

**AND THEY  
CONTINUED  
STEADFASTLY**

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## **Introduction to the Central Illinois District Updated History 1982 – 2015**

One of the early projects of the newly-formed Archival Board of the Central Illinois District in 2008 was to ascertain what had been done about the history of the District. After some inquiry, the President Bueltmann told the undersigned that the last history had been written by the Rev. Herbert Pragman, ending in 1982. President Bueltmann was asked who a suitable candidate might be to update the District's history. He recommended the Rev. Mark Miller, pastor at St. John Lutheran Church in Pekin, and the District's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, as its author. On August 27, 2009, the undersigned was informed by President Bueltmann that Pastor Miller had accepted our invitation.

Pastor Miller, a Ft. Wayne Seminary graduate, began his work almost immediately, choosing the Synodical President J. A. O. Preus and CID Presidents Arthur Kuehnert and Robert Kuhn during the Synodical crisis of the 1970's and 1980's as a starting point. With his election as District President in 2012 he felt no longer able to give time to the project and asked the Archival Board to be relieved of this duty. It graciously, and with regret, accepted his withdrawal from the project. Mr. Ralph Mickley, a Synodically-rostered teacher *emeritus*, with 44 years in the teaching ministry, residing in Pekin, was selected as Pastor Miller's replacement. We should note that every effort was made to include Pastor Miller's efforts into this project.

Mr. Mickley, in the undersigned's judgment, has made excellent use of existing resources to formulate what is essentially his product. He has used original materials from the CID archives, items from District and Synodical convention minutes as well as interviews involving current and past CID administrators. While it is his product, the Archival Board assumes primary responsibility for its accuracy.

As with the writing of any history, sacred or secular, there is always the question of what has been gained by doing so. While the Holy Scriptures accurately relate God's history of our salvation, culminating in the words of the cross, "It is finished," it also tells in sometimes gruesome detail of God's pleading with sinful mankind to learn from the past lest great tragedy or misfortune come upon us.

We hope that, in the narrative which follows, and in President Miller's concluding remarks, all will rejoice in God's overall care of His flock wherever it is found in Central Illinois, fervently pleading with Him to abide with us as we learn from this history to the end that His kingdom here and elsewhere may grow and prosper until the Great Day when our Lord shall return and translate all believers into the New Heaven and Earth!

The Archives Board

Ralph Woehrmann, CID Archivist

## Preface

In the second chapter of Acts, Luke describes the early Christian community surrounded by the persecution and ridicule of the Roman world as one that continued to adhere and proclaim the message of salvation as taught to them by the apostles, to worship and administer the sacraments, and to seek fellowship within the newly established church. Amidst this hostile environment, the early congregation could have easily fallen into disarray; however, that was not to be the case. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they established a steadfast Christian church anchored in Jerusalem with environs that reached into every corner of the then known world.

In 1982, in celebration of its 75th anniversary, the Rev. Herbert C. Pragman published a history of the Central Illinois District entitled, *His Story*. Pastor Pragman chronicled the religious turmoil that plagued Europe during the early nineteenth century which resulted in Saxon Lutherans immigrating to Perry County in Missouri in 1838, the birth of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1847, and the struggle and final establishment of Central Illinois District in 1907 by splitting the Illinois District into three separate districts - Northern, Central, Southern. Pastor Pragman then summarized the mission and ministry activities of numerous agencies, boards, and committees through the first seventy-five years.

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have created many new economic and social conditions that have placed the Christian church again in a hostile environment. The purpose of this book is to continue the story begun by Pastor Pragman and to demonstrate how the Central Illinois District is meeting the challenges confronting them and opportunities available to them in this vast and changing modern world while remaining steadfast to the central Bible teaching of faith alone in Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord.

## **Forward**

The following paragraphs appear on the Central Illinois District home web page at [www.cidlcms.org](http://www.cidlcms.org). These paragraphs provide a clear understanding of the purpose and function of the district and its officials in assisting member congregations in fulfilling the Great Commission. As the pages unfold, it is hoped that the reader will see the scope of work that is undertaken by the district and the dedication of faithful servants in providing leadership in sharing the Gospel message.

The purpose of the Central Illinois District, as a corporate body, is to respond to the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matt. 28) which is "*to make disciples of all nations.*"

The congregations of the District carry out this command by electing, calling, appointing and employing District personnel whose function, in part, is to advise and assist the congregations of the District in the use of their God-given resources to fulfill this mission and ministry both within their locality and throughout the world.

To accomplish this purpose such personnel of the Central Illinois District serve the members of the congregations of the District in their ministry of worship, witness, nurture, stewardship, and fellowship and assist them in establishing and maintaining missions and ministries beyond the structure of their congregations.

## America at the Turn of Another Century

After the social upheavals and countercultural movements of the 1960's and 1970's coupled with the Watergate scandal and diverse opinions of the Vietnam War, Americans became much more skeptical of the sincerity of their government, established institutions (including religious denominations), and even their fellow human beings. The latter decades of the twentieth century seem to find Americans drifting towards a more worldly approach to life. Materialism and consumerism set the tone of the 1980's and 1990's; this continues even today.

This "whoever has the most goods wins" philosophy put added pressure for the wage earner to find a second job as well as placing many more women (many of whom became working mothers) into the workforce. The two-income family became the standard as families struggled through economic depressions of 1982 and 2008. This, in turn, brought about changes in family life. The family may now consist of a single parent with children, a remarried couple with children from their previous marriages plus their own, or even (as life expectancy increases) grandparents living under the same roof with their children and grandchildren.

As early as the 1982 CID District Convention, a resolution was passed to establish a Family Life Committee. By the 1985 convention the committee was functioning providing resources to congregations. A District Family Life Conference was held in 1990 and again in 1998. A recent addition in family life ministry is the Family Friendly Partners Network. Seven congregations within the CID have joined together in a three-year program to become partners with Christian marriages and homes to deliberately pass on faith in Jesus Christ to the next generation.

As America moves from a Christian nation to one where Christian values play a lesser role in society, one of the key words became tolerance as defined as not wanting to offend another person's opinion. This has led to a wide acceptance of morals and practices that are not founded on Scriptural foundations. After the *Roe/Wade* decision in 1973, abortions increased reaching over 1,600,000 in the late '80s and early '90s. Since that time abortions have decreased but an abortion still takes place every 26 seconds. That is 137 every hour, 3,304 every day and over a million every year. At the 1991 CID District convention, a resolution was passed to reaffirm our pro-life position and encourage participation in the pro-life movement. Again at the 1997 convention, a resolution passed affirming the sanctity of human life. Recently in the 2012 convention, two resolutions were passed in opposition to U.S. Health and Human Services mandate that religious organizations pay for medications for their employees that may lead to aborting a child.

More tolerance has also been given to alternative life styles and marriages. The Bible speaks boldly on the sin and consequences of homosexual relationships. The 2009 convention reaffirmed the Scriptural definition of marriage as one man and one woman. As same-sex marriages were being upheld by courts throughout our land, the district, in its 2012 convention, again resolved to recognize only the God-given form of marriage.

The media has certainly played a major role in the acceptance of the non-Christian culture. Television provides programming that demonstrates the disrespect of authority, the misuse of

God's name, alternative life styles, and violence in increasing varieties as cable channels expand to over one-hundred. Movies also contribute to the secularization of society through their themes of sex and violence. Even many video games that began innocently as Pac-Man and Frogger emphasize annihilating your opponent to reach the next level. The Internet was just in its infancy in the 1980's, but has grown to be our major source of information and communication. The advent of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media have provided the opportunity for friends and family to keep in contact, but these platforms also can be very detrimental to relationships as people are willing to post things that would not necessarily be said in a face to face contact with another person.

The Internet also assists in another key word of this time period - globalization. The expansion of American corporations and businesses into foreign countries has given rise to a global economy. The destruction of the Berlin Wall and the downfall of communism provided new opportunities for markets, economic growth, and mission efforts. While a nuclear attack from Russia seemed an improbability, a new threat to America came suddenly on 9/11/01. Fear gripped the nation as our soldiers went off to war in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the CID, churches proclaimed the message of God's ever present help in time of trouble and His comfort to those families that were disrupted by the call to duty and even the loss of a loved one.

One of the major trends continuing into the twentieth century has been the migration of the American population from the "rust belt" to the "sun belt" in the United States. This seemed to be the pattern in Illinois in the 1980's and 1990's with a reverse trend by the 2010 census mainly due to the increase in Latino immigration into the larger cities. In most of the rural areas where most of our CID Lutheran churches are located, there is a steady decline in population. This trend coupled with the secularization of America during this time period presents some staggering statistics for churches in the CID. The evangelism committee of the CID did a study of 145 churches in the CID over the past 25 years from 1987 to 2012. One of the findings dealt with average church attendance.

- 19 CID congregations have increased their average worship attendance, the rest have plateaued or declined. In the last year, of the study (2012), 58 of our CID churches did not baptize or confirm a single adult, and an additional 27 churches baptized or confirmed only one adult.

As the study points out, "the fields are white unto harvest". As we look at the CID's mission and ministry over the past thirty years, we will see how God opened doors and provided opportunities for His Word to be shared and spread to the many people of central Illinois, America, and throughout the world.

## **Missions**

### **Subsidized Missions**

When one thinks of missions, the picture that comes to mind is a missionary in some far off country bringing the message of the Gospel to people of a different culture. While this is one

aspect of mission outreach, there is much to be done closer to home. Within the area of the CID there are thousands of people who have not been reached with the Gospel's saving message. Starting a new church in a specific location is not an easy task and may take well over five years. Usually a missionary-at-large begins knocking on doors to gather a flock that becomes the nucleus of a self sustaining congregation. In the CID not all attempts have been successful, but approximately fifteen new congregations have been established since the 1980s. Among those congregations that are receiving district support at the present time are: Christ The King, East Moline; Faith, Monticello; Redeemer, Peru; and Our Savior, St. Joseph.

### **Hispanic Ministry**

One of the causes of an increase in Illinois population has been the influx of Hispanic immigrants. Realizing the potential outreach to many who are unchurched or to those who do not know that it is Jesus who saves, the CID established a mission congregation, Christ the King (Cristo Rey), in East Moline in 2003. Rev. Pablo Dominquez is well known in the community. He is a volunteer hospital and prison chaplain, has a weekly radio program, and televises his weekly worship service.

Another community that received a large increase in Hispanic population because of work opportunities is Beardstown. In 2014 the district began assisting St. John's efforts to reach out to these new families. Many of the children gather at the former school gym for after school activities. New Hispanics to the community are welcome to contact the church for assistance in becoming acclimated to the community, learning English as a second language, or learning or improving computer skills.

### **Campus Ministry**

The college campus in the United States today demands a Christian focal point amidst the secular and more liberal teachings found on many college campuses. Leaving the security of the Christian home for the first time, many students encounter philosophies and ideas from professors and other students that are radically different from what they have been previously taught and accepted. Many students experience loneliness on a large college campus apart from their known world, or they fall into peer pressure of the college crowd and engage in unwholesome activities. Campus ministry is there to fill that void and provide the college student a place for worship, Bible study, fellowship, and activities.

Another trend in recent years has been the increase in the number of foreign students seeking basic or advanced degrees. What a tremendous mission field has been brought right to our front door in central Illinois! Campus ministry has a great opportunity to introduce God's love in Christ to these students.

Within the area covered by the Central Illinois District, there are over thirty-two community colleges, private and public colleges and universities that are located in communities that have a LCMS church. Many of the churches welcome the collegians as part of their congregations.

CID has long recognized the importance of a presence on the four large state universities within the area of our district and has subsidized the mission and ministry work being accomplished. Each of the four campuses provides a unique relationship with the district. Pastor Ken Hoover and Pastor Greg Witto provide leadership to Immanuel Lutheran Campus Ministry reaching out to students at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston through a "town and gown" ministry. Students are assimilated into the Immanuel congregation and participate in worship, small group activities, Bible study, etc. Currently approximately about seventy-five students are a part of ILCM.

Across the state at Western Illinois University in Macomb, the district owns a separate building on campus that serves as a center of activities and as a site for worship each Sunday. The Rev. Michael Burdick serves as pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church as well as director of the St. Timothy Student Center. Approximately fifty students are actively involved through this campus ministry.

At Illinois State University in Normal, Pastor William Jensen sees fifty to sixty students participating in worship, Bible study, and fellowship activities at the Wittenberg Lutheran Center - a separate building on campus owned by the district.

University Lutheran Church on the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign is unique in that although the district owns the building, University Lutheran functions as a stand-alone congregation with subsidy from the district. The Rev. Rick Milas has served as pastor since 1994. The congregation has about ninety in attendance each Sunday during the school year and ministers each year to 250-280 students from as many as eighteen different countries. Pastor Milas comments that personal evangelism of bringing a roommate or close friend increases worship attendance each Sunday.

### **Prison Ministry**

The time of incarceration-whether a few months or many years-certainly weighs heavy on the hearts and minds of those whose criminal activity has caused them to be separated from loved ones and friends. Sharing both the Law and especially the Gospel with these inmates and working with families through these difficult times is following Jesus' command to visit those who are in prison (Matthew 25:36-40 NIV). Within the geographic area of our district there are over fifteen federal or state correctional institutions in communities where there is one of our district churches. Although obtaining clearance is difficult, some pastors or other individuals from congregations have been able to minister to inmates with Bible study and prayer programs. Congregations often help out especially at Christmas by providing gifts for the children of inmates through the "Angel Tree" program.

In the mid 1980s, Rev. Charles Olander began and continues to visit the male inmates at Lincoln Correctional Center and the female inmates at the Logan Correctional Center with the life-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the mid 1990's the district also began subsidizing the work of Pastor Stephen Southward in the western part of the district. Pastor Southward conducts Bible studies at Pittsfield Work Camp, Western Correctional Center in Mt. Sterling, and Green County Work

Camp in Roodhouse. He also directs an Addict's Victorious support group in Pittsfield and is able to distribute Portals of Prayer to inmates on his many visits to the three correctional centers.

### **Developmentally Disabled**

Meeting the needs and sharing the message of the Jesus' love with the developmentally disabled provides a special mission opportunity for the Central Illinois District. A small beginning of this ministry was started through the work of Pastor Neitzel and the ladies of Zion Lutheran Church in Lincoln during the late 1950's. CID then began providing chaplains at the state mental hospitals in Bartonville and Jacksonville, and the state school in Lincoln. In 1970 due to the extended work load of Pastor Otto Borchelt, Deaconess Linda Schaefer was called by the district to serve the people living in the Lincoln area. Deaconess Schaefer daily shared the love of Jesus with the disabled until the Lincoln Developmental Center closed in 2002. During that time she also provided resources and workshops for people in the district that work with the developmentally disabled within their own congregations. After 2002, Linda continued to serve individuals and group home settings in the Lincoln and Jacksonville area and assisting with ministry to the deaf at Christ Lutheran Church in Jacksonville. Deaconess Schaefer retired in August, 2014 after forty-four years of service in the district. What a blessing she has been to people to whom she has ministered.

### **Ministry to the Deaf**

Another area of special ministry conducted by our district focuses on bringing the Gospel message to those who are deaf. Already in 1846 the state legislature had established a School for the Deaf in Jacksonville. Ministry to the deaf in Jacksonville began as a joint effort of both the Illinois and Missouri Districts in 1901 by a commuting missionary from St. Louis. In 1945, the Illinois/Missouri deaf field was split, and under the leadership of the Rev. Nathaniel P. Uhlig, Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf was organized in 1948. Eventually up to 60 students attended Lutheran classes taught by Rev. Uhlig. With the seminary nearby in Springfield, many future pastors for the deaf began their work as seminarians assisting in Jacksonville. Deaf student attendance at Christ varied. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, attendance reached over one hundred students. Two full-time ministers served the congregation. Gradually this number dwindled to the point of being nonexistent by 2000.

The Mission Committee insisted that the CID not abandon the deaf mission. For two years CID contracted two days per week with Rev. Tom Phillips. Deaconess Linda Schaefer helped with the outreach to the ISD students, as well as those who are deaf with other disabilities. In 2003 Rev. Phillips moved to Jacksonville to half time service among the deaf in Central Illinois. The work in Jacksonville blossomed. In August 2005, the CID extended a full-time call to Rev. Phillips. At the present time Pastor Phillips ministers to around 25 members at Christ Lutheran Church and also conducts Bible classes for 30 students during the year

In addition, Pastor Phillips conducts weekly services at Joy of Jesus Lutheran Church of the Deaf. Established as a daughter church of Christ in Jacksonville in 1982, Joy of Jesus serves the hearing impaired in the Peoria area. Bible study sessions are also conducted among the deaf in the Bloomington and Decatur areas. Through this special ministry those who are deaf are

"hearing" the Gospel message in their own special way and sharing the joy of being with Jesus both now and throughout eternity.

### **Foreign Ministries - Latvia**

During fifty years of communist rule, the many Lutherans living in Latvia were not able to worship. With the independence from Russia in the late 1990s churches were again opened, but among the problems were the poverty of the people, the lack of a trained clergy, and the deplorable conditions of the churches themselves. Altar and pulpit fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia was declared by resolution at the LCMS 2001 Synodical Convention. The Central Illinois District became a partner church with the ELCL in 2005. Our Central Illinois District support is purchasing cars and computers for pastors, building a Children's Center, providing Sunday school and Biblical materials and assisting the church in other areas. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia reports that there are 113 pastors and 86 evangelists serving its 293 congregations with a total membership of 333,700. It has 160 Sunday schools with 5,500 children.

### **Stewardship**

Christian Stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the church, in managing life and all of life's resources for God's purposes. (LCMS definition) The district provides a wealth of resources to assist congregations in making best use of their time, talent, and treasures in service to the Lord. Many congregations have used the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University materials to help members in financial planning. The stewardship committee also provides salary guidelines for professional church workers within the district.

### **Evangelism**

The district's evangelism commission objective is to support the congregations in placing a greater and a growing emphasis on an evangelistic ministry that will assist them to reach more people with the Gospel message and keep all church members faithful in worship and active in the work of the church. Periodically the district holds workshops on different aspects of evangelism: friendship evangelism, witnessing, assimilation, rural outreach, etc. District Great Commission Convocations were held to energize both clergy and laity in disciple making. In fact, at the 2006 District Convention it was reported that in the past triennium the CID had been recognized by LCMS Mission for having the biggest numerical increase in baptized members while 1/3 of the counties in the CID decline in population.

One of the unique approaches to evangelism is the use of our youth. Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ which utilize youth in sharing the Gospel message in the community and canvassing neighborhoods was a program developed by Pastor Fred Darkow in 1968. Pastor David Bueltmann was instrumental in establishing a chapter within the CID and locating the headquarters in the district in Athens, Illinois. The numbers have dwindled, but OAFC is still active in the district. Pastor Bueltmann comments that it is not only a benefit for the

congregation, but is also a benefit to the participants as about 75% of the youth go on to professional church work.

As alluded to earlier, the Evangelism Commission's twenty-five year study of 145 congregations in the CID certainly points to the need for more evangelistic efforts among current members as well as reaching out to welcome new members. In 25 years, the baptized membership of all CID congregations has gone from 75,584 to 65,158 (12.6% decrease). The number of people each Sunday in our CID churches has gone from 29,627 to 21,012 (29.1% decrease). The number of evangelism gains from the outside (adult baptism and confirmations) has gone from 728 a year to 326 a year (44.8% decrease). This presents our congregations with a challenge to bring back and to reach out to those who are not concerned about their future after leaving this life.

A new program offered by the evangelism committee is to assist congregations to look closely at the mission field around their own congregation. A self-study and weekend retreat under the leadership of a district consultant helps a congregation to see where they are now and the opportunities available for mission work in their area. After the initial retreat, the congregation may opt to participate in a more in-depth evangelism outreach. This revitalization program has helped congregations to bring back delinquent members as well as reach out to those who do not have a church home.

## **Congregational Life**

With the retirement of Mr. Edward Krueger pending, the delegates at the 1988 district convention decided to restructure the district's commissions. The growing preschools, elementary schools, and high school in our district would still be served by the Commission on Education under a half-time position administrative assistant. A new commission, "Congregational Life", would be created with a full-time administrative assistant. The Rev. Gary Byers became the first administrative assistant for Congregational Life. The Congregational Life Commission organized around five areas: Youth, Worship, Parish Education, Life Stages, and Social Ministry. These subcommittees changed through the years as some were dropped, others were given to other commissions, others formed their own commission, and new subcommittees were added. The Congregational Life Commission itself moved under different administrative assistants during this same period of time.

## **Youth**

Youth today, as in any era, face the inward desire of independence while outwardly being bombarded by pressures from family, mass media, and peers. Family pressures may include meeting the high expectations of their parents to excel academically in order to obtain scholarships to help defray the increasing costs of higher education, or to attend the "right" college or university as well as involvement in extra-curricular offerings in athletics, music, drama, or other clubs or organizations. The mass media certainly has promoted the acceptance of a lifestyle that is not in keeping with Scripture. Disrespect for authority, sex before marriage, underage drinking, and drug and alcohol abuse are just some of the areas that society seems to tolerate in increasing fashion. Added to the above is a stronger push from peers to conform to

the group's norms or face bullying, ridicule, and ostracism from the group. This can often lead to depression and suicidal tendencies within the frustrated teen.

Our church certainly has a tremendous responsibility to assist parents in their efforts to instill within their teen Christian values and decision making. Traditionally, the churches of our district have had youth groups for high school youth. As societal pressures continue to filter down, churches increasingly are providing youth groups for junior high youth as well. The district provides workshops and materials to assist counselors working with both age groups. Each year, the district sponsors separate lock-ins for junior high and senior high youth. Every three years, CID is well represented at the LC-MS National Youth Gatherings. The last one held in 2012 saw over nine hundred youth and adults in attendance.

### **Worship**

The worship subcommittee's purpose was to assist congregations with materials and workshops to enhance the congregational worship life. It initially published a quarterly resource with suggested music selections, orders of worship, sermon studies, etc and held workshops for organists, choir directors, church musicians, and pastors. Workshops continue even today.

### **Worship in the Twenty-first Century**

God set aside a day of rest after creation, but our American society does not rest. Many stores, restaurants, and other places of business are open on Sunday. People employed in these businesses may have to work during the time of worship. Others who have worked hard all week find Sundays as a time to "sleep in" or do household chores. For some, Sunday is the only time the family can "get away" together. To counteract this movement to be away from God's house, many churches have provided an additional time to worship. In the CID about one-third of our congregations offer this alternative worship service. Saturday nights or Wednesday evenings prove to be the most popular times.

Another alternative that some of our CID churches have initiated is to provide a more contemporary worship experience. While the proclamation of the Word and celebration of the sacraments are still the focal point, the liturgy and music may contrast in various degrees with our traditional Lutheran worship. Praise bands and lead singers take the place of the organ and choir and offer a worship experience that appeals to many younger people. Many older worshippers also enjoy this alternative approach to worship.

Even traditional worship has undergone changes. *The Lutheran Hymnal* published in 1941 was the only standard for liturgy and hymnody used in our LCMS churches for many years. In 1979, the LCMS joined with other Lutheran denominations to produce *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Because of doctrinal differences, this hymnal was not accepted by the LCMS convention. After *LBW* underwent revision, the LCMS published its own hymnbook, *Lutheran Worship*, in 1982. The newest hymnal in use in LCMS congregations is the *Lutheran Service Book* published in 2006.

Within our CID congregations one might find church members worshipping God using any of the above hymnals or just watching the words on the screen. The Word is proclaimed, the sacraments are administered, prayers and praises are offered to our gracious God. As the psalmist declares, " Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." (Psalm 100: 1-2, 4 NIV)

## **Parish Education**

### **Director of Christian Education**

Directors of Christian Education (DCE) are a special category of professional church workers called by congregations to provide leadership and direction in various areas of congregational ministry. Most DCEs serve to facilitate the parish education and youth programs of the congregation, although others may serve in the areas of worship/music, outreach, or family life. At the present time there are 14 DCE's and 3 DCE interns that are serving congregations in the CID.

### **Sunday School**

Assisting parents in the awesome responsibility of, "bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"(Eph. 6:4 KJV), congregations provide a Sunday School programs for their "little lambs". Many congregations begin this process with a Nursery Roll program that sends information on Christian parenting to the new parents and activities to do with the child until they are three.

The Sunday School hour either before or after the worship service provides an opportunity for the congregation to share Bible stories and Biblical truths with its young people. Sunday School may include worship time with music and prayers, presentation of a Bible story with discussion, and application and activities based on the theme of the lesson and the age of the learners. Classes may be taught by professionally trained classroom teachers or simply by members who enjoy working with children and sharing their love of God. Our district recognizes these special people by presenting a Volunteer of the Year Award to one of the many dedicated individuals. Based on 2013 statistics, 142 of our congregations conducted Sunday Schools with over 10,000 young people in attendance.

### **Bible Class/ Small Group Bible Study**

While children ages 3 through eighth grade are in Sunday school, high school youth are involved in their own Bible class applying Biblical truths to their own unique teenage lifestyle. Adults are also delving into God's Word studying either a book of the Bible, Lutheran confessions, or the Christian perspective on various modern day topics. Another growth trend in our churches are the many small group Bible studies that meet during the week either at church or in members' homes. Some churches offer special groups such as: men's, women's, retirees, young mom's, those suffering from grief, addiction, etc. Paul admonishes us, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly". (Col. 3: 16 NIV)

### **Week-Day School**

Confirmation instruction for seventh and eighth grade students was typically held on Wednesdays after school or in the evening. Many of our churches have taken this a step further by offering classes for younger age children and even parenting classes for adults making Wednesday night a true "church night" for the whole family. According to 2013 statistics, there were 130 week-day schools in the CID offering instruction to over 4,750 students.

### **Vacation Bible School**

Vacation Bible Schools have always been an outreach of our congregations into the community. Through the efforts of countless volunteers, many children have their first encounter with a loving and caring God while other children receive a strengthening of their faith in Jesus, their Lord and Savior. In 2013, there were over 5,800 children in attendance at VBS programs in the CID with over 2,750 of those being non-members.

### **Lutheran Schools in CID**

Many of the trends that have affected the churches and their ministry in the CID have also brought about changes in the Lutheran schools of the district. Population changes from rural to urban, migration from the Midwest to southern and coastal states, and the smaller family size have contributed to a smaller pool of children available. Since many Lutheran congregations have declining membership, so also the number of member children from the supporting congregation has dwindled. Many of our congregations in rural areas or small towns, and even some in metropolitan areas, have not been able to keep up with the rising cost of education and have had to close their schools' doors.

While in some places doors have closed, in other locations, doors have opened. New schools since the 1980 include: Good Shepherd, Pekin; Bethel, Morton; St. John's, Champaign; St. John, Mattoon. Through the dedicated work of Principal Ralph Nitz, Springfield Lutheran High opened its doors in 1978. Since then two more high schools are in operation in Buckley and Decatur. Over 350 students attend the three high schools.

Due to the fact that we have more women in the work force, the greatest increase in student enrollment has been in our early childhood centers. According to 2012 statistics, close to 1,250 children are enrolled in various types of preschool programs. Also in 2012, there were 48 centers operating within our district. Nineteen of those are a part of the twenty-two K-8 Lutheran elementary schools in the district. Glenn Goeres, CID Administrative Assistant for Education and Congregational Life, comments that one of the challenges the district has is alerting the twenty-nine free standing early childhood centers of the fact that they are not out there alone, but are part of the district and synod which can help them in their mission.

Another trend that can be seen in our schools is the composition of the student body. In 1980, member children that attended the congregational school was at 70%. In 2012 that number had dropped to 41%. Mr. Goeres comments that the district needs to help parents set different priorities from "kids making the team" to "kids making the Kingdom". Another trend is that 41% of our elementary and high school enrollment is non-Lutheran and about one-fourth of that

number is unchurched. This is where we see our schools as a mission outreach to the community. Between the 2009-2012 district conventions, 158 children and 251 adults were brought in as new members to congregations within our district as a result of enrollment in our Lutheran schools.

The classroom might look a little different from the one that you might have entered in the 1980s. First of all, the teacher in the '80s was probably synodically trained. Unfortunately, fewer young people are preparing for full-time church work. As a result, many teachers and even principals in our Lutheran schools have not attended our synodical universities. The colloquy program provides a way for those teachers to obtain theological training. The chalkboard has been replaced with a whiteboard where information from the internet streams into the classroom. Computers and iPads provide the means of instruction and children's responses. Teachers can access the Lutheran Portal to share curriculum ideas with other teachers. To assist Lutheran schools in evaluating its complete program, the National Lutheran School Accreditation program was initiated in the late 1980s. Twelve of our district schools have NLSA accreditation. Each year Lutheran schools celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week to emphasize the importance of Lutheran schools to the congregation and community.

The district provides training for board members and call committees. Planning and presenting workshops and teacher conferences that help church workers grow in their faith and professional skills are another focus. An important task of the district is to provide schools with a list of candidates for teacher and principal openings.

Financial support of our schools has also changed over the last thirty years. In the 1980s most schools charged no tuition if you were a member of the congregation, and non-members only paid a small "book fee". By 2012, the free-standing early childhood centers were funded 84% by tuition. For elementary and high schools, congregations still provided 50% of the operating cost; however, most schools also now charge members as well as non-members to support 40% of the budget. The other 10% comes from 3rd source funding. Charging tuition to member families still is a controversial issue among congregations that support a Lutheran elementary school. To provide Christian education in today's economy, congregations have come together to lend support. Our three high schools are joint ventures of congregations within their communities. There are also five elementary schools that are association schools: Altamont, Danville, Decatur, Pekin, and Concordia, Peoria.

In summary, Mr. Goeres states, (The Congregation needs)" to value Christian education to the level where they encourage, embrace, and support all forms of Christian education so that these programs thrive."

### **Life Stages**

This subcommittee dealt with ministering to the needs of congregational members at various ages. Single, young adults held retreats twice a year and a quarterly newsletter was published. A Twentieth Anniversary of Single Adult Ministry was held in August, 1999. Since that event the

single adult ministry has declined. Another area of ministry was to sponsor a pastors' wives retreat each year at Camp Cilca.

As the family continued to struggle to achieve its cohesiveness, much emphasis was placed on family life ministry. The first Family Life Conference was held in 1990. Other conferences and convocations followed. Resources were developed to assist pastors in this new area. In fact, the district at one time had a vast video library of media for Bible study, training, youth and family ministry. One of the newest approaches to family ministry is entitled, "Family Friendly Partner Network". FFPN was initially started in seven congregations in the CID with the stated purpose to become intentional marriage and family centers. The three year program provides an evaluation of current practices and the opportunity for the congregations to work together to develop resource and host joint gathering to enhance Christian marriages and families and make their churches more family friendly.

### **Care for an Aging Population**

With the large number of the "Baby Boomer" generation reaching the over-65 age level and the advancement in the medical field promoting a healthier life style and better treatment, the U.S. population continues to age. This necessitates another special type of ministry for the congregations of the district. Pastors have been called upon to make more visits to hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and nursing homes as well as what are traditionally called "shut-in" visits to those who are living at home, but cannot physically attend church and receive the sacrament.

In the CID, many congregations have joined together to provide for older adults. Begun as Lutheran Home in 1963, Lutheran Hillside Village of Peoria is currently supported by twenty-four congregations in the Peoria area. Springfield's Concordia Village opened in 1995 through the financial assistance of thirty congregations in the Springfield area.

Both villages have expanded their facilities to meet the increasing needs of our aging population. Both provide either apartment or patio homes for independent living. Also included are areas for short term rehabilitation, assisted living, and skilled nursing care. Hillside Village has also opened up a section for memory care to assist those who are in the early to mid-stages of Alzheimer's. These two facilities are operated by Lutheran Senior Services of St. Louis.

A third facility designed to provide care for older adults is Lutheran Care Center in Altamont. In 1990, congregations in the Altamont area formed an association to purchase and operate the nursing home established in 1969 by Dr. D. G. Huelskoetter. Since that time, an apartment complex and villa homes have been constructed to provide independent and assisted living facilities. Skilled nursing and rehabilitation areas have been upgraded, and even a childcare center has been added. Integrating the children with the older adults in many of the activities provides physical, emotional and social support for both groups. Our congregations have

certainly heeded the Biblical directive in Leviticus 19:32, "Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly, and revere your God." NIV

### **Social Ministry/Human Care Ministry**

Missouri Synod Lutherans have long been known for their in-depth understanding of the Scriptures and Lutheran confessions, and to a lesser degree, the application of those truths in their everyday lives. Over the past twenty-five to thirty years, Lutherans in central Illinois have taken steps to find ways to put their Christian faith into practice. This subcommittee developed into its own commission as congregations' members made a determined effort to find that neighbor in need of comfort and care. Many congregations have established food banks to assist the poor in the area. When tornadoes struck central Illinois in 2013, human care ministry was able to provide assistance to churches and church members. When Hurricane Katrina rolled over the Gulf coast, the CID raised over \$90,000 to help our two sister congregations in Gulfport, Mississippi. When hurricanes toppled villages in Haiti or tsunamis devastated parts of Asia, members in the CID generously supported LC-MS World Relief efforts to give aid to those affected. The most recent program sponsored by Human Care Ministry is the training of first responders. People who have taken the course are certified to assist state and federal agencies in the wake of a natural disaster in the area.

Less dramatic, but equally important, is the care that is given to members with special needs within each congregation. This begins with the strong pro-life stance our church expounds in the fight against abortion. The district holds a yearly workshop for the developmentally disabled. The district also provides resources for pastors and lay members as they work with those in the congregation who deal with abuses and addictions of various kinds. As the congregation members take the place of the former extended family in our mobile society, it is the little things such as preparing a meal, providing babysitting, or just a listening ear that follows Christ's words, " . . . whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

(Matthew 25: 40)

### **Student Scholarship Fund**

To become a professional church worker in the LC-MS involves a large monetary commitment. To encourage men and women to pursue careers in church work, the Central Illinois District provides financial assistance to members of CID congregations seeking to serve the Lord in full-time ministry. This includes full-time or part-time students as well as those who are seeking to be on the Roster of the Synod through the colloquy program. For many years, the Clara and Spencer Werner Foundation provided generous donations to the CID student scholarship fund. In 1994 the LWML of the CID also began making significant contributions. These, along with personal and congregational donations, provide financial resources to aid students. The first Sunday in May is designated as Scholarship Sunday in all congregations in the CID to provide added income. What a tremendous outlay of support to the furthering of the kingdom through the training of future professional church workers!

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sch Yr</u>	<u>Student Aid</u>	<u>Colloquy</u>	<u>Total</u>
2012	2012-13	\$87,150.00	\$4,062.00	\$91,212.00
2013	2013-14	\$92,000.00	\$2,019.00	\$94,019.00
2014	2014-15	\$90,749.00	\$7,592.50	\$98,341.50

### **CID Endowment Fund**

When the Werner Foundation indicated that it would not be able to support the Student Scholarship Fund as it had been doing in the past, the District needed to consider other resources to provide funding. At the 2000 convention, a resolution was passed to establish the Central Illinois District Foundation, Inc. The synod strongly discouraged the formation of a foundation, but was more open to establishing an endowment fund. As a result the district in its 2003 convention rescinded the 2000 resolution on the foundation and established the Central Illinois District Endowment Fund, Inc. While the undesignated gifts in the fund may be used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, the main purpose of the fund is to provide student aid to individuals who are studying to become professional church workers. As an endowment fund, only the interest on the principal is used for scholarships. The fund continues to grow although interest rates continue to be low:

2012-\$935,607      2013-\$968,305      2014-\$988,525

### **CID Church Extension Fund**

The purpose of the Church Extension Fund is to aid the member congregations and agencies of CID to finance the acquisition of land and in the purchase, erection, and improvement of facilities for effective programs of ministry, witness, outreach, and service for the expansion of God's Kingdom in the CID. Recently, CEF has also provided loans to church workers to assist them in purchasing their own homes while serving in the district. The fund is supported through investments by individuals, congregations, and agencies of the CID and interest is paid to these investors for the use of their funds.

One special program that emphasizes to children the importance of savings as well as the use of their treasures for the Lord's work is the Savings Stamp Program. A savings program may begin with as little as \$.25 to purchase one stamp. When the booklet is completed with 75 stamps worth \$18.75 it can be sent to CEF to purchase a growth bond that matures to \$25.00.

The CID-CEF is unique in that it is not a part of the national LC-MS Lutheran Church Extension Fund. As far back as 1982, the CID in convention instructed the Board of Directors to determine if CID-CEF should join the national organization. Apparently, the Board's decision was not to be a part of that organization, and CID-CEF has been one of seven independent church extension funds in synod ever since. By 1994, CEF was greatly increasing in the amount of investments and loans. This, coupled with the requirement of filing disclosure reports with the state on all district finances, led the delegates at the 1994 district convention to incorporate the CID-CEF as a separate entity. The Church Extension Fund, Inc. was incorporated separately from the Central Illinois District as of January 1, 1995, as an Illinois Not-For-Profit organization administered by

a seven member board of trustees, none of which could hold membership on the District's Board of Directors or committees. Loans have been given to churches, mission congregations, school associations, deaf ministry, Hispanic ministry, Camp Cilca, etc.

As of December, 2014 CID-CEF had \$38,000,000 in assets; \$29,200,000 in investments; \$17,000,000 in loans and a capital/asset ratio of 22.2%. The capital/asset ratio is the ratio of net assets of the organization divided by the total assets and liabilities. CID-CEF is far exceeds both local lending institutions and LCMS guidelines in this regard. The CID-CEF is a very solvent financial institution, and it provides an excellent way for members to share the blessings which the Lord has given them in furthering the Lord's kingdom in central Illinois and beyond.

### **Gift Planning Services**

A gift planning counselor is made available through the district to congregational members who are interested in providing financial support for the work of the Lord at the synodical, district, and/or local congregational level. These gifts may be shared at the present time, but more likely as a legacy gift at the time of the individual's passing into eternal life. For some years the counselor was shared with the Southern Illinois District. More recently it has been a part-time position sharing 25% of the time with the director of the CID Church Extension Fund. At the present time, Rev. Charles Olander serves in this capacity on a part-time basis. The gift planning process is accomplished through the LC-MS Foundation. The counselor works with the individual on a confidential basis to make sure that the gift is used in accordance with the donor's intent. Mr. David Rohe, (Planned Giving Counselor) in his report to the 2012 convention, indicated that he was able to assist members in leaving \$31.3 million dollars in gifts to ministry and with God's help, anticipates more gifts in the future.

### **Central Illinois Lutheran Camp Association CAMP CILCA**

In 1949 the Walther League of the CID purchased 180 acres (20 acres were eventually sold off) of timberland twelve miles northwest of Springfield for \$35 an acre as a site for a youth camp. The camp has grown to encompass 220 acres at the present time. In the beginning the association was a joint venture of CID, LLL, and Walther League. Presently the camp is owned by the association and subsidized by the district. There is a governing board of twelve members -six appointed by CID and six by LLL.

The first facilities constructed were: roads, a lake, kitchen and dining room, restrooms, cabins, and water supply. Gradually other structures began to appear. An Assembly Hall was built in 1956. By 1980 the need for a winterized facility was accomplished with the Retreat Center providing a large meeting room, kitchen, and rooms for overnight lodging. The Christian Growth Center added in 1988 also incorporated a meeting room and kitchen with 14 motel-style rooms with bathroom facilities. The camp currently has three larger cabins and twelve smaller cabins for housing campers. Two cabins that have storm shelters in the basement have recently been built. If you bring your own camper or mobile home, there are water and electrical hook-

ups available. Shower facilities, a dining hall, and an indoor chapel can be found in the camp complex.

Improvements have also been made in the outdoors. There are hiking/jogging trails and the rugged challenge course. A new lake was developed in 1965 which now includes beach and docks, canoes, paddle boats, and kayaks. Land lubbers might just want to stick to sand volleyball, an archery range, or open fields for softball or kickball games. Outdoor devotional sites provide an awesome setting to meditate on God's Word and join with others in prayer and praise.

Extra funding from the LWML, churches, schools, and church organizations of our district have allowed the camp to continue to offer this unique outdoor ministry. During the summer, youth camps are offered for children age 4 through high school. A highlight of the summer is the Joyful Hearts Weeks where the camp facilities are set aside for those with developmental disabilities. Interim camp director Rev. David Buelmann commented that he hopes to see over five hundred youth at the summer camps this year. The camp also hosts church retreats, family reunions, outdoor educational programs, and servant events.

Thanks be to God for the many volunteers and dedicated individuals that have given of their time, talents, and treasures to ensure that the mission of the camp, "to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by teaching God's Word, promoting Christian fellowship and fostering an appreciation of God's creation," may continue into the next generation.

Pastor Buelmann comments, "The camp has been a blessing to my wife and me in our teenage years, for our children, our grandchildren, and hopefully our great-grandchildren. We pray that the camp can continue for generations to come to tell the Good News about Jesus."

#### Camp Directors

Rev. David Buelmann 1978 -1990  
Rich Harkins 1990 - 2008  
Rev. Charles Johnson 2008 - 2012  
Rev. David Buelmann (Interim) 2012 - Present

#### **Conflict from Within**

While working to present a strong Christian witness in our modern society, members and congregations of the CID also had to deal with conflicting ideas within the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Listed below are resolutions passed at district conventions over the past thirty years. Each of these issues could be the basis of a separate study. Most of the accompanying resolutions center on three themes: 1. The Office of the Public Ministry (Word & sacrament ministry/woman's role in the church); 2. Open/close(d) Communion; 3. LC-MS interaction with both Christian and non-Christian denominations. It is sufficient here to demonstrate that CID has been steadfast in adherence to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in dealing with doctrinal concerns.

1982

- 82-7-01 To Remind Congregations and Pastors of our Synod's  
Stance on Unionistic Activities
- 82-7-02 To Reaffirm Resolution 78-7-01 To Warn Against the  
Charismatic Movement

1985

- 85-1-03A To Decline Congregational Status to Wittenberg Student Assembly and to  
Memorialize Synod to Establish a Consistent Policy for Campus Ministry  
Organization Regarding Membership

1988

- 88-7-R-01A To Study Interchurch Relationships between LCMS and  
the Newly Formed ELCA
- 88-7-R-05 To Encourage all Pastors, Congregations, and Officials of the LC-MS  
to Uphold Synod's Stand Concerning Unionism and Open Communion
- 88-7-R-06A To Update Lodge Material

1991

- 91-7-R-2 To Correct the Abuse of Lay Preaching and Administering the Sacraments
- 91-7-R-6a - To Recognize Close Communion Policy as Doctrine
- 91-7-R-7 To Reaffirm Scriptural Teaching on Woman's Role in the Church
- 91-7-R-9B To Strongly Criticize the Actions of the Praesidium of the Synod Against the  
Rev. Dr. Robert Preus and to Authorize Action in Regard to this Matter on  
the Part of the District Board of Directors
- 91-7-R-10 To Urge that the LC-MS Board of Directors not Recognize Valparaiso  
University as a Service Organization of LC-MS as long as Valparaiso  
Officially Recognizes a Gay Support Group on Campus

1994

- 94-4-R-4 To Address Concerns in Reference to the National/District Youth Gatherings
- 94-5-R-4 To Memorialize Synod in Convention Regarding "Expanding the Circle"
- 94-7-R-8 To Emphasize the Spiritual and Theological Leadership  
Expected of the Synodical President

1997

- 97-7-R-2 To Uphold and Promote the Historic Liturgy
- 97-7-R-3 To Examine and Formalize Guidelines for Consistent Practice in Worship and  
Close(d) Communion in the Ministry to the Armed Forces.
- 97-7-R-4 To Regularize the Practice of Close(d) Communion among the Colleges and  
Universities of the Concordia University System
- 97-7-R-7 To Encourage the Use of Private Confession and Absolution
- 97-7-R-8 To Support Encourage and Direct the Synodical President  
in the Exercise of Ecclesiastical Supervision

2000

- 00-2-R-1 To Commend our District President and Board of Directors for their  
Endorsement of "Toward True Reconciliation"
- 00-2-R-2 To Encourage Holy Baptism of Infants

2003

- R-03-2-2 To Overturn CCM Opinions "Ecclesiastical Supervision and Conflict of Interest"(02-2309 and "Ecclesiastical Supervision of the Synodical President" (01-2240)
- R-03-2-3 A Resolution Calling the Rev. David Benke to Repentance
- R-03-2-5 To Offer A Biblical Response to Dissents from the "Synod's Position"

2006

- R-06-02-03 To Petition the Synod to Rescind Resolution 8-01A and its  
Consequent Handbook Revisions
- R-06-02-04 To Memorialize Synod to Rescind 2004 Resolution 3-08A
- R-06-02-05 To Memorialize Synod to Overrule CCM Opinions 02-2296 and 02-2309
- R-06-02-06 To Memorialize Synod to Provide Encouragement, Supervision, and  
Admonition in the Practice of Closed Communion
- R-06-02-07 To Memorialize Synod to Require the CTCR to Rewrite Guidelines  
for Participation in Civic Events
- R-06-02-08 To Memorialize Synod to Reaffirm the Doctrine of the  
Office of the Holy Ministry

2009

- R-09-02-01 To Memorialize Synod in Convention to Require Uniformity of Practice with  
Regard to Word and Sacrament Ministry
- R-09-02-02 To Require Consideration of CCM-Related Business

2012

- R-12-01-01 To Require Uniformity in Regards to Word and Sacrament Ministry
- R-12-03-08 To Rescind Synodical Resolution 3-08A (2004) Women's Role in the Church

### **The District Office**

When Rev. H.C. Rein was called to serve as executive secretary to Pastor Alvin Miller (1954-1963), the district purchased a house in Decatur for Pastor Rein. One of the rooms in the house, in effect, became the first district office. When Pastor George Albers became the next executive secretary, the District established an office in Springfield renting space in a building that also housed Lutheran Child and Family Services.

Through the generous gift of the Clara and Spencer Werner Foundation, the District was able to erect its own office building in Springfield at the eastern edge of the seminary campus adjacent to Immanuel Lutheran Church. The new structure had five offices, a central open area for

secretaries, a kitchenette, and a very large conference meeting room. When Synod moved the seminary and sold the property, the district was without office space. After some initial negotiation, the Synod agreed to provide the funds to purchase another office building for the District at 974 Clock Tower Drive. This relocated CID office building was dedicated on September 22, 1981.

In his 1991 convention address, Pastor Kuhn states that during the last triennium the old office building was sold and the new and present offices of the CID at 1850 North Grand Avenue West was purchased from Hope Evangelical Free Congregation which was in need of a larger facility. The property consists of slightly more than four acres and has two buildings. One is used as office space containing a main floor of offices, an open area for reception and secretarial work, a small kitchenette, and a small chapel. The lower area provides office space for CID-Church Extension Fund offices as well as a large meeting area. The other building houses the archives in two small rooms, but basically serves as rental property providing additional income for the district.

### **Archives**

The archives provides a wealth of information on the founding and growth of congregations of the district as well as the missions and ministries of the district itself. Cataloging material is an on-going task. Approximately 90% of the materials in the archives is also now in electronic storage form. Another project of the archival board is the Pastor Emeriti Project. Twenty retired pastors have shared their thoughts and remembrances of ministry in the CID either on tape or in written form. Work on translating early historical documents from German to English continues. Pictures of past district presidents have been mounted at the District Office. The Archivist, the CID Archival Newsletter, continues publication on a quarterly basis.

One of the more significant undertakings of the archival board during this time was the establishment of a permanent historical marker at the site of the former Springfield Seminary. For one hundred years from 1875 to 1976, Springfield was the site of one of the two seminaries (the other in St. Louis) preparing students to receive a call to serve in the preaching ministry of the LCMS. In 1976 due to economic considerations, the Synod decided to move the seminary to Ft. Wayne. The Springfield Seminary was first the home to Illinois State University (no relation to the present Illinois State University at Normal). Founded in 1854, the university, even with the support of Abraham Lincoln and with Robert Lincoln and John Hay as students, could not succeed and was closed in 1869. After the exit of the seminary in 1976, the facility was purchased by the Illinois Department of Correction to train prison guards.

Through the efforts of Mr. Stuart Fliege, Mr. William Furry, and the CID Archival Board an Illinois State Historical marker was placed on the former campus of the two schools. Two dedication ceremonies were held. The first was on Reformation Sunday, October 27, 2013, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Springfield where Rev. Mark Miller, District President, dedicated the marker to the glory of God. The second brief ceremony was held on July 23, 2014

at the marker's permanent location at 1301 Concordia Court. The marker serves as a reminder of the importance the two schools played in the life of the Springfield community.

## LWML

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is the official women's auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. For over 70 years, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and to support global missions ([lwmlcid.org](http://lwmlcid.org)). There are 40 LWML districts within the LC-MS. The National LWML holds biennial conventions where mission projects are chosen, servant events are offered, mission speakers are heard, and fellowship is enjoyed. In 2011 the national convention was held in Peoria. According to the Peoria Tourism, it was the largest multi-day event ever for Peoria. During the biennium from 2013-2015 over 1.8 million dollars has been received to fund eighteen diverse mission projects from support of the Comfort Dogs ministry to rebuilding the Haiti Lutheran School.

The CID LWML has over 2,000 members in 123 societies divided in to 12 zones. A district convention, a fall retreat, and fall rallies are held each year. *The Clarion* is a quarterly newsletter providing spiritual encouragement and up-dating news and projects of the district. At each meeting, mites (offerings) are collected. One-fourth of the mites are sent to the national organization, while the other three-fourths are used to fund mission projects within CID. The CID mite goal for 2015-16 was set at \$85,000. Throughout the years, beneficiaries of the LWML mites include: the student scholarship fund, campus ministry, deaf ministry, Camp Cilca, many mission churches, foreign missionaries, outreach programs by local congregations, and many more too numerous to mention. Besides the mites, LWML is dedicated to spiritual education and growth, developing leaders of different ages and ethnic backgrounds, prayer, Bible study, and servant activities. What a blessing these dedicated women have been to the mission and ministry of the CID!

## The Average CID Lutheran Church

Based on the 2013 statistics from the *Lutheran Annual 2015*, the average Lutheran Church in the Central Illinois District has 429 baptized members and 331 communicant members. There are a total of 155 congregations. These are broken down as follows according to confirmed membership:

Under 100	32
100-499	94
500-999	21
1000+	8

## **District Officers 1982 - 2015**

### **1982**

President: Rev. Arthur T. Kuehnert  
Education/Youth: Mr. Edward F. Krueger  
Finance/Business Manager: Mr. David Goldhammer

### **1985**

President: Rev. Robert T. Kuhn  
Education/Youth: Mr. Edward F. Krueger  
Finance/Business Manager: Mr. David Goldhammer

### **1988**

President: Rev. Robert T. Kuhn  
Education/Congregational Life: Mr. Edward F. Krueger  
Evangelism, Stewardship, Missions: Rev. Michael K. Brewer  
Business Manager: Mr. David Goldhammer  
Deferred Gifts Counselor: Mr. James R. Brown

### **1991**

President: Rev. Robert T. Kuhn  
Education: Rev. Hugh McGhghy  
Congregational Life: Rev. Gary Byers  
Evangelism, Stewardship, Missions: Rev. Michael K. Brewer  
Business Manager: Mr. David Goldhammer  
Deferred Gifts Counselor: Mr. James R. Brown

### **1994**

President: Rev. Robert T. Kuhn (1994-1995)  
President: Rev. David J. Bueltmann (1995-1997)  
Education: David H. Bernhardt  
Stewardship/Congregational Services: Rev. Wesley E. Reimnitz  
Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Business Manager: David Goldhammer  
Gift Planning Counselor: Kirk Mattes

### **1997**

President: Rev. David J. Bueltmann  
Education: David H. Bernhardt  
Stewardship/Congregational Services: Rev. Wesley E. Reimnitz  
Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Business Manager: Mr. David Goldhammer  
Gift Planning Counselor: Jeffrey Miller

### **2000**

President: Rev. David J. Bueltmann

Education: Glenn Goeres  
Stewardship/Congregational Services: Rev. Wesley E. Reimnitz  
Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Business Manager/Church Extension Fund: Mr. Mark Werner

## **2003**

President: Rev. David J. Bueltmann  
Education: Glenn Goeres  
Stewardship/Congregational Services: Rev. Wesley E. Reimnitz  
Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Church Extension Fund: Mr. David Rohe

## **2006**

President: Rev. David J. Bueltmann  
Education: Glenn Goeres  
Stewardship/Congregational Services: Rev. Wesley E. Reimnitz  
Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Church Extension Fund: Mr. David Rohe

## **2009**

President: Rev. David J. Bueltmann  
Education/Congregational Services: Glenn Goeres  
Stewardship/Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Church Extension Fund/Gift Planning Counselor: Mr. David Rohe

## **2012**

President: Rev. Mark Miller  
Education/Congregational Services: Glenn Goeres  
Stewardship/Mission/Evangelism/Human Care: Rev. Joel Cluver  
Church Extension Fund/Gift Planning Counselor: Mr. David Rohe  
Business Manager: Mr. Hugh Shown

## **Final Thoughts**

"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." (Isaiah 55:10/11 NIV)

God's Word is alive and active in central Illinois. God's Word will not return empty but will accomplish God's purpose: "God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4 NIV). As you have read these pages, give thanks and praise to God for the work which has taken place through the ministry of the CID to reach that goal of having all people know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Through the external pressures of a changing non-

Christian society and internal conflicts within the LC-MS, the CID has held firm to saving truths of the Scriptures and Lutheran confessions and has reached out with its resources to enlarge the kingdom. However, we dare not rest on what has already been accomplished. Not all people have been saved and have come to the knowledge of the truth. There is still much work to be done. My prayer as this study concludes is that the Holy Spirit will continue to work through the Word and Sacraments to strengthen the faith of those who already believe and equip them to share the Gospel within their own communities, throughout central Illinois, and throughout the world.

### **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the archive committee for the privilege of writing such an account of the work of the Central Illinois District. Thanks to Ralph Woehrmann, CID Archivist, for his guidance and use of the district's archives. Much appreciation to the district staff: Rev. Mark Miller, Rev. Joel Cluver, Mr. Glenn Goeres, Mr. Hugh Shown, Mr. David Rohe, and former president Rev. David Buelmann for their personal interviews and e-mail exchanges. Letters of reminiscence were received from former president Rev. Dr. Robert Kuhn, Mr. Ed Krueger, and Mr. David Bernhardt. Helpful was the input from the following: Deaconess Linda Schaefer - Developmentally Disabled; Rev. Rick Milas - Campus Ministry; Rev. Tom Phillips - Deaf Ministry; Mrs. Sheila Lutz - LWML; Special thanks to Mrs. Sue Woodruff for assistance in editing.

*Soli Deo Gloria*

**Ralph Mickley  
Pekin, Illinois  
July, 2015**



# His Story

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

Central Illinois District

for

Seventy-Five Years 1907 - 1982

On Prophets and Apostles Built;

On Christ, the Corner Stone!

To the Glory of God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

Ageless and Forever

- The Rev. Herbert C. Pragman

## PREFACE

When in the fall of 1981 the writer was asked to write a short history of the Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, he trembled. When it was time to begin the writing, he trembled still. The writing is now finished. It has been a task larger than the writer - that in the Church "on prophets and apostles built; on Christ, the Corner Stone," - "God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:11)

The History as here written is His Story. In no way dare one claim it to be complete or total. It is a beginning and leaves to others a deeper study and evaluation of the fifties, sixties, and seventies in this 20<sup>th</sup> century that gave us so much noise and confusion in church and nation.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In grateful appreciation the naming of names is in order. These contributed much to make possible the 'unfinished' product: Dr. Alvin W. Mueller, Dr. Lewis C. Niemoeller, Rev. Rudolph A. Haak, past presidents of the District, Rev. Herman F. C. Wetzel, former vice-president, and Dr. Arthur T. Kuehnert, president since 1974; Dr. Kuehnert's associates in the district office, Edward F. Krueger and David L. Goldhammer, and three efficient secretaries, Mrs. Mary Olsen, Mrs. Pat Cox, and Mrs. Nancy Gentry; pastors for their silent and oral support, Ernest L. Gericke, Robert E. Lange, Harlan C. Wendler; Camp Director David J. Bueltmann and Arthur Brockschmidt; Archivist Martin Kaste of the Northern Illinois District; Director August R. Suelflow of our Concordia Historical Institute; a supply of LLL and LWML information from Mr. And Mrs. Edwin Wetzel, Mr. And Mrs. Martin Garbe, Mrs. Ludwig Haluska, Ken Jaeger, Norman and Walter Kleinschmidt, Alvin Bluhm, C. Arthur Schoessel, Del T. Precht, Carlton Schumacher; daughter Genevera Johnson, M.S. in Business, for typing and eliminating the father's mistakes, for putting the brother's dots and commas, words and phrases where they belong, and Esther, *meine Beste, meine Vertraute und Gehilfin*.

Herbert C. Pragman

Bloomington, Illinois

May 24, 1982

## ON PROPHETS AND APOSTLES BUILT; ON CHRIST, THE CORNER STONE!

To read, to read again, and to live again the beginnings and the early years of our Synod, to walk again with Prussians and Saxons and others of their persuasion, a little flock, that stood firm and solid in their faith, gives spirit to our spirit that we are the church “on prophets and apostles built; on Christ, the Corner Stone.”

### 1817 – 1838

In 1517 Luther nailed the Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. This unknown monk with his little instrument challenged pope and potentate and people: “Consider your ways, whether they be of God or of man.” Three hundred years later, in 1817, the heavy hand of “principalities and powers” demanded that Lutherans and Reformed compromise their differences and become one church. As in 1517, again in 1817 the pot of challenge and controversy began to boil.

King Frederick William III of Prussia in 1817 issued the order that “on October 31<sup>st</sup> both the Reformed and Lutherans at Potsdam unite” to observe the tercentenary of the Reformation in a joint communion service.<sup>1</sup> This proposed union of Reformed and Lutherans was supported by the Rationalists who had no doctrine to defend and the Pietists who were indifferent to Scriptural doctrine, “neither cold nor hot.” The Confessional Lutherans insisted on faithfulness to the Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions. This began and continued a battle of words until 1830 when the Prussian State took sterner measures against the Confessional Lutherans.

Pastors who resisted the union of Reformed and Lutherans were arrested and imprisoned. The State demanded that congregations either comply or cease to function. Member stood against member, family against family, house against house. To escape this oppression by the State, 700 Lutherans in 1838 also with Pastors L. L. C. Kavel left Prussia for Australia. In the following year Pastor J. A. A. Grabau and 1,000 Lutherans left Prussia for America.<sup>2</sup>

The demand by the Prussian State that Reformed and Lutherans become one church, a union without unity in doctrine, had no authority in Saxony. However, the spirit toward outward union without unity of doctrine and without “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3) was at work also in Saxony and other German states. They saw the handwriting on the wall. The spirit that moved Lutherans to leave Prussia for other lands also helped to bring about a decision by 700 Saxons to leave for America in 1838 under the leadership of Pastor Martin Stephan.

### 1838 - 1841

Martin Stephan was the man of the hour. In the summer of 1838 he sent word to his followers that “the hour to depart has struck; the time to flee from Babel has come; whoever desires to save his soul should get ready to leave.”<sup>3</sup> And 707 people agreed, “where thou goest, we will go.” Farmers sold their acres; doctors and lawyers gave up their practice; pastors, teachers, government officials resigned their positions; candidates of theology packed their books; artisans, craftsmen, merchants gathered their tools and joined the planned exodus.

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<sup>1</sup> A Century of Grace, Walter A. Baepler, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

Among the 707 souls “were 160 children, 110 of them of school age.” The exodus was not without its heartache and tears. It created disagreement in some families, severe enough to separate spouse from spouse, parents from children, reminding us of the final judgment when “one will be taken and the other left” (Luke 17:34). The supporters of Stephan had put their hand to the plow. The ocean would be their Rubicon. There would be no turning back.

In November of 1838 five ships, the Copernicus, Johann Georg, Republic, Olbers, and Amalia set sail from Bremerhaven. The Amalia was lost at sea. There were no survivors. C. F. W. Walther, whose day in the church had not yet come, was scheduled to ship out on the Amalia. He was threatened with arrest on a false “charge of having abducted some children.” To avoid that arrest he was transferred from the Amalia which set sail on November 18 to the Johann Georg which set sail on November 3.<sup>5</sup> A ship was scheduled to leave Bremerhaven and arrive in New Orleans. That ship set sail but did not arrive at its destination. The Johann Georg arrived in New Orleans and on that ship was the young pastor, C. F. W. Walther. Man proposes and God disposes.

Four of the five ships carried their passengers to New Orleans, where they engaged four river steamers, the Rienzi, Clyde, Knickerbocker, Selma, to take them to St. Louis. When the 700 Saxons left Bremerhaven, Martin Stephan was their spiritual leader without benefit of a title except that of “pastor.” Between Bremerhaven and St. Louis, within the short time of four months, Martin Stephan with support from his supporters took upon himself a title, that of “bishop.” A “Declaration of Submission to the Bishop” demanded that the signers submit to the bishop’s “authority in temporal as well as in spiritual matters.”<sup>6</sup>

Was it not just such a system, (an iron fence built by the state) that they had rejected in Saxony, that would have them “teach for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:9), that had sent them to seek greener pasture? They proceeded to build a fence of their own choosing, some place where they could expect on a minimum of interference from people not of their persuasion. On April 8, 1839, land in Perry County, Missouri, measuring 4,472.66 acres, was purchased for \$9,234.25.<sup>7</sup>

That purchase of land made of the Saxon immigrants, *diese deutsche Gesellschaft*, two camps. With high hopes and a pocket full of money, they had taken leave of their homes in Saxony. Setting sail for America, they held a common purse that counted \$80,000. Those who remained in St. Louis and those who planted themselves in Perry County may have envisioned for themselves a paradise on earth. But their Shangri-la soon turned to ashes.

One ship had been lost at sea and left no one to tell how it happened. Contrary winds had taken the wind out of their high hopes. So much money, but it did not last. It was used at a pace too fast. A man, their bishop, was deemed unworthy of his office. On May 24, 1839, Stephan was removed from office by a council of pastors and five laymen.<sup>8</sup> Land which the Perry County settlers held in common did not produce the milk and honey that they desired. Plague and pestilence had not respect for Saxons newly arrived in Perry County. The land of promise

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

become for healthy and sick a “*trautiges Jammerthal.*” Time and again, while at home in Saxony and in their adopted country, they had been brought to “Marah’s brink.”

“When in the hour of utmost need, we know not where to look for aid,”... but “seek Thy pardon for our sin and respite from our griefs within,” God will not and does not leave His people comfortless. When life was at its worst in Perry County, there appeared in the *Anzeiger des Westens* a notice dated August 13, 1839, announcing the opening of “An Institution of Instruction and Education,” in Perry County. God, with that announcement, breathed life into “dry bones.” A log cabin was built in that “Forest Primeval” that up to that time had been no paradise of joy. They did rejoice and give thanks to God when on December 9, 1839, that little house opened its doors to eleven students to be trained and educated, prepared and equipped for service in home, school, and church.<sup>9</sup>

That little house was like a breath of fresh air for a people hurt and discouraged, but only a beginning. The hurt and discouragement of the people and the pastors had long roots. They were asking questions that cried for answers. Are we still a church? Are we Christians at all? Are we pastors? Do we have God’s approval? Are our calls valid before God? This whole venture — is it the will of God, or are we deceiving ourselves? Where and when shall we find peace for our troubled souls? This terrible frustration of unanswered questions would not and could not be healed unless the Word of God be applied for “doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).

To that troubled *Gesellschaft* living in the hills and flat lands of Perry County, God sent His Moses to “make straight what was crooked and make smooth the rough places” (Luke 3:5). That man was C. F. W. Walther. To calm troubled waters, a debate was arranged for April 15 and 20, 1841, in Altenburg. Walther, with assistance from Pastors Loeber and Keyl, presented and defended the Scriptural view of the doctrine of the church and ministry. Dr. Marbach and Pastor Buenger presented and defended what they believed. The Altenburg debate achieved God’s purpose. The spirit of Ichabod was cast out and the joy of salvation was restored. In later years Pastor Schieferdecker, the first president of the Western District, called the victory “the Easter Morn of our sorely tried congregation when, like the disciples, they again beheld the Lord in the light of His grace and in the power of His resurrection were filled with joy and hope.<sup>10</sup>

While the Lord was heavily engaged with His troubled sheep in Perry County, He was not idle in other places. Friedrich Wyneken of Hannover arrived in Baltimore in July of 1838. God directed his footsteps westward from Baltimore with instructions from the Mission Committee of the Pennsylvania Ministerium to gather “Protestants” into congregations.<sup>11</sup>

Using Fort Wayne as his base of operations, Wyneken visted German settlements in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. These visits revealed a desperate need for pastors. God planted Wyneken’s feet in the right places at the right time. His appeal to pastors and mission societies in Germany was simple, yet evangelically demanding: “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35b). He shook the trees that the Lord had “planted by the rivers of water” (Psalm 1:3), but few were the apples that fell. Wyneken then determined to visit the Lutherans in Germany, to go from place to place and make known by word of mouth the spiritual poverty and misery that he had found among the German settlers in America. The man spoke and people listened.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

Among Wyneken's listeners was Pastor Wilhelm Loehe of Bavaria. Within a ten-year period Loehe sent to America more than 80 workers, pastors, teachers, and students. It was Loehe who resolved to devote "his time and energy to the upbuilding of the Lutheran Church in America."<sup>12</sup> It was Loehe with his spirited approach who obtained much of the necessary "Gold, frankincense, and myrrh" to support the Macedonian cry of Wyneken. Many of Loehe's "Sendlinge" joined the Missouri Synod after its organization.

### 1841 - 1847

O. H. Walther was installed as the pastor of the Saxons who remained in St. Louis, in June of 1839, and died in January of 1841 at the age of 31. The congregation paid the funeral expenses which amounted to \$27.95½ and paid his wife as long as she remained a widow a monthly pension of \$5. Mrs. Walther married Pastor Ottomar Fuerbringer, October 18, 1842.<sup>13</sup> Could a widow live on a monthly pension of \$5 from January 1842 to October 1842?

On February 8, the St. Louis Saxons called C. F. W. Walther to succeed his brother. When the call was extended, C. F. W. Walther was confined by a "stubborn sickness" in the home of his brother-in-law, Pastor Keyl. Luther had his Wartburg and Walther had his. As Luther used his time of his confinement in Frederick's castle to begin the task of translating the Bible, so did Walther use his lingering illness for diligent study of Luther's works and the works of other theologians in the light of Scripture. He was ready to debate those doctrines of church and ministry that brought calm and peace to the troubled Saxons in Perry County.

With peace restored in Saxon hearts, Walther gave his attention to the call extended to him by the Saxons in St. Louis, dated February 8, 1841. The Altenburg debate ended on April 20. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 1841, Walther stood before the Saxon congregation in St. Louis to announce that the Lord had restored his health, that the call extended to him was a valid call, that the sins which he had committed during the turmoil and confusion within the Perry County *Gesellschaft* did not make him ineligible for the ministry, that they were indeed a Christian congregation, and that he would accept their call.<sup>14</sup>

God made in Perry County a "Zion of the Mississippi" and in St. Louis made He another. After two years of diligent study a constitution was adopted and signed by the members, who chose for their congregation in St. Louis the name "Trinity." God had brought them a "far way" from the spiritual fog of yesterday into the sunshine of His peace.

"Tell my people that they go forward," said God to Moses. Israel stood before the Red Sea, their enemies, the Egyptians, in hot pursuit of God's people. It was their hour of utmost need. What were they to do, when they could turn neither to the right nor to the left, threatened by the sea in front of them and by a ruthless enemy about to strike and return them to their wretched huts? By faith they overcame their indecision to move. By faith they obeyed God's command to go forward. In like manner God gave to Walther and his fellow pastors and the people the faith to go forward in the King's business.

Out of Missouri from Walther and the Saxons came a document dated September 7, 1844, the first issue of Der Lutheraner. The Lord made it possible to send the first issue to Friedrich

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

Wyneken and Wilhelm Sihler, a Loehe disciple, who with other pastors not of the Saxon *Gesellschaft* were determined “to support any movement which would hold out the prospect of establishing a Lutheran body” in which faithfulness to the Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions would be upheld.<sup>15</sup>

Wyneken read the first issue and exclaimed, “Thank God, there are still Lutherans in America!” Dr. Sihler wrote in his biography: “It was a great joy to receive the first number of *Der Lutheraner*, and after I read the succeeding issues, I did not hesitate to recommend the paper to my congregations.” This was the beginning of a courtship that resulted in a marriage of kindred spirits. Following a pregnancy of about thirty months the happy marriage brought forth a child on April 26, 1847.

1847 - 1982  
GRACE UPON GRACE FOR 135 YEARS

The Synod that God called into being on April 26, 1847, was given the name — *Die Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten*. In 1947 when the Lord had lengthened the years of Synod to measure a century of grace the name was reduced from the original eleven words to five. Since 1947 we are The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

At the time (1847) “our Synod occupied a solitary and lonely position, was looked at askance, or even despised by other church bodies,”<sup>16</sup> so said Vice-President Theodore Brohm 25 years later. Anxious and caring hearts did ask, will this child live? Will this child prosper?

The child did live. The child did grow. The evaluation of Dr. R. C. H. Lenski of the Ohio Synod merits our attention. In the *Kirchenzeitung* of May 20, 1922, Dr. Lenski wrote: “if there ever was a strictly conservative Lutheran body, it surely is the Missouri Synod. Nevertheless, this growth! Here is a historical fact that refutes all talk trying to persuade us that we must be liberal, accommodate ourselves to the spirit of the time, etc., in order to win men and grow externally. The very opposite is seen in the Missouri Synod. Missouri has at all times been unyielding; it is so still. In this body the Scriptures and the Confessions have been, and still are, valued to their full import. There was no disposition to surrender any part of them. With this asset Missouri has been working in free America, which abounds in sects and religious confusion, and now exhibits its enormous achievements. What so many regard as Missouri’s weakness has in reality been its strength. This fact we might write down for our remembrance. It is a mark of the pastors and leaders of the Missouri Synod that they never, aye never, tire of discussing doctrine on the basis of the Confessions and the Scriptures. This is one trait that may be called ‘the spirit of Missouri.’”<sup>17</sup>

In May of 1911 Synod observed the anniversary of the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of C. F. W. Walther. Prof. H. W. T. Dau said of Walther, “I know of no man in the Lutheran Church of America between 1843 and 1887... who labored so enthusiastically for the true unification of divided sections of the Church... On Scriptural grounds he declined union without unity and was not greatly agitated over the absence of organic union between bodies with whom he knew himself one at heart as regards teaching and practice.”<sup>18</sup> Walther bowed to the authority of two sets of

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

Scripture texts: “those which issue urgent appeals for brotherly fellowship and those which issue emphatic warnings against false union.” On the one hand the Scriptures bid us, “Be ye one,” and on the other hand, “Be ye separate.” Dau at Walther’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary also described Synod’s spirit of that day: “In whatever form time and the changing conditions of men may compel us to apply these sacred rules, we propose to apply either religiously, and we call for no revision at this point.”<sup>19</sup>

Some fifty years later in 1962, Carl L. Abel, president of the Northern Illinois District, addressed the 29<sup>th</sup> Lutheran Laymen’s League convention in St. Peter Lutheran Church, Arlington Heights. He restated Dr. Walther’s views, urging laymen “always to keep in mind two kinds of Bible passages when discussing Christian doctrine and church fellowship — “sharing” passages which urge Christian witnessing; and the “guarding” passages which caution against compromise.<sup>20</sup>

Today The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is witness to God’s great and countless blessings. The greatest blessing is the Gospel that God has entrusted to us, that we preach it, teach it, confess it, and apply it, working the works of our Savior “while it is day, before the night cometh when no man can work” (John 9:4).

When on April 26, 1847, Synod was organized it was like planting a few acorns. Charter members numbering twelve congregations and twelve pastors are listed in the Proceedings of that first convention. (Three of the twelve congregations were rooted in the good earth of Illinois, St. John’s at Minden in Washington County, the German Evangelical Lutheran congregation in the Hessler settlement near Peru, and the French Evangelical Lutheran congregation in Peru.<sup>21</sup>

At this first convention Trinity Church of St. Louis proposed the following paragraph be included in the constitution: “In its relation to its members, the Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to the individual congregation’s rights of self-government it is but an advisory body. Accordingly, no resolution of the Synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of the congregation is concerned.”<sup>22</sup> This proposal was adopted.

In the second convention of Synod in 1848, in praise of the constitution adopted at the first convention, President Walther spoke: “Our constitution... grants to our congregations in all matters full liberty, nothing excepted but the Word of God, faith and love... Synod is not above our congregations, but is rather in them for the purpose of giving them assistance.” Walther then spoke his conclusion. “The more our congregations are convinced that we desire to exercise no power over them but the divine power of the Word, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believeth, the more will our congregations be inclined to accept our advice. Those, of course, who do not love the Word of God will separate themselves from us, but those who love it will be glad to be united with us; and when these adopt our resolutions, they will not look upon them as a burden that has been imposed upon them by someone from without, but they

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>20</sup> A Collection - LLL Events: Ludwig A. Haluska.

<sup>21</sup> A Century of Grace, pp. 104, 105.

<sup>22</sup> How the Missouri Synod Was Born, W. G. Polack, p. 34.

will rather consider such resolutions a blessing and a gift of brotherly love and will defend and honor them as their own resolutions.”<sup>23</sup>

In this wholesome spirit the Synod determined and agreed that we walk together “with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:2, 3). To carry out this purpose of Synod the territory represented at that first convention was divided into six “conference districts,” centered in these places: 1. St. Louis, Missouri; 2. Chicago, Illinois; 3. Fort Wayne, Indiana; 4. Monroe, Michigan; 5. Fairfield, Ohio; and 6. New York, New York. And the acorns planted in these places began to grow. Already in 1854, Synod was reorganized into four larger districts: 1. The Eastern District (New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia); 2. The Central District (Indiana and Ohio); 3. The Northern District (Michigan and Wisconsin); 4. The Western District (Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana). Within the span of 40 years, 1847 to 1887 the Western District became six districts. One of the six, the Illinois District, was called into being in 1874. Thirty-three years later, in 1907, when our Synod counted 60 years three districts were fashioned out of the Illinois District: The Southern, Central, and Northern Districts of Illinois. The triplets breathed their first breath on May 24, 1907. In 1982, seventy-five years later, our Central Illinois District is one of 39 districts in Synod.

### 1854 - 1907 WHEN WE WERE NOT YET A DISTRICT

The first convention of the Western District which was organized in 1854 was held in the First German Ev. Lutheran St. Paul’s Church, Chicago, April 23 to May 1, 1855, where the Synod had been organized on April 26, 1847. The Western District in 1855 held within its territory 46 congregations, 19 of the 46 were planted in Illinois, where Lincoln had not yet been acclaimed by a grateful nation. No congregation from the central Illinois area was represented at the first convention of the Western District.<sup>24</sup>

While the early years of the Synod show a phenomenal growth, those years were not immune to some frustrations and disappointments. At the very first convention of the Western District in 1855, only 25 of the 46 congregations were represented by pastors, and only five congregations sent a lay delegate. No doubt the famine of ready cash, long miles, and roads that held travelers to a slow pace were factors for the poor attendance in 1855. If the 135 year history of our Synod were put under a magnifying glass there would be revealed some “do little or do nothing meetings” and dated appointments that became disappointments.

That first convention of the Western District was disturbed to a sufficient degree that the District addressed a letter to “all congregations and pastors within its confines to induce them to take a more active participation in the work of Synod and District.” It is a letter of evangelical persuasion reminding all what Synod is all about, a walking together with one another in faith and in the love of our God and Savior.<sup>25</sup>

Though the Western District which included Illinois began with disappointment, we can make “a joyful noise unto the Lord,” when at the next convention in 1856 the attendance was far better. The Central Illinois area was represented by Pastor F. Boehling of Pekin, attending as an

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> “Forget Not His Benefits,” Walter A. Baepler, 33<sup>rd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1957, p. 26.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 29, 30.

advisory member. In 1858 this pastor's address was listed as Peoria and from that time no one need ask, will Synod "play in Peoria?"

We pause to marvel and rejoice, lest it be forgotten: "The Word is mightier than the sword;" God is mightier than Caesar. At Caesar's door the slave question that set brother against brother, culminating in a war that left a nation hurt, disrupted and disillusioned. Before, during, and after that war between the states, "how beautiful are the feet of them that brought good tidings," that published peace and salvation, that said to isolated flocks in Central Illinois, "Thy God reigneth!" (Isaiah 52:7) In 1856 Bloomington and Danville are listed as voting members. In the same year the pastors of Geneseo, Shelbyville, Petersburg, Champaign, and Springfield are listed as advisory members. In 1859 the congregation at Rock Island was brought into the fold. In 1862 for the first time the names of Quincy and Warsaw appear. In 1867 the congregation at Clayton, Galesburg, Jacksonville, and Secor appear on the district roster. The pastor of Effingham joined as an advisory member in 1868. Bethlehem, Altamont, Decatur, and Siegel were added to the district membership in 1871.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless the accessions of congregations and pastors were not too "swift." European immigrants were slow in coming to Central Illinois in the fifties, sixties, and seventies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition "other synods had a lead on the Missouri Synod in Central Illinois," said Dr. Walter Baepler at our 33<sup>rd</sup> District Convention in 1957.

By 1874 the Lord had enlarged the tent of the Western District to the south in Louisiana, to the southwest in Texas, and to the far west in California. The growing pains of the Western District were sharp enough that they cried for relief. How to make smaller districts out of the far-reaching Western District was the challenge. Congregations and pastors of the Western District in the state of Illinois became the Illinois District in 1874.

When the newly created Illinois District met for its first convention in 1875, the District numbered 68 voting and 43 advisory pastors, 100 Christian Day School teachers and 73 voting congregations. Congregations in 1875, located in what is today the area of our Central Illinois District were these: Warsaw, Springfield, Jacksonville, Secor, El Paso, and Minonk, Effingham, Geneseo, Quincy, Decatur, Peoria, Bloomington, Rock Island, Danville, Strasburg, Arenzville, Bethlehem (Altamont), Chandlerville. Advisory congregations were Shelbyville, Pekin, Danvers, Champaign, Manito, Buckley, and Hampton near Rock Island.<sup>27</sup>

In the seventies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Illinois District reaped what it had not planted. When in 1872 the General Council, a product of the General Synod organized in 1820, would not take a firm stand on Scriptural doctrine and practice, the Synod of Illinois (not of our Synod) withdrew from the General Council. This Synod of Illinois, "meeting in La Grange, Missouri, sent a delegation, headed by its president, the Rev. F. Wolbrecht of Okawville, to Quincy to discuss amalgamation with the Illinois District." The Illinois District approved the union and the entire Synod of Illinois consisting of twenty-two pastors and ten congregations signed the constitution of the Missouri Synod. Among the congregations joining the Missouri Synod were five congregations located in central Illinois: Mt. Pulaski, Blue Point, Beardstown, Lincoln, and Nokomis. The Illinois District Convention of 1880 lists 95 voting and 66 advisory pastors, 116 Christian Day School teachers, and 96 congregations. At the first Illinois District Convention with the former members of the Synod of Illinois in attendance, Pres. H. Wunder of the Illinois

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

District was re-elected president, and the former president of the Synod of Illinois, the Rev. F. Wolbrecht, was elected First Vice-President of the Illinois District.<sup>28</sup>

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Our Synod takes seriously the great commission: “Go, make disciples.” The Illinois District from its very beginning had a Mission Board of three, one from each of the three areas of the state. It was at this time that European immigrants came to Chicago in such great numbers that the central and southern areas of the state received little support to establish new congregations. When the pastoral conference of central Illinois (not yet a district) met in Secor in 1893 the pastors resolved to begin a mission expansion of their own, independent of the Illinois District.

In 1918 the Central Illinois District met for its seventh convention in Bloomington. The proceedings of that convention report: “Twenty-five years have elapsed since we began doing mission work in central Illinois. Twenty-five years ago, the Central Illinois Pastoral Conference, assembled at Secor, resolved to undertake this work in the name of the Lord. A committee was appointed to explore the entire area with the assistance of pastors willing to give of their time and energy, so that the banner of the Lutheran Church might be raised in suitable places. This resolve was carried out. A crusade through the entire central Illinois area was organized and expedited, and with the help of the Lord, already in the first year, preaching stations were established.”<sup>29</sup>

### 1907 - 1957 FIFTY YEARS OF IMMANUEL - GOD WITH US

Not for long did the soldiers beneath the cross debate what to do with the Savior’s robe, whether to divide or to leave it whole. To bring about the birth of our District took a sixteen-year on-and-off-again pregnancy from 1891 to 1907. Those were the days of the horse and buggy. The delegates attending the District Conventions did not fly from Cairo to Chicago by day or by night. Congregations outside Chicago were too small to house and feed the delegates. There were enough delegates attending the convention that “there was no room for them in the inn(s),” which were not too many; and in many towns, if they did exist, only large enough to provide lodging for salesmen going from town to town, selling their wares. When the Central Illinois Pastoral Conference reported that a number of congregations in Chicago were willing to host future conventions and provide the needed housing, the question of dividing the Illinois District was laid to rest but not forgotten. In 1898 (most likely after a long discussion) a committee of nine, three members from each of the three pastoral conferences (southern, central, and northern) recommended, “*wir bleiben bei’m Alten.*” Their recommendation not to divide was accepted. The question of dividing the District refused to die.

It is the 1905 and 1906 *Verhandlungen* (Proceedings) *der deutschen evangelisch-lutherische Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten* now speak to us of the question of division that was destined to be settled in 1907. Let a free translation tell it.

Before the Synodical Convention in 1905 the pastoral conference of the southern area “*in ihrer letzten Sitzung,*” in their last session, determined that a division of the District was necessary. They called it a “*Nothwendigkeit der Abzweigung.*” In that session of the “southern” pastors a committee was appointed with instructions to encourage and urge the Central and Northern Pastoral Conferences to state their position. They replied, expressing themselves as

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p.32.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

favoring a division of the District. Having obtained this support the congregations in southern Illinois were invited to state their position. Five congregations opposed “*die Theilung*,” dividing the District; seven congregations voted to present this “*Theilungsproject*” to the District for a vote; thirty-six congregations made known their decision in favor of the proposed division.

The vote of the congregations in southern Illinois sent a message to the pastoral conference — “strike while the iron is hot.” The pastors, encouraged by the support of their congregations and the two pastoral conferences in the central and northern areas of the state, resolved to present to the Synodical Convention (1905) the request for a “*Theilung oder Abzweigung*” of the District. (Either a “*Theilung*,” division or an “*Abzweigung*,” a branching off? The latter term could mean a cutting off from the District. We prefer the more charitable term, “*Theilung*.”) The plan presented to Synod called for a division, a new district in the southern area of the state, with the privilege of adding congregations located in the central Illinois area.

The Synodical Convention in 1905 approved the request for a division of the District. It was agreed that the division would take place after the Illinois District reached a decision as to the shape of a division or divisions within the state.<sup>30</sup>

What in 1905 appeared to be a final conclusion still had a mile or two to travel. The question of dividing the Illinois District was once more debated in 1906. Some congregations in the southern and central areas did not desire a division. They preferred to remain in a District that included northern Illinois. They held the opinion that there was no need to divide since the Chicago congregations were strong enough and big enough and also willing to host the District conventions. Those in favor of dividing the District pointed out that because of the size of the District conventions (microphones and PA systems had not yet arrived) the delegates had difficulty in hearing what was said “up front,” ... “*dasz daher ein groszer Teil des Segens verloren gehe, was gewisz sehr beklagen sei.*” One cannot say it any better, but one must try. Delegates, due to the size of the congregations would lose a great portion of the blessings and that would be most deplorable. In smaller districts delegates attending the conventions could better hear, respond with greater participation in the discussions, and thus receive greater blessings for themselves and for their congregations.

As a result of the opinions expressed a second committee of nine, three members from each of the three pastoral conferences, was chosen. This committee, so said the delegates, shall have the privilege to proceed with the “*Theilungs Frage*,” the question of dividing the District, with all earnestness and submit to the District a resolve to the question that needs a solution. The members of this committee were Pastors L. Hölter, F. Brand, and F. W. Brockmann; Teachers Louis Selle, E. Krumsieg, and Th. Deffner; Laymen Eduard Mesenbrink of Addison, Karl Pagel of Bloomington, and Heinrich Faster of Strasburg.<sup>31</sup>

These men were in the right position at the right time when the Lord had made the Illinois District the largest District in Synod. When the question of dividing the District was finally settled in 1907, there were 756 delegates in attendance at the District Convention. The first plan, as indicated earlier, was to divide the Illinois District into two districts, a northern and a southern district. The Illinois household awaited the birth of twins, but the delegates (midwives) went home to report the birth of triplets, three districts in good health.

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<sup>30</sup> Verhandlungen der Delegatensynode, 1905, pp. 152, 153.

<sup>31</sup> Verhandlungen des Illinois Distrikts, 1906, pp. 130, 131.

At this last convention of the Illinois District a question of what to do with the Effingham area was quite warmly considered. Effingham at the time was listed as a special conference. When the Southern and Central Illinois Districts came into being Effingham immediately had two suitors who wanted her hand in marriage. It was not so much that Effingham rejected the south. Effingham "chose to be joined to the Central Illinois District." (*Diese Effingham Gesellschaft war ohne Zweifel eine freche Dame und zur selben Zeit eine sehr schöne Dame für unsere Gesellschaft.*) The route of the B & O Railroad from the Effingham area to Springfield helped to dictate Effingham's choice in 1907.

We deemed it proper to share portions of a letter addressed to us by August R. Suelflow, Director of the Concordia Historical Institute. "... the Illinois District may have acted a bit precipitously in providing structurally for its division in 1907. This may partially account for the fact that there was no little, if any fanfare about the birth of three new districts. ...the convention opened that year on 22 May with a sermon by the synodical Vice President, H. Succop on Acts 9:31. The convention closed on 28 May with the singing of '*Ach, bleib mit deiner Gnade*' and the Lord's Prayer. ...at the 1907 convention, the three districts met separately and elected its new officers. Then each unit began functioning as a separate district, even though the Missouri Synod gave its approval in 1908, one year later. Then each of the three districts met in 1909, and they call it the 'First' convention. Actually, it should have been the second."

In 1907 during the days of the Illinois District Convention our Central Illinois District elected the following officers:

Rev. F. Brand, Springfield, President  
Rev. F. Berg, Beardstown, First Vice President  
Rev. O. L. Hohenstein, Bloomington, Second Vice President  
Rev. E. Berthold, Danville, Secretary  
Prof. J. S. Simon, Springfield, Treasurer

When in 1907 the three districts came into being, the Illinois District had a purse with at least two pockets, a Church Extension pocket and a Mission pocket. Out of the Church Extension pocket the Southern and Central Districts each received \$500, (David Goldhammer says it was \$576.99) the Northern District \$536.60. Of the funds in the Mission pocket five-twelfths was given to the Northern District, four-twelfths to the Central, and three-twelfths to the Southern District.<sup>32</sup>

Dare anyone imagine that a division of property and area, and the allotment of money held in common ever goes as smoothly as the above report seems to indicate? At a Synodical Convention in years past, there was a long and tiring discussion how the contributions of money to Synod should be summarized and published. Finally in desperation the delegate from Frankenmuth in his Franconian dialect announced, "Dees is nit gesetzlich und nit evangelisch; dees is business," — not legalistic, not evangelical, but — business.<sup>33</sup> That ended the discussion. The question was resolved without further delay.

#### AND THE CHILD GREW

In 1907 the District circuits numbered five: 1 Champaign - Danville; 2. Springfield; 3. Peoria - Rock Island; 4. Quincy; and 5. Illinois Valley.

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<sup>32</sup> 33<sup>rd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1957, p. 34.

<sup>33</sup> Eighty Eventful Years, Ludwig Ernest Fuerbringer, p. 153.

In 1957 the District circuits numbered ten: 1. Altamont; 2. Bloomington; 3. Champaign - Danville; 4. Decatur; 5. Effingham; 6. Illinois Valley; 7. Peoria - Pekin; 8. Quincy; 9. Rock Island; and 10. Springfield.

In 1982 the District circuits numbered fourteen: 1. Altamont; 2. Bloomington; 3. Champaign; 4. Danville; 5. Decatur; 6. Effingham; 7. Jacksonville; 8. Lincoln; 9. Peoria; 10. Quincy; 11. Rock Island; 12. Springfield East; 13. Springfield West; and 14. Tazewell.

#### AND THE CHILD GREW

In 1907 the District counted 36,040 souls; 21,711 communicants; 83 pastors; and 118 congregations.

In 1957 the District counted 54,262 souls; 38,617 communicants; 104 pastors; and 130 congregations.

In 1982 the District counted 76,965 souls; 58,302 communicants; 120 parish pastors; 17 associate and assistant pastors and those in special ministries, five candidates eligible for calls, and 32 retired pastors for a total of 174; and 146 congregations.

Of the 146 congregations 79 were in existence before 1907; fifty-one of the 146 congregations came into being from 1907 to 1957; the remaining 16 congregations count their birthdays since 1957. Unless the fine print of the Lutheran Annual deceives us, St. John's of Quincy organized in 1837 and is older than Synod by ten years. Immanuel of Athens counts as many years as our District. During the District's jubilee of fifty years, 1957, the congregations in the District increased by three: Christ of Clinton, Christ of Delavan, and St. John's of Rushville.

#### 1957 - 1982 TWENTY-FIVE YEARS: OUR ANCHOR HELD IN CHRIST, OUR LORD

The fifties, the sixties, the seventies were not the best of times, neither were they the worst of times. It is man's poor vision and his poor memory that has him rejoice when the times are good and has him groan and moan when the times are not so good. Whether best or worst, good or bad, one thing is certain: "God's great love abides for aye" and "earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." During the years of "sour grapes" from the fifties to the present, God has not vacated His throne.

Winston Churchill called World War II the war to prevent the world from sinking back "into the abyss of a new Dark Age." After the signing of the surrender documents on the deck of the battleship Missouri, General Douglas MacArthur expressed the hope that "from this solemn occasion a better world shall emerge."<sup>34</sup> In less than five years after World War II, our nation became entangled in the Korean War. In the late sixties and early seventies American troops fought, bled, and died in the Vietnam War. These three wars from 1941 to 1973 one might call a second Thirty Years' War. Wars and rumors of wars can never God's church destroy. The church glories in the cross of Jesus "towering o'er the wrecks of time."

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<sup>34</sup> "The Story of America," Reader's Digest, p. 456.

Who can forget the unrest, and the strife, and the bitterness of the Civil Rights Movement that brought with it heartache and bloodshed, mobs in our streets, burning, wrecking and looting, lawlessness, disobedience, and rebellion. The church did not remain untouched. The times provided an awakening for our good. They taught us anew that from the heart of man proceed evil thoughts and deeds, that laws do not a righteous nation make, that the Gospel of God's love, God's forgiveness, God's peace in Christ are God's cure and remedy for society's ills and evils.

But the deepest, the sharpest hurt these 25 years was the controversy within our Synod. Districts have been made to weep and bleed; congregations have been cut in twain like one cuts apples for eating; one of our seminaries was left a shambles, but not destroyed by the exodus of more than those who remained. The years have not undone our Synod, disturbed but not destroyed, wounded but not slain.

God has preserved unto us our Synod and our District. It is good to recall that Synod and District have the same reason for existing. The districts are Synod. Synod is a union of all her members, baptized and confirmed; a union of congregations, circuits, and districts. The constitution of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is the Constitution of the Synodical Districts, when there were but four districts and today where there are 39 (now 35) districts. The reason for having this structure is stated in the Preamble of the Constitution: 1. The example of the apostolic church (Acts 15:1-31); 2. Our Lord's will that the diversion of gifts should be for the common profit (1 Corinthians 12:4-31).

For these 25 ears of God's grace, 1957 - 1982, let the superscription read — "...seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commanding ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Corinthians 4:1,2).

This is every congregation's concern, our District's concern, our Synod's concern, and this adds up to people remembering that "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). As members of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod we have the privilege, the undeserved honor to "accept without reservation: 1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice. 2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God." So reads Article II of Synod's Constitution.

The chief doctrine, from first to last, is that doctrine that declares the sinner righteous by grace alone. A Christian growth chairman of the LWML told of a survey among Lutheran women that revealed "an abundance of work-righteousness, hoping to get to heaven by their own good conduct." Then turning to the president of our District spoke her conclusion: "Tell your Pastors to preach from the pulpit that Jesus died to take away their sins."

### "TEACH THEM"

The one task that Jesus gave to the church is told in one word, "teach." Teach them by "making disciples of all nations," — "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," — "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." That we "preach unto them Jesus" is not tasteless manna. It is the refreshing nectar that

refreshes the heart that is weary. That we “preach unto them Jesus” is the grace, the wisdom, and the power of God that builds the church and “keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.”

To be what God wants us to be is the ongoing battle. Both sheep and lambs must be on a steady diet of the Word. We are the church militant, not yet the church triumphant. There are tares among the wheat, bad fish swimming with the good, fruitless trees standing among the fruitful. Where is the gladness to hear God’s Word gladly, to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18), when on the average only 40 percent, four out of every ten, are in attendance at the Sunday morning worship service?

It was the prayer of our synodical fathers and is also ours today that “God preserve unto us a pious ministry.” The worship service of the congregation is the best opportunity to “preach unto them Jesus” to more people than at any other time or through any other agency. Present in the Sunday morning service in spite of empty pews are “all sorts and conditions of men.”

#### “TEACH THEM” — THE LAMBS (SUNDAY SCHOOL)

The Sunday School is not just a session before the service, not just a session between the early and the late service, and not a session after the close of the service for the sake of convenience. The Sunday School is not an interlude that one might include or omit on the first day of the week, that is set aside for “the assembling of ourselves together.” The Sunday School is for teaching and learning, for growing and equipping the saints. Having been made a saint of God, St. Paul wrote: “I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep on striving to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to Himself” (Philippians 3:12). Make the most of it, the Sunday School, that one hour per week that will reach the greatest number of people next to the Sunday service.

“Feed my lambs!” Is there anything of greater importance? The Savior is the good example for children and their elders in home and in church. At the age of twelve Jesus let it be known that He must be about the Father’s business. He then went with Mary and Joseph and was subject unto them. During His public ministry Jesus let it be known that His lambs are not to be neglected. Suffer those little children to come unto Jesus, permit them, let them come, forbid them not, do not put any obstacles in their way, be a good example unto them, come with them. While the children are in their classes, attend a Bible class. For continuing in the apostles’ doctrine and in the fellowship of our fellow Christians there is no age limit. When once the fruit on the apple tree stops growing it falls to the ground. Sunday School and Bible classes are the instruments to connect us and keep us connected to our Savior, that we might live and not die.

It is the privilege and duty of the church to feed His lambs and with that goes the feeding of His sheep. St. Paul writes to the church, sheep and lambs: “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16). How rapidly are we growing, climbing Jacob’s ladder, moving heavenward? Let the figures for 1957 and 1980 speak.

In 1957: 125 Sunday Schools; 2,200 teachers and officers; 19,173 enrolled; a gain of 1,111 over the previous year. Total Bible Class enrollment 7,217.

In 1980: 145 Sunday Schools; 2,255 teachers and officers; 17,081 enrolled; a gain of 83 over the previous year. Total Bible Class enrollment 10,921.

## “TEACH THEM” — THE LAMBS (CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL)

The Christian Day Schools in our District are not many when compared with the number of Sunday Schools. Like the Sunday School the Christian Day School is an agency of the church engaged in educating and training children what to believe and how to live. “Our forefathers placed the Christian Day School next in importance to the office of public preaching.” Congregations within our District 25 years ago were urged to labor with determination and dedication toward Synod’s goal “of having 50 percent of our children in a Christian Day School by 1972.<sup>35</sup>

The report for 1958 shows an increase of 240 pupils and five additional teachers within our District over the previous year. It is also stated that the number of unchurched children in our Christian Day Schools increased from 219 to 249. The school year of 1957-1958 was a year of good vintage in the Lord’s vineyard. There were more gains than losses. The School in Bible Grove was closed “because of the inability to secure a teacher.” At Pana a Kindergarten was opened. New schools were dedicated in Rock Island and St. Peter. The new school at Christ Church in Peoria would be dedicated in the near future. Immanuel of Danville was enjoying the sweat of constructing a new school. Plans were well underway for the erection of a consolidated school in Peoria. Cooperating in this venture of faith were three congregations in Peoria: Mt. Calvary, Redeemer, and Trinity.<sup>36</sup>

In 1982 that spirit is with us still. In 1979 Springfield Lutheran High came into being followed by two Christian Day Schools, Mt. Calvary at Galesburg and Good Shepherd at Pekin. The school at Pekin is a joint effort of Trinity and St. John congregation in Pekin and St. John congregation near Green Valley. Of the 37 Christian Day Schools in our District, fifteen were in existence before the turn of the century. St. John’s of Beardstown, begun in 1848, is the oldest among the Christian Day Schools.<sup>37</sup>

In 1957 our District counted 36 Christian Day Schools; 123 teachers; 3,485 pupils. In that year 3,015 pupils were members of the Missouri Synod; 32 were members of other Lutheran churches; 228 were members of non-Lutheran churches; 210 claimed no church affiliation.

In 1980 our District counted 38 Christian Day Schools; 216 teachers; 4,178 pupils. In that year 2,897 pupils were members of the Missouri Synod; 107 were members of other Lutheran churches; 897 were members of non-Lutheran churches; 277 claimed no church affiliation. The 38 schools involved 51 congregations.

## “TEACH THEM” — THE LAMBS (PART-TIME AGENCIES)

Times change — programs change — the message remains the same!

## SUMMER SCHOOL AND VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

In 1957: 70 schools; 7,309 enrolled — of the total 1,862 were non-members.

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<sup>35</sup> 34<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1958, p. 65.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp.65, 66.

<sup>37</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, p. 53.

In 1980: 123 schools; 9,246 enrolled — of the total 2,656 were non-members. The teachers numbered 1,160.

#### WEEKDAY-RELEASED TIME

In 1957: 6 schools; 153 enrolled — of the total 33 were non-members.

In 1980: 134 schools; 2,117 enrolled — of the total 163 were non-members. The teachers numbered 234.

#### SATURDAY SCHOOL

In 1957: 30 schools; 437 enrolled — of the total 30 were non-members.

In 1980: no figures listed.

Within the period of some 20 years the good seed of the Word has been sown and God has given the increase, but not without prayer, good planning. Members, teachers, parents freely gave of their sweat and toil. They all bear the good title — workers together with God. When one counts the teachers there may be some duplication. It is however safe to write that the teachers “teaching them” — the lambs — in the Christian Day Schools, Sunday Schools, and in the part-time agencies in 1980 add up to more than 3,500. That is more than the membership of the largest congregations in our District.

#### BIBLE CLASSES

Among our congregations are there any that have not one Bible Class? There are today more than 10,000 attending Bible classes and study groups. In the early fifties our District participated in a “Bible Study Advance” effort. God blessed that effort. The percentage of our communicant membership enrolled in Bible classes in 1948 stood at 12.3 percent and rose to 17.1 percent in 1956.<sup>38</sup> Since then our youth and adult Bible classes have not climbed much higher. The enrollment in our Bible classes was at its best in 1977 when the enrollment reached 19.2 percent of our communicant membership.<sup>39</sup>

Our congregations today are offering many opportunities for spiritual growth in Bible classes that meet on Sunday and during the week, and devotional materials freely offered for home and family use, “*Portals of Prayer*” and seasonal devotions of God’s people. Bible study is the field that has no limit. Keep the gates open that the people may come in. The time is always right for the congregation to engage in an on-going “Bible Study Advance” effort.

“Teach Them” — the lambs and the sheep — the lambs in the Christian Day School, Sunday School, part-time schools; the sheep in Bible classes, and special classes for special people, developmentally disabled, physically and spiritually needing extra care, special classes for special groups, those not married, singles, those once married, but no longer, the deaf, the blind, the aged. Having tasted that the Word of God is sweeter than honey and more precious than gold, there is joy and satisfaction in sharing that taste.

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<sup>38</sup> 33<sup>rd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1957, p. 65.

<sup>39</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, p. 54.

## EVANGELISM: TEACH TO EQUIP

Education is not an end in itself. Evangelism is the life line of the church, reaching out and “bringing in the sheaves.” Our District cares, our District is concerned, that what we are taught we are to “live and tell” — what great things Jesus has done for us!

When we “preach (proclaim) unto them Jesus,” that is evangelism. When Evangelist George H. Beiderwieden, Jr. in 1968 delivered his essay, “My Brother’s Keeper,”<sup>40</sup> when Dr. Henry Eggold in 1972 delivered his essay, “Blessed to Be a Blessing,” that was training in evangelism.

In 1972 at the District convention no less than eight evangelism resolutions were approved. Five of the eight resolutions urge us: 1. to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Synod by winning souls; 2. to equip the saints for evangelism; 3. to encourage evangelism training for pastors; 4. to add a commission on evangelism to the board of directors; and 5. to engage a full-time director of evangelism.<sup>41</sup>

The very next year in September of 1973 Ellis T. Rottmann began serving as our District’s Evangelism Field Man. He served until June 1979. He stimulated pastors and congregations for the work of evangelism.

The present commission on evangelism is active in seeking ways to equip and train pastors and congregations for greater participation in winning souls for Christ. Since 1981 six Spiritual Gifts Seminars were held with 473 people attending; a Witness Workshop was held with 35 pastors and one layman in attendance; fifty congregations held Open House with these results: twenty-two congregations made a total of 2,114 contacts, two adults and 12 children requested baptism; nine people requested transfers; thirty-six enrolled in a Pastor’s class; thirty-nine children were added to the Sunday School and two enrolled in a Christian Day School; and seven were added by Affirmation of Faith.<sup>42</sup> There you have it. Evangelism is sowing as God commands and reaping what God produces. “Lord of harvest, let there be joy and strength to work for Thee!

## MISSION AND MINISTRY (SUBSIDIZED CONGREGATIONS)

Mission and Ministry are the King’s business in which the King’s people are engaged. Time is still with us, but “moves reluctantly on.” There will be a time when time shall be no more. Today is the time; “time for grace, time for work” to engage in the King’s business of building the kingdom of grace, enlarging the place of His tent, the Church.<sup>43</sup>

In 1957 the District claimed eleven congregations for special attention, assisting them with their birth, supplying a portion of the money for the purchase of land and buildings and for the salaries of pastors called to labor in these congregations. These eleven subsidized congregations numbered 1,766 souls, for work at home gave \$81,567.66, and for work at large \$12,446.04. Their indebtedness was \$86,886.39 and their subsidy from the District was \$25,648.07.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> 40<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1968, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> 42<sup>nd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1972, pp. 16, 53, 54.

<sup>42</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, p. 70.

<sup>43</sup> 34<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1958, p. 52.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

In 1981 there were fifteen subsidized congregations. They claimed 2,536 souls, for work at home gave \$343,086, and for work at large \$45,103. Their indebtedness was \$1,682,474 and their subsidy from the District was \$218,318.<sup>45</sup>

Subsidized congregations are gifts from God granting us the privilege and the honor to reach beyond our own little acre and become “workers together with God” also in other places. When we present our mission offerings to the Lord there ought to be a happy beat in our hearts, a delightful sparkle in our eyes, and willing hands to let go because our exalted King once died, gave His all for us and for all people. Some say, “give until it hurts.” That’s depressing! Far better and pleasing to the Lord and to the giver — “Give until it no longer hurts.” That’s exciting! Out of every mission dollar sent to the District office about 75 cents is sent to St. Louis for World Missions and about 25 cents remains in our District for the District’s missions and ministries.

There are within our District also some congregations that have received little or no financial help from the District. Local congregations have freely transferred members and given financial assistance, and their outreach made possible the additions of some congregations to our District. As every mother knows, there are no two births alike. The Lord uses a variety of ways to bring churches into existence.

#### MISSION AND MINISTRY (CAMPUS MINISTRY)

Dr. Ludwig Fuerbringer in his Eighty Eventful Years quotes Prof. A. Crull, a member of the Fort Wayne faculty in 1879 —

*Wer es kennt, der will es nicht;  
Wer es will, der kennt es nicht.*

(He who knows it, does not desire it;  
He who desires it, does not know it.)

Whatever the position, whatever the office, God must give His special grace to accept that responsibility, be content with it, and be happy in it. This holds true for every mission and ministry, including the campus ministry. Those who find themselves in this calling soon discover the task is far from easy. Nevertheless the prayer, time, and toil that one puts into it is gratifying. As in any Christian ministry so also in the campus ministry, what is sown may quickly take root or the pastor may discover the fruit of his labor in unexpected places years later.

In 1957 twenty colleges and universities within the area of our District, served by full-time and part-time campus pastors — the latter serving a congregation and the students, a town-gown ministry — counted a total enrollment of 37,570. Of this total, 3,655 were listed as members of the Missouri Synod, and 1,221 were listed as members of the Norwegian, Slovak, and Wisconsin Synods. Thirty students were received into membership by the rite of confirmation.<sup>46</sup>

The report for 1982 is not complete, but up-to-date as far as possible. While the total enrollment in 20 colleges and universities in 1957 was 37, 570, the total enrollment in 1982 at

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<sup>45</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, pp. 66, 67.

<sup>46</sup> 33<sup>rd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1957, p. 57.

the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana is 38,542. Since the retirement of Raymond Eissfeldt, campus pastor, the services and activities in mission and ministry have been limited. Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, has an enrollment of 10,587. Rev. Robert Hackler and DCE Thomas Alling are serving 827 students. Western Illinois University, Macomb, has an enrollment of 13,297. Rev. Lindsay Watkins is the pastor, recently installed and serving 215 students. In Charleston and in Macomb it is a town-gown arrangement, in Charleston the dual ministry under one roof, and in Macomb the ministry of Word and Sacrament takes place in two locations. Illinois State University, Normal, has an enrollment of 20,274. Rev. Robert Lange is the campus pastor serving 721 students. At these four stations the buildings, erected with the cooperation and support of our District congregations, are the type and size to well serve the university families.<sup>47</sup>

The Bible has both major and minor prophets. The college and universities within the area of our District are not all big. Some are little. Never despise that which is small. Jesus was born in little Bethlehem, lived in despised Nazareth, served a little congregation. He "had not where to lay His head," and two friends buried Him in a borrowed grave. "Where you are is of no moment, but only what you are doing there," said Petrarch, the poet, Whittier by name, wrote this line, "Oh, brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother." And for the icing that tops the cake, we have the word of our Savior, "whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (Matthew 20:26b).

#### MISSION AND MINISTRY (INSTITUTIONAL)

Our District was somewhat denuded when the Seminary in Springfield took leave of us in 1976 for its future home in Fort Wayne, Indiana. For many years faculty and students were available in the District as guest and vacation-time preachers. That privilege is now given to vicars serving the District and retired pastors. The District congregations suffer not too much.

There is another loss that is not a catastrophe, but does affect special people. When the seminary moved to Fort Wayne, it took along the Wyneken Mission Society that in 1958 numbered 109 seminary students, serving 27 institutions and stations in the Springfield area. This seminary group in one year conducted 4,891 bedside devotions and served 14,476 in their group devotions and Sunday School classes.<sup>48</sup>

During the years, 1957 and following, Chaplains Otto Borchelt and Harry Timm tell of their services to people sitting and lying near the "Pools of Bethesda," providing them with the "Bread of Life." Year after year the two chaplains were on call to service people, who were as sheep without a shepherd.

At the Lincoln State School and Farm in 1958, Otto Borchelt conducted 92 services and 135 ward devotions showing a total attendance of 13,654. In addition the chaplain conducted 338 private devotions. Five hundred of the 5,200 patients were Lutherans. In the same year at Jacksonville the same chaplain preached to 5,253 at his bi-weekly services, held 181 ward

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<sup>47</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, p. 68.

<sup>48</sup> 34<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1958, p. 56.

devotions. Of the 33,597 patients at Jacksonville State Hospital, 286 at that time were Lutherans.<sup>49</sup>

At the Peoria State Hospital in 1958 Harry Timm ministered to 226 Lutherans. When filled this hospital cared for 2,600 mentally ill. In 14 Lutheran services and 264 ward services the chaplain reached 5,487 bedtimes sharing the good news of salvation in 902 bedside visits and counseling sessions. At the T. B. Sanatorium Chaplain Timm had a congregation of 61 patients, and conducted services at the County Nursing Home, Proctor and Buehler Homes, Mirell Hospital, and ten nursing and convalescent homes, reaching 5,909 people for whom Christ died.<sup>50</sup>

The thirty-sixth convention of our District in 1961 reports the addition of a third institutional chaplain, the Reverend Martin Torbeck, called to serve the Lincoln State School and Colony. By the year 1970 Chaplains Timm and Torbeck had retired. To assist and give relief to Chaplain Borchelt in the field of institutional missions that had too many areas for one man, the wives of two Seminarians, Mrs. Rebecca Dahmann and Mrs. Pat Wulf, came to the rescue, both serving at the Jacksonville Mental Health and Development Center.

It was at this time that patients in our large State Hospitals were moved to nursing and county homes throughout the state. This made for a greater responsibility for pastors and congregations to serve “the least of these” that God has placed at our doors. This change explains, at least in part, why the District is no longer supporting three institutional chaplains. Deaconess Linda Schaefer now ministers to 550 patients at the Lincoln Development Center. Mrs. Ethel L. Kay at the Jacksonville Mental Health and Developmental Center ministers to 97 in weekly classes and to 130 in ward visits. At the Ivanhoe Nursing, Mrs. Kay serves 50, teaches a Bible Class of five and a sign language class of six. During the week and Sunday she teaches a class of twelve children.<sup>51</sup>

#### MISSION AND MINISTRY (DEAF)

They hear not, yet hear so well; they speak not, yet speak so well! To minister to these precious people is a special grace that God gave to Pastor N. P. Uhlig. He worked with the children attending the Illinois School of the Deaf at Jacksonville, traveled speedily, so we are told, throughout the District, seeking and bringing into the fold our good Shepherd people whose ears cannot hear words and sounds and whose tongues are tied.

Mrs. Earl Boucher, president of the LWML in 1946, invited Pastor Uhlig to speak of his work to the members of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League and to any and all who would come to hear. His visits to the LWML rallies in 1946 and 1947 started a fire that is still burning. From the LWML came gifts that amounted to \$20,000. From Synod’s Peace Offering came a grant of \$15,000. The Church Extension Fund helped with a loan of \$10,000. The Walther League provided \$1,500 for visual aids. From individuals, organizations, congregations, day schools, Sunday schools (primarily in our District, but also in the Northern and Southern Illinois Districts, and in the English District) came sufficient gifts that soon filled the purse with little mites and many dollars that made a sum total of \$97,000, that was enough to pay for the site, chapel, parsonage, and equipment; enough to make possible the dedication of the chapel on

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, p. 69.

September 13, 1953.

From 1938 to 1945 Pastor Uhlig served the deaf at Jacksonville while living in St. Louis. In August 1945 there was a division of the field that he served. That division made Illinois his field and moved him to make Jacksonville his home. But his passion for souls sent him on to Bloomington-Normal where he began monthly worship services on January 5, 1947. Pastor Uhlig continued his mission and ministry to the deaf in Central Illinois until 1956.

From 1956 to 1962 the deaf in our District were served by Pastor Delbert I. Thies. What Uhlig planted, Thies watered. Pastor and Mrs. Thies coming from Tennessee into Illinois with eight children the family lived and worked among us. Leaving our District in 1962 for another field, their children numbered ten. For the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Bloomington-Normal, Pastor Thies sent greeting and a picture of father, mother, and their ten children. The children appear to have ripened well, all showing happy faces that indicate the Savior's peace and contentment within their hearts. It is a picture worth twelve hundred words, 100 words each for father, mother, and for each of their ten.

Rev. Orlin Anderson is the pastor of the deaf in our District since 1962. Living in Jacksonville as did the Thies family, Pastor Anderson serves at the Illinois School for the Deaf, the Illinois School for the Visually Impaired, the Jacksonville Mental Health and Developmental Center, and several nursing homes. Anyone who has attentively observed a pastor to the deaf signing the proceedings of a convention hour after hour or attending a worship service in which a pastor signs and speaks to worshipers who cannot hear and do not speak must be filled with amazement that there is also in this mission and ministry a sharing of that simple message of salvation that "not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble" can grasp (1 Corinthians 1:26).

In 1974 Robert Rowland II served the deaf in Peoria and in Bloomington-Normal as a part-time pastor and as a part-time instructor at our Springfield Seminary. He is now serving the deaf in California.

In 1976 Larry J. Larsen was installed as a full-time assistant to serve the deaf in Greater Peoria, Bloomington-Normal, Quincy, Springfield, Decatur, and Lincoln Development Center. Worship services are now held every Sunday in Peoria and in Normal. In the past the deaf worshipped at Trinity Church in Bloomington and for several years at Trinity Church in Bloomington and for several years at Christ Lutheran in Normal. It was in that setting that Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Bloomington-Normal hung the bells of joy in the worship area and rang thanks to God for 35 years of His favor on March 7, 1982, the year of our District's Diamond Jubilee.<sup>52</sup>

The record of our mission and ministry to the deaf shows 130 baptized members and 102 communicants, an enrollment of 130 in the Jacksonville School of the Deaf, 61 of these indicating a preference for the Lutheran Church. At the Mental Health and Developmental Center, School for the Visually Impaired, Ivanhoe Nursing Home, Pastor Anderson ministers to 105. Stations served by Pastor Larsen also teaches 46 students in nine classes for the mentally retarded deaf at Peoria, Latham, and the Lincoln Development Center.

A statement by the Synodical Board for Missions issued November 5, 1969, brought to our attention "that Synod's Handbook places the responsibility for the conduct of all mission and

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<sup>52</sup> 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Worship, Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Normal, March 7, 1982.

ministry upon the District's of Synod.<sup>53</sup> Our District in 1970 voted to accept that responsibility. This change in administration from Synod to District gives to the deaf and to the District congregations a deeper sense of walking together, of our weeping when they weep, of their weeping when we weep, and our rejoicing with them and their rejoicing with us.

Like the end of the rainbow that is never reached, so it is with mission and ministry. It is the road that has no end, until time is no more. Our District is also engaged in ministries known among us as Social Ministry, but definitely not social gospel. This ministry of our District is varied and includes nursing homes, homes for the sick, in their homes and in hospitals, ministering to prisoners, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, supporting Lutheran Welfare Services, Child and Family care, Rural Life, Town and Country, Inner City.<sup>54</sup> There are no limits. There are no boundaries. In all of these missions and ministries to all sorts and conditions of people the heart and center of our caring that we bring unto them Jesus dare not change.

At the present time Dr. Clarence Spiegel is serving in the ‘inner city’ in Springfield, preaching every Sunday at Holy Trinity. Pastor Eldor Haake for some fifteen years has served at the East Moline State Hospital. Pastor Charles Olander of Zion, New Holland, is engaged in ministry at the Minimum Security Prison in Lincoln. To these names one could add the names of people, clergy and laity, in such great numbers that it would tire both reader and scribe. Blessed are they to whom the Savior will say, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

#### MISSION AND MINISTRY (LYF – LWML – LLL)

In rural, urban, and suburban communities the work goes on, one on one, face to face, in groups — a never-ending privilege to share that Savior who died for them and for us. LYF stands for Lutheran Youth Fellowship; LWML stands for Lutheran Women’s Missionary League; LLL stands for Lutheran Laymen’s League. Each has a heritage worthy of our remembrance.

#### LUTHERAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

What is today the official youth organization of our Synod has for its predecessor the youth organization that was planted on May 23, 1893 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo, New York. The next year they chose the name Walther *Liga*. When among the second and third generations of German immigrants the ‘*Mutter Sprache*’ began to yield to the King’s English, the *Liga* became Walther League.<sup>55</sup> The Walther League ceased to exist as a legal organization by the action taken at the Synodical Convention in Milwaukee in 1971. It was a burial not too pleasant for some. The seventies were still a time of unrest in church and nation. Voices called for change and called it progress, but progress is not always synonymous with success.

Pastor Harlan C. Wendler of Effingham was asked for the Latin motto of the Walther League. He replied: “I do remember the Latin motto. It was *Pro Aris et Focis* — which is loosely translated ‘For Church and Home,’ more literally ‘For Altars and Hearths.’ ... Our local congregation calls its youth program the LYF. The zone goes by the name Walther League.” The name may change but the purpose of the Walther League that served so well in the past must

<sup>53</sup> 41<sup>st</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1970, p. 51.

<sup>54</sup> 40<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1968, p. 46.

<sup>55</sup> Lutheran Cyclopedias, p. 836.

continue:

1. Worship — building a strong faith in the Triune God;
2. Education — discovering the will of God for their daily life;
3. Service — responding to the needs of all men;
4. Recreation — keeping the joy of Christ in all activities;
5. Fellowship — finding the power of belonging to others in Christ.<sup>56</sup>

Were the youth of yesterday involved in activities that edify and build? The Walther League was involved “in worship, leadership training, camping, writing and publishing, training projects of service, missions, vocational guidance, recruitment for church professions, opportunities for practical experience in roles of leadership.” ...It sponsored the Wheat Ridge Foundation for the support “of hospitals in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, Japan, India, Hong Kong, New Guinea, and Nigeria; ...published the Walther League Messenger (that had a good ring and a healthy punch); the Worker’s Quarterly, a program guide; Arena, a monthly magazine for teen-agers.”<sup>57</sup> And they had still other chestnuts in the fire for a variety of spirited activities.

The name was changed from Walther League to Lutheran Youth Fellowship in 1971. It was not until 1977 that the Synodical Convention in Dallas resolved to establish a national youth organization. There are in recent years pulse and heart for our District’s youth. In the District Conventions Proceedings of 1978 is a resolve that was adopted: “That our CID youth be kept aware of the unfolding of the new Synodical youth organization; that Circuits would give priority attention to Circuit Youth Cabinets to enable this to happen; and that our Circuit Youth Cabinets help bring matters of the new organization to our youth and facilitate the establishment of such an organization.”<sup>58</sup>

The congregations of our District are invited and encouraged to follow in the footsteps of the fathers who pioneered in the youth work of our Synod. Edward F. Krueger. Administrative Assistant for Education and Youth in our District, is of that heart, mind, and stature. He reminds us that “events fly by rapidly” and then makes the point never too oft repeated: “One constant motif that always remains is Christ and His cross. He is God’s Son; He is Savior; He is Lord. He acted in the past, and He acts now in your history and mine, in the church, in your congregation, in our District and Synod.”<sup>59</sup>

#### LUTHERAN WOMEN’S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Woman is man’s crown and glory. That is where the Scriptures place woman, “high and lifted up.” Woman is equal to man as a partner “in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.” Woman’s arena of service is unique to her. Woman is the rib to which God has attached the meat of service in home, church, and nation.<sup>60</sup>

The LWML was organized forty years ago, in July of 1942. Of our three auxiliary organizations the LWML is our “Johnnie come lately.” They were about the King’s business before 1942. Their activities in Bible Study and Christian service did not go unnoticed. They

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> 45<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1978, p. 151.

<sup>59</sup> 46<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1980, p. 53.

<sup>60</sup> Lutheran Cyclopedias, p. 822.

were busy in the Savior's mission and ministry when prior to 1928 some of our pastors and spirited women saw the need to secure the united efforts of women throughout Synod in support of missions and ministries, over and above and beyond those missions and ministries not provided for in the Synodical budget.<sup>61</sup>

During the years from 1928 to 1942 the ground was prepared and the seed was sown for a united organization of women that the Lord would fashion into a mighty army, "soldiers of the cross." Within that period of fourteen years the conclusion was reached not to let this mighty army of women stand idle in the market place, but let us bid them God's blessing and go with us where the Savior's mission and ministries are so desperately needed.

At the 1938 Synodical Convention in St. Louis two proposals regarding organized women's work were submitted. The Synod took the plans under advisement and appointed a committee to study the situation.<sup>62</sup> This is not said in criticism, just a response to a procedure that is oft repeated in any 'body corporate.' There are times when "haste makes waste" and when "look before you leap" is in order. But the spirit and the enthusiasm of determined women did not cool. As a result in 1941 the Synodical Convention approved the creation of a Synodical organization of women, and the LWML became a reality.

The objectives serve as guideposts directing the traffic of all LWML activities in the right directions:

- I. To develop and maintain a great mission consciousness among the women of Synod through —
  - A. Missionary Education — "Study to show thyself approved unto God" (2 Timothy 2:15).
  - B. Missionary Inspiration — "They said, Let us rise up and build, so they strengthened their hands for this good work" (Nehemiah 2:18).
  - C. Missionary Service — "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17).
- II. To adopt and support mission projects through prayer, cooperation, and financial support, especially those projects for which adequate provision has not been made in the work program of District and Synod.

This second objective has been and is being supported in the spirit of the LWML motto, "Serve the Lord with Gladness." Year after year mite boxes in uncounted homes of District and Synod yield pennies, nickels, dimes, and larger coins for work in the Lord's vineyard. One quarter out of every dollar given in this manner is used for mission and ministry by the International LWML and three quarters of every dollar is used by the Districts within their Districts and wherever needed, anywhere in the world.

On June 5, 1982, the LWML of our District met in the Bone Student Center, on the campus of Illinois State University in Normal. At this convention a congregation of 847 made the sound "as of a rushing mighty wind," all uniting in the convention theme, "Mold me, Lord!" The

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

teacher, Mr. Ted Richter, likened us unto clay vessels that need polish that only the Holy Spirit can give, as we feed in the green pastures that God provides for us in His Word.

Many of our Lutheran women are drinking well and deep of the ‘still waters’ that the Good Shepherd provides, with the result that they can speak to one another and to people who must still be told of God’s great love in Christ alone.

Many are the mites that have been placed into the LWML mite boxes and out of the mite boxes have been passed on to make “beautiful the feet of them, that bring good tidings, that publish peace; that bring good tidings of good, that publish salvation” (Isaiah 52:7). St. Paul speaks the same message in Romans 10:15 — “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.”

The mites so gladly given sing for us year after year. From 1946 to 1982 the mites have provided a mission fund of \$777,916.13 distributed in our District and beyond the area of our District as follows:

1947 – Our Savior, Lawrenceville	\$5,000
1948 – Brush College Chapel, Decatur	\$5,000
1949 – Christ for the Deaf Chapel, Jacksonville	\$10,000
1950 – Mt. Calvary, Galesburg	\$500
1950 – Trinity, Casey	\$6,000
1950 – Good Shepherd, Hoopeston	\$6,000
1951 – Holy Cross, Moline	\$5,000
1951 – Redeemer, Peoria	\$5,000
1952 – Student Chapel, Champaign	\$7,155.95
1953 – Student Chapel, Champaign	\$7,000
1953 – Christ for the Deaf Chapel, Jacksonville	\$2,000
1954 – Christ for the Deaf Chapel, Jacksonville	\$3,760.47
1954 – Portable Chapel, Urbana	\$7,000
1955 – Grace, Marquette Heights	\$4,500
1955 – Christ for the Deaf Chapel, Jacksonville	\$4,500
1956 – Concordia, Springfield	\$6,406.25
1956 – Mt. Calvary, Decatur	\$6,406.25
1957 – Immanuel, Macomb	\$6,047.50
1957 – Trinity, Urbana	\$6,047.50
1958 – Concordia, Marshall	\$6,190.85
1958 – Christ, Delavan	\$6,109.85
1959 – Christ, Clinton	\$6,322.16
1959 – Grace, Marquette Heights	\$6,322.16
1960 – St. Paul, Pittsfield	\$6,673.04
1960 – Immanuel, Charleston	\$6,673.04
1961 – Our Savior, Springfield	\$6,992.91
1961 – Mt. Calvary, Galesburg	\$6,992.91
1962 – St. Matthew, Milan	\$7,100.21
1962 – Immanuel, Peoria	\$7,100.21
1963 – Mission, Manito	\$7,228.21
1963 – Chapel Addition, Champaign	\$7,228.21
1964 – Medical Mission Supplies	\$7,409
1964 – Good Shepherd, Rochester	\$7,409.89
1965 – Bethesda Lutheran Home	\$7,834.22
1965 – Scholarship Fund, CID	\$7,834.22

1966 – Medical Missions Scholarship Fund	\$7,853.61
1966 – First Lutheran, Sterling	\$4,712.17
1966 – St. John, Rushville	\$3,141.45
1967 – Mission for the Blind, Peoria	\$7,940.95
1967 – Student Center, Macomb	\$7,940.94
1968 – Mission, Washington	\$8,107.89
1968 – Concordia Tract Mission	\$2,066.99
1969 – Lutheran Bible Translators	\$4,133.98
1969 – Lutheran Child Welfare Association of IL	\$4,133.98
1969 – Concordia Seminary Hour, Springfield	\$6,200.97
1970 – Bethesda Lutheran Home Building Fund	\$7,777.80
1971 – Macomb Debt Reduction	\$9,065.71
1971 – Faith, Lincoln	\$4,532.85
1971 – Holy Cross, Peoria	\$4,532.85
1972 – Lutheran High School in New Guinea	\$8,540.62
1972 – Pastor Alber's Memorial: Brazilian Scholarship	\$6,405.47
1973 – Camp Cilca	\$9,968.60
1973 – Medical Supplies, Lutheran Hospital, New Guinea	\$4,984.29
1973 – Scholarships: Jungle Aviation & Radio Service	\$2,492.15
1973 – Two-Way Radio in Remote Areas	\$2,492.15
1974 – Camp Cilca	\$10,360.86
1974 – Trinity, Casey	\$10,360.87
1975 – North American Indians, Don Johnson Ministry	\$10,788.25
1975 – Lutheran Bible Translators, Jim and Laura Laesch	\$10,788.24
1976 – Ascension, East Peoria	\$11,291.77
1976 – Nigerian Medical Missions & LAMP	\$11,291.77
1977 – Epiphany, Dunlap	\$11,491.33
1977 – Camp Cilca All Season Lodge	\$5,745.66
1977 – Dakota Boys Ranch, Minot, N. Dakota	\$5,745.66
1978 – Blind Ministry, St. Louis	\$12,594.75
1978 – Christ for the Deaf, Jacksonville	\$10,495.62
1978 – Linda Schaefer Project	\$2,099.12
1979 – Faith, Sullivan	\$14,325.65
1979 – Wittenberg Lutheran Center, Normal	\$14,325.65
1980 – Lutheran School Association, Springfield	\$15,781.41
1980 – Our Redeemer, Forsyth	\$15,781.41
1981 – Lutheran Braille Workers	\$16,409.21
1981 – Preaching-Teaching Station in Newton	\$16,409.21
1982 – Concordia Seminary Deaconess Training Program	
India Evangelical Lutheran Church	\$14,694.21
1982 – Good Shepherd Mission, Sherman	\$14,694.20

With just a few words inserted between the convention themes from 1957 to 1982, the LWML years sing for us: Go and tell, share Christ with others, for we are saved to serve and give all glory to God. We are laborers together with God and we work while it is day, till the

whole world knows. We are joyous workers in the Lord and pray that every tongue shall praise Thee. You have given a radiant faith and for this gift we praise Thy name. To God alone all glory for the Word for the world. Praise God from whom all blessings flow, shout joy — share love, live with more love, bloom where you are planted, and let the Son Shine. Freedom is: Being His, saints commissioned and compelled. Heaven is my home, prepare the way, spread the Word, walk in Wisdom. Mold me, Lord.

The Christian service of Christian women has at times been described as a service of *Kinder, Kicke, und Kirche* — children, kitchen, and church. The LWML has not lost sight of these important areas. There are additional areas that the Lord has opened to women. To equip, educate, train, maintain, and increase the membership, the LWML publishes the Lutheran Women's Quarterly and with each issue a District Supplement, in our District called the Clarion. With Bible Study, seminars, workshops, and helpful literature like mission tracts, pamphlets bearing good tidings, and packets of "Mustard Seeds" to be shared with family, friend, and stranger, women are serving the Lord with gladness.

The District LWML presidents since 1957:

Mrs. Wilbert Kasper, Peoria	1957-61
Mrs. Raymond Eissfeldt, Champaign	1961-64
Mrs. Otto Stahlke, Springfield	1964-68
Mrs. John Wenthe, Decatur	1968-70
Mrs. Martin Garbe, Mattoon	1970-72
Mrs. John Meyer, Galesburg	1972-76
Mrs. Howard Mull, Rantoul	1976-80
Mrs. Lewis Harms, Rock Island	1980-

As of March 1982 the LWML of our District counts 5,103 members in 175 societies in 141 of our 146 congregations. For this "Let the Amen sound from His people again" and again and again!

#### LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

"Supporting the church in word and deed" is the Magna Charta" of the Lutheran Laymen's League. It was during the days of the Synodical Convention in Milwaukee in 1917 that twelve laymen met in the home of F. C. Pritzlaff and "launched a successful effort to liquidate" Synod's debt of \$100,000.<sup>63</sup> (Was their number twelve or twelve minus one? One source says twelve; a second source lists the names of eleven. There were 12 tribes, 12 apostles, and John seeing that great city, the holy Jerusalem, saw twelve gates and at the gates twelve angels. We like the number 12).

In that group was a layman of our District, H. W. Horst of Rock Island, a man unique, standing with men like Aaron and Hur, who came to the aid of Moses, "holding up the prophet's hands." Twelve men in 1917 determined with God's help to refill Synod's purse. At that convention H. W. Horst was elected to Synod's Board of Directors and served until 1944.

As a member of the Board at his own expense, Mr. Horst visited congregations and mission stations in South America. Upon his return he repeatedly told what he had seen and heard. He was persuaded and determined that God must lift "his Synod" — the Synod that Horst loved — in mission and ministry so that people everywhere might hear from "his Synod" how great our

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<sup>63</sup> Lutheran Cyclopedias, p. 505.

God, how great His love for sinners! That man, a laymen among many, loved "his Synod," serving his God and Lord by supporting the church with time, talent, and treasure.

Having discovered that the land in Synod was ready and ripe to accept more digging and dunging in established congregations and in congregations that God would call into being, those laymen of yesterday lived to see the fruit of their labor. This venture of faith began in Milwaukee, June 22, 1917.

As a thankoffering at the close of World War I the LLL resolved to collect a \$3 million endowment fund to give financial aid to "inform pastors, teachers, professors, and their widows and orphans." In June of 1923 the LLL gave to the Synod for that fund more than \$2,300,000.<sup>64</sup>

With that success the LLL was off and running Radio Station KFUO, "The Gospel Voice" of St. Louis was dedicated December 14, 1924. The cost of the station, \$14,000, was provided by the students of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, the Walther League, the LLL, and others.<sup>65</sup> The LLL was also in the forefront of supporters for the Lutheran Hour that began so small in 1930. Bringing Christ to a world confused and lost, KFUO and the Lutheran Hour stand and function as memorials to the dedicated laymen of yesterday and today.

In 1943 the League began publishing the Leader's Guide for LLL-affiliated clubs and inaugurated seminars to help train the laity for service in mission and ministry; in 1944 the League began providing scholarships to Valparaiso University and in the same year produced its first feature film, Youth for the Kingdom; in 1947 the League initiated a campaign to gather money for a classroom-administration building at the university in Indiana. For five years from 1949 to 1954 the LLL operated the Lutheran Hospital at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

The fifties in 1900 and also the sixties and seventies were busy decades for the Lutheran Laymen's League. A placement program for Lutheran workers was begun; the League Bulletin was changed to a newspaper format and became the Lutheran Layman; the LLL hand in hand with Synod planned and carried out "a program for enlisting and training the laity." A radio program, "The Family Hour" was produced from 1954 to 1971; financial support was given to begin microfilming at the Concordia Historical Institute in St. Louis in 1954; in the same year summer study grants for pastors were made available; in 1956 a Youth Leadership Training Program was begun at Valparaiso University.

Due to the continuing growth in activities and services for both LLL and Concordia Publishing House, the LLL took leave of the rented rooms at the Publishing House and dedicated its own headquarters building in April of 1959 at 2185 Hampton in St. Louis. To that building a wing was added in October of 1971. "Preaching through the Press" went to press in 1961, advertising God's good news of salvation in secular publications.<sup>66</sup>

Time and season come and go; time and tide wait for no man; heaven and earth will pass away; but in our day until the end of time the church will be at work. This arm of Synod, the LLL, is at work with heart and good spirit in this diamond jubilee of our District, supporting radio programs in a variety of forms that originate from 19 overseas Lutheran Hour offices aired in more than 125 countries in about 45 languages.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 658.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. p. 505.

There is today the radio ministry in our country and in Canada, the weekly Lutheran Hour aired over about 1,200 stations, Joy, a weekly music and meditation program aired over about 300 stations, Day by Day with Jesus, a daily five-minute devotional program aired over about 400 stations, a fifteen-minute Spanish drama aired over about 45 stations. The LLL television ministry, This is the Life, is seen weekly over about 150 stations, animated specials featuring Benji and Waldo are aired seasonally, and Patterns for Living featuring reruns of This is the Life episodes continue to bring peace and hope that people everywhere need.

As in the past "Preaching through the Press" reaches untold numbers through newspaper ads, posters, and booklets to help people in every walk of life, whether a situation of too much prosperity or not enough of it, whether the situation calls for laughter or salty tears. Accompanying these programs of the LLL are God's power and wisdom that God supplies through private and group Bible study and corporate worship.

In 1944 the Lutheran Laymen's League counted 426 members in our District; in 1957 the membership reached 3,837; in 1981 the count stood at 7,086, and the membership goal for 1982 has been set at 8,000 members.

Our District gratefully remembers the services of these LLL presidents:

B. J. Jordan, Decatur	1930
F. W. Martens, Bloomington	1931-32
Frank Mehrings, Peoria	1933-34
J. D. McDonald, Peoria	1935-36
C. R. Heidbrink, Quincy	1937-38
W. D. Brune, Jacksonville	1939-40
Otto Rittmiller, Bloomington	1941-42
A. A. Nicols, Savanna	1943-44
Alfred Loetterle, Lincoln	1945-46
W. E. Stoll, Mount Pulaski	1947
Martin E. Garbe, Mattoon	1948-49
Arthur Stube, Danville	1950-51
Karl G. Schmidt, Beecher	1952-53
Alvin Bluhm, Clayton	1953-54
Carlton Schumacher, Chapin	1955-57
Lud Haluska, Peoria	1957-59
Del T. Precht, Decatur	1959-60
Ken Degler, Mattoon	1960-62
W. K. Kidwell, Mattoon	1962-64
Irvin L. Heins, Chenoa	1964-66
C. Arthur Schoessel, Rock Island	1966-68
Paul D. Morrison, New Berlin	1968-70
Weldon Renken, San Jose	1970-74
Merlin Wetzel, Mattoon	1974-78
Forrest Meseke, Shobonier	1978-80
Norman Kleinschmidt, Bushnell	1980-

Is the LLL worthy of our prayers, our support, and our participation? The answer lies in the following letter (and there are many like it) addressed to the Lutheran Laymen's League: "I have been listening to your program for quite some time, and I have finally decided to write you. Your programs have been a great help to me and in my home. Little by little Christ has been entering into my life with increasing conviction by listening to your programs. I feel like your

brother. Since hearing your programs I have accepted God as my Savior. For a long time I have considered joining that path and today I am on that road thanks to you.”<sup>67</sup>

#### CENTRAL ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CAMP ASSOCIATION (CILCA)

In 1982 a suburban or city lot might sell for as much as \$18,000, a ten-acre plot to be used for housing might sell for \$3,500 per acre. In 1948 our District purchased 140 acres of Illinois land for \$35 per acre. These 140 acres plus the purchase of 20 acres in the early fifties, and still another land purchase of 30 acres in the early sixties give our District a total of 190 acres and adequate space for buildings as needed and *Lebensraum* for people who love to be where the buffalo once roamed, where the deer still roam, and where one can hear the moo of the cows in the pasture, located twelve miles northwest of Springfield.

The original 140 acres had neither barn nor house. Like trees in a forest, buildings began to appear. In the year of that first purchase a garage, 8 by 20 feet, was moved on the land for a men’s retreat. By the end of July there were plans to build a kitchen and lay a concrete slab. On that slab stands the dining hall. In 1949 CILCA was opened to families for camping. Cabins were built and dedicated on May 7, 1950. The Assembly Hall for worship and meetings was built in 1954. The hall is now the chapel. When first built for a variety of activities, it was a leap forward that made possible conferences and retreats for pastors, teachers, seminary students, Walther League, then Lutheran Youth Fellowship, the LLL, the LWML, their leaders and members.

During the first ten years of the camp, 1948 to 1958, the camp association of the Central Illinois District, the District LLL, and the District Walther League determined to improve and to add to the camp programs. In 1963 a Forward program for CILCA was adopted by the District to smooth and improve the grounds and add more buildings to help satisfy the growing appetites for camping. This resolve like a sturdy wagon had sturdy wheels, but the troika of three oxen (District, LLL, and Walther League) was somewhat slow of foot. Take heart! It took Israel forty years to get to the Promised Land.

At the 40<sup>th</sup> District Convention in 1968 the District was authorized to provide the leadership in planning the camp programs and in exploring what additional facilities and buildings would be needed to make CILCA available and useful to all in all kinds of weather. During the next 14 years from 1968 to 1982 more programs for children, youth, and adults were added; the boundaries of the lake were extended; all outdoor areas for camping, sports, and games on land and in the water were improved; buildings for housing, worship, seminars, workshops, conferences, and meetings for all ages and special groups are not lacking. The newer buildings are the all-seasons Retreat Center, a Picnic Shelter, and the Camp Director’s office.<sup>68</sup>

Many in the interest of CILCA, in the varied programs offered and administered, have made the camp what it is today, a retreat from the hustle and bustle of today’s world to the peace and quiet for a weekend or longer beneath the canopy of heaven. To these who have so freely given of themselves we owe so much. David Bueltmann, whose “cup runneth over” as camp director, shares with us the names of the camp directors, 1949 to the present:

Martin Wallner	Sept. 1949	to	Sept. 1960
Arthur Spiefel	Jan. 1961	to	Sept. 1966

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<sup>67</sup> LLL Brochure.

<sup>68</sup> CILCA notes by Art Brockschmidt, April 20, 1980.

Norbert Schakel	May 1967	to	Jan. 1970
Tom Eggold	Jan. 1970	to	Aug. 1973
Norbert Schakel	Aug. 1973	to	June 1975
(Arnold Wentzel was resident manager 1970-1975)			
Rev. Bruce Harrmann	June 1975	to	June 1977
			(Velda Moore assisted)
The Camp Board	June 1977	to	May 1978
			(Rich Kubbe: summer of 1977)
Rev. David Bueltmann	June 1978	to	present

There is definitely a woman in Director Bueltmann's life: "Dear Pastor and Mrs. Bueltmann, Thank you for cooking. The food was delicious. Also I want to thank you for letting us have seconds on the food." So wrote a young member of an outdoor education class.

### STUDENT AID

"Take my silver and my gold!" Lustily we sing it. Let the hands dig deeply into the purse and discover that the purse does not bite the hand that feeds it. Student Aid is financial aid given to students in education and training in our colleges and seminaries for service in the church. During the 1956-57 school year, financial aid to nine students amounted to \$3,095.10 averaging \$343.90 per student.<sup>69</sup>

In 1963, and perhaps before 1963, our District Board administered the Grace Scholarship which today is the Clara and Spencer Werner Foundation in Paris, Illinois. Some money for student aid is allocated in the District budget, but the greater part of student aid is given by the Werner Foundation. God has richly blessed the Clara and Spencer Werner family, and from their God-given purse they have freely given uncounted dollars to the Lutheran Church in our District and elsewhere. (In addition to their annual gifts for student aid the Werner family contributed money for the Administration building at the Springfield Seminary). God in blessing them has made them a blessing unto many.

Thanks to the generosity of a family of our District, student aid is like an oasis of cooling shade and refreshing water for students and their families. Over the last several years the Clara and Spencer Werner Foundation has increased its annual gift from \$25,000 to \$40,000. For 1980 and 1981 a total of \$93,843 was available for student aid from the Foundation and other sources. With 102 students sharing in the use of \$92,955 for an average of \$911 per student, only a small balance of \$888 remains.<sup>70</sup>

### CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

The story of Church Extension needs telling and retelling. In 1907 the newborn Central Illinois District owned \$576.99 worth of Church Extension money. In need of more, the young district borrowed \$1,000. From 1907 to 1948 Church Extension was supported out of district funds and through personal gifts. The 1948 District Convention approved the soliciting of money from congregations and individual members, paying the lenders 2 ½ percent.

How this garden grew to lend the bounty of its apples to mission stations and congregations so that early rather than late land could be purchased and schools, parish halls, and churches

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<sup>69</sup> 33<sup>rd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1957, p. 83.

<sup>70</sup> 47<sup>th</sup> Convention Workbook, 1982, p. 86.

could be built! In April, 1961, the Fund went over a half million dollars; in May, 1964, the Fund reached one million; in November, 1969, again as much; in March, 1976, another million was added, and in December, 1979, still another million was added, making a total of five million dollars. In May of our jubilee year, 1982, our District has a Church Extension Fund of 5.8 million dollars.

Today, one-year \$100 loan earns 5 percent interest; a three-year \$100 loan, 6 percent; a four-year \$1,000 loan, 7 percent; a five year \$5,000 loan, 7 ½ percent; and six-month \$10,000 earns interest as allowed when such a loan is made. The money in this fund is at work in our District or through the Church Extension Fund of Synod beyond our District. It is a revolving fund used again and again.

“The money is lent, but never spent,” says David Goldhammer. The Extension Fund is like the “barrel of meal” that did not waste, and the “cruse of oil” that did not fail. As the members lend their dollars to this fund, they are placing them in God’s bank, all the while drawing interest and providing a useful fund for the King in the King’s business.

#### VENTURE OF FAITH

Synod’s Venture of Faith planned and begun in 1955 was designed to achieve greater financial support for mission and ministry in every District of Synod. It pointed out that Synod consists of the individual members and every congregation and every district working together. The work of Synod is the privilege of every congregation to share in the work of Synod depends upon the support of every member.

God blessed that Venture of Faith. There was a revival of interest in the work of Synod; in our District missions, ministries, and evangelism; in seminaries; in our efforts to proclaim the Gospel by means of radio, television, and the printed page; a greater interest in world missions and in the stewardship of giving.

In 1955 in Synod the offerings of nine million dollars increased to more than twelve million in 1956. The next year the giving increased to thirteen million.<sup>71</sup> The good seed of the Word was sown and God gave His blessing. During these past 25 years of our District’s existence again and again we have experienced what God’s people of every age have experienced that sowing sparingly we shall also reap sparingly and sowing bountifully we shall also reap bountifully.

Whatever might be the iron in the fire in any given period, whatever the specific mission – Venture of Faith, Faith Forward, Train Two, Church and Community, Family Life, Project Compassion, Project Philip, Ambassadors for Christ, Sunday School Teacher Training, Evangelism, Witnessing, the Great Commission Convocation – whatever the thrust, all have the assignment to build and edify God’s saints for Christian life and service.

Such was again the happy experience in District, in Synod, and in congregations that supported the latest venture of faith, Forward in Remembrance. How powerful is the faith that God gives to His saints? “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” said Jesus, “nothing shall be impossible to you.” (Matt. 17:20) When this venture was launched in 1979, the goal was set at \$40,000,000. It was a high mountain that challenged God’s people. Faint were the hearts of many. God the Holy Spirit, who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian

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<sup>71</sup> 34<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1958, p. 76.

Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, drew from our pockets money for mission and ministry that went beyond \$75,000,000. To reach that pinnacle God's people marched through many a 'red sea' that stood in the way.

This God-given treasure of money from God's people has begun to work in the world and also in our District. Sums of money have been allotted to assist in these seven mission and ministry expansions in our District:

1. Good Shepherd at Sherman, a new mission . . . . .	\$60,000
2. Good Shepherd at Newton, a new mission . . . . .	\$10,000
3. Epiphany at Dunlap, for mission expansion . . . . .	\$60,000
4. Good Shepherd at Minier, a new congregation . . . . .	\$10,000
5. Beautiful Savior at Colona, a new mission . . . . .	\$60,000
6. Our Redeemer at Robinson, a new mission . . . . .	\$25,000
7. Institutional Pastoral Ministry at Lincoln, a part-time ministry for three years, provided by Pastor Charles P. Olander, Zion, New Holland	\$25,000 <sup>72</sup>

"Therefore, in view of Christ's resurrection – He lives who once was dead, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Let that which has been written and what is yet to be written in this jubilee year of our District help us to be like the Macedonians of old who "first gave their own selves to the Lord." (2 Corinthians 8:5)

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7) "Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." (1 Corinthians 16:2)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board has the responsibility for providing good counsel and giving wise directives in all District matters that pertain to "missions, evangelism, parish education, youth ministry, finances, church extension, stewardship, and student aid" (Bylaw 2.77a). The Board divides itself into five commissions – Missions, Evangelism, Parish Education and Services, Youth Ministry, Finance and Management, thereby designating which chapter of District work is the primary responsibility of each group within the Board of Directors. The duties and powers delegated to each commission "remain responsibility of the Board" (Bylaw 2.77c).

"Change and decay" are all around us, but it need not follow that change and decay be yoked together and that you cannot have "one without the other." Some change but not all change

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<sup>72</sup> District Newsletter, February 12, 1982.

brings with it decay and ruin. The heart changed from unbelief to faith, from proud to humble, from arrogant to obedient is God's delight and moves angels to rejoice. Changes in many areas of church work here have been these 25 years, including changes in administration.

### The Ship Must Have A Pilot

Dr. Alvin W. Mueller . . . . .	1954 – 1963
Dr. Lewis C. Niemoeller . . . . .	1963 – 1970
Rev. Rudolph A Haak . . . . .	1970 – 1974
Rev. Dr. Arthur T. Kuehnert . . . . .	1974 – 1985

### President Mueller

When in 1957 our District reached the age of 50, Dr. Alvin W. Mueller was District President and simultaneously pastor of a large congregation, St. Paul in Decatur. How does one fill two such large responsibilities?

Dr. Mueller expressed himself as follows: "Rely heavily on vice-presidents and circuit counselors... I trusted my vice-presidents and counselors and asked them to be the president's assistants in the real sense of the term... If any problems arose in a particular circuit... I referred the problem to the circuit counselor for resolution. It worked in almost all situations... This is the way our fathers envisioned the office. It is in harmony with the Synodical Handbook: 'Each Circuit Counselor by virtue of his office, shall assist the District President within the circuit.'" (Bylaw 4.15a)

What does Dr. Mueller remember of the years 1954 to 1963, the years that he served as District President? "Briefly stated it is this: The loyalty, devotion, love, and unity of the brethren – pastors, teachers, professors, and laymen... There was, in those days, real trust among the brethren and real love for each other. We were convinced that our pastors and teachers were loyal to the Word and the Lutheran Confessions in their preaching and teaching. This does not mean that we were not constantly warning and admonishing each other. This we did with brotherly love! The District grew in numbers and new congregations... What was important too was that our District was convinced that actually it was the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in action in this particular area that comprised that Central Illinois District.

"In retrospect – it was an undeserved honor and a God-given privilege to serve that Lord of the Church and our Christian people as president of the Central Illinois District. Mistakes there were plenty, but isn't it wonderful to know that we have a gracious God, who loves us and forgives us through the merits of His Son, Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Savior. Successes there were many, but they were not of our making. They were granted to us by our rich God, who knows how to bless even when we fumble and stumble... The Church belongs to Him and not to us. We are but His servants for Jesus' sake. God be praised!

"During my presidency the Rev. Remus C. Rein was our only field man [assisting] congregations, especially in missions, evangelism, and stewardship. The office of the District at that time was in Decatur – in the home of Rev. Rein – which made it possible for me to be in constant touch with our executive secretary... He was a great man of God with many talents and the District flourished under his able leadership."

Pastor Herman Wetzel, serving as one of several vice-presidents during the presidency of Dr.

Mueller and being the eldest among them, received the nod and wrote: "What impressed me most about the Central Illinois District during my time as vice-president was its loyalty to Synod. The District was always ready to do its part and more for the support of the work of our Synod. If there was a balance at the end of the year it was usually sent to the Treasurer of Synod. It gave me great joy to behold how the members of the District supported the District with money and personal services... I was chairman of the Student Aid Committee for about 13 years. During that time we received the first donation from Mr. And Mrs. Spencer Werner for the Student Aid Fund. It was a check for \$5,000." When Mr. Werner died his family, his church, and our District suffered a great loss. Nevertheless, what the family began years ago is to this day still bearing fruit. From a trust fund established by the family, our Student Aid Fund is continuing to receive an annual grant much greater than the first grant of \$5,000.

President Niemoeller

When Dr. Lewis C. Niemoeller recollects and recalls his presidency, 1963-1970, he sings the same song in the same key as President Mueller and Vice-President Wetzel. This is his verse: "The years in which I had the privilege of serving as president were years of change. Some changes were material and physical, such as holding conventions in different cities and a separate District Office established for the full time District workers. Then there were changes in the world regarding the attitude toward Scripture that sought to bring about changes in our doctrinal attitudes. I saw pastors and teachers and congregations struggling with the winds of doctrine that blew around them.

"But in all the struggles what a joy it was to see how again and again the individual pastor, teacher, congregation member remained faithful to the Lord and to His Word. In all the changes the rank and file of the pastors and teachers and members continued to worship the Lord as their Savior, continued to abide faithful to the Scriptures, and continued to carry out in joy the task the Risen and Ascended Savior has given us.

"No wonder then that the years were years of growth – growth in the number of congregations, growth in the size of congregations, and growth in the spiritual maturity of the individual members.

"If I would list some of the things that impressed me very much as I would look over the District in Convention and in the work between Conventions, I would mention the determination to be about the business of the Father in heaven, the very high regard that congregations and workers have had for the office of the public ministry, and the cooperation of pastors, teachers, and congregations in the work of the Lord both in the local parish and in the District."

Dr. Niemoeller, like his predecessor Dr. Mueller, served both as pastor of a large congregation, Trinity in Springfield, and District President. He continues: "One of the burdens that weighed on my heart personally was the constant task of trying to carry out the responsibilities of the office of president and at the same time being faithful to the vow to be a faithful pastor of a large congregation and a faithful husband and father. Too often there was not enough time to do everything. Only a loving and forgiving Lord and an understanding District and a loving wife and family eased the burden.

"However, I will never forget the great things that the Lord has done in His grace and love through us sinners who are but the earthen vessels. My prayer is that the enjoyment of past blessings, both physical and spiritual, will always compel us to work faithfully in keeping with the gifts that the Lord has given to us individually and collectively. May our determination

continue to be: “To Him who has created, redeemed, and brought us to faith in Christ – to Him be all honor and glory!””

#### President Haak

Pastor Rudolph Haak in writing of the years 1970 to 1974, when he served as our District President, describes those years as “intense.” Those were intense years when “members of the District together with many members of the Synod were examining their convictions and loyalties mindful of the fact that their position might well need defending.”

So it was then and so it will be until the end of time in any congregation, district, or synod that earnestly contends “for the faith once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3)

We continue with Pastor Haak’s evaluation of those years. “There were also many positive factors to be noted. The afore-mentioned stirrings among our people drove them into God’s Word. It brought them to their knees in prayer. It called upon them to exercise their Christian faith. It drove us into the Lutheran Confessions and forced us to find the solid Lutheran foundations again. Benefits of all this carry years into the future.

“These were years in which there was a strong evangelism spirit in the District. A full time evangelism worker was supported by the District to help congregations in their primary task. People were conscious of the great commission and were determined to get the Gospel out to people.

“This basic interest in evangelism showed itself also in the financial support of our people for the work of the District and the Synod. Every year the people of the District came through to give beyond budgeted amounts... Student work at our universities and other non-church schools within the District had strong interest and support. Our people wanted to do more to reach our youth at every age level with the Gospel of Christ. Christian Day Schools enjoyed strong support. New styles of ministry were being sought in order to reach every one for whom our Lord died... They were years when there was wide and eager participation by God’s people in His work.”

#### President Kuehnert

Dr. Kuehnert comments on the eight years of his presidency: “As the home goes, so goes the nation. As congregations go, so goes the Synod... Congregations have been seeking the lost in their geographical areas of responsibility... During the past eight years 6,658 adults have been received into communicant membership, over 11 percent of the present communicant membership... The Central Illinois fields continue to be ‘white unto the harvest.’ The latest census shows 40.16 percent to be non-churched... Nine new congregations were formed during this time (8 years), five of the nine congregations during the current biennium. The Kingdom grows with the planting of new churches.

“Of the 142 congregations in the District in 1974, one hundred congregations have had a change of pastorates during the past eight years. Forty-two pastors and 46 teachers of the 252 teachers are serving still in the same congregation and school... It has been said that there are two areas which are the spiritual barometers of a congregation, indicating whether it is ‘rising’ or ‘falling:’ average Sunday worship attendance and partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

“As people in time of trouble turn more frequently to God in prayer, so there was a greater

and more intensive searching in the Holy Scriptures during the 70's. The historic Lutheran Confessions were studied with greater interest, highlighted by the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Augsburg Confession and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Book of Concord. The doctrines of the nature and authority of the Holy Scriptures, of Justification, and of the Church were the subjects of congregational Bible Classes and District Conventions.

"The pastors and members of our congregations and the teachers in our Christian schools are committed to our Scripture-based doctrinal position and to our Savior's Commission:

'God's Word is our great heritage And shall be ours forever;  
To spread its light from age to age Shall be our chief endeavor.  
Through life it guides our way, In death it is our stay.  
Lord, grant, while worlds endure, We keep its teachings pure  
Throughout all generations.'

"In 1974 the average worship attendance compared to the baptized membership in our District was 43.5 percent. During the past year it was 40.6 percent. Of the communicant members 81.1 percent partook of the Lord's Supper at least one or more times during 1974. During the past year it was only 76.1 percent. Pastors have been taking heed to the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers, and together with the Board of Elders they have been devoting special efforts according to the exhortation in Hebrews 10:23-25: 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised; And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.'

"The past eight years have seen a startling 103.12 percent increase in inflation. This means that the total offerings of our members of \$8,412,912 in 1974 would have been \$17,088,306 in 1981 according to the inflation rate. Even though pace was not kept with inflation, there was an increase in dollar amount as the members during 1981 laid \$15,372,007 on the Lord's altar.

"The members manifested that they have the heart and the will to be busy with our heavenly Father's business and that they have the fervent desire for His Kingdom to grow and expand. In a special effort they gave \$1,852,076.72, surpassing the Forward in Remembrance goal of \$1,316,150 for our District."

#### Assisting the District Presidents and District Congregations

1. Executive Secretary Remus C. Rein was the only field man during the presidency of Dr. Mueller. He assisted congregations in missions, evangelism, education, and stewardship.
2. Toward the end of Dr. Mueller's presidency came Martin F. Wessler, a second District Executive Secretary. His field was Youth and Education. He assumed his duties on June 15, 1962.<sup>73</sup>
3. When Remus Rein accepted a call to Oregon as pastor, George C. Albers, pastor of St. John's in Decatur, was called to serve as

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<sup>73</sup> 37<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1963, p. 73.

Executive Secretary for Missions and Stewardship. He served from 1964 until his death, October 12, 1970.<sup>74</sup>

4. When Martin F. Wessler accepted the call as Associate Secretary of Schools in the Synod, Eldon C. Kaiser, Wichita, Kansas, succeeded him. Mr. Kaiser began his service in the District as Executive Secretary of Youth and Education on June 15, 1966.<sup>75</sup>
5. Late in 1968 came J. Richard Scheuerlein, an eastern sage out of New York to accept our District's call to be the first Business Manager. He, from the Empire State and the Big Apple, kept our District's financial and property records. He made the figures and the sums sing "of Jesus and His love" for us and all mankind.<sup>76</sup>
6. Eldor C. Kaiser served as Executive Secretary of Education and Youth for three and one-half years. Like Martin F. Wessler, his predecessor, Eldor Kaiser took his leave from us to accept a call to St. Louis to serve on Synod's Board for Youth Ministry. His work among us ended January 31, 1970.<sup>77</sup>
7. The death of George Albers in 1979 moved the District Board to seek and to call someone to serve as the Executive Secretary for our District in the field of Christian Education. Kenneth Markworth was called. He began his work among us on July 1, 1971, and concluded his services in our District, following the 43<sup>rd</sup> Convention of our District in Charleston, June 21-24, 1974.<sup>78</sup>
8. Ellis T. Rottmann, parish pastor near Cape Girardeau, Missouri, was called by our District for a special assignment as our District's Evangelism field-man. He served the District from September, 1973, until June, 1979, when he became the Director of Stewardship and Evangelism in the Missouri District.<sup>79</sup>

Serving in the District Office at the side of President Kuehnert presently are David L. Goldhammer, continuing the toil of J. Richard Schauerlein, our first business manager, Edward F. Krueger in Parish Education and Services and Youth Ministry. Mr. Goldhammer does the detail work of Finance and Management, Stewardship, and Church Extension. Among his duties Mr. Krueger devotes a lot of time in the interest of our Christian Day Schools and our District Youth programs and services. Goldhammer and Krueger carry the title of Administrative Assistants in their areas of service.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> 42<sup>nd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1972, p. 29.

<sup>75</sup> 39<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1966, p. 31.

<sup>76</sup> 41<sup>st</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1970, p. 41.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>78</sup> 43<sup>rd</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1974, p. 152.

<sup>79</sup> 46<sup>th</sup> Convention Proceedings, 1908, p. 26.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

The office secretaries behind the scenes who may not make the first page, but do with all diligence copy the scripts of executives, put into writing what is said, keep the files neat and in order, type, and prepare news releases, let their fingers do their walking by using both the yellow and white pages, and that marvelous gift of Alexander Graham Bell, ready the office for meetings to you, past and present, a grateful District says, God bless you. You are to us very special people with special gifts to serve our District.

### THIS IS BUSINESS

During the years of Rev. Remus Rein, executive secretary, the District office was in his home in Decatur. When secretary Rein moved to Oregon and Dr. Mueller had returned to his first love, the parish ministry, the District office was moved to Springfield, into rented office space until the District office was built on Synod's land near Immanuel Lutheran Church. That fine office building on that Seminary land owned by the Synod was not the end of the road for our District office. The Seminary moved out and the Seminary property was sold. The Synod has now relocated our District office and this is the short of it: the Synod purchased the building in which our District office is now located at 974 Clock Tower Drive, P.O. Box 276, Springfield, IL 62705-0276.

In honor of all those servants who in the past have been given the grace and the privilege to serve our District as members of the District Board, circuit counselors, and circuit lay delegates, it is in good order to list and salute those holding office in this year of our District's 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Rev. Arthur T. Kuehnert, D. D.

First Vice President: Rev. George H. Beiderwieden, Jr.

Second Vice President: Rev. Ernest L. Gericke

Secretary: Rev. J. Robert Cunningham

Assistant Secretary: Rev. Arthur I. Schudde

Treasurer: Mr. Walter Karloski

Financial Secretary: Mr. Wayne Krueger

Rev. Ronald Schmidt

Rev. William E. Friedrich

Rev. Gary Fortkamp

Rev. Robert Kuhn

Mr. Edsel W. Tieman (Teacher)

Mr. Vernon E. Soeken (Teacher)

Mr. Marlin Roos

Mr. Robert Bokenkamp

Mr. Norman Kleinschmidt

Mr. Leonard Fuchs

Administrative Assistants

For Education and Youth: Mr. Edward F. Krueger

For Finance, Business Manager: Mr. David Goldhammer

### CIRCUIT COUNSELOR

### CIRCUIT LAY DELEGATE

(1978-1982)

Altamont  
Rev. Martin L. Travis  
Bloomington  
Rev. Marvin L. Matzke  
Champaign  
Rev. Donald E. Ehlers  
Danville  
Rev. Delmar O. Krueger  
Decatur  
Rev. William K. Abbott  
Effingham  
Rev. Marvin F. Kammrath  
Jacksonville  
Rev. Paul J. Kroll  
Lincoln  
Rev. Donald E. Kirchner  
Peoria  
Rev. Wilbur F. Neumann  
Quincy  
Rev. William W. Adam  
Rock Island  
Rev. Eldor W. Haake  
Springfield East  
Rev. Philip S. Kaufmann  
Springfield West  
Rev. Robert G. Jordan  
Tazewell  
Rev. David A. Likeness

(1981-1983)

Mr. Stuart Jagow  
Mr. James Sauder  
Mr. Guy Hicks  
Mr. Clarence Scheiwe  
Mr. Herbert G. Goers  
Mr. John Beldon  
Mr. Virgil Vortman  
Mr. Ray Yagow  
Mr. Albert Schneider  
Mr. Paul Hagemann  
Mr. Delbert Oetting  
Mr. Ralph Folkerts  
Mr. Elmer Boesdorfer  
Mr. Ernest Cook

This journey into the past has been a pleasant road “on prophets and apostles built; on Christ, the Corner Stone.” His Word was and remains the heritage of our Synod and District. Continuing in His Word we are His disciples indeed.

“How precious is that Book Divine?” Not to know the Bible is not to know Christ, and not to know Christ is darkness, desolation, and death. The Bible in every age is the Book for everybody.

John Wycliffe, 1320-1384, “The Morning Star of the Reformation,” has also been called a Lutheran before Luther. What a man wrote then we can repeat in the English of that day: “God grant to us all grace to ken well and to keep well Holy Writ.” In this day we also write:

May we in faith its truth confess  
And praise the Lord our righteousness!

Having lived under the banner of the cross from infancy to the present I have been and continue to be fully persuaded that Christ Jesus, who loved the Church and gave Himself for the Church, will build His Church until the end of time.



## THE CENTRAL ILLINOIS DISTRICT AND THE “GREAT LUTHERAN CIVIL WAR”

A former Central Illinois resident had this insight that strikes one as perfectly logical as regards those things that divide men and brothers from one another: “In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time...”<sup>1</sup> Abraham Lincoln wrote these words about the American Civil War that tore apart families and the constitutional union over a great political, and eventually a great moral divide. The healing of a nation and its people is still in process as in April 2011 we commemorated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of that horrific conflict.

James Adams, author of *Preus of Missouri*, includes in his title an allusion to that afore cited event, referring to the conflict of the Missouri Synod (1969-1977) as the “Great Lutheran Civil War.” The parallels are interesting. “Depending on whose ox was being gored,” so goes the subtext and subtitle of subsequent evaluations of the religious “battles” waged within a corner of the present church militant. Fred Danker in his *No Room in the Brotherhood* calls the 1970s the “Preus-Otten Purge,” perhaps reminiscent of Southerners referencing the war of the 1860s as the “War of Northern Aggression.” Harold Lindsell called it the “Battle for the Bible” which, for the first time in modern Christian denominational history in the United States, the outcome fell in favor of an *inerrant* Scripture. Kurt Marquart’s exposé is entitled *Anatomy of an Explosion*.<sup>2</sup> And in the most recent analysis by James Burkee, it was a conflict of “power and politics” that led to a “changed American Christianity” and this, in part, implies that the struggle was more about secular politics and its influences than theology. Yet, he admits, “Yes, it was about theology.”<sup>3</sup>

Walter Otten points out in a 2011 issue of his brother’s tabloid, *Christian News* that it was for the benefit of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ recorded in and upheld by the pages of the prophetic and apostolic writings that these battles were waged.

As one evaluates the Central Illinois District’s involvement in regaining the St. Louis Seminary (which presupposes that it needed to be regained) as well as in the upholding of Missouri’s theological heritage (which also presupposes that God wanted us to do just that) it should be no surprise that several significant figures from our fertile soil should have a part to play and be of influence in the outcome.

### JACOB AALL OTTESEN PREUS

Certainly the chief figure, Jacob Aall Ottesen Preus II, was a fixture of the Central Illinois District as professor and then as 8<sup>th</sup> president of the Missouri Synod’s Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield. Coming from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod by way of Luther

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<sup>1</sup> A. Lincoln, “Meditation on the Will of God,” Sept. 1862.

<sup>2</sup> Marquart provides a little excursus into church politics that, in part, motivated this introduction that proves valuable in this particular context. “Church politics, like beauty, is largely in the eye of the beholder. My “politics” is likely to be somebody else’s “responsible leadership” and vice versa. It all depends on whose ox is being gored. As long as there are outward structures, ways, and means must be found to conduct their affairs “decently and in order.” That makes virtually unavoidable arrangements like deliberative assemblies, delegates, elections of leaders, parliamentary procedure, and the like. These things are in themselves neither good nor evil, but indifferent. Everything depends on the use to which this machinery is put. Given the machinery, *all* use of it is “politics” – the only alternatives being *good* politics and *bad* politics.” Marquart, Kurt, *Anatomy of an Explosion*, (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1977) p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> James C. Burkee, *Power, Politics, and the Missouri Synod*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011) p. 5

Seminary of the old ELC, and following his younger brother, Robert, in 1958 he had made the jump into Missouri. He was brought on board as a Greek instructor at Concordia and quickly rose to the presidency of that institution in 1962.

During his tenure as president, the American Association of Theological Schools accredited the Springfield seminary. The school had been rejected for consideration in 1959 because only 19% of its students had college degrees. Although the machinery had been put into place to raise the standards and class of students in Springfield under his predecessors Walter Baeppler and George Beto, nevertheless, under Dr. Preus, reconsideration was requested together with a curriculum study in 1962. A thorough accreditation self-study began in 1965. Finally, full membership was granted in June of 1968 (associate status in the AATS had been granted already in 1963).<sup>4</sup>

At the Synodical convention held in New York in 1967 the Springfield seminary was recognized not only as a “functional part of the synodical system” but was made an “integral part of the system.” At this point, the graduates of the Fort Wayne Senior College were welcome to consider and attend the seminary in Springfield.<sup>5</sup>

As a prelude to a full-blown conflict, and whether it was overtly stated or not, if there were troubles at one seminary it appeared wise in the eyes of some that an alternative to the “theoretical” institution in St. Louis be made available to students of a more conservative and traditional bent. It is also true that as academics improved in Springfield, it only made practical sense, that it became another option within the usual synodical system and not just an institution for the producing of alternate route ministers or *Not Pastoren* (emergency pastors). These events were all unfolding during the Preus administration prior to his election to synodical office.

At the same time it might be assumed that friendships and alliances were being formed through regular contact of seminary personnel, especially its president, with CID congregations and pastors. Pastors’ Conferences, and the proximity of the seminary, would provide further opportunity for President Preus to converse with and get to know CID officers and pastors besides the fact that the seminary and its president would be under the auspices and supervision of CID’s president.

It was within a short span of less than ten years that Dr. Preus would become a candidate for the synodical presidency. He was elected at Denver in 1969, unseating the incumbent Oliver Harms, on the third ballot. The politics that got him into office, he later decried it as inappropriate and implied it to be unholy. Still, many who sided with him and supported his candidacy believed that the theology he espoused was that of “old Lutheranism” which reflected the stand of the Fathers of our beloved Synod. With his election all seemed to be in place to make the necessary changes to turn the mighty ship “Missouri” back to a God-appointed and God-pleasing course.

For some, the former president of Concordia Theological Seminary was seen as the last great hope, aside from God Himself – by miraculous intervention, to prevent the slide of the Missouri Synod over the precipice into mainline and “liberal” Protestantism. For others, Preus and his ilk were responsible for the descent of Missouri into a dark medieval ignorance of blind and unthinking fundamentalism.

It is obvious that not everyone saw Dr. Preus from the same perspective, but there were very few who were indifferent to his election and his subsequent service to God and synod. It was also true that a number of pastors and congregations determined that the events in St. Louis would neither bother nor upset them. Some pastors and congregations proceeded as if nothing of any consequence or of any interest to them was happening. Some took sides and an active part in the issues of the day.

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<sup>4</sup> Erich H. Heintzen, *Prairie School of the Prophets*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989) pp. 204-205.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.201

Adams points out that the vast middle of Missouri was neither itching for war nor inclined to condemn as enemies those teaching at their seminary, preaching from their pulpits, or serving the Church in any administrative capacity. To many these were still “brothers.”

Among Preus’ supporters the coming and inevitable conflict was primarily (and is still viewed as) a theological concern, and for many their synodical politics were tempered by this belief. Will the Scriptures as the inspired, infallible, and thus “inerrant” Word of God define the doctrine believed, taught, confessed, and practiced among us? Will the Lutheran Confessions serve as the true exposition of those Scriptures and the “normed norm,” standard, or banner among us authoritatively speaking to all controverted issues addressed by them?

Adams observes that there was an “arrogance” on both sides. Among some it might have been a certainty in the Faith that could not be derailed and was worth fighting... and even dying for, and among others it may have been a pride based on how gifted and intelligent some may have perceived themselves to be. There can be evidence found of naiveté, misstep, and misdirection wherever politics might be substituted for Biblical proof. There was arrogance where one approached Scripture with a magisterial rather than a ministerial attitude. One thing is for sure. The battle for the soul and support of the Synod was waged by “sinner-saints” on both sides.

Those recruited in our District to engage the battle behind the Preus presidency were drawn from among the recognized CID “faithful.” They included Louis Niemoeller, District president from 1963-1970, and E. J. Otto of Quincy, and included laymen, especially Henry Hilst of Mason City.

#### LEWIS C. NIEMOELLER

The Rev. Dr. Lewis C. Niemoeller, (graduated in 1935 from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis) pastor of Trinity, Springfield since 1953, and District President (1963-1970) of the Central Illinois District whose term of office ran almost concurrently with Dr. Preus’ seminary presidency, was chosen by Preus to serve as chairman on Special Floor Committee 3 for the 1973 New Orleans Convention of the LC-MS. Burkee states that all the important committees were made up of Preus’ “cronies.”<sup>6</sup> The committee was made up of nine pastors, two of which had leveled charges against the seminary and were included in line with constitutional requirements, two teachers, one seminary professor (the Rev. Dr. Eugene Klug also connected with the Springfield seminary), and ten laymen. The committee’s area of responsibility pertained to Seminary issues to which 196 overtures were submitted for consideration “from all parts of the synod... All points of view were represented, but the majority called for support of President Preus...”<sup>7</sup>

When the Committee took the convention floor on the morning of July 9, 1973, Chairman Niemoeller began by explaining to the delegates that the committee had spent 57 hours in

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<sup>6</sup> Burkee, p. 143. Observed practice has been that the President of Synod chooses those whom he knows or of whom he is advised by those he knows to serve as Chairmen of Floor Committees which falls within the purview of constitutional privilege. To characterize derogatorily his appointments as “cronies” is prejudicial. It would be better put that this important committee, in the light of our theological heritage and due to the theological issues at hand, needed to be 100% of the same mindset. It might also be noted that Dr. Niemoeller as District President had also served on the Seminary Board of Control while Preus was president, and since Dr. Preus was a member at Trinity, Springfield, during his tenure as seminary president, Dr. Niemoeller also would have been pastor to the J. A. O. Preus family.

<sup>7</sup> Zimmerman, Dr. Paul A., *A Seminary in Crisis*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 2007, p.101. Zimmerman’s explanation of the make-up of Committee 3: “President Preus selected men whom he believed to be the best available to deal with the complex theological issues and present to the delegates Scriptural, well-reasoned, and fair resolutions to all concerned.”

meetings prior to their arrival in New Orleans and 55 hours since. “No committee had ever faced so great a task or executed it with more thoroughness.”<sup>8</sup>

A story, then, related by J. Adams, as well as by John Tietjen in his memoirs, tells of Dr. Preus and Dr. Niemoeller calling for a meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 a.m. in the presidential VIP suite before the major issue pertaining to Dr. Tietjen’s presidency would be considered.

“Tietjen knocked. ‘Come in, John,’ said Lewis Niemoeller, fellow Lutheran minister and chairman of the convention committee on seminary issues. They sat, but both were to squirm in their chairs the next half-hour in unsuccessful efforts to find a comfortable position.

“Standing in the background was Jacob A. O. Preus, president and chief executive officer of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod...

“Preus appeared even more edgy than the others. It seemed he might not concentrate on the discussion Niemoeller was introducing. His committee, Niemoeller was saying, had arranged this meeting in a last-ditch effort to try to end the calamity surrounding Tietjen, to quell the storm Tietjen seemed intent to bring on himself and the entire church. The committee had struggled to come up with an appropriate proposal for the convention delegates, Pastor Niemoeller said.

“Their proposal was a harsh one nobody wanted, he insisted, but it was necessary to deal with the serious complaints against Tietjen which had been discussed the last few days in closed hearings. Pastor Niemoeller reminded him that the talk centered on his condoning the teaching of untraditional interpretations of Holy Scripture and on his highhanded administration at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

“The proposal the committee was reluctantly considering, Pastor Niemoeller said, would call for Tietjen’s resignation before the close of the convention in four days. Resign in seventy-two hours! But if Tietjen agreed privately to resign sometime that day, this harsh indictment would never be made public. Instead, a resolution praising Tietjen’s ‘God-pleasing’ and selfless churchmanship could be submitted to the delegates. It was the only reasonable choice, Tietjen was told. It would bring peace to Concordia Seminary and would save Tietjen and his family much pain. And, of course, it was an option, not a threat.

“Preus had joined the other men, more or less. At times he nodded approval of Niemoeller’s points and added a few of his own; yet he wasn’t concentrating fully...

“About 2:30 that afternoon, Tuesday, July 10, 1973, John Tietjen sought out Niemoeller near the massive assembly room of the New Orleans Rivergate Convention Center where some three thousand Missouri Synod faithful were convened. No, Tietjen said, he could not accept their proposal. He would not resign. He would await the will of the delegates.

“A persistent Niemoeller tried again. As earlier, he hit on the theme of peaceful and private solutions. If Tietjen wouldn’t resign, at least couldn’t he give a commitment to modify quietly back at St. Louis headquarters? Even that might be enough for the committee.

“Did Niemoeller realize what he was asking, Tietjen responded curtly. No, he wasn’t stubbornly defending himself. He was defending the integrity of his seminary and ultimately of his church... Couldn’t Niemoeller see that theological differences could never be resolved by convention vote?”<sup>9</sup>

Under Dr. Niemoeller’s leadership at the podium at New Orleans resolution 3-01 declared that *A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles* “expresses the Synod’s position on current doctrinal issues” and that it should serve as a “more formal and comprehensive statement

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. (quoting the Convention Proceedings, p. 26) p. 104

<sup>9</sup> Adams, James E., *Preus of Missouri*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 1-3. A similar story, lacking of some embellishments, is related in Tietjen, John H., *Memoirs in Exile*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), pp. 156-157. What becomes obvious is that Tietjen is the source for Adams of these details.

of belief.”<sup>10</sup> It was approved by a vote of 562 to 455.<sup>11</sup> Resolution 3-09, which resolved to declare the faculty majority theological position to be in violation of the doctrinal Article II of the Synod’s constitution, was passed six days after the opening of the New Orleans convention by a vote of 574 to 451. On July 13<sup>th</sup>, the last day of the convention, with time ticking away, an important resolution (3-12) still had yet to be considered regarding the disposition of Dr. Tietjen. It was substituted, not without further controversy, with a very brief Resolution 3-12A. This resolution simply said that this matter should be dealt with in line with Synod’s Handbook. The convention passed this with a vote of 513 to 394. The lesser numbers, no doubt, were due to delegates typically leaving early on the day of the convention’s adjournment.<sup>12</sup>

Lewis Niemoeller also served as chairman on the Synod’s Board for Higher Education (1974-1977), which subsequently provided a platform, or at the very least an overlap, for the carrying out of the New Orleans resolutions.<sup>13</sup>

Dr. Niemoeller (born in 1911) died in Springfield on August 9<sup>th</sup> of 1999.

#### EWALD JUSTUS OTTO

E. J. Otto, following his 1939 graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was ordained and installed on December 1, 1940 as the first pastor of Our Redeemer, Quincy. He remained pastor of that congregation until his retirement in November of 1982. He was short and thin, bespectacled. Though tough for his size, maybe even viewed by some as gruff and uncompromising, the times may have demanded such a personality in such a position. The fact that he served the same parish for 42 years says a lot about his pastoral dedication, care, and style.

He was first elected to the Board of Control of his *alma mater* at the 1973 New Orleans convention and together with the addition of three new lay members the make-up of that Board had a slight majority (6-5) supporting the efforts of Dr. Preus to deal with the theological matters at hand. He became chairman of that Board and remained in that office until 1986. Needless to say he had, in his hands as Board member and chair, the responsibility of supporting the decisions of the New Orleans assembly and carrying out the resolutions of that body under very hostile circumstances.

Pastor Otto came to the fore through his association with Balance, Inc. He also served as part of the editorial group of its publication, *Affirm*. In fact, one item that “haunted” him was an editorial he had written a month prior to the convention entitled, “Close the Sem.” John Tietjen, in his memoirs, noted that in November of 1973, the faculty had sent a “blunt” letter to the Board of Control accusing the Board of attempting to do exactly what the Chair had called for in his June editorial. Then, as news of the action of the Board to discontinue the contract of one faculty member and to “honorably retire” seven faculty members who had reached the age of 65 spread through the Synod, Paul Jacobs, president of the California and Nevada District “called on the [Board of Control] to recognize that its chair, Ewald J. Otto, had demonstrated his prejudice against [Tietjen] in his writings and should be disqualified from sitting in judgment on [his] case.”<sup>14</sup>

So then under Otto’s chairmanship resolution 3-12A was carried out, and with it, fulfillment of synodical by-law 6.79 dealing with *Procedures for Exercising Board Supervision* that required meetings with Pastors Buelow and Harnapp who had filed charges against Dr. Tietjen.

Further actions of the Board included not renewing the contract of Paul Goetting, retiring Herbert Bouman, Richard Caemmerer, Alfred Fuerbringer, Arthur Piepkorn, Arthur Repp,

<sup>10</sup> Zimmerman, p. 106.

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Zimmerman speculates of the votes in the negative that not all the nays were representative of “liberal sympathies,” but perhaps, some were looking for “another way out,” p. 107.

<sup>12</sup> Zimmerman, pp. 111-112.

<sup>13</sup> Information provided by CHI on its “Today in History” page for August 9.

<sup>14</sup> Tietjen, John H., *Memoirs in Exile*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), pp. 179-180.

Alfred von Rohr Sauer, and Lorenz Wunderlich. Nineteen classes were dropped from the class schedule. To get a handle on the seminary's curriculum, documentation was to be submitted as regards syllabi and materials to be used in the classroom. Tietjen was eventually suspended on January 20, 1974.

Otto presided, as required by the by-law, to be present at a meeting of the complainants and the accused, at which time the accused declared the chair prejudiced, who ought to recuse himself, and at Tietjen's instigation an impasse came about. A walk-out of the majority of faculty and students (although they returned from their staged demonstration to eat lunch in the school's cafeteria) occurred the day after Tietjen's suspension was announced. Otto announced in February that paychecks would not be cut if the rebellious faculty members did not take up again their called responsibilities as teachers of the church. Faculty housing would be vacated. They did not return, and were terminated for vacating their call and duty. The Board of Control, by virtue of their election, had a solemn obligation to keep the seminary open and operating, but their actions were met by well-orchestrated drama and publicity.

The Board of Control in April of 1977 produced its own accounting and defense pertaining to this 1974 departure of faculty and students entitled *Exodus from Concordia*. Chairman Otto played a significant role both in the actual events and in the public explanations.

There is much one can deduce from his longevity on the Seminary' Board of Control (Regents). Unlike Winston Churchill, who served as England's Prime Minister during the Second World War and was put out of office soon after the armistice, after the LCMS battles of the 70s; E. J. Otto served the Seminary long after the dust had settled, and even through the Bohlmann and Barth presidencies. Otto proved himself to be an able and faithful leader.

#### HENRY HILST

Pretty much unknown prior to the publication of James Burkee's, *Power and Politics in the Missouri Synod*, Henry Hilst, Layman, from Mason City, was a behind-the-scenes figure who did lots of grunt work for the conservative elements of the Missouri Synod. He was a "pipeline" and head counter in preparation for Synodical conventions. Although Burkee describes him as "singularly loyal to Preus," he still worked the telephones long after Jacob Preus retired.<sup>15</sup> Sadly, Burkee also implies some parallel between Hilst' activities and the "plumbbers" of Richard Nixon.

Hilst was a part of the Balance, Inc. inner circle<sup>16</sup>. He was also present at Preus' "Ping-Pong Club" strategy and gripe sessions in the Preus' home.<sup>17</sup> Before the time of computers, Hilst could compile detailed lists containing names, addresses, phone numbers, district affiliation, and whether liberal or conservative. He proved to be valuable during the Preus' administration although he always remained behind the scenes.

In 1980, Burkee says, Henry told Jack Preus that it was time for him to retire from the Synodical presidency because the conservative element in the Synod would be fighting against his reelection.<sup>18</sup> He followed Hilst's advice.

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<sup>15</sup> In 1989 this author was elected as Wayne Circuit delegate from Nebraska to the Wichita convention. Soon enough I started to receive phone calls from this quiet, unassuming man who would always introduce himself to me as "Layman Henry Hilst." I was recruited to gather as much information as I could about the make-up and nature of the other delegates in the District. I also ended up sending out literature to those delegates on issues the Synod would face at Wichita. This activity brought me an unexpected Saturday evening phone call from the Nebraska District President, Eldor Meyer, informing me that I should not be involved in such behaviors and that I should trust the District President to adequately inform the delegates pertaining to those issues. I never did go to Wichita. I received and accepted a call to East Grand Forks, MN and moved in May prior to the convention, which disqualified me to serve any longer as delegate.

<sup>16</sup> It is recorded in Balance's financial statement that in 1972 Hilst received \$18,004 from the Balance treasury, which, it was claimed, was reimbursement of expenses, Burkee, p. 117; also cf. fn. 118.

<sup>17</sup> Burkee, p. 105.

<sup>18</sup> Burkee, based on an interview with W. Werning, p. 175. Preus did not run for reelection in 1981 and Ralph

## RUDOLPH A. HAAK

Serving as pastor at Trinity in Peoria, Rudolph Haak was elected the first full-time president of the Central Illinois District in 1970. On September 18, 1972 he was ushered into the office of the president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Dr. Tietjen wondered what this gentleman had in mind, being from “one of the most conservative districts in the Missouri Synod.”<sup>19</sup> The Council of Presidents, assembled in St. Louis, was scheduled to meet later in the day. Haak had a proposal and he wanted to float it past Tietjen before raising it before the praesidium and his fellow district presidents. His intention was to find another “way through the crisis.”

Haak asked Tietjen whether the seminary faculty members would be willing to participate in “local forums” throughout the synod to discuss their own written confessions of faith as they pertained to the controversy. His intention was to “find a method different from the present process.” His reasoning was that, together with Holy Spirit and the means of grace, mutual conversation would result in salutary benefits. The faculty would have its day to speak its piece, and the church would have opportunity to hear and question them. Tietjen agreed that if the council would agree to the process he was fairly certain that the faculty would be willing to participate. Tietjen attended the council two days later, and was amazed that Haak’s proposal was being given serious consideration. Even Jack Preus appeared to be on board and a joint statement was drawn up and signed by Preus and Tietjen that “full and frank discussions of the theological issues” were urged.<sup>20</sup> Wilbert Griesse, president of the Mid-South District and chairman of the Council of Presidents, sent out a letter to all the pastors of the Synod on September 21, 1972. This letter was to explain what new efforts toward unity in the Synod to which the principals had agreed.

A week later Haak met with the faculty to urge them to respond positively to the council’s proposal. On October 5<sup>th</sup> the faculty approved. His next action, expressed in a letter to Griesse and COP program chairman, Carl Heckmann of Texas, was that the council invite faculty members to its November meeting and offer presentations on the historical-critical methodology.<sup>21</sup>

By October 20<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Preus made it clear that he saw that such presentations would be a step backward. In a phone conversation with Haak on October 26th, Dr. Preus told him that in meeting with the faculty his duties as defined by the council had been discharged and nothing more was required of him.<sup>22</sup>

Haak wrote to Preus the next day, and the portion included in Dr. Tietjen’s memoirs is now offered for historical purposes and to reveal Haak’s thinking on this matter.

“I am not really surprised, but I am disappointed, that you chose to discourage my personal discussion of their faith confessions with members of the faculty. Validity for this and responsibility to perform this are not derived from a resolution of the Council of Presidents nor from the Synod’s president, but from the Lord of both. There is no ‘appropriate’ or ‘out of season’ time to do this but it is always in order and *urgent* (2 Tim. 4:1-2). . . . To curtail or stop this activity again reduces our work to human strategy in carrying out a kind of ‘game’ over which we must have control. Do we no longer believe that the Spirit of God is active in Christian witness, in confession, absolution, and correcting activities? What about the Word as the power of God? . . . I favor (heavily) the Lord’s strategy.

“Please count on me to do nothing. The chief reason is that I have no authority to say what should be done. Secondly, I feel that there need be no ‘watch-dog’ restrictions placed upon

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Bohlmann, who was touted by Preus as his anointed successor, was elected Synodical president on the fourth ballot.

<sup>19</sup> Tietjen, p. 101.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 102-103.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 113.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 114.

them. If they choose to tell anyone in the church what they believe, praise the Lord! If what they say is right, praise the Lord! If what they say is wrong, then we correct them, praise the Lord! So I beg of you to have me excused from whatever it was that I should do . . . .

“Other than this one thing, our phone conversation as I remember it last evening stands. I shall not be seen among the Seminary faculty except for authorized reasons. Having said what I did in the earlier paragraphs, I don’t see how I can do you a greater honor. In fact, sound logic (in case you have missed it) tells me that I have placed you above God. I confess that I will have to think about this some more.”<sup>23</sup>

Arthur Kuehnert reminisces that soon enough the controversy had consequences within the borders of the Central Illinois District. Good intentions notwithstanding, the actions of the District President at the time were viewed by the majority of the District not to be in line with the “Synod’s historic doctrinal position.”<sup>24</sup> Haak was not reelected to another term at the 1974 District convention.

Similarly, at the same convention action was to be taken against the District’s executive secretary for education, Kenneth Markworth. He had joined the dissident group ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission) and had become a member of their board. Kuehnert, who as recently elected District president, had inherited the situation. It had become a consensus of the District that Markworth had not only expressed a personal opinion on the Synodical controversy but had taken an open and active part in opposition to the Synod’s confessed doctrine.

The Board of Directors had pleaded with the Secretary numerous times and at numerous meetings to terminate his association with ELIM and its board. Finally, at the 1974 convention the issue was presented for final disposition. He was to resign from ELIM or he could no longer serve the District as Executive Secretary. His decision was to be conveyed to the Board of Directors by July 1<sup>st</sup>. The resolution passed by a vote of 110 to 91.<sup>25</sup> Markworth did not resign and was terminated.

In 1976 supporters of Seminex, the breakaway faculty, and students, offered a resolution at the District convention to stand by their position and cause. Once again, the majority upheld the historical doctrinal position of the Synod.<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the early 70s, Pastor Marvin Kammrath of Grace in Strasburg (at the time the only English District presence within the CID borders) led a weekly Bible Study dealing with the issues facing the Synod in those days. This was convened jointly with members of St. Paul Strasburg, mother congregation to Grace.<sup>27</sup>

Midyear 1974 the congregation expressed concern about the “liberal and antisynodical trend of the English District,” and began the process to affiliate with the Central Illinois District.

About this same time, Immanuel of Charleston, through the efforts of its pastor and some members who were “strongly supportive of ELIM and Seminex,”<sup>28</sup> attempted to bring their congregation under the auspices of the non-geographic English District. At the time, that district “involved itself in, and gave encouragement to” them to leave CID. Since the congregation

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 114-115.

<sup>24</sup> Notes of Arthur Kuehnert, *The LCMS Doctrinal Controversy of the 70s*, CID archives, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> President David Buelmann remembers that this action was taken toward the end of the convention. Some had left; others were preparing to leave and were summoned back to the convention floor. Kuehnert also notes that “there was division within the District, but not to the extent that the votes might suggest. Some of the negative votes could be interpreted either as giving support to Mr. Markworth as a person, or that the proposed action requiring his termination was too harsh, and that more patience should be exercised in dealing with him, or that some were sympathetic with ELIM and its cause in supporting the St. Louis faculty...” Notes of Arthur Kuehnert, *A Crisis*, CID archives, 2002. One finds the same reasoning in Adams and Zimmerman.

<sup>26</sup> Kuehnert notes, *The LCMS Doctrinal Controversy of the 70s*.

<sup>27</sup> Information garnered from the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary Pictorial Directory of Grace, Strasburg, 1997, p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Kuehnert note, *The LCMS Doctrinal Controversy of the 70s*, p. 2.

provided the district's campus ministry to nearby Eastern Illinois University, and the district and its congregations had invested mission funds for this enterprise, when the matter came up at a district convention the transfer was defeated.

In the meantime, by the end of 1975, Grace Strasburg had resolved to "formerly request a transfer of the congregation and pastor from the English District to Central Illinois" at the 1976 District convention. This resolution was accepted "unanimously," and it was ratified at the 1977 synodical convention in Dallas.<sup>29</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Certainly one does not pass through the raging waters unscathed or the purifying fires without the dross being separated from the pure ore. The hard thing is that persons, cherished institutions, families, and congregations were touched in one way or another by these events. In the sterile environment of historical analysis one must not remove humanity from the equation.

The pure and true doctrine of God was in the balance. The right confession of the "faith once and for all delivered to the saints" was the goal. The soldiers fighting the battles had come to believe that they were God's servants for the glory of God and good of His Church. More than toes were stepped on, relationships were severed... some never to be reconciled, careers and callings came to an end. In taking expedient measures, the true confession, a clear clarion call of the Scripture in the service of the Gospel, was not always served. But then again, all the players, other than God Himself and the Lord of the Church, Jesus, are fallible and faulty, sinners, in need of God Himself, for Jesus sake, "not counting their sins against them."

It has been pointed out many times before this, that Dr. Tietjen had expressed the concern that the Seminary and the faculty had not been honest with the people of the LCMS.

"I did not appreciate what I thought was less than candor in the seminary's repeated claims that nothing had really changed in CS [Concordia Seminary] teaching. I resented the efforts to demonstrate that what was happening at CS was really the "old" Missouri Synod after all. I thought that it would have been not only more honest but also more helpful for CS to capitalize on the changes that were going on by showing how those changes were enabling CS and the LCMS to be more faithful to the Synod's confessional position."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Grace, Strasburg, *Annual Report*, 1974, 1975, 1976. *LCMS Convention Proceedings*, Resolution 4-05, 1977, p. 146. Also found on the same page is Resolution 4-08.

"To Defer Request of Immanuel, Charleston, to Transfer from Central Illinois District to English District  
WHEREAS, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Charleston, Ill., has requested a transfer of membership from the Central Illinois District to the English District; and  
WHEREAS, The Central Illinois District, earnestly desiring to continue this town-gown ministry, wishes this congregation to remain in its District; and  
WHEREAS, Some confusion exists as to justifiable reasons for granting or declining this request; and  
WHEREAS, Immanuel Lutheran Church currently has a pastoral vacancy; and  
WHEREAS, Immanuel Lutheran Church has sought and received counsel and guidance from the English District President, who has been in consultation with the Central Illinois District President; therefore be it  
*Resolved*, That the congregation be urged to continue to work its way toward a God-pleasing solution, making use of the counsel of the President of the English District; and be it further  
*Resolved*, That the presidents of the Central Illinois District and the English District continue to cooperate in a healing ministry to this congregation for the purpose of fostering harmony and stability under the loving hand of God; and be it finally  
*Resolved*, That action on the transfer request be deferred.

### Action: Adopted (5)

(This was introduced in Session 3. The convention consented to consider a substitute motion to grant the request. However in Session 5 it voted down the substitute and adopted Res. 4-08.)"

<sup>30</sup> Tietjen, p. 23.

Dr. Preus had the mandate of the Scriptures and the Confession, as well as Synodical Constitution and by-laws, churchly resolve and convention resolutions, to point out those doctrines “which cannot be tolerated in the church of God,” and this for the good of the souls we shepherd.

Although Martin Marty, consigned to the ash heap of history, the LCMS and the reconstituted Concordia Seminary, in his writings and pronouncements, (and one must be careful how one interprets the “physical evidence”) certainly the confession of our Church, and the hearts and lips of those making such a confession have been steeled and in seen and unseen ways have been blessed by God.

The controversy of the 1970s, what led up to it and what has flowed from it since, has affected the culture of our beloved Synod and District. Even the mention of these events and how one interprets them can have the effect of pulling off the scab. But we must learn from our history even as we understand that history from the greater and heavenly perspective of what God Himself has revealed through the Prophets and the Apostles, and in these latter days through His Son. The principals are dead or dying, the generations of those who lived in these days are graying, and we are fifty plus years removed from the “walk out,” and numerous classes of pastors and church workers have been graduated and placed for whom these events have little to no significance. They know Missouri as she is now, and they live with present-day challenges without thinking much on the waters that have passed under the bridge.

It is yet to be seen whether a new culture of commitment and confession, repentance and reconciliation is flourishing and has become the hallmark of the Missouri of the twenty-first century. Attempts are being made to see to it that we walk in the word. Our walking together as a Synod must be built more on the influence of Spirit, Word, and Sacrament than on structures held together *only* with the *papier mache* of human by-law strictures and constitutional contrivances. For us, it should be as it has been, that *Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr' vergebet nun and nimmermehr. Verbum Dei manet in aeternum.*

Those days were not the end of controversy in our midst. The devil, although thoroughly defeated at Calvary – and for the present time is kept on a short leash – he has not yet and finally been put in that place reserved for his “angels” and him. We all know his intentions as regards the church and the saints. St. Paul, while praying that “you all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,”[1 Cor. 1:10, NKJV] he also recognizes a simultaneous reality. “... I hear that there are divisions among you... there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized.” [1 Cor. 11:18-19, NKJV]

We still face issues pertaining to worship forms and styles, American evangelical influences and church growth theories that do not come from sound Scriptural and confessional moorings and the controversies of the 70s may have had a detrimental effect on addressing differences and errors, or even exercising true evangelical discipline in our midst.

Our heavenly Father is not finished with us yet, as He conforms us, by His Spirit, to the image of His Son, by both confession and cross, bain and blessing. Our prayer is that the Lord would direct us “in all our doings with Your most gracious favor, and further us with Your continual help that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in You we may glorify Your holy name and finally by Your mercy obtain eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

Mark A. Miller  
Pekin, Illinois  
February 2012

Rev. Dr. Arthur T. Kuehnert  
(Nov. 12, 1915 – April 7, 2006)

### Brief Biography

Arthur Theodore Kuehnert was born to the Rev. Arthur M. and Liode (Kroenke) Kuehnert in Muskogee, Oklahoma on November 12, 1915. He was the oldest of four children. He was married on January 11, 1940 to Marion E. Sawatske (June 17, 1918 – August 26, 2011). They enjoyed 66 years of married life together. This union was blessed with 2 children, son, David, born in 1945, and daughter, Joan, born in 1947.

He attended St. Paul's College in Concordia, Missouri and matriculated to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri graduating in 1939. He served from 1939-1944 as Assistant Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Springfield, Illinois, and then was called to St. Paul, Pana, Illinois where he served from 1944-1974 when he was elected the 13<sup>th</sup> President of the Central Illinois District LC-MS. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne, Indiana in 1981.

He had previously served the wider church as Circuit Visitor, Vice President, and chairman for the District's Mission Board, the Public Relations Committee, and the Evangelism Board. He was also a member of the CID Board of Directors. In the wider community he had for twenty-five years chaired the Christian County March of Dimes and for ten years was a member of the Illinois Public Aid Commission.

From 1985 – 1991, what started as a six-month assignment as special assistant to the LCMS President Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, obviously became a more permanent position requiring a move to St. Louis.

In 1993 the Kuehnerts moved to Gallup, New Mexico, to be closer to their daughter. In the "Four Corners" area he filled vacancies for several congregations. In 2000 they moved again to Albuquerque and Dr. Kuehnert remained an active preacher ("his hobby") until age 88.

The Lord called him to his heavenly home on April 7, 2006, due to complications from prostate cancer. Services were held on April 12 at Faith in Christ Lutheran Church in Albuquerque and committal followed at Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

### A Wider History

Rev. Herbert Pragman of Normal, Illinois, in his brief history of the Central Illinois District (His Story, 1982, pp. 75-77) included the following summary of the Kuehnert years as CID President up to that time: Dr. Kuehnert comments on the eight years of his presidency: "As the home goes, so goes the nation. As congregations go, so goes the Synod... Congregations have been seeking the lost in their geographical areas of responsibility... During the past eight years 6,658 adults have been received into communicant membership, over 11 percent of the present communicant membership... The Central Illinois fields continue to be 'white unto the harvest.' The latest census shows 40.16 percent to be non-churched... Nine new congregations were formed during this time (8 years), five of the nine congregations during the current biennium. The Kingdom grows with the planting of new churches.

"Of the 142 congregations in the District in 1974, one hundred congregations have had a change of pastorates during the past eight years. Forty-two pastors and 46 teachers of the 252 teachers are serving still in the same congregation and school... It has been said that there are two areas which are the spiritual barometers of a congregation, indicating whether it is 'rising' or 'falling:' average Sunday worship attendance and partaking of the Lord's Supper.

"As people in time of trouble turn more frequently to God in prayer, so there was a greater and more intensive searching in the Holy Scriptures during the 70's. The historic Lutheran Confessions were studied with greater interest, highlighted by the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the

Augsburg Confession and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Book of Concord. The doctrines of the nature and authority of the Holy Scriptures, of Justification, and of the Church were the subjects of congregational Bible Classes and District Conventions.

"The pastors and members of our congregations and the teachers in our Christian schools are committed to our Scripture-based doctrinal position and to our Savior's Commission:

'God's Word is our great heritage And shall be ours forever;  
To spread its light from age to age Shall be our chief endeavor.  
Through life it guides our way, In death it is our stay.  
Lord, grant, while worlds endure, We keep its teachings pure  
Throughout all generations.'

"In 1974 the average worship attendance compared to the baptized membership in our District was 43.5 percent. During the past year it was 40.6 percent. Of the communicant members 81.1 percent partook of the Lord's Supper at least one or more times during 1974. During the past year it was only 76.1 percent. Pastors have been taking heed to the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers, and together with the Board of Elders they have been devoting special efforts according to the exhortation in Hebrews 10:23-25: 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised; And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.'

"The past eight years have seen a startling 103.12 percent increase in inflation. This means that the total offerings of our members of \$8,412,912 in 1974 would have been \$17,088,306 in 1981 according to the inflation rate. Even though pace was not kept with inflation, there was an increase in dollar amount as the members during 1981 laid \$15,372,007 on the Lord's altar.

"The members manifested that they have the heart and the will to be busy with our heavenly Father's business and that they have the fervent desire for His Kingdom to grow and expand. In a special effort they gave \$1,852,076.72, surpassing the Forward in Remembrance goal of \$1,316,150 for our District."

These words show that the Presidency of the Central Illinois District is inseparably intertwined with its people, its pastors, its parishes, and its parochial teachers and schools. These words also show the deep exploration that Dr. Kuehnert put into his reports to the Convention. He was a meticulous researcher, record keeper, and reporter. You will find him to be a student of Holy Scripture and a supporter of the same. His reports are rife with references from Holy Writ. But he also used sociological tools and statistics to undergird the District's missionary zeal and to underscore his consecrated commendation of Christian activity within its borders.

The first convention President Kuehnert chaired took place the same year that Concordia Theological Seminary was preparing for relocation to the city of its original founding in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Some of those who entered the CID during the previous biennium, all too soon, would be leaving as was reported at the following convention. Names such as Preus, Marquart, Degner, Fry, Hauser, Huth, Judisch, Mueller, Schmidt, Voelz, and Weinrich were installed in one season and by the next they, and some of the others long residing in Springfield, were transferred to Indiana. This was recognized as leaving a great hole in the life of our District.

At the 1976 convention, the whole Synod is still reeling from the 1974 Concordia Seminary walk-out and would to some extent continue to do so for the remainder of the decade, if not in some distinct and subtle ways continue even to the present time.

One of the CID congregations was served by a Seminex vicar. The troubles had moved another congregation within our border to leave the English District and affiliate with the CID. It is noted in the convention minutes that after Seminary President, Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, reported of the present condition of the school the delegates rose and sang the common

doxology. A motion was made that the next convention would take up as its essay the topic of unionism, which showed that the theological issues that precipitated the conflict were the chief thing for this District. It showed that the Biblical matters needed to be discussed and this was not the time of frilly attempts at relationship building while sweeping the important substance under the synodical rug.

Highlights from the President's Report, originally written during the high holy days of Easter 1976, is an initial reference by Rev. Kuehnert to the chief teaching. The essayist was Dr. Robert Preus speaking on that topic of which he was a particular expert. The title of the essay was: "Justification – Then and Now." Kuehnert noted that Holy Week pointed us to the cardinal doctrine of justification. That would be "fundamental and appropriate" to the mission of the District always to start there. He reminded the workers in the church that the "one thing required of servants [is] faithfulness!" "Pastors and teachers are joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment in doctrine and practice based on the Holy-Spirit inspired Scriptures."

He emphasized the work of the congregations, the need for laborers and that they are worthy of their wage, the necessity for godly unity, and an eye ever focused on the future as long as the Lord may grant it.

"Let us constantly be on guard lest Satan succeed in causing divisions to arise in congregations because of various abilities. He delights in sowing dissension in the assembly of God's people, not only in the all-important matters of doctrine and practice, but also in the areas of trivial things. None of us wants to be co-wreckers with Satan... rather co-workers with God in the building of His great and glorious kingdom." (CID Convention Proceedings, 1976, p. 57)

As to the common work in which we are engaged, he said, "Not 'I' or 'they' but 'we' will carry this back to our individual congregations, and we'll be in it together.

Looking beyond the CID and its congregations there was a concerted and consistent support of the synodical endeavors to which we had committed ourselves. Budgeted figures for worldwide mission effort through the Synod were 1974 \$1,000,000; 1975 \$1,020,000; 1976 \$1,065,000; 1977 \$1,165,000; 1978 \$1,250,000. Other 1974 District expenses came to: District Mission (subsidizing 14 congregations and other projects such as campus, developmentally disabled, deaf, and new mission starts) \$285,000, District Support (staff and programming) \$128,000; and CID Student Aid \$28,000. \$25,000 was expected to be drawn from the District's surplus to cover what was lacking in congregational commitments. At that time, total CEF investments came to \$3,000,000. One new congregation was enrolled: Our Redeemer, Jacksonville, under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Harold Woodworth, which was formed on the basis of 230 members of Salem congregation being transferred to the new church.

The Convention's theme was "Jesus: Savior and Lord." Dr. Kuehnert was through half of his first four year term at this point. There was no presidential election at this convention as was the procedure in those days...

In the closing year of Kuehnert's tenure as District President, he makes his usually keen and well-researched address to the CID Convention meeting in Charleston in 1985. The theme of his report, in light of history not yet having drawn to a close, is "Make Disciples."

The challenges noted were 1,066,000 non-churched in the geographic area covered by the Central Illinois District. A decrease in worship and communion attendance is a trend that is still affecting us in the present day. Noticeable in 1985 was the change on the domestic landscape of the "family unit" so that in only "15% of U.S. households were composed of a working father and a mother who worked at home, compared with 70% back in the 1950's." The New Lutheran Church was on the horizon for its inauguration in January of 1988. (CID Proceedings, 1985, pp. 28-29)

Kuehnert noted that "1-1/2 million babies each year [are] not permitted to be born; a new human life [is] terminated every 20 seconds in our own land which cherishes life and liberty." He states: "Iniquity is increasing. Lawlessness is multiplying. The love of many is waxing cold. The forces of evil in the world are gathering momentum." Interestingly, he writes, prior to the

1989 opening of the Berlin Wall, that “atheistic communism is stretching out ever farther its encircling and subjugating pincers.” That has changed in drastic ways since then. However, he prophesizes, no doubt, with insight gained in the changes in the Mid-Eastern governance in Iran under the ayatollahs that “Islam is flexing its muscles in renewed aggression.” (*ibid.* p.29)

Kuehnert had reached the end of his term by virtue of By-laws prescribed term limits. At this 1985 convention with 45 nominations Robert T. Kuhn of Zion, Pleasant Plains, was elected CID president on the fourth ballot with 120 votes. Other candidates at the time were Ernest Gerike, George Beiderweiden (both previously VPs of the CID), Hackler, Lubben, Schmidt and Skov (the latter two who then became 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> VP under Kuhn).

This last note from the 1985 Convention Minutes (p. 26) also pointed to a unique characteristic of President Kuehnert’s style. He was fascinated by and heavily relied upon object lessons to underscore his point at the moment.

Pastor Phil Kaufmann once told the author that when the President conducted an installation he would have the Scriptures handy to display while the pastor pledged his allegiance to the Bible as “the rule and norm” of all teaching and preaching and then, copies of each of the confessional documents of the Lutheran Church also mentioned in the ordination and installation vows of a Pastor.

Finally, those minutes: In his concluding devotion of the 48<sup>th</sup> Convention of the CID Dr. Kuehnert used a candle as an object lesson just as he had done 11 years previous (1974) when elected at Charleston. “The candle gives light, and as it does, it is expended and grows less. So with the Christian as he shares the light of Christ in the world: ‘He must increase, I must decrease.’”

– Rev. Mark A. Miller