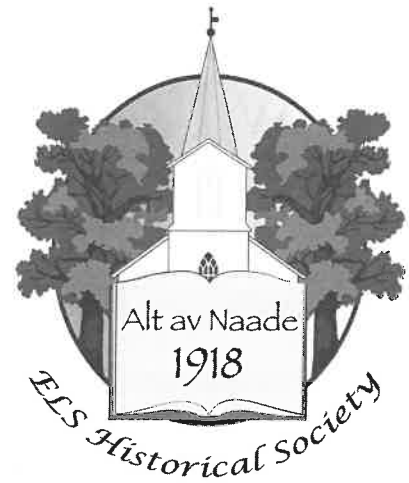


# Oak Leaves

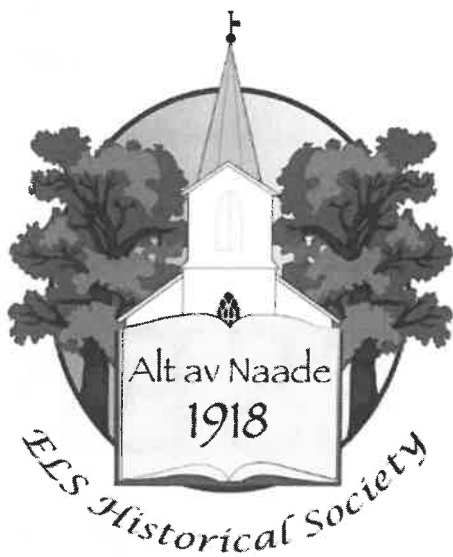
Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society



Volume 29

Issue 2

Spring 2025



The Twenty-Eighth Annual Meeting of  
the ELS Historical Society

## **"The First Decade of ELS Growth"**

Presented by Rev. Paul Webber

Hymn by the Norseland singers

All are invited to attend this free presentation.

*Sunday, June 15, 2025*

*6:30 p.m.*

*Bethany Lutheran College,*

*Lee Theater of the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center*

*Mankato, Minnesota*

*A brief business meeting will follow the program.*

*Everyone is welcome to attend.*

## THE ELS CHURCHES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY, IOWA

About 60 miles south of Mankato lies Winnebago County, Iowa. It is the fifth smallest county in Iowa, but includes several E.L.S. church, perhaps more than any other county in the United States.

Iowa became a state in 1846. At first there were only two big counties, but as population increased the state was divided into more counties, ending up with 99. (There were supposed to be 100, but Kossuth County, the county directly to the west of Winnebago, was not divided due to lack of population in its northern part. Kossuth county thus has remained the biggest county in Iowa.)

Winnebago County was formed in 1851 and had a formal government in place by 1857. The county seat is Forest City.

Winnebago County is named in honor of the Winnebago Indian Tribe. "When the first white settlers came into the county, and for some years thereafter, roving bands of Winnebago Indians made their temporary home within the limits of the county. At times there would be as many as one hundred living along the Lime Creek valley or about Coon Grove, and at other times there would be but a mere handful. During the summer seasons they would cache their cooking utensils, leave their tepees standing and go northward into Minnesota

(Continued on page 4) 1

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# A NEW LOGO FOR THE OTTESEN MUSEUM

Although the Ottesen Museum has been in existence since 1941, it has never had its own identifying logo. That has now changed. Bethany Lutheran College student Reese Moorad, worked with Museum Director Becky DeGarmeaux to create two versions of a logo which we hope will serve the museum for many years. We thank Reese for her work on this project.

The logo features two important images in Evangelical Lutheran Synod history, the Oaks of Koshkonong where one of the first services in the Norwegian Synod were held in 1846, and the Lime Creek church, where the Synod was reorganized in 1918. The church image appears to come out from between the two oak trees to

represent the 1918 church coming out of the old Synod and moving into the present time.

Two versions were created to fit different applications. The round version is for smaller uses, like the museum's Facebook page. The rectangular version will work well for letterheads and envelopes.

We will again have special hours during Synod Convention this year. They are Tuesday and Wednesday: 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, and Thursday: 8:00 am to 11:00 am. Families are especially welcome during these times but special arrangements can be made for other times as well. Remember, we now have three scavenger hunts for kids of various ages.



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**EDITOR:** Timothy Erickson

**DESIGN & LAYOUT:** Darsie Stockman

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** Marie Aaberg, Julie Faugstad, Theodore Gullixson, Michael Lilienthal (President), Cheryl Heiliger, Glenn Obenberger, Neil Shaffer, Larry Rude, Kyle Madson.

**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

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

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# FROM THE EDITOR

I hope that you can make it to the Annual Meeting of the ELS Historical Society on June 15. The Norwegian Synod was reorganized in 1918. Many thought it would not survive, so its first ten years are very important. The topic will be very interesting.

Thank you to Rebecca DeGarmeaux for her piece from the Otteson Museum and for showing us the new logos of the museum. Please visit the museum while you are in Mankato for the Synod convention, June 15-19. In her article our museum director has included the hours that the museum will be open, but she is also willing to open the museum at other times if an appointment is made.

The article about Winnebago County and the Lime Creek congregation is very personal to me. I was born and raised in Winnebago County, Iowa. One of the places mentioned where the Winnebago Indians roved is Coon Grove. As a child I lived with my family a half-mile away from the grove. Then, on the day of President John F. Kennedy's funeral, we moved to a big house on the hill of the grove. We lived there when I was a teenager from 1963 to 1965. We loved the grove. It had about 50 acres of trees. The local chapter of the FFA (Future Farmers of America) was called the Coon Grove Chapter at that time. I think I still have an FFA jacket that says "Coon Grove" on the back. Later an owner of the Coon Grove farm started to remove trees from the grove so it is a lot smaller now. I was sad to see the grove diminished so much. The owner had to stop when University of Iowa archaeologists discovered Indian burial sites in the grove. Also, the two houses (which were rather run down when my family lived there) where I lived and all the other farm buildings have been removed. A smaller "Coon

Grove" of trees remains.

The Indians also camped along the banks of Lime Creek, which meanders through eastern Winnebago County until it becomes the Winnebago River just north of Leland. This is the creek that gave its name to our Lime Creek Lutheran Church.

2025 is an important year for Norwegian migration to America. It marks the 200 years of formal migration of Norwegians to America. Norwegians had come to the Americas previously, as individuals or small groups, on ships from other countries like England or Germany. 1825 marked the first time a ship full of Norwegians sailed from Norway itself all the way to America. That trip is being reenacted this year. If you are in New York City on October 29, you could see it come in. I include some news about this voyage.

The interesting telegram to the Synod secretary W. C. Gullixson in 1965 was sent to me by Craig Ferkenstad who found it in the archives. Thank you, Craig.

The Acorn is a letter from Norman A. Madson to a soldier. Thanks to Ted Gullixson for finding this Acorn in the archives.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Oak Leaves and I hope to see you at the annual meeting and the synod convention.

*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.

to hunt and trap. At that time the Winnebago agency was located about forty miles north of Forest City [that would be in Minnesota].” The Winnebago were removed after the Dakota War of 1862. The Dakota War ended with the largest mass execution in American history in Mankato, Minnesota, in 1863, in which 38 Dakota were hanged in a public spectacle.

Initial settlement of Winnebago County was in the wooded eastern third of the county, with prairie and marshy areas in the west being settled after 1880. Many of the county’s pioneers were of Norwegian descent.



Map of Winnebago County

Winnebago motor homes are well known on the highways of the United States. The Winnebago Industries RV manufacturing company was founded in Forest City in 1958.

In the early years of the reorganized synod from 1918 there were seven congregations in Winnebago County. Lime Creek, Lake Mills, Scarville, Center, Forest, West Prairie and Thompson. In 1949 West Prairie and Thompson merged to form Zion in Thompson. Lima Creek recently merged with Lake Mills and Somber (in Worth County to the east of Winnebago County) to form Grace in Lake Mills. So due to two mergers, there are now 5 active E.L.S. congregations in Winnebago County.

We will look at the history of these congregations beginning with the best known of them, Lime Creek, where the synod was reorganized in 1918.



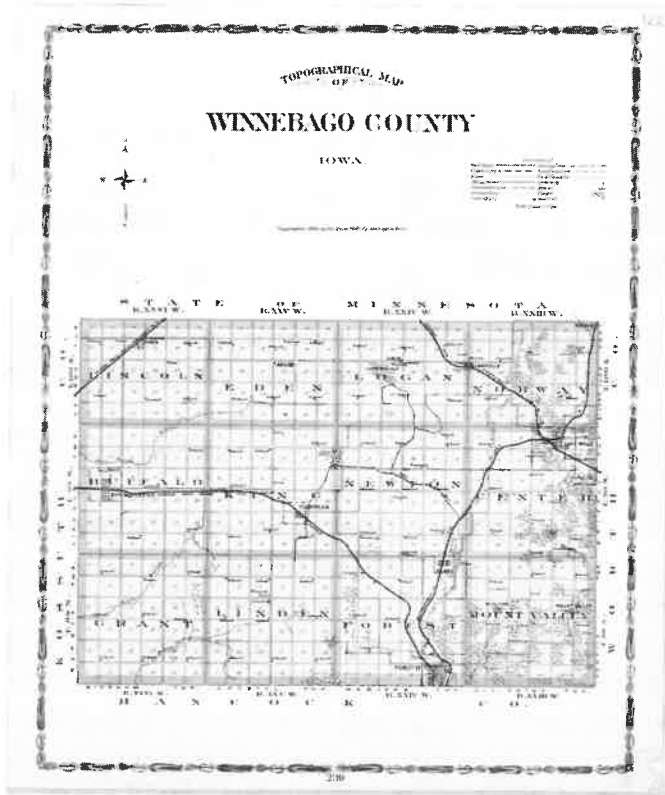
Painting of Lime Creek Church

The church is named after a creek. Lime Creek’s headwaters begin in Minnesota to the west our Lime Creek Church. It flows south between Scarville and Lake Mills. Lime Creek used to continue on through Mason City, but now, just north of Leland it joins with another stream called Pike Run and its name changes to the Winnebago River. It then flows into the Shell Rock River (the E.L.S congregation in Northwood, Iowa, is called “First Shell Rock”) then the Cedar River to, the Iowa River, which flows into the Mississippi River. Since it goes through Mason City, which was the home of Meredith Wilson, who wrote the musical “The Music Man,” the name “Lime Creek” was officially changed to “Winnebago River” in 1961. The locals felt compelled to promote their “creek” to a “river.” In Wilson’s musical, Mason City was called River City. [An interesting aside: The Blue Earth River, which joins the Minnesota River in Mankato, also has its origins in Winnebago County, Iowa].

### Early history of Lime Creek Lutheran Church

The Lime Creek church is barely in Winnebago County. It is in the northeast corner of the county,

one mile south of the state line. Worth County, Iowa, is a mile to the east. As you drive on U.S. Highway 69 between Emmons, Minnesota, and Lake Mills, Iowa, one mile south of the state line you can see the church a half mile to the west.



*Winnebago County Iowa*

Iowa-Minnesota state line), Silver Lake, Shell Rock, and Lime Creek.

In May of 1865, a meeting was held and a call was extended to T.A. Torgerson, a candidate of Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri to become Pastor of a parish consisting of the congregations of Lime Creek, Silver Lake, and Shell Rock. Pastor Torgerson began his ministry in the area in August of that year. As the United States was emerging from the Civil War, a theological debate of the day in the old Norwegian Synod was on the topic of slavery. At a congregational meeting in February of 1869, a majority of the Lime Creek members voted to withdraw from the Norwegian Synod.

### **Controversy over slavery.**

At the outbreak of the Civil War, there were accusations that the Missouri Synod favored the southern cause. The controversy was over slavery, some saying that all slavery was sinful and others taking the position that some slavery was allowed, which is what we see in the Bible, cf. Philemon, and that even a Christian could be a slave owner. Missouri was a border state between North and South, and the Missouri Synod had congregations in the South, so that the synod was accused of supporting the confederate cause. In reality, Germans of Missouri were instrumental in keeping the state with the Union.

The church dates to the beginnings of the Lutheran Church among Norwegian immigrants to Freeborn County, Minnesota and Winnebago and Worth Counties in Iowa. The first Lutheran worship service in the area was held July 20th, 1858 on the farm



*Pastor T. A. Torgerson  
Early pastor of Lime  
Creek Lutheran Church*

of Lars L. Loberg near Silver Lake. Services were held approximately four times a year and the early pastors who would come to the area were Rev. C.L. Clausen, Rev. A.C. Preus, and Rev. U. V. Koren. Soon, four congregations would come about as a result of these services: Round Prairie (this church is highly visible on the east side of Interstate 35 2 miles north of the

The following are some excerpts from *Grace for Grace: A Brief History of the Norwegian Synod*, published by the Lutheran Synod Book Company in 1943. This was for the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the synod in 1853 and the 25th anniversary of the reorganization in 1918. There is a chapter concerning "The Controversy Regarding Slavery" in this book

"As for slavery, since the Bible nowhere forbids it, they would not call it in itself a sinful institution nor accept the contention that a Christian could not own slaves, although they were against the institution of slavery as it appeared in America."

"Rev. C.L. Clausen held that "slavery in itself is a sinful thing because it enables a man to use his fellow-men

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as his property, “exercising unrestricted authority and control over them as over other property.”

The Lime Creek congregation split in 1868 because of this slavery controversy which arose in the Norwegian Synod. As a result of the division within the congregation, the majority left to organize a congregation of their own, which would also become known as “Lime Creek Lutheran Church.” The ELS Lime Creek congregation remained with the Norwegian Synod and the new (non-ELS) Lime Creek congregation joined the Conference of the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. In 1890 this conference merged with the Norwegian Augustana Synod (established 1870) and the Anti-Missourian Brotherhood (established 1887) to form the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (UNLC). This church body then participated in the merger of Norwegian church bodies in 1917.

“Rev. Torgerson remained with the original Norwegian Synod congregation on the Iowa side of the state line in Norway Township until his death in 1906. This congregation is the modern-day Lime Creek Evangelical Lutheran Church and is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).”



*Interior of Lime Creek Church*

## **History of Lime Creek Lutheran Church After the Slavery Controversy**

The new (non-ELS) Lime Creek congregation joined Silver Lake in calling a Pastor in 1869. In 1874, this congregation built a house of worship on a site west of Emmons on the Minnesota side of the State Line Road, just north and west of the Lime Creek “syn-

od” church. During the years this Lime Creek church shared pastors at different times with area churches. It may be of interest to ELS readers that in 1878, Bethel Lutheran Church was organized at Vinje, Iowa, and became part of the non-ELS Lime Creek parish. Vinje is just 3 miles west of Scarville.

In of 1963 Bethel extended a call to Rev. Søren S. Urberg, was installed as the new minister. Rev. Urberg later joined the ELS by colloquy in 1996. He served Calvary in Ulen, Minnesota, and Our Savior’s in Hawley, Minnesota, and in the church of our fellowship in Avaldsnes, Norway, from 1999-2000. He died in 2022.

The (non-ELS) Lime Creek shared pastors with Mansfield Lutheran Church from 1962 until it closed in October of 1983. The Lime Creek (non-E.L.S.) cemetery remains, but the church building was moved to the Farm of Yesteryear site near Kiester, Minnesota in 2003, and a monument to the Lime Creek church was erected where the church once stood.

The ELS Lime Creek congregation began work on the present church building in 1874. It was dedicated in 1879. This historic congregation and building was the site of the meeting in 1918 where the ELS was formed as a reorganization of the old Norwegian Synod after several pastors refused to enter the merger.

### **1918:**

There is a little booklet called “A Blessing in the Midst of the Land,” commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. In that booklet, Pastor Iver Johnson wrote:

“The oak trees in historic Lime Creek church yard have been witnesses to many events during the years, both sad and joyful, in the life of the congregation. But perhaps few happenings have ever been so important to all of us as that gathering with responded to an announcement printed in the church paper in April, 1918, which read:”

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“Pastors and members of congregations who desire to continue in the old doctrine and practice of the Norwegian Synod, will, God willing, hold their annual meeting in the Lime Creek congregation, Pastor H. Ingebritson’s charge, June 14 and following days.”

In June 1918 13 pastors and approximately 200 members responded to this announcement and met at Lime Creek in order to reorganize the old Norwegian Synod. The details of this meeting are available in many chapters of the books of the synod’s history and in many historical articles that have been written.

We often think of the two oaks at Koshkonong, Wisconsin, under which Pastor J.W.C. Dietrichson preached in 1844. A little over 100 years later, Pastor Johnson continues in his article: “The oak trees still stand at Lime Creek. [Pastor Iver Johnson was the pastor at Lime Creek when he wrote these words.] They are taller and sturdier. The Synod lives today also, but it too has changed. It has become larger, stronger, adding proof to the Lord’s promise regarding His Word: “It shall not return unto me void . . . It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Is. 55, 16. The forces of nature may one day humble our oaks. But if it be our determination to ever remain faithful to God’s Word, our Synod shall have a perennial youth and vigor, for are we not reinforced by Christ promise to the Church: The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

The president of the synod, Pastor Bjug Harstad said the following words his sermon at this 1918 convention: “The faith that the fathers fearlessly confessed in speech and writing, and which they have also embodied in our Synodical constitution and church policy, is give us by God Himself. We have a Chrit right to stand on this ground, and we cannot yield to false brethren and this for the very reason that we want to retain the freedom which the Gospel gives us. . . . Let us remember and follow these words of Jeremiah the prophet: “Thus says the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for you souls.”

There is a monument to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod’s place of reorganization, erected at the Lime Creek Church that reads as follows:

“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.” John 8:31.

“Here in June 1918, a number of pastors and laymen of the Norwegian Synod, who for scriptural reasons could not, in good conscience, consent to their Synod’s merger with two other Lutheran bodies, met to reorganize the Norwegian Synod of he American Evangelical Lutheran Church. (Evangelical Lutheran Synod since 1957.”

“Erected by the youth of the Iowa-Southern Minnesota circuit of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, October 1969.”

The 20 minute video showing the reenactment of this convention can be found at: <https://els.org/history/>. It is also located on the Web page of Grace Lutheran Church in Lake Mills: <https://northerniowalutherans.com/grace-lutheran-church/grace-lutheran-heritage/>.



*Circuit 7 Pastors conference in September 2018.*

*Pastors from ELS Circuit 7 met at the historical Lime Creek Lutheran Church, rural Lake Mills, Iowa, on September 10, 2018. Pictured (back row, L to R): Pastor Tim Erickson, President John Moldstad, Pastors Peter Faugstad, Ron Pederson, Christian Walz, Bob Harting.*

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## Since 1918

The congregation hosted the synod convention again in 1927. This was also an historic convention. It was this convention that voted to take over Bethany Lutheran College.

In 1966 Lime Creek Lutheran Church became a part of a multiple congregation parish in northern Iowa. This became a five-point parish with the addition of Immanuel of Riceville, Iowa, in 1971.

## Merger to form Grace

As the number of members dwindled due to a drop in the area population, membership and church attendance on Sundays also went down. An example of this is also seen in the public schools of Winnebago County, some in the county had to merge with others because of the drop in in the number of students. Even with a five-point parish in the church, it became difficult to continue serving the means of Grace. In 2024 Lime Creek merged with Lake Mills Lutheran and Somber Lutheran to form a new congregation called "Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church." Regular services have been discontinued, but the people are served with God's Word and Sacraments as member of Grace in Lake Mills.

In coming issues of Oak Leaves, we will look at the other E.L.S. congregations in Winnebago County, Iowa.



# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 1925

100 years ago - 1925

The 1925 Convention of the Norwegian Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (which later was

renamed the Evangelical Lutheran Synod) was held at Nicollet Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church (became Norseland Evangelical Lutheran Church) of St. Peter, MN, 11 to 17 of June 1925

The President of the synod was George Albert Gullixson. This is the second part of the address he gave at the convention. It is a continuation from the last issue of Oak leaves. J. Herbert Larson translated it in 2004

## Presidential Address 1925

That the Norwegian State Church has made itself guilty of a sin cannot be denied. We cannot do other than to keep our distance from that which is now in vogue between other Norwegian Lutheran church bodies over here, of cultivating fraternal and religious fellowship with missionaries from the Norwegian State Church where such an unbiblical and un-Lutheran behavior is tolerated in doctrine and life.

Faithfulness toward our Savior demands that His disciples take a completely different position toward such phenomena in the churches than to treat those who make themselves guilty of such a thing, as brethren in the faith.

Whoever really believes Jesus' words: "Whoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whoever will deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 10:32) — will never join with those who deny or omit Jesus' name in prayer and confession, whether they call themselves Free Masons or modern theologians.

Love for God and men forbids it.

On the other hand, whoever believes Christ's words: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," will take this word to heart. He will ask himself: Am I now obedient to my Savior in this matter, or am I standing before him as a deaf and disobedient disciple?

Where the word of Christ dwells richly in the heart, there no one who makes himself guilty of neglect will

have any peace. No, a feeling of responsibility for the salvation of others is laid upon such a Christian's heart by the Holy Ghost. He asks with Paul: "Lord, what do you want me to do?" In this prayer Paul has shown the proper mind of a disciple. Love for Christ and thankfulness to him make him a soul who is willing to serve. He prays, whatever you wish is what I am going to do. A personal willingness to serve was one of the fruits of his conversion. (continued in the next issue)



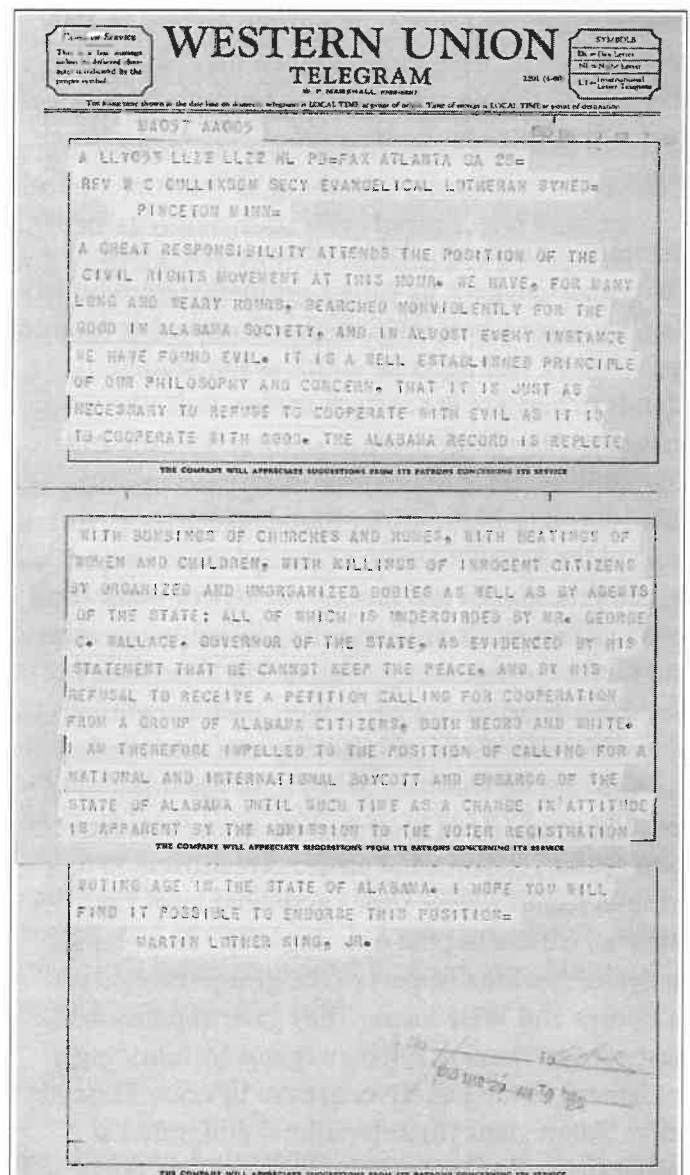
STATE, AS EVIDENCED BY HIS STATEMENT THT HE CANNOT KEEP THE PEACE, AND BY HIS REFUSAL TO RECEIVE A PETITION CALLING FOR COOPERATION FROM A GROUP OF ALABAMA CITIZENS, BOTH NEGRO AND WHITE. I AM THEREFORE IMPELLED TO THE POSTION OF CALLING FOR A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BOYCOTT AND EMBARGO OF THE STATE OF ALABAMA UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A CHANGE IN ATTITUDE IS APPARENT BY THE ADMISSION TO THE VOTER REGISTRATION BOOKS OF AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF THE NEGRO CITIZENS OF VOTING AGE IN THE STATE OF ALABAMA. I HOPE YOU WILL FIND IT POSSIBLE TO ENDORSE THIS POSITION. = MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

A Telegram from Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1965, March 29, a telegram was received by Synod secretary, W.C. Gullixson from Martin Luther King, Jr. It may of interest to Oak Leaves readers. It reads:

A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY ATTENDS THE POSITION OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AT THIS HOUR. WE HAVE, FOR MANY LONG AND WEARY HOURS, SEARCHED NONVIOLENTLY FOR THE GOOD IN ALABAMA SOCIETY, AND IN ALMOST EVERY INSTANCE WE HAVE FOUND EVIL. IT IS A WELL ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLE OF OUR PHILOSOPHY AND CONCERN, THAT IT IS JUST AS NECESSARY TO REGUSE TO COOPERATE WITH EVIL AS IT IS TO COOPERATE WITH GOOD. THE ALABAMA RECORD IS REPLETE WITH BOMBINGS OF CHURCHES AND HOMES, WITH BEATINGS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, WITH KILLINGS OF INNOCENT CITIZENS BY ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED BODIES AS WELL AS BY AGENTS OF THE STATE: ALL OF WHICH IS UNDERGIRDED BY MR. GEORGE C. WALLACE, GOVERNOR OF THE



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# THE BEGINNINGS OF NORWEGIAN IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES

2025 is an important anniversary year for Norwegians in America. While individual Norwegians and families had come to America before, they had arrived on ships that originated in other countries. Organized Norwegian immigration to North America began in 1825, 200 years ago. On July 4 of that year, the Restauration left the harbor of Stavanger, Norway, with 45 passengers and seven crew. After a long and difficult journey, the group arrived in New York on Oct. 9. Sometimes dubbed the “Norwegian Mayflower,” the Restauration has become a symbol of the first organized migration from Norway to North America.

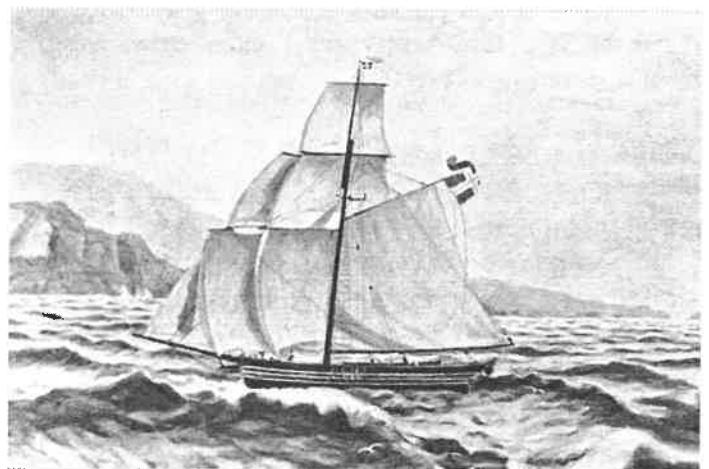
The immigrants onboard the Restauration were Haugeans, Quakers, and their sympathizers, who left Norway in search of religious freedom and economic opportunity. Sailing as far south as the Madeira Islands to harness the eastern trade winds, the group arrived in New York more than three months and 6,000 miles later. On their 14-week journey, they sailed south to Madeira, an island off Portugal, then crossed the broad expanse of the Atlantic. They reached the Caribbean having run dry of water (due to a disastrous misunderstanding in Madeira), and had further problems upon reaching New York: The ship carried more passengers than permitted by immigration laws and the ship was impounded and the captain was held in jail until the fines could be paid. After intervention from President John Quincy Adams, the passengers moved on to settle in Kendal, New York, on the banks of Lake Ontario, witnessing the opening of the Erie Canal en route. Eventually, part of the group traveled on to Illinois and Wisconsin. They gave impetus to the westward movement of Norwegians by founding a settlement in the Fox River area of Illinois. Though other Norwegians (mainly sailors) emigrated at earlier dates, the Restauration was the first organized

emigration from Norway to America

This year there is a reenactment of this voyage. The ship will leave Stavanger, Norway, on July 4 and arrive in New York on October 9. If you are in New York City on that date, you can see its arrival.



*U.S. postage stamp featuring the ship Restauration issued in honor of the 100th anniversary of Norwegian immigration in 1925.*



*A sloop like the ship Restauration.*



# ACORNS

## FROM THE ELS ARCHIVES



Theodore G. Gullixson - Archivist

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Mr. Andrew Petersohn, Bat. 4, Bn. B, 51st. F.A., Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

Dear Andrew,

You will not doubt be surprised to get a letter from me. But an occasional surprise is not going to hurt you. While making a hurried visit to my old home in Manitowoc, on my way back from St. Louis, recently, I was shown the nice letter you had written Alfred and Florence. And so I told them that I would also remember you with a few lines. I know how welcome a lone letter may be while in the army. I have served as a private myself, you know. And it was pretty hard for a poor home-sick body to stand in line when the mail was read off, but not so much as a postal for you.

The army isn't half bad when one once gets only the ropes. I rather liked it when I got into the swing of it. And what I would remind you of is this: Always to your duty, even though it doesn't happen to be the most pleasant. And don't only do what is expected of you. Do a little more. It's the small things which count. Make use of your time in the service to improve yourself wherever possible. And don't neglect to read your Testament daily. If you do not possess one, let me know, and I shall be glad to furnish you with a pocket edition. In fact, it isn't a bad plan to learn by heart a verse a day. Have you ever tried that? If not, give it a test, and I know you will find it very worthwhile. You need not be ashamed of being seen reading the Word of Life. The greatest military leaders we have had have been men of humble, child-like faith. And some of our very finest leaders to-day are men who seek counsel and comfort daily in the Word of God. What will military victories avail us in the end, if we have lost our spiritual heritage? What America needs most urgently in these days of sore distress is a true spiritual awakening. And that means that you and I,

who have had the blessed privilege of being taught the way to salvation as it so simply has been pointed out in Luther's Small Catechism, really live by the confession we have made when we promised that we would remain faithful to that saving faith even unto death.

This week Vivian (do you remember her?) will be graduated from her nurses' training course down in Chicago. I will not have the time to go down for the event, but Mrs. Madson will go to-morrow. The ladies of the congregation surprised her last week and presented her with the necessary money to make the trip. Juul will be graduated from Northwestern College at Watertown, Wis., in June, and Gudrun will be graduated from her preparatory course at Bethany College, Mankato, Minn., in June. Paul is also attending Bethany, but has still five years ahead of him.

We have had a rather cool spring here, though the pastures were green the last week in April. Rain, and more rain, has drenched the whole country here for the past forty-eight hours. But it'll dry up in time. I have ten of my congregation's boys in the armed forces, and more are leaving almost every week. I try to keep in touch with them by correspondence, but it gets to be quite an undertaking, when you are to answer all their letters promptly. I have also written to Ralph Thompson, my sister Emma's boy, who is down in Texas with the flying corps. Well, if you find time to drop me a few words, I shall be glad to hear from you, Andrew. I shall remember you in my prayers, and trust to God that you come home from the army a better man for the experience. May God be with you and bless you!

Faithfully,

Rev. Norman A. Madson

# ELS Historical Society Subscription-Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type:  Voting  Associate Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

