

THE LUTHER LEAGUE

Youth gatherings sponsored by the church were held at the homes during the late 1890's and in the early 1900's. Money raised, usually by basket socials, was used for the church.

An "Ungdoms Forening" was started in 1911 by the direction of the Rev. L.L. Masted. Later it was called "Young People's Society." Meetings were held at the homes for several years.

Until about 1919 the Young People's Society sponsored a Fourth of July picnic for the congregation with a patriotic and religious program at the parsonage grove. The Young People's Choir, singing usually from "Frydetoner," took part in the program.

The Young People's Society was reorganized as a Luther League during the pastorate of Reverend Swenson. Luther League topics and Bible Studies became part of the programs. The Pocket Testament Movement was introduced and several Pocket Testament Movement banquets were held between the years 1930 and 1950.

During World War II, thirty-nine men of the congregation served in the armed forces. Under the direction of the Reverend Berg, the Luther League presented Pocket Testaments to each serviceman, kept a list of addresses, sent birthday cards, letters and Christmas gifts.

In recent years, the Luther League has been merged with the Luther League of Faith Lutheran Church.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

From the beginning of the congregation to the present time religious instruction has been provided for the children.

In the early period several weeks of parochial school in the Norwegian language was customary. One of the earliest school masters was "Klokker" Andreas Heitmann. He taught here during the Reverend Eldahl's pastorate. Another early teacher was Alfred Smeberg.

No record is available on the first of our Sunday Schools, but according to information from older members, a Sunday School was held in the Loberg district in the early eighteen hundred and eighties, with several fathers as teachers. About 1903 a Sunday School was held in the Garfield Schoolhouse for the children of that community. Some of the teachers were Mrs. Berthe Kankrud, Mrs. Christina Knutson, Tina Elihovde, Regina Peterson, and perhaps others.

Anna Farseth, who was a parochial school teacher in the congregation, was in charge of a Sunday School held in church during the Reverend Farseth's pastorate.

The St. Olaf College students Axel Bue and John Lawrence taught summer school and helped with the Sunday School work while the Reverend Masted was pastor. Some

other teachers at this time were Alma Reierson, Ida Peterson and Inez Aanrud. Later during the same pastorate two Sunday Schools were held, one at the parsonage for Oak Grove, Garfield and Peru communities with Mrs. Masted in charge, and one at the Rueben Hiller home with Mrs. Hiller in charge.

During the Reverend Kile's pastorate the Sunday School again met at the church. Textbooks used up to and during this time were Fontoppidars Explanation, Luther's Small Catechism, Vogt's Bible History, and the Bible.

A parish Sunday School for North and South New Hope was organized by Phillip Hiller at the request of Pastor Swenson during the early years of his pastorate. Mrs. Ole Nerlien was superintendent and the enrollment was between fifty and sixty children. In 1957 the enrollment in the Sunday School and High School Bible Class was 38.

Mona Aanrud was superintendent of the Sunday School for over 20 years. Others who have served as superintendent are Effie Krogwold, Ruth Nerlien, Virginia Krogwold, Charlotte Isaacson, Rachelle, Kunzman, and Vivian Wogsland. Janet Wilhelm is the present superintendent.

The Sunday School has helped support several missions over the years. This year their contributions are going to Ephphatha Ministries, the branch of the ALC providing ministry to the deaf and the blind.

Lenore Wogsland has been treasurer and piano accompanist for the children's singing for many years. The Sunday School presents special music for church services at Christmas and occasionally during the year.

The enrollment in the Sunday School is now twenty-three. Current teachers are Lenore Wogsland, Lisa Budsberg, Janet Wilhelm, Joan Gunderson, Kelly Aanrud, and Karen Catozzi.

SOURCES FOR THIS HISTORY

The primary source for the histories of the church, ALCW, Luther League, and Sunday School is the booklet published on the one hundredth anniversary of the congregation. This history was written primarily by Inez Hanson. The recent history of the church and ALCW was provided by Mona and Leila Aanrud. The recent history of the Sunday School was provided by Virginia Krogwold. Other sources for this history include: the congregation's pictorial history compiled by Inez Hanson, Malcolm Rosholt's articles in the Iola Herald entitled "From the Indian Land," the history of Faith Lutheran Church written by Malcolm Rosholt, the history of Northland Lutheran Church appearing in its 75th anniversary booklet, and the history of New Hope Lutheran Church, Hayti, South Dakota. Additional material was written by Rev. Tim Peterson, who also compiled this history. Please bring additions and corrections to our attention, so that an accurate and complete history of our congregation may be maintained.

LOOKING BACK - LOOKING AHEAD

By Rev. Tim Peterson

The history of the church is the history of God's faithfulness. What is special about New Hope's history is the special ways in which God has touched its members through the years. This grace can not be captured in writing, but is revealed in your lives of faithfulness to the Word you have heard in this place.

What I find most interesting in New Hope's history is the controversy of the 1880's. I think the witness of our congregation in that difficult time can strengthen our commitment to Christ as we look to the future.

Both sides in the "Missourian controversy" were very concerned that God's truth be preached and taught accurately. Both sides felt it necessary to separate themselves from falsehood. North New Hope broke away from the Synod, while the members of South New Hope left North New Hope. Such commitment to the truth of the faith is admirable. It's hard today to be loyal to truth, when there are so many voices telling us different things about God, and when we naturally want to be open-minded. Our heritage in New Hope calls us to seek what is true and hold tightly to it.

The primary issue in the dispute was the question of faith and grace. In a general way of speaking, North New Hope focussed more on our faith, while the South centered on God's grace. Their joint witness to us is to lift high both faith and grace. God does something wonderful within us when his grace gives us faith. Martin Luther said, "Word alone, faith alone, grace alone." If we're looking to find truth strong enough to build our lives on, it's good to start with this foundation.

Finally, the specific matter that received the most discussion in New Hope was whether or not a person "on Conversion's Way" could "pray in a manner pleasing to God." Pastor Eidahl said that an unbeliever who was repenting would have his prayer of repentance heard by God even though he had not yet become a believer. The Synod theologians taught that anybody repenting had already been given faith by God's grace, because no unbeliever could please God with his prayers. What benefit can there be for us in this hair-splitting? Being a member of God's family can easily be taken for granted. Not all people are able to talk to God. Both sides in the dispute agreed on that. If we can talk to our Lord, it is because by God's Grace in Jesus Christ that we have been brought into His Family. To be able to "pray in a manner pleasing to God" is a special privilege God has given to us, His Children.

Our congregation had a "Golden Age" when it was large and prominent. We are now much smaller. We rejoice in the thousands who received God's Word here, trusting that, living or dead, they are still united with us in the Lord. We rejoice that the power of God in Jesus Christ is in New Hope Lutheran Church now, with the Word and the Sacraments. The call of God and the salvation of God are here for us all, for me, and for you.

PASTOR BERGE'S FAREWELL

Before he died on May 5, 1883, New Hope's first resident pastor dictated to his wife a short message to be read to the congregation. Pastor Nils Bryngelsen Berge was 41 when he died. Except for his one year in Scandinavia, New Hope and Alban were the only churches he served in his ministry. He was buried in the New Hope cemetery. His farewell message was translated by Belva Nerlien. It was printed in The Iola Herald on February 24, 1972, as part of Malcolm Rosholt's series "From the Indian Land." It was also used by Rev. Leonard Masted in his book Goals that Grip and Grow.

"Since I am not permitted to hold farewell services in the dear New Hope and Alban congregations, I would earnestly exhort you to remember Jesus Christ, meditate on His suffering for us, and consider His great love which moved Him to suffer rather than that we should be condemned. Think of what a great sin it would be for us to despise such great love, for He out of His great mercy has freed us from suffering by taking it upon Himself, and has opened the portals of grace to the heavenly kingdom for us.

"We have the promise that in His good time we shall rise according to His transfigured body and, as the Apostle Peter says, partake of His godly nature.

"I urge you to pray your Heavenly Father to forgive all your sins for the sake of Jesus Christ and to hold in high esteem the great grace of the gift of forgiveness and, with it, eternal life and salvation. Use God's Word diligently for, through it, the Holy Spirit reveals Christ to and in your hearts and thereby leads you on the Way of Life.

"With this I must close, dear congregations, since I am so weak that I can not even write this myself but am dictating it to my wife and she is writing down my words. I want to thank you, dear congregations, most heartily for the great devotion you have shown me during my illness and likewise for your good will toward my family.

"Finally, I would confess before my dear congregations that I die believing in the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that I rejoice in my Savior and in the fact that He has taken away all my sin and its merited punishment, so that I can now, in the name of the Lord Jesus and out of pure grace without any merit of my own, inherit eternal life and salvation. I am not afraid to die but rejoice with all my heart in the knowledge that it will not be long till I am permitted to enter into the eternal glory.

"In closing, I also want to pray God's blessing down upon the new pastor and his work among you. May our gracious and merciful God so direct his labor that it may be to God's glory and result in the eternal salvation of many souls.

"So be it for Jesus sake. Amen."

"A PLEDGE TO KEEP"

The following poem was a centennial greeting to the New Hope Church from Pastor Olaf L. Olsen, October 13, 1957, and was printed in the 100th anniversary booklet of the congregation.

The New Hope Church through hundred years
Has sown the Gospel, oft with tears,
The fruits for us to reap.
From age to age the Gospel sound
Has echoed on this holy ground,
Our heritage to keep.

For this we thank our loving God
Who blest our fathers where they trod;
He heard them pray and sing.
And in their steps we will proceed
To worship God in word and deed,
In service to our King.

We consecrate ourselves anew
To serve our Savior and to do
As He Himself has said.
To teach His Word to all the world
In doctrine pure, with truth unfurled,
That souls to Christ be led.

MEMORIAL GIFTS 1958-1982

- 1958 Tables for Mathilda Olson, Gladys Krogwold, Fred Kolden, and Perry Swenson
- 1959 Service Book and Hymnal; names on covers (red)
- 1961 Altar Bible in memory of Adolph Skowen
- 1963 Candelabra in memory of Robert Broadway (replaced by candlesticks in 1973)
- 1966 Drapes for the Math Broadways
- 1967 Slide projector for Gary Wogsland
Electric Clock for Irving Larson
- 1971 Good News (copies for pews) for ALCW for Norris Hotvedt
Allen Organ from Maxwell Estate for Lewis and Hilma Maxwell
- 1974 Creamers/sugar bowls by Mrs. Lyle Knutson in memory of Lyle
Replacement of Communion Service memorial for Carl Christopherson
Guest book for Emelie Nerlien
- 1975 Multiplex for Nels P. Hanson and Ella Hiller Floistad continued in memory of Inez Aanrud Hanson
Speaker system in memory of Steve Williams
- 1978 "Last Supper" Three dimensional picture for Elmer Kolden
Lutheran Book of worship; names in name plates in books
- 1979 Pew Cushion fund for Arthur Stoltenberg
Many memorials given to improvement fund and refugee fund
- 1981 Ceiling fans for Mabel Hotvedt
Chimes Fund was begun in 1970 in memory of Pauline Kussman. It was completed in 1981 with memorials from James Cox, the Ellingsons in memory of Selma Cox, and Edward Seefeldts. Other memorials for Doris Shuler, James Kolden, Norris Hotvedt, Norin Gunderson, Marie Danielson, Meta Broadway, James Olson, Melvin Rustad, and Everette Isaacson. Many other gifts help to complete this project.
- 1982 Wall hanging for Mr. and Mrs. R. Hiller
Altar Hangings and pulpit antependrums for Mabel Stoltenberg and Mollie Reiersen
Kitchen ceiling for Olga Rustad

OTHER GIFTS

- Movie Projector from L.D.R. fund
- Piano and altar carpet from W.M.F. (now A.L.C.W.)
- Wall hanging by Frieda Isaacson and Viola Sinclair
- Wall hanging by Pamela Jensen and Kelly Aanrud
- Picture "Christ and the Childred" by Pastor Holten

IMPROVEMENTS 1958-1982

- 1961 Rest rooms, new floor, and new heating system
- 1970 Interior repainted
- 1978 Front entrance steps rebuilt
Back porches rebuilt
New front doors
- 1979 Front hall (downstairs) paneled
- 1980 Building Insulated and windows sealed and weatherproofed
- 1982 Kitchen paneled