

Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society



Volume 28

Issue 2

Summer 2024

ELS Historical Society



DEAR CHRISTIANS ONE AND ALL REJOICE

Hymnbook traditions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Sunday, June 16 7:00 pm

**Bethany Lutheran College
Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center**

Martin Luther's Achtliederbuch - 1524

Thomas Kingo's Psalmebog - 1699

Guldberg's Psalmebog - 1778

Landstad's Salmebog - 1869

Synodens Psalmebog - 1874

The Lutheran Hymnary - 1913


The Lutheran Hymnal - 1941

Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary - 1996





REPORT FROM THE OTTESEN MUSEUM

ELS Ottesen Museum
Special Convention Hours



Tuesday & Thursday:
8:30 - 11:30 am 4 Browns Court -
Wednesday: 1:30 - 4:30 pm across from the Softball
Or by appointment Diamond

In many ways it's like a family reunion. We see faces we've seen before and make new acquaintances. Worship services, meetings, reports, presentations, essays and our social interactions tie us together as part of the family that is the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

In the same way, those at a family reunion will share stories, share meals, and even share pictures. Some families even have a family historian who records some of these interactions to preserve them for the next generation.

The Ottesen Museum and ELS Archives serve as the "family historian" for the ELS. The museum preserves artifacts and the archives preserves documents to pass on the "family history" to the next generation.

The Ottesen Museum will again have special hours during Synod Convention. You are invited to stop in and learn more about our family history. We will be open Tuesday and Thursday 8:30-11:30 am and Wednesday 1:30-4:30 pm or by appointment.

We are also excited to report that we now have three different "Koren's Kids" activities. Along with scavenger hunts we also have a new crossword puzzle. All clues are connected to artifacts or pictures in the museum. Stop in during the scheduled hours or contact Becky DeGarmeaux for visits at other times

It's time for Synod Convention again. We are so blessed as a Synod to be able to meet every year.

EDITOR: Timothy Erickson

DESIGN & LAYOUT: Darsie Stockman

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Marie Aaberg, Julie Faugstad, Craig Ferkenstad, Theodore Gullixson, Michael Lilienthal (President), Marge Lillo, Glenn Obenberger, Neil Shaffer, Andrew Soule.

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*

FROM THE EDITOR

As I write this it is the afternoon of Syttende Mai (17th of May), the day on which Norwegians celebrate Constitution Day, the day on which the country's constitution was adopted in 1814. This year I was privileged to spend a couple of hours in Stoughton, Wisconsin. It was good to get a little Norwegian flavor for that special day.

I hope you can all make it to our annual meeting, Sunday, June 16 at 7:00 p.m. Guests are welcome. The topic for the meeting will be "Dear Christians One and All Rejoice: Hymnbook Traditions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Our presenter will be Rev. Craig Ferkenstad. The meeting of the Historical Society will also take place at that gathering.

In this volume of Oak Leaves we have the following contents:

- Some publicity for the Annual Meeting of the ELSHS
- A note from the director of the Otteson Museum, Becky DeGarmeaux.
- A report concerning the 1924 Synod Convention
- "Excerpts from the President's message and one of the essays at the 1924 Synod Convention
- An Acorn from the 1931 The Holy Cross newsletter of Rev. Erling Ylvisaker
- Publicity for a new publication A Historical Register of Evangelical Lutheran Synod Congregations and Pastors.

I hope to see you in June at the meeting of the ELS Historical Society and the synod convention.

Rev. Timothy Erickson



100 YEARS AGO

Synod meeting of 1924

The report of the Synod Meeting in 1924 begins with the title page in Norwegian:

https://els.org/wp-content/files/document_archive_synod_reports/report1924.pdf

This is translated:

Report about the seventh yearly synod meeting of the Norwegian Synod of American Evangelical Lutheran Church. Held at Jerico Lutheran congregation of New Hampton, Iowa from the 19th to 25th of June, 1924

Page 3 of the report begins with the arrangement of the convention.

"The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church held its seventh annual meeting from 19th to 25th June 1924 in the Jerico Lutheran Church, called pastor H. M. Tjernagel."

"The meeting opened with a service in the morning, and pastor O. M. Gullerud preached on the text "Faithful to

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 Truth in Love". Eph. 4 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—"

"After the service ended, Pastor Tjernagel expressed his own and the congregation's joy at having the synod meeting in their midst and welcomed the assembly warmly."

"Chairman G. A. Gullixson thanked for the welcome and appointed the following temporary plenipotentiary committee, which was later made permanent: pastors A. J. Torgerson and P. A. Widvey, as well as Mr. E. R. Edwards. The time for afternoon meetings is set from 2:30 until 5."

"Standing members of the Synod, Present and Entitled to vote

Chr. Anderson, O. M Gullerud, L. S. Guttebø, Emil Hansen, John Hendricks, L. P. Jensen, J. A. Moldstad, C. A. Moldstad, G. Guldberg, K. L. Guttebø, B. Harstad, H. Ingebritson, M. F. Mommsen, C. N. Peterson, H. A. Preus, C. J. Quill, S. Sande, J. J. Strand, J. E. Thoen, H. M. Tjernagel, A. J. Torgerson, Jos. B. Unseth, S. C. Ylvisaker."

The Presidential Address begins on page 6. The address was given in Norwegian, but with many English quotes from the Book of Concord (Concordia Triglotta). The Norwegian has been translated into English by Pastor J. Herbert Larson. Excerpts from the address are included in this issue of Oak Leaves.

After the Presidential Address, the president gave his report of his activities as president. This report begins on page 17. He begins:

"I have had the pleasure of telling you about my official pursuits. It is gratifying to be able to report that our congregations and pastors work in good faith for the great goal."

There will be more of his report in the next issue of "Oak Leaves."

The Convention Essay begins on page 18. It is titled "The Power of the Word," written by Pastor Christian

Anderson, and has been translated from Norwegian into English by Mark DeGarmeaux. Excerpts from it are included in this issue of Oak Leaves.

A second essay was written by Pastor J. E. Thoen called The Objection of the Norwegian Synod to the First Paragraph of "Opgjør." This report was given in English. It begins on page 47 of the Synod Report. There are also some excerpts in this issue.

On page 65 and following there is a An Historical Overview of the Parish School in the Synod, written by Pastor Lauritz S. Guttebø. He states:

"The creation and maintenance of parish schools has been considered one of our society's most important tasks. We have conducted negotiations on this matter at all our synod meetings, and there has been shown to be a lot of eagerness and interest in establishing such schools. Our synod is currently the only one among the Norwegian Lutherans, which is eager for the establishment of parish schools. Is it something new we have started?"

"When our community was organized in Lime Creek congregation, Iowa in 1918, we agreed that we wanted to continue the work of the old Norwegian synod on the old foundation and according to the old principles.

"Is now such a burning zeal for the establishment of parish schools in accordance with the synod's old principles"? It will certainly be an encouragement and encouragement for us to work diligently and persistently for this important cause."

At the end of the Synod Report a list of the synod's pastors is included.

Officials of the Synod

President: G. A. Gullixson Chicago, Ill.

Vice president: Chr. Anderson Minneapolis, Minn.

Secretary: L. P. Jensen Marshfield Ore.

Treasurer: A. J. Torgerson Northwood, Iowa

Synod pastors

O.H. Aaberg (em.) Parkland Wash

Aanestad H. (em.) Sherman, S. Dak.

Chr. Anderson, Minneapolis, Minn.

I. Blækken Spokane, Wash.
 C. U. Faye St. Louis, Mo.
 P. C. Forseth Suttons Bay, Mich.
 G. Guldberg Suttons Bay, Mich.
 O. M Gullerud, Princeton, Minn.
 G. A. Gullixson, Chicago Ill.
 Lauritz. S. Guttebø, Deerfield, Wis.
 K. L. Guttebø, Holton, Mich.
 Emil Hansen, Scarville, Iowa
 B. Harstad, Parkland, Wash.
 O. B. Harstad, St. Paul, Minn.
 John Hendricks, Minneapolis, Minn.
 B. P. Hovde (em.), Glenwood, Minn.
 H. Ingebritson, Lake Mills, Iowa
 L. P. Jensen, Marshfield, Ore.
 J. Johansen, Fresno, Calif.
 O. Leverson, New Ulm, Minn.
 Geo. O Lillegard, Wanhsien, Szechwan China
 C. A. Moldstad, Boston, Mass.
 J. A. Moldstad, Chicago, Ill.
 M. F. Mommsen, Belview, Minn.
 G. E. Møller Vulcan, Alberta, Canada
 G. P. Nesseth Clearbrook, Minn.
 O. B. Overn, St. Paul, Minn.
 C. N. Peterson, Fertile, Minn.
 H. A. Preus, Chicago, Ill.
 C. J. Quill, Albert Lea, Minn.
 Stephen Sande, Harland, Minn.
 O. A. Sauer (em.), Minneapolis, Minn.
 J. J. Strand, St. Peter, Minn.

J. E. Thoen, Amherst Junction, Wis.
 H. M. Tjernagel, Lawler, Iowa
 A. J. Torgerson, Northwood, Iowa
 Jos. B. Unseth, Waterville, Iowa
 P. A. Widvey, Metaskiwin Alberta, Canada
 M. Fr. Wiese (em.), Cambridge, Wis.
 S. C. Ylvisaker, Madison, Wis.

The complete report except for some missing pages can be seen at”

https://els.org/wp-content/files/document_archive/synod_reports/report1924.pdf



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

1924

Dear fathers and brothers in the Lord!

With thankful remembrance of God’s rich blessings upon the annual meetings thus far, we meet again with bright expectations for our seventh synod meeting. God has allowed us to succeed beyond all expectations in continuing our work as a church body on the foundation of his holy Word in conformity with the Confessions of our Lutheran Church. He has given us grace to work on this foundation with a good conscience and a holy courage.

We surely all agree that our purpose with this meeting, as with all our meetings, ought to be to discuss our mutual affairs in the spirit which finds its expression in the apostle Paul’s words in Ephesians 3:20.21: “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

Surely the deeper our comprehension is, the clearer it will be for us at this meeting, as ever before, that 1924

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Surely the deeper our comprehension is, the clearer it will be for us at this meeting, as ever before, that our highest goal ought to be to give glory to God who is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask and understand. "To him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end!" says the apostle Paul. As Bible-Christians and true Lutherans we will agree with the apostle's singing of praise, and cry and sing anew the old watchword: Glory to God alone for everything!

All glory is owed to God because He is the true God of heaven and earth. Him, the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and Him alone we ought to laud and praise from generation to generation, yes, forever and ever. The children of God on earth and in heaven have no higher calling than to give the one true God adoration and glory forever and ever. God alone is due all glory and adoration because of His perfection, His eternal, divine majesty, His omnipotence, His omnipresence, omniscience, holiness, righteousness, grace, love and mercy, etc.

He ought always be praised and glorified for His blessings in creation, redemption and sanctification.

What is there in God which ought to be lauded, praised and glorified by all creation? Everything which He is and which He determines, remains unchanged. As the Most High, as the Creator of all things, as the real source of all good, truly, God commands all the allegiance and glory of all creatures.

That He demands this, we see from His holy Word.

Both in the Old and in the New Testament

innumerable passages are to be found in which He makes this demand.

Our hope is surely to attain salvation in heaven, there to praise God eternally with all the angels and all the elect. That's why we should begin already here to praise Him and to make a beginning and rejoice that by the grace of God we can grow daily in this art of the Christian. To this we are called. God has given us an excellent education in this through pious pastors and teachers of the past. We are certainly not saying anything new. It peeled like a keynote in all the proclamations and in all the instruction and all the speaking of our fathers who founded the Norwegian Synod. Not as an empty slogan but as the expression of true apostolic Christianity, yes, as a fruit of true Lutheran theology. We pray God to preserve this in our hearts still as the watch-word of our Lutheran Church and to give us grace to continue to be fully convinced of this truth from generation to generation.

The Word of God and all true biblical theology teach that everything which is taught and done in the church which does not give God alone the glory, is bungling work and fraud. Yes, worse, it is the devil's delusion, however beautifully it can be portrayed for the eye of man.

You see, therefore, that it becomes so important for us to be able to answer the question correctly: How can we by the grace of God give God all glory?

Luther has again given the answer of God's Word to this question, briefly, in his excellent explanation of the First Petition of the Lord's Prayer: God's name is hallowed among us "when His Word is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God live holy lives according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven!"

When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and we live holy lives according to it, then God is given all glory — then His name is hallowed among us.

What is teaching the Word of God in its truth and

purity, other than laud, glory and praise of God? And what is the fruit of teaching His doctrine other than the praising of God? asks a brother in the faith from the past.

The proper proclamation of the Law honors God's holiness and righteousness, and the full and clear proclamation of the Gospel praises His love, grace and mercy.

Luther says:

“We cannot laud God or praise and honor Him more highly than when we confess that out of sheer grace and mercy He takes sin, death and hell from us, and that He has given us His only-begotten Son, and with Him, everything that is good. Such acknowledgement must give Him all glory.”

When we accept and truly believe God's Word, then we give God the soul's inner homage and glory. And when we proclaim the Word of God in its purity in word and deed, then we show God the proper glory and praise before men.

In the position we take as those who want to give glory to God alone for everything in the matter of our salvation, and only confess the saving doctrine of the Word of God as rule and guide for faith, doctrine and life, we do not expect to gain honor or recognition from lukewarm unionists and indifferent Lutherans. But we do expect that those among our people who share with us the proper love, shall summon up the man within themselves and testify with us to the glory of Christ's name. Yes, that they shall arrange their lives and their associations in the church in such a way that they do not contradict in their lives what they confess with their mouth. Especially, that their consciences shall rebuke them for their silence at this time.

We ask God to give us all grace to prize the fact that our church body is grounded in the pure and correct doctrine of God's Word, so that we guard against such associations which lead to denial of Christ's saving Gospel. In particular we must guard against associations in worldly associations and lodges where

the spirit of the world rules and where Christ's name is denied. Through such associations the name of God is dishonored, the church — the kingdom of God — corrupted, and redeemed souls are led astray and lost.

May God in grace give us wisdom and courage always to hallow His name through correct teaching and Christian conduct, for the sake of Jesus Christ! Amen.

George Albert Gullixson

Translated by J. Herbert Larson, 2004



GEORGE GULLIXSON



George Gullixson

Rev. George Albert Gullixson died May 22, 1933 in Chicago, Illinois.

After his ordination in 1893, Gullixson served as pastor in Beloit, Wisconsin 1893-1902, St. Paul's, Chicago, 1902-1933.

Gullixson served as Synod President 1922-1926. He was also the editor of the "Lutheran Sentinel" for several years.

Gullixson's most famous moment was when he stood up on the floor at the 1927 Synod Convention amidst the discussion concerning taking control of Bethany College, saying: "I move we take over the school." The motion passed and Bethany College has been run by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod ever since.


On October 7, 1897, Gullixson married Minnie Amanda Olsen in Madison, Wisconsin. They were blessed with seven children. Rev. George Albert Gullixson died May 22, 1933 in Chicago, Illinois.

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THE OBJECTION OF THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD TO THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF "OPGJØR"

Rev. J.E. Thoen

1924 Synod Convention Essay

When the President of our Synod requested me to write a paper for this meeting, he expressed a desire to get a clear statement of our objections to the union which was consummated in 1917 between the former Norwegian Synod, the United Church and the Hauge's Synod. It was especially for the benefit of our young people that such a paper was desired.

The subject assigned was the first paragraph of "Opgjør", or what has been called the Madison Agreement. When I came to write on this subject, I found it difficult to present our objections to the union in an adequate way without



touching quite extensively upon the contents of the whole document. The reason why it is difficult to treat the first paragraph alone, so as to express our objections to the union, is that I am unable to see that the "Opgjør" is anything more than a compromise, and that no differences of doctrine have been cleared up or settled. Looking upon it from this viewpoint, which I am convinced is correct, it would be difficult to say more about the first paragraph than that it is a statement of the doctrine of the United Church concerning the two forms, and that it demands an acknowledgment of this doctrine without reservation. This we have objected to, and object to now, as something which

the Norwegian Synod had always consistently refused to do.

In order to make it clear why we refused to vote for the adoption of "Opgjør" and enter the union, it is necessary to recall the doctrinal situation, especially in the former Norwegian Synod and the United Church.

[Here the author has some pages detailing a comparison between the two church bodies. And then he writes a conclusion.]

We object to the first paragraph of "Opgjør", because it contains the doctrine of the United Church concerning the two forms and their relation to each other. The first form is not election in a so-called wider sense, and it does not contain the "Intuitu fidei" doctrine. The two forms do not contain the same doctrine of election, as the paragraph declares that they do. The doctrine of the second form is not the doctrine of Scripture nor of Confessions of the Lutheran church.

We do not, however, object to the first paragraph alone. We object to the "Opgjør" as a whole, because it is a compromise, an agreement by concessions, and forms the basis for a unionistic church, a false brotherhood. A brotherhood founded on a pretense of agreement is dangerous, false and sinful. It is not Christian. A Christian brotherhood must rest on unity of faith and doctrine. Brethren, members of the same church, should speak the same thing, be of the same mind, avoid those who cause dissensions and offenses contrary to the doctrine. Paul writes to the churches of Corinth and Rome: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1,10. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine you have learned; and avoid them," Rom. 16,17.

We refused to enter the union, because the "Opgjør", which is the basis of union, sanctions the doctrine

of man's self-determination in conversion, or that the good conduct of man is the deciding factor in conversion and election. It permits the teaching and defense of man's co-operation in his own conversion, the doctrine that we must not rely on God alone in our hope of salvation. This doctrine we reject with our whole heart and will resist unto the last! "The assurance of salvation, the steadfast confidence of the remission of sins, is irretrievably lost, if we no longer can rely on God alone."

Who can with confidence and assurance approach the throne of judgment on the last day? Not he who demands recognition on account of his attitude, good conduct or works. Christ has said: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." These have done great things in the name of Christ, but He never knew them as His own. Their hearts were closed to Him, for they come as those who have their own righteousness. They come with money of their own coinage to buy what they desire. They are not fit for the joys of heaven, for they cannot adore Christ and His work for their salvation. When these are made unfit by reliance upon their works, how much more unfit would those be who come relying on such small coin as a correct attitude, good conduct, or a "feeling of responsibility!" What pride and self-righteousness must fill the hearts of those who dare to reckon with such coin!

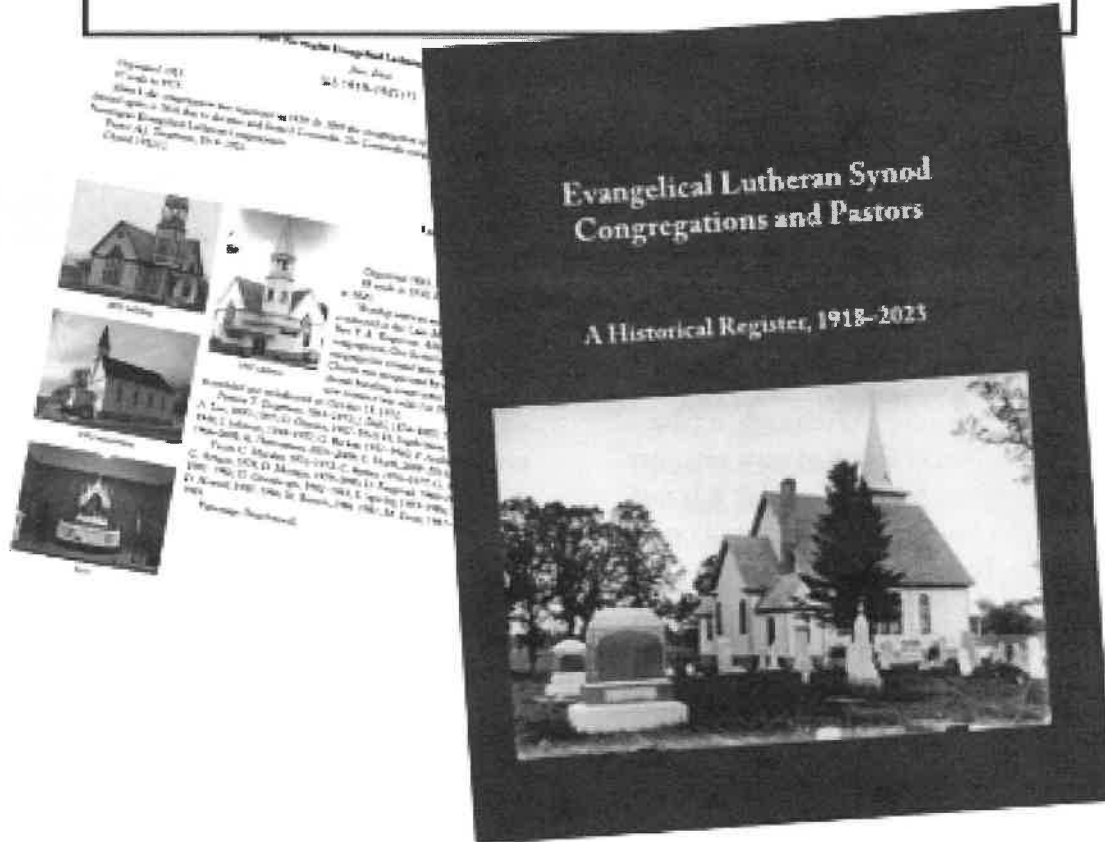
Only when our reliance is on Christ and His merits alone can we approach the throne of judgment with assurance, for He is the Judge. He cannot deny His own work in our stead, for then he would deny Himself. Our hearts being filled with gratitude and adoration to the Judge for the love and work he has bestowed upon us, they are open to Him for the final gift of eternal life.

Lord Jesus keep us in the true faith! Amen. But from where does God's Word have such miraculous power? It has this power because it is God's Word.

Evangelical Lutheran Synod

A Historical Register
1918-2023

Journey through the annals of time with "Evangelical Lutheran Synod Congregations and Pastors," a 312-page record documenting the legacy of Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) congregations, pastors, and educators from 1918 through 2023.



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ACORNS

FROM THE ELS ARCHIVES



Theodore G. Gullixson - Archivist

THE HOLY CROSS

*A Lutheran Paper for a Lutheran Parish
Edited by the pastor [Rev. Erling Ylvisaker]
Published Monthly by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Cross.
Volume II, No. 3 Madison, Wisconsin November 1930*

“Five Years of Childhood”

On Monday evening, five years ago, September 26th, 1926, our congregation organized at the home of S. Reque with a nucleus of six families. Immediately these men began to study blue-prints for a church building.

Things have changed. In the “Flat-Iron Building” on East Washington Avenue and Winnebago Street, where we conducted our first services, the wind howled through window cracks, and the snow lay in small drifts under our chairs. The only warm place in the chapel was close to the coal-stove and there it was so hot that faces baked red. One Sunday there were only five worshippers. Today we sit in comfortable pews.

Then the congregational singing made us all squirm for we did not know the hymns well enough to keep together, in tune or time, from the beginning of a line to the end. It is strange that those good old hymns tolerated all the abuse we gave them.

Five years ago we had hardly enough men to serve as officers. Our first members remember the difficulty we had to get a man to serve as treasurer. Today we have enough able men to give us a choice. Furthermore, as it always happens in the building of a new church, some were along merely for the excitement of hanging on to something new. Now most of our members are people who join the church for the right reason.

Then all the men and women who attended our services had been asked to come. We rang their door-bells and invited them to come the following Sunday. The church had to go to them. Now we have enough members to be self-advertising. Strangers come to worship with us, many of whom later become members.

But, after all, these things are only the shell. We are still the little church on Milwaukee Street, doing mission work. Our strength is still in the Gospel, and not in counting numbers. As one preacher said, who has worked in New York City for 30 years: “Hardly anything of importance has changed. The Bible, the old hymns, the Lord’s Prayer, are just the same. Life has not changed. Weddings, funerals, births, laughter, old age, youth, still are just the same. There are no new crimes and no new virtues.”

I like to think that our congregation is still a child, and that the Lord can still bend us with His chastenings. Let us not be in a hurry about growing up. May it always be said of our congregation, “Like a child they believed; like a child they did the will of their Father in heaven.”

Have you noticed that as we grow older, we become less thankful. Let this be our anniversary prayer: “God preserve in the bosom of our congregation the child’s heart which beats so much faster because of its gratitude.”



ELS Historical Society Subscription-Membership Form

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Special Gift for _____ Amount \$ _____

Voting Membership

\$15 - Individual or married couple

\$300 - Lifetime

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
Evangelical
Lutheran
Synod

