

FIRST LUTHERAN LADIES AID SOCIETY

Wittenberg, Wisconsin



Rev. E.J. HOMME

Organizer

The Immanuel Ladies' Aid was organized in the middle eighties, at the parsonage of Rev. E. J. Hommee, Wittenberg, Wisconsin.

The exact date of organization cannot be stated, as no records were kept at the time. All the business was done orally.



Mrs. E. J. Homme was chosen honorary president.



Mrs. P. C. Schlytter was elected the first president.



The above picture was taken in 1932, when Mrs. Schlytter was the only surviving charter member.

The other officers elected were: Mrs. Osmund Olson, vice-president; Mrs. Peter Olson, secretary and treasurer. The other members were:

Mrs. Hans Westgor

Mrs. Andrew Gunderson

Mrs. Ingeborg Johnson

The day of meeting, which was the first Thursday of each month, was held at the different 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 roads. Oftentimes the ladies would take a tumble into the wagon box. Now the meetings are held in the church parlors. At first the member's fee was five cents. It was later raised to ten, while at the present time the dues are twenty cents. Devotion was held in the Norwegian language, followed by business, roll call and collections, and last but not least, the social hour and serving.

In 1892, many of the members left the Immanuel Aid and organized a Missouri Synod Ladies' Aid. Mrs. Tobias Larson, wife of Rev. Larson, then superintendent of the Bethany Indian Mission, was its first president.



At the March meeting, which was held in the main building of the Bethany Indian Mission, the society adopted the name Bethany Ladies' Aid.

The members of the Synod Aid were:

Mrs. T. Larson

Mrs. A. K. Dahl

Mrs. Andrew Gunderson

Mrs. John Husey

Mrs. G. T. Loberg

Mrs. Jacobo Lunde



The meeting day was on the second Wednesday of the month. Serving was had at set tables, while today lunch is served cafeteria style. Sewing was their pastime.

In the year 1919, the Bethany congergation and the Immanuel congregation were united, was served by the newly elected pastor, 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 and helped the congregation at all times in remodeling the church and parsonage.

The first \$50. in the treasury of Immanuel Ladies' Aid was turned over to the first pastor, Rev. E. J. Homme, to be used by the congregation as first payment towards the purchase of the altar, pulpit, baptismal font and the beautiful pews. The church furniture was in light oak. In June, 1922, the two Aids worked hand in hand to get a basement and furnace under the church. They raised money for this by giving food and apron sales, supper and entertainments. Donations were also given by many. The basement was completed in the summer of 1923. The Norwegian Aid held their first meeting there on May 3, 1923; the English Aid on July 11, 1923.



A Flower Fund was started in April, 1924, with each member contributing five cents at each meeting. Several ladies were appointed on the committee. They were as follows for the years 1924 to 1926, : Mrs. L. A. Larson, Mrs. O. B. Hagen; 1926 to 1928, Mrs. I. J. Nelson, Mrs. Andrew Grimstad, Mrs. O. B. Hagen; 1928 to 1930, Mrs. J. C. Johnson, Mrs. H. Rolfson, Mrs. Carl Jacobson; 1930 to 1932, Mrs. John Englund, Mrs. Arne Johnson, and Mrs. T. A. Lillehei. The present committee consists of Mrs. Hans Johnson, Mrs. John Bentson and Mrs. Henry Hanson. A Birthday Box was also started at the April meeting, each member contributing as many pennies as they were old.

At a special meeting held on Wednesday afternoon, November 16, 1927, the two Ladies' Aids dissolved and started a new Aid, adopting the name First Lutheran Ladies' Aid. Mrs. Carl Nelson was elected president; Mrs. J. Lawrence, vice-president; Mrs. C. C. Peterson, secretary; Mrs. J. Abrahamson, treasurer. The constitution of the Womens' Missionary Federation for local Aids was adopted. Four members are to serve at each meeting, the first Thursday of ever month.

It was decided at the May 3, 1928, meeting to re-decorate, re-paint and re-model the interior of the church. Mrs. Val Meckes, Mrs. Wm. Berbaum, Mrs. Oscar Olson were appointed on the committee. Later Mrs. O. B, Hagen, Mrs. J. C. Johnson and Mrs. I. J. Nelson were added to the committee. Now our church is greatly improved with the addition of new carpet and linoleum strips up the aisles, pews and floor revarnished, walls and ceiling repainted, and colored glass windows set in. We will likely install a pipe organ in the near future, or as soon as financial conditions will permit. At the present time we have a very fine pipe-tone Hinner's organ in use.

The organization of the Women's Missionary Federation of Scandinavia Circuit took place on the 24th day of June, 1926. A small group of interested women met in the First Lutheran Church here in Wittenberg, invited by its pastor, Rev. T. Aug. Lillehei, and organized the Scandinavia Circuit (now called Central Wisconsin Circuit) branch of the Women's Federation of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. Ten delegates representing eight Aids in three charges reported and thirty visitors attended. The following officers were elected: Mrs. J. Lawrence, president; Mrs. Andrew Arveson, vice-president; Mrs. H. O. Bach, secretary and treasurer; Mrs. J. C. Johnson, Mission Box secretary; Mrs. William Selmer, Thank Offering secretary; Mrs. A. O. B. Moldrem, Self-Denial secretary; Mrs. C. J. Bjelland, Cradle Roll secretary; Mrs. Oscar Holm, In Memoriam and Life Membership secretary.



Mrs. H. O. Bach, Wautoma
Mrs. C. Bjelland, Mt. Morris
Mrs. J. Lawrence, Wittenberg
Mrs. J. Johnson, Wittenberg
Mrs. Oscar Holm, Tigerton
Mrs. A. O. B. Moldrem, Scandinavia

This little beginning, like the biblical mustard seed, has grown and developed beyond all expectations, until now delegates report from practically all the forty Aids of the fourteen charges within the circuit.

On May 7, 1930, a motion was made and carried that we amend our constitution so that no officer should hold office more than two years in succession. A rising vote of thanks was given Mrs. T. M. Rykken for her work as member and president, at the meeting on August 7, 1930. Her resignation was on account of moving to Petersburg, North Dakota.

A mission box program, arranged and conducted by Mrs. J. C. Johnson, the mission box secretary, was enjoyed very much at the May 7, 1931 meeting. Mrs. J. Lawrence, president of the Women's Missionary Federation, rose and thanked Mrs. Johnson for her conscientious work, not only in our Aid, but for all the Aids in the circuit. A rising vote of thanks was extended to Mrs. Johnson, and all those taking part in the program.

At the December 3, 1931 meeting it was decided that only three serve at each meeting and that three things be served, two kinds of sandwiches and either cake, cookies or doughnuts. A Self-Denial program was given at this meeting, which included a play that had been presented at the Federation meeting in Wautoma in the fall, in which many members of our local aid took part. The ladies serving at the meeting on February 4, 1932, namely, Mrs. J. C. Johnson, Mrs. Arne Johnson and Mrs. Hans Johnson, had the church parlors appropriately decorated in honor of the Bi-Centennial and Lincoln's birthday. A mission box program was also given at this meeting.

The officers of the First Lutheran Ladies' Aid at the present time are as follows: Mrs. Edward Westlund, president; Mrs. Selmer Schlytter, vice-president; Mrs. S. P. Iverson, secretary; Mrs. Will Gates

treasurer; Flower Committee: Mrs. Hans Johnson, Mrs. John Bentson, Mrs. Henry Hanson; Work Committee: Mrs. Carl Nelson, Mrs Selmer Schlytter, Mrs. J. Abrahamson, Mrs. O. B. Hagen, Mrs. Gust Berglund; Ushers: Mrs. C. C. Peterson, Mrs. M. J. Borge. Our present pastor Rev. T. Aug. Lillehei, leads the devotion and reads short and interesting articles from books and papers that he thinks timely, before we start our business.

For years our Ladies' Aid Society has made annual contributions to the local institutions, Bethany Indian Mission, Homme Orphan Home, Homme Old People's Homes, and many other good deed which are not mentioned in this writing, but are registered in God's records and He will praise the faithful workers and reward them.

Following is the enrollment for 1932:

Mrs. Jacob Abrahamson	Mrs. S. P. Iverson	Mrs. John Nessheim
Mrs. Nels Anderson	Mrs. Axel Jacobson	Mrs. Gust Norrbom
Mrs. William Berbaum	Mrs. Carl Jacobson	Mrs. Oscar Olson
Mrs. John Bentson	Mrs. Nels Jacobson	Mrs. Gabriel Overen
Mrs. Gust Berglund	Mrs. Arne Jacobson	Mrs. H. Overen
Mrs. M. J. Borge	Mrs. George Johnson	Mrs. C. Peterson
Mrs. T. C. Carlson	Mrs. J. C. Johnson	Mrs. C. O. Reed
Mrs. Gust Carlson	Mrs. K. M. Johnson	Mrs. B. Schlytter
Mrs. Earl Cowles	Mrs. WM. Kirberger	Mrs. Selmer Schlytter
Mrs. Carl Dahl	Mrs. L. A. Larson	Mrs. Christ Slotten
Mrs. John Englund	Mrs. John Lawrence	Mrs. Christ Sundet
Mrs. Ludvig Falstad	Mrs. T. A. Lillehei	Mrs. T. M. Swenson
Mrs. N. A. Findall	Mrs. Thos. Lysne	Mrs. Strom Torgerson
Mrs. William Gates	Mrs. Hans Johnson	Mrs. J. A. Wang
Mrs. Andrew Grimstad	Mrs. Albert Madson	Mrs. A. B. Westlund

Mrs. O. B. Hagen

Mrs. Val Meckes

Mrs. Edward Westlund

Mrs. Erick Hanson

Mrs. Carl Nelson

Mrs. Adam Wopshal

Mrs. Henry Hanson

Mrs. I. J. Nelson

Mrs. Hans Helgeson

Mrs. Mathea Nelson

Mrs. Martin Iverson



Interior view of the church basement of the First Lutheran Church where the Ladies Aid Meetings are held, 1932.



Bethany Ladies Aid gathering taken on the grounds of the Bethany Indian Mission



First picture taken of the members of the Immanuel Ladies Aid

1898

First picture of the Immanuel Ladies Aid - 1898.



Last row from left: Mrs. E. Norbom; H. Rolfson; T. Westgor; S. Torgerson; Chas. Erickson; A. Grimetal; O. J. Nelson; H. Gundersen;
 2nd row: - Mrs. J. Anderson; E. Njoh; O. B. Hager; O. Westlund; O. R. Wilson; Mrs. Rev. C. H. Helland; Mrs. Rev. E. J. Homme;
 3rd row: - Mrs. G. Lyne; Mrs. O. Carlson; Mrs. Solomon; Mrs. O. Nelson;
 On Floor: - Mrs. H. Klovdahl; Mrs. L. Slotter; Mrs. Hans Westgor; Mrs. Simon A. Klovdahl.

Sven Carl



Second picture of the Immanuel Ladies Aid, with Rev. N. Lunde.

1912



Members of the First Lutheran Ladies Aid, with Rev. T. Aug. Lillehei.

1931