

THE
HISTORY
OF
THE
FIRST
LUTHERAN
CHURCH,
NEW RICHMOND,
WISCONSIN

FIFTY-FIVE
YEARS
OF
SERVING
CHRIST,
1945-2000

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This historical collection is dedicated to the hundreds of devoted members of First Lutheran Church who have over the years have so faithfully served. This includes past pastors, salaried church personnel and most important, the countless volunteers who donated their time and talents to the church. Where would our church be without these faithful servants?

A special thanks to past writers who compiled numerous accounts of our church history. A fair portion of this document is a compilation of these various works that have been done over the years. I did not feel it was appropriate to dissect their accounts and write yet another version of our history. Each and every article has its merits of significance.

A special thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to this document:

- † Debbie O’Flanagan – layout, and creativity
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- † Numerous others whose donations are cited within this booklet

Signed,

Jim Reppe – project coordinator, September 2000

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

I hope that you enjoy this special gathering of rich history of the First Lutheran Church and it’s members. It is an account of faith and blessings lived out in the Love of God for God’s people. Out of this heritage we are rooted but also sent into this new millennium with the same call of those who have gone before us. That call is to reach out to their community and world with the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is my hope and prayer that we will continue to be blessed with the faith and the tools to “open hearts and doors” to this world for the next 50 years.

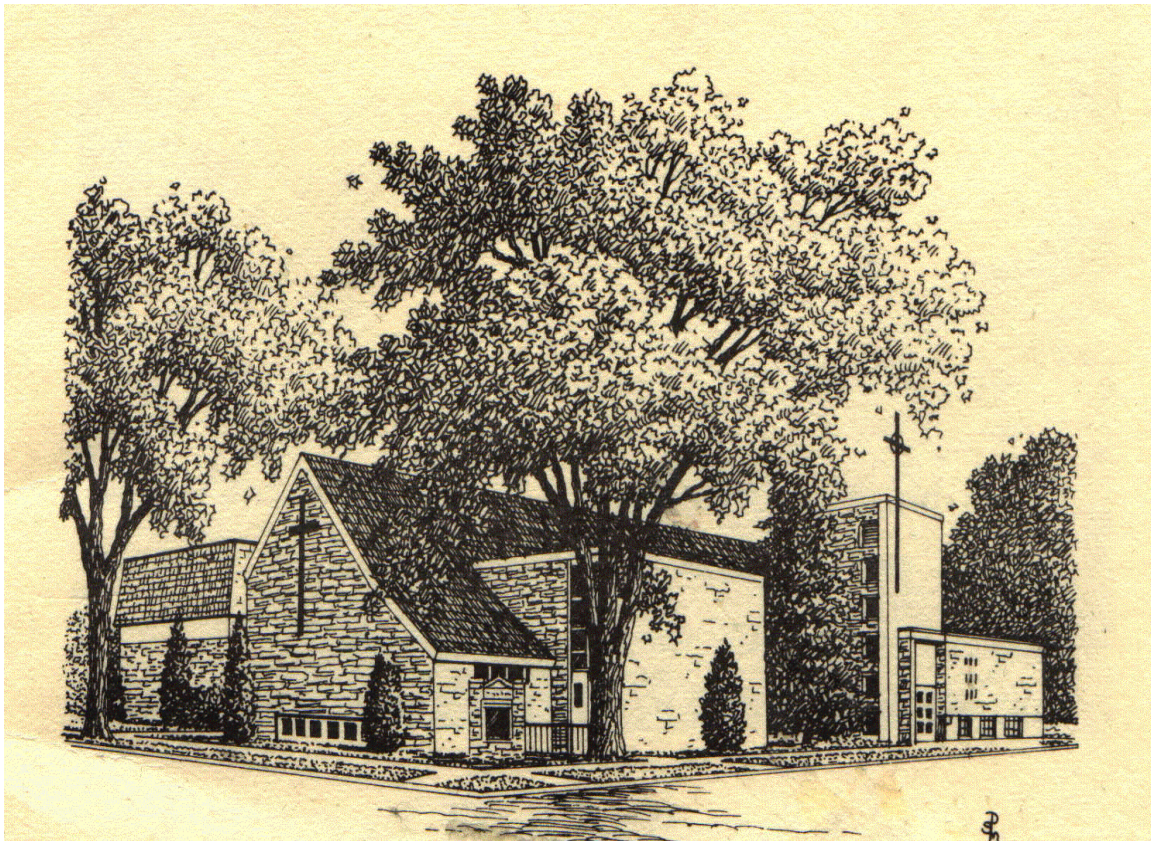
May the love of God bless and keep us.

In Gods’ service and yours,

Pastor Larry Jorstad

THE HISTORY OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH NEW RICHMOND, WI

Our church has a most interesting history. Some may say that the history starts when the Norwegian Evangelical Church merged with the English Lutheran Church in 1945. This is true in the sense as to when First Lutheran officially began, but I have chosen to research it even further and trace the history down to its roots. The roots go back to the early settlement of New Richmond and even further back to Norway and Sweden.



I have also chosen to print many of the accounts of our history just as I have found them while doing the research. When known, I will give the original author full credit for the work they did. Many of these people who wrote these articles were active members of our church years ago and thus are a part of our history too. It is more interesting to read their accounts as they were written, rather than for me to break them apart and give yet another account of our history. Some of the writings I have are similar to one another too, however they all contain interesting tidbits of history that make for a more interesting account of our history. I am also trying to preserve these older accounts too that were done a number of years ago.

THE SWEDISH ARRIVE IN WISCONSIN

I have chosen to start the history of our church with the Swedish emigrants that came to this area back in the late 1860's. They were some of the early settlers in this area for they were a strong and hardworking group of people that worked well in the then booming logging industry. The roots of our church are anchored firmly in our Swedish and Norwegian heritage. My intention is not to give one group more credit than the other. Some records were just more readily available than others also.

To understand why the Swedish left their country to come to this unsettled area of Wisconsin, one needs to have an understanding of the conditions back in Sweden at that time. Certainly it must have been hard to pack up your most precious belongings, load them on a boat, and endure a long journey across the ocean. Once in the United States, then a long trek across virtually unexplored country awaited them. They were true pioneers.

The following is an excerpt I found on the Internet at www.americanwest.com It provides a glimpse into the past as to the conditions back in Sweden in the 1860's. Most likely, this may very well be what some of our ancestors were experiencing.

“At the end of the 1860s, Sweden was struck by the last of a series of severe hunger catastrophes. The agriculture which was still only partially modernized had been struggling with difficult times. Now came a series of crop failures. 1867 thus became “the wet year” of rotting grain, 1868 became the “dry year” of burned fields, and 1869 became “the severe year” of epidemics and begging children. Sixty thousand people left Sweden during these three “starvation years”. It was the beginning of the mass emigration which, with short intervals, was to continue up to World War I. During the era of mass emigration 1868-1914 more than a million Swedes emigrated, mostly to the U.S. The emigration resumed after the war, but on a more modest scale. It ceased completely during the depression at the end of the 1920s.

The Swedish mass emigration would not have been possible without the Swedish railroads and the organized passenger traffic over the Atlantic. At this time no Swedish line carried passengers directly from Gothenburg to New York. The Swedes therefore had to use British or German ships. The emigrant route started with the train ride to the big port of Gothenburg, where the complete passage, such as Gothenburg-Chicago, of the British Wilson Line, which brought the emigrants to Hull in England. A train took them across the country to Liverpool or Glasgow; from there the Inman Line or some other company's ships sailed them to New York. The whole voyage Gothenburg-New York need not take more than three weeks in 1870.

For most immigrants New York was just the halfway point. In the early days the journey continued by paddle steamer up the Hudson River to Albany. Before the railroads were built the Erie Canal, completed in 1825, served as the link between the Hudson River and the Great Lakes. From Buffalo the emigrants were taken by paddle steamer over the Lakes to Chicago, Milwaukee

or Duluth. The last part of the 1-3 month long journey was spent on horse carts or walking through the bush. This itinerary was, of course, completely changed by the railroads, which from the 1850s brought the emigrants straight to Chicago. Modern communications made the overland route to the homestead region relatively simple from the beginning of the Swedish mass emigration.”

Many of the Swedish settlers that settled in the New Richmond area were from the Gräsmark Parish in Värmland, Sweden. The Christian faith that they brought to America had its foundation from the church in Gräsmark. This church is still an active church. The following is from a news article about the Gräsmark church that was written in Swedish and translated to English. It was donated to me by Tom Satterlund.

“No one can believe that it was a poor congregation who in 1730 built the beautiful Gräsmark’s church upon a point in Värmland’s Lake Rottnen. It is rich in art treasures and has a unique painted ceiling and the church’s exterior gives an impression of prosperity.



Like a pearl set in a lavishly beautiful Värmland landscape lies Gräsmark’s church on a point in Lake Rottnen. The smiling surroundings, with their green meadows, majestic forests and pretty farms breathe wealth and security; the church itself, with its distinctive façade of cream-white mortar with brown brick décor gives evidence of the same sort. No one would believe that it was built in a time of need and poverty, that the bricklayers then had bark bread as their only food.

It was around 1730 men began to build the present church. Need and poverty reigned over the countryside. The huge forests that dominated the landscape were not very valuable at that time. It was the cultivated land that had the value, and that was lacking. As early as the 1610’s, Karl IX understood that the countryside’s own people couldn’t clear off (the forest) to break the soil, so he offered Finns five years freedom from taxes and five years free seed if they moved and helped to cultivate the soil. Many obeyed the summons, and in contrast to many other places, relationships between immigrant and local folk became very poor.

FINNISH-SWEDISH COOPERATION

The good relationship must primarily rest on the fact that one commonly had to cooperate to survive.

But the strong population increase also caused the existing church to become too small. Whether due to poverty or something else is unclear, it wasn’t until 1730 before it was decided that a new church building must be built.

Even when it was a matter of building a church, Finns and Swedes cooperated—one can count on it that each did half. It took a long time for the need to be answered. The builders, for the most part, lived on bark bread and mush of the same sort. But the church was put into use in 1738 even if it was not fully finished. The tower and sacristy became a later question.

SUPERSTITION



Before 1663 there wasn't a church to be found in all of Gräsmark. Then, one had to travel to Sunne to attend religious services. For the parishioners who lived further away, it required a journey of five miles. To this must be added that there wasn't even to be found anything like an ordinary road, but only a small path.

When the people decided to build their own church, they couldn't agree where it should be located, so they called the bishop as an arbitrator. He decided to locate the church where most of those present would have it. So it happened and church construction began. But it was an unlucky undertaking. Then one misfortune after another occurred, and many workers were hurt. They perceived that it wasn't necessarily God's will that the church should stand there. They decided that He Himself should give a sign, so they cast a stick into the

water. The church would stand where it floated to land. That happened in the vicinity where the present church stands. The wooden building they began was seen to be too small right away.

FARMER MODEL FOR THE DEVIL

Bit by bit the new stone church was decorated. From the old one was carried an extraordinarily beautiful altar triptych, a gift from the Finnish emigrants. They commissioned the well-known church painter Erik Joneaus to do a ceiling painting. The result became a monumental representation of the Last Supper with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as a central focus. Naturally, even hell was to be found in the picture. It is placed above the organ loft with the devil and everything. The devil, yes, it has a special story. Joneaus, during the time he was working, lived in the house of a farmer in the parish. The farmer often annoyed the painter, with whom he often had hard words. But he got revenge in his own way—when the depiction of hell was completed and the devil stood there among the unblessed spirits with horn, tail and everything, it was so like a portrait of the irritating farmer that no one in the congregation could fail to recognize him.

AWAY WITH SPLENDOR

About in the 1850's a thorough, continuing housekeeping took place in our Swedish churches. All unnecessary splendor was to be removed. Nor did Gräsmark escape cleaning people, and to the general indignation, they painted over the ceiling painting with white. The church's decorations were plucked away, among others, the expensive triptych, which was never recovered. It is found at present in the State historical museum which is considered to be a secure storage place.

It 1924 the church was restored to its original appearance. When the outside was renovated, the unique brick décor which gives Gräsmark's church its special character was found. That Gräsmark's church is one of the most popular tourist objects in the area around Frykens Lakes is understandable. With its rich art works and its wonderful setting, it is something of a "must" for all who travel in the region."

EXCERPTS FROM THE ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH GOLDEN JUBILEE, 1891 – 1941

In a conference history written by Dr. Emil Lund we find the following facts about the Swedish Lutheran Church of Star Prairie.

“Andrew and Nels Arnquist, and Peter Rulien were among the first Swedes to settle in the Star Prairie community. Mr. and Mrs. Nels Arnquist, Mr. and Mrs. John Erickson, Mr. and Mrs. Hokanson and Miss Betsy Wilen arrived from Sweden in July, 1868. For a few months the Arnquist family lived in the William Crawford home in Star Prairie, but in the fall moved into a house which Andrew and Nels built on their farm west of town. The Jon Erickson family lived in a shack north of Huntington. It was so poorly constructed that snakes crawled in and out through cracks in the floor. The settlers labored “in the sweat of their brow” as only Swedes from Värmland can labor, and soon the fields became clear and were productive.

Occasionally a pastor or lay preacher would visit the settlement and conduct services in the Huntington schoolhouse or in a home. The children were sent to Marine for religious instruction and confirmation. Rev. L. O. Lindh was the first Lutheran pastor to visit his countrymen in the new settlement. The congregation was organized May 14, 1876, at a meeting in the Huntington school. N. Arnquist was chairman and O. N. Wilen, Secretary. O. N. Wilen was elected to serve as lay preacher. Each member was to pay five dollars per year for the pastor’s salary. It was decided to call an ordained pastor to visit the congregation twice each year to administer the sacraments.

Those who joined the congregation at its first meeting were: N. M. Arnquist, Andrew Arnquist, Nels Arnquist, Otto W. Arnquist, C. Arnquist, C. Arnquist, Mrs. Anna Arnquist, Carrie Arnquist, Betty Arnquist, A. Anderson, J. E. Erickson, Mary Nelson, Andrew Nelson, John Peterson, Olof Erickson, Kristina Erickson, and Kristina Johanson. The congregation was received into the Augustana Synod in 1876. Two years later it withdrew because it felt that it had not received the support it merited. In 1881 it was again received into the synod.

The church was built in 1879. Many extra meetings were held to decide upon the most suitable location and the proper plans for the church. The minutes of annual meetings and extra business meetings from 1876-1924 when the congregation merged with the English Lutheran of New Richmond, are complete, carefully done, and as legible as the day they were written. (First Lutheran church still has these records in its possession. They are written clearly, but in Swedish. A small segment of them were translated and appear in this document).

For Sunday school and Ladies Aid groups the congregation was divided into three sections – the southwest or Johannesburg community, the northeast or Horse Creek community, and of course, the central or Huntington community. Today, when the sons and daughters of the pioneers get together, they remind each other of the good times they used to have at church socials, and Young Peoples meetings. Somehow it seems they were united in their common faith, and bore one another’s burdens more than we do today. The seed that was planted in the Church

of our fathers has grown and become fruitful; of that we are reminded when we visit the homes of the men and women who were raised in the Huntington Church.

Due to the fact that there was a shortage of pastors in the Augustana synod at that time the congregation experienced difficulty in securing pastors. During one vacancy they issued calls to six pastors before they were successful. Some of the pastors who served Huntington before 1891 were L. O. Lind, G. A. Stenborg, Tornell, John Ternstedt.

RECORDS OF THE SWEDISH EVANGELICAL CHURCH, HUNTINGDON, STAR PRAIRIE
TOWNSHIP, WISCONSIN
TRANSLATED FROM SWEDISH BY STAN DANIELSON, BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA,
SEPTEMBER, 1999.

First Lutheran Church today still has in its possession the original meeting minutes from the early church founded in Huntington, WI. The meeting minute book is quite lengthy and is written entirely in Swedish. They wrote the meeting minutes in Swedish well into the early years of the 1900's. I know only of this small segment below that has been translated.

“Minutes of the parish meeting held in the Huntington Schoolhouse on the 14th May 1876.

To this parish's officers for the coming year [voted in from the present date until the same date next year], are elected the following persons:



President: N. Arnquist
Secretary: O. N. Wilen
Deacons: O. N. Wilen for 1 year
J. E. Ericson for 2 years
A. Anderson for 3 years

The same day, the decision has been made that this parish's yearly meeting will be held in the beginning of the month of May. In the same manner, and concerning the Augusta Synod, at the next parish meeting, this parish will decide if it will become a part of the named synod, and if this constitution will be accepted.”

Nils Arnquist
President

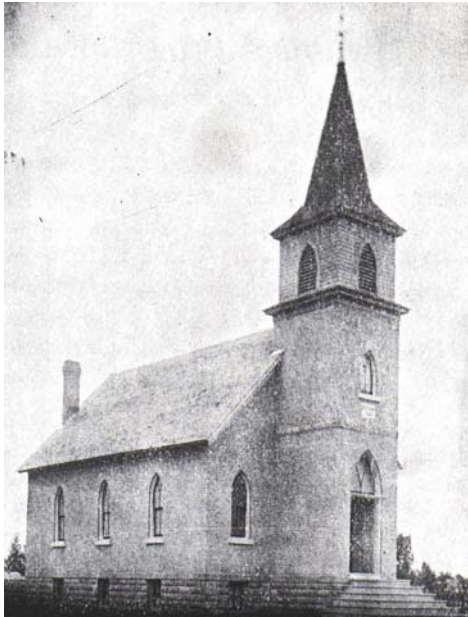
O. N. Wilen
Secretary

MINUTES

“A meeting was held in Nils Arnquists residence, Star Prairie, St. Croix Co., Wis. On the 20th September 1876, of the Sv. Ev. Lutherska Star Prairie parish members.

The meeting was opened at 5 p. m. , according to what had been decided, and had the same 16 people, with the Deacons, O. N. Wilen, J. E. Ericson and A. Anderson included and present.

The meeting was opened with a prayer by the secretary, followed by the president reading the legal papers, and then the Trustees were voted in, and are the following persons:



Andrew Arnquist	for 1 year
Nils Arnquist	for 2 years
J. E. Ericson	for 3 years

Nils Arnquist – President
O. N. Wilen. Secretary

After the church service of the 1st of October, 1876, the Trustees voted Andrew Arnquist as Treasurer, from the present date until May of 1877.

Minutes of the meeting held in N. Arnquist's home after the church service ended on Sunday, the 15th of October, 1876.

Those eligible to vote in the parish are called to this meeting to find a place for the parish to build a church, to be carried out, on an inexpensive lot, and to choose which one, lying approximately 150 (illegible unit of measure) to the west of this residence, and to be voted on for this purpose.”

The minutes book goes on to list all the members of this newly formed church. Some of the spellings may appear to be wrong to you but I have entered them as they appear. Examples; Setterlund is now spelled Satterlund and Rulin is now spelled Rulien. Original members of the church were as follows: N. M. Arnquist, A. Arnquist, N. Arnquist, J. M. Arnquist, Otto W. Arnquist, A. Anderson, J.E. Ericson, Andrew Nilson, John Petterson, Olof Ericson, Lars Setterlund, John Ericson, John S. Johnson, S. M. Nelson, A. S. Nilson, N. Asp, John Nilson, P. Asp, P. Rulin, sons of P. Rulin: Johan, Magnus, Peter, Androw, Nils and Frans W., Nils P. Asp, Olof Asp, John P. Asp, Carl Otto Asp and Nils Nilson.

The women were listed in a separate column. They are as follows: Mrs. Anna Arnquist, Mrs. Crestin Arnquist, Mrs. Carry Arnquist, Mrs. Betty Anderson, Mrs. Crestin Ericson, Mrs. Mary Gr. Nilson, Mrs. Crestin Petterson, Mrs. Crestin Sätterlund, Mrs. Maria Sti Ericson, Mrs. Ingeborg Asp, Miss Mary Nilson, Mrs. Mary Asp, Mrs. Crestin Rulin, Miss Carry Rulin, Miss Carolin Asp, Miss Anna Asp, Elisabeth Asp, Carlotta W. Asp, Miss Carry Nilson, Miss Katrina Nilson, Miss Johanna Nilson, Miss Carolina Nilson.

The next page of the membership listing appears to be the younger members of the church or adult additions to the membership list. They are as follows: Johannes Petterson, Magnus Peterson, Albert Eman Ericson, Carl Johan Ericson, Carl Leonard Anderson, Carl Martin Ericson, Eric Conrad Ericson, Conrad Arnquist, John Johnson, August Wallin, Robert Johnson, Gustaf Setterlund, Magnus Hedlund, Androw Asp, Olaus Svenson, Sven Wilen, Mrs. Edith Arnquist, Mrs. Matia Wilen, Miss Crestin Petterson, Miss Märta Petterson, Miss Johanna Setterlund, Miss Tilda Setterlund, Miss Maria Setterlund, Miss Lina Setterlund, Miss Carlotta

Setterlund, Miss Hilda Ericson, Miss Mary Ericson, Miss Carlotta Ericson, Miss Anna Asp, Miss Ingeborg Asp, Miss Crestin Asp, Miss Nellie El. Anderson, Miss Clara Arnquist, Miss Hilda Paulson, Miss Menny Paulson, Miss Mary Johnson, Miss Lovisa Johnson, Miss Carry Johnson, Ida Ellingson Johnson, Jenney Wilhelmina Ericson, Edna Florens Arnquist, Hulda Asp, Oscar Arnquist, Ingeborg Svenson, Carolina Svenson, Anna Lovisa Svenson, Wilhelm Svenson and Ellen Victoria Ericson.

EXCERPTS FROM “OX CART DAYS”, WALLACE W. SILVER, 1941

“The Swedes and other Scandinavians who came and settled represented the best and most desirable addition to the American blood that has ever been received from any European nation. They have always been a saving bulwark against radicals and chiselers. We have learned a lot from them, but not a much as we should.” So wrote Fred Smith.

The religious convictions of these people were deep, pure and sincere, and so solid that they could not be shaken.

Before any church was built Lutheran services were held in the front room of the Nels Arnquist home. The Swedish Mission Church was built in 1884, when a split came in their religious faith.



For over fifty years the Mission Church has held a Fourth of July celebration and a picnic. Services are still held in this little church, some of these early members were the Hedbacks, the Croners, the Andersons, the Schanches, the John and Ole Westbergs, the John Linds, the Lindstroms, the John Olsons, and the Fallos.

The other church, the Swedish Lutheran, has for many years held a midsummer picnic. Some of the families in this congregation were the Swen Wilens, Gust Satterlunds, John Bergquists, Andrew Olsons, Ben Halbergs, Pearson, Rydeens, Mons Olson, Nels Asps, Nels Arnquists, Nels Johnsons, John and Andrew Arnquists, and the Engstroms---its props and pillars.

1Co 1:5 He has enriched your church with the gifts of eloquence and every kind of knowledge.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION OF NEW RICHMOND

(Written by Reverend John Haaland for the 50th anniversary of the church. June, 1934. It appears in the New Richmond News on August 22, 1934 in a slightly modified version.)

Next we will turn our attention to the Norwegian heritage of our churches history.

“The beginning as nearly as we can gather the work in this congregation was begun a little over 50 years ago by Rev. A. R. Rystad, who came to N. R. from Blackbrook in January 1884. A few services were conducted by him before it was decided to organize a congregation. The work of organization took place in about June of that year so we are today commemorating this great event at approximately the correct time of the year.

Services were conducted in the homes and as the work assumed regularity the crowds increased to the joy of those who preached and others interested.

As there are no secretarial notes from those very first years, it is extremely difficult to say anything about the exact date of organization and who the charter members were. At any rate, the articles of Incorporation were under the name of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of N. R., were signed by the Messrs. Christ Villa, Iver Pederson, Ole Ryan, Anton Shern, John Halvorson, Peter Johnson, Ben J. Seielstad and Christ Dyson (Rev. Lee, pastor) on the 8th of January 1889.

Two years before, the lot had been procured and the main part of the church erected. Two men donated the work upon the foundation, they were: J. B. and J. E. Benson. Lars Egenes contracted to build the church for \$800.00. Later they agreed to pay the same party \$100.00 to help pay for the material in the church.

On the 6th of January 1889, Rev. J. H. T. Lee was called as the pastor. The articles of Incorporation before referred to were completed and there was a constant growth of membership. This year marks the time when the first class was confirmed in this church, three of which are here today. Mrs. Minnie Dyson Olson; Mrs. C. N. Jordheim, Glenwood City; Mrs. Garry Pederson Melbostad, Forest Lake, Minn.; (seven all together) Mrs. Carrie Hedeem, Yakima Valley; Mrs. Ben Johnson; the only boy Severin Olson died in 1912; and Mathilda Dahl Teigen passed away at Glenwood City.

In that year several important questions were decided, such as, the matter of which hymnbook to use and the matter of salary for the pastor. It was also decided to rent the church to the Swedish Lutheran people for \$1.00 per service (this was practiced for many years). Congregational meetings were conducted, as a rule, once a month.

The two following years the question of joining the new church body was discussed but no action taken. Rev. Lee was granted a leave of absence on account of failing health.

1892 marks an epoch in the congregational work as it was decided to begin with Sunday School, Jens Christianson was elected as the first superintendent and Mesdames Minnie Dyson

and Carry Pederson were chosen as helpers. It was also decided to give Rev. Lee permission to use 5 Sundays out of the 17 in Star Prairie (they were to have 17 services in N. R. which was their share of Sundays). The congregation voted that the pastor should use the vestments at the services.

During 1893, more new members were added and at one of the meetings it was agreed upon that collections should be received at every evening service.

The year 1894, it was decided to conduct six weeks of religious vacation school. The choice of a new pastor also loomed to Reverend Lee's resignation. Should we join in with the Wilson congregation, was another question awaiting for a decision.

In 1895, the joint call committee from Hudson, Glenwood City, New Richmond, and Star Prairie issued a letter of call to the candidate of Theologian Hans Fosness. This question was not settled, however, until the following year 1896 when Hans Fosness was ordained to the ministry and accepted the call. In the meantime, he had given them services now and then, and they had also received services from others.

In 1897, the now Reverend Jodheim was hired to teach school during the summer. During that year the church was painted and repaired. In the latter part of 1898, Reverend Fosness resigned and on the 11th of April the following year his services terminated. In August of that year, it was decided to call Reverend Holm Holmson.

After due consideration the congregation voted to charge non-members a fee of \$1.00 for the use of the church and seventy-five cents for the work of the janitor at weddings and funerals, this work was reemphasized in 1900.

From 1901 on, business became more regularly outline. The congregation numbered thirty paying families. The circuit was invited to have a meeting here. The men decided to put on at least two socials during the year, the money to be used for church expenses, old and new. They also decided to lift an offering for the Christian Educational budget of the church body.

During 1902, it was decided, the building was to be enlarged. Reverend Holmson received three months of vacation to go to Norway. Instead of making an addition to the church however, Normanna Hall was purchased and moved upon the church lot and Reverend Risvold was invited to come and conduct mission services.

In 1903 Reverend Holmson left and the letter of call was extended to venerable Reverend Lee, who accepted the same. During the intermission the congregation was favored with the services of Reverend Jordheim. Reverend Lee came in the fall of 1903.

From 1903 to 1918 while Reverend Lee was pastor here the congregation built the chancel, a basement and a furnace installed. The congregation bought a share in the parsonage at Star Prairie. They asked the ladies aid, girls society and choir to help them financially. They granted Reverend Lee a month's vacation every year if he so desired it.

From 1918 to 1926, the congregation was served by Reverend I. H. Messenlien, and the 26th of this month, it will be exactly seven years since I was installed as the pastor."

The following are words spoken to the congregation by Reverend J. M. Haaland at the 50th anniversary of the church on June 17, 1934:

“Permit me to voice my sincere appreciation, to all men and women who have faithfully served in the various offices and capacities in this congregation during its existence. For fear that I should overlook some name, I refrained from mentioning any of those who have served as trustees, deacons, Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School teachers, secretaries, treasurers, President of the congregations, organists and janitors, etc., simply this, “a hearty thank you for your work and services.

During these later years we have worked hard to keep things going. The men and boys are doing their part, the aid has been successful and our Sunday School, though not so large, is doing good work, the members of the choir deserve credit for their untiring efforts. They have cheered us often with their singing.

Today as we look back upon the fifty years past and gone, we know that God’s name must be praised for He has helped us through them all. The past fifty years were not all roses by any means but as we look upon the accomplishments achieved, we face the future courageously and hopefully. Knowing that the ever present God is the same today as yesterday.

To the many gathered here who were received into the fellowship with God in Holy Baptism, in this church, to the man, who renewed their baptismal covenant in confirmation at this altar, let me state: thank God for all your blessings. If you have strayed away, come back today, the day of this golden jubilee. The Heavens will reverberate with joy when they see you return to the confessions of the Lutheran church, see you come back to the Lord in whom you believed, whom you confessed and whose fellowship you desired when you started out upon life’s journey. God help you be a loyal disciple of Christ Jesus, a generous supporter of the Lutheran church, a receptive listener to God’s Holy word, and a worthy communicant at the Lord’s Supper. We take great pride in knowing that ours is the church of the pure unadulterated “Gospel Message, Justified by Faith in Christ Jesus, we have the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.”

“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;
Thru life it guides our way,
In death it is our stay;
Lord grant while worlds endure
We keep its teachings pure,
Thruout all generations.”

In all, 213 young people have been confirmed in this congregation.”

In the June 24th issue of the New Richmond News the following article appeared telling of the celebration the church had for the golden jubilee.

“RAIN DID NOT DAMPEN ENTHUSIASM OF LUTHERAN CHURCH GOLDEN
JUBILEE

The rain perhaps kept some folks from attending the celebration of the golden jubilee of the organization of the Norwegian Lutheran church in this city Sunday, but it in no way dampened the enthusiasm of those that did attend. And for the event the church was filled to capacity. There were visitors from other points in Wisconsin, from Minnesota, New York and

Oslo, Norway. Amplifiers were installed outside the church as well as in the dining hall for the benefit of those unable to obtain admission to the church.

The program published in THE NEWS Saturday was fulfilled, there being a sermon at the 10 a.m. service by Reverend J. H. T. Lee, Hudson. A former pastor, who preached in Norwegian, and Reverend John M. Haaland, present pastor, speaking in English. The choir sang several selections under the direction of Paul Strand.

Then came the lunch hour. The afternoon service opened at 2:30, the choir complying with the requests for a repetition of the morning's musical program, the favorite number being: "Den Store Vide Flock." Addresses of welcome were delivered by Julius S. Hoff, president of the congregation; Mrs. John G. Aune, president of the Ladies Aid; Mrs. Arthur O. Elkin, superintendent of the Sunday school, followed by responses by Reverends Haaland and Lee. Miss Helen Jacobson sang several selections as did Paul Strand. The afternoon service closed about 5 and then came a light lunch served by the Young People's Society.

Collections were taken for the Lutheran Homes for the Aged and for the Orphans at Wittenberg.

A history of the parish was read. This is being revised and will be published in THE NEWS in some future addition. (Was printed in the August 22, 1934 edition. It is very similar to the above article.)

Among the out of town people attending the celebration were: Messrs. And Mmes H. C. Jacobson, Con Johnson, A. M. Ryberg, Jimmie and Elton, W. J. Bergman and Henry Ryberg, Mrs. Anna Gilbertson, Elmer Olson, St. Paul; Messrs. and Mmes., Andy Anderson, Alfred Olson, Howard Blanchard, Melvin Stephenson, Mmes. C. Anderson and Al Larson, Miss Viola Pederson, Elmer Jorgenson, Minneapolis. Messrs. and Mmes. Melvin Olson and Melvin Pederson, Hudson; C. A. Nelson, Mrs. L. J. Hjelsten, Julia Olson, Peder Pederson, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Christianson, Amery, Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Jorgenson, Raymond Jorgenson, Martin and Oscar Anderson, Mrs. Amelia Elkin, Wanderoos; Mrs. T. R. Gabrielson and Jean, Deer Park; Mrs. O. N. Jordheim, Glenwood City; Mrs. Oscar Jerdee, Star Prairie; Mrs. George McMillan, Wausau; Henry Halvorson, Madison, Minnesota; Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Hedine, Winthrop, Minn; Mrs. H. A. Wittig, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Johnson, Somerset; Mr. and Mrs. Ed Thompson, Milltown; Mrs. Arthur Heppner, Maitland Johnson, Spooner; Evelyn Johnson, Bertrand Johnson, Glenwood, Minn."

GRETA'S MEMOIRS OF YESTERYEARS

Greta Payson, a member of both the Norwegian Lutheran and First Lutheran, submitted these memoirs of her years of being a member of these churches. (September, 2000)

My memories of the Norwegian church are all very good. The first pastor I remember is Rev. Haaland and then it seems it was Rev. Holte. He confirmed me and was a very good pastor but very strict. You had to memorize the Catechism at the time and you could not have one wrong word! We had Catechization in front of the Church on a weekday evening and anyone could come and watch us goof up as we struggled thorough our memorization work. I think we all got confirmed though and there wasn't just one grade back then. There were kids in there a year older than me and maybe some a year younger. I remember having our Christmas Program on

Christmas Eve with a tree in front of the church. We all had pieces to learn. I remember Nina, Mrs. Art Elkin, Jim's mother, was there. I thought she was my teacher one year but seems she was the head of the entire Sunday School. I loved Bible school, we had that in the Church Hall next to the alley back then and I think we had it for two weeks. I just loved it. We had no crafts, no fun and games, recess was our only break. We had to LEARN! Lots of Bible history as I remember.

The memories I have aren't necessarily history, mostly just fond memories. I remember the most about the Rev. Okland years, my years growing up. Things he said, things he did. I have a picture of him standing with Rev. Holte at Bible camp. Bible camp was a time for sitting for hours listening to preachers and many were long winded! Lorene Okland was my cabin counselor, and what a lot of fun she was. She knew her Bible better than many pastors did. The Oklands were a lot of fun and were good for the church. She was very involved in the choirs. Fern (Norman) Slaughter was our Choir Director. We had several cantatas and they were good. It was music that everyone loved back then. I know we had Easter cantatas and I believe we also had a Christmas one, one year. I got "drafted into the choir" by Rev. Okland my freshman year. Usually no one joined until they were in high school. Yvette Larson Nelson, also a freshman, had a gorgeous voice and was in the choir. We have always had a good choir. No way though could I sing the music of today! I was an alto and if we were short of men, Fern would make me a tenor for that day!

We had the best Luther League ever. We always had a good sized group. We would have hotdish suppers, always had a meeting, usually had something going on but there weren't all the causes to work for back then. We would go to other towns to other leagues and they would come to New Richmond. My father, Bill Kemling, always Daddy to me, was an advisor back then. The church was ran by men back then, only men. Only men were on the council or any committees. However, I do remember Rev. Okland asking Mom about the kitchen layout when it was being designed. I believe he was in our kitchen at my parent's home as he sat there drinking coffee talking about the plans. He was very much "at home" at our house. I can remember the days before indoor plumbing, the church had an outhouse. Also for Bible School we had a building with a big room, with a kitchen too I recall. They had "Sewing Circle" in there, whatever they did at Sewing Circle, I don't know. I recall my mother telling me that Rev. Lee used to preach in Norwegian at times. He went from here to Hudson to preach.

Lorene Okland's Junior Choir was so good that they rocked the rafters! She was so good. She was also a great Bible class teacher. I used to tell Rev. Okland as I was going up the aisle from the old church balcony to get my choir robe, and he too to get his, that "your sermon had better be VERY GOOD today because Lorene was going to be excellent and she is going to be hard to beat!" I really loved those people, they were like family to me. Daddy was always at the church, or Rev. Okland was always at the house looking for him if he hadn't made it to church yet. My father, like so many of the old-timers, ushered every Sunday. Back then Chuck Carow ushered every Sunday as did Arvid, (Swede) and Harold, (Dedo) Lundell.

In the old church you had to pull a rope to ring the bell, not push a button. When World War II was over and it was announced on the radio, I went over to the Church and rang, and rang, and rang the bell. That got the other churches ringing their bells too. I was just so thrilled that the war was over. I don't think I asked anyone for permission to do it, I just went over there and started ringing the bell. I was a little lightweight back then and as the rope went up, so did I. Up and down, up and down, I went, my feet coming off the ground with each swing of the bell! The war was finally over!"

My husband Ken and I were married in the “old church” in 1953. Reverend Okland wanted us to be the first couple to be married in the “new church”. I had to say, “no” though. I wanted to be married in the church I grew up in. I think it held about 250 people after they added the balcony. I loved the old church and all its wonderful memories. For our candlelight wedding the church was just packed. There were kids standing on the steps outside as I came up those steps into the church in my wedding dress. I even walked to the church in my wedding dress! The photographer didn't want it wrinkled from sitting in a car! Can you believe the whole congregation was invited to the wedding? It was announced from the pulpit, which was normal in those days I guess. Naturally wedding invitations were sent out but I can vividly remember him announcing to the congregation that they were all invited to the wedding. Things were so much more simpler then. The reception was to follow in the basement and the church ladies made it very beautiful for us. It was very special to be married in the “old church”.

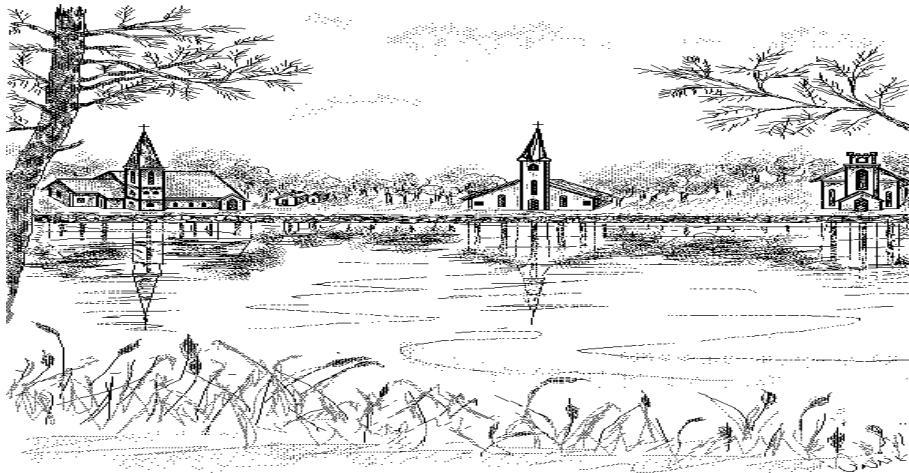
So these are some of my memories of the Norwegian Lutheran Church and the early years of the First Lutheran church. I have mostly just wonderful memories of wonderful people. It certainly was “the good old days”.

HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Marion Olson, who has prepared this history, says that much of the material in this report was taken from a paper prepared by Pastor J. M. Haaland for the 50-year anniversary of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in 1934. Marion passed away October 2, 1997.

“The beginning of the work in the Norwegian Lutheran Church was done by Pastor A. R. Rystad who came to New Richmond from Blackbrook in January of 1884. At that time services were held in the homes whenever a pastor came and could stop.

During the following five years plans were made for an established church. A lot was purchased and the main part of the church was built for \$200. Later the same man charged \$100 to build the tower and the church spire. Five hundred dollars was borrowed to pay for the material. Much of the labor was contributed by various members of the congregation, and most of the furnishings were handmade.



As there are no secretarial notes from those first years, it is extremely difficult to say anything about the exact date of organization or who the charter members were. At any rate, the Articles of Incorporation under the name of the Norwegian Lutheran Congregation of New Richmond were signed by Messrs. Christ Willa, Iver Pederson, Ole Ryan, Anton Shern, John Halverson, Peter Johnson, Ben J. Seielstad, and Christ Dyson, on the 8th of January 1889. Pastor J. H. T. Lee, who was also serving the Hudson church, would come here seventeen Sundays out of the year. Later he was shared with Star Prairie, going there for five holidays out of the seventeen. In addition the congregation held monthly business meetings and through their dedication the following progress was achieved:

1. The first confirmation class of one boy and six girls was ready to be confirmed soon after the new church had been dedicated.
2. The Sunday School was established in 1892 with Jens Christiansen as Superintendent. He was followed in turn by Mrs. Peter Larson, Emil Hendrickson, and Mrs. Nina Elkin, each of whom put in several years of service.
3. In 1894 it was decided to have six weeks of religious vacation school in the summers.
4. During 1902 they built the chancel, put in a basement, and installed the furnace.
5. They affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.
6. They bought a share in the Star Prairie parsonage when they entered into an agreement to share a minister with Star Prairie and West Immanuel.
7. The Normanna Hall was purchased and moved upon the church lot. It was used for many years by the Ladies Aid, the Sunday School, and for a variety of other meetings.

“A 1958 Sunday School Class”



During the first fifty-six years, Pastor Lee served twenty-two years, I. H. Messenlein for seven years and J. M. Haaland for fourteen years. Pastor Jordheim, Hans Fosness, and Holm Holmson each served from two to four years. In 1941 Pastor C. W. Holte came to serve in New Richmond, Star Prairie, and West Immanuel, and it was he who helped guide the merger that led to our present church.”

NEW RICHMOND NEWS, FEBRUARY 15, 1939
(DONATED BY ALICE TALMADGE)

In an article written in commemoration of Mr. and Mrs. Gust Ryberg's golden wedding anniversary, mention was made of the Norwegian Church. The article stated:

“The spiritual needs of the community were not overlooked. Lutheran services were held by Reverend Lee on Sundays in the homes of some of the early members – chief of these being the C. K. Willa residence. At this time these Norwegian pioneers began making plans for a house of worship. After two years the little church on the north side became a reality. The ladies aid held its monthly meetings at the homes of different members. Some of the names that stand out predominantly in the early days of the Lutheran church are Mr. and Mrs. John Halverson, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Dyson, Mr. and Mrs. Iver Pederson, Mr. and Mrs. Anton H. Shern, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Seielstad and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Johnson and Mr. and Mrs. Ryberg.

On Sundays it was no uncommon sight to see a half dozen teams hitched to the long rows of hitching posts which surrounded the little church. In the winter the congregation occupied seats as near as possible to the large wood-burning stove that stood near the center of the building. The air was laden with the odor of smoke from poplar, birch or whatever wood that might be used for fuel at the time; if it was the evening the flickering of the kerosene lamps spread a weird light over the members who had perhaps come a long way over muddy, almost impassable roads, to listen to the gospel.”



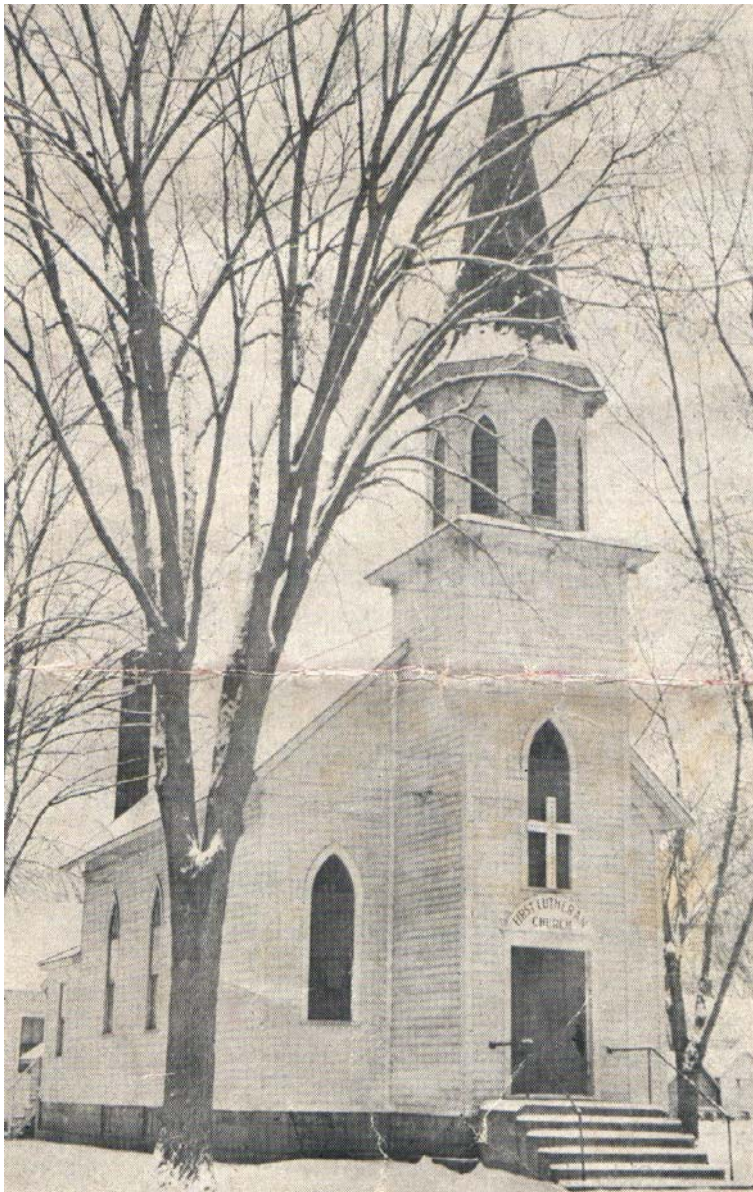
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH BY MARION BERGSENG.
DECEMBER 11, 1999

“Before we merged with the English Lutheran Church people, our Pastor J. M. Haaland had three parishes. One at West Emmanuel, one at Star Prairie and one in New Richmond. It was getting to be too much for one pastor so the Norwegian Lutheran Church decided to get their own pastor and separate from Star Prairie and West Emmanuel.

Carlyle Holte was a student in the seminary and would come to First Lutheran for our weekend services. He would usually stay at my current home, then my father's home, (Ole Bergseng), arriving on a Friday and leaving on Sunday evening. He would always tell my mother, “if there is any leftover coffee from supper, save it for me and I will heat it up while I am studying at night.” I recall him as being such a fine young man.

The English Lutheran people decided to merge with the Norwegian Lutheran Church which then became First Lutheran Church of New Richmond.

My father, Ole Bergseng, born in Lillehammer, Norway in 1869 came to the USA in 1892 at the age of 23. My Uncle Gilbert came earlier and was established already in the church. He was the janitor for many years. My dad became the Treasurer of the church. He also had a grocery store, which also carried clothing for farmers, for fifty years. The store was located where the present Skoglund Deep Rock station is. I currently live in my parent's house and have been here all my life. I recall as a child walking to the church through a field across the street where Blue Ribbon Feed is. At that time there was a creamery there. This is how we went to church each Sunday.



As a child I remember the church having three Holy Days. The men of the church would walk to the altar and each would lay a dollar bill down. If there was any coins left up there, the janitor and the church organist received this money for their compensation. I also recall times that we did not have enough pastors to go around to serve all the churches needs. Often times we had to hold our services on Sunday evening. We did not particularly care for this as I recall because Sunday morning seemed more appropriate for worship.

After the merger, our Sunday School Superintendent was Nina Elkin who was now ready for retirement. Irma Sontag then became the new Superintendent. Irma had taught school for many years in Birnamwood, WI. I believe that her husband Fred was the Superintendent at this school. This way we really got two superintendents for our Sunday School, Irma and Fred. Irma and I worked together for numerous years arranging Christmas programs, teaching and doing other functions.

Just south of where the church sits was a white painted building used for various church activities. It became the Sunday School building with heat from a heater. It was also used for meetings, and Ladies Aid suppers. It was later moved and became the Alano Club west of New Richmond. The church was very cold and drafty during the winter and the stove had to be stoked often.

I recall the construction of the current First Lutheran building. First Unit I was built, the current basement. Here we held our church services. I remember an open stairway built going up to the church proper so the children could get to the altar at the front of the church to perform. It was a problem to keep the kids quiet on these steps when the church was filled with people. Fred Sontag did very well in keeping the children quiet and safe in spite of the rickety stairway.

We had a big enrollment in church membership at this time. Irma Larson was the church organist and also a Sunday School teacher. She had replaced Minnie Olson as the organist. Minnie was Marion Olson's mother. Pastor Okland was our pastor at the time and he recommended that we start an "LDR" group, (Lutheran Daughters of the Reformation). This was for young working gals who could not attend daytime Ladies Aid meetings. We did organize it and it was very successful. Our first meeting was held at Vernice and Klayt Evans home. We would often get together on Sundays for a Sunday tea.

In 1956 the officers of the LDR were: Mag Lindell, President; Margaret Lundy, Vice President; Doris Larson, Secretary; and Nila Erickson, Treasurer. To our dismay though, after we reached a certain age we had to leave the organization. This was very difficult to do though because we had formed such close friendships with its members. We soon found ourselves split up and into separate Ladies Aid circles."

"A 1958 Sunday School Class"



In 1983 the State Historical Society of Wisconsin did a survey of some of the historical buildings in the city of New Richmond. The St. Thomas Episcopal Church, formerly the English Lutheran Church, was one of the buildings surveyed. The following are excerpts taken from those reports:

SURVEY RESULTS

“The Swedes and Norwegians settled in the old Third Ward in the north part of town. They came as mill and railroad workers. Predominantly Lutheran, many came like the Irish to escape unrest in their native countries. For years there were separate Norwegian and Swedish Lutheran churches on the north side. In 1945 they merged and the Episcopalians use the church now. The church has retained its architectural integrity but it is not architecturally significant. Historically, it may be closely associated with the Swedish population but information is scant. It would not have been closely associated with the Norwegians because they had their own church. If historical significance is determined later it would be for the Swedish ethnic group only and not the larger Scandinavian population. Mr. and Mrs. Chris Willa ran the Scandia House, a rooming house, on the northwest corner of Pierce Avenue and North Third Street for a number of years around the turn of the century. It was established c.1882 and provided lodging for mill workers. Shift sleeping was common and religious services were held here. The building is gone but it would have been a more appropriate example of a structure associated with the development of an ethnic group than the church. The local newspaper noted in an 1895 article that Scandia House was being used for social gatherings instead of the churches. The present church (Episcopalian) was not built until 1906. Maps show the rooming house here until the 1920's. Willa was born in Norway in 1853 and came to the U. S. in 1880, first in Los Angeles and then in New Richmond. He worked in the mills before opening the boarding house. He built a home next to the Scandia House in 1909 and retired. It is not known who ran the hotel then. The Arnquist family is another prominent name from this area of the city.”

Also from the survey:

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

“This church is the result of a merger between the First English Lutheran Church of the Augustana Synod and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The merger occurred in March of 1945. The group became a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. They had services in a church begun in 1947 and dedicated in 1955. The exterior fabric is Kasota stone. In 1960 the church became affiliated with the American Lutheran Church.

The Norwegian Lutheran Church was incorporated in New Richmond in 1889. C. 1884 Pastor A. R. Rystad came to the town and began to organize a church. Services were held in houses and much of the labor to build the church was donated. Pastor J. H. T. Lee preached here for seventeen Sundays each year and the rest of the year he was in Hudson. The church built by the parishioners survived the tornado but was torn down later. The site is the location of the present Lutheran church.

The First English Lutheran Church was organized c.1892 by Swedish settlers in this area. Pastor J. T. Kjollgren was the organizing force behind this group. They held their first services in the Norwegian Lutheran church and were charged one dollar per service to rent the building. Their own church was built in 1906-07.

In July 1906 plans were begun to raise funds for a church and a permanent pastor. The Swedish Lutherans of New Richmond, Star Prairie, and Glenwood were going to put on a benefit concert to raise money for the church building. Both this church and the Norwegian church were located in the Third Ward of the city. The area was populated mainly by Scandinavian mill and rail workers. The Swedish church was to be located about one block west of the Norwegian church. Concrete had just been used as the exterior fabric on some other buildings in New

Richmond and this was what the Swedish Church decided to build its new church of. The Reverend J. A. Gustafson of Amery was to become the first pastor.

The “Famous Arpi Quartette of Gustavus Adolphus College (St. Peter, Minnesota)” gave the benefit performance at Hagan’s Opera House. Admission was thirty-five cents at the door, fifty cents reserved, and twenty-five cents for children. In August work on a concrete brick church was begun “in the modern style”. B and W Concrete Company of New Richmond had the contract to furnish the bricks. Ten thousand were estimated to be needed for the foundation and \$20,000 for the building itself.

On January 5, 1907 the first services were held here with sermons given in both Swedish and English. The roof was not completed and the services were conducted in the basement. The cornerstone was to be laid in the spring. This building now houses the St. Thomas Episcopal congregation.”

1900 ACCOUNT OF MEMBERS AND DUES – NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
(TAKEN FROM AN OLD RECORD BOOK FOUND AT FIRST LUTHERAN)

Severin Olsen, A. E. Sherin J. P. Johnson, C. D. Dysen, A. H. Sherin, L. A. Berg, Chris Hansen, Pete Johnson, Gust Nelson, Ryberg, L. Dahl, John Bensen, Gilbert Bergseng, I. Pedersen, C. K. Willa, Amun Nelson, Tildo Dahl, Hattie Hansen, J. Christiansen, J. S. Johnson, Carie Flovik, C. Dahl, Carie Pederson, Marie Ordahl, Annie Johnson, H. Sheren, Nels Saga, Conrad Johnson, Ole Bergseng, Erik Anderson, Anne Gilbertson, A. Liguard

NOTES ON THE BUILDING, ENGLISH LUTHERAN,
(TAKEN FROM A BOOKLET PUBLISHED BY THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH)

“A 1½ story structure constructed in 1906 of concrete with a buff-colored exterior brick on Outlot 287, part of a parcel of 40 acres bought from the U. S. government by Moses S. Gibson on April 24, 1855. The 40 by 60 ft. building is a rectangular structure of Western Wisconsin Gothic (Gothic Revival) lines. There is a raised basement with rock facing, topped by a stone beltline and stone window sills. The Northside has a 2½ story steeple, centrally situated between two lancet-shaped windows heavily obscured by large evergreen trees on each side of the entry steps. The east and west sides are identical, each having three small basement windows and three lancet windows symmetrically placed above. The south wall has a small gable-roofed entry. The building is situated on a corner lot and has retained all of its original exterior architectural integrity. Originally, the building had a curved, pressed tin ceiling and furnishings conforming to the worship needs of the First English Lutheran Church, including a curved altar rail at the south wall. When the building was purchased, the interior was redone to conform to Anglican traditions. The tin ceiling was changed to acoustical tile, and the curved altar rail replaced with a straight rail that transects the front portion of the worship area. The console of a 12-rank pipe organ has been installed in the balcony with pipes in the belfry. In 1968 the steeple and roof were repaired and the building painted red to preserve the brick which was showing signs of deterioration. The steeple was again repainted in 1986.”

NOTES ON THE FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
(TAKEN FROM A BOOKLET PUBLISHED BY THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH)

“The congregation was formed in 1892 by Swedish settlers. A plat map of 1897 indicates a “Swedish Mission” directly across the street to the north of the present building. At first, church services were held at the Norwegian Lutheran Church, one block east. Rent was \$1 per service. A benefit was held at Hagan’s Opera House to raise funds for the building. Work on the “modern style” building began in 1906, with a contract for bricks given to B & W Concrete of New Richmond. Although the building was not finished, first services were held in the basement on January 5, 1907. The sermon was in Swedish and English. Over the years a series of pastors ministered to the congregation, some coming by train as far as Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota. Many Swedes and Norwegians had been lured to New Richmond by the work in lumber and flour mills and canning plants. Most of them settled in the northwest Ward) of the city and of their national and through World War conflict, strong national identities declined and practical considerations provided impetus to



held at the Lutheran Church, one Rent was \$1 per benefit was held at House to raise funds Work on the “modern began in 1906, with a concrete and 30,000 B & W Concrete of Although the building finished, first services basement on January sermon was in English. Over the pastors ministered to congregation, some from as far as Adolphus College in Minnesota. Many Norwegians had been Richmond by the work in lumber and canning plants. Most in the northwest Ward) of the city and of their national and through World War conflict, strong national identities practical provided impetus to

merge. In 1945 merger talks were begun between the First English Lutherans (Augustana Synod) and the Norwegian Lutheran Church. When the merger was completed in 1946, the building was sold to the Episcopalians many of whom have worshipped there since.”

1 Co 5:4 In the name of the Lord Jesus. You are to call a meeting of the church, and I will be there in spirit, and the power of the Lord Jesus will be with you as you meet.

EXCERPTS FROM ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH GOLDEN JUBILEE, 1891 – 1941

“**T**he first Swedish Lutheran service held in New Richmond was conducted by Rev. J. Theodore Kjellgren of Marine, in January 1891. The meeting was held in the Norwegian Lutheran Church. On the 24th of May, 1891, a congregation was organized by Rev. Kjellgren. A few of the charter members were: Otto and Joe Rulien, A. J. Moline, Andrew Olson, John Olson, Charles Peterson, J. M. Arnquist, Magnus Lindberg, Andrew Carlquist, and Otto Engstrom.

The records of the annual meetings from 1891 – 1909 could not be found by the album committee. From various sources we learn that Rev. J. P. Lundblad served as the first resident pastor. The congregation bought household equipment for him, and also paid his house rent. His kindly spirit is remembered by a few of the oldest members. In 1895 Rev. Andrew Bengston faithfully served the congregation as its resident pastor. Many recall the hardships he endured in serving his fifty-mile parish during the cold and stormy winter weather. In 1902-1903 the congregation was served by students Oscar Sandahl and E. G. Knock. Rev. J. A. Gustafson was the next ordained pastor. In some respects his was the golden era. In the conference history of 1926 it is stated that the people of New Richmond still speak of his indomitable spirit in raising money for the building of the church.

Lots were purchased in the North side in 1905. In 1906 a church 28 x 40 with full basement was built. The exterior of the church is brick veneer. The men of the church donated much of the labor.

“Gladys Cole’s 1958 Sunday School Class”



During the Pastorate of Rev. C. E. Lindquist in 1909 the interior of the church was completed. In 1911 Rev. E. Rendahl, who lived in Hudson, began a three-year ministry which was most successful. Rev. Rendahl was instrumental in securing the pews for the church at cost, from the Anderson Company of Hudson.

Improvements made since 1929 include: New ceiling and pleasing decorating of the interior, also new roof and exterior painting. The social room in the basement has been finished with plywood, and the kitchen remodeled. Sewer connection installed by donated labor of men of the church, and money contributions of C. F. Johnson and Lyman Arnquist. The Ladies Aid society purchased a new carpet, and altar coverings. An individual communion service was purchased through memorial gifts of several members. The new \$600.00 organ, purchased this year, is a most fitting improvement for our Jubilee year. The organ committee and Mr. C. F. Johnson are deserving of our gratitude, as well as all who contributed to the organ fund.”

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
WRITTEN BY FERN SLAUGHTER
(FERN PASSED AWAY JULY 24, 1985)

“Ye Shall Know the Truth and the Truth Shall Make You Free” John 8:32
(Bible verse inscribed on the wall in the chancel of the church)

“Pastor J. T. Kjellgren of Marine preached the first Swedish sermon in New Richmond in January 1891, and on May 24 organized the congregation which had previously worshipped in the Swedish Lutheran Church in Huntington. They became affiliated with the Augustana Synod.

Until their church was built services were conducted in the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the rent of which was \$1.00 per service. The new church, (now owned by the Episcopal congregation and located one block west of our present church) was completed in 1909 and represented many hours of labor by dedicated members.

Some of the charter members of the congregation were Otto and Jo Rulien, A. J. Moline, Andrew Olson, John Olson, Charles Peterson, J. M. Arnquist, Magnus Lindberg, Andrew Carlquist, and Otto Engstrom. Deacons elected in 1909 were John Olson, Oscar Asp, Joe Hedeem, Fred Pearson, Magnus Lindberg, J. P. Arnquist, C. F. Johnson, Oscar Johnson, and Adolph Olson.

Many of the early pastors, whose resident church was Hudson, served several congregations, and before the advent of the automobile this meant that services could not be held regularly. The pastors were J. P. Lundblad, J. A. Gustafson, C. E. Lindquist, E. Rendahl, Andrew Bengston, C. A. Olander, Frank Hanson, N. P. Tuleen, and C. W. Almen who was here until the merger in 1945.

Many student pastors from the seminary assisted during summer vacations and Christmas. They were E. G. Knock, Arthur Benson, A. Edward Peterson, who was here for 2½ years, Luther Lindstrom, Vernon Granquist, Milton Gundberg, Reuben K. Youngdahl, Abner O. Blom, C. A. Bernardson, Daniel Friberg, and Melvin Dorstad.

As a student pastor, Reuben Youngdahl preached his first Christmas sermon at English Lutheran. After his ordination, he became pastor of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, which later became the largest Lutheran church in America.

The student pastors usually stayed at the home of Mrs. August (Mary) Anderson. A. Edward Peterson held his Saturday morning confirmation classes there in winter so the church wouldn't have to be heated. In those days the confirmands, seated around the altar rail, were questioned in front of the congregation and confirmed at the same service. The first class to be confirmed in English was the class of 1911. It was about this time that the services were conducted in English instead of Swedish, and the name of the church changed to English Lutheran.

Mrs. Fred (Lizzie) Pearson was a dedicated Sunday School superintendent for many years, and Magnus Lindberg, a faithful choir director. Some of the members of the choir were Hattie and Con Nelson, Hulda Johnson, Lizzie Pearson, Hilma Johnson, Elmer Wilen, and Edna McIntyre, the organist.

Many fond memories linger in the hearts and minds of those who were members of English Lutheran. One was the Julötta service at 5:30 on Christmas morning. The farm families would come in bobsleds and cutters with the temperature sometimes well below zero.

June 24, Midsummer Day, was always a holiday, and families attended the Midsummer Day picnic at the Swedish Lutheran Church at Huntington, arriving not in automobiles, but in surreys and buggies.

The annual smorgasbord, with the ladies dressed in their native costumes, was always well attended and much delicious food was served.

When it was decided to merge with the Norwegian Lutheran Church the members felt sad about leaving the church they loved, but after much prayer and deliberation, realized it was best for the future of both congregations.”

MINUTES FROM THE SWEDISH LUTHERAN MEETING MINUTE NOTEBOOK
SEPTEMBER 4, 1924

In 1924, the Swedish Church in Huntington was considering merging with the English Lutheran Church. The following meeting minutes are a record of what the church leaders were thinking of when the merger was under consideration:

“Motion made and carried that Dr. Mattson act as chairman of meeting. Motion made and carried that Oscar Johnson act as secretary of meeting. Motion made and carried that the Swedish Lutheran Church at Huntington consolidate with the English Lutheran Church at New Richmond and that the property become common property. Motion made and carried that this church should remain and be used for church purposes such as services, church festivals, and funerals to be decided by the Church Council. Motion made and carried that the trustees of this church be authorized to transfer the church property to trustees of church at New Richmond. Motion made and carried that the trustees be authorized to collect dues and pay the bills to the Conference and Synod. Motion made and carried that the trustees be authorized to remain in office until New Year.”

Minutes of this meeting read, corrected and approved.
Sec. Oscar Johnson, J. Holmquist

ENGLISH SERVICES AT SWEDISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

This was the headline in the May 19, 1917 issue of the New Richmond News. There was a concern that the church would be losing its younger members unless it started to conduct its services in the English language. As an “experiment”, they started to do the services in English to see how well it would be accepted by the members. Prior services were being held in the Swedish language. The article reads:

“Resident Pastor for Four Months Arrives to Try Experiment. New Richmond May be Permanent Pastorate if Trial is Successful.”

Realizing that if they are to hold the young people in the church, the members of the local Swedish Lutheran church have been exerting every effort to have their services, or at least the greater part of them, in the English language. The matter has been taken up at length with the Minnesota conference, under which the local church is organized, and this body has been cooperating most gratifyingly with New Richmond workers.

The proposed scheme is finally to be given a trial, and the services of Rev. Arthur G. Benson, a student in the Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Illinois, have been secured for four months. Rev. Benson arrived in town yesterday and will hold his first service at the church Sunday evening at seven-thirty. All of the Lutheran faith are earnestly invited to be present.

Mr. Benson is the brother of the Rev. Benson of Stillwater and is a similar type of man. A live, modern, up-to-date preacher with a strong personality and should have a vital factor in reviving the interest in his church, especially among the younger generation upon which the future progress of the church depends entirely.

May Establish Permanent Pastorate

Should the experiment prove successful, there is no doubt that a permanent pastor will be located in this city who will also have charge of the parishes in Star Prairie and Clear Lake. This is a thing New Richmond people are very anxious to see come about. With a resident pastor devoting his entire energies to the church work and with practically all the services in the English language, there is little reason to believe that anything but progress and revived interest would result.

Mr. Benson, the temporary pastor, is a master of both the English and Swedish languages so will be able to cope with all situations which may arise.”

“Pre-School Students”



EXCERPT FROM ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH GOLDEN JUBILEE, 1891 – 1941

Pastor Oscar Sandahl had written a letter to the church congratulating them on their fiftieth anniversary:

“I have been informed by your pastor, C. W. Almen, that you are planning to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary in November this year. While I was a student at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, I had the privilege to serve you for about a year, and during that time became very interested in your church, and I have since that time followed your history with personal interest. At that time you had no church building, but used the Norwegian Lutheran church, and, on some occasions, the Swedish “Mission House.” The church at Star Prairie was the main church and New Richmond the annex preaching place. I conducted the Sunday service at Star Prairie in the forenoon and at New Richmond in the evening every other Sunday. At both places the services were well attended and the people seemed to be spiritually interested in the church. On Saturday evenings we had prayer meetings in Star Prairie at the home where I was the guest, and those meetings were always well attended.”

ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 14, 1944

A special meeting of the board of the English Lutheran Church was held February 14 in the church.

The president and the vice-president of the district were present.

The meeting opened with a hymn.

Scripture reading and prayer were given by Rev. Cornay.

The purpose of the meeting was stated Rev. Granquist. Due to a shortage of pastors, transportation, facilities, and amount of service given to the congregation, there were to be some changes made in the Apple River district.

Discussion was held on how this parish could be divided so that New Richmond could receive more services. It was suggested that Clear Lake and New Richmond be made into one parish with a pastor to serve the two churches; thus eliminating New Richmond from the original setup.

It was later suggested that we try to merge with the Norwegian Lutheran church. If this was to be done we would have to have a pastor in New Richmond serving this church only. We would also have to build or remodel one of the churches and make some other changes.

The board was 100% in favor of merging.

The outcome of the meeting was that Rev. Cornay and Rev. Granquist was to put the facts before Rev. Holte, the pastor of the Norwegian church, and let the next step come from them.

The meeting was adjourned.

George Olson
Secretary

Eph 4:11 He is the one who gave these gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 16, 1944

The annual meeting of the First English Lutheran Church was held in the church parlors November 16, 1944 at 8:00 o'clock.

The meeting opened with the singing of two hymns, "Faith of Our Fathers" and "I Lay My Sins on Jesus".

Rev. Almen read the second Psalm and gave a prayer.

The following auditing committee was appointed: Fred Sontag, Lewis Olson and Edwin Asp.

Adolph Olson was re-elected deacon.

Edwin Asp was re-elected trustee.

Alfred Asp was re-elected deacon for a period of two years to finish out the term of C.F. Johnson.

Lewis Olson was elected trustee for a period of one year to finish out the term of Hugo Baum.

A motion was made and seconded the salaries of the pastor, organist and janitor remain the same.

Margaret Asp was re-elected organist.

Oscar Asp was elected janitor.

C.V. Pearson was re-elected treasurer.

Geo. Olson was re-elected secretary.

Oscar Asp was re-elected Sunday School Superintendent.

Mrs. Adolph Olson and Adolph Olson were elected delegate and alternate to the conference.

Hattie Nelson and Mrs. Lewis Olson were elected as delegate and alternate to the district meeting.

Discussion was held on the subject of making a parish of New Richmond and Clear Lake. Also the point was brought up that we merge with the Norwegian Lutheran Church and make a parish of New Richmond and Star Prairie.

A motion was made and seconded that we go on as we have been with Lewis Almen and Rev. Almen serving. Motion amended until it becomes necessary to change because of making a new parish or merging.

The majority were in favor of merging with the Norwegian Lutheran Church.

Motion made and seconded we invite a committee of the Norwegian Lutheran Church to talk things over with a committee of the church.

It was decided to have the church board act as this committee.

A motion was made and seconded Claude Pearson also be on this committee and act as Chairman.

It was decided that Fred Sontag act in the place of M. J. Lindberg on this committee.

A minute of silent prayer was given in the honor of Andrew Olson, C.F. Johnson Mary Asp and Helen Wilen.

A motion was made and seconded and we adjourned.

George A. Olson
Secretary

Ro 14:19 So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.

“Alta Mae Olien’s 1958 Sunday School Class”



FACTS ABOUT THE MERGER
FROM THE FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH 40TH ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET

“The board members at the time of the merger were: Louie Olson, Claude Pearson, Edwin Asp all of English Lutheran. Matt Lyngass, Albert Rustin, Bill Kemling all of Norwegian Lutheran.

After the merger, the only things that were used from the two former churches and placed in the First Lutheran Church were the bell from the Norwegian Lutheran Church and the organ and a small cross from the English Lutheran Church. The cross is now on the small altar in the dining room.

Above the west entrance to First Lutheran, the words “First Lutheran Church” are engraved. This work was done by Marlin Carlson.

The kind of stone used to build the church is Kasota limestone from around Mankato. The stone above the entrance is limestone from Indiana. Usually, stone to be engraved is brought into Marlin’s shop at the New Richmond Granite Works, and put into place afterwards. In the case of our church however, the stone had already been placed above the entrance. Marlin took his pneumatic hammer to the church and spent many hours on a ladder hand styling the words, which we still appreciate and will continue to enjoy for many years to come. (Marlin today can still remember vividly this most tedious task.)

The cornerstone is granite. Marlin and his father-in-law, Alfred Asp, used chisels to hollow out the center of the stone. A tin box, soldered shut, was then placed inside.” (As of this printing, this tin box remains secure within the cornerstone.)

1Co 14:12 Since you are so eager to have spiritual gifts, ask God for those that will be of real help to the whole church.

**FROM CHAPTER IV, GROWTH OF OUR CHURCHES, NEW RICHMOND CENTENNIAL,
1957**

“The First Lutheran church of New Richmond is a congregation that is a result of a merger between the First English Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Augustana Synod, and the First Lutheran Church, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC). Differing only in the national background of the founders (the one of Swedish, the other of Norwegian tradition). For over 50 years both church buildings had been located only a block apart.

The two congregations merged on March 19, 1945. Loren Spaulding, Seminary interne, served the congregation, under the guidance of the Rev. Carlyle W. Holte, of Star Prairie. A new church was sought, and a parsonage, at 212 East Third Street was extensively remodeled and redecorated.

Beginning on October 1, 1946, the Rev. Elmer N. Oakland served the congregation as pastor. The membership increased greatly, and the Sunday School increased rapidly.

The present building, the third unit of which was completed in December of 1954, was dedicated on February 13, 1955. This Kasota stone structure provides twelve Sunday School classrooms, three large assembly rooms, the church nave, two choir lofts, a choir room, a nursery, church office and sacristy.

The present membership of First Lutheran is 610 confirmed members, and 912 baptized members. The congregation holds two services each Sunday. Sunday School is held for three hundred children. Three choirs sing regularly at the worship services: the Senior Church Choir, the Junior Choir, and the Cherub Choir.

The Ladies Aid carries out its activities through Interest Circles. Other church organizations are the Junior and Senior League, and the Couples’ Club.

First Lutheran church is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC), the national Lutheran Council, and the Lutheran World Federation. The present pastor is Rev. J. M. Donhowe, who has served the congregation since July 10, 1955.”

“A Church Basement Event”



EXCERPTS FROM CHAPTER 11, MECHANICS OF LIVING IN THOSE FIRST YEARS
BY MARY SATHER – DECEMBER 28, 1978
PUBLISHED IN A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE NR NEWS

“Late in the century two Lutheran churches were established in the city, an English Lutheran in 1892 by a group of Swedish emigrants and a Norwegian Lutheran church in 1889. These two churches were eventually merged in 1945 into a combined congregation, the First Lutheran church.

As was typical in the early beginnings of the other churches, the Lutheran element held services in a home. Mr. and Mrs. C. K. Willa were the first Scandinavian settlers in 1882 in what was called “Pierces Addition,” building there a hotel-like house which later became known as Scandia House. The sawmill was being enlarged at this time and Scandia House lodged and boarded the sawmill employees. “When the sawmill operated at night,” said Mrs. Sevrin Olson in the Centennial Book, “the demand for rooms was so great that the night crew took the beds the day crew left in the morning, after a change of linen. Again at night there was a shift back.” “Since there was no Lutheran church at the time,” went on Mrs. Olson, “if a pastor came through Svenningsen and could stop, services were held at Scandia house along with the baptizing of children and an occasional wedding.”

In chapter 5 of her article Mary makes mention of other churches undergoing change:

There was another church body whose New Richmond history had been interrupted. The Episcopal Mission Church had been wiped out by the cyclone in 1899 and was finally reestablished in the 1930’s. The St. Thomas Episcopal Mission congregation now worships in a Northside church that was formerly the English Lutheran Church building. When the Norwegian and English Lutheran churches had merged in 1945, a usable building had been left up for sale. The Lutheran merger also formed an active body, First Lutheran Church, whose growth has necessitated several building programs which culminated in 1970 with a final stage of an educational unit completed. At that point the congregation had grown from 200 baptized members in the two merging churches in 1945 to 1564.”



“Church Council: Front Row; Alice Michaels, Sandy Nelson, Jan Jacobson, Corrine Elkin, Shirley Johnson, Second Row; Arnie Tjelta, Jim Moeller, Daryle Augustine, Scott Needham, Curt Anderson, Back Row; Art Larson, Gary Sveningson, Arvid Fl anum, Ted Irl e, Jon Nordin”.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH BY FERN SLAUGHTER

“**T**he First Lutheran Church is a congregation that is the result of the merger on March 19, 1945, of the English Lutheran Church, affiliated with the Augustana, Lutheran Synod, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Synod. The members only differed in the national background of the founders, the one of Swedish heritage and the other Norwegian. After the merger the new congregation became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Pastor C. W. Holte, with the help of Loren Spalding, served the congregation until Pastor E. N. Okland arrived in October 1946. At that time the congregation consisted of 200 parishioners.

During Pastor Okland's ministry the building program went forward. In 1947 Unit I, the present basement dining room and kitchen area, was constructed. In 1952 Unit II, comprising of the overflow area and adjacent Sunday School rooms, was completed. On February 13, 1955, the completed church sanctuary with Units I and II was dedicated.

Pastor Oakland left our congregation in March, 1955, and Pastor Donhowe was installed on July 10, 1955. Under his leadership our church grew spiritually and numerically. Sunday School enrollment increased by approximately fifty percent, which brought about the need for more Sunday School rooms. The Parish House, located where the Education Unit is now, was converted for use as classrooms. In 1957 the new organ was installed, which added much to the beauty and reverence of our worship services.

During 1959-60, Intern Paul Jensen assisted in the ministry of the congregation. Pastor V. D. Aaker, a retired minister living in the area, assisted with visitation in the congregation from May 1959, until November 1959, when he was accidentally killed in a car-train collision.

Our church became affiliated with the American Lutheran Church in 1960.

Following Pastor Donhowe's resignation in 1960, James D. Anderson became our next pastor and served our congregation until August 1966. During his ministry the first floor of the Parish Education Unit was completed and dedicated on August 26, 1962.

In August of 1965 we decided to enlarge our ministry so Associate Fred Ohlrogge accepted our call to serve in that capacity. He was here until the summer of 1967.

Our present pastor, Eugene Wekander and his family arrived in March 1967, and his deep concern for our spiritual welfare has been expressed in many ways, some of which are the development of an adult Bible program and the expansion of our youth program. It again became apparent that we had outgrown our facilities, so plans were formulated for our present educational unit. Two more floors were added, and the completed area included a connection area serving as a main entrance, classrooms, offices, lounges, nursery, and restrooms.

Interns serving under Reverend Wekander were Sue Carlos, Dan Wilfrid, and Mark Sabin.

Associate Vern Weeks came in the fall of 1978 to assist in the ministerial duties of our congregation.

The parsonage on East Third was sold, and in 1972 Reverend Wekander and his family moved to the newly constructed parsonage in the Southview addition. A second parsonage on South Dakota Avenue was purchased in the summer of 1978.

The one big moneymaking project of the year is the smorgasbord held the first Thursday in November with most of the proceeds going to benevolence. The sewing group makes approximately 150 quilts a year for Lutheran World Relief.

The church has been richly blessed, and under dedicated pastors the membership has grown from 200 at the time of the merger to 1,713 baptized and 1,250 confirmed in December 1978. Our present Sunday School membership is 352.

Our benevolence giving, which has increased from \$7,615 in 1957 to \$32,643 in 1978, includes the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Social Services, American Lutheran Homes, and local benevolence for chaplaincy programs at St. Croix Health Center and Maple Manor.

Under the guidance of our two pastors our ministerial needs are being very well met. As we look back and count the many ways we have been blessed through the years, we can only look forward in eager anticipation of what the Lord has waiting for us in the future.”

“A 1956 Gathering of First Lutheran Church Men”



In February of 1955 the dedication services for the completed church were held. A lengthy article about the church was written and printed in the New Richmond News.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH DEDICATION SERVICES WILL BE SUNDAY
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

“This beautiful new First Lutheran church, erected at North Dakota Ave. and North Third St., is a timeless monument to the planning and effort of the congregation and the work and leadership of the pastor, Rev. E. N. Okland, during the past 8 years. Of contemporary design, yet ageless in conception and execution, the edifice of Kasota stone is both a symbol of and a tribute to

the growth of the congregation and the community. It is the culmination of the merger of two churches--the English Lutheran and Norwegian Lutheran--into a unified body.

The structure comprises 3 units--the basement, including a modern kitchen and a dining room with seating space for 200; a memorial chapel, 3 large assembly rooms and 10 classrooms; and the church proper, including a "cry" room, nursery, church office and sacristy, pastor's office, junior and senior choir loft, and choir robe room. Unit I, the basement, was completed in 1947; Unit II, the classrooms over the basement, was finished 3 years ago; and Unit III, the church proper, has just been completed.

Total cost, including the building and all its furnishings, will be under \$120,000, which this low figure was made possible by much donated labor, wise planning on the part of the building committee, and favorable purchasing, according to Pastor Okland. Albert Rustin is chairman of the building committee.

The edifice is 133.5 feet long and from 36 to 62 feet wide--Units I and II are 42 by 62 feet, and Unit III, 36 by 92.5 feet. It will seat from 400 to 700 people when the overflow facilities are used.

Natural and artificial lighting--floodlights, spotlights and fluorescent lights are used; and all of the woodwork is oak, with the exception of the ceiling of the church proper, which is fir. The heating system is steam, fired by an oil burner, with separate thermostatic controls for each of the 3 units.

The appointments all are of modern design. Conveniences include cupboards for communion ware and a sink for washing the communion glasses, in the sacristy off the chancel. In the sound-proof "cry" room at the back of the church proper, mothers may sit with children and view the proceedings through a large window, while listening via the loudspeaker.

Symbols cut in stone on the tower above the main entrance to the building are the Greek letters Chi Rho, the first 2 letters in the name Christ; Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, telling that Christ is "the beginning and the end"; and the triangle and 3 links in a chain, standing for the Trinity.

Only two items remain from the beginning of the merger, the organ from the English Lutheran church, and the bell from the Norwegian Lutheran church.

Dedication services will be held Sunday, February 13, with the first service at 10:30 A. M. and the dedication of the church at 3 P. M. From 11:45 A. M. to 2:30 P. M. , dinner will be served by the women of the church.

"You are cordially invited to First Lutheran to join in our festive dedication Sunday services," Pastor Okland states."

1Ti 3:15 So that if I can't come for awhile, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and support of the truth.

DEDICATION SERVICES, NEW RICHMOND NEWS, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

“Impressive services will mark the dedication of the new First Lutheran church, North Dakota Ave. and North Third St., Sunday, February 13, Rev. E. N. Okland, pastor, announces.

First service will be at 10:30 a. m. Dr. O. G. Malmin, editor of the Lutheran Herald, official organ of the Evangelical Lutheran church, will be guest speaker. Both the junior and senior choirs will take part in the service.

“This service is to emphasize the dedication of the congregation to the work that God has in mind for them, and to consecrate their time, talents, and means to His service,” Pastor Okland said.

For the service of dedication of the new church at 3 p. m. , the pastor and officiants, the visiting clergy, the building committee, the Church Council and the senior choir, will form a processional as they enter the nave of the church.

The senior choir will render two anthems, and a solo will be sung.

The sermon and rite of dedication will be given by Dr. Martin Anderson, former president of the Eastern district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. He will take the place of the Rev. F. I. Schmidt, president of the district, who is unable to come because of illness.

Scriptures will be read by Rev. C. W. Holte, a former pastor; by Rev. C. Smeby, circuit president; by Rev. N. P. Scheide; and by Rev. Walter Abramson. Rev. Herbert Hanson of the Home Mission department of the Evangelical Lutheran church will give a meditation.

Between the morning and afternoon services, the women of the church will serve dinner for a nominal sum.”



**NORWEGIAN AND ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCHES MERGED INTO TODAY'S NEW
FIRST LUTHERAN
NR NEWS FEBRUARY 10, 1955**

“The First Lutheran church of New Richmond is a congregation that is made up of a merger between a church of the Augustana Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran church (ELC).

The Augustana congregation had been worshipping one block west of the present site of the ELC congregation, and it had been served by a man from Hudson, 22 miles away. The Norwegian congregation in New Richmond had been served by an ELC man who had two other congregations and he lived 5 miles away.

On the evening of February 14, 1944, a pastor of the Augustana church, Pastor Granquist, who had something to do with the Apple River district, called a special meeting of the First English Lutheran church of the Augustana Synod. He explained to the members courteously and prayerfully that there was a shortage of pastors, that the transportation facilities had been taxed, and that members of the New Richmond congregation were not getting the service that they should have. He suggested that they should discuss two things: First, the possibility of the Augustana church in New Richmond transferred to the Clear Lake parish; and second, the possibility of merging with the Norwegian church of New Richmond. (Comment: I am sure that few felt transferring to Clear Lake was a viable option).

The board of the First English Lutheran church expressed approval of the idea of joining with the Norwegian Lutheran church. Then at their annual meeting the following fall a discussion was held. The Augustana members thought about it and talked about it and finally decided to invite a committee from the Norwegian congregation to talk things over with the church board who would serve as their committee.

The following spring in March there was a meeting of the Norwegian Lutheran church. The district president was there and a discussion was held by them. At first the realization of their gain was not too evident, but they did qualify their thinking and said they would consider a merger providing they could be released from their parish to the north. They also stated that they would like their pastor to be a resident of New Richmond. This parish, as mentioned before, was served by a man living in Star Prairie. Star Prairie and West Immanuel gave their consent.

On March 19, 1945, a joint meeting was held with the Augustana congregation. In July 1945, the two congregations began to worship together. The Augustana man who had been serving them from Hudson now was out of the picture and Pastor Holte who lived in Star Prairie served this joined-in-worship congregation. At the annual meeting in 1946, Pastor Holte resigned, but agreed to serve until a new pastor would be secured as their resident pastor. Lastly, the new congregation adopted the name, First Lutheran of New Richmond, Wisconsin.

In February, 1946, arrangements were made to sell the former Augustana Lutheran church and a parsonage was bought in the spring of 1946. Nothing was to be done to it until a pastor had accepted the call. Rev. E. N. Okland came on October 1, 1946 and had the opportunity of helping to remodel the parsonage. The church that was chosen for use by the merged congregation was the one formerly belonging to the Norwegian Lutheran congregation.

The reasons for growth and success lay in the fact that the pastors resigned, that both of them got out of the picture and common sense was shown in seeing to it that members of both churches, at least for a while, were represented on Church Councils and various committees. Also, effort was made to inculcate members with much interest and activity.

Soon these people began to see outward growth and inner strength and the Lord Christ glorified in their midst, as they deepened in His Word. It was a real thrill, when on December 8, 1946 at the Special Merger Service, 98 souls were added to the churches membership at one time.

This, in a small church, seemed like an entire congregation. Much credit must be given to the former pastors who so willingly stepped out of the picture; much credit must be given to the many people who had a part in the various steps of merger and growth.

With such prayerful deliberation and background there are the following results which make a success story: Before, there used to be an old church and a small parish house with an evaluation of about \$3,000. Now, there has been built in three different units, a completed structure of Kasota stone where there are all the facilities of the nicest church that one can imagine. There now are 10 fine classrooms, three large assembly rooms besides the nave of the church, a beautiful memorial chapel, a cry room (for infants up to two years) a nursery (age 2 to 5), a church office and sacristy, the pastor's office, a special place or loft for the junior choir and another for the senior choir, and a choir robe room.

At the time of the merger, even with the two congregations going together there were only 31 in Sunday School counting the teachers. Now there are 374 enrolled with as many as 105 in the Bible class alone.

At the time of the merger, there were 200 souls in the combined congregations, and now there are 862 souls which make up First Lutheran.

At the time of the merger, there was a gross income for the year, counting the help of the organizations, of about \$2,500. During 1954, again counting organizations, the gross income was about \$34,000.

Under God, the progress made has been gratifying; about 80% of the congregation today is composed of new members. There are very few who think, or even know, about the fact that at one time, some nine years ago, a merger took place and those few who do remember, have no regrets."



MANY SERVE THE FIRST LUTHERAN
NR NEWS, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

Many persons serve the First Lutheran church on its council and building committee:

CHURCH STAFF:

E. N. Okland, pastor.
Erma Larson, organist.
Mrs. S. B. Slaughter, Senior Choir director.
Mrs. E. N. Okland, Junior Choir director.
Marion Olson and Diane Zemke, assistant organists.
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Kittel, custodians.

CHURCH COUNCIL:

Matt Lyngaas, President.
Fred Sontag, Vice-President.
Ray Carow, Recording Secretary.
Paul Albrightson, Financial Secretary.
Ray Wentzel, Treasurer.
Kenneth Wittig, Benevolence Treasurer.
Claude Pearson, Special Gift and In Memoriam Treasurer.

TRUSTEES:

Marvin Olien, Floyd Larson, John Mickelson, George Bergquist, Riley Livingston, Lyman Hugdahl, Pete Pederson, C. A. Groth.

DEACONS:

Bob Erickson, Jalmer Johnson, Gerald Peterson, George Gregerson.

BUILDING COMMITTEE:

Building Committee chairmen: Albert Rustin and Lewis Olson.
Building Committee: Grant Westrom, Art Elkin, Alfred Asp, John Paulson, Melvin Mickelson, Ted Carlson.
Loan Contract Men: Paul Albrightson, Claude Pearson, Ray Wentzel.
Altar Furnishings and Chancel: Mrs. Matt Lyngaas, Mrs. A. L. Lindell, Mrs. Lu Nelson, Rev. E. N. Okland.
Finance Committee: Matt Lyngaas, Paul Albrightson, Bernard Olson, Ray Wentzel.
Choir Rooms and Furnishings: Marion Olson, Mrs. S. B. Slaughter, Mrs. Lu Nelson.
Sunday School Rooms and Furnishings: Mrs. Fred Sontag, John Smith, H. R. Hertenberg.
Church Office and pastor's Office: Chris Karlsrud, Fred Sontag, Rev. E. N. Okland. Pews: William Kemling, Harold Dahlin, Rev. E. N. Okland

1 Co 12:5 There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving.

MANY MEMORIALS AND GIFTS HELPED TO COMPLETE THE FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH,
NR NEWS, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

“Dedication of the First Lutheran church Sunday is the culmination of some years of planning and work by the congregation and its pastor.

While all the members of this growing congregation did their share in both time and contributions, some made it possible through memorials and gifts to further complete its appointments and equipment.

The new Memorial chapel with pews and furnishings was made possible by monies given in memory of: Carl Johnson, Norman Nelson, Mrs. Mary Anderson, David Carow, John Arnquist, Harry Arnquist, Henning Carlstrom, Kermit Carlstrom, John Carlstrom, Mrs. Sadie Ohlson, Mrs. Otto Peterson, Mrs. John Elkin, Andrew Johnson. Mrs. Laura Hendrickson, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Asp, Mrs. John Hanson, Martin Jorgenson, Herman Larson, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Stromen, Margie Anderson, N. L. Lindberg, Melvin Ryberg, Mrs. Conrad Johnson, Elmer Folsom, Mrs. Peter Larson.

The baptismal font, which is stainless steel, was given by the Sunday school; the pulpit by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Olson; the Christian flag by Roger Olien; the American flag by Mrs. John Gaspord; floor candelabra by the Senior Luther League; missal stand by Miss Grace Shern; altar cross and 4 offering plates in memory of Bert Gaspord; lectern by Couple's club; communion candlesticks by L.D.R.; flower vases by Dr. and Mrs. Lindell; altar books and hymnary by the Junior Luther League; 12 Lutheran hymnals by Mr. and Mrs. George Gregerson.

Furnishings for a classroom by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rosenau; classroom pictures by Dr. and Mrs. L. W. Brown; chapel fund by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Olson; memorial and special gifts book by Mrs. Hazel Hedine; white book marker by Victoria Smith in memory of Mrs. Otto Peterson; one pair of candle lighters by Otto Peterson in memory of Mrs. Otto Peterson.

Piano by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Dahlin; piano by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Shern and Grace; 8 hymnals by Mary and Martha Asp; lettering above front entrance and the church cornerstone by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Asp and Mr. and Mrs. Marlin Carlson; 16 candle burners by Mrs. John Olson and Nellie Oppeward; kneeling bench and nine book markers by Mr. Alfred K. Nelson.

Frontal screens were donated by Mr. and Mrs. Ray Wentzel and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Wittig and son.

Forty-four pews were contributed by: Mr. and Mrs. Paul Albrightson and family; Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Amundson and Mr. and Mrs. Robert DuBois; Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Asp and Mr. and Mrs. Marlin Carlson; Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Asp and Robert and Mrs. Ella Arnquist; the Elmer Asp family; in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Nels Asp by Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Asplund.

By Mr. and Mrs. Howard Bentley; in memory of L. A. Berg by Mrs. Mary Berg; Mr. and Mrs. Ole Bergsens, Marion and Norman; in memory of Dr. L. Nelson by Dr. and Mrs. L. W. Brown; Mr. and Mrs. Ray Carlstrom and Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Olson; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Carlstrom and family; in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John Hanson and David Carow, by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Carow and family.

By Mr. and Mrs. Klayton Evans, Kay and Barbara; Richard Field; Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Groth; in memory of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Kinner and Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Humphrey by Mr. and Mrs.

Cal Humphrey; in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Johnson by Miss Dora A. Johnson; in memory of mother, Mrs. Conrad M. Johnson, by her son Lloyd; Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Krueger, Marilyn, Robert, Kathryn and Judy.

In memory of Herman N. Larson, by Mrs. Herman Larson and family; in memory of N. L. Lindberg by Mrs. N. L. Lindberg; Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Livingston; Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lundberg and family; Mr. and Mrs. Matt Lyngaas; in memory of mother, Mrs. Maybelle Mickelson, by Mr. and Mrs. Keith Mickelson and Mr. and Mrs. John Mickelson; Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Mickelson; in memory of Dr. L. Nelson by Mrs. Lu Nelson; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Nerison and Barbara; Mr. and Mrs. Claude Pearson; Mr. and Mrs. Parnell Pederson and family; Mr. and Mrs. Albert Rustin, Helen and Robert; in memory of Mrs. A. H. Shern and Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Stephenson, by Mr. and Mrs. Henry O. Shern.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Mons Olson, Elmer Wilen, Helen and Raymond Wilen, by Mrs. Louise Wilen and Mrs. Fern Slaughter; in memory of Mr. and Mrs. N. J. Moline by Mr. and Mrs. John Smith and Mr. and Mrs. Denzell Smith; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Sontag and family; Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Emerson and Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Emerson; in memory of Marlys Anderson by Mr. and Mrs. Elert Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. John Beebe, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Anderson and Mr. and Mrs. Donald Rogers; Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Theis, Sr.”

“1960’s Senior Choir”



1Co 1:10 Now, dear brothers and sisters, I appeal to you by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to stop arguing among yourselves. Let there be real harmony so there won't be divisions in the church. I plead with you to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.

THE BEAUTY OF THE INTERIOR
NR NEWS, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

“The beautiful interior of the new First Lutheran church is a masterpiece of contemporary design, with the simplicity and comfort of functional furnishings providing a fitting atmosphere for worship.

The church proper now is equipped with comfortable one-piece pews, and a good public address system, including plug-in facilities for earphones for the hard-of-hearing. The baptismal font is a single bowl of stainless steel, mounted on a wrought iron base; it has a convenient drain which allows the water to run through copper tubing into the ground.

The pulpit is of reeded oak and is a little different from the ordinary, in that the speaker’s book rest is on the inside, out of view of those who worship. The communion rail has foam rubber for the kneeler, and wrought iron uprights which have been formed into grapes and wheat, symbolizing the bread and wine.

Besides these appointments, the beautifully carpeted chancel has a floor-to-ceiling louvered window, and an all-oak altar with a reeded retable and base. The all-brass cross, communion candleholders, the candelabra, the flower vases and new Christian and American flags, make for a most worshipful sanctuary.

Natural and artificial illumination are combined to beautify the interior, as a person views the laminated arches and the blond fir planking. The remainder of the woodwork, including the pews, pulpit, altar, doors, trim and furnishings are of oak.

Artificial illumination is provided by floodlights, spotlights and fluorescent lighting, with indirect lighting over the windows. The cross is of soft glass of variegated colors, with indirect lighting which diffuses light into the church, and can be seen from the street.

At the rear of the church are the modern fold doors which, when opened, can increase the seating capacity from 400 to about 700.”

WELL DONE
NR NEWS, FEBRUARY 10, 1955

“Rev. E.N. Okland, pastor of the First Lutheran church, just completed the culmination of 8 years of planning and effort by the congregation under his leadership.

Rev. Mr. (Elmer) Okland was born June 7, 1914, at Thompson, IA., son of Rev. and Mrs. H. E. Okland. While at Fertile, IA., he was graduated from high school. He received his A. A. degree from Waldorf college at Forest City, IA., and his B. A. from St. Olaf college, Northfield, Minn.

Following this, counting his interne year at Bainville, Mont., he was graduated with the Candidate of Theology degree from Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., in 1940.

His first pastorate was at Milltown, Wis., and after this came a tour of duty as Navy chaplain. He attended chaplaincy school at William and Mary college at Williamsburg, Va., with

duty at Norfolk, Va., and at the Naval Air station at Memphis, Tenn. Next came casualty call assignment out of the 12th Naval district, San Francisco, Calif.

Following this he had duty aboard the U.S.S. Samuel Chase, APA 26, which cruised the southern Pacific; and upon completion of this, returned by way of the Panama Canal to Norfolk, Va. During reserve duty, there were periods during which he was assigned to the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, and as Protestant chaplain on board the U.S.S. Leyte.

Upon leaving the United States Navy, he and his family came to First Lutheran at New Richmond, October 1, 1946. On March 1 this year, he will be leaving for Trinity Lutheran church at Park Forest, Ill.

In 1935 he married Miss G. Lorene Johnson of Forest City, IA., and they have 2 children: LaVonne, who is a freshman at St. Olaf college; and Stephen, who is in 7th grade.

Rev. Mr. Okland wishes to express his thanks to God for all blessings bestowed on his work and family; to thank all members and friends of First Lutheran for their fine cooperation and willingness to be a part of a growing team for the Lord; and to thank the business men and friends of New Richmond for their many instances of good-will, cordiality and good wishes. His aim has been to be a friend of man and to help point others to the Savior, Jesus Christ.

As pastor of First Lutheran church, he cordially invites you to visit the new church; and where there is no conflict with existing loyalties, to feel most welcome to attend any or all of the services.”

“1958 Cherub Choir”



FIRST LUTHERAN MERGER OF TWO CHURCHES
BY REVEREND EUGENE WEKANDER
NR NEWS, SEPTEMBER 27, 1973

“**T**he First Lutheran Church, on the corner of North Third and North Dakota in New Richmond, began in June of 1945 as a merger of the English Lutheran Church and the Norwegian Lutheran Church. Its ministry was started in the facilities of the Norwegian Lutheran Church at 258 North Third. The building used by the English Lutheran Church was sold to the newly formed Episcopal congregation.

The English Lutheran Church was started in 1892 by a group of Swedish emigrants. The Swedish Lutherans previously had a congregation at Huntington, organized in 1876, and in Star Prairie. The church in New Richmond was served by pastors serving other congregations and by student pastors. Much of the time they were served by the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Hudson. The Norwegian Lutheran church was started in 1889 by Reverend J. T. Lee with the church dedicated the same year. This congregation was served by the pastor at Star Prairie who also served the congregation at West Emmanuel.

Listed as combined membership of the merging congregations in 1945 were 200 souls (baptized members). Facilities included the frame church with a social hall behind, where church suppers were served and the Ladies Aid met. In October 1946, the resident pastor, Reverend E. N. Oakland arrived and was installed on December 9. In 1947, Unit one, the present dining room area, was completed and put to use. In 1952 the area above it, now overflow area and Sunday School rooms, was added. On February 13, 1955 the church sanctuary with the basement area below it was dedicated. At this time the congregation had grown to 863 baptized members. In July of 1955, Pastor J. M. Donhowe was installed as pastor.

With the growth of the Sunday School, expansion of teaching facilities was needed. In 1957 the parish house next to the church was used for classrooms. This house was moved from its location east of the church in the summer of 1961 and work began in the fall of that year for the lower floor of the education unit with dedication on August 26 of 1962. Space for Sunday School became a problem again. Some classes were held on Saturdays until arrangements could be made for the completion of the education unit. Two floors were added with a connecting unit to the worship area. Dedication of this completion of our church facilities was on February 15, 1970. This was fifteen years after the dedication of the main church and twenty-five years after the merger of the English Lutheran and Norwegian Lutheran. The congregation had grown to 1,564 baptized members, with 465 in the Sunday School program.

Pastor J. D. Anderson became pastor of First Lutheran in 1960. Pastor Fred Ohlrogge was Associate Pastor from 1965 to 1967. Pastor Eugene Wekander is presently pastor of First Lutheran. Pastor James Nelson from Immanuel near Forrest spends two days a week assisting with youth programming and confirmation instruction.

In addition to its parish program and support of the mission program of the American Lutheran Church, of which it became a member in 1960, First Lutheran Church initiated and supports chaplaincy work at the St. Croix County Hospital and Maple Manor. It has provided the

major support for the work of Pastor A. P. Anderson who was permitted by his congregation at West Immanuel to spend a day a week in this ministry. With Pastor's Anderson's passing, this work is now continued by Pastor Richard Jewett from Dresser, who spends two days per week as chaplain at the county hospital. Pastor Dan Olson from Bethany at Star Prairie the half a day a week chaplain at Maple Manor."

MERGER OF NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN AND ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCHES
FROM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1946 WORSHIP BULLETIN
WRITTEN BY MR. AND MRS. CLAUDE PEARSON

"The Norwegian Lutheran church has been served by Rev. C. W. Holte, who resided in Star Prairie, five miles north of New Richmond, Wisconsin. He not only served New Richmond and Star Prairie but the West Immanuel church as well, about ten miles north of Star Prairie. This arrangement requires considerable driving and a pastor cannot devote the time necessary to really serve any congregation as he would like.

The English Lutheran church which is located only a block west of the Norwegian Lutheran church has had a similar arrangement in that it too, was served together with other churches. Rev. C. W. Almen served this congregation and Hudson, Wisconsin, where he lived, and also two other congregations closer to Hudson.

There had been some whisperings to the effect that a merger should be considered. This idea was at first ridiculed by the majority, but as time went on even some outsiders saw the folly of two Lutheran churches a block apart. That in itself did not look good in a community and was no incentive for growth.

However, after war was declared in December 1941, many pastors joined the armed forces and this called for changes within church districts. This was especially true as concerned the English Lutheran congregation which belonged to the Augustana Synod. The district officers felt that a merger would be the best solution, so after several meetings, it was decided in November 1944, to approach the Norwegian Lutheran congregation on this matter of merger. The English Lutheran congregation would join with them as they had the larger membership of the two, with the understanding that New Richmond would have a resident pastor to serve the merged congregation only.

In March 1945, the Norwegian Lutheran congregation voted also to merge and after the details were worked out, the two congregations worshipped together as one, commencing in June 1945.

None of the chaplains were yet available and Rev. Holte needed assistance, so we were able to secure the services of Mr. Loren Spaulding, an interne, who came here in September 1945, for a period of eleven months, after which he was to resume school again.

At the annual meeting held in January 1946, Rev. Holte resigned to serve Star Prairie and West Immanuel congregations, resignation to take effect when we were able to secure a pastor for New Richmond. It was voted at this meeting to change the name to First Lutheran Church, New

Richmond, Wisconsin. In February 1946, legal proceedings were completed whereby the property of both churches was transferred to the First Lutheran congregation.

We sold the English Lutheran church to the newly organized Episcopal congregation so it is still used for church services.

Then came the question of a parsonage. Our church does not have a full basement but we have a parish hall and it was thought best to convert this hall into a parsonage. That would necessitate enlarging the church basement to replace the hall. If any building material was to be made available it would require priorities and those we did not have. A chaplain would be in a position to get priorities but we could not get a chaplain without a parsonage; we tried to buy a house but none was available at the time. It began to look hopeless until one of our members decided to make a change and we were given first chance to buy, which we did.

We were fortunate in securing a recently discharged Navy chaplain, Rev. E. N. Okland, who was to serve the First Lutheran congregation commencing October 1, 1946.

The parsonage committee felt it necessary to make a considerable amount of alterations together with redecorating. Before proceeding with the work Pastor and Mrs. Okland were consulted as to what changes they would like. This was two weeks prior to their coming, so the parsonage committee called for volunteers from the congregation, who in turn worked incessantly to get the most necessary work done before their coming. It was impossible to hire all this work done and without cooperation among the congregation it could not have been accomplished in this length of time.

It now appears that with this merger and a resident pastor we are headed for a healthy growth.”

“1956 Church Men”



Re 1:3 God blesses the one who reads this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to it and obey what it says. For the time is near when these things will happen.

FIRST LUTHERAN OBSERVES 100 YEARS OF IT'S HERITAGE

The following article written by Donna Gleason recalls the past history of the First Lutheran Church in New Richmond. It was published in the New Richmond News, November 16, 1989.

“During the first two weeks in November, the church celebrated 100 years of continuous ministry in the community, while last Sunday, a special service was held, recognizing the history and events that led to today’s present membership and existence.

“We are observing 100 years of our heritage,” said Pastor Ron Hanson, of First Lutheran Church, 258 North Third Street. “The congregation here,” he continued, “was established in 1945, so we’re really not that old, but our ethnic roots go back to the Norwegian church, formed in 1889, and the Swedish church, formed two years later, in 1891, these two congregations were neighbors, only a block apart, for over 50 years.”

Last Sunday as part of this celebration, the worship service included a liturgical dance company from St. Olaf College, directed by Susan Bauer. The group, in great demand in the Midwest, composed of 12 women, also lead a lecture demonstration on the history of dance in the church between services.

Music has always been an integral part of the heritage of these two merged churches. Chris Willa, a charter member of the Norwegian church and a well-known violin player whose daughter Helma played the piano, offered his home for services before the church was built.

Many times during the summer months, the Willas opened their doors for concerts. And, Leonard Seielstad, a descendant of another charter member, remembers going to Sunday School in a building on North 4th Street that had formerly been a dance hall, and was used by the Ladies Aid for their famous chicken suppers. That building, Normana Hall, was eventually given to the VFW, and later moved to its present location west of town. It is now the Alano Club.

Marion Olson’s mother was an organist in the church and she recollects that there were special collections four times each year for the organist and the janitor. Originally, collections were forbidden during worship service because some of the families might have been mortified by their inability to contribute.

Helen Carlson, speaking for the Swedish descendants, who changed their church’s name to “English Lutheran” when it was agreed that the English language should now be spoken, recalls a student pastor, Reuben K. Youngdahl, who preached his first Christmas sermon here, and later became pastor of the largest Lutheran Church in America, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, in Minneapolis.

Carlson said, “The majority of the Swedish members came from one place, Gräsmark, Sweden. They brought with them, of course, the Smorgasbord, which has become an annual tradition.” Helen said, “I’ll always remember Vivian Johnson’s mother’s ‘potatis kory.’ ”

Marion Bergseng’s father Ole, was in charge of cooking the lutefisk, and she remembers that the men put it on, and they even cleaned up the kitchen afterwards. At that time, there was a heavy trap door in the kitchen floor that had to be tugged open in order to get at the water.

Erma Larson had to get the fire going before she could teach her Sunday School class. She said, "By the time we were ready to go home, it was warm."

The language question was a difficult idea to come to terms with for some of the earlier members, since they wanted to preserve their ethnicity. For a time, both languages were used, but on alternate Sundays. Some parents also wanted their offspring baptized and confirmed in Norwegian, and at least one funeral was conducted by two ministers, one for Norwegians and the other in English. At the same time, many of the children were forbidden by their parents to speak Norwegian in public because they considered themselves Americans.

"I used to look forward to a couple of guys that always bid against each other at the church auction," said Doug Krumm. "This habit, of course, raised a lot more money for the church, while their good-natured rivalry amused those within hearing distance."

Bob Erickson said that in the fall of 1966 when Pastor Anderson was leaving, Pastor Fred Ohlrogge came as an associate to fill in. After the service, Pastor Anderson said, "Fred, I think you said something you shouldn't have." Then he went on to explain, "you said something about sweeping all the crumbs under the table, and we have a lot of Krumms in this church." "And, the following Sunday," added Doug Krumm, "Pastor Ohlrogge began his sermon with something like, 'I think you've got a real 'Krummy' church here.'" Doug says some folks are still laughing about this incident and remind him every time he runs into them.

Curt Anderson, who joined the congregation in 1951 said, about the final building program, "Much of the work was done by volunteers...all the finishing of the woodwork, the sealing, varnishing, and the painting, and basement work."

The work ethic, so firmly ingrained in the people of this part of the country, is illustrated by the following true story: During Rev. Okland's stay here, one of the women of the church noticed the basement lights were on as she passed the building one evening. She peeked in the window and saw a group of men playing shuffleboard. Indignant over this, the frugal woman marched to the church the following morning to complain about the "lazy men" who, in her opinion, should have been working instead of wasting electricity playing a game. Rev. Okland, it is said, wasted no time or patience informing her that the men had worked hard all evening and deserved to play shuffleboard if they so desired."

TAKEN FROM THE FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH ALBUM DIRECTORY 1967

"The First Lutheran Congregation was formed in June, 1945 as the result of the union of two neighboring churches, namely, the Norwegian Lutheran, a member of the E.L.C., and the English Lutheran, a member of the Augustana Synod. At the Annual Meeting January 2, 1946, a vote was cast to name our church First Lutheran. By February, 1946, legal proceedings had been completed so that the property of both churches was transferred to the First Lutheran Congregation. The new congregation was affiliated with the E.L.C.

The newly formed First Lutheran Congregation owned a Parish Hall adjacent to the building. We had no parsonage at this time as this would be our first call for a resident Pastor. When this became a necessity there were some thoughts of converting the Parish Hall into a parsonage. At this particular time one of our members decided to make a change and we were given the first opportunity to secure the property at 212 East Third Street. This seemed to be an ideal location for a parsonage because it was close to the public school and also the business district

of New Richmond. After securing this property there was much remodeling to be done. With much enthusiasm and goodwill many of our members cooperated in assisting with this work.

Rev. E. N. Okland, who had been serving as a navy chaplain, accepted the Call to serve First Lutheran. It was a happy occasion to welcome Pastor Okland, his wife Lorene, and their children LaVonne and Steve into our midst. His ministry began on October 1, 1946 and at that time First Lutheran consisted of approximately 200 parishioners. Under the guidance and direction of Pastor Okland we saw the completion of our new church building which was dedicated on February 13, 1955. In March of 1955, our Pastor and Mrs. Okland and their children left for Park Forest, Illinois where he accepted a Call to serve a newly formed congregation.

“A 1950’s Church Basement Event”



We were again faced with the task of finding a Pastor to serve our congregation. We felt confident that our Call Committee would secure a capable, dedicated man who could minister to our needs. This was realized when Pastor J. M. Donhowe accepted this Call and came to New Richmond with his wife Audrey and their three children, John, Eric, and Maren. Pastor Donhowe was installed on July 10, 1955. Under his leadership our church grew spiritually and numerically. Sunday School enrollment increased by approximately 50% and this brought about the need for more Sunday School rooms. In 1957 the Parish House adjacent to the church was converted for use as classrooms. A Sunday School building fund was initiated because we anticipated the need for more room for future needs. During these years our mission work also reached a higher level. It was in 1957 that the new organ was installed which added much to the beauty and reverence of our worship services. It became evident at this time that our pastor needed assistance and it was decided that we should have a student from the Seminary. During 1959-1960, Mr. Paul Jensen served his intern year at First Lutheran. In the spring of 1959 Pastor and Mrs. V. O. Aaker moved to our community. Pastor Aaker was retired but he was graciously consented to assist with visitation in our congregation. He was ably assisted in this capacity from May, 1959 until November 1959, when he was accidentally killed in a car-train collision. Shortly after that his wife left our community and went to live with a daughter and her family. In 1960, after having served at First Lutheran for five years, Pastor Donhowe accepted a call to serve a congregation in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

We again put our trust and confidence in a Call Committee to secure a Pastor. We were fortunate in having Rev. J. D. Anderson of Belgrade, Minnesota accept our call. In August of 1960,

Pastor Anderson and his wife Wanda and four children, Mark, Cheryl, Carol, and Kim, come to New Richmond. With the opening of Sunday School classes in the fall of 1960, it was apparent that we must take action concerning the proposed Sunday School addition. During the winter months there was considerable volunteer help to complete the interior. On August 26, 1962 the Parish Education Building was dedicated. In August 1965, we decide to enlarge our ministry so an Assistant Pastor was called to serve in this capacity. Pastor Fred Ohlrogge accepted this call and he and his wife Dee joined our fellowship in August. The two pastors worked in different areas in the ministry of First Lutheran, each having specific responsibilities. In August, 1966 Pastor Anderson accepted a call to serve a congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Pastor Ohlrogge continued to serve First Lutheran while we were in the process of calling a Senior Pastor. In March, 1967 Pastor Ohlrogge accepted a call to serve as Associate Pastor at St. John's at Marion, Wisconsin.

Our district president, Dr. Theodore Ohlrogge, assisted us in securing our present Pastor, Eugene Wekander. In March, 1967 Reverend Wekander and his wife Joan and six children, Linda, Mark, Faith, Kristi, Barbara, and Pam, joined our First Lutheran family. Pastor Wekander's deep concern for our spiritual welfare had been expressed in many ways, some of which are the development of an Adult Bible Program and the expansion of our Youth Program. It is again apparent that our Sunday School program has outgrown our present facilities. A Building Committee has been formed and they are hard at work making plans for an addition to our present educational building. In the meantime, we are holding classes for one department of our Sunday School on Saturday to accommodate all of our young people. We have also purchased the property directly north of our church which will someday be converted into a parking lot for our congregation.

First Lutheran has been a member of the American Lutheran Church since the merger of 1960.”

“Marilyn Reppe and son Peter”



Ac 2:41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church – about three thousand in all.

The following is taken from a church document which I believe was developed for the purpose of providing literature about the church to new or potential members:

WELCOME TO FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

“Welcome to First Lutheran Church, a congregation the result of a merger of the English Lutheran Church affiliated with the Augustana Lutheran Synod, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Synod. The members differed only in the national background of the founders, one of Swedish heritage and the other Norwegian. For over 50 years the two church buildings had been located only a block apart. After the merger, on March 1945, the new congregation became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. At the time of the merger Pastor C. W. Holte, with the help of Loren Spalding, served the congregation, until Pastor E. N. Okland arrived 1946. A parsonage located at 212 E. 3rd St. was acquired, extensively remodeled, and redecorated.

During Pastor Okland's ministry the building program went forward. In 1946 Unit I, the present basement dining room and kitchen, was constructed. In 1952 Unit II, comprising of the overflow area and adjacent Sunday School room, was completed. In 1955, the completed church Sanctuary with Units I and II was dedicated. The Parish House, located where the Education Unit is now, was converted for use as classrooms, and in 1957 a new organ was installed. Pastor Okland left in March, 1955, and Pastor Donhowe was installed in July, 1955. Under his leadership our church grew numerically with Sunday School enrollment increasing by approximately 50%, which produced a need for more Sunday School rooms.

Samih Awad Ismir was sponsored by the Ladies Aid in 1958 when he served as intern. He was ordained at First Lutheran in 1959. During 1959-60, Intern Paul Jensen assisted in the ministry and our church became affiliated with the American Lutheran Church in 1960.

“Samih Awad Ismir Greets Fay and Ann Reppe”



Following Pastor Donhowe's resignation in 1960, James D. Anderson became our pastor and served until August 1966. During his ministry the first floor of the Parish Education Unit was completed and dedicated on August 26, 1962. In 1965, Fred Ohlrogge accepted our call to serve as Associate Pastor. He was here until the summer of 1967.

Our present Pastor, Eugene Wekander and his family arrived in March, 1967, and his deep concern for our spiritual welfare has been expressed in many ways, some of which are the development of an adult Bible program and the expansion of our youth program. Plans were formulated for our present education unit. Two more floors were added, and the completed area included a connection area serving as a main entrance, classrooms, offices, lounges, nursery, and rest rooms and were dedicated in 1970. Interns serving under Reverend Wekander were Sue Carlross, Dan Wilfrid, and Mark Sabin.

In 1972 the parsonage on E. 3rd St. was sold and Reverend Wekander and his family moved to the newly constructed parsonage in the Southview Addition. In 1978 Associate Vern Weeks came to assist in the ministerial duties. A second parsonage on South Dakota Avenue was purchased and later sold when Pastor Weeks resigned in 1982. Also in 1982, a 3-manual, 4-division, 23-rank pipe organ was installed by the Vaughn Organ Co. of Holdrege, Nebraska.

Laurie Hanson served as a Parish Worker from March, 1983 to May, 1984, and in the fall of 1984, Pastor David Saetre joined the staff as Assistant Pastor.

One money-making project each year is the Smorgasbord held in November, with most of the proceeds going to benevolence. The sewing group produces approximately 150 quilts a year for Lutheran World Relief. Our benevolence giving in 1984 was \$66,420.00 and included the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Social Service, the local benevolence for the St. Croix Chaplaincy Program, World Hunger Fund, 50 More In "84", Luther Point, and Support for Stacy Roettger.

Our church has been richly blessed, and under dedicated Pastors, membership has grown from 200 at the time of the merger to 1,796 baptized and 1,289 confirmed as of January, 1985. Our present Sunday School membership is 338 with another 45 in the Search Adult Bible Study."

"Herb Hanson and Robert Holliday"



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCHES BELL BY BRAD NASSET, NOVEMBER 1999

“**M**ost churches have a special place in their memories for their bells. This is what I have found about our bell:

There is one bell in the First Lutheran bell tower. Cast into the bell reads: Meneely & Co. West Troy, NY 1892. This date is the date the bell was cast.

The Meneely bell foundry was started in 1826 by Andrew Meneely in West Troy (now called Watervliet), New York. Meneely was an apprentice to Julius Hanks who had the nation's first bell foundry in 1808 in West Troy. A second Meneely bell foundry was formed in 1870 in Troy, New York.

Meneely bells rang for Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy's funeral and also for Lyndon Johnson's presidential inauguration. The replacement to the cracked Liberty Bell in Philadelphia is a Meneely bell. The bells at the Cornell University bell tower and the West Point Military Academy are also Meneely bells.

The Meneely foundry closed in 1952 due to metal shortages and the increased popularity of electronic bells and chimes.

The bell rings at First Lutheran in an unusual manner. For a visual image, the bell is about three feet across and about three feet high. It rests in its pivot-ringer cradle but does not move. It has a spot for a big wheel that a rope would go around to ring it but the mounting bracket was somehow damaged and broken off. When the bell rings, the bell never moves. It stays still and a mechanical system of a motor, gearbox and hammer mechanism pound on the side of the stationary bell. There are two "hammers" that look like, and are about the same size as someone's arm with a fist made. The "fists" are metal hammer heads that look like a small soup can. When the motor is started, a wheel turns and cocks the arm like a cowboy pulls back the hammer on his gun in an old west movie. When it releases, the hammer arm releases and strikes the bell. As it is hitting the bell, the hammer arm squashes a small spring, about the size of a person's thumb, that is just big enough to lift the arm back off the bell so the bell can ring freely without having the hammer head resting on the surface of the bell when it is ringing. There are two hammers. While one is working, the other is being cocked to be ready for the next strike. When the wall switch is turned on, the motor never stops. It just keeps cocking one after the other. If the pulley on the gearbox were a different size, the bell would ring either faster or slower. Whoever designed this mechanical fascination decided on the tempo of the ringing of the bell.”

This bell we have came out of the Norwegian Lutheran Church and rings today as it did when it was ringing to signify the start and beginning for the Norwegian church services years ago.

SMORGASBORD

(adapted from an article by Pete Nowacki from the October 30, 1987 *Stillwater Gazette*)

“The smorgasbord was first celebrated by members of Swedish heritage of the old English Lutheran Church. Originally, the feast was celebrated on the traditional Swedish Midsummer Day, June 24. In 1945, the church merged with the Norwegian Lutheran Church to form First Lutheran Church. The smorgasbord has lived on as an annual event, with the change to the present November date after the merger.

Planning and preparation are the keys to making the smorgasbord a success each year, according to Annis Fredrickson, chairwoman of the Smorgasbord Committee for the past 20-plus years. Literally hundreds of church members are involved.

The planning process begins in August. Usually three or four meetings are held to decide who is responsible for which dishes. Volunteers must be recruited to set up and decorate the dining area, and to serve guests the day of the feast. A variety of linens, hangings, candelabra and figurines of Scandinavian heritage are used to attain the desired atmosphere. Despite good organization and plenty of hard work, there are always little headaches to overcome. Ann Elkin, a member of the Smorgasbord Committee, says, “Every year we feel something will manage to go wrong, that we don’t have enough of this or too much of that.” She smiles and adds, “Of course, when the day arrives, everything goes off without a hitch.”

Workers begin to arrive early on smorgasbord day. Last minute preparations assure everything will be perfect, and it’s time to begin brewing the gallons of coffee to be consumed throughout the day. Many of these workers will remain long into the night, as cleanup can take until as late as midnight.

“Nancy Swiggum, Lona Christensen, Pearl Emerson, Edna Nesvold, Ann Elkin”



Over 1,000 guests have attended the smorgasbord in each of the past few years. Many diners journey from the Twin Cities area, and some return each year from as far away as Duluth and Superior. Since this is the one event each year that involves nearly the entire congregation, there is a tremendous feeling of closeness and tradition being passed on. Recipes and cooking techniques

are handed down between generations of church members. Native costumes and décor provide a feeling for the past.

For New Richmond and the surrounding area, there is an opportunity to meet a few new friends, to indulge, to enjoy, and to let the whole community become a little bit Scandinavian for the day.

Cookbooks containing some of the smorgasbord recipes are available in the church office.”

STAINED GLASS WINDOW PROJECT COMPLETED AT
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
(NR NEWS, APPROXIMATELY 1969)

“Members of the First Lutheran Church are admiring the 25 new stained glass windows on the church with placement of the last window being completed just before Christmas. The windows were manufactured and installed by Reinhart Art Glass, Winona, MN.

The windows serve as a constant reminder of the gospel in picture form and serve as a reminder during the church services of the important events in Christian history. The brilliant colors of the glass panels are highlighted by the sunlight.

Each window, costing \$100, was purchased from gifts and memorials provided by parishioners of the church. Some of the gifts were from individuals while others were made possible by contributions of from \$1 to \$20.



The windows depict the history of the gospel from the creation through the Pentecost on the east wall. Rev. Fred Ohlogge explained each window, beginning from the north going south on the east wall.

The first frame is the picture of the creation of the sun, moon, planets and the stars flowing off the open hand of God.

The fall of man is shown in the second frame with a serpent entwined on a tree in a garden.

The flood scene is depicted with the ark in a brilliant blue sea, covered by a beautiful rainbow.

The creation of the Holy Bible is shown with the Bible shown laying up on a brown cross and surrounded by olive leaves.

The fifth frame from the north shows two angels facing each other when kneeling on an altar which is the altar carried around the Holy Land for the preachings of Jesus Christ.

The beginning of the New Testament is shown in the sixth frame with the birth of Jesus Christ shown with a cradle covered

with straw and the symbol of Christ which is called the Chi Ro, topped by the Eastern star.

The flight to Egypt is symbolized with palms and pyramids and the letter J and M, Joseph and Mary with the Chi Rio in the center.

The next window is the choosing of the 12 disciples with the Chi Rio symbol.

The wedding at Cana is shown with the two rings of marriage and five wine vessels with a blue water scene as when water was changed to wine.

The feeding of the multitudes which had followed Jesus Christ for three days without food or water is depicted in a scene of fish and bread in the cup.

The 11th frame shows the Gethsemane in the form of a cross coming from a cup symbolizing the cup of suffering before the trials of His life, as a premonition of His impending death.

The Crucifixion is symbolized by three crosses on a hill with a bright red thunderbolt striking over the cross bearing Jesus Christ.

The 13th frame from the front on the east wall symbolizes the rise from the tomb with a cross coming out of a bowl with the lid slipped off in the resurrection from the grave. Flying from the cross is the Christian banner with the Eastern sun in the background.

Ascension depicted by a chariot wheel and tongues of flame that promise the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The last window on the east wall to the rear of the chapel shows the tongues of flame indicating the Pentecost and the arrival of the Holy Spirit.

The frames from the north to the south on the west wall begin with a picture of the hand of God coming from a cloud to create the world.

The lamb in the next window represents God the Son with the Christian banner.

A dove descending from above represents the symbol of God the Holy Ghost.

The baptismal is symbolized with the dove of the Holy Ghost, the sea shell and water symbolizing the baptismal rites.

A cup with stalks of wheat and clusters of grapes depicts the Lord's Supper.

The disciple Matthew is symbolized by the praying angel.

Mark is symbolized by a winged lion.

The third from the last window shows a crown of thorns with the letters INRI in the middle, these are the Greek letters meaning Jesus Christ, King of the Jews.

Luke is shown as the winged calf.

John is symbolized by an eagle.

The entire project was completed after a year of work by the congregation which began in December of 1965. A dedication ceremony will be held during the first month of the new year.”

CHURCH HISTORY, FALL OF 1978 – 1986
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH 40TH ANNIVERSARY BULLETIN

“Pastor Vern Weeks joined First Lutheran as an Associate Pastor in the fall of 1978.

A pipe organ was installed at First Lutheran and dedicated on September 12, 1982. It was built by the Vaughan Co. of Holdrege, NE, at a cost to the church of \$49,870. Handbells were purchased in 1983 and have become a pleasant addition to our worship services.

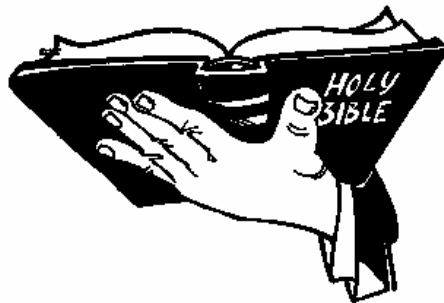
Pastor Weeks resigned as associate pastor at First Lutheran in December, 1982. Laurie Hanson was called as Parish Associate and served from March 1983, to April 30, 1984.

Pastor Dave Saetre was installed on September 16, 1984, on a temporary, part-time call. He also served as interim pastor following Reverend Wekander’s retirement on August 4, 1985.

Pastor Ron Hanson was installed as Senior Pastor on December 15, 1985. Pastor Saetre was called and installed as Associate Pastor on April 23, 1986.

The membership of First Lutheran on January 1, 1986 was 1,736 baptized members and 1,244 confirmed members. Our benevolence budget is \$66,430, and we support the programs of the ALC, Lutheran Social Services, the local Health Care Center Chaplaincy, Luther Point Bible Camp, the Hunger Fund, the World Mission Prayer League missionary, Stacy Roettger (a member of First Lutheran now serving as a nurse missionary in Bangladesh).

First Lutheran continues to hold the Smorgasbord each year on the first Wednesday in November. At this time, we celebrate our Scandinavian heritage and share fellowship with the New Richmond community. Proceeds go to benevolence and selected projects of the First Lutheran Church Women.”



Ac 9:31 The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it grew in strength and numbers. The believers were walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

REVEREND WEKANDER'S YEARS

Numerous pastor's have served First Lutheran since it's conception in 1945. One though has served longer than any of the others and that is Reverend Eugene Wekander. Reverend Wekander came here in March of 1967 and retired on August 4, 1985. He became a steady pillar of our church during those eighteen years. Many of us think of Reverend Wekander at just the mention of First Lutheran. His contributions made over the years have become an important part of our history.



The Anniversary Committee asked Reverend Wekander what he felt were some of his more important accomplishments during his years at First Lutheran. He also made mention of some of the members he recalled that so faithfully served, although he admitted that he could not write them all down. Here are some of his comments in paraphrased form.

Some of the members he recalls and how they served First Lutheran are as follows:

- † Bernice Albrightson – Church Women, Adult Education (Bethel Teacher)
- † Dennis Alfveby – Organist, choir director
- † Curt and Elaine Anderson – Leadership
- † Chuck and Esther Carow – Custodians and Chuck's ushering
- † Henry Cotton – Adult Education, Treasurer
- † Ann Elkin – Church Women, kitchen work and serving
- † Bob and Nila Erickson – Adult Education, leadership, Nila (Treasurer)
- † Annis Fredrickson – Sunday School, Church Women, Smorgasbord
- † Hilma Johnson – Bible student, smorgasbord
- † Bev Krumm – Church Women, kitchen work and serving, Treasurer
- † Severina Lundell – Altar care, and "let me know if I can help"
- † Swede Lundell – Ushering, veiling cross
- † Lu Nelson – Choir, Church Women
- † Art Peterson – Leadership, choir
- † Fay Reppe – Church Women, kitchen work and serving
- † Fern Slaughter – Choir Director
- † Numerous others who were my friends and encouraged me

Some of the events and programs he remembers as being important changes during his tenure are as follows:

- † Bethel Series - adult education

- † Stephen Series – special training to teach others to be helpful and supportive
- † Completion of the Education Unit – all the volunteers that made it possible
- † Pipe Organ – a gift from the John Mickelson estate was the driving force
- † Chaplaincy Program at the Health Center and Maple Manor
- † Providing rides from the Health Center to church services
- † Clothing Center started
- † Ordination of David Steffenson
- † Commissioning of Stacey Roettger as a missionary to Bangladesh

“Reverend Wekander confers with confirmation students”



CHURCH MERGER CELEBRATED JANUARY 6
(DECEMBER 31, 1987)
NR NEWS

“A special worship celebration will be held at First Lutheran Church in New Richmond on Wednesday, January 6 at 7 P. M. , to mark the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

On January 1, several area Lutheran congregations will unite with over 11,000 Lutheran churches across the United States to become part of the 5.3 million member ELCA.

Clergy and lay members of First Lutheran, Bethany Lutheran of Star Prairie, Christ Lutheran of Somerset, and Redeemer Lutheran of Burkhardt, will unite in a joint sponsored festival service.

The guest preacher for the service will be Rev. Gary Knutson, who is the newly elected Bishop of the West Central Synod of the ELCA. Special music to highlight the birth of the ELCA will include a combined choir and the First Lutheran Bell Choir.

“This is an exciting time for our congregations,” Pastor Al Kelsy of Bethany Lutheran said, “and we are looking forward to exciting new possibilities.”

The ELCA is a result of a merger between the 110,000 member Association of Evangelical Churches, the 2.3 million member American Lutheran Church, and the 2.9 million member Lutheran Church of America.

The Service of Celebration on January 6 provides an opportunity for all members of the families to gather together in worship.

“Our coming together should not be seen as a time of excluding anyone, but as a time of inclusiveness,” Pastor Ron Hanson of First Lutheran said. “That’s what God’s church is all about.”

SUMMARIES OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCHES ANNUAL REPORTS

Nila Erickson donated to the church all of her annual reports going back to 1947. From these annual reports a number of us on the Anniversary Committee read through them extracting interesting parts of our history and reference point trivia. One can see how we have grown and times have changed since the earlier days fifty-five years ago.

1947:

- † The first annual report is published.
- † Church Council consists of: Matt Lyngaas President, Fred Sontag Vice President, Robert Hertenberg Treasurer, Harold Dahlin Corresponding Secretary, Chris Karlstrud Financial Secretary, Reverend E. N. Okland, Pastor.
- † Church service is but one, at 11:00 AM.
- † A photo is included showing the interior of Unit 1, which we now call the church basement. Services were held here on the west side of the basement with wooden chairs for seating. A shuffle board court was on the southern side.
- † Financial report: Pastor’s salary \$1,800, janitor’s salary \$121. Sunday offerings for the year totaled \$4020.29.
- † Iver Holm and Ole Bergseng retire from the Church Council after many years of devoted service.
- † There were but four services of communion held for the year.
- † Sunday school teachers: Mrs. Claude Pearson, Dolores Baum, Betty Anderson, Wanda Slipka, Yvette Larson, Marjorie Krumm, Marion Bergseng, Carmen Wilkus, Mary Asp, Mrs. H. G. Hanson, Mrs. E. N. Okland, Fred Sontag, Mrs. Harry Anderson.

1948:

- † The telephone number of the church was, 640.
- † Pastor Okland says in the Pastor’s Message in the annual report: “In retrospect, one views the past year with mingled feelings. To say that there have been no disappointments would be untrue; to say that cooperation in every field of endeavor has been 100% would likewise be false.” He then goes on to show appreciation to those that have served and ends by saying, “These people form the nucleus of a growing congregation and without such willing and sacrificial efforts there would be no progress but the prayers and helpfulness of all our people are needed.”
- † There were five members of the church that contributed more than \$100 to the church in 1948. The largest contributor was \$500.
- † On the treasurer’s annual financial report the single largest expense, besides the pastor’s salary, was for coal, \$361.73. The Ladies Aid took in \$3,104.55 through various means.

- † Ladies Aid officials: Mrs. Adlore Lindberg, President; Mrs. L. W. Brown, Vice-President; Mrs. Severin Olson, Secretary; Mrs. Ray Wentzel, Treasurer.
- † The annual report was mailed to members for 2 cents postage.

Eph 4:12 Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

1949:

- † The Mission Circle officials: Mrs. John Paulson, President; Mrs. Elert Anderson, Vice President; Mrs. Hugo Melius, Secretary; Mrs. Gerald Peterson, Treasurer.
- † In the Pastor’s message Reverend Okland says, “ Much more can be said in appreciation to the many fine people of First Lutheran, all the way from the young girl who is giving one tenth of her baby-sitting earnings to her Lord to the elderly lady who is just waiting for the day the New Church will be built.”
- † Church services are now held at 9:00 and 10:00. Sunday School and Bible Class are held at 9:00.
- † Meeting times: L.D.R. (Lutheran Daughters of the Reformation) meet every Saturday at 10:15 am. Parent/Teachers meeting held every third Thursday of each month. Lutheran Brotherhood or Men’s Club meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.
- † Eight communion services were held, 31 baptisms, 7 marriages and 8 funerals were performed.

1950:

- † No annual report available.

1951:

- † Senior Luther League officials: Ronnie Stromen, President; Sonya Albrightson, Vice President; Marlys Lindberg, Recording Secretary; Diane Kahl, Correspondence Secretary; Bernard Odalen, Treasurer.
- † Ladies Aid was broken into five Circles so that more than fifty women could now participate. A Junior Luther League was formed. Sunday School attendance has grown so much that crowding has been experienced.
- † The church janitor, Otto Peterson had to resign due to health reasons. John Smith has assumed his duties.
- † Pastor Okland had surgery this year and the congregation donated money to pay for his hospital bill.
- † Every Member Building Fund drive started in April. The house east of the church is purchased, new steam-heating plant installed, and an architect is secured for design of the church.
- † Young members of the church are being sent to the war in Korea.
- † 15,000 worshippers are recorded for the year.

Eph 4:15 Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

1952:

- † Unit 2 of the church is now complete. Much of the labor required was donated by members. One more Unit to construct.
- † Mr. and Mrs. Robert Erickson are keeping in touch with the servicemen serving our nation. They send the newsletter, the Fortress, and other church correspondence regularly to the men.
- † Disbursements for the year: Telephone, \$59.31; postage, \$65.25; insurance, \$214.11; clerical help, \$10.00. Income of \$7374.56 from the General Offering.
- † Membership: confirmed, 517; children, 238. Total: 755
- † The treasurers for the five Circles are: Margaret S. Lindell, Mrs. Roy Olson, Mrs. Leona Asp, Mrs. Elert Anderson, and Mrs. John Smith

1953:

- † Pastor Okland states that 1953 was an outstanding year in the history of First Lutheran. Church attendance is growing rapidly in the worship service, Sunday School attendance, and the Bible Study Class. Pastor Okland encourages the congregation to go ahead and build Unit 3.
- † Pledges for the year amount to \$16,389.
- † Summary of Pastoral activities: services conducted, 125; funerals, 13; classes taught, 106; meetings held, 234; talks or sermons outside the parish, 15; calls made to outside and sick members, 915. Total appointments: 1408.
- † The annual report is made possible by the following: Paul Albrightson, L.H. Beebe, Dr. L. W. Brown, Klayt Evans, Lyle Kellaheer, R. H. Krueger, Lindberg Brothers, Dr. A. L. Lindell, Bernard Olson, Claude Pearson, Pederson and Son, Henry Shern, and Red Strand.
- † A memorial fund is in place and the monies donated in memories of deceased loved ones is used to buy various items needed for the church. Some of the items purchased were: pictures, a brass plate, 9 folding chairs, 8 hymnaries, 1 aluminum tray, 24 glasses and 6 Sunday School teachers desks.

1954:

- † Pastor Okland states in the Pastor's Message in the Annual Report: "Some over eight years ago we had only 31 in Sunday School and 200 souls as members of the church. Now there are about 374 enrolled in Sunday School and 861 souls on our church rolls. On December 19, 1954 we joyfully entered into the new Sanctuary and what we saw and felt and heard was good."
- † Further into the Pastor's message he states, "Tonight, sort of on the eve of our departure, we thank God for having had the privilege of being fellow laborers with you in the Kingdom work here in New Richmond. It has been extremely difficult to decide upon leaving for a new field of endeavor. The foundation for a bigger and better First Lutheran has been laid."
- † A special thanks was given to Severina Lundell who each Saturday comes over to the church to faithfully fold the Sunday bulletins.
- † The L. D. R. group collects \$1.71 in Rap-in-Wax coupons. The Senior Luther League purchased a table tennis set for \$5.00. The Sunday School program spent \$16.50 at Walt's Dairy Bar and \$20.00 at the North Side Grocery. The Ladies Aid made \$148.05 at the Rummage Sale and \$766.76 at the Fall Bazaar.

Eph 5:29 No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, just as Christ cares for his body, which is the church.

1955:

- † Matt Lyngaas, after having served twelve years as the church president, has requested that he not be considered for another term.
- † Pastor Donhowe is the new pastor replacing Reverend Okland. For a period of four and one half months the church was without a pastor. Pastor Donhowe was installed on July 10.
- † The sanctuary is dedicated on February 13, 1955.
- † Improvements planned for 1955 are: a new asphalt tile floor for Unit 1, new kitchen equipment, improved parking, curb and gutter on the north and west side of the church and a new pipe organ is being planned for.
- † Members of the building committee for the sanctuary were: Chairmans, Albert Rustin and Lewis Olson; members of committee, Grant Westrom, Art Elkin, Alfred Asp, John Paulson, Melvin Mickelson, and Ted Carlson. Others serving in various support roles were: Paul Albrightson, Claude Pearson, Ray Wentzel, Mrs. Matt Lyngaas, Mrs. A. L. Lindell, Mrs. Lu Nelson, Reverend E. N. Okland, Matt Lyngaas, Paul Albrightson, Bernard Olson, Marion Olson, Mrs. S. B. Slaughter, Mrs. Fred Sontag, John Smith, Bob Hertenberg, Chris Karlstrud, Fred Sontag, Bill Kemling, and Harold Dahlin.

1956:

- † The church organizes a Cub Scout Pack with 61 young boys registered.
- † Double payments are being made on the mortgage.
- † The Ladies Aid is very active with ten Interest Circles now organized. In their financial statement they reported income of \$19.00 for vanilla sales and \$7.26 for the reimbursement from one turkey.
- † The Sunday School staff is: Mrs. Fred Sontag, Superintendent; Mrs. Ernie Amundson, Secretary-Treasurer; Assistants to the Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Marlene Krumm and Mrs. Beulah Frain.
- † Projects for the Senior L. D. R. group were: Mother-Daughter banquet, every member parties, traveling Friendship Food Basket, sold dusters, cards and dish cloths, supported the nursery, helped with smorgasbord, and gave Christmas gifts to patients at the County Home.

1957:

- † Church officers for 1957: Fred Sontag, President; C. A. Groth, Vice President; Don Reppe, Recording Secretary; Paul Albrightson, Financial Secretary; Ray Wentzel, Treasurer; Kenneth Wettig, Benevolence Treasurer; and Claude Pearson, Special Gifts Treasurer.
- † The church is sponsoring Samih Ismir as an intern in Bethlehem, Jordan.
- † Baptized members, 999. The church membership continues to grow.
- † The Ladies Aid Circles, all with a specific focus, are: Cradle Roll Circle, Mother's Circle, Foreign Mission I Circle, Foreign Mission II Circle, Home Mission Circle, Sunshine Circle, Christian Education Circle, Christian Nurture Circle, Reading Circle and Sewing Circle.

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.

1958:

- † Weekly contributions amounted to \$21,585.62. The Colfax Disaster Fund collected \$400.00.

- † The Sunday School program had four special services held: Rally Day, Christmas Program, Good Friday service and Perfect Attendance Sunday.
- † Building projects completed for the year are: painted all trim in the church, organ platform was built, speaker screen for the organ installed. The Parish House was converted over to function as an overflow area for Sunday School classes. Special thanks is given to Severina Lundell, and Myrtle and Jerry Kittel for all the fine work they have done in the church and the church house.
- † Intermediate Sunday School teachers are: Mrs. William Simon, Mrs. Ray Fredrickson, Mrs. Wayne Cole, Jalmer Johnson, Mrs. S. B. Slaughter, Mrs. Lloyd Nygaard, George Berkholder, Jack Nelson and Fred Sontag.
- † Various projects completed by various Circles were: traveling friendship baskets, selling vanilla, letters and materials mailed out to families who recently had babies baptized providing them with materials to help them raise their child in the Christian faith, provided prayer books and Bibles to young men joining the armed services, made bedroom slippers, handkerchiefs, pot holders and aprons, and provided gifts for patients at the County Home.

1959:

- † Pastor Donhowe commends the Sunday School program for it has increased its attendance by 50% in five years. More space is needed to accommodate this increase. A Sunday School Building Fund has been started.
- † Intern Paul Jensen began work in September to assist the pastor in his duties at FLC.
- † Stewardship is not keeping pace with membership growth. “We MUST increase our contribution to the National ELC level in order to maintain and improve our high standards of worship”, states the Church Council.
- † The Organ Memorial Fund is officially closed and the balance of donations is transferred to the Sunday School Building Fund.
- † The Sunday School staff consists of 340 children, three superintendents, twenty-six teachers, two organists and a finance committee of five people.
- † Various ways to serve at FLC are listed on the back page of the annual report: Confirmation classes, Junior League, Senior League, Sunday School, Sunday worship, Cherub Choir, Junior Choir, Senior Choir, Couples Club, Ladies and eleven Service Circles.

1960:

- † Church Council: Fred Sontag, President; C.A. Groth, Vice-president; Marlin Carlson, Recording Secretary; Robert Erickson, Finance Secretary; Ted Irle, Treasurer; Kenneth Wittig, Benevolence Treasurer; Claude Pearson, Special Gifts Treasurer; Pastor J.D. Anderson.
- † The Sunday School building fund was started.
- † Reading circle meets the first Monday afternoon after each Ladies Aid meeting. They spent \$124.30 for new books.
- † Confirmation meets on Saturdays. Junior class at 8:30 a. m. and senior class at 10:00.

Re 1:3 God blesses the one who reads this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to it and obey what it says. For the time is near when these things will happen.

1961:

- † October 8th, 1961 groundbreaking service was held for the new Sunday school annex. Received a loan from Lutheran Brotherhood in the amount of \$9741 for Sunday School building fund.
- † Senior League raised money by car washes, pie sales, lunches after Lenten services and a lemonade stand during the corn festival, proceeds were used to send delegates to the National Luther League Convention in Miami.
- † Sunshine Circle made candies and cookies for the shut-ins. Donated \$200 to the Sunday School Furnishing Fund and \$105 to the Master Aid.
- † Promotion Circle, served the Clark-Krumm wedding reception, the Senior Banquet and the reception for new members. Contributed \$100 toward the new stove and \$75.00 to Senior League for their trip to Florida.
- † Christian Nurture Circle served the Confirmation Banquet for confirmands and their parents, also was the calling committee for the junior choir. Donated to the Homme Home for Boys.
- † World Mission Circle had two successful rummage sales, held bake sale at Lindy's Store, the proceeds went to the Senior League for their Miami trip, \$50 to Foreign Missions and \$244 to the Building Fund.
- † American Mission Circle - We open our meetings with a song, then the Bible study, close with the Table Prayer. To raise money we served the Father-Son Banquet, coffee at the Gamble Store, sold dish cloths, bake sale at Lindy's and passed a birthday apron around to each member. Donations during the year were \$75 Luther League to Miami, \$150 to the Sunday School Furnishing Fund, \$50 radio broadcast service, \$10 for the Retarded Children's School at Hammond, \$25 to L.E.A.F.. We also donated a rocking chair to the Opportunity Room in New Richmond.

1962:

- † Sunday School Building Fund: Receipts from envelopes contributions - \$5733, Furnishings Fund \$398, loan from Lutheran Brotherhood \$18103, refund from Central Lumber Co. \$91. Disbursements: White Construction \$15,666, Lutheran Brotherhood \$1928, Central Lumber Co. \$1489 N.R. Plumbing and Heating \$1,238, Wm. Peirson \$719, Kenneth Wettig \$8, Carroll Grubbs \$1,218, Pioneer Supply \$1,004, Murtha & Meles (sod) \$84, Beebe's \$458, Bob Soderquist \$95, Theis Appliance \$365. Total Disbursements \$24,2777.
- † Senior League had an interesting film topic this year, "Science and Religion". We went roller skating at Deronda, attended St. Olaf College annual Luther League Day.
- † Baptized Membership December 31, 1962 – 1376, Confirmed Membership December 31, 1962 - 875.

1963:

- † Pastor J.D. Anderson.
- † Disbursements: Salaries, Pastor \$5700, Supply Pastor \$112, Custodian \$1481, Organist \$466, Junior Choir Director \$220, Senior Choir Director \$100, Secretarial Assistants \$709.
- † Operations: Postage \$110, Telephone \$203, Maintenance \$277.
- † Church Women: Smorgasbord November 7, 1963 - receipts \$1609, expenses \$428, income \$1180. Fifty baptismal towels were made. Sent to New Guinea - 5 blankets, dozens of sweat shirts, t-shirts and other needed articles. Old Christmas cards were collected and sent to Japan. Buttons were collected for occupational therapy work, Fairview Hospital, Minneapolis. Six layettes were sent to Lutheran World Relief. Also, bandages from old sheets were torn and rolled for Lutheran World Relief.

1964:

- † Pastor J.D. Anderson
- † Church Officers 1964: President Paul Albrightson, Vice President C.A. Groth, Recording Secretary Marlin Carlson, Financial Secretary Robert Erickson, Treasurer Ted Irle, Benevolence Treasurer Kenneth Wittig, Special Gifts Treasurer Curtiss Anderson.
- † Committees: Evangelism and Worship - Donald Gaede, Clarence Kahl, Jack Peterson, and Dale Tuttle. Stewardship - James Elkin, Lavon Krumm, Vern Skoglund, and Ray Vold. Property and Management - John Beebe, Wayne Cole, Arthur Larson, John Mickelson, and Grant Westrom. Education - Lawrence Engesether, Albin Lenander, Stan Groth, and Clarence Ziegel.
- † Ministerial Acts: Baptisms 46, Weddings 2, Funerals 16, services at the St. Croix County Home 37.
- † Fixed Assets: Church \$213,726, Parsonage \$11,900, church fixtures \$23,147.
- † President Paul Albrightson wrote in his report of the Church Council: "1963 was a very satisfactory and harmonious year, This I'm sure can be accounted for by the spiritual guidance of Pastor Anderson. Our church is growing each year, not only in numbers, but in stewardship and it's the council's hope that in the coming year, with the endorsement of the Council, that First Lutheran will prayerfully resolve to carry out the Resident Counseling Service."
- † All Sunday School classrooms and several open areas of our church are being utilized each Sunday morning at 9:35 a. m. as approximately 350 children and young people assemble in the departments for opening devotions followed by class session.
- † Church Women officers: President Mrs. Philip Kjeseth, 1st Vice-President Mrs. William Pierson, 2nd Vice-President Mrs. Helmuth Krumm, Secretary Mrs. Adlore Lindberg, Treasurer Mrs. Robert Erickson, Secretary of Education Mrs. Art Kastens, Secretary of Stewardship Mrs. Claude Pearson.
- † Couples Club meets the third Sunday evening of the month in private homes, the purpose of this group is to help married couples of the church to know one another better. Officers are Mr. and Mrs. James Elkin and Mr. and Mrs. Vern Skoglund.
- † Family Night is held the last Sunday of the month with the exception of the summer months. The purpose is to provide fellowship among the families of the congregation. The program is informal in nature and begins at 4:00 and closes with a Sunday evening supper served by one of the circles.

Jas 3:1 Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged by God with greater strictness.

1965:

- † J.D. Anderson, Pastor, F.D. Ohlrogge, Associate Pastor, President N.C. Goebel.
- † Sunday School: 101 children in Primary Department, 109 children in Junior Department, 162 young people in Senior Department. Vacation Bible School: 300 boys and girls enrolled, 30 teachers and a student from the Seminary. Concordia materials used through grade 6, grades 7 & 8 used Augsburg material.
- † Hannah Circle: Served working men during the spring flood disaster in New Richmond. Served father and son banquet.

1966:

- † Pastor and Mrs. Anderson left to accept a call to Christ Lutheran in Minneapolis. F.D. Ohlrogge Associate Pastor, President Robert Erickson.
- † Confirmation Choir consists of members of the confirmation classes, rehearsals are held Saturday mornings. Mrs. Fred Ohlrogge director and Nancy Cole accompanist.
- † Senior Choir is the regular church choir for adult voices which sings each Sunday, usually at the 11:00 service. Rehearsals on Tuesday evenings 7:30, Mrs. Fern Slaughter director.

1967:

- † Pastor is Reverend Eugene Wekander (March 1967). Church Council President is Robert Erickson. Pastor Ohlrogge accepted a call in June to serve with his father at Marion.
- † Building committee to complete Sunday School building consists of Art Larson, Ted Irle, Curt Anderson, John Beebe and Dave Borg.
- † Long Range Planning Committee was organized to make a study of the potentials and needs of our congregation. Appointed to this committee John Helling, Dr. Craig, Alan Hove, Paul Storehalker and David Olson. On their recommendation, the Brown property, located directly north of the church, was purchased for a future parking lot. At present time the house is rented and the rear portion of the lot will be used for parking.
- † Sunday School Superintendent Mrs. Earl Miller. 411 children enrolled.
- † The Parish Education Committee has worked out policies and job descriptions for the operation of our Sunday School and Vacation Bible School.
- † Pastor Russell Jensen taught 7th grade confirmation. Pastor Eugene Wekander taught 8th grade confirmation.

1968:

- † Pastor is Reverend Eugene Wekander and Church Council President Dave Borg.
- † Worship Services Sundays at 8:30 and 11:00, except during the summer season worship which is at 8:00 and 10:00. Midweek Advent and Midweek Lenten services on Wednesdays are at 7:30.
- † 1968 is the first year of a three-year program called LIFE. LIFE stands for, Lutheran Ingathering for Education. Life is a program sponsored by the American Lutheran Church for the purpose of raising money to be used for building new and better facilities at our ALC church colleges, schools and seminaries. Members of First Lutheran contributed \$1,341 for this purpose in 1968.
- † Pastor Baker is asked to serve.
- † Bethel Series started in October. 100 members of our congregation are involved in this instruction on Wednesday evenings at 7:30. Teachers are Mrs. Paul Albrightson, Mrs. Curt Anderson, Mr. Bob Erickson, Mrs. Jerome Zuelke, Mrs. Margaret Amundson, Mr. Henry Cotton and Mr. Envor Johnson.
- † Mother & Daughter Banquet May 2, featured a style show of articles made and worn by the mothers and daughters. The dinner was served by men and boys of our congregation.
- † Father and Son Banquet September 23. The basement was decorated like a football field with football place cards, Mrs. Bob Larson was in charge.

Eph 1:22 And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and he gave him this authority for the benefit of the church.

1969:

- † Started construction of the educational wing June 20. Bonds were sold amounting to \$60,500. Much of the work was done by members of the congregation. The painting and all woodwork done by members, cost from a contractor was bid at \$5,597.
- † Architect James B. Horne, St. Paul, MN. General contractor George W. Olson Construction Co. Inc. Stillwater, MN, heating and plumbing by Boldt and Gregerson, Baldwin WI. Electrical Contractor Bill Peirson, New Richmond, WI. Building Committee Chairmen: Art Larsen & Curt Anderson. Hopes are to dedicate the new facility in February 1970.
- † Miss Shirley Schuster, office duties & parish worker.
- † Couples Club activities included seeing the Harlem Globe Trotters, floating the St. Croix on a houseboat, outing at Deer Lake, Halloween Masquerade party Christmas party and working on the new unit.
- † Music organist for congregation Mrs. Gerald Wettig. Senior Choir Director Mrs. Fern Slaughter, practices at 7:00 Thursday evenings. Confirmation Choir directed by Mrs. Jack Nelson, accompanist Mrs. David Boeddeker, practices Wednesday evenings at 6:30. Junior Choir directed by Mrs. L.W. Brown, practices each Saturday morning at 10:00. Accompanist Mrs. Emmett Langness.
- † Adult Education includes classes for membership preparation and the Bethel Program.

1970:

- † All of the Church Council members are men.
- † Baptized members is 1572, confirmed members is 1045. The membership is leveling off.
- † Budget for the year, submitted by Everett Branjord, is \$81,400 with Senior Pastor salary of \$9500 plus benefits.
- † Sunday School Superintendent is Bob Erickson. Treasurer is Mrs. Bob Erickson, Secretary is Mrs. John Peirson and Assistant Secretary is Mrs. LaVon Krumm.
- † Couples Club very active. Activities were: volleyball, Ice Capades, bowling, scavenger hunt, houseboat ride and picnic, and a Christmas party.
- † Luther League was a very active organization this past year.
- † The overall tone of Reverend Wekander's report in the annual report is that there are so many things the church should be doing but not enough time to do all of them.

1971:

- † Organist is Nancy Peterson, Senior Choir Director is Fern Slaughter, Junior Choir Director is Frona Brown.
- † Women are now on the ballot for the Church Council.
- † The worship committee discussed having two Christmas Eve services. They also discussed having a contemporary service at the first service each Sunday.
- † Total Sunday School members are 471. Sunday School committee consists of: Mrs. Alden Kruschke, Mrs. Dale Tuttle, Mrs. William Preece, Mrs. Jerry Weinkauff and Mrs. M. A. Keyes.
- † Greeters at the entrance of the church are a new concept being used.
- † Improvements made in the church the past year were: surfacing of the parking lot, new ceiling in the kitchen, painting of kitchen, dining area and the front of the church and carpeting added to the entryways.

1972:

- † Senior Choir Director is Daryl Augustine. Henry Cotton is treasurer in 1970,71, and 72.
- † In the annual report Reverend Wekander expresses a serious concern of lack of involvement by many members of the church. More involvement is needed to grow.
- † Jean Krumm and Nancy Hergert are first women to have completed one year on Church Council. Officers of the Church Council are: Curtiss Anderson, David Hallberg, and Robert Mullen.
- † First Lutheran Church women have a busy year. Activities are: attendance of various retreats, seminars and conferences, smorgasbord, gifts of money sent to St. Croix County Health Center and Northern Colony.
- † Started having pastoral assistants two days each week to help assist the Senior Pastor.

1 Co 12:7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.

1973:

- † The church is looking at the next year's activities as being status quo, much as 1973 was. No monumental undertakings or changes planned. Declining attendance is a concern.
- † There are now four women on council, Fay Reppe, Jean Krumm, Mary Bonnes and Pearl Emerson. Total council members are at eighteen members.
- † There are eight active women's circles in the church. The Social Group is an organization of women between the ages of 65-80. They serve the needs of older members. Grace Bentley is the Chairman.
- † A proposed special project for 1973 was \$9000 to carpet the church.
- † The Social Services Committee exists to serve in the following ways: showing concern for others by providing transportation for elderly folks to church, visiting shut-ins and elderly members, and participation in the Chaplaincy Program at the Health Care Center.

1974:

- † This is 25th anniversary of Reverend Wekander's ordination.
- † "Gems of Wisdom", is presented by Reverend Wekander. A small group attended but all felt blessed from the experience.
- † This was a tough year financially for the church. Mention is made of the energy crisis, inflation, and recession. There is a genuine concern about dwindling energy supplies.
- † Indebtedness as of 1/1/71 is \$151,472.
- † The Brass Choir, under Leroy Lee's direction, is new addition to some services.
- † Ninety-seven quilts were made by churchwomen, 35 of them by Marie Germain.
- † Reverend Wekander commends faithful servants such as Swede Lundell who faithfully serve God by attending to regular duties required.
- † The stewardship committee consists of: Leroy Swanson, Ted Irle, John Mickelson, Art Peterson and Dave Borg.

Eph 1:23 And the church is his body; it is filled by Christ, who fills everything everywhere with his presence.

1975:

- † Our first intern, Sue Carloss started work at First Lutheran. Under Sue Carloss's direction, we now have active Junior and Senior Leagues.
- † We've passed the 1100 mark with 1110 confirmed members now and 1555 baptized.
- † The pipe organ fund was begun this year and new carpeting has been installed.
- † Proposed budget for the year is \$101,106. This is the first time the budget is over \$100,000.
- † We had 35 junior choir members and 22 youth choir members.
- † It was another financially troubled year.

1976:

- † Dan Wilfrid is the new intern. Our church is regarded as a teaching arm of the seminary school.
- † Dennis Alfveby is now the organist.
- † This year, the First Lutheran Church Women made 137 quilts. Thirty-five again by Marie Germain. They also made 83 hospital gowns from men's shirts, gathered 73 pairs of eyeglasses, 27 sweaters and one box of yarn pieces for Bangladesh.
- † Sunday School Enrollment is 349, a downward trend.
- † The ninth graders organized themselves into a separate congregation as a learning experience and named themselves, "Agape". They were involved in a number of responsible church activities and contributed a total of \$552.13.

1977:

- † Mark Sabin is the new intern.
- † Reverend Wekander states that 1977 was a good year for the congregation. Membership increased, expenses were met and a renewal of interest is apparent.
- † An emphasis of needed growth is in Reverend Wekander's message in the annual report. This growth is just not in numbers but in spiritual growth and ministry to the needs of the people.
- † The Behrens Family Portraits was hired to do the church photo album but was not able to deliver because of financial difficulties.
- † There is mention made by Church Council President, Robert Holliday that the organ may need replacement in the near future.
- † Mr. and Mrs. George Oldenburg are the custodians.
- † Couples Club name was changed to the Social Committee.
- † Communion is still 1st and 4th Sunday.

Col 1:24 I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am completing what remains of Christ's sufferings for his body, the church.

1978:

- † Pastor Weeks is the new Associate Pastor. The congregation is very pleased with the call committee's choice.
- † Membership is 1713 baptized and 1240 confirmed.
- † We seem to have come out of a time when there was a lot of criticism and dissension in our church. The tone of Reverend Wekander's message in the annual report is very upbeat.
- † First parsonage mortgage was paid off and we bought the Bill Pierson home at 524 South Dakota, for the second parsonage.

- † The Ministries Committee was formed after Pastor Weeks was called. It was made up of members of Pastor Weeks call committee. They made recommendations as to how the two pastor's duties should be split up.
- † Chuck and Esther Carow are the church custodians.

1979:

- † Money was budgeted to begin Stephens Series.
- † By laws were changed so 5th graders could now receive communion.
- † Reverend Wekander says to the congregation in the annual report, "Thanks for making the 70's a good decade at First Lutheran."
- † John Helling is the Church Council President.
- † Special thanks is given by Pastor Weeks to Jean and Scott Needham for involvement with the Junior and Senior Youth Committees. He states that they have given much more than 100%.
- † The Property and Management Committee have studied the church to find ways to cut fuel consumption. They recommend that groups that require rooms to use the rooms that are the easiest to heat. Energy saving thermostats and circulating fans to be installed.

1980:

- † Pastor is Reverend Eugene Wekander and Associate Pastor is Reverend Vern Weeks.
- † Organist and choir director: Dennis Alfveby, Junior choir director: Jean Needham.
- † Youth choir: Bill Leahy, Cherub choir: Judie Olson.
- † Membership: 1685 on January 1, 1980, 1734 on December 31, 1980.
- † A change made in Section I of church constitution to read:

Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to baptized members of this or other Lutheran congregations who are in 5th grade or above, and who have received instruction in the Lutheran view of the sacrament. Other desiring to receive communion shall confer with a pastor of this congregation, who shall determine their views of the sacrament are consistent with those of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church.
- † In February the Fellowship Committee scheduled a trip to the Omni Theater to see the movie, "Eruption of Mt. St. Helens."
- † Annis Fredrickson is president of the FLCW.

1981:

- † Staff is the same as for 1980 with the exception of Youth choir: Jeanine Green, and Junior choir: Shirley Rossing.
- † Council President was Arvid M. Flanum.
- † This year it was recommended that the Christmas Eve services be set at three in order to accommodate the many people who wish to worship on this night. Services were set at 4:30, 6:30, and 11:00. The earlier hour was added with the hope of increasing attendance.
- † John Anton, as chairman of the Social Services committee, stated that they were looking into the possibility of purchasing a chair lift for the church entry.
- † In 1981 the Pipe Organ Committee was primarily involved with the raising funds toward the purchase of the Vaughan Co. organ to be installed at First Lutheran in the Spring of 1982. Two-thirds of the total purchase price of \$49,870.00 has been raised and forwarded to the Vaughan Co.. Plans for raising the final payment of \$16,624.00 are presently being made. This committee consists of Betty Mickelson, Nancy Peterson, Dennis Alfveby, Scott Needham and Daryl Augustine.

1982:

- † Staff continues the same except that Sue Smith has become both Youth and Junior Choir Director.
- † Council President was Scott Needham.
- † The pipe organ was installed this year. On September 12, 1982, the pipe organ was played for the first time during services. The Pipe Organ fund will be continued for improvement and additions to the instrument in the future. All maintenance and tuning will be covered by the General Fund.
- † The Property and Management Committee reported that energy conservation was one of the main goals undertaken this year. The front walls of the church were insulated and sheetrocked prior to the installation of the new pipe organ.
- † Folding doors for the stairways in the Sunday School wing have been ordered and should be installed in January
- † Committee members are Ed Jessen, Shirley Johnson, Art Larson, Jerry Kjolsing, Bob Soderquist, and Willis Bierbrauer.
- † A farewell potluck dinner for Pastor and Emilie Weeks was given on December 5.
- † Annis Fredrickson is president of FLCW.
- † On September 15 the Father-Son banquet was held with Daryl Augustine as Master of Ceremonies. The men's quartet sang several numbers and also led the group in singing. Leo Demulling of New Richmond entertained with illustrated drawings.

1Co 8:1 Now let's talk about food that has been sacrificed to idols. You think that everyone should agree with your perfect knowledge. While knowledge may make us feel important, it is love that really builds up the church.

1983:

- † Council President was John Beebe.
- † The Bell Choir was begun this year.
- † During 1983 there were 17 funerals, and 7 weddings held within the church.
- † There were 693 collection envelopes for this year.
- † A new roof was put on the northwest portion of the church over the front overflow areas and a new saddle was put along the bell tower to eliminate water leaks which were becoming a problem.

1984:

- † Laurie Hanson resigned in March leaving the vacancy. The committee investigated several alternatives including the Tentmaker program, but in September decided to extend a call to Pastor David Saetre for a one-year commitment.
- † Senior choir: James Corrow, Junior choir: Ann Corrow
- † Church Council President: Dr. Robert Holliday
- † Rachel Moore is president of FLCW.
- † Smorgasbord proceeds were \$5378.
- † There were 704 offering envelopes this year.

1985:

- † This was a busy year for First Lutheran, 43 children and two adults were received by baptism together with transfers from other churches and by affirmation of faith we have added 118 new members to the church roll.
- † Twenty-seven baptized members were confirmed. We lost 13 through death, 104 to inactivity and 61 through transfer to other churches making our membership number of baptized members 1736 and confirmed 1244.
- † Administration/Finance established a need for a safety deposit box to be rented from a bank. They would establish the items to be placed in the box and designate authorized persons for access to the contents.
- † A new telephone system had been installed and a new copy machine purchased for the church office. Windows were painted and new shelves installed in the office also.
- † Highlights for the youth were a trip to the National Youth Congress in Estes Park Colorado, and a canoe trip in the Boundary Waters.
- † A farewell dinner was held in August for Senior Pastor Eugene and Joan Wekander as Pastor retired from First Lutheran. December found us welcoming Ron and Connie Hanson to our midst with a reception. Ron took the position as Senior Pastor.
- † On the last day of Vacation Bible School the third grade students gave Reverend Wekander a quilt which they had made. The last day of Bible School balloons were released outside the church with prayers attached.
- † An atrium was being looked into for the courtyard by the long range planning committee. The plans are also being discussed for an elevator or ramp to be installed near one of the entrances.

1986:

- † Attendance was once again up and averaging 451 per Sunday, baptized members were 1737 and 1270 confirmed members. Children taken in by baptism numbered 52. Eighteen weddings were performed and eleven funerals.
- † Fellowship committee had several potluck dinners, one of them for organist Dennis Alfeby as he retired from his duties.
- † The Sunday School had a venture called the "Heifer Project International", the children decide how they can use their money to help needy families. They have plans to buy a heifer out of the several animals that they could choose from.
- † Vacation Bible School designated an offering of \$171.24 for World Prayer League to help Stacy Roettger serving as a nurse-missionary in Bangladesh.
- † A special educational program for the high school youth was presented by several discussion leaders, Tim Emholtz, Marilyn Peplau, and Pastors David Saetre and Ron Hanson.
- † Money had been donated to the church library to purchase more books, a TV, and a VCR. The library was moved into the lounge area. Talk is ongoing for an elevator and some improvements to the kitchen. A parking lot was black-topped and a new commercial-duty refrigerator was purchased for the kitchen.
- † Due to the constitution, when a Senior Pastor takes his new position, the associate must be issued a call. At the annual meeting in 1987 it was unanimous that the call be extended to David Saetre to continue as our Associate Pastor.

1Ti 3:10 Before they are appointed as deacons, they should be given other responsibilities in the church as a test of their character and ability. If they do well, then they may serve as deacons.

1987:

- † Bernard's provided First Lutheran with a vehicle to use for group activities and to aid the volunteer drivers who provide transportation to and from church.
- † The Endowment Fund was officially formed at the annual meeting and six members were elected to this first time committee. They are: three year terms: Don Reppe, and Robert W Krueger, two year terms: Art Larson, and Curt Anderson. One year term: Bev Peterson, and Daren Powers.
- † A proposal for an amendment to the constitution was read at the annual meeting, it was that First Lutheran Church would provide communion during at least two worship services each month and communion would be provided for all baptized members 10 years of age or older. This proposal was approved.
- † The budget received many comments as the year ended with a \$4,600 deficit and we were short on benevolence by \$8,700.
- † Discussion was on going about an elevator and handicap access. A new sound system was discussed but was tabled until the Church Council can come up with a better price. Our Child Care Center is up and running and has 29 children, some are full-time while some are part-time. The kitchen had new cupboards installed and they also were installed around the stove to form an island. Three window air conditioners were also purchased for the offices.
- † February 1987 was the start of the Altar Guild, the purpose of the group is to keep the worship area beautiful and to care for the altar with the banners and paraments. To also keep the altar linens in good shape and care for the altar for communion, special festivals, weddings and funerals.

1988:

- † We have 1864 baptized members this year and 1343 confirmed members, receiving 40 children into baptism and nine funerals were performed. Nineteen weddings were performed.
- † Jill Lindell was introduced at the annual meeting as the new Child Care Director. The program was on shaky ground at the start but with a new director and the fact that the enrollment is growing, it shows the need for a Christian atmosphere for care of the children.
- † A proposed by-law change was approved at the annual meeting concerning "Discontinuance of Membership". Membership shall be terminated by death, resignation, transfer or release, disciplinary action by the Church Council or removal from the roll due to inactivity. These reasons were spelled out in more detail following the complete by-law changes.
- † There was also discussion originated by the Long Range Committee to help determine the future of the church proper. The options were (1) Stay or move, (2) Remodel, (3) Purchase property. An outside consultant recommended that the congregation remain in the same building as it is in good shape, remodel and purchase adjoining property. Possibly, also purchasing additional property in another site for a future Lutheran church SE of New Richmond. The motion was made and carried to remain at the present site and look into a major remodeling project which would include an atrium, chapel and elevator service. Also cancel remodeling and elevator service to all levels was also added to the original plans. The Atrium would provide gathering space after worship, weddings and etc.. It would establish a main entrance and include a bell tower.
- † The Wade Johnson house to the east of First Lutheran Church, was purchased at the price of \$40,000 with a \$20,000 down payment and a monthly payment of \$350. The Child Care is able to use half of the yard for a playground and the Church receives \$275.00 per month rent from Mr. Johnson which is deposited into a Capital Improvement account.
- † The Ad/Finance Committee recommended that a computer be purchased by the church, and the

study also included software and hardware that would fit the needs of the church. The committee also made recommendations to reduce the budget to meet the amount of giving.

1989:

- ✠ Bev Peterson retired after seventeen years of faithful service as the parish secretary. Pastor Hanson gave her a special thanks of appreciation in the annual report.
- ✠ The decision was made to install an elevator in the church.
- ✠ Jeanne Kahl and Avalene Swanson helped to implement the Greeter Program.
- ✠ New church directories with photos were done this year.
- ✠ Recycling is going to be a topic investigated for the upcoming year to help make the church more environmental conscious.

1Ti 4:13 Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.

1990:

- ✠ Ron Hanson is Senior Pastor; Dave Saetre is Associate Pastor. Both pastors, in their Annual Report letters to the congregation, discussed the conflicts that have evolved through 1990, and asked for congregational reconciliation and renewal.
- ✠ Council President Kirk Lindell, in his message, also discussed malaise and discontent within the congregation, which was also evident in our giving; we went from a \$45,000 financial cushion to a \$21,000 deficit.
- ✠ The elevator project was completed, and the elevator fund, which began in March, stands at \$85,357 at the end of 1990. Building Task Force members: Curt Anderson, Ed Kruschke, John Helling, Jim Moeller, Arnold Tjelta, Herb Melby, Marie Pierson. Elevator Fund Task Force members: Marie Pierson, Becky Fowler, Bob Olson, Rachel Moore, Kirk Lindell, Ed Kruschke, Bob Holliday.
- ✠ Membership is 1999 baptized and 1401 confirmed.
- ✠ Gale Langer has succeeded Jill Lindell as director of the First Lutheran Child Care Center in March.

1991:

- ✠ Emil Dockter is Interim Pastor, Norris Erdal is Associate Interim Pastor. Ron Hanson resigned as Senior Pastor in February. Dave Saetre resigned as Associate Pastor in June.
- ✠ Council President, Donna Preece, has an upbeat and optimistic report and she thanks the congregation for its continued commitment.
- ✠ Membership is 2028 baptized and 1419 confirmed.
- ✠ The Wade Johnson property is now completely paid for.
- ✠ Twenty-one youth, accompanied by Lona Christenesen, Mark Klemsrud, Jackie Langer and Lynelle Olson, attended the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Dallas in July.
- ✠ Smorgasbord proceeds are \$6,164.50 despite a major blizzard on Smorgasbord Day, November 6. The FLCW gave 75% of the proceeds to the Northwest Synod as a benevolence offering.
- ✠ The Call Committee members are: Donna Preece, Arnold Tjelta, Jean Needham, Daren Powers, Vern Skoglund, Joyce Klemsrud, Dave Olson, Kirk Lindell, Carleen Tjader, Jim Peirson.

1992:

- † Ron Golberg is Senior Pastor, Norris Erdal is interim Associate Pastor.
- † Arnold Tjelta, Council President, thanked the congregation for all of the volunteer labor in the redecorating of the fellowship room and the renovation of the parsonage.
- † Benevolence of 22% of total income, \$56,808 has been paid. The ELCA is the major benefactor, receiving \$38,777.
- † The Dorcas workers made and donated 173 quilts this year.
- † The parsonage renovation included new windows and doors, furnace, air conditioner, carpet, dishwasher, water softener and lots of tender loving care. New siding is scheduled.
- † The fellowship room received new carpet, drapes, wallpaper and furniture. Adjacent hallways also received new carpeting.
- † Other maintenance included sidewalk repair adjacent to the east parking lot, and paving of the west parking lot.

1993:

- † Ron Golberg is the Senior Pastor, Dave Mesaros is Associate Pastor.
- † Council President, Daren Powers thanked the council and committee members for their help and the congregation for its generosity.
- † The Wade Johnson house is now the home of Five Loaves food shelf.
- † Treasurer Don Michels, has put together an amazingly clear and comprehensive budget and financial report.
- † This year there were two Lenten services on Wednesday evening with a supper in between.
- † Thirteen tons of clothing, requiring thirty-three trips, have been delivered to Goodwill in Stillwater by volunteers from the Clothing Center.
- † “Catch the Sprit” welcome signs have been erected on highways 64 and 65 and more are planned for the future.
- † The Long Range Committee has four recommendations:
 1. Commitment to the present location.
 2. Pursue acquisition of adjacent property east of us.
 3. Establish a building fund.
 4. Determine if the 1987 study and plans are still viable.

Eph 3:10 God’s purpose was to show his wisdom in all its rich variety to all the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. They will see this when Jews and Gentiles are joined together in his church.

1994:

- † Council President Greg Demulling, pointed out in the Mission Statement of the annual report: *“First Lutheran Church is a fellowship of believers in the Triune God. We believe we have been saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. We are committed to a ministry of Word and Sacrament as a means of nurturing our members in their Christian faith and life. In response to Christ’s command to follow him, we are commissioned to serve God, and all persons in his love.”*
- † Membership is 1984 baptized and 1382 confirmed.
- † FLC youth traveled to Washington DC and Atlanta for 10 days to attend “Alive in Christ”.

- ✠ A “Good News” format is being used for fourth Sunday worship services.
- ✠ A new mentoring program is started for the confirmation program.
- ✠ The Perpetual fund has swelled to \$28,539 with a gift of \$10,000 from the Lloyd Johnson estate.

1995:

- ✠ Ron Golberg is Senior Pastor, Dave Mesaros is Associate Pastor. Reverend Golberg’s annual letter to the congregation discusses four issues:
 1. A third worship service.
 2. How many members do we really have?
 3. Stewardship.
 4. The question of either rebuilding or relocating the church.
- ✠ Greg Demulling is Council President.
- ✠ The Crop Walk on October 8 netted \$2150 for World Hunger.
- ✠ 230 children are enrolled in Sunday school. Average worship attendance is 405.
- ✠ Mary Ann Hanson is the primary organist and Dan Sanderson is part-time organist.
- ✠ Twenty-one youth and eight chaperones traveled to Pennel County, West Virginia to participate in Habitat for Humanity.
- ✠ FLC’s income from offerings is \$285,731.

1996:

- ✠ Ron Golberg is Senior Pastor, Dave Mesaros is Associate Pastor.
- ✠ Arvid Flanum is Council President.
- ✠ In three separate votes, the congregation rejected proposals to buy the two parcels of property east of the Wade Johnson house, to be used for future expansion. Although a majority was reached in all three votes, the required two-thirds majority was not.
- ✠ The Evangelism committee has begun “small groups”. They include groups for young women, newlyweds, divorced, and widows and widowers.
- ✠ The Resident Stewardship Service, (RSS) of the ELCA, was utilized in the fall stewardship program. Included in that program was a joint worship/brunch at the high school, attended by about 600 members and a church-wide Bible study attended by about 300.
- ✠ Dan Sanderson is Senior choir director.
- ✠ Peer ministry is taking an active role in the church services. Ernest Reppe and Josh Kluge are two young men who participate on a regular basis.

Eph 3: 21 May he be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen.

1997:

- ✠ Wally Obinger is Interim Pastor, Dave Mesaros is Associate Pastor.
- ✠ Pastor Ron Golberg retired in 1997. Reverend Golberg mentions, “peace, joy and thankful” in his final annual message to the congregation.
- ✠ Herb Hanson is President of the Church Council.
- ✠ A third worship service, on Saturday evenings at 5 PM is begun. It is a “blue jeans”, informal type of service. JoDee Johnston is music leader. An electronic keyboard has been purchased and is in use at this service.

- † The congregation has purchased nineteen acres of land adjacent to the New Richmond Golf Course from Bob and Leona Asp for \$95,000. The land will be used for a future ELCA Lutheran church.
- † First Lutheran Church voted to remodel the main entry and the overflow area of the sanctuary, bring the bathrooms up to code, replace windows and improve lighting. The cost is “not to exceed \$117,000.”

1998:

- † Larry Jorstad is Senior Pastor; Dave Mesaros is Associate Pastor.
- † Curt Anderson is Council President.
- † The remodeling project was completed, and following that the congregation liked the new carpeting so much the rest of the sanctuary was also re-carpeted. A major improvement was the replacement of pews in the overflow area with attractive, comfortable cushioned chairs, that can be rearranged to make the overflow space more versatile. A pleasant surprise was a refund of \$7,281 from Derrick Construction.
- † The Evangelism committee has begun the use of “Opportunity Sheets” in the Sunday bulletin.
- † Joan Nasset is the new choir director.
- † Youth Group went to South Dakota for Habitat for Humanity this year after three years of going to West Virginia.
- † Larry Jorstad was installed as Senior Pastor in July. The call Committee consisted of Emeline Emerson, Peggy Grubbs, Arne Skatrud, Gary Svenningsen, John Swingle, Susan Timm.

1999:

- † The Anniversary Committee is formed to make plans for the 55th anniversary of First Lutheran Church and to also instill a sense of pride in our history. Members are: Chairman Donna Preece and committee members Dick Nelson, Envor Johnson, Sandy Nelson, Herb Hanson, Rick Lundell, Leslie Stocklen, Judy Schultz, Virgil Krumm, Lois Satterlund and Jim Reppe.
- † Pastor Jean Gfall is our new Associate Pastor as of July.
- † A workshop was done by Reverend Mark Olson to help us develop a vision as to our future.
- † Special thanks is given to the following members by President Scott Needham: Pastor Jorstad, Pastor Gfall, Ellen Smith, Sandy Nelson, Sue Powers, Rebekah Jorstad, Joan Nasset, JoDee Johnston, and Mary Ann Hanson.
- † A Lay Ministry program is started and directed by Nancy Hagen. The Lay Ministers will visit church members who are unable to attend regular services.

This concludes the history of the First Lutheran Church. A fair portion of the contents of this project were the works of others that have preceded us. My intent was to preserve their efforts because otherwise they would be lost over time. For now, they have a new lease on life. They are all works worth saving for many years. Other parts of the booklet are new to all of us. These parts record pieces of our history that we may have long forgotten. My intent with these new additions to our history is to bring recognition to those who have served so diligently over the years. As you can see, there have been many before us that have been very diligent servants to our church. I only regret that I know that we have not included mention of so many that fit this category of “diligent servant”. Many, many, names are not recorded as I wish we could have. My sincere apologies to those unintentionally omitted and to their family members. We should all be thankful for those that have served before us and for those who currently are serving. It was the hard work of these people over the years that made our church the great church it is. May we continue to serve and carry this church forward for another fifty-five years and then some.

NOTES

