



75th



ANNIVERSARY

First

Lutheran

Congregation

Wittenberg ~ Wisconsin

1882

1957



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH — 1957

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends in Christ:

At a 75th Anniversary such as we now celebrate at First Lutheran Church, it is a natural and right thing we think back over past years, to take note of present times, and also to look toward the future.

As one reads and hears of the faithful and consecrated efforts of our parents and grandparents one is again impressed with the manner in which God works in and through His children. God instilled in the hearts of the founders of First Lutheran a realization of their own need and the need of their children to have the opportunity of regularly hearing God's Word, receiving the Sacraments, and joining in Christian fellowship. Now, 75 years later, we know of the fruit that has been borne. we enjoy the blessed results of their labor. During this 75 years countless people have heard the gracious Word of forgiveness of sins and their souls have leaped with joy, many have received the Word of comfort as they walked through the valley of the shadow of death, many a troubled and weary heart has here received the Word of help and hope it needed, the trembling and fearful have received assurance. The saving power of God's Word and the Sacraments has been proclaimed and received. For all of this and much more we give praise to our Lord. As we look back over past years and see the goodness of God and the faithfulness of His people we join with the Psalmist and sing, "Praise ye the Lord, Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise Him, O ye servants of the Lord, Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, Praise the Lord: for the Lord is good; sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant."

As we take note of present times we also can rejoice knowing that the God of our fathers is still with us. He is adding His blessing to these days as we with joy go into the house of the Lord. Let us rejoice and be glad. Let us serve Him.

And what of the next 75 years? May it be true of us that we too have a vision of the things and the ways of God. May it be true that we too can go forward with a steady and sure step, with confidence in God's grace, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, being faithful in all things, until finally we stand with all of the redeemed and receive the crown of Life that Christ has prepared for us.

May the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ be with you all.

PASTOR EUGENE PETERSON.

Historical Sketch

The history of First Lutheran begins with the early efforts to meet the spiritual needs of the Scandinavian immigrants who pioneered in Central Wisconsin in the wake of a thriving lumber industry. The roads were rude trails. The erection of log cabins meant laborious clearing of land in the forest where at three o'clock in the afternoon, the sun would set behind a green barricade of trees. Families were often so isolated that only infrequently did they get together. These hardy folk, many of



REV. E. J. HOMME
FOUNDER OF THE HOMME INSTITUTIONS
AND FIRST PASTOR OF THE CHURCH

them used to city life, nevertheless, endured the hardships, established their homes and learned to live with their Indian neighbors. They welcomed each advance of civilization such as the establishment of shops and businesses to make their life easier.

Like most pioneer pastors, Rev. E. J. Homme had tremendous energy. Besides Wittenberg, he conducted services at a number of other places.

Although the organization of the congregation at Wittenberg wasn't officially recorded until the year 1882, the early records indicate that

services for Norwegian Lutheran church people were held beginning in December of 1880. According to the records, Hans Westgor, John Klov-dahl, Julius Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Nelson, H. Delvo and Ingeborg Jorgenson were among those attending this first service held nearly seventy-seven years ago. The first recorded baptism was that of Jorgen, son of the Edward Nelsons on Oc-

tober 6, 1881. During the year of 1881, also, the first holy communion was given. First Lutheran thus takes the date of June 11, 1882, as the official beginning of our Church because it was on that date that the congregation was organized as such. These charter members, A. K. Dahl, Andrew Gunderson, Edward Nelson, Christian Gulbrandson, Erick Anderson, Helge Overen, Gilbert Paulson, Anton Gunderson, Hans Westgor, Joseph Boren, Lud-



HOMME RESIDENCE — 1880
Where first services were held.

vig Falstad, Bernt Knutson, Andrew Nelson, Ingeborg Johnson, with Rev. Homme, formed a congregation known as the "Skandinavisk Evangelisk Lutherske Menighed" in Wittenberg, Wisconsin. Hans Westgor served as deacon; Jacob Lunde, secretary; Andrew Gunderson, treasurer; who together with Peter Olson and Hans Erickson formed the board of trustees. Having no church building, services were held in the school room of the newly built Orphan Home. In 1885, Rev. Homme secured a deed for a church site and cemetery grounds and with a committee consisting of Hans Westgor, Peter Schlytter and Ole Olson, went ahead with building plans. In the year of 1885 a new constitution was adopted, and the congregation applied for membership in the Norwegian Synod, from which they withdrew in 1888 for reasons of harmony in the congregation.

By January of 1887 the foundation of the church was up and 26000 feet of lumber were on the premises for building purposes. Much of the work was voluntary and therefore it was some time before the building was completed. In 1892 the first services were held in the new church and the dedication probably took place in August of that year. The bell was added then that down through the years has called us to church. Minnie Thomp-

son Hagen and Clara Homme Englund, as young girls, helped to clean and prepare the new church for the first service. Ole Hagen and Minnie Thompson were the first couple to be married in the church.

After serving the spiritual needs of these pioneer folk, Rev. E. J. Homme resigned as pastor of the congregation at the age of 59. The following day, June 12, 1903 he died, leaving behind him a monument

in the form of the buildings he had erected, the congregations he helped to organize and the lives he salvaged for the Lord. In retrospect he looms large, and considering the handicaps he had to overcome in this new raw land, his accomplishments are truly awe-inspiring. Blessed be his memory. Hebrews 2:10 "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto thee."

Rev. O. C. Farseth succeeded Pastor Homme and served the congregation for one year. Rev. K. L. Eidahl served as temporary pastor



REV. O. C. FARSETH

1903 - 1904

until the fall of 1905, when Rev. P. P. Houglum began his ministry among us. By this time Wittenberg and our congregation had grown considerably, and it was with true rejoicing that the 25th Anniversary was celebrated on June 9, 1907. Pastors A. L. Dahl and Jens Mathison were speakers at this celebration.

In the year 1908 the constitution and by-laws were again changed in accordance with the needs of the times, and our people now numbered 271 souls with 59 voting members.



REV. P. P. HOUGLUM

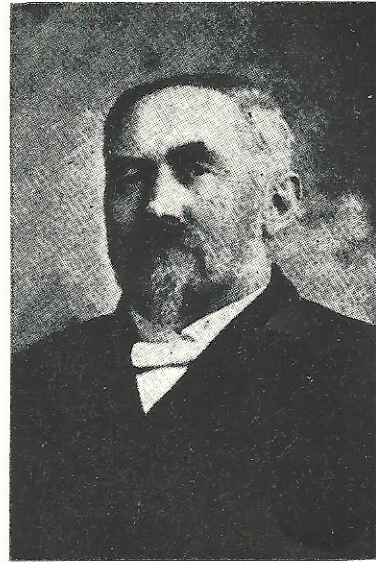
1905 - 1911

In 1911 Rev. Houglum resigned, and Rev. J. A. Wang, who was then manager of the Homme Homes, served as temporary pastor until the following year when Rev. N. Lunde became our pastor for the next seven years.

During this time discussions had been held with the Bethany Congregation regarding merger. On November 20, 1918 at a joint meeting of the two congregations, it was unanimously agreed to dissolve their respective organizations and merge into one to be known as the First Lutheran Church of Wittenberg.

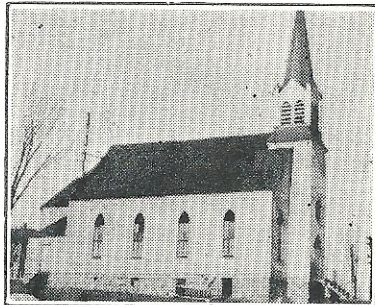
The Bethany Church had had its first services in 1892. The pastors who have served were: Rev. Larson, who called Axel Jacobson to be the manager of the Indian Mission; Rev. B. Hovde, Rev. I. Ramberg, Rev. A. Strom, Rev. C. N. Waller, Rev. John Skavland, Rev. T. M. Rykken, and

Rev. E. W. Sihler, under whose management of the Indian Mission, the church was dismantled after having served as a Mission Church for 24 years. A historical marker of red granite, facing east as did the old church, was erected with suitable ceremony in 1942 to mark the site.



REV. N. LUNDE

1912 - 1919



Bethany Church, Wittenberg

Rev. L. L. Masted was called to our parish in 1919 and served as pastor for four years being succeeded by Rev. T. August Lillehei in March, 1924. Besides servicing the local congregation, both of these pastors served East Immanuel at Morris and the Norrie Congregation at Norrie.

The close ties with Norwegian tradition were loosening with most of the younger generation speaking English, and so in January of 1929 the church records were kept in Eng-

lish and English was adopted as the official language. By 1936 three services a month were held in English and one in Norwegian.

Half a century had brought many changes to this community and to our church. On June 11, 1932, we celebrated our 50th anniversary. Two former pastors, Rev. Houglum and Rev. Masted, officiated at morn-

ing services, and in the afternoon Pastors Tollefson, J. A. Wang, R. P. Wasbotten, H. M. Mason and our own pastor, T. A. Lillehei, took part in the services.

Our church had seen steady growth down through the years. In 1935 woman suffrage came to First Lutheran when the by-laws were amended to give our women the right to vote and hold office, and they have since then taken keen interest and an active role in the spiritual and administrative work of the church.

In the 30's the church was re-decorated by the Ladies Aid.

When Rev. Lillehei resigned in 1937, Rev. Ernest Stolen, manager of the Homme Children's Home, served as temporary pastor until 1938 when Palmer A. Wahl became First Lutheran's pastor.

In 1940 the first of the Christmas candlelight services was held, and these services have been one of the highlights of the Christmas season ever since.

In 1939, Dr. Lokensgard became manager of the Homme Children's Home and because he was not a minister, for the first time since it's beginning, the children and staff of the Home became members of First Lutheran Sunday school and congregation, continuing down to the present, contributing greatly to the religious life and social fellowship of First Lutheran.

In 1941 a new pipe organ was purchased for the church and has since added greatly to the fine heritage of music which First Lutheran has enjoyed, and has served a dual role in contributing to the richness of the service and to the training of many young musicians who have received their initial inspiration and training at the organ and in the choir.

1942 was a historic year. In that year the Crooked Lake property was purchased by the Central Wisconsin Circuit and has been a source of much spiritual growth both for our teenagers and adults as well. Our people have contributed in promoting its activities and building program.

At the time of the 60th anniversary on June 9, 1942, the congregation had 217 voting members, a junior and senior choir, Ladies Aid, Lutheran



REV. T. A. LILLEHEI

1924 - 1937

Brotherhood, Lutheran Daughters of the Reformation, and Luther League. Rev. E. G. Stolen was guest speaker on this happy occasion, with Pastors N. B. Ursin, P. P. Houglum, F. B. Anderson, H. M. Mason, and E. W. Sihler, all of whom were residents of Wittenberg, taking part in the afternoon's festivities and adding their memories and greetings to mark the day. A roll call of confirmands was held and almost every class was represented.

In 1943 I. M. Thvedt was ordained in our church, the only ordination that First Lutheran has been privileged to celebrate. He is the son of

Pastor and Mrs. I. O. Thvedt, the latter serving at the Homme Children's Home as a matron for several years after the death of her husband. Pastor I. M. Thvedt is presently serving as Pastor at the Ephphatha School for the Deaf and Blind at Faribault, Minnesota.

We adopted the Pastor's Pension Plan in 1943, to provide a measure of security for these faithful servants. In 1943 the congregation voted to set up a building fund of a thousand dollars with a view to the future needs of our church.

Our pioneers placed their church upon a hill so that its tall spire could be seen from the village, and it was difficult for our people to visualize any other location for our church. So in 1947 they decided by vote to remodel instead of building anew upon another site, and anyone who has come up the church hill at night when the lighted windows throw colored shadows on the snow with the soaring spire lifting its cross to the sky, cannot help but feel



REV. P. A. WAHL

1938 - 1952

the almost mystical pull of this finger pointing to God.

A new heating system and fuel room, modern plumbing, a new entrance with stairs leading to the basement and also to the church, the kitchen remodeled and a new sunny room added to the rear of the church for the use of the primary department, made our church modern and increased its use by the organizations many fold so that now you see our church lighted many nights a week and rejoice that this building is so important in the religious and social life of our people.

In 1952, Pastor Palmer A. Wahl resigned to accept a call from Gays Mills. During 14 years in our midst, Pastor and Mrs. Wahl gave themselves unstintingly to the service of the parish. The congregation swelled

to fill the church, and with the coming of better times, material gifts helped make the functioning of the church much easier. Pastor Wahl served the neighboring Elderon congregation besides his regular duties with the parish congregations of Wittenberg and Morris. His energy and enthusiasm for his work have made lasting impressions on the lives of his parishioners. Mrs. Wahl, too, with her quiet efficiency, and dedicated service to our women's organizations will be long and affectionately remembered. Pastor N. J. Holm of Minneapolis served as temporary pastor.

With the necessity of calling a new pastor upon us, we took a long look at the parsonage which had housed so many lively pastor's families and realized its inadequacies, so in the fall of 1952 work was started on a story and a half frame and lannon stone house with breezeway and garage attached. The new parsonage was completed in March 1953, with a cash outlay of \$17,500, not including a great deal of donated labor. The location is a few doors from the old parsonage.

Pastor Leon Holm of Arkdale, Wisconsin, accepted our call to serve First Lutheran and Morris, and he and his wife moved into an apartment in one of the Mission buildings until the new parsonage was completed.

On the 18th of June, 1953, dedication ceremonies were held with Pastor Wahl as guest speaker. Pastor S. C. Knutson of Iola and local pastors, P. P. Houghlum, Oliver Bergeland, E. W. Sihler and Leon Holm presented greetings and remarks in the afternoon, after which the congregation marched in a body to the parsonage where Pastor Wahl prayerfully dedicated this building to its new use.

At this time too, our church interior came in for a face lifting. The bid of Mr. J. J. Stradle of Wayside, Wisconsin of \$2600.00 was accepted and work begun. The ceiling was painted a soft off-white and the walls a delicate green with suitable decoration. The altar painting given to the church by the first Young People's League in 1887 was mounted on the rear wall set off by a pleasing design in soft colors and light reflecting gold leaf. The organ, pulpit, altar and railing were painted white, giving a lightness and airiness to the interior that is a continuing joy to all.



REV. LEON HOLM

1952 - 1955

Under Pastor Holm's effective leadership and guidance, a new constitution and by-laws were adopted and printed. The new constitution provided for a president and vice-president.

The prayer committee was formed and gained much spiritual blessing from the close communion with each other such an association afforded. Problems brought to God by this little group seemed to be especially blessed with guidance, and a warmth and a fellowship resulted that is still continuing.

In 1954 we participated in the first Preaching, Teaching, Reaching mission and took stock of ourselves and of the opportunities for reaching out to others that it afforded.

Our Savior's Congregation at Elderon made formal application to become a member of the parish on October 20th, 1955, and was accepted, and the association has proved to be mutually beneficial.

Now with the closing of the Indian Mission by the Board of Home Missions, Pastor Sihler left for Minneapolis, and the spiritual welfare of the Indians in the area became our responsibility. Because such a transition cannot be accomplished overnight the Board of Home Missions pro-



CHOIR PROCESSION



PASTOR EUGENE PETERSON AND FAMILY

vided the parish with an intern to assist in the work. Mr. Paul Hougen, a student at the seminary, was appointed to work with the local pastor for a year and during that time proved to be of valuable assistance. When Pastor Leon Holm resigned, Mr. Hougen filled in very capably until the

new pastor came. He was assisted part of that time by Pastor Sven Tverberg of Northfield, Minnesota.

In the fall of 1955, Pastor Leon Holm accepted a call to Onalaska, Wis. During his short stay with us Pastor Holm made many friends in the congregation, and it was with regret that we saw him leave.

The congregation then called Pastor Eugene Peterson, who accepted and arrived here in April of 1956. In the short time that he has been our pastor, we have grown to like and respect our young minister, and his masterly sermons prove his thorough preparation and training.

On March 1st, 1957, Mrs. Beatrice Kjona of Minneapolis arrived and took up her duties as parish worker. We are happy that Mrs. Kjona and her daughters have come to Wittenberg, and we hope that her work will bring spiritual reward to her and to the congregation.

One cannot conclude a history of our church without making mention of the contributions the pastors and staffs of the institutions here in Wittenberg have made to our spiritual growth. As members of our congregation, they have given us many examples of Christian leadership and activity.

These have been 75 years that have kept pace with the changing conditions of the world. May we continue to serve the spiritual needs of our people by God's Grace!

ROSTER OF PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED FIRST LUTHERAN

1882-1903	Rev. E. J. Homme.
1903-1904	Rev. O. C. Farseth.
1904-1905	Rev. K. O. Eidahl (Temporary Pastor)
1905-1911	Rev. P. P. Houglum.
1911-1912	Rev. J. A. Wang (Temporary Pastor)
1912-1918	Rev. N. Lunde.
1919-1923	Rev. L. L. Masted.
1924-1937	Rev. T. Aug. Lillehei.
1937-1938	Rev. Ernest Stolen (Temporary Pastor)
1938-1952	Rev. Palmer A. Wahl.
1952	Rev. N. J. Holm.
1952-1955	Rev. Leon Holm.
1956	Rev. Sven Tverberg (Temporary Pastor)
1956-	Rev. Eugene Peterson.

LADIES AID

The Immanuel Ladies Aid was organized in the middle eighties, at the parsonage of Rev. E. J. Homme, Wittenberg, Wis. The exact date of organization cannot be stated, as no records were kept at the time. All business was done orally. Mrs. E. J. Homme was chosen honorary president. Mrs. P. C. Schlytter was elected the first president; Mrs. Osmund Olson, vice-president; Mrs. Peter Olson, secretary-treasurer. The other members were Mrs. Hans Westgor, Mrs. Andrew Gunderson and Mrs. Ingeborg Johnson.

The meetings were held the first Thursday of each month at the homes of the members. In the early days, members often had some uncomfortable rides to get to the place of meeting, especially when riding in a lumber wagon, with boards for seats and traveling over corduroy



LADIES AID GROUP — 1893

Top row, left to right — Mrs. Emil Norrbom, Mrs. Hildus Rolfson, Mrs. Tom Westgor, Mrs. Strom Torgerson, Mrs. Charles Erickson, Mrs. Andrew Grimstad, Mrs. Ole I. Nelson, Mrs. H. M. Gunderson.

Middle row, left to right — Mrs. Jens Anderson, Mrs. Kjek Gilbert, Mrs. O. N. Hagen, Sr., Mrs. Ole Carlson, Mrs. Ole Westlund, Mrs. Mikkell Solomon, Mrs. O. R. Wilson, Mrs. Ole Nelson, Mrs. Helland, Mrs. E. J. Homme.

Bottom row, left to right — Mrs. Nels Klovdahl, Mrs. Tom Lysne, Mrs. L. Slotten, Mrs. Hans Westgor, Mrs. Wm. O. Johnson.

roads. Devotions were held in the Norwegian language, followed by business, roll call, collections, lunch and social hour.

In 1892 many of the members left the Immanuel Aid and organized a Missouri Synod Ladies Aid. Mrs. Tobias Larson, wife of Rev. Larson,



LADIES AID GROUP — 1928

Top row, left to right — Mrs. Chris Slotten, Mrs. O. B. Hagen, Mrs. Iver Nelson, Mrs. T. C. Carlson, Mrs. Carl Jacobsen, Mrs. Axel Jacobson, Mrs. Val Meekes, Mrs. J. C. Johnson, Mrs. Chris Nelson.

Second row, left to right — Mrs. Chris Sundet, Mrs. Hildus Rolfson, Mrs. Nels Jacobson, Mrs. Peter Schlytter, Mrs. John Nessheim, Mrs. Arne Johnson, Mrs. John Englund, Mrs. Mathilda Lawrence, Mrs. Chas. Peterson, Mrs. Clara Kirberger, Mrs. John Bentson, Mrs. M. J. Borge.

Third row, left to right — Mrs. C. O. Reed, Mrs. Ole I. Nelson, Mrs. Andrew Grimstad, Mrs. Tom Lysne, Mrs. Strom Torgerson, Mrs. Hans Helgeson, Mrs. T. Aug. Lillehei, Rev. T. Aug. Lillehei, Mrs. Wm. Olson, Mrs. Gustav Carlson, Mrs. Jacob Gunderson.

Fourth row, left to right — Mrs. Sanford Iverson, Mrs. Hans Johnson, Mrs. Gust Norrbom, Mrs. Axel Westlund, Mrs. Martin Iverson, Mrs. Gabriel Overen, Mrs. Carl Nelson, now Mrs. Jacob Abrahamson, Mrs. J. A. Wang, Mrs. Henry Hanson, Mrs. Oscar Olson.

Bottom row, left to right — Mrs. Wm. Berbaum, Mrs. Ed Westlund, Mrs. Earl Cowles, Mrs. Gust Berglund, Mrs. Hamm.

(then Supt. of Bethany Indian Mission) became their first president, and the Society adopted the name of Bethany Ladies Aid.

In the year 1919, the Bethany and the Immanuel congregations were united and served by Rev. L. L. Masted. The Immanuel Aid then called itself the Norwegian Ladies Aid and the Bethany Aid was called the English Aid. Although having separate meeting days, they accomplished a great deal in helping the congregation remodel its church and parsonage.

The organization of the Women's Missionary Federation of Scandinavia Circuit was held at First Lutheran Church June 24, 1926. (Now called Central Wisconsin Circuit). Ten delegates representing eight Aids in three charges reported and thirty visitors attended. Mrs. Mathilda



LADIES AID GROUP — 1946

Top row, left to right — Mrs. Palmer A. Wahl and Marcia, Mrs. George Anderson, Mrs. Clara Kirberger, Mrs. Mildred Hellestad, now Mrs. Norman Nelscn, Mrs. E. W. Sihler, Mrs. Ole Oxhøvd, Mrs. Guy Jensen, Mrs. Nels Anderson, Mrs. Mat. Mickelson, Mrs. Mathilda Twedt, Mrs. Surland Thorson, Mrs. Gust Berglund, Mrs. Art Larson and Larry, Miss Cora Helgeson, Mrs. A. B. Larson, Rev. Palmer A. Wahl.

Middle row, left to right — Inez Madson, Mrs. Wm. Johnson, Mrs. T. C. Carlscn, Miss Theresa Peterson, Missionary in China, Mrs. Chris Sundet, Mrs. Hans Johnson, Mrs. R. G. Peterson, Mrs. Gust Norrbom, Mrs. Mathida Lawrence, Mrs. Sanford Iverson, Mrs. Theo. Gjermundson, Mrs. Henry Hanscn, Mrs. Allen Jensen, Mrs. O. B. Hagen, Mrs. Roman Schroeder, Miss Clara Reed, Mrs. F. B. Anderson, Mrs. M. H. Mason, Mrs. Wm. Gates.

Bottom row, left to right — Mrs. Wm. Berbaum, Mrs. Nels Jacobson, Mrs. Ed Westlund, Mrs. Rudolph Schoepke, Mrs. Arne Johnson, Mrs. Knute Johnson, Mrs. Josephine Sherwood, Mrs. Axel Westlund, Mrs. John Bentson, Mrs. Andrew Lindland, Mrs. N. B. Ursin, Mrs. Wm. Eickhoff, Mrs. Earl Cowles, Mrs. Lena Gilbertson, now Mrs. Geo. Gille. Children—Judy Jensen, Joan Schroeder, Andrea and Kristi Cowles.

Lawrence Olson was elected the first president. At present, two other Aid members have served as Circuit WMF presidents. Mrs. E. W. Sihler 1947-51 and Mrs. Arthur Larson 1951-53. Mrs. E. W. Sihler was also elected Eastern District WMF president in 1953 and served in that capacity until they moved to Minneapolis in 1955. In 1936, our Aid entertained the WMF Convention on its tenth anniversary and in 1951 the Silver Jubilee Celebration was held here, with Mrs. Olson, first president, present.

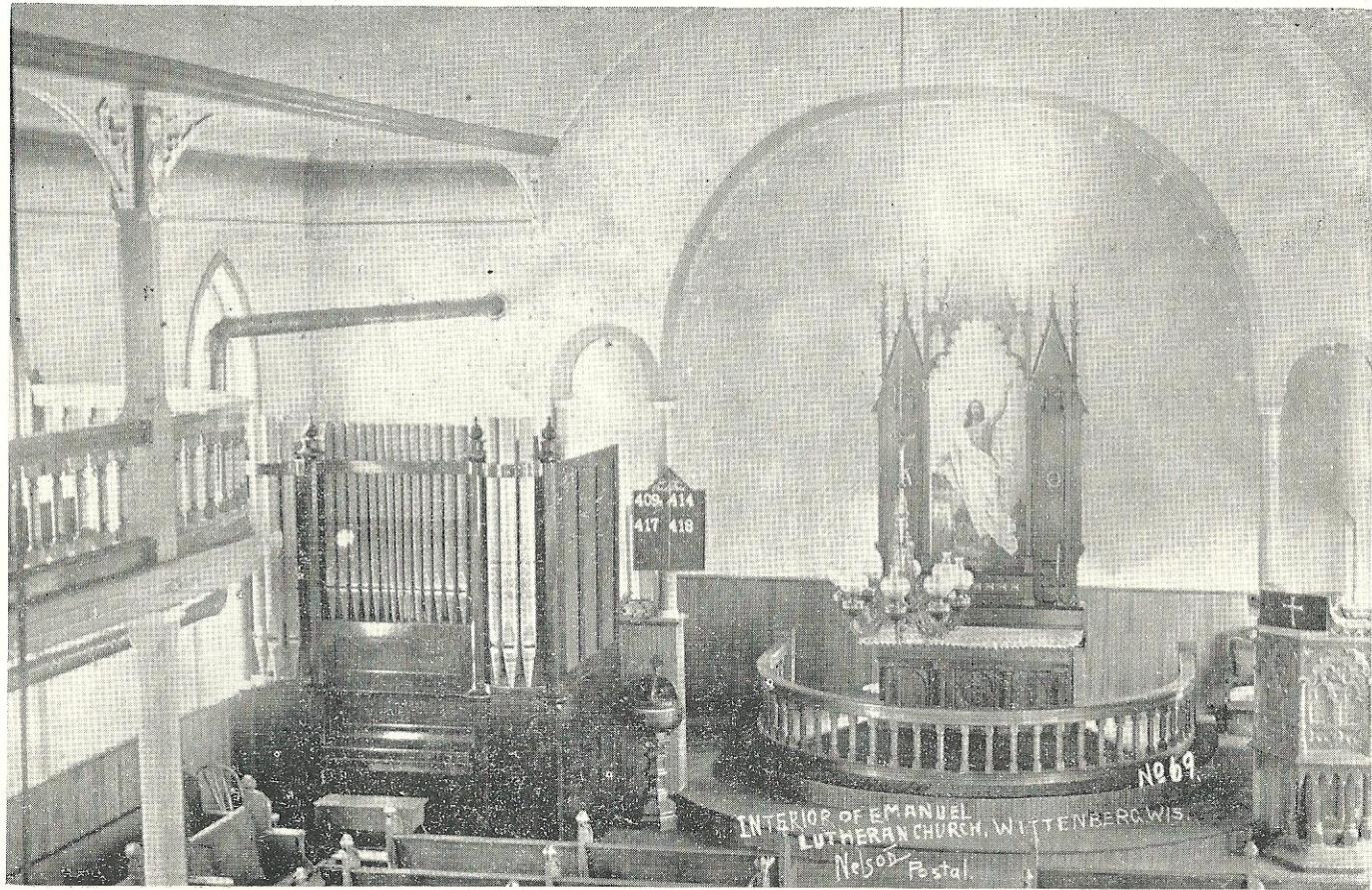
At the special meeting held on November 16, 1927, the two Ladies Aids dissolved and started a new Aid, adopting the name of First Lutheran Ladies Aid. Mrs. Carl Nelson was elected president; Mrs. Oscar D. Olson, vice-president; Mrs. C. C. Peterson, secretary; and Mrs. J. Abrahamson, treasurer. The Constitution of the Women's Missionary Federation for Aids of the Circuit was adopted.

The meetings of the Aid are held the first Thursday of each month.

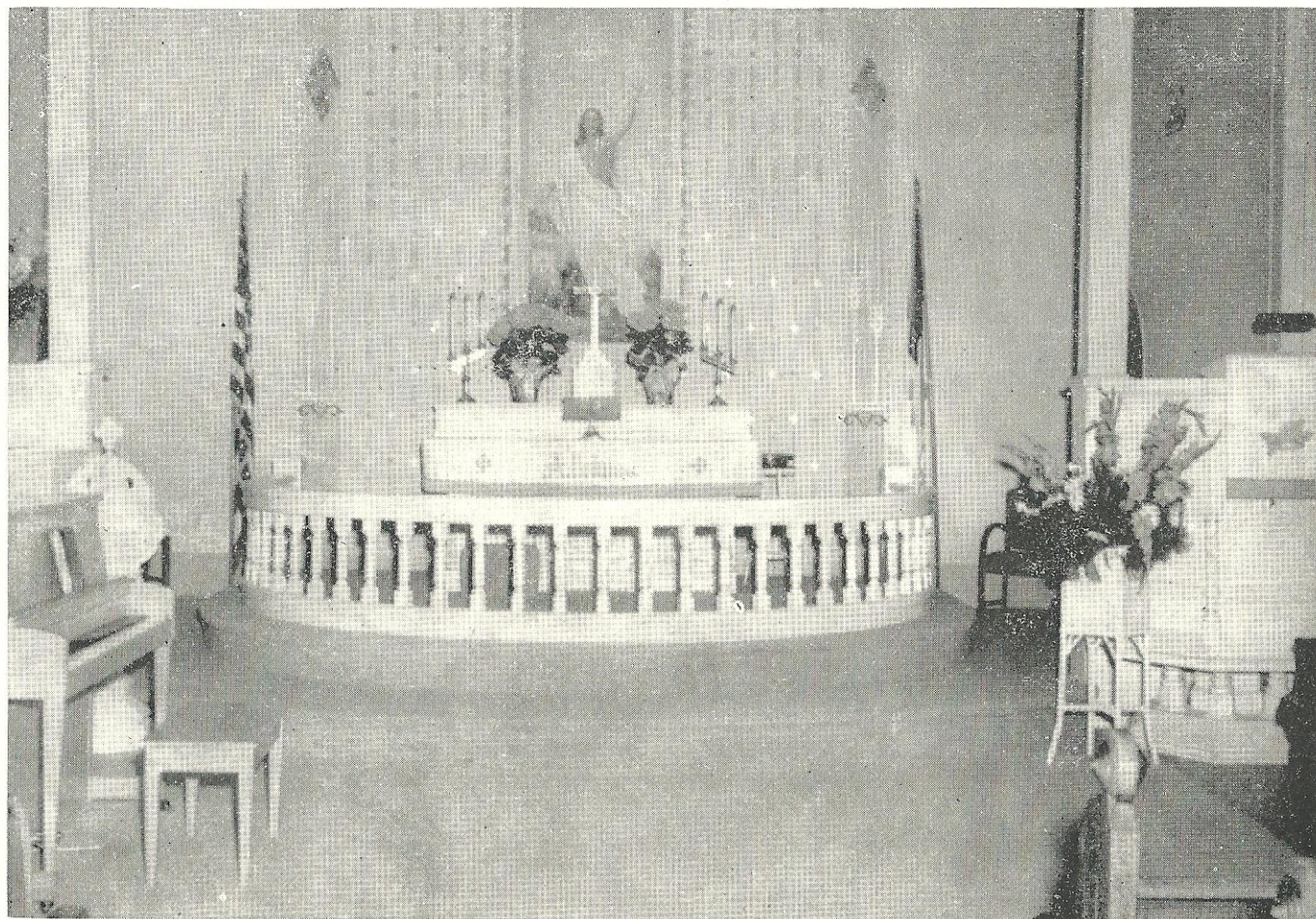


LADIES AID - 1957

Sixth row — Mrs. R. G. Peterson, Mrs. Surland Thorson, Mrs. E. J. Bentson, Mrs. Frank Doering, Mrs. O. S. Johnson, Mrs. Drews. Fifth row — Cora Helgeson, Mrs. Guy Jensen, Mrs. Ed. Loberg, Mrs. Arthur Larson, Mrs. E. L. Peterson, Mrs. Morris Nelson. Fourth row — Mrs. Nika Gustafson, Mrs. Norman Ursin, Mrs. Harold Hoffman, Mrs. Ingvald Larson, Mrs. R. Adams, Mrs. Vernon Jorgensen, Mrs. Earl Cowles. Third row — Mrs. Gust Norrbom, Mrs. Rudolph Schoepke, Mrs. Oscar Hanson, Mrs. Olin Hagen. Second row — Mrs. N. E. Jacobson, Mrs. S. P. Iverson, Mrs. Andrew Nelson, Mrs. Smeberg, Mrs. Carl Larsen, Mrs. C. J. Sundet. First row — Mrs. Peter Witte, Mrs. T. C. Carlson, Mrs. O. B. Hagen, Mrs. Jacob Abrahamson, Mrs. Ed. Robinson.



CHURCH INTERIOR - 1915



CHURCH INTERIOR — 1957

The Bible Study of the WMF program series have been followed with additional topics and special music.

The present officers are: Mrs. R. G. Peterson, president; Mrs. E. J. Bentson, vice-president; Miss Grace Dommersnaes, secretary; and Mrs. Norman Nelson, treasurer.

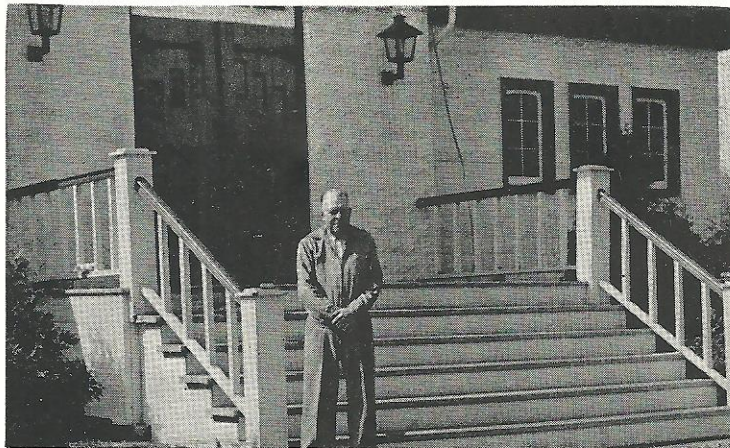
75 YEARS — UPON THIS HILL

Our fathers built upon this hill,
Thrust this tall steeple to the sky,
Mounted their cross upon it's height,
As symbol of their upward sight,
Gave of their best, in wood and might,
This was their faith.

Our pioneer mothers, in common need
Braved rude trails through forest deep
Gathered together in homes, these few
To share a christian fellowship, review
Their Bible, and gain strength anew
From this, their faith.

We cannot now accept their work
And lean content upon their deeds
Let us lift our eyes and see fields still
White unto harvest, Lord, let Thy will
Be done among us. Help us grow until
We too, keep faith.

—Mamie Westlund Nelson.



CHURCH CUSTODIAN — Marvin Carlson.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHOIR

The Choir was organized in 1892 by Mrs. John Englund, who was formerly Miss Clara Homme, and who was organist in the church for many years. She resigned from that position in January, 1934, and was succeeded in that work by Mrs. Hazel Basse. In January, 1935, Bernhardt Westlund, a member of the congregation, became the director.

Mrs. John Englund, organizer of the choir, is a daughter of the late Rev. E. J. Homme, founder of the church. The charter members of the Choir were Ingvald Odegaard, Inga Homme, Minnie Thompson, Olaf Hagen, Arne Johnson, Ed and Axel Westlund, Gertie and Martin Wilson and others.

First Lutheran has continued to have a choir down through the years, not always a choir with gowns, but on August 1, 1935 under Bernhardt Westlund's direction, twenty-nine voices gave a concert for the benefit of choir gowns. Black, with white collars for the ladies, which were enjoyed soon afterwards.

On Friday, August 28, 1936 the choir had the privilege of singing at the State Fair. The members then were Bernice Mickelson, Nora Hagen, Albertina Bentson, Virginia Schlytter, Phyllis Anderson, Marion Larson, Amanda Westlund, Sylvia Westlund, Luella Knutson, Gerda Jacobson, Ambjor Braaten, Carol Johnson, Eva Westlund, Ellen Ursin, Randine Westlund, Nelida Jacobson, Harriet Palladeau, Marie Iverson, Adeline Mickelson, Anna Anderson, Ruth Johnson, Wm. Palladeau, Sigurd Westlund, Emanuel Bentson, Gerhard Johnson, Rev. P. P. Houglum, Axel Westlund, Edwin Grasmyer, Fritz Larson, Gordon Cowles, Elroy Peterson.

Bernhardt was very interested and successful in this undertaking, so decided to go on to college and is making it his career. He is now the director of the Milton College Choir.

Then Clarence Spiedel, a teacher in the local grade school, was the director for two years when Edwin Born, Wittenberg High School band director, continued for three years. Then in 1940 Ruth Johnson, a member of the congregation and director of the Junior Choir, consented to direct the Senior Choir, also.

New purple robes with white stoles and gold crosses dressed up the choir for Christmas, 1955.

In June 1956 Ruth Johnson resigned after many years of good and faithful service, and in September of the same year Gordon Cowles, another member of the congregation, was called to be Senior Choir director, a position which he still holds.

The present Choir consists of the following: Sylvia Dobbe, Nora Hagen, Mamie Nelson, Stella Peterson, Linda Kjona, Miriam Larson, Beth



SENIOR CHOIR

Fourth row — Kenneth Johnson, David Larson, Sigurd Westlund, Gerhard Johnson, Peter Johnson, Carl Norrbom. Third row — Jerilyn Westgor, Harvey Johnson, Sylvia Westlund, Orwoll Hagen, Tom Olson, Robert Heckman. Second row — Cathy Olson, Kristi Cowles, Sharon Wogsland, Andrea Cowles, Mrs. L. Bestul, Bette Johnson, Ruth Johnson. First row — Mrs. R. G. Peterson, Shirley Wogsland, Judy Wogsland, Linda Kjona, Miriam Larson, Mrs. Andrew Nelson, Sylvia Dobbe, Beth Peterson, Mrs. Olin Hagen.
Accompanist: Sylvia Peterson. Director: Gordon Cowles.

Peterson, Judy Wogsland, Shirley Wogsland, Kristi Cowles, Ruth Johnson, Dagny Dobbe, Sylvia Westlund, Sharon Wogsland, Kathy Olson, Bette Johnson, Andrea Cowles, Jerilyn Westgor, Robert Heckman, Kenneth Johnson, Peter Johnson, David Larson, Orwoll Hagen, Gerhard Johnson, Sigurd Westlund, Harvey Johnson, Carl Norrbom, Tom Olson.

Other organists have been Oline Overen Abrahamson, Lena Johnson, Leona Westgor Johnson, Anna Slotten Sundet, Carol Johnson Sturgul, Carol Peterson Preus, Margaret Sihler, Priscilla Peterson Timm, Mary Peterson and Sylvia Peterson. Andrea Cowles has served as a substitute the past year.

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for his mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let EVERYTHING that hath breath praise the Lord. PRAISE ye the LORD."—Psalm 150.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. G. P. Gavin, Mrs. Beatrice Kjona, Pastor Peterson, Mrs. Norman Ursin, Mrs. Henry Hanson.

fathers as our guests. At this meeting we have a guest speaker, lunch and social hour.

The present officers of our Club are Mrs. Carl Larsen, president; Mrs. Howard Stoltenberg, vice-president; Mrs. Virgil Neuman, secretary-treasurer; Mrs. Art Larson, club reporter.

FIRST LUTHERAN LUTHER LEAGUE

The Luther League of First Lutheran Church was organized in 1893. Through the years it has proved to be a guiding light for the young in our church. In the year 1902, during a meeting in January, the league gave the congregation the sum of \$68.49. This amount was to be used toward the purchase of an altar painting to be placed in the church proper. The Luther League also agreed to raise whatever additional money that would be needed toward the painting. This painting still



LUTHER LEAGUE

Fourth row — Orvoll Hagen, David Larson, Robert Heckman, Kenneth Johnson, Peter Johnson, Pastor E. L. Peterson. Third row — Tom Olson, Larry Larson, Sylvia Dobbe, Bette Johnson, Miriam Larson, Dale Thorkelson. Second row — Judy Wogsland, Sylvia Peterson, Mary Hansen, Kristi Cowles, Andrea Cowles. First row — Shirley Wogsland, Linda Kjona, Jerilyn Westgor, Beth Peterson, Cathy Olson.

hangs in First Lutheran enclosed with a recently installed frame (which was put in during the 1953 remodeling).

First League also assisted in paying for the first pipe organ installed in the church.

The League has also engaged in many lesser activities through the years, but they are nonetheless important to the youth of our church. About two years ago the PTL (now PTM) movement was initiated in our League, largely as a result of the invitation and work of the Immanuel League in Wausau. The PTM banquet is now a yearly event for the League.

The officers of the League at this writing are: President, Tom Olson; Vice-President, Dale Thorkelson; Secretary, Sylvia Dobbe; Treasurer, Ken Johnson; PTM Secretary, Cathy Olson.

Our League is now a participant in the Leadership School program, and this year Reverend Peterson is teaching at the school to be held on the St. Olaf College campus.



CEMETERY COMMITTEE

C. J. Sundet, Norman Nelson, Henry A. Hanson.

THE LCR

On January 16, 1952 the first meeting of the LCR was held. The following were advisors: Mrs. Oliver Berglund, Mrs. Art Larson, Mrs. Andy Nelson, Mrs. R. G. Peterson, Mrs. P. A. Wahl, Mrs. Allen Jensen and Gerhardt Johnson.

The following officers were elected: Mary Peterson, president; David Larson, vice-president; Susan Sihler, secretary; Thomas Bland, treasurer; and Kay Gjermundson, historian.

The LCR meetings are held in the church basement the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Their program consists of Bible Study, hymn singing, topic and worship offering.

The present officers are: Gary Klug, president; Gil Maronek, vice-president; Judy Jensen, secretary; Billie Strong, treasurer; Marlene Ursin, historian; John Johnson, reporter. Advisors: Mrs. Joe Haanstad, Mrs. Art Larson, Mrs. Olin Hagen and Mrs. Norman Ursin.

This organization is dedicated to the purpose of helping our boys and girls express their Christian life, to acquaint them with the work of our Mission Program and train them for service in their church.



LUTHERAN CHILDREN OF THE REFORMATION

Fourth row — Ralph Hercher, James Promer, Gilbert Maronek, John Johnson, Benny Busch. Third row — Eileen Johnson, Dorothy Hagen, Marlene Ursin, Billie Jean Strong, Gary Klug. Second row — Judy Jensen, Rolf Larsen, Michael Cowles, Charles Peterson, Paul Larson, Jeff Haanstad, Gregory Cowles, Faith Peterson, Tom Ursin. First row — Linda Peterson, Linda Brekke, Michael Haanstad, Donald Erickson, Steven Westlund.

Advisors: Mrs. Arthur Larson and Mrs. Joe Haanstad.

THE LUTHERAN DAUGHTERS OF THE REFORMATION

The LDR is a missionary organization for the girls and young women of the church. The constitution states the fourfold purpose this way:

1. To lead young women to know Jesus Christ as their Savior.
2. To be a means through which their religious life finds expression.
3. To acquaint them with and train them for Christian service in the church.
4. To unite the societies of the younger women into cooperative efforts for work in the church.

The First Lutheran LDR was organized at a meeting held at the home of Mrs. Olin Hagen on the third Tuesday of January of 1934. The following officers were elected: Mrs. Olin Hagen (Nora Bentson), president; Marion Larson (Mrs. Emanuel Bentson), vice-president; Ruth Johnson, secretary; and Clara Mickelson (Mrs. Hans Christianson), treasurer. The motto chosen for the new organization was as follows: "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:14.

The charter members of the organization were Ruth Johnson, Carol Johnson (Mrs. Carence Sturgul), Mrs. Clarence Loken (Lillian Lillehei), Adeline Mickelson (Mrs. Wm. Green), Elaine Rehder, Jean Dorman, Eileen Dorman, Marion Larson and Mrs. Olin Hagen.

Meetings were held once a month. The programs consisted of devotions, hymn singing, Bible and topic studies, and prayer sessions. A worship offering was given at each meeting and the money was divided



JUNIOR BIBLE CLASS

Third row — Teacher: Gerhard Johnson, Orwoll Hagen. Second row — John Kunstman, David Ziebell, Larry Larson, Douglas Anderson. First row — Miriam Larson, Jerilyn Westgor, Linda Kjona, Judy Wogsland, Kristi Cowles.

between the various mission projects, such as, the Mission at Shishmaref, Alaska; Girls' School at Manafiafy, Madagascar; Evangelists' School at Untunjambili, South Africa; Bible School at Bogota, Colombia, South America; Jewish Missions, Lutheran Welfare, Mission to Negroes, and for the Missionary Residence being built in Minneapolis for single lady missionaries home on furlough. Contributions were also sent to The Missionary-for-a-Day and Treasure Chest Plans.

The membership of the organization changed continually. We were fortunate in having our Missionary in Alaska, Miss Helen Frost, as a member for some time inspiring us all to a greater interest in missionary work. Mrs. T. A. Lillehei worked faithfully to give the organization a good beginning. Our other pastor's wives, Mrs. P. A. Wahl, Mrs. L. A. Holm, and Mrs. E. L. Peterson also contributed greatly to the success of our LDR.

A Mother-Daughter Banquet was sponsored by the LDR on October 4, 1940. An LDR Octette consisting of Mrs. Olin Hagen, Carol Johnson, Ruth Johnson, Inez Madson, Amanda Westlund (Mrs. Fred Schmid), Eva Westlund (Mrs. David Genter), Sylvia Westlund, and Adeline Mickelson had the privilege of singing at several conventions and many special programs. Our organization presented the "Torch Bearer" program at the first meeting of the new LDR society at Rosholt, January 18, 1939.

Our group had the pleasure of having the first Central Wisconsin Circuit LDR Convention on November 10, 1934. The program was held at the First Lutheran Church and a banquet was held at the Homme Children's Home in the evening, where the first circuit officers were installed at a Candle-Lighting Service. Mrs. E. G. Stolen assisted with the organization of several new LDR within the circuit. Since that time several members of our LDR have served as circuit officers: Carol Johnson, treasurer, Albertina Bentson, president 1952-54, and Sylvia Westlund, president 1956.

It was the custom of our LDR to buy two poinsettia plants at Christmas and two lily plants at Easter for the altar at church. After the holiday services the plants were given to sick or shut-in mothers of the congregation.

At the Christmas meeting held December 15, 1956 at the home of Sylvia Westlund, our LDR, because of its decreasing membership, voted to disband. The only charter member to remain with the organization until it disbanded was Ruth Johnson.

May the LDR light kindled within each LDR girl and young woman shine on and on into eternity.



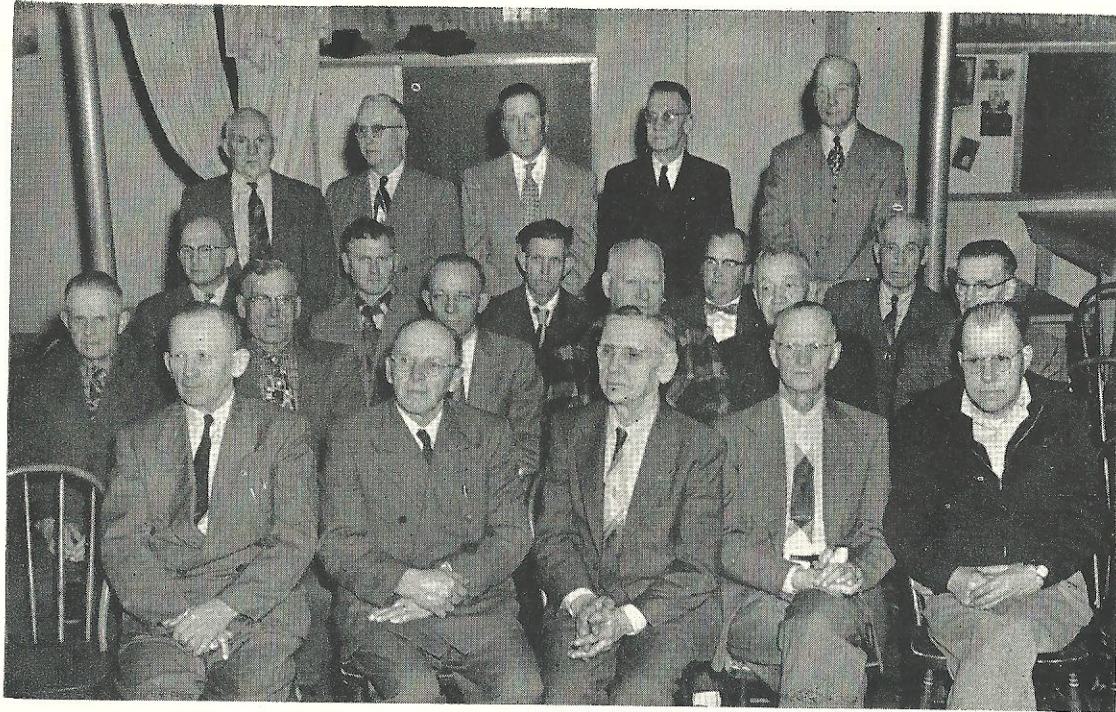
CHURCH COUNCIL

Back row — Howard Stoltenberg, O. S. Johnson, Olin Hagen, Pastor Eugene Peterson, Gerhard Johnson, Oscar Hanson. Middle row — Arthur Larson, Elroy Peterson, Mrs. Andy Nelson, Mrs. E. J. Bentson, Mrs. Norman Ursin, Joseph Duffek. Front row — Mrs. Gust Norrbom, Mrs. Carl Larsen, Mrs. R. G. Peterson, Mrs. S. P. Iverson.



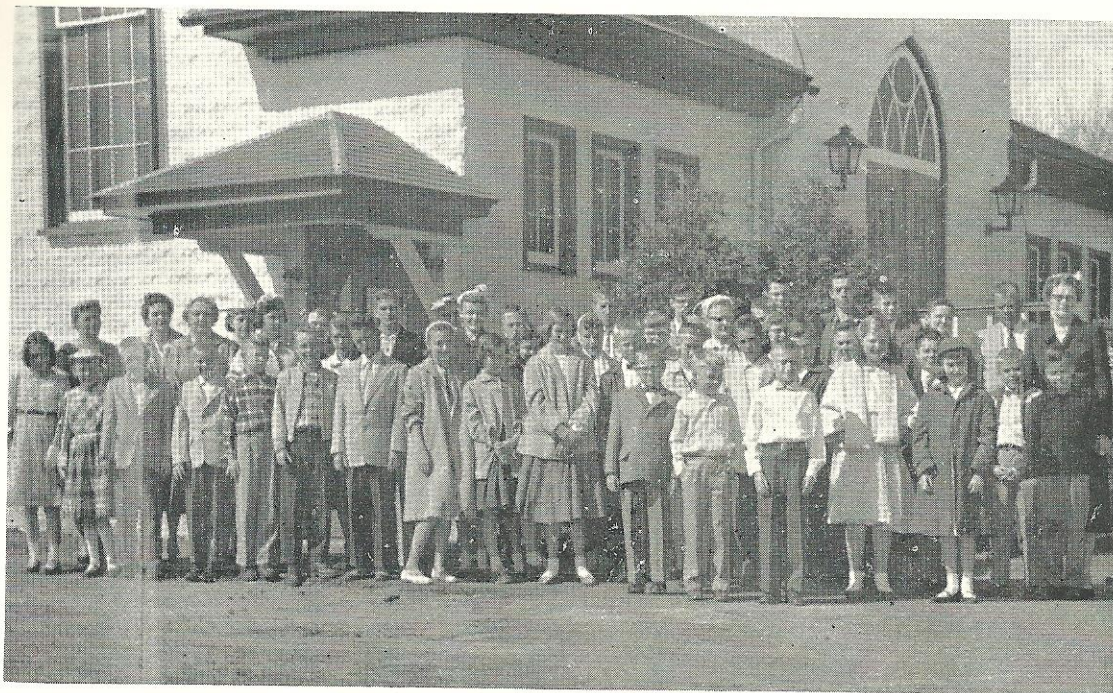
SENIOR BIBLE CLASS

Back row — Chris Sorenson, Gerald Miller, Robert Heckman, Kenneth Johnson, David Larson, Tom Olson, Dale Thorkelson. Front row — Sylvia Peterson, Bette Johnson, Cathy Olson, Andrea Cowles, Sharon Wogsland, Shirley Wogsland. Teacher: Mrs. Arthur Larson.
(First Lutheran parsonage in background).



LUTHERAN BROTHERHOOD MEN'S CLUB

Back row — Val Meckes, Olin Hagen, Harold A. Hoffman, Melvin Schlytter, O. S. Johnson. Third row—E. J. Bentson, Helmuth Reiter, Surland Thorson, Alan Jensen, Jacob Abrahamson. Second row — Gunder Gunderson, Carl Dahl, Joe Haanstad, Invald Larson, Wm. Palladeau Sanford Iverson. First row — Theo. M. Gjermundson, Gust Norrbom, Ed Aanonsen, C. J. Sundet, Marvin Carlson.



FIRST LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUPS

Back row — Marilyn Duffek, Judy Jensen, Benny Busch, Marlene Ursin, Roger Doering, Marcia Harrer, Billie Jean Strong, Ralph Herscher, Ramona Kunzak, Gilbert Marcnek, Dorothy Hagen, Evan Englund, Larry Kurowski, Eileen Johnson, John Johnson, Michael Cowles, Wally Gardner, Jeff Abts, Gary Klug. Middle row — Arla Jacobson, Janice Drews, Tom Ursin, Gregory Cowles, Allen Jacobson, Rolf Larsen, Steven Wogsland, Mary Kjona, Joan Jensen, Delores Miller, Paul Larson, Jeff Haanstad, Steven Strong, Charles Thorson, Donna Miller, Joan Thorson, Donald Erickson, Allen Jensen. Front row — Brian Neuman, James Jacobson, Michael Haanstad.

Mrs. R. G. Peterson, superintendent; Mrs. Sigurd Westlund, secretary-treasurer. Teachers: Mrs. Frank Doering, Mrs. Gerhard Johnson, Mrs. C. J. Sundet, Mrs. Henry Hanscn, Morris Nelson and Mrs. Olin Hagen.

Back row—Jimmy Jensen, Steven Peterson, Nedra Gavin, Sharyn Haanstad, Norman Englund, Lief Larsen. Middle row — Lee Sickler, Ann Hoffman, Susan Larson, Paula Ursin, John Jacobson, Charles Jacobson, Nickie Strong, Diane Neuman. First row — Susan Jorgensen, Kathy Peterson, Judy Peterson, Jean Innerebner, Connie Wogsland, Eric Larson, Julie Strong, Jhan Cowles.

Teachers: Sylvia Westlund, Mrs. Joseph Duffek, Mrs. Andrew Nelson.





PICTURES OF FIRST LUTHERAN CONGREGATION — 1957