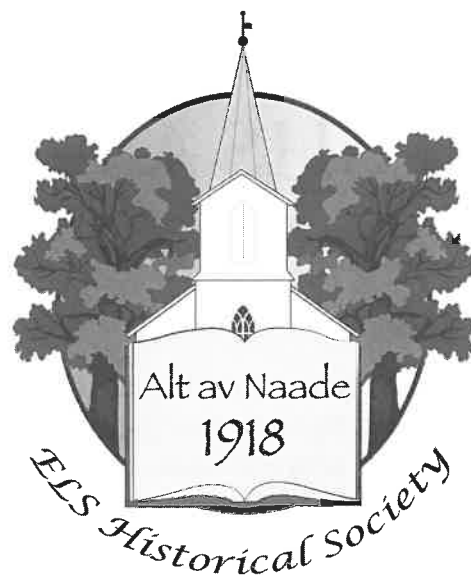


Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society



Volume 25

Spring 2021

Issue 2

A SURPRISING DONATION

Over the last few years several significant donations have been made to the ELS Ottesen Museum that help tell the story of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Old Norwegian Synod, and their members.



Linka's travel case.

One recent donation, however, was an especially big surprise because of its age, who it belonged to, and the relatively good condition that it's in.

This spring, a friend of the museum came into possession of the travel case of Mrs. Caroline (Linka) Preus and donated it to the Ottesen Museum. Her husband, the Rev. H. A. Preus was one of the leaders of the Old Norwegian Synod. A note in the case states that Linka used the case in 1851, the year that she and her husband were married, traveled by ship from Norway to the United States, and moved to Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, where Herman served as a pastor in the Norwegian Synod.

The case, now 170 years old, shows wear but is in remarkably good condition for its age. It still contains several of its accessories as well as some personal items. As a part of the Museum collection, it gives us a picture of not just the life of Linka as she came to this country, but also other women of that time as they traveled.



Linka Preus

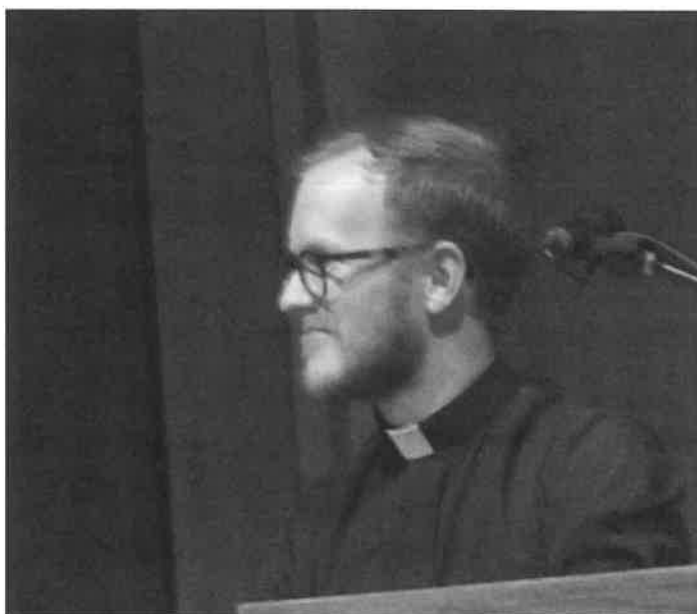
To see the case in person, as well as the rest of the museum collection, stop in at the Ottesen Museum during its regular hours of Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, from 1:30 to 4:30. Or you can make an appointment by contacting the museum at museum@blc.edu.

ELSHS ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, June 20, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.

Bethany Lutheran College

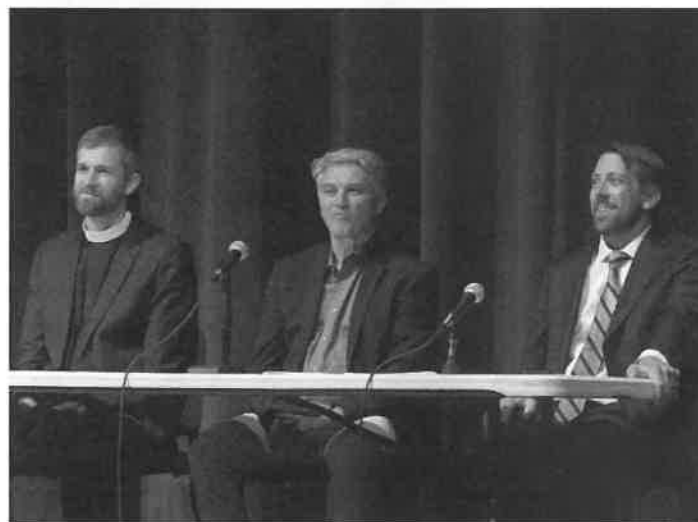
ELSHS President Rev. Michael Lilienthal opened the annual meeting in the Lee Theater of the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center with a welcome to all in attendance, a brief history of the organization and a prayer. He then introduced the program for the day, "The Ministry Marches On," and the participants.



The Annual meeting was called to order by its president, Pastor Michael Lilienthal.

Rev. Andrew Soule served as moderator for the program designed to compare and contrast service in the public ministry of the ELS in the very early churches

in the old Norwegian Synod and the reorganized Norwegian Synod, mid-twentieth century churches, and current congregations of the ELS. Guided by questions from the moderator Rev. Peter Faugstad represented ministry in the early churches, Chaplain Donald Moldstad represented mid-century, and Rev. Luke Ulrich answered for the current parish pastors. Areas of interest included how worship services and communion were conducted including frequency, the pastor's clothing and robes, publications within and between congregations, parish education, seminary training, and



The program was a discussion by a panel of how the ministry of the word is carried out in ELS congregations in the past and present. Panelists were Pastors Peter Faugstad and Luke Ulrich and Chaplain Don Moldstad.

EDITOR: Erling T. Teigen, eteigen@charter.net

DESIGN & LAYOUT: Katharina Schleef

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Marie Aaberg, Craig Ferkenstad, Theodore Gullixson, Lois Jaeger, (Secretary), Michael Lilienthal (President), Marge Lillo, John Moldstad, Andrew Soule, Erling Teigen.

Check out the Historical Society website - <http://www.els-history.org/>

Oak Leaves welcomes articles of both Synodical and local significance for publication. Articles may be edited for style, clarity, or length to allow for publication. Each issue will be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

*Oak Leaves is published quarterly by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society,
6 Browns Court — Mankato, MN 56001*



Historical Society Treasurer Marge Lillo presented the annual financial report to the members gathered in the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center.

family life in the parsonage. Though times and certain practices change the constant has remained the centrality of the gospel and rightly dividing the law and gospel. May it always be so in the public ministry of the ELS.

Following the presentation President Lilienthal called the business meeting to order. The secretary's report was distributed at the door and the motion was made, seconded and passed to approve as presented.

Marge Lillo, treasurer, reported the at the June 2019 meeting the balance on hand had been \$2,999.82, income since then was \$3,010.50 and expenses were \$1,999.45 resulting in a balance on hand of \$4,010.87. It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the treasurer's report.

Becky DeGarmeaux reported for the Ottesen Museum. She told the assembly that the museum was back to being fully open once again, that there were several new displays, and that the annual Christmas open house was

scheduled to resume in December 2021. It was moved, seconded and passed to accept her report.

Oak Leaves editor Dr. Erling Teigen reported that typically 125 copies of the newsletter were printed at a cost of \$200 per issue with four issues each year. Eighty are mailed. He is assisted by a layout person, trained at Bethany by Prof. Andy Overn and that layout editor is paid \$75 per issue. It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the report.

The final order of business was the election of board members. Rev. Andrew Soule and Marge Lillo were both up for reelection and both had agreed to be nominated for such by the board. It was moved, seconded and passed to elect.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Jaeger, secretary



As usual, the Museum Director, Rebecca DeGarmeaux had books published by the Historical Society available for sale, as well as museum information.

The ELS Historical Society depends on the membership/subscription fee to fund our projects and produce Oak Leaves. Even without the annual meeting our work still goes on. If you pay your membership annually, you may send your check to

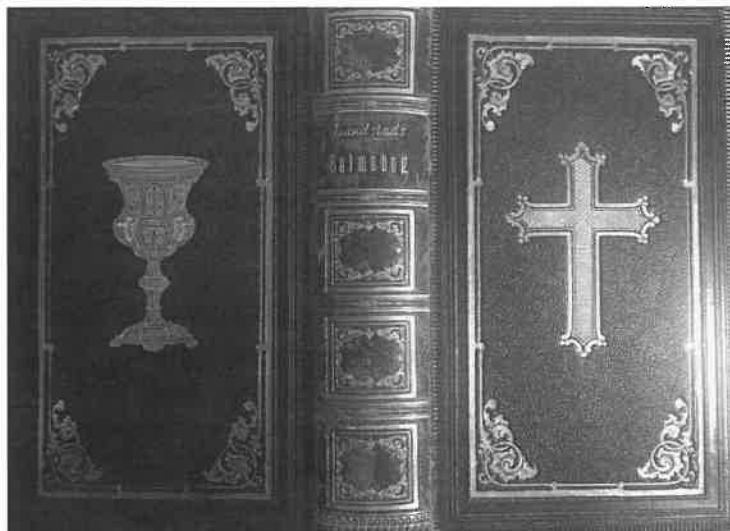
ELS Historical Society
6 Browns Ct.
Mankato, MN 56001.

THE HYMNBOOK AS A CONFESSION OF FAITH

Markus Frederik Wiese

Luthersk Tidende, October 20, 1920

Markus Frederik Wiese was longtime pastor of Western Koshkonong congregation near Madison, Wisconsin. He became an expert on hymnology and accumulated a large collection of hymnbooks which were later, with other rare books, given to the synod. Wiese was on the committee that prepared the last Norwegian hymnbook published by the old Norwegian Synod. If he had been on the committee that produced the 1913 English Lutheran Hymnary it might have been quite different. Wiese's theme may remind one of the words often spoken by Dean Norman A. Madson that one could know "a pastors theology from observing the hymn-board." (ed.)



It is certainly not without significance that from ancient times the hymn book was called "the layman's Bible" and they were often referred to in theological studies and controversies. In some respects it can be argued that the hymn book occupies a position over the confessions and creeds (in a broader sense). The latter are mainly for the teacher; but the hymnals are in the hands of the people, and, so to speak, are their daily confession of faith. One will not look for fine distinctions and theological subtleties in hymnbooks, but if one looks for the kernel of a doctrine as it exists in the life of the people, the hymnbooks are the place to look. In the hymnbooks one will find more biblical doctrine than in dogmatic and polemical writings (that is, doctrines and controversial writings), where according to the saying, one does not see the forest for trees.

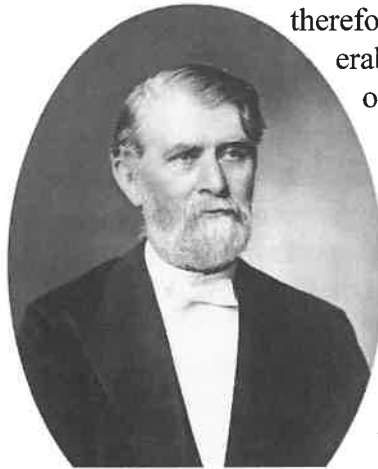
The great Lutheran hymnal expert Philipp Wackernagel says: "The hymnbook controversies are the preparatory battles for the battles for or against the confessions. The hymnbook is the outer fortress wall; after its conquest, the attack turns first on the creed and then on the scriptures. In the hymnbook it is a matter of defending

the very fortress of confession of faith and then Scripture; for the hymnbook belongs to the people—the confession of faith of the people is chiefly found there."

It is an undeniable and significant fact that where Lutheran Christians (at least in earlier days) have been free to decide which hymnal they most prefer, and have been free to choose which they would

like to use in public worship and for private edification, they have shown a decided preference for hymn books in which the old hymns of our church are reproduced unchanged and uncut. Such hymn books have therefore also become surprisingly widespread. A few examples should be mentioned here. Thus, such a book of hymns, published in Berlin in 1858 by the Society for the Publication of Christian Devotional Writings, in its first edition 57,000 copies were distributed. And even more widespread has become Herman Stip's hymnal, "Authentic Hymns." That was the position about half a century ago. Now it is, unfortunately, completely different.

Nowadays, it looks as if it is an easy matter to make and collect hymns—it is thought that following the old Lutheran path is not possible. Now everything must



M F Wiese

be modernized; the old hymns must therefore be "updated" or, preferably, replaced with new ones; not Scripture and confession and ecclesiastical language, but the "demands of the times and the people" namely, their tastes and pleasures now seem to be the rule and guideline here. We must here think of a strange statement by the famous Leipzig professor Dr.

Kahnis (and no one will accuse him of being of the old orthodox school). In 1857 he published a valuable little devotional book, written by the old Lutheran theologian Johannes Lassenius, (pastor and professor in Copenhagen, died in 1692) and gives the book the best recommendation. In his preface he writes: "No matter how high you want to set that task which the church today has to solve, then it is undeniably to prepare confessional writings, to write hymns and to produce true devotional books: the contemporary church has not been given that gift." (tr.ett)]



HISTORY OF THE NEWPORT EV. LUTH. CONGREGATION, NEAR KILBOURN, WIS.

Earl Lewis, Secretary

Lutheran Sentinel, November 9, 1921

Two congregations near Portage Wisconsin, Newport and St. Paul's are today member congregations of the ELS and are served by Pastor William Grimm. The congregations were founded in 1851 by the pioneer pastor, Herman Amberg Preus from Spring Grove near Madison. They belonged to the old Norwegian Synod until the 1917 merger which they declined to join. For the next forty-eight years they were members of the Missouri Synod and were served by Missouri Synod pastors. They were in fellowship with the reorganized Norwegian Synod through the Synodical Conference until the division of that body in 1963. In 1966 they joined the reorganized Norwegian Synod, (Evangelical Lutheran Synod), and since then have been served by ELS pastors. This article appeared in the Lutheran Sentinel in 1921.

The "Moe Settlement" or "Newport Congregation" was organized in the early fall of 1851. H. A. Preus, pastor of the Spring Prairie Evangelical Lutheran Congregation came up to Newport [approx. 50 miles] shortly after his arrival from Norway in 1851, and preached to the Norwegian settlers in this vicinity. In the same fall, this pastor together with the settlers, organized the "Moe Settlement Congregation," later called and known as the "Newport Norwegian Ev. Luth. Congregation."

At that time, a piece of land had already been purchased by the Norwegian settlers and was being used as a burial ground; at the first meeting after the organization of the congregation this land was dedicated on Sunday, Sept. 11, 1851. The cemetery was located on Lars Olson Refsdalen's land, and later on became the location for the church building.

In the year 1855 the congregation was incorporated under the laws of the State of Wisconsin and took the name Den Norske Evangelisk Lutherske Menighed in the Town of Newport, Columbia Co., Wis. The first trustees were: Ole Hendrickson, Peder Jensen Holton, Martin Nelson Blockhus, Aasmund Jensen Fungerer, Peder Anderson, Tori Anderson Nestesoe, Ole Andrir, Nels Christopherson Vospe, and Ole Williamson. In the same year, 1855, the congregation joined the Norw. Synod of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



Newport Lutheran Church

The first services were held in the log houses of the settlers and later in Sylvidalen's School House. The first church building was begun in 1860 and finished and dedicated in the fall of 1863.

In later years, the congregation had for a long time felt the need for a new church building, but no final action was taken until 1891. The members of the southern part of the congregation wanted the new church to be built on the ground-plot of the old, while those members living farther north would have the church moved more into the center of the settlement. As the wishes of both sides could not be granted, it was resolved to build two churches. Thus the northern part severed their connection with the Newport congregation and organized the "Upper Newport and New Haven Norwegian Ev. Luth. Congregation" [Now St. Paul's, Portage].

On October 22, 1891, the congregation decided to build a church 28 x 44 ft. with spire-butt 8 x 8 ft. The following building committee was elected: Isaac

Toldnes, Hans and Julian Lovlien (Peterson), Thomas Hanson, and Jens Haralson Tyvand, with Olaus C. Lee as treasurer. The committee contracted with Anton Stomner as to the mason-work, and with Don French as carpenter. The work on the new church was begun early in the spring of 1892. As the old church lot was found to be too small for the new church building the congregation purchased a piece of land directly north of the old cemetery, and on this ground built the new Newport church. On October 12, 1892, this church was dedicated to the service of the Triune God by the Rev. Styrk S. Reque.

Pastor Preus continued as minister until the summer of 1865, coming four times a year. Then in 1865, together with Rache-a-Cree and Lemonweir [congregations], the Newport congregation called their first resident pastor in the person of Rev. S. S. Reque who served the call until the close of the year 1871. After that, the following pastors served the charge: Rev. B. Hovde, 1871-1878; Rev. Emil Petterson, 1879-1882; Rev. Edw. Borgen, 1882-1901; Rev. B. C. Swenson, 1901-1919; Rev. Wm. Lochner since 1919. [After the merger, Rev. Brynjolf Hovde joined the reorganized synod and lived in Glenwood, Minnesota.]



ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

N. J. Bakke, Sentinel 6-8-1921, 775



Pastor N J Bakke, a member of the old Norwegian Synod, attended Concordia Seminary, St. Louis during the time the Norwegian Synod had its pastors trained there. His assignment upon graduation was to the Synodical Conference colored mission in

New Orleans, where he spent much of his career in the general colored mission of the conference. He appears to have remained in regular contact with the Norwegian Synod which was also a member of the Synodical Conference, and after the Norwegian Merger in 1918, the reorganized synod rejoined the conference and continued to participate in and support that work, including the Black college in Selma, Alabama.

On the evening of Sunday, May 8, the Rev. Nils J. Bakke, for many years prominently identified with the Negro Mission work of the Synodical Conference, entered into eternal life.

Rev. Bakke took ill Tuesday. He received constant medical attention, but on Saturday night his condition became serious. He was hurriedly conveyed to the Milwaukee Hospital and operated on. It was found

that his bowels were paralyzed and that there was an obstruction which would not yield to treatment. The Rev. Oscar Kaiser visited him four times on Sunday. His sons, who are studying in Fort Wayne, were summoned. In the afternoon, Rev. Kaiser wrote us: "His condition has not improved in the least. He realizes this and is prepared to go to his Savior." On Monday the Mission Board received a telegram which informed us that Rev. Bakke had passed away at 9:30, Sunday night.

Rev. Bakke was born in Norway, September 8, 1853. At the age of thirteen he came to this country. He was a graduate of Luther College, Decorah, Ia., and in 1880 was graduated from Concordia Lutheran Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

Many thousands of friends from all parts of the Synodical Conference will mourn the news of his death. Especially will the members of the colored congregations feel their loss. Rev. Bakke had been connected with the mission since 1880, when, as a graduate from St. Louis, he accepted a call to New Orleans. Of late he has been traveling a great deal, delivering sermons and lectures on the work among the negroes. The full story of his sacrifices and sufferings on behalf of the negro will never be written. When he entered work, there was still widespread feeling in the South against

PROF. EDWARD G. MELLEM

**September 27, 1866—September 27,
1921**

Lutheran Sentinel, October 1921

Though a seminary graduate, Edward Mellem was never ordained. In his last years, he was a member of the synod church at Northwood, Iowa, and during the first years of the Tidende and Sentinel, he was a frequent contributor of articles on doctrine and the confession of the Lutheran faith. (ed.)

The death of Prof. E. G. Mellem on September 27 will be keenly felt by all the members of the Norwegian

any white person's devoting himself to the uplift of the colored race. Rev. Bakke, a man of refined culture, suffered much from the ill will of those who then, in ignorance and prejudice, opposed the works. He was ostracized, he suffered persecution, his life was threatened. But he persisted, and today our work receives the commendation of all Southerners acquainted with a it.

Rev. Bakke understood the black man and loved him. And our converts loved him in turn. He was a powerful orator, an untiring worker, a steadfast friend. He has done a great life-work.

More about N. J. Bakke from O. M. Norlie, Who's Who Among Pastors in all the Norwegian Lutheran Synods of America, 1843-1921. Born Sept. 8, 1853, in Norway. Immigrated 1866. Attended Luther College, 1871-77 (A.B.) Concordia Seminary, St. Louis Mo. 1877-80 (C.T.). Pastor (colored missions) New Orleans, Louisiana, also home missionary among Norwegians and sailors) 1880-91. Served pastorates in North Carolina. Theological professor (1910-20), Immanuel College Concord, North Carolina, (president 1903-05), Died May 8, 1921. (ed.)



Synod who knew him, most keenly, however, by those who were college-mates or class-mates. Prof. Mellem was graduated from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in 1890 and three years later from Luther Seminary, then located at Robbinsdale, Minn.

While Prof. E. G. Mellem did not enter the ministry he continued throughout his life to be a strong and fearless contender for the true teachings of God's holy word. His course in practical life was somewhat varied, having been engaged in teaching, in editorial work, in the publishing of newspapers and in the lumber business; but through his whole life he stood firm as a rock for his Lutheran faith.

The loyalty of his friendship, the buoyancy of his spirit that drew us to him on the campus in the class room, in the band room, or the gymnasium, was present with

him to the last. A visit with him when he was on his sick bed, August 17th, confirmed these impressions. He heard the word of God with joy, adding: "that is the old familiar voice,"—"we must have that! Nothing else will do!" So we feel assured that when the summons came from his heavenly Father to come home, it was known to his heart and soul as the sound of the old familiar voice that called, and with a ready mind and heart as of yore, he would say "Thy will be done."

Edward G. Mellem was the son of pioneer settlers of Northwood, Iowa. His parents were staunch Synod people who lived through many trials and hardships as pioneer citizens and pioneer church people. They, as he, could bear heavy burdens in Christ and for Christ; but they could not compromise on the truth of God. Now he is gathered with his fathers. May God bless his memory.

ZION IN FOREST CITY, IOWA GETS ITS CHURCH BACK

Church News

Sentinel 7-2-1921

This is a story describing an event that didn't happen very often in the founding days of the ELS. At Forest City, Iowa, for example, the congregation decided to join the Norwegian merger, and the minority who did not go into the merger lost their church home but were able to get it back. (ed.)

Our congregation at Forest City, Iowa, has succeeded in getting back its old church. It has bought it from the consolidated congregation for the price of \$2,200 [\$34,000 2021 dollars]. With a little repairing they will have a very fine church home again. The congregation will be served by pastors E. Hansen and H. Ingebritson temporarily. This has compelled Rev. E Hansen to resign as the pastor of the congregation at Albert Lea, Minn. Rev. A. J. Torgerson of Northwood, Iowa, will take charge of the congregation at Albert Lea temporarily.



First Shell Rock Northwood, Iowa

A Classmate [A. J. Torgerson]

The School Calendar, 461 adds further details about Mellem's teaching career: taught grammar, geography, history, vocal music Park Region Luther College 1892-98, Principal there 1893-98; St. Ansgar Seminary 1903-07, history, English, German, Glenwood Academy.



Forest City, IA

—Funds are being raised for the parochial school at Albert Lea for the coming year. Mr. Veggar Guldberson has donated a lot to the congregation to which the school building may be moved when the time comes for building a new church on the present site of the school.

NAMES FROM THE PAST—THE TORGERSONS

The Rev. A. J. Torgerson

1870-1963

The names of many honorable fathers of our church fade away after the passage of decades and centuries. For the ELS, one of those names is that the father and son Torgerson, both of whom served congregations of the little Norwegian Synod—ELS.

One of the founding pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, was A. J. Torgerson, pastor of two congregations in Northern, Iowa, which had also been served by his father T. A. Torgerson. The father had also been a prominent pastor in the old Norwegian Synod and was an early pastor in Iowa; he was president of the Iowa District from 1894 to 1906. The son, as noted, participated in the founding of the reorganized Synod, and served in various offices, including as synod treasurer from 1918 to 1932. (ed.)



A. J. Torgerson

August Julius Torgerson was born November 27, 1870 in Worth County, Iowa, the son of the Rev. Torger Torgerson and his wife, Dena. He was baptized and confirmed by his father who was the first resident pastor of Worth County, Iowa. A. J. Torgerson attended Luther College at Decorah, Iowa, and the Theological Seminary at Robbinsdale, Minnesota. On July 4, 1894, he was ordained in the Lutheran ministry having accepted the call as assistant pastor in the parish of his father which then consisted of the Silver Lake, Concordia, and Lime Creek congregations. After the death of T. A. Torgerson in 1906, the son served the Silver Lake and Concordia congregations until the

merger of 1917 when he was called to serve the First Shell Rock and Somber Lutheran congregations of the reorganized Synod. This parish he served until his retirement on March 1, 1939, a period of 45 years all of which was spent in this community with the exception of 18 months at a pastorate in Renville, Minnesota.

One year to the day after his ordination, on July 4, 1895, A. J. Torgerson was married to Ingeborg Pedersen of Bode, Iowa. To this union were born 13 children—two sons and one daughter died in infancy in addition to a son in his teens and another son, Adolph in 1952.

After retirement Pastor Torgerson and his wife resided for a time in Lakeland, Florida and when his wife, Ingeborg, died in 1947, he moved to Yakima, Washington to stay with his daughter, Dagny.

August J. Torgerson enjoyed remarkably good health until last December when he became ill with an attack of influenza and also suffered a light heart attack. On Thursday, February 14, he passed away in his sleep at the Crescent House Nursing Home in Yakima where had recently been admitted.

He is survived by Alfred and Fritz Torgerson of Northwood, Iowa; Mrs. Charles (Agnes) Bedford of Moses Lake, Washington; Ralph Torgerson of Casablanca, Morocco; Reuben Torgerson of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Mrs. Dagny Eaton of Yakima, Washington; Mrs. Naomi Kidd of Cocoa, Florida; and Walter Torgerson in the U. S. Air Force at Ankara Turkey. Also surviving are 13 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

At the age of 92 years, 2 months and 17 days, he returns to his God and Savior whose child and servant he was. Blessed be his memory. Funeral services were held Wednesday, February 20 at the Somber Lutheran Church.

The Rev. T. A. Torgerson

The following is taken from a 1906 newspaper article.

Torger Andreas Torgerson was born the 26th day of January, 1838, in the southern part of Norway, at Nes Jernverk one of the most beautiful spots in that

romantic kingdom. His father managed a fine botanical garden with greenhouses containing plants from the remotest lands of the globe. His kind-hearted mother died two and a half years after the deliverance of this her third child, and he was brought up by her parents in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with great tenderness and care. He was baptized in infancy and taught the Evangelical Lutheran doctrine. When he was three years old his grandparents sent him to a private school and from the age of six he went to the excellent public school of the place about eleven months every year, until he was confirmed, in the spring of 1853 and together with his father, stepmother, brothers and sisters and other relatives emigrated to this country.

During the winter of 1853-54, when his parents, resided in the village of Winneconne, Winnebago county, Wis, he went to school in the country a few miles distant,



T. A. Torgerson

in order to be instructed in the English language. The summer following he moved with the rest of the family to Scandinavia, Waupacca county, Wis., where his father finally settled as a farmer, and where he is still living and doing well. The next three years he earned money in the city of Stevens Point, and other places, assisting his father in providing for his large family. After that he worked on the farm at home until the fall of 1858. Through the instrumentality of his pastor, Rev. O.F. Duus, whose memory was ever dear to him, his heart was revived by the sacred power of the word of the only living God, and he became zealous to spend his life in the service of his dear Lord Jesus Christ, who had shed his precious blood for him, a poor sinner, and has bestowed his bountiful mercy upon him through living faith in him, his beloved Savior. Incited by this reverend gentleman, and with the consent of his parents, he concluded to study theology and prepare for the ministry." In pursuance of that purpose Mr. Torgerson entered the college of the so-called Missouri Synod, on September 1, 1858, and graduated from its theological seminary in June, 1865,

having completed its nine years' course in less than seven years.

In August, 1865 he was ordained as an Evangelical Lutheran minister and installed as pastor to the congregations of Shell Rock, Silver Lake and Lime Creek, a wide field which was soon after greatly enlarged. In fact, it was not long before he was serving congregations through a district 150 miles long by 50 miles wide, equivalent in area to upwards of fifteen counties the size of Worth. His life in this community for upwards of forty years has been an open book and the work which he has accomplished has been prodigious. In the early days of almost impassable roads he appears to have looked upon a ride of 100 miles as a mere trifle. He has been a pastor in the true sense to an army of people, and it is safe to say that the influences for good started by him are living on in hundreds of hearts and lives. For many years before his death, he was president of the Iowa district of the Norwegian Synod of America and secretary of the church council. He literally died in harness—on New Year's day, six days before his death, he preached twice, carried consolation to a poor widow, and incidentally made a drive of thirty miles.

Two weeks ago last night, while in Northwood to participate in a marriage service, he seemed in his usual splendid health. But doubtless the strong machinery was breaking down under the strain of his more than sixty years of strenuous life, for it appears that he died of a general collapse of all the vital forces. His mind, however, was clear to the very last and his faith burned bright while heart and flesh were failing. More than twenty years ago he wrote this of himself: "His dearest hope on earth is that he, together with many dearer souls committed to his care, shall praise the Lord of mercy in the heavenly mansions." Who can doubt that he is now realizing that Christian hope? In his family life Pastor Torgerson was most happy. He was married on June 10, 1866, to Dina Anderson, a sister of Hon. Rasmus Anderson and an accomplished lady who proved to be a helpmeet indeed. Six sturdy sons who were born to them, are now educated men in good positions.





ACORNS

FROM THE ELS ARCHIVES



Theodore G. Gullixson - Archivist



Theodore Aaberg

*In January 1972, Pastor Theodore Aaberg reflected on the title of the synod's 50th anniversary book, *A City Set On a Hill*. He did so responding to a New Year's letter received from "Dear Brother Paul."*

He refers to the following hymn verse from the hymn "If God Himself Be for Me" in the Lutheran Hymnary:

This I believe—yea, rather,
In this I make my boast,
That God is my dear Father,
The friend who loves me most;
And that, whate'er betide me,
My Savior is at hand,
Through stormy seas to guide me,
And bring me safe to land.



Pastor Aaberg then continues:

Your greeting in the form of Hymn 272, is comforting and appropriate. I am fond of that verse. When I was writing the book on the history of the synod I first suggested to the Golden Anniversary Committee that it carry the title *Through Stormy Seas*, but they thought it indicated too much polemics, and so we later came up with *City Set on a Hill*. That title came to me when I chanced to read an old report of H. M. Tjernagel to the synod's Christian Day School Board where he reported on his little "Strandebarm" Day School in Saude, the few pupils, two I believe, and the little salary, one or two contributors, and that the school likely would close at the end of the year. The board's questionnaire asked if the pastor thought the day school in his parish had served the cause of missions, and HMT, undaunted by it all, had replied: Yes, in spite of its small size and the obstacles in its path, it had been a veritable *City Set on a Hill*. I was deeply moved by that and thought that about sized up the entire history of the synod.

ELS Historical Society Subscription-Membership Form

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Voting Membership:
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Associate (non-voting):
\$25 - individual or organization

Voting Members must belong to an ELS congregation or a congregation in fellowship with the ELS. Associate Members are any others interested in the work of the ELS Historical Society.

Oak Leaves
ELS Historical Society
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

