as the group presented a concert at St. Paul in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada on Easter Sunday and then visited congregations along the East Coast. The 1976 tour traveled to congregations in Texas, and the 1978 choir toured congregations in Florida again. The 1980 terminus destination was Denver with concerts in Nebraska, South Dakota, and Minnesota along the way there and back.

In 1980 Prof. Albrecht was 71 years old. His wife had been diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and was not able to stay alone at home. She had accompanied him on the 1976 and 1978 tours, but was not able to travel in 1980. Literally at the last minute and with his suitcases in hand, Albrecht decided to stay home, and student James Renz conducted the choir until Albrecht joined the group in Minnesota on its return trip. The chorus didn't take a long tour in 1982 because of Albrecht's inability to accompany the group. Students planned a tour to Florida in 1984, but again Albrecht did not accompany the choir; Mark Wilde was the student director. As Prof. Albrecht approached his 75 birthday, it was obvious that his long tenure as director of the choir and professor at the seminary was sadly drawing to a close.

Despite its unhappy ending, it must be said that the Seminary Chorus flourished under Albrecht's directorship. His time at Mequon coincided with growing student enrollments, and his choirs often had more than 50 members. Although he was not always appreciated in class, Albrecht was respected and liked by choir members who found him more easy-going outside the classroom. The music he prepared with the many choirs he directed was interesting and enjoyable to sing. Always the teacher, Albrecht's programs were invariably themed and included program notes aimed at the people in the pews. He ran effective rehearsals and conducted without mistakes. Albrecht expanded the choir's repertoire as he continued to arrange classic SATB choral works for the male chorus and programmed old spirituals as well as works by more contemporary composers such as Leland Sateran and Knut Nystad. He prepared all the choir's programs on his personal typewriter and duplicated them (as well as a great deal of the music) on the off-set printer he purchased and located in his basement. He regularly produced recordings of the choir's major tours. And he made money. The chorus was financially independent throughout his tenure (and is still today) and had \$32,000 in the bank (in a fund for a new chapel organ) when he retired in 1985.

Two notable undertakings need to be mentioned for the historical record. Together with Prof. Meilahn Zahn, director of the Dr. Martin Luther College Choir, Albrecht produced a series of three audio cassettes entitled *Our Favorite Hymns*. He sold literally thousands of copies of these recordings; in fact, he liked to say that he sold more cassettes than Robin Yount had hits (and Yount had over 3,000 hits). Albrecht also was deeply involved with several major choral endeavors sponsored by the Milwaukee Federation of WELS Churches that were held at Milwaukee's Performing Arts Center in the early 1970s. These concerts, which invariably had the Seminary Chorus as one of the anchoring choirs, were received with overflowing enthusiasm and are memorable in the minds of students who participated in them. Albrecht also directed the 400 voice choir that participated in the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth in 1983. The service was held at the Milwaukee Auditorium and attracted an enormous throng of WELS members.

After retirement Martin Albrecht purchased a home in Grafton and lived there until his death in March 1993. His funeral service was conducted at Calvary, Thiensville. Members of the chorus took turns standing at the sides of his casket during the visitation, and a bouquet of fifty roses, one for each member of the 1993 choir, was presented by the group in his honor. A large group of pastors under the direction of Pastor Kurt Eggert sang his TTBB arrangement of "For All the Saints," and the chorus presented his tune and setting of Herbert Filter's paraphrase of Luther's Evening Prayer.

The Seminary Chorus: 1985-2006

The list of names nominated to succeed Prof. Albrecht was short. His were big shoes to fill, and not many men in WELS had both the musical and theoretical experi-

ence the call demanded. Kurt Eggert had just accepted a call to head up the synod's new hymnal project and would not have had the time to handle both these responsibilities and those of a full-time seminary professor. It was no secret among faculty members that Albrecht hoped the board would call his nephew, Bruce Backer, who certainly had the most extensive musical training of the men on the list. The board selected a colleague of Backer's at Dr. Martin Luther College, Prof. Mark Lenz. Lenz certainly had the academic credentials and had directed the mixed choir at St. Croix Lutheran High School in West St. Paul, MN, during a previous tenure there. When Lenz returned the call, the board extended the call to a very surprised James Tiefel, then serving as pastor at St. Paul Church in Saginaw, MI.

Tiefel had neither the academic nor the musical training that the call required. He was a member of the choir as a student and one of its accompanists. He did have parish experience, however, and the board seemed interested in securing a younger man with that qualification. He also seemed to have gained the recommendation of several Michigan men⁵⁸ who were close to the WELS worker training system and had witnessed his work in Saginaw. The new director arrived on campus with his young family in August of 1985. While he audited the courses in Christian education during his first year, he immediately began teaching the liturgics courses and directing the chorus. The first Christmas concert under his leadership was held in December, 1985.

As a student, Tiefel had been involved in planning the 1976 choir tour to Texas. It didn't quite dawn on him that he should not pick up where he had left off, and began planning the 1986 tour to the Pacific Northwest District at Albrecht's suggestion. From that point on, tours have been arranged by the chorus director and not by students or officers of the chorus.

Beginning in 1932, the chorus' Christmas concerts were always held in the seminary chapel. Crowds grew, and two performances became necessary; but even then the chapel was severely taxed. After Calvary, Thiensville, dedicated its new church in 1976, Christmas and Commencement concerts were held at Calvary. When Tiefel arrived on campus, plans were complete and construction was ready to begin on a large auditorium/gymnasium that would serve as the new thousand seat "concert hall" for the chorus. Area WELS members soon recognized that they would be able to find a seat at these concerts, and crowds approaching 2,000 regularly attend the two performances of the Seminary's Christmas concerts held on the second Sunday in December.

In 1988 the choir followed its new director to his old home base, the Michigan District; only 28 students accompanied the tour, the smallest touring group in many years before or since. Since he lacked the skills to arrange anything but simple hymns for the male voices, the chorus commissioned Mr. Robert C. Potratz to compose a three-part motet on the hymn "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage," a favorite in the Michigan District and almost the school song at Michigan Lutheran Seminary. The concert program in 1990 featured nine of the eleven sections of Bach's great motet, "Jesus, Priceless Treasure" in a compendium of arrangements by Albrecht, Oswald, and Prof. William Heyne, long-time director of Concordia's male choir. The program was fairly long-haired, but congregations along the way to Denver and back seemed to enjoy the chorus' visits. In 1992 the director planned a trip that led the chorus as far south as New Orleans and as far east as Atlanta. Congregations in Texas invited the choir to take its 1994 tour in the South Central District and witnessed the new blue choir robes that were generously funded by the Seminary Auxiliary. Both in 1992 and 1994 the chorus was so large that a student-driven van accompanied the motor coach (driven by driver George Cedzo who has driven the chorus on most of its major tours since 1985).

In late 1992 the WELS hymnal project was coming to a close; the book's manuscripts had been delivered to an Indiana publisher, and the new book was to be presented at the 1993 synod convention in Saginaw. It was becoming obvious that the life of the hymnal project director was also coming to a close. Kurt Eggert's health had been precarious since 1986 when he suffered a major heart attack, and by the early 1990s he was subject to occasional serious health problems. In October of 1992, Tiefel approached Dr. Carl F. Schalk, the notable Concordia-River Forest composer and a close friend of Eggert's, and asked him to arrange a male chorus setting of "Lord, When Your Glory I Shall See." Eggert had composed a tune, *WEDDING GLORY*, for this text when it had been removed by the hymnal committee from its status as the final stanza of Paul Gerhardt's hymn, "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth." The chorus received the arrangement in manuscript form and prepared it for the 1993 Commencement Concert. Eggert and Schalk were invited to the concert and both were present when the chorus presented the anthem. A memorable afterglow followed at the Tiefel home as Eggert and Schalk, perhaps representing the best in church music in each of the former sister synods, reminisced over very dry martinis. It was the last musical event Eggert would attend. He was soon hospitalized and died in June 1993. Tiefel programmed "Lord, When Your Glory I Shall See" as the final anthem of the 1994 tour program and each time explained its origin before the choir sang the piece. The magnificent text, tune, and setting have met with such approval that it has become the chorus's signature anthem and concludes every concert appearance.

A friendship with two brothers who would be members of the 1994-1995 choir led the director to consider an unusual trip to the Arizona-California District that would be scheduled for the spring of 1995. Anticipating long coach rides to and from the West (and determined not to repeat the overnight trips of the 1986 tour), Tiefel planned ahead and asked the faculty to schedule the Easter recess to cover two weeks. As it turned out, the father of the two students convinced the director to fly the choir west and helped to find reasonable ticket prices. The choir flew to Phoenix on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, presented 21 concerts over the next 14 days, and flew out of Las Vegas on the Saturday after Easter. Not only was the tour too long, but sickness plagued choir members all along the way. One student had to be sent home, and the full choir performed at only the first and last of the concerts. It remains, in the memory of both the director and students, the "tour from hell" as one student coined it along the way.

In 1998 the choir traveled to congregations along the East Coast from New York to Georgia. The 2000 tour celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Wisconsin Synod, and the choir traveled almost in a square from Wisconsin to Ohio to Michigan to Wisconsin to Minnesota and to Nebraska and presented concerts in congregations with historic synodical connections.

No synodical school choir had ever visited the WELS congregations in Alaska, and a visit to that state seemed an obvious extension of a 2002 tour to the Pacific Northwest District which had not hosted the choir since 1986. WELS President Karl Gurgel was very supportive of the venture and released \$19,000 from WELS funds to make the trip to Alaska possible. The choir flew again—from Milwaukee to Chicago to Seattle to Anchorage to Juneau to Seattle to Chicago and back to Milwaukee—without so much as a missed beat or a bit of turbulence. Concerts were scheduled in Kenai, Anchorage, and Juneau and were attended by overflowing crowds of visitors and very appreciative WELS members, many of whom hadn't heard a WELS choir in years.

Although on crutches, Tiefel accompanied the chorus on a Florida tour in 2004. He

had fallen on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral in London on March 15, endured surgery to repair a ruptured quadriceps tendon on March 18th, and climbed on the tour coach on April 7, well-attended by junior Nathanael Scharf who endured the ignominy of having to "shoe" the director before each concert. The 2006 tour, to Denver and back, was much less notable, although it marked the first time a son of a director participated as a member of the Seminary Chorus.

As the Seminary Chorus celebrates its 75th anniversary, it is obvious that the group has been able to build on the legacy presented to it by past singers, student leaders, and directors. Participation remains popular; it is not uncommon that half the student body is involved in the Christmas concerts, although not that many remain in the second semester for the spring engagements. The chorus continues to be well received by congregations, and students make good impressions as they are hosted by members on tour stops. But the times are changing. The chorus made special efforts to introduce to congregations the new hymns and liturgical settings of *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* (1993) and *Christian Worship: New Service Settings* (2004). Albrecht encouraged students to use their individual talents as organists and instrumentalists, but he might not have anticipated the day when more students would have guitar and percussion skills than keyboard and trumpet skills. He would occasionally cringe at the repertoire selected by the present director; there was a rather stormy discussion over a somewhat unusual rendition of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" in the late 1980s. Although recent programs have leaned heavily on traditional repertoire (the choir presented both Brahms's "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place" and the opening chorus of Bach's Cantata No. 4, "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Dark Prison" on its 2006 tour), the group has also presented the percussion based Nigerian Christmas song "Betelehemu" and Leon Robert's "This Is the Day" accompanied by guitar, percussion, and clapping. With anthems such as Peter Hallock's "Peace" and Eric Whitacre's "Lux Aurumque" the choir has taken on harmonic challenges that go beyond what is the norm for WELS choirs—and listeners. As WELS musical sophistication advanced and people began criticizing the quality of its recordings, the choir began to record with the services of a professional (the same gentleman who records St. Olaf). It now produces CDs, not LPs or cassettes. As today's seminary students travel far beyond the Midwest and even overseas, chorus members themselves are suggesting that the choir visit congregations in Europe with which WELS is in fellowship and which they themselves have visited and served.

Singing New Songs to the Lord

In his 1988 essay Paul Prange commented on a photo of the men of the Seminary Choral Society preparing to leave on the 1932 tour and noted that the choirs of his day would not have looked much different. The same can be said of today's choirs. There is nothing very sophisticated about a group of several dozen young men practicing choral anthems, spending long hours on motor coaches, playing sheephead on the back of the bus, or preparing for yet another concert. The Seminary Chorus possesses neither the notoriety nor the aplomb of the St. Olaf Choir. Whether in 1931 or 2006, the chorus isn't really much more than a group of young seminarians with little or no musical training who are willing to spend long hours preparing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs and then taking them by car or coach to fellow Christians across the length and breadth of this land. Make no mistake: great fun is had along the way. But the stories that can be told by each generation of chorus members are not the stuff historical essays are made

of. Let it be enough to say that the Seminary Chorus remains committed to its purpose to preach the gospel in song and that it retains this commitment with joy and enthusiasm.

The Seminary Chorus awaits its own Joseph Shaw to produce *The Seminary Chorus: A Narrative*. But perhaps the readers of this essay can come away from it with just a little more knowledge about a group of singers that has become well known and deeply appreciated in our little synod. And with that small objective, the author is content.

Charter Members of the Seminary Chorus

Harold Backer	Norbert Paustian
Louis Bleichwehl	Walter Paustian
Ewald Blumenthal	Waldemar Pless
Arthur Dobberstein	Henry Pussehl
Martin Drews	Gerhard Redlin
Siegfried Fenske	Fritz Reuter
Martin Franzmann	Helmut Rutz
Hugo Fritze	Alfred Sauer
Roland Hoenecke	Gerhard Schaefer
Ernst Kuehl	Erwin Scharf
Herbert Lemke	Waldemar Schuetze
Kurt Lescow	William Schweppe
Alfred Maaske	Gilbert Thiele
Gerold Martin	Neelak Tjernagel
Hans Meyer	Louis Vater
Norbert Mielke	Heinrich Vogel
Walter Nommensen	Sieghard Westendorf
Hilton Oswald	Albert Winter
Erhard Lankow	Raymond Zimmermann

ENDNOTES

1. Prof. Armin Schuetze in a personal letter to Paul Prange.
2. *The Milwaukee Journal*, April 18, 1931.
3. Paul T. Prange, *The History of the Seminary Chorus*, submitted as a requirement for the senior course on American Lutheranism on May 2, 1988.
4. Choral Society minutes, May 17, 1933.
5. Seminary Chorus minutes, September 12, 1962.
6. Seminary catalog 2006-07, page 29.
7. Johannes Ph. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*. Pertinent information is found on pages 219-222 and on page 238.
8. Johannes Ph. Koehler, "Seminaranchors," a lecture at Milwaukee Lutheran High School on May 12, 1911. *Quartalshrift*, July, 1911, Vol. 8, No.3), pages 209, 211, 212.
9. Johannes Ph. Koehler, "About a Concert of Our Church Chorales," *Faith-Life* (March, 1964, Vol. XXXVII, No. 3), page 11, a translation of "Under Kirchenlied im Konzert," *Evangelisches Gemeinde-Blatt* (November 15, 1900) by W. P. Hess.
10. Seminary catalog, 1928-29, page 9.

11. William Stuebs, "An Evaluation of Prof. Koehler's Dealing with the Problem of Poor Singing," church history paper, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, March 11, 1977, page 12.
12. Prof. Hilton Oswald in a letter to Paul Prange, February 10, 1988.
13. Prof. Erwin Scharf in an oral interview with Paul Prange on February 7, 1988.
14. "A Record of the Organization and Meetings of the Seminary Choral Society." WELS Historical Archives, January 14, 1931.
15. *Ibid.*, May 8, 1931.
16. Oswald, *op. cit.*
17. Choral Society minutes, *op. cit.*, January 16, 1931
18. Scharf, *op. cit.*
19. Choral Society minutes, May 8, 1931.
20. *Ibid.*, May 8, 1931.
21. S. J. Bergemann in a letter to Paul Prange, February 24, 1988.
22. Scharf, *op. cit.*
23. Choral Society Minutes, May 8, 1931.
24. *Ibid.*, January 25, 1932.
25. Scharf, *op. cit.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. Scharf recalled to Prange that some objected to this anthem, but others thought it was the best anthem on the program.
28. Choral Society minutes, June 13, 1933.
29. Paul Prange *op. cit.*, pages 8-9.
30. Scharf, *op. cit.*
31. C.T. Aufdemberge, *Christian Worship Handbook*, pages 630-631.
32. Prof. Martin Albrecht, oral interview with Paul Prange, February 11, 1988.
33. Choral Society minutes, December 5, 1934.
34. Prof. Erwin Schroeder in a personal letter to Paul Prange on February 3, 1988.
35. C.T. Aufdemberge, *op. cit.*
36. Male Chorus minutes, May 25, 1939.
37. Male Chorus minutes, November 30, 1943.
38. Male Chorus minutes, November 16, 1944.
39. Oswald, *op. cit.*
40. Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, (Saginaw, MI, August 6-11, 1941), pages 49-50.
41. *The Northwestern Lutheran* (Vol. 30, No. 14, July 11, 1943), page 221.
42. *The Northwestern Lutheran* (Vol. 30, No. 20, October 3, 1943), page 317.
43. Oswald, *op. cit.*
44. *Ibid.*
45. Bruce Backer in an email to James Tiefel, May 8, 2006
46. Pastor David Valleskey in an email to James Tiefel on May 15, 2006.
47. Backer, *op. cit.*
48. Backer had prepared Bach's cantata *Ach wie wichtig, ach wie fluechtig ist der Menschen Leben* for the 1955 Christmas concert at which Oswald directed.
49. Seminary Chorus minutes, November 7, 1955.
50. Seminary Chorus minutes, January 19, 1953,
51. Paul Prange, *op. cit.*, page 14

52. Seminary Chorus minutes, October 1960.
53. Valleskey, op. cit.
54. Seminary Chorus minutes, December 3 and 10, 1961.
55. James P. Schaefer in a conversation with James Tiefel about 1988.
56. Seminary Chorus minutes, September 12, 1962.
57. Prange, op. cit., page 14
58. Board chairman Edward G. Zell, pastor in Redford, and John C. Lawrenz, president of Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw.

The Life and Work of Fritz Otto Reuter

by Mark Braun and William Braun

At locations throughout the United States, hundreds of Lutheran elementary and high school teachers of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod meet each year for educational conferences. A key element at these conferences is worship, featuring vigorous singing by the assembled teachers. While many there may protest that they are not very “musical,” these assemblies contain skilled keyboard players, competent choir and choral directors, proficient musical composers and arrangers, and a host of men and women who love to sing traditional Lutheran music.

This is so common among called workers of the WELS as to scarcely be considered remarkable. Yet it must not be assumed that gatherings of such teachers at other educational conferences, or even within other Christian church bodies, possess the wide range of musical abilities found at these gatherings.

This musical proficiency now enjoyed by the educational agencies of the Wisconsin Synod did not develop easily or by chance. The Synod’s early history offers little indication that such musical gifts would later exist in such abundance. Early pastors and church leaders seem to have had little interest in hymns, liturgy, and church music. There are not even any reports left behind to suggest that they displayed signs of musical ability.¹

The growth in musical skills and appreciation may be traced to many small efforts and to the major contributions of key musicians in the Synod’s history. One of those key musicians was Fritz Otto Reuter. This article will discuss the musical preparation Reuter received, describe his service to Dr. Martin Luther College and the Wisconsin Synod, and offer an evaluation of his contributions. Most of the material upon which this article is based comes from the masters’ thesis written by Prof. Edwin H. Meyer for Concordia College in River Forest, Illinois, in 1972. A summary of Prof. Meyer’s work was presented by Professors Mark Braun and William Braun to the annual meeting of the WELS Historical Institute, held on October 16, 2005, in the chapel of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Growing Up

Fritz Reuter was born in Johannisback, Erzgebirge, Saxony, on October 11, 1863, one of the eleven children of Friederich Johann Reuter and Ida nee Kraetzel. His father was a master stocking knitter. At an early age, Fritz learned to play violin and piano, soon progressing to the organ. Even before his confirmation in the Lutheran faith, he began to play the organ for regular church services.

Reuter’s formal study of music began in 1877, just prior to his 14th birthday, when he undertook a six-year course at the *Lehrerseminar* (teacher’s college) in Waldenburg, Saxony. Among his teachers were Karl Kleeman, Johannes Schreyer, Bernhard Reicherdt, and Theodor Schneider. Reicherdt in particular provided a direct link to Johann Sebastian Bach, the great Lutheran organist and composer. Bach’s son Christian F. Bach was the teacher of August Eberhardt Mueller, cantor at St. Thomaskirche. Mueller, in turn, was the teacher of Johann-Gottfried Toepfer. Toepfer was a teacher of Reicherdt. This link, as Prof. Meyer explained, “serves to connect present-day instruction at Dr. Martin Luther College with Bach; Reuter was a teacher of Prof. Emil D. Backer, 1893–1957; Backer was a teacher of several present music staff members.”²

Reuter's final year of formal instruction, during the 1904-05 academic year, was in Berlin at the *Akademische Institut fuer Kirchenmusik*, where his main study focused on the Gregorian Chant and composition.

While still a young man, Reuter held several professional music positions. He served as organist and assistant teacher at the Abtei Oberlungwitz near Chemnitz, 1884-87. After that, he was teacher, organist, and choir director at Klingenthal, 1887-92. Next he became teacher, organist, and choir director at Reinsdorf, 1892-93. In 1894 he was appointed as cantor of the St. Laurentiuskirche in Lichtenstein-Calenberg, a position considered "the most significant before his arrival in America." As cantor of a late nineteenth century German church, Reuter held a prestigious position, in charge of all church music and typically its chief performer. He supervised singing and instrumental playing, selected the music, and assumed responsibility for the standards of the performance.³

In addition to church music, Reuter also took on the additional duties of "civic musical life," which included directing the children's and adult public choirs and the city orchestra. Reuter's original compositions for the town choruses and musical ensembles of the city included "*Kornblume und Eichenlaub*," a German nationalistic song for male chorus and military band, and a similar composition in content and voice, "*Deutsches Lied*." Reuter presented Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* ("The Creation") with "a choir of more than 100 voices, accompanied by a large orchestra." According to a local evaluation at the time, Reuter was "the proper person for the post, an outstanding organist and a spiritual director."⁵

A significant accomplishment during his time at Laurentiuskirche was the purchase, installation and dedication of a new church pipe organ. At the dedication, Reuter had a full complement of performing groups, including church choir, joint choir of Lichtenstein-Callberg, the 300-voice children's choir from the city's schools, and the full city orchestra. The choral music listed on the dedication program displayed "a complete cross-section of periods and styles, from Palestrina to the contemporaries. A comprehensive historic and stylistic perspective on the part of the cantor" was put on display.⁶

On July 14, 1894, Reuter married Clara Sonntag of Oberlungwitz. Their marriage was blessed with six children who grew to adulthood: Magdalena, Elizabeth, Marie, Fritz, and Gerhard, and Ruth; as well as two children who died in infancy.

A New Life in the New World

By age 30, Reuter was recognized as a proficient musician and outstanding teacher, with experience gained at several enviable musical positions. But he had also grown increasingly dissatisfied with the theological position of the *Landeskirche*, the German State Church. A spirit of rationalism pervaded the German church; sermons frequently addressed economics, conservation, or agriculture. Reuter recognized that the preaching of the Word of God was being greatly neglected. Although he was a church musician, Reuter feared that music "had become the concern of the church to such an extent that the preaching was no longer the central part of the service."⁷ Later in life he remarked that "when the liturgical and musical portions of the service become outstanding, then [we must] become more aware of what is being offered in the pulpit."⁸

For this reason, Reuter severed ties with the *Landeskirche* of Saxony in 1904 and became affiliated for a time with the German *Freikirche* (free church). Reuter's break with the state church came at a critical time in his professional career.⁹ A headline in the local newspaper announced in bold type, "*Kantor ausser Amt und Brot*" ("The cantor is

without a position and without bread").¹⁰ He soon moved his family to Berlin, where he was appointed to a teaching position in a boys' school.

Only months after this momentous decision, Reuter made an even more dramatic move. Lutheran churches in the midwestern United States were experiencing critical shortages of trained teachers and congregational musicians. Through correspondence with his brother Karl and Pastor D. Willkomm, Reuter initiated contact with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. On August 5, 1905, Reuter brought his family across the ocean to Winnipeg, Ontario, Canada, and to St. John's Lutheran Church.

Thus began two difficult years in Winnipeg. The Reuters were not accustomed to the harsh Canadian winters, nor were they prepared for the primitive conditions of the city. The unpaved and muddy streets, inadequate public sanitation, and poor housing were in sharp contrast to the way of life his family enjoyed as prominent and secure citizens of Lichtenstein. In addition, Reuter suffered a lengthy bout of typhoid fever, and though he survived, his two children born in Winnipeg did not.¹¹ Other than the records of the burial of the two children, no other information about the Reuters survives from that time. It remains unclear whether he taught at the congregation's elementary school, or if he served only as the congregation's organist and choir director, or even if he simply lived in Winnipeg.¹²

What is clear is that in 1907 Reuter moved to the relatively milder climate of Chicago to serve First Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Organized in 1871—only months before the Great Chicago Fire but not directly touched by it—First Bethlehem was a thriving congregation with a reported membership of 3,600 communicants in 1905.¹³ In 1894 it began the first Lutheran worship service conducted in sign language, which resulted in a mission for the deaf that expanded into five nearby states. An elementary school began operation in 1869, two years before the official organization of the congregation,¹⁴ and by 1905 First Bethlehem operated schools at three separate locations: Girard Street School, First LeMoyné Street School, and Leavitt Street School.¹⁵

Reuter taught at Girard Street School, sharing musical responsibilities with several other teachers. In short order he appears to have become quite popular at the school and within the congregation. Almost 65 years after his brief stay there, a later pastor of the congregation remarked that "the name of Fritz Reuter was a household word" in the church and school.¹⁶ While there, he also soon organized what was believed to be the first children's choir in the Missouri Synod.

Yet only a few months into his time in Chicago, he received a call from Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, a college of the Joint Ev. Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, to be a professor of music. The Wisconsin Synod had come to know Reuter through combined teachers' conferences of the two synods, and the Joint Synod was seeking someone with experience and ability to develop a music curriculum for its teachers' college.

His request for a peaceful release of his call from First Bethlehem, on January 12, 1908, was met with some disfavor—understandably, given the extremely short time of his service there. Apparently it seemed "unthinkable" to some members at First Bethlehem that Reuter would consider leaving them for the Wisconsin Synod. "In those days," Meyer explained, "many in the Missouri Synod considered the Wisconsin Synod to be a unionistic and doctrinally lax church body." The congregation finally granted his release reluctantly, and only after D.M.L.C. made a special effort to point out how "gracious" it was for First Bethlehem to grant him his request.

Years later, during a visit to Chicago, Reuter's two oldest daughters learned that their father "was never forgiven" for leaving First Bethlehem and the Missouri Synod.¹⁷

Reuter himself reportedly never returned to visit the area.

Meyer summarized the professional qualifications and personal faith which made Reuter ideally suited for the music professorship at D.M.L.C.:

His educational experiences were in the area of keyboard and stringed instruments, choral directing, music history, music theory and composition, and pedagogy. His broad professional background included positions of organist, choir director, cantor, and teacher in Saxony. In America he was a parish school teacher, an organist and choir director. His inner convictions which ultimately caused a break with the *Landeskirche* were firmly grounded in the doctrines of the Lutheran Church. He was forty-four, the prime age of his productive life.¹⁸

Arrival at New Ulm

Reuter came to a college and a synod that were coming to realize the necessity of better musical training in their school system for the improvement of congregational worship. The Joint Synod's 1905 *Proceedings* report, "The nurture of congregational singing and church music is mainly the task of our parochial school teachers," and so it was "absolutely necessary that they receive thorough instruction in music" as they prepared for their teaching profession. Yet "because of the present lack of instructors," it was "impossible to offer an adequate course in music." Convention delegates therefore recommended that D.M.L.C.'s Board of Control "be authorized to secure an assistant instructor in music to make up for the present lack, at least in part." Even this was considered only a temporary solution: "We must eventually call a full-time professor for this position."¹⁹

Enrollment for the entire high school and college departments of D.M.L.C. was 91 students in the 1907-08 school year: 20 men and two women in the college department, and 61 boys and eight girls in the high school department.²⁰ A class of five had been graduated from the college department in 1907. It was "impossible with the [small] number of members of the faculty to do justice to the training for Lutheran teachers." Although "various teachers were giving organ and piano lessons," there remained "a lack of properly outlined courses," with voice training "almost entirely neglected." Gradually, from a "rather haphazard course in music, efforts were being made to outline the course definitely," with "a definite prerequisite in piano playing before permitting one to take lessons on the pipe organ."²¹

Reuter arrived in New Ulm on Thursday, April 2, 1908 and was installed into office by College President John Schaller the following day. At a short service of Word of God and prayer, President Schaller "pointed out the importance of instruction in church music to which the new teacher should dedicate himself." A student choir sang a psalm and Reuter "set."²²

Soon after his arrival, Reuter presented a concert at New Ulm's Turner Hall. When asked how he was able to present such a strong program with so little preparation, he answered, "Discipline."²³ With most of the 1907-08 school year had already passed, Reuter still set himself immediately to the task. Taking those class periods not filled by other courses in the existing schedule, Reuter taught singing to every class two periods per week, and in the process becoming acquainted with his students and their musical ability. Outside the daily class schedule, Reuter practiced with a male choir, a mixed choir, and a girls' choir, and he also trained the orchestra for spring commencement.²⁴

After only a little more than a year at New Ulm, Fritz Reuter was recognized as an

exceptional talent capable of greatly improving the musical education program for future elementary school teachers. "We succeeded in securing for this professorship," the 1909 Joint Synod *Proceedings* reported, [a man] "who not only possesses musical knowledge, especially in the area of church music, but [who] also has the ability to transfer this enthusiasm for good music to his pupils and to advance them therein." The *Proceedings* noted his success "in spite of the great lack of time, instruments, and suitable space."²⁵

Fourteen Fruitful Years

Reuter devoted himself with extraordinary energy to a wide range of musical service. He quickly developed the music curriculum at Dr. Martin Luther College. A comparison of the 1906-07 and 1908-09 college catalogues reveals the significant changes he implemented. D.M.L.C. at the time followed the six-year German *Gymnasium* educational system, with the two college classes named A Class (sophomores) and B Class (freshmen), followed by the four high school years, (C, D, E and F Classes). In A Class, two periods of harmony and two periods of church music were added to the curriculum, with weekly singing period and organ and violin lessons retained. The catalogue also listed an additional required class hour for mixed choir and two hours of men's choir for sophomores. To Class B, which already contained the singing period, organ and violin lessons, and two hours of harmony, was added an hour of music history. Two additional hours of orchestra per week were required of college freshmen. In the high school department, singing was added to piano instruction in the freshman, sophomore and junior years. In the senior year of high school, harmony, singing, and piano and violin lessons were retained, with an option added to begin organ lessons.²⁶ Reuter instituted fewer changes in the music curriculum after this initial burst of improvement, but course descriptions in subsequent college catalogues "exhibit a constant revision and a trend toward greater scope and depth."²⁷

Reuter procured musical books, scores and other literature. Yet by 1918, after a decade of enlarging the music holdings of D.M.L.C., Reuter still judged the college library to be "just in the developing stages" and in great need of choir books for future choir directors. Music of lesser quality was, of course, readily available. "Poor, popular fads [and] sloppy music we can find any place," Reuter lamented, "and sorry to say, in some of our churches too." But if the synod's future choir directors and musicians were expected to provide a higher quality of music in classrooms and church services, the same sort of attention would need to be paid to music books and supplies as was done for other subject areas.²⁸

He acquired several pianos and organs for student practice and performance. If the organs needed repair, Reuter fixed them himself or enlisted student aid. "Both of our pipe organs have giving us some trouble," according to *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* in 1912, "but they have been repaired by the able hands [of] Prof. Reuter, assisted by a few of our students."²⁹ On another occasion, "Prof. Reuter called a number of the bright students into the old chapel room" to "have them assist him in repairing the old organ."³⁰

By 1910, the Minnesota Synod *Proceedings* urged students to begin their education at D.M.L.C. if they wished to teach in Lutheran elementary schools, because "those young people who begin their secondary education at other schools do not receive the necessary instruction in music." Transfer students managed to fit into other subject areas quite readily, but their previous education in music "is such that they cannot do advanced work in this subject."³¹

How would Reuter have compared his service in New Ulm to the places in which he had worked as a younger man in Germany? "The lack of musical background exhibited by many of his rural-oriented students must have been a contrast to what he had been accustomed to in Germany," Prof. Meyer suggested.³² A former student, interviewed in 1971, remembered that her teacher "came to this country steeped in the rich heritage of good Lutheran church music," and he must have "felt keenly the lack of interest and background for this area among students of the Middle West." In a moment of frustration, Reuter was remembered to remark, "Yes, John, it's much easier to walk behind the plow than to write a harmonization of a hymn."³³

Another Reuter student estimated that of the fewer than 100 students on campus at his time, most possessed "no musical background whatever," and he ventured that "it must have been rather frustrating for a person of Prof. Reuter's talents to recruit from this group enough material for a college male choir, mixed choir and orchestra." Yet this student considered Reuter "quite successful" because he had "a unique way of inspiring students, both individually and in groups." The results were that "he instilled a sense of appreciation of good church music into them, the effects of which were soon felt in the various congregations throughout Synod."³⁴

A Somewhat Temperamental Nature

Prof. Reuter was remembered as "both demanding and understanding with his students." Blessed with "a somewhat temperamental nature," he refused to tolerate misbehavior from less dedicated class members. Students recalled "his hasty actions and words" when they disappointed him, but also his readiness "to apologize for words and actions resulting from anger."³⁵ Said one student:

Prof. Reuter was a very sensitive person and punished malicious young disturbers with a box behind the ears. His face, however, beamed with joy at discovering God-given talents and sincere interest in any of his classes. He richly rewarded the dedicated students by leading them into continuously broader areas of endeavors and sustaining them therein with encouragement and praise.³⁶

Education students learned more than music from Reuter. They were also "given a pedagogical model of mathematical preciseness, logic and clarity" in his harmony classes. Reuter "never [uttered] a useless word or sequence deviation" in classroom presentations.³⁷ He was most exacting in keyboard instruction. "Wrong notes and mixed accidentals were always corrected, even at unexpected times."³⁸

One student, whose family home was in New Ulm, recalled practicing a piano accompaniment for an upcoming graduation recital. As Reuter passed by the screen door of the boy's home, he heard the young student misplay a single accidental note amid a stream of rapid passages and arpeggios. Reuter stopped, rapped on the door, and announced, "You have played an A Flat and it was an A Natural." The student recalled that his father, a good friend of the Reuter family, met the professor in the parlor, and the two of them joked about the boy playing the wrong note, although the boy initially may not have found such personal musical correction very funny.³⁹

Recital programs by Reuter and his students featured organ music "typical of the day" and compared "favorably with the programs of a Midwestern contemporary, Wilhelm Middelschulte of Chicago."⁴⁰ But D.M.L.C. concert programs from the time feature "little advanced piano literature," because students generally received organ

instruction "after a certain piano proficiency was reached." Student technique and style on the keyboard improved noticeably under Reuter's tutelage. "It wasn't choppy anymore," was how one student put it.⁴¹

Students found Reuter's musical proficiency impressive. During an organ lesson, one student recalled that Reuter tried to impress upon her the importance of good rhythm and tempo in congregational accompaniment. To make his point, Reuter played "All Glory Be To God on High," first in waltz time, then as jazz, and finally in disciplined, moderate tempo.⁴² That anecdote is especially intriguing, in view of widespread condemnations of jazz music in many religious and even secular publications. Synod Pastor Fred Graeber, for example, citing an evaluation from the *Lutheran Church Herald* that "the roll of the snare drum and the wail of the saxophone" stirred sensual desires, wrote in *The Northwestern Lutheran* in 1921 that "there is in the music and the dance of today more than a suggestion of harmful influence."⁴³ Reuter apparently felt comfortable in that idiom, even if only to provide a negative example.

With the choir, Reuter is remembered as "an exacting and energetic director." The performance style popular at the time demanded "great emotional involvement—much use of crescendo and decrescendo, ritardando and accelerando." When the choir was slow to respond to Reuter's exacting expectations, "baton-smashing episodes were likely to occur." Yet students accepted his occasional emotional outbursts because "they knew Reuter had a predetermined sound in his mind," and "we were not always able to give him what he wanted."⁴⁴

Although the college had long boasted of its orchestra, it would today be considered something of a cross between an orchestra and a band. "I wonder how that man could stand the sound of the orchestra when we first began to practice," one orchestra member remarked. One year, when no drummer was to be found among the students, Reuter enlisted a local "town boy" to fill the part, though he had never before played drums. At one point during a rehearsal, Reuter asked for "*keine Trommel*" ("no drumming") but the eager neophyte understood him to say "*kleine Trommel*" ("a little drumming") and responded with a vigorous drum passage. Reuter angrily repeated, "*Keine Trommel*," which the boy misunderstood again and played another loud drum roll.

Even in public performances, Reuter was known to stop during the performance and announce to the choir or musicians, "*Es ist nichts*." ("That is no good!") and have them try again. Reuter's son, also named Fritz, recalled that "Dad rarely attended any musical performance" of other organizations "because the imperfect rendition and the terrible sounds were unbearable for him."⁴⁵

Yet Reuter could also be a model of humility. For the observance of the 400th anniversary of the Reformation in 1917, Reuter wrote a special for children's and mixed choirs with organ accompaniment, *Jubelgesang*. At the first public performance of this piece, the school children from St. Paul's congregation joined the choir in the singing of the chorus, and at its conclusion were received with a standing ovation from the audience. Reuter quickly turned to the audience and with a gesture of his arms directed their applause to the children. "This made him extremely popular with the local people," recalled one student.⁴⁶

Reuter was remembered for "jumping up and down" as he directed, even as late as 1922 when physical illnesses began to take their toll, but these references must be seen in their setting. Choir members often could not see Reuter on stage. The college janitor regularly brought a *Gestell* into the auditorium for concerts, a platform for Reuter to stand on when directing the choirs and the orchestra.⁴⁷ Shortly thereafter a permanent

podium was installed, to increase his ability to see and be seen by the musical groups.⁴⁸

Reuter's typical teaching schedule included 32 hours of course work, keyboard instruction, and rehearsals. Yet he still found time for outside musical activities and did not neglect responsibility toward individual students. "He was always ready to help and give advice," recalled one of his students. "You could go and see him any time after school hours at his home." When the crowded daily schedule left little time for rehearsal of the male choir, Reuter "walked up the hill every Sunday morning and rehearsed with the choir before the students left for church."⁴⁹ Other students recalled being invited by Reuter to his home in the evenings "so that they could copy scores by hand for use in the choirs and orchestra." Several such hand-copied scores are still to be found in the college choral library.⁵⁰

Having come from Europe to the American Midwest past the age of 40, Reuter "spoke a German that had its own accent and ring," which contrasted sharply with the "New Ulmer Deutsch" spoken by the local citizenry.⁵¹ Especially in the years prior to World War I, classroom instruction, college catalogue, the school newspaper, and other official documents of D.M.L.C. were in German, and Reuter himself never developed a complete command of the English language. Yet sometimes "translations had to be made for the rare non-German student," and Reuter and other students "had many a good laugh about the misplaced accent or the droll wording" of an impromptu classroom translation.⁵²

My glorious, glorious land

Reuter's experience with fulfilling "civil music duties" in Germany also served him well in New Ulm during World War I. Settled almost exclusively by German immigrants less than 60 years before, the city had publicly celebrated German victories in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-71.⁵³ Throughout Minnesota, 70% of the state's approximately 2,000,000 residents were foreign born or had at least one parent of foreign birth, and almost a quarter of the state population was born in Germany or Austria or had German or Austrian parentage.⁵⁴

With the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914, neither the city nor the college seemed to understand the growing anti-German sentiments of their countrymen. D.M.L.C., in fact, "appeared to go out of its way to hoist its Germanic origins flag." The first literary society to be formed in the city in 1913 was *Der Deutsche Verein*, a German literary society. *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* continued to be written and published in German.⁵⁵ An essayist in the 1915 *Messenger* noted that "Uncle Sam is a ready 'minute man'" to help with the troubles in Europe through the Red Cross. "Englishmen will collect for the Red Cross in England. A Frenchman will collect for the Red Cross in France. We, being Germans, would automatically help the Germans."⁵⁶

By 1918, after the United States had entered the war *against* Germany, city and college moved quickly to display their pro-American sympathies. A patriotic program was presented at the New Ulm Armory to benefit the American Red Cross; publicity afterward boasted that "the entire program was rendered in English."⁵⁷ Reuter and Lydia Goeglein Wagner composed "America, A National Anthem," for the program. The piece, scored for mixed choir, piano, and organ, and set in march time, proclaimed:

America, most blessed land
Where freedmen ever shall gather
Where high and low and rich and poor
Unite as man with man.

After recognizing America's rich bounty and natural beauty, the song concluded by calling America "my country, my glorious, glorious land."⁵⁸ That same year a patriotic program in recognition of Abraham Lincoln's birthday was also presented at D.M.L.C. "The Flag of Freedom," which was sung by the mixed choir, 'took the cake' in so far as the audience applauded so loudly and unceasingly that it was resung."⁵⁹

Also of special note is the hymn tune Reuter wrote in 1917 for "*O Jesu, einig wahres Haupt*" for the 400th anniversary of the Reformation in 1917. In the Wisconsin Synod's *Gesangbuch* of that same year, the stanza was originally sung to the tune of "*Ein Feste Burg*" ("A Mighty Fortress") and was included as a fifth stanza. But because the syllables of the text did not agree with the accents of the tune, organists were forced to rearrange the beat of the tune, and its association with "*Ein Feste Burg*" was discontinued. The melody Reuter composed for this hymn is famously known today as "Reuter," and is sung to the familiar lines of "God's Word is our Great Heritage."⁶⁰

Reuter's music in larger context

After the death of Bach in 1750, the quality and quantity of church music declined through the middle of the 19th century. In the second half of the 19th century, as Carl Winterfeld and Phillip Spitta voiced concern for the state of church music, composers such as A. Mendelssohn, Heinrich Herzogenberg, and Max Reger composed music that would improve the state and function of church music.⁶¹ The music Reuter composed was intended chiefly for the service of the worshiping community. His contributions naturally focused on organ and choral music, and while many of his pieces never saw the black of printer's ink, he did have a number of pieces and/or collections that were printed. Following is a short catalogue of his organ publication and printed works.⁶²

Church Organ Music

Acht Postludien
Devotion
Wedding March
Funeral March
Christmas Pastoral
Consolation
A Might Fortress, Festival Prelude
All Glory be to God on High, Festival Prelude
22 Short Preludes to the Most familiar of the English Gospel hymns
30 Short Preludes to the Most familiar of the English Gospel hymns (Series II)
The Lutheran Organist
337 Easy Selections of Lutheran Chorales and Hymn for Reed and Pipe Organ

Concert Selections

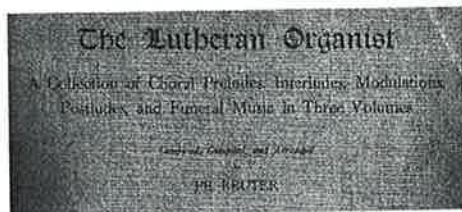
At Eventide
Idylle
Intermezzo

Organ Music

Reuter's three-volume collection entitled *The Lutheran Organist* was published by Concordia Publishing House in 1921. It enjoyed wide circulation and served as a

companion to *Anthologie*, a previous Concordia organ collection of two volumes, which included thirteen of Reuter's organ compositions.⁶³ In his preface to this collection, Reuter laid out his "aim in getting out this collection" as well as his philosophy regarding the role of the church organist.

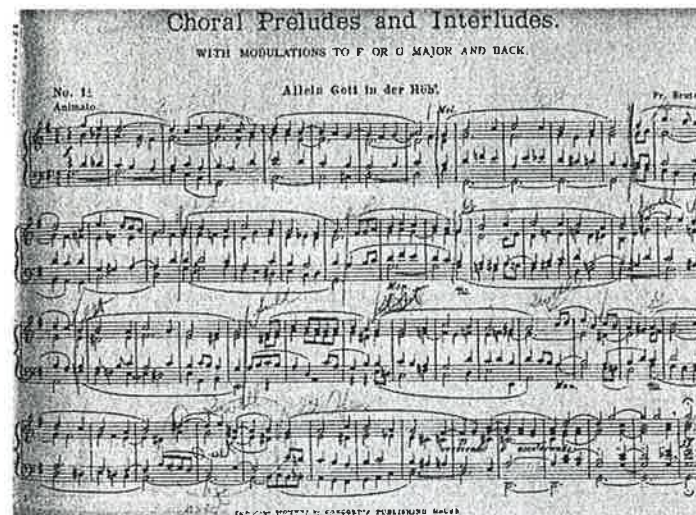
Each number purposes to serve as a dignified and appropriate enhancement of the divine service on the part of the organist, the latter not arrogating to himself the rank of soloist, but being content to contribute his share toward the religious edification of the worshiping congregation. This function of the church organ has been the compiler's chief aim in getting out this collection, particular in the *Preludes* which have been written and arranged for a number of classic chorales of the Lutheran Church.



Various publications encouraged church musicians to purchase the entire collection; all three volumes were \$8.00, if ordered in advance.⁶⁴ Volume I consisted of three sections, each valuable for the average church organist. The first section contained 38 chorale preludes that covered the major festivals of the liturgical year, a few liturgical hymns, and some hymns of praise. Among the German chorales for which Reuter composed arrangements were "Wachet auf," "Vom Himmel hoch," "Wie schoen leuchtet der Morgenstern," "Jesu, meine Zuversicht," "Komm, Heiliger Geist," and "Ein feste Burg." (Reuter covered English hymns in two future collections.) For each chorale, Reuter provided his own original chorale prelude and at least one other chorale prelude by another composer. Some of these arrangements were by well-known composers of

the past, such as Bach, Rinck, Hummel, and Walther, while others were by Reuter's contemporaries, many of whom have been forgotten today, such as Barner, Merk, Forchhammer, and Lerch.

These chorale preludes employ a variety of techniques and forms such as *figato*, *augmented cantus firmus* structure, and *Zwischenspiel*. The latter form, a favorite of Reuter, uses a practice that goes back to Saxony in which the organist would play interludes between the phrases or lines of a hymn that the congregation was singing.⁶⁵ This practice can be seen in the first choral prelude of volume I on "Allein Gott in der Hoeh." The musical phrases and registration or manual changes are clearly marked in pencil, which helped delineate the chorale tune from the intervening interludes.



The second part of Volume I is comprised of interludes—short musical phrases played between the various stanzas of the hymn. Reuter provided about 300 short interludes consisting of three to five measures of music, often based on some motive taken from a chorale. A dozen longer interludes, ranging from 20 to 50 measures of music, are based on chorales used in the communion service. The final part of Volume I consists of about 140 modulations, short phrases of about five measures in length used to connect one hymn to another in a different key or to another section of the liturgy in the service.

The thirty extended free organ pieces in Volume II are intended to be used as preludes or postludes in church services. Seven were written by Reuter, with the remainder by composers such as Rinck, Pilland, Merkel, Brosig and Volckmar. The preludes are written in the most common major and minor keys. Reuter also included the requisite "FUGE" by Bach. Volume III is devoted to funeral music and includes 20 preludes on chorales and ten preludes and/or transcriptions of pieces such as "Pie Jesu" by Cherubini, sections from Bach's *Matthaeus-Passion*, and "Trio" by Krebs.

Two other collections that deserve mention include *22 Short Preludes to the Most Familiar of the English Gospel hymns* and the *30 Short Preludes to the Most Familiar of the English Gospel hymns*. Reuter's two volumes contain his pieces that "were written in response to numerous urgent requests, simple in character and contain no contrapuntal complications."⁶⁶ These collections contain preludes on hymn tunes such as

"Abide with Me," "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say," "Nearer, My God to Thee," "What a Friend We have in Jesus," and "Silent Night."⁶⁷

Reuter's last organ collection (published posthumously by his wife), *337 Easy Selections of Lutheran Chorales and Hymn for Reed and Pipe Organ*, demonstrates his understanding that a lack of practice time or keyboard skills limited many church organists; the music in this collection could be mastered by those who were less skillful or had little time to practice. Yet he also was striving to keep out of Lutheran worship what he called the "camping-ground . . . secular music, be it ever so worthy as such," that was often used in place of preludes, offertories and postludes—"material strangely out of place in a religious service."⁶⁸

SACRED CHOIR MUSIC	
FRITZ REUTER	
1. Hark in the Lord (English and German)	40
2. Der Herr wird mich erlösen (German)	40
3. Psalm 116, 1st Section (English and German)	20
4. Nix, Nix, Nix (German)	25
5. Weidmännchen, weidmännchen	18
6. Sing Ye With Happy Voices, A Cantata (German)	20
7. Weibchen mit Almond (German)	18
8. Easter Cantata (English and German)	25
9. Psalm 116, 2nd Section	25
10. He Shall Reel His Flute (German and English)	20
11. The Lord Is My Shepherd (English and German)	20
12. Ich habe meine Augen auf den Herrn (German)	25
13. Uns hat der Herr geliebt (German)	15
14. For Thanks giving (German and English)	15
15. My Zion, God's Fair Garden (German)	20
16. God Is Our Refuge (German and English)	18
17. Psalm 116, 3rd Section	15

M. C. Reuter, 206 N. Cambridge Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

Choral Music

Reuter's sacred choral compositions first appeared in 1904-05,⁶⁹ beyond his fortieth birthday, rather late for a musician to begin composing. As with his organ music, Reuter felt the need to provide the church with good church music. Emil Backer, Reuter's student at D.M.L.C., recalled that the lack of good church music at the time "drove [Reuter] into an ever-zealous activity as an instructor and composer."⁷⁰ Meyer compiled a catalogue of more than 70 sacred choral pieces in the appendix of his thesis on Reuter. The three pictures on page 46 provide the titles and forces required for most of this oeuvre.

Meyer's catalogue lists choral music Reuter wrote for many of the high points of the liturgical year, for Reformation and mission festivals, and for many of the general scriptural texts, such as Psalm 23 or "*Jerusalem, du hochgebaute Stadt*" ("Jerusalem, thou city Fair and High"). Nearly two-thirds of the pieces are intended for a cappella choir, with the remainder written for organ accompaniment; some could be performed either way. He composed pieces for a variety of voice ranges and groups: SATB, men's choir, treble and/or children's choir, and soloists. Some pieces include multiple groups: for example, "He Shall Feed His Flock" for mixed choir, solo, children's choir, and organ. Most pieces are in both English and German. Although he was working for a largely German population, many of whom spoke little English, Reuter also realized that a change to the vernacular was necessary and inevitable.

Reviews and advertisements in a number of publications described Reuter's choral music as "well-composed, effective and useful."⁷¹ Bernhard Schumacher, in a review of "*Ist Gott fuer uns*" in the *Evangelical Lutheran Schulblatt* of 1914, wrote:

Being untiring in his efforts, Prof. F. Reuter is providing sacred music for our church choirs. This present motet commands the same honor his earlier compositions do. . . . Each section has its own character; these Prof. Reuter has not arranged in the same manner, but we find each musical setting based upon texts, and it seems to me in this motet that they are extremely well set. Meyer described and encapsulated Reuter's sacred choral as follows:

[Reuter's choral music] exhibits the late Romantic chromaticism common to the early twentieth century church music. A basic homophonic counterpoint is used. Polyphonic entrances are often placed into some sections. The frequently indicated crescendo and decrescendo, accelerando and ritardando, accent, dynamic and tempo markings contribute to the emotional impact of the compositions. His choral music is by its very nature highly emotional but it would hardly be called sentimental. The persistent shifting in tempi and moods tend to break up the compositions into sections; however, the change in text thought is Reuter's basis for a change in compositional technique.

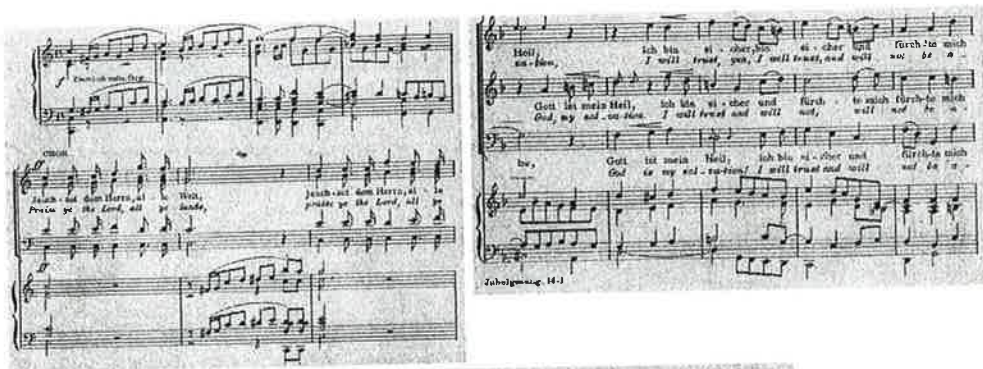
Reuter's "*Jubelgesang*," written for the 1917 Reformation festival, illustrates the above points very well. It is scored for a mixed SATB choir, a trio of soloists (or small choir), children's choir, and organ. It opens with an organ introduction and the mixed chorus in a homophonic setting of Psalm 100. The second section is slower and written for soprano, tenor, and bass soloists in a manner very similar to Haydn's scoring in his oratorio "The Creation," with the trio singing the text from Isaiah 12: 2-4. On the next verse from Isaiah the full mixed choir returns with an *allegro moderato* homophonic

SACRED CHOIR MUSIC	
FRITZ REUTER	
11. Psalm 100, 1st Section (English and German)	15
12. Psalm 100, 2nd Section (English and German)	15
13. A. In Reformation (German)	20
14. B. Dankbare Herde (German)	15
15. C. Mission (German)	15
16. For God So Loved The World (German and English)	15
17. For The Reformation (German and English)	15
18. There Where Holy Spirits (German and English)	15
19. A. Myrtle Blossoms (German)	15
20. B. Myrtle Blossoms (English)	15
21. H. Hark, He, For He (German and English)	15
22. The Lord's Prayer (German and English)	15
23. Psalm 100, 3rd Section (German)	15
24. He Who Feels His Heart (German and English)	15
25. Hallowed Be Thy Name, Lord (German and English)	15
26. For Whom (German)	15
27. Psalm 100, 4th Section (German)	15
28. Sing, Ye, Praise Him (German and English)	15
29. The Dawn (German)	15
30. Psalm 100, 5th Section (German)	15
31. Thank Ye The Lord (German and English)	15
32. Lord, Hark With Us (German and English)	15
33. Psalm 100, 6th Section (German)	15
34. Jerusalem, Thou City (German and English)	15
35. Christ Is My Refuge (German and English)	15
36. Psalm 100, 7th Section (German)	15

M. C. Reuter, 206 N. Cambridge Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

FRITZ REUTER	
GEISTLICHE CHORE	
26. Danket dem Herrn (German)	15
27. Hark, Hark, He, Hark (German and English)	15
28. Lobet den Herrn (German)	15
29. Jerusalem, du hochgebaute Stadt (German and English)	15
30. Christ Is My Refuge (German and English)	15
31. Danke dem Herrn (German)	15
32. Die Taube (German)	15
33. Psalm 100, 8th Section (German)	15
34. Psalm 100, 9th Section (German)	15
35. Psalm 100, 10th Section (German)	15
36. Psalm 100, 11th Section (German)	15
37. Psalm 100, 12th Section (German)	15
38. Psalm 100, 13th Section (German)	15
39. Psalm 100, 14th Section (German)	15
40. Hark, Hark, He, Hark (German and English)	15
41. Psalm 100, 15th Section (German)	15
42. Psalm 100, 16th Section (German)	15
43. Psalm 100, 17th Section (German)	15
44. Psalm 100, 18th Section (German)	15
45. Psalm 100, 19th Section (German)	15
46. Psalm 100, 20th Section (German)	15

M. C. Reuter, 206 N. Cambridge Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.



setting of the text accompanied by organ. The fourth and final section continues with the Isaiah text (verses 5-6) at a faster tempo, but now the text is set in a simple imitative counterpoint until the children's choir sings the chorale "Ein feste Burg" with an organ accompaniment. The piece continues with the entire chorale being presented by the children's choir. It concludes with everyone singing a majestic "Hallelujah."

An Evaluation

Following his 14th full school year at D.M.L.C., Reuter spent the summer of 1922 in Hot Spring, South Dakota, recuperating from what was diagnosed as a nervous breakdown. After initial recovery he suffered a relapse at the beginning of the 1922-23 school year and was confined to his bed on October 23 for the remaining months of his life. He died on June 9, 1924, four months shy of his 61st birthday.

Emil Backer, Reuter's student, recalled "many memorable hours were spent with him in which various phases of music and education were discussed." Reuter was "a very religious man," and Backer frequently found him "in deep meditation, with Holy Scripture in one hand, pondering on a text he expected to set to music." Reuter "treated music as the handmaiden of the text." In his compositions "the word was proclaimed in such a way that the emotional content of the text was expressed in the art of music."⁷²

Edwin Meyer, Backer's student, in surveying the range of Reuter's compositions, concluded that "the bulk of Reuter's organ music is 'practical' literature, that is, music for the [worship] service."⁷³

Although they are seldom performed today, they must be evaluated in their his-

torical setting. The first decades of the twentieth century saw American publishers produce choral and organ music for churches, but much of it was not suited textually and stylistically for the Lutheran liturgical service. . . . Reuter composed music attempting to satisfy the church's need for music in the contemporary Romantic idiom which was intended to displace that which was thought to be inferior. Reuter's music partially filled that need. It sold, it was widely performed, and it filled the choral libraries in many congregations.⁷⁴

Seminary Prof. Joh. P. Koehler, himself a musician and keenly interested in the improvement of musical usage and appreciation in the Wisconsin Synod, wrote that Reuter "devoted himself entirely to church music, and with this thorough musicianship, mastery of the organ, and as a prolific composer won no small distinction." With his work and zeal "he inspired his pupils for the improvement of musical manners in our section of the church."⁷⁵

Morton Schroeder, reviewing Reuter's relatively brief but productive career, concluded that his contributions to the music program of D.M.L.C. and the Wisconsin Synod "were many, varied, and incredibly out of proportion to his college tenure" as performer, director, composer, and builder of organs.

The church music of Fritz Otto Reuter has taken its place in the Lutheran musical literature. It remains a silent testimony of the Midwestern Lutheran Church's worship music. The church retained Reuter's music as part of its performance repertoire for a half century. As late as the Valparaiso University Church Music Seminar of 1944 it was cited as being "eminently fitting," making it "a safe bet." Reuter's literature did serve the church at a time when it was needed and it served the church well.⁷⁶



ENDNOTES

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3. Meyer, "Reuter," 9.
4. Obituary, *The New Ulm Journal*, June 13, 1924.
5. *Lichtenstein-Calenberg Anzeiger*, November 5, 1902.
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8. Herbert Sitz, interview; Meyer, "Reuter," 14.
9. Morton Schroeder, "Gifted Musician," *The Northwestern Lutheran* 94 (June 1997): 14.
10. Meyer, "Reuter," 15.
11. Meyer, "Reuter," 16.
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13. *First Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Booklet, 1946*, 13-17.
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16. Edwin A. Reinke, letter, May 9, 1972; Meyer, "Reuter," 17.
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29. *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* (September 1912): 10.
30. *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* (October 1914): 15.
31. *Minnesota Synod Proceedings, 1910*, 52; trans. Lydia Sperling.
32. Meyer, "Reuter," 29.
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34. Ehlke, letter, July 28, 1971; Reuter, "Meyer," 29-30.
35. Meyer, "Reuter," 30.
36. Sievert, letter; Meyer, "Reuter," 30.
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40. See Henry C. Lahee, *The Organ and Its Masters* (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd.: 1909), 289-90; Herbert Westerby, *The Complete Organ Recitalist* (London: "Musical Opinion," 1927), Part II.
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43. [Fred] G[raeber], "Jazz and the Dance," *The Northwestern Lutheran* 8 (February 20, 1921): 51.
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54. William Watts Falwell, *A History of Minnesota*, Vol. III (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1926), 558.
55. Schroeder, "Adolph Ackermann, Chauvinism, and Free Speech," 15.
56. *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* (March 1915).
57. *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* (June 1918): 14.
58. Schroeder, "Adolph Ackermann, Chauvinism, and Free Speech," 16.
59. *The D.M.L.C. Messenger* (March 1918): 18.
60. Meyer, "Reuter," 63.
61. Georg Feder, "Decline and Restoration," *Protestant Church Music*, ed. Fredrich Blume (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), 319-404.
62. A number of these were self-published and "marketed privately." Meyer, "Reuter," 76.
63. Meyer, "Reuter," 76.
64. *Der Lutheraner* 76 (October 4, 1921): 323.
65. According to Carl Schalk, this practice, dating back as far as J.S. Bach, coupled with slow dragging tempos, had a detrimental effect on congregational singing. Carl Schalk, "Sketches of Lutheran Worship," *A Handbook of Church Music*, ed. Carl Schalk (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1978), 91-92.
66. Fritz Reuter, *Preface to 22 Short Preludes to the Most Familiar of the English Gospel Hymns* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 2.
67. "Stille Nacht" is also included in the second volume of English hymn preludes. It is curious why Reuter would include a version of one the most popular and widely sung of all German hymns in a set designated to cover English hymns.
68. Reuter, *Preface to 22 Short Preludes*, 2.
69. Meyer, "Reuter," 70.
70. Emil D. Backer, "Composers of the Lutheran Church, Prof. Fritz Reuter," *The Lutheran School Bulletin* 20 (December, 1949), 4.

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72. Backer, "Composers of the Lutheran Church," 4.
73. Meter, "Reuter," 80.
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76. Meyer, "Reuter," 84-85.

No. 21. What A Friend We Have In Jesus.

Mel. by Ch. C. Converse. Fr. Richter.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "What A Friend We Have In Jesus." It consists of four systems of music. The first system is the vocal melody, marked "Messa" and "p. Sic.". The second system is the piano accompaniment, marked "Man.". The third system is the organ accompaniment, marked "Org." and "rit.". The fourth system is the piano accompaniment, marked "Man.". The score is in 4/4 time and G major.

Vignette

by Arnold O. Lehmann

Swimmers today expect a warm pool in winter and one with refreshing water in other seasons. The water also has chemicals enough to kill off almost anything that does not belong in the pool. Then every once in a while the pool has to be cleaned from all that stuff. Pump or pumps are a necessity for every pool. To swim you have to be a member of some group or pay the price of admittance, unless you owned the pool, in which you by that time had enough money invested to swim in a public pool for the rest of your life. Take that in comparison with swimming in my days. Our large pool was called the Rock River. There was no control of the temperature of the water. The carp, turtles, frogs, snakes and other aquatic critters took care of much of the untoward material found floating to the south. Gravity, not pumps, took care of the flow. There was no ticket booth nor fence nor policing personnel in sight. And best of all, you had plenty of room in the RR.

Two places in the Watertown area were available for us. One was across the river from Riverside Park, just to the north of the Boughton St. bridge. Transportation to this swimming hole from Northwestern was by foot.

The most popular was the BA (bachelor of arts) beach. This was located southeast of the city. To get there one had to walk about a mile or so on the TMER&L tracks. (The electric railroad to Milwaukee, of which we may write a bit later). A schedule of a train on every hour had to be observed by those walking on the tracks. The track crossed the river at one spot and you had to be sure not to be on the bridge if a train were coming. A friend did get caught on the bridge, but with speed he was able to get to the end of the bridge and jump into the ditch.

You ask about a bathhouse? No need. The swim suits were pretty much alike, all of a kind of tan, some a bit lighter and some a bit darker, depending on one's origin. The poor Scandinavians! Apparently this made quite a sight. The road from Watertown to Milwaukee, No. 19, ran fairly close to the River east of Watertown. Autos coming from Milwaukee could get a sight of the beach and its inhabitants as they neared the city. Then there was a hill which obstructed the view before a brief view again appeared. The autos used to come at their full speed from Milwaukee, note the scene on the beach, and by the time they had driven past the hill were barely crawling with all necks craned to the left. Fortunately the scene was about as clear as an impressionistic painting.

Many a pastor and teacher learned to swim in the Rock, but another tradition has rippled its way down the Mississippi.

from the editor ...

by Arnold O. Lehmann

A special thank you to the writers of the two articles. It may seem odd that the subject matter of both articles refers to musical activities of our synod. Each article was the main topic for the paper read at an annual meeting of the Historical Society. The history of the seminary chorus was presented at the 2006 annual meeting and the life and contributions of Prof. Reuter at the 2005 annual meeting. It is felt that members who are unable to attend the annual meeting should at least be able to read the essay presented. This has been the practice in most cases.

Some readers may just scan the minutes of 1872, printed in this issue. We suggest that you go back and read them to see what problems—financial and with personnel—the synod had to overcome that year. History repeats itself.

Genealogy and family history is advancing not only in this country, but also abroad. Much of the information is sought from church records. Family ties are often found that were not known to exist. Requests are frequently made with our Institute and with synod's archive for information about persons living a century or more ago. Our churches which are celebrating their 100th or even their 150th anniversary seek information about their founding and establishment. What I am driving at is this—any record, any church book, any baptismal, marriage, burial, confirmation list and record, any anniversary booklet should be carefully retained, preferably in a fireproof case or vault. A duplicate copy ought to be sent to the synod archives. Never destroy church records, as has unfortunately been done in the past. Please send anything no longer wanted or any duplicates to the synod's archive or the Historical Institute's museum. Inquiries may be sent also to the editor.

May you all enjoy a blessed Easter season, and may the spirit of Easter remain with you yearlong.

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

The board members are: Dr. Mark Braun, president; Prof. Alan Siggelkow, vice president; Naomi Plocher, secretary; Duane Kuehl, treasurer; Prof. Robert Bock, Pastor Curt Jahn, Pastor Joel Pless, Clarence Miller, and Steve Miller. Advisory members are: Prof. John Hartwig, Dr. Arnold Lehmann, and Charlotte Sampe, curator.

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