





CHRIST
THROUGH US

SYNOD CONVENTION 2025

WELS 175 resources

- *Christ Through Us* and *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans* (2nd edition)
- Bulletin inserts
- Interactive timeline
- Bible study
- WELS History YouTube channel
- Resources for congregational histories and archives
- Worship planning materials for a three-Sunday series in October
- Anniversary swag
- A video on WELS history (available in early 2026)

175 Years of God's Surprising Grace to the Wisconsin Synod



Prof. Joel D. Otto

- Dodransbicentennial
- Dodrabicentennial
- Dequasbicentennial
- Dosquicentennial
- Demisemiseptcentennial
- Quartoseptcentennial
- Terquasquicentennial
- Septaquintaquinquecentennial



He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations. (Psalm 105:8 NIV)

We have sinned, even as our ancestors did; we have done wrong and acted wickedly. (Psalm 106:6)

Save us, LORD our God, and gather us from the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise. (Psalm 106:47)

We have heard it with our ears, O God; our ancestors have told us what you did in their days, in days long ago. With your hand you drove out the nations and planted our ancestors; you crushed the peoples and made our ancestors flourish. It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them.

You are my King and my God, who decrees victories for Jacob. Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes. I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; but you give us victory over our enemies, you put our adversaries to shame. (Psalm 44:1-7)

My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. (Psalm 78:1-4)

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south. (Psalm 107:1-3)



Anniversary Applications

- Remember God's faithfulness to his promise that the gospel will be preached; by his grace, "Christ through us"
- Confession for our shortcomings; trust in God's grace and forgiveness
- Appreciate God's victories through sinful and flawed people
- Teach a new generation about God's surprising grace to and through WELS for 175 years
- Give thanks for God's enduring love to us

*Amazing grace—that chose us ere the worlds were made;
amazing grace—that sent your Son to save;
amazing grace—that robed us in your righteousness
and taught our lips to sing glory and praise.*

*O faithful love—that shepherded through faithless years;
forgiving love—that led us to your truth;
unyielding love—that would not let us turn from you
but sent us forth to speak pardon and peace.*

Kurt Eggert
Christian Worship 582:2,3

Beginnings: A “Mild” Lutheran Synod





BARMEN

Museum

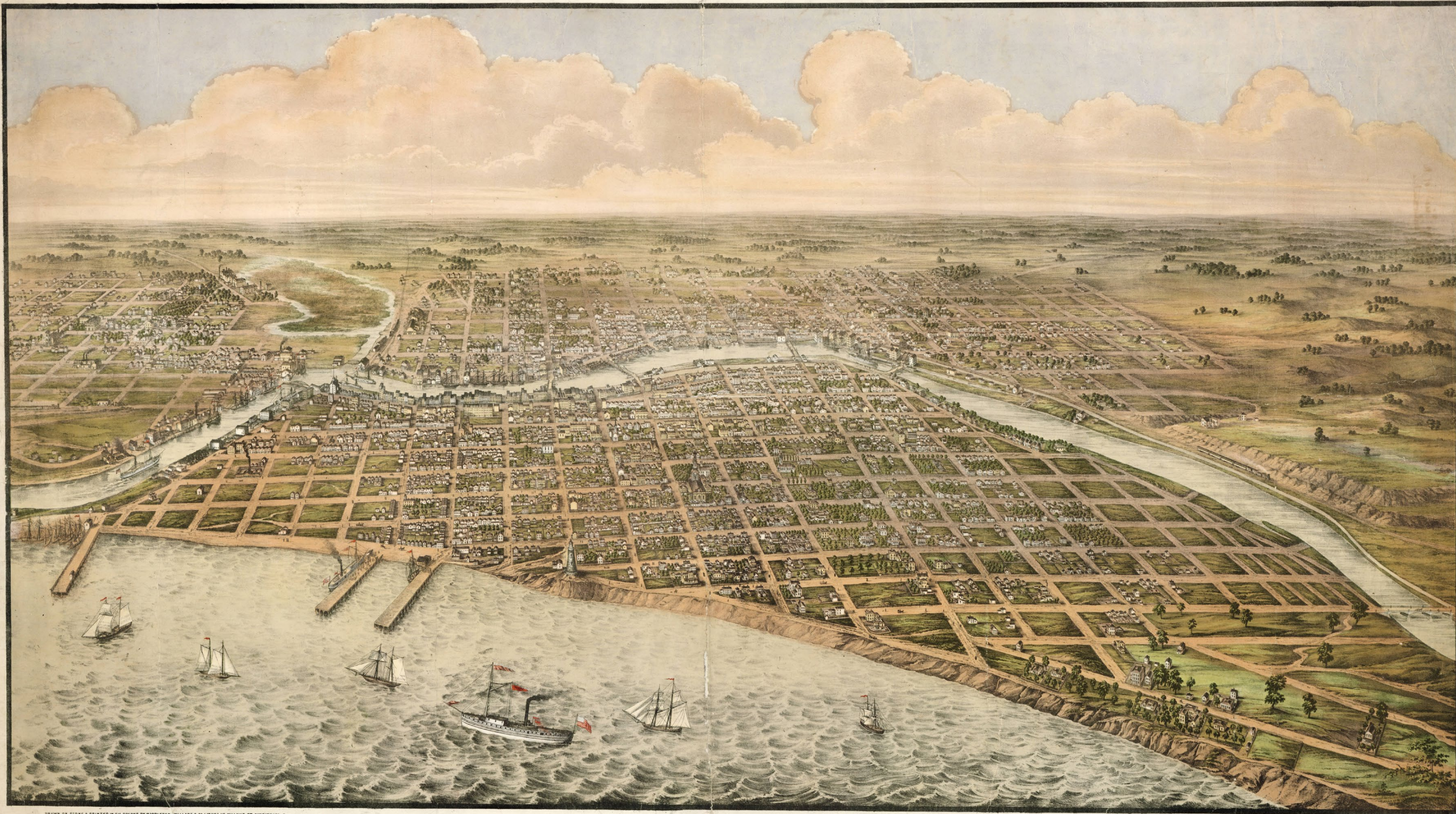
Missionshaus

Helm

Vorschule

*Ihre mit Ihrer lieben Frau beglückte Götter sendet uns in
W. Müller, Barmen. Fr. v. E. Kersch*





DRAWN ON STONE & PRINTED IN COLOURS BY WIDDLETON WALLACE & CO. LITHO' 115 WALNUT ST. CINCINNATI, O.

VIEW OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE,
WISCONSIN.

PUBLISHED BY J. T. PALMISTY.



Pastor J. Conrad.



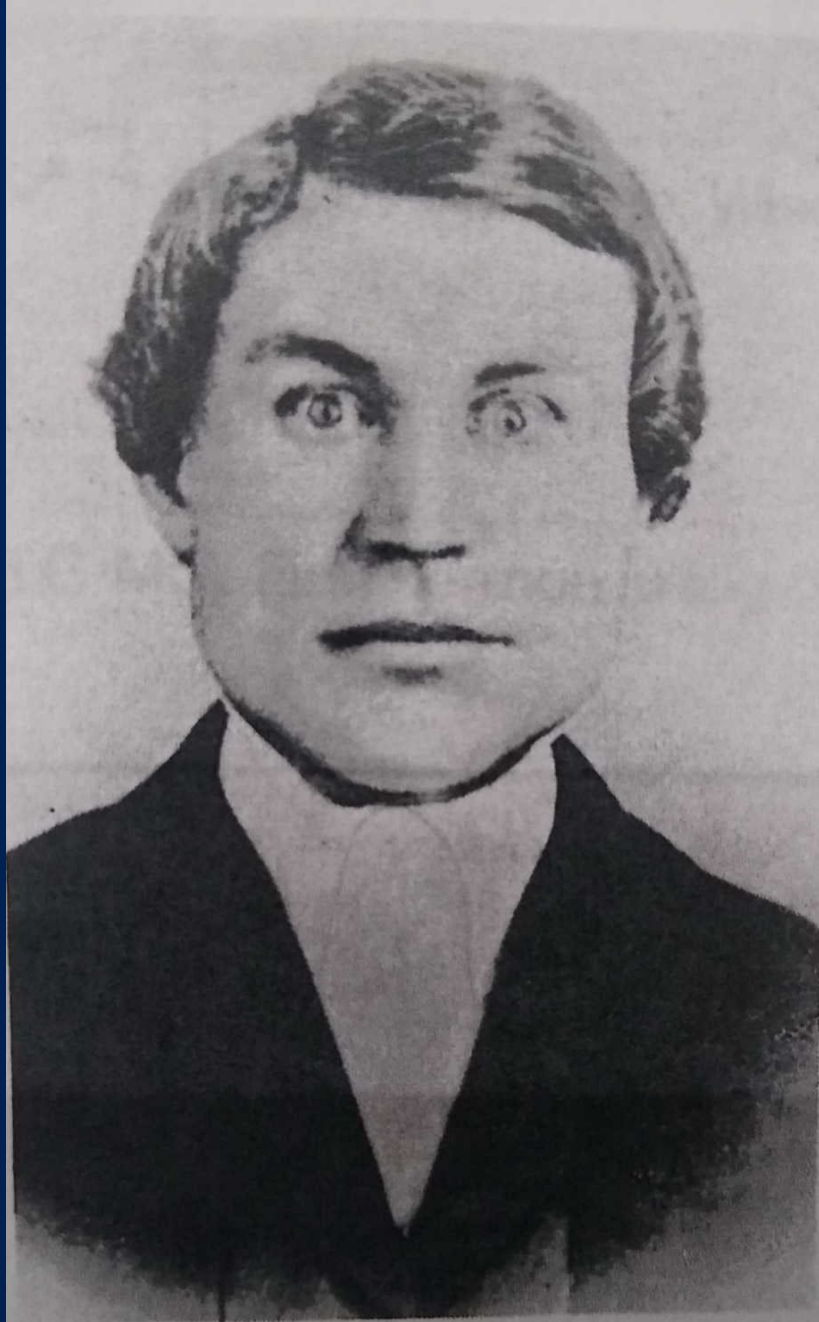


C. F. Goldammer

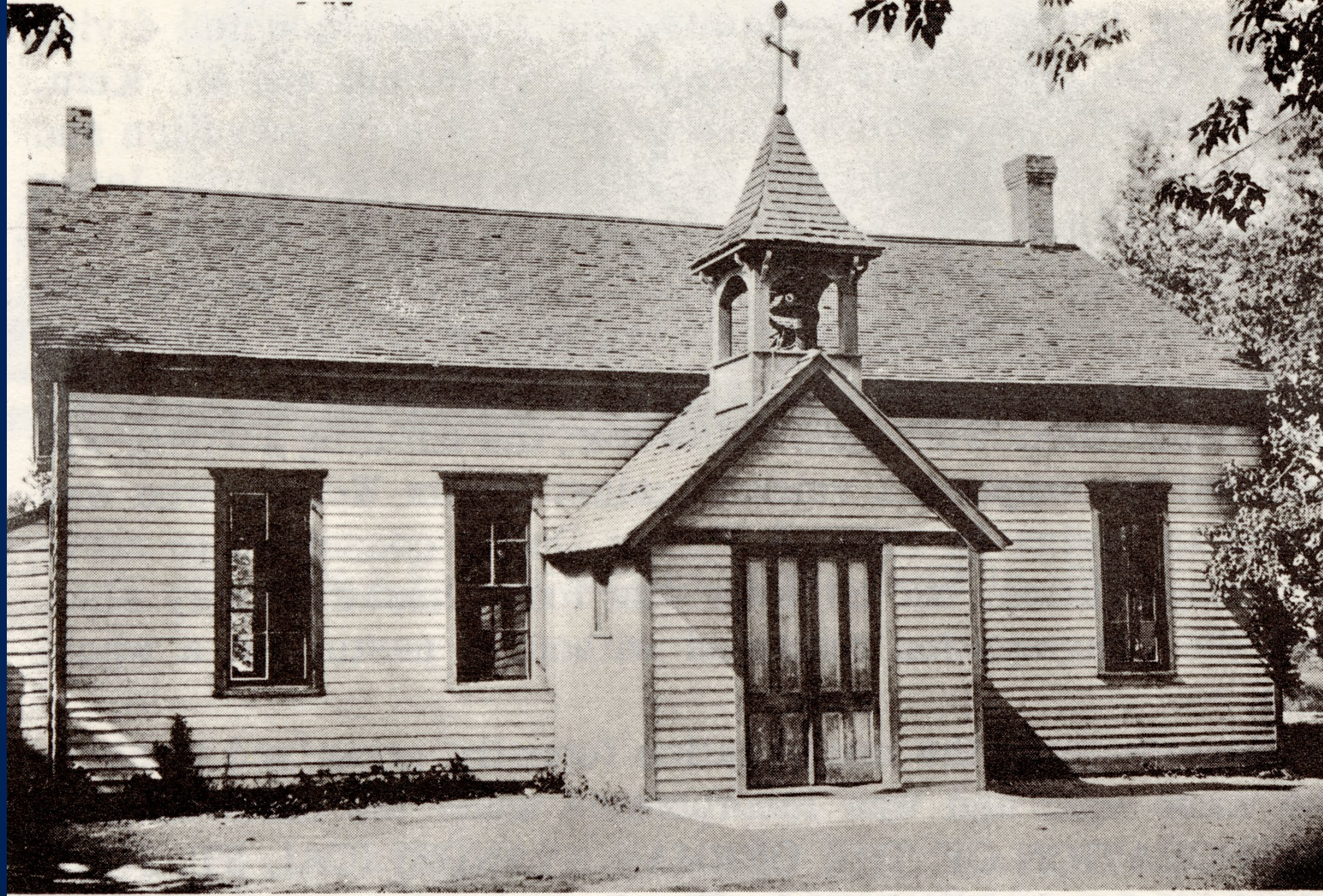


The Lack of Quality Pastors





PASTOR L. NIETMANN



30 Juni 1862

Der Herr Oberbürgermeister als ein das Stadtrathsamt
unserwürdigster Mann offenbar gesonnen ist und sich selbst
als solchen bekannt hat, so verspricht dasselbe hiermit
dass er am frühigen Tage den 30^{ten} Juni 1862
sein Amt von der Evangelisch lutherischen Gemeinde in
Newton Manitowoc Co. Wisc. niederlegt, dass er in
keinerlei Weise das Wohl dieser Gemeinde fördern und
finden, noch in dem Sinne eingreifen will;
er verspricht ferner: dass er sich fortan nicht mehr für
ein Glied der Evangelisch lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin
und angrenzenden Staaten aufser auf daselbst anzuwenden,
und dass er in keiner zu dieser Synode gehörigen Gemeinde
niedringen will.

Newton Manitowoc Co. Wisc.
30 Juni 1862

L. Nietmann

Im Auftrage des

*J. Ph. Sprengling ex. luth. Pastor,
Joh. Ernst Carstensen
Heinrich Struthof
Friedrich Jäger
J. Häpke
H. Buoch*

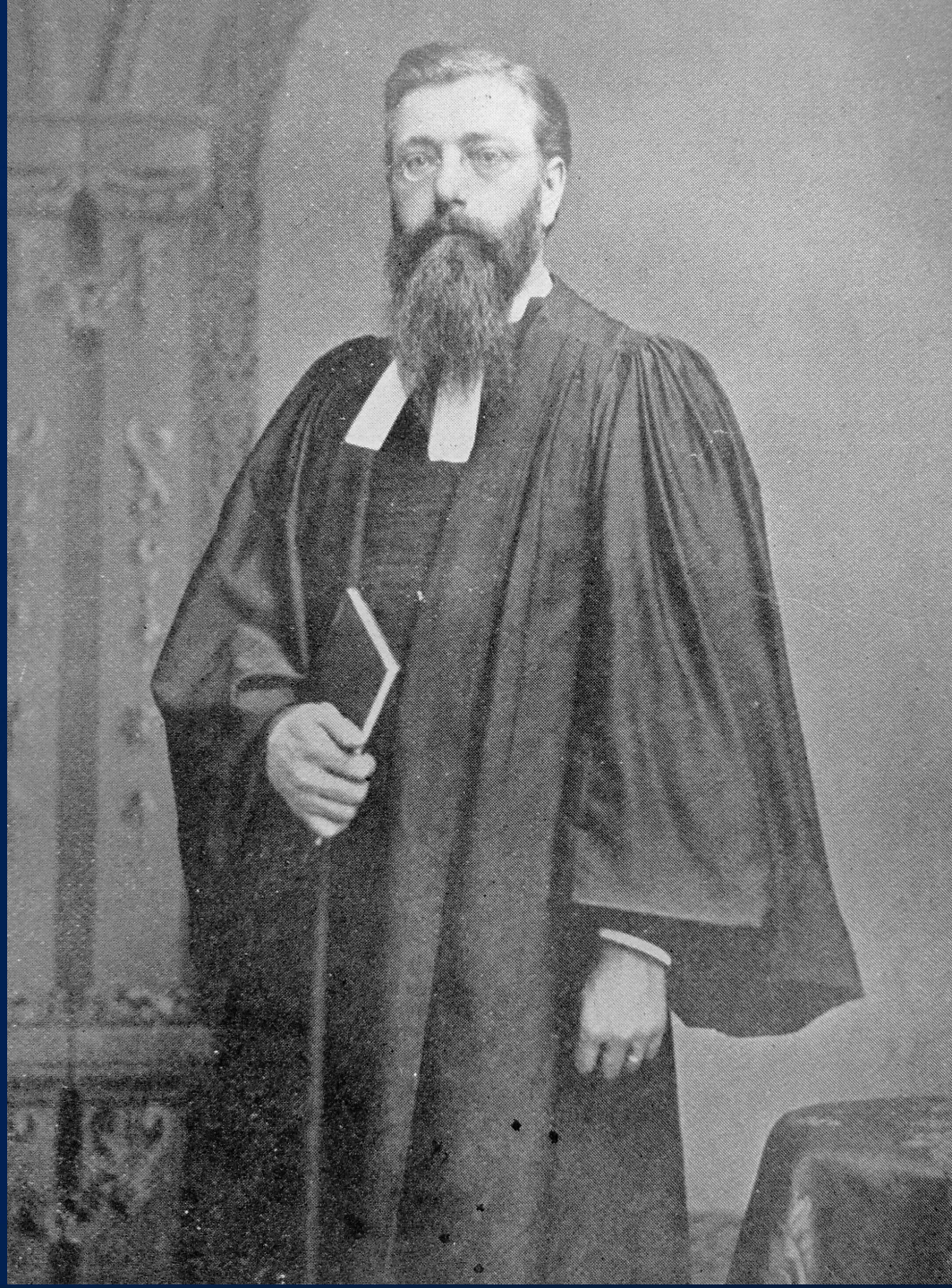






“A Well in Our Country”: Ministerial Education





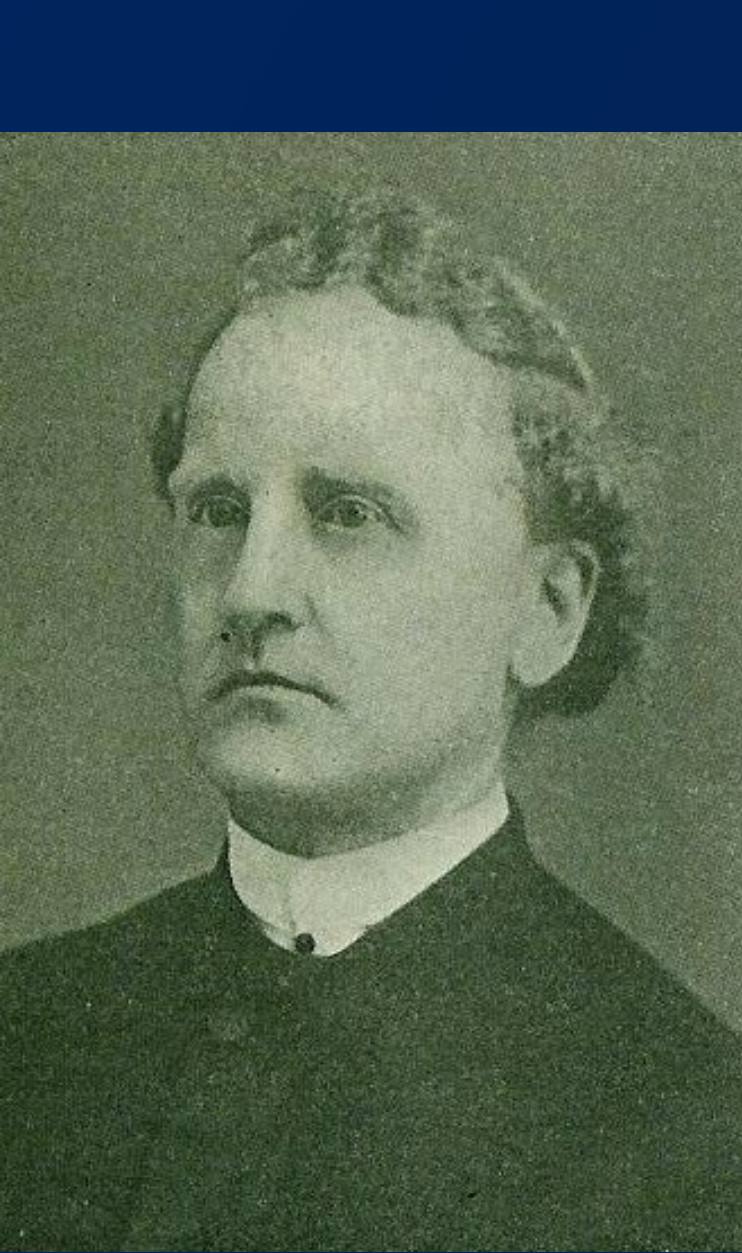




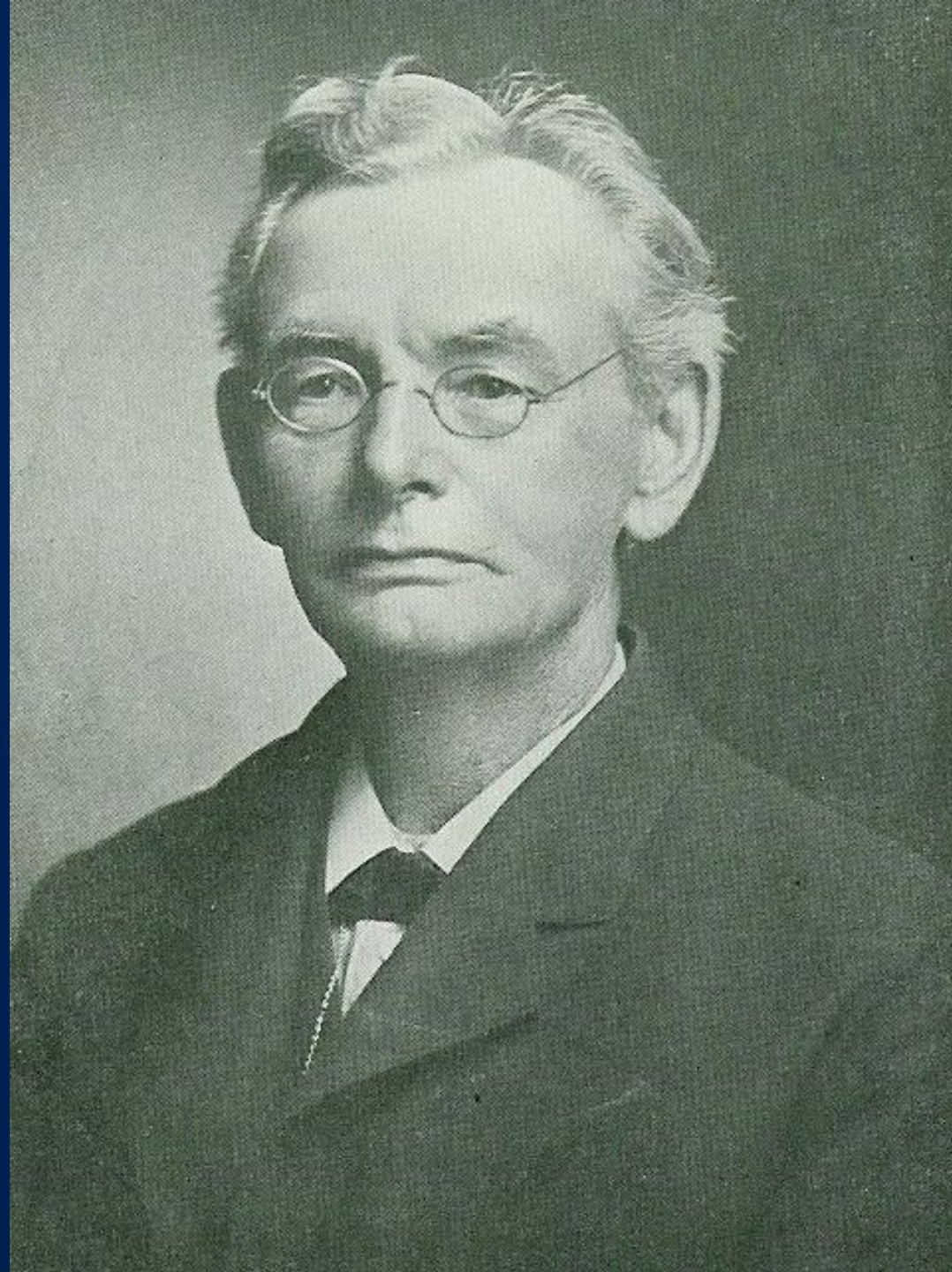


*We must dig a well in
our country, in our
synod, that will
supply the workers.*

Johannes Bading
1862 Synod Convention



















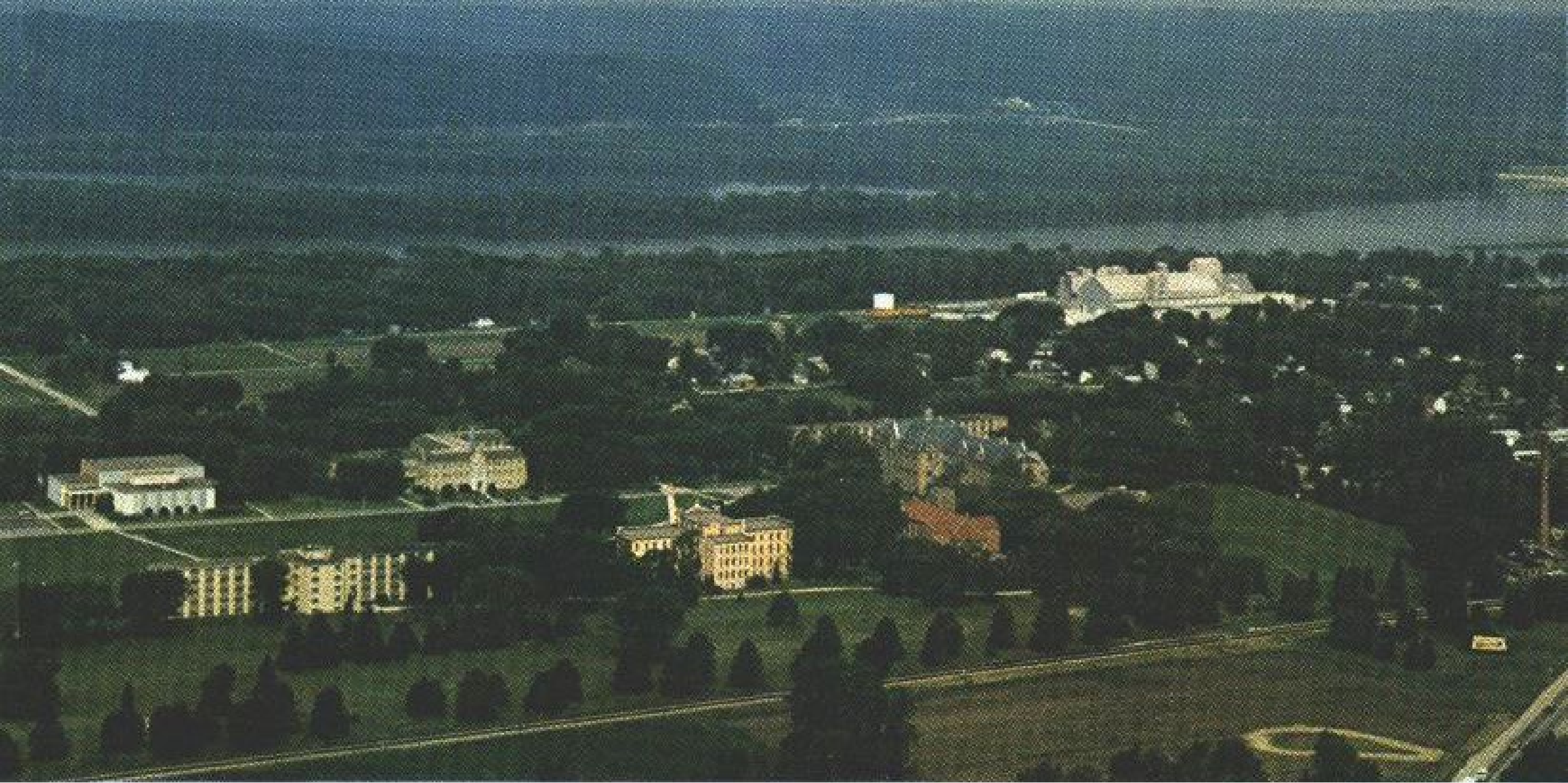












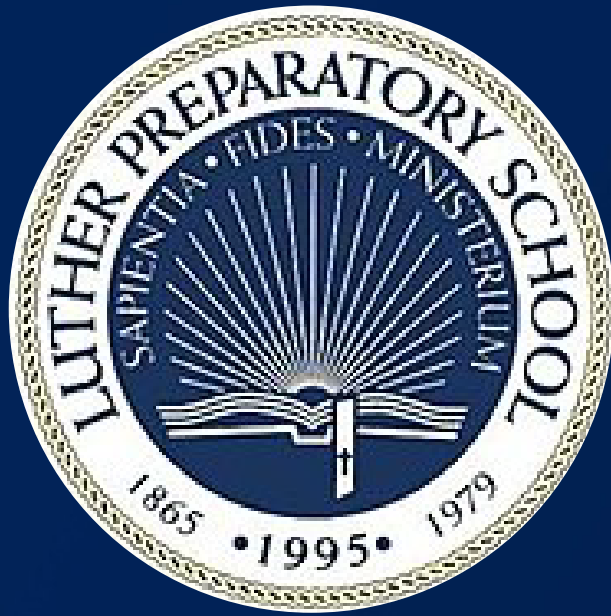
Aerial View of Campion



CAMPUS CENTER

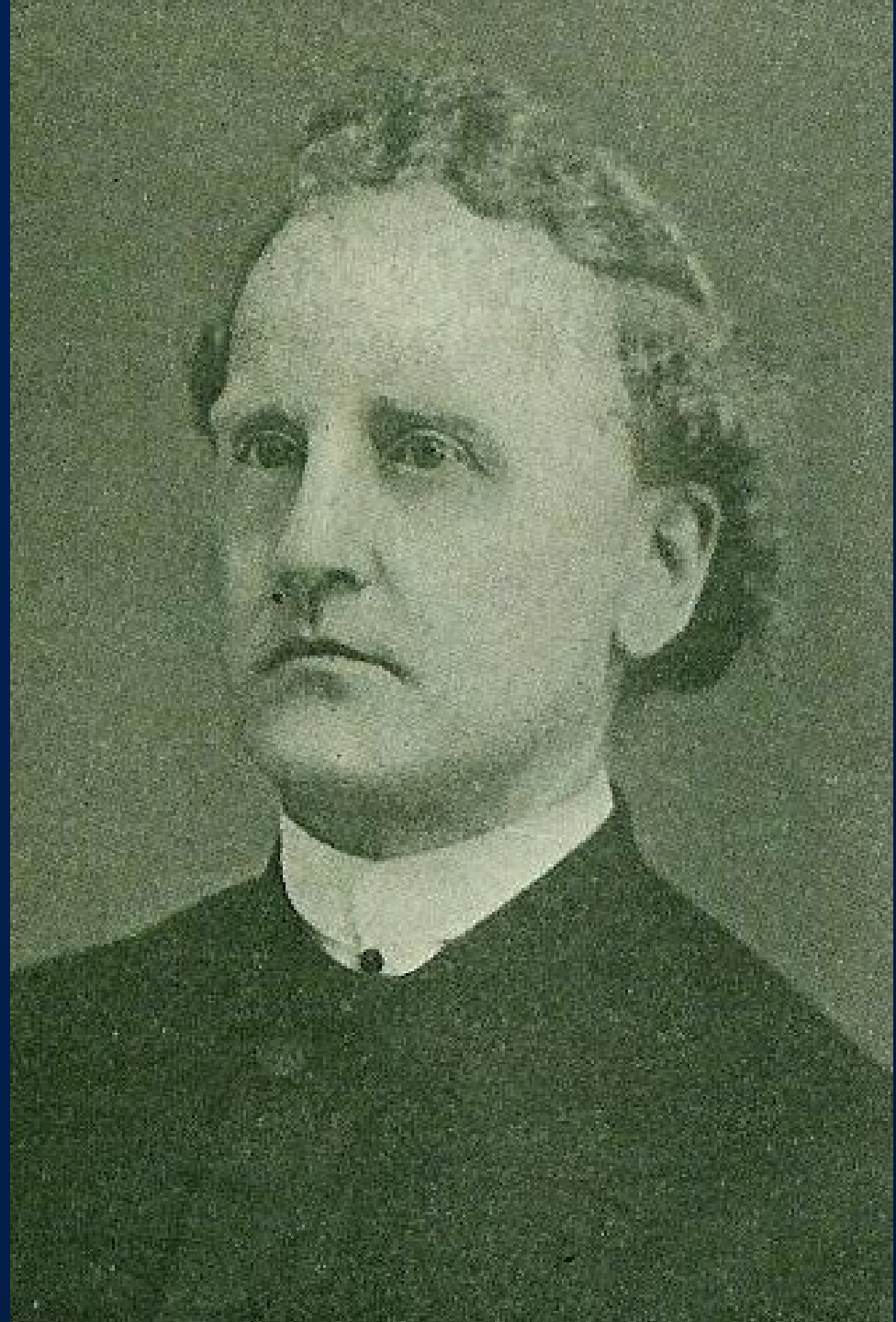
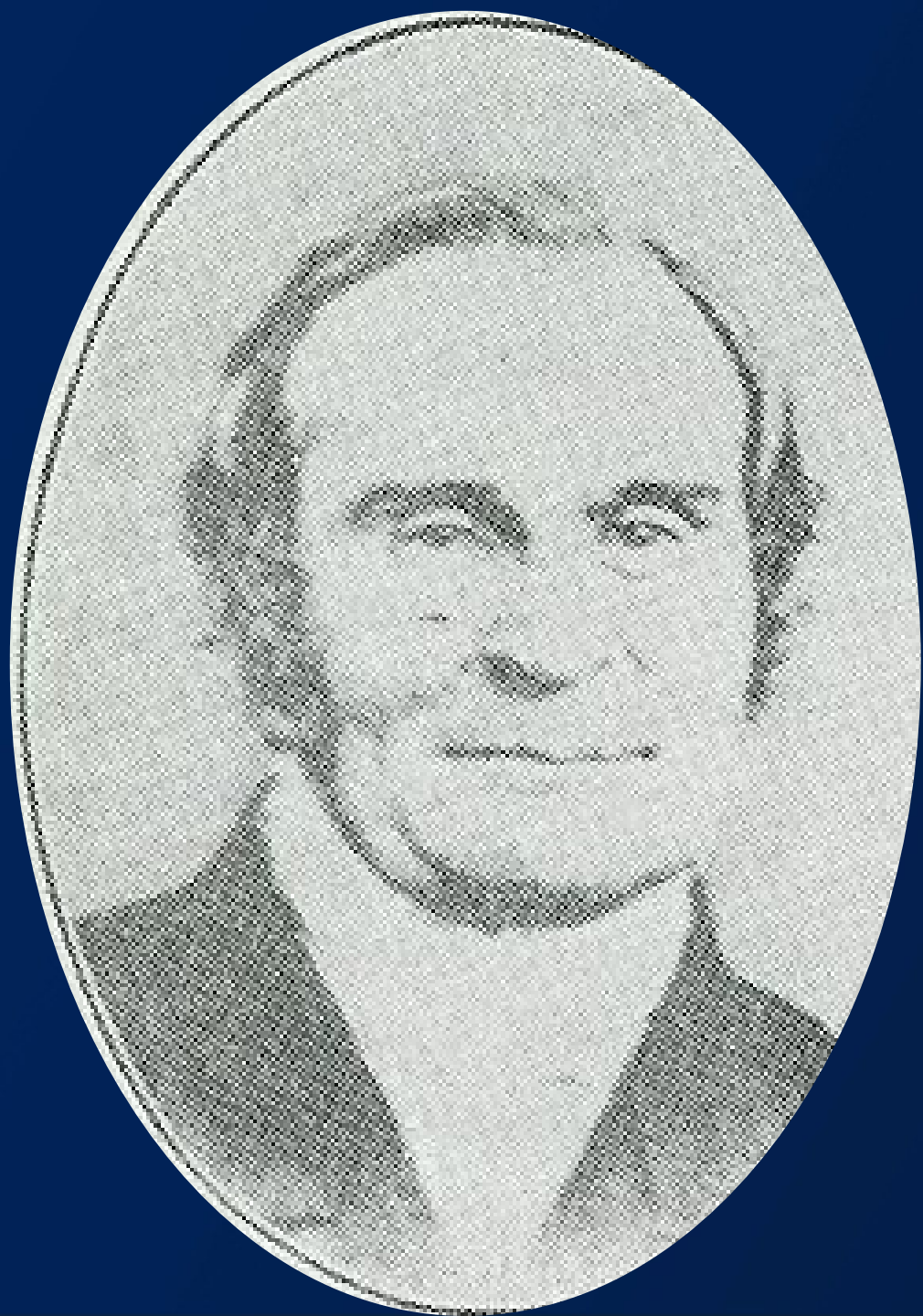
LUTHER
PREP
SCHOOL





A “Turn to the Right”: Becoming a More Confessional Synod









Verantwortlich für den Inhalt: Theodor Engelhardt, Verleger: Theodor Engelhardt, Druck: Theodor Engelhardt, 1881.

18. Jahrgang. St. Pauli, No. 10, August 1881. No. 1.

Verantwortlich für den Inhalt: Theodor Engelhardt, Verleger: Theodor Engelhardt, Druck: Theodor Engelhardt, 1881.

Der Lutheraner

Der Lutheraner ist ein Blatt für die Lutheraner. Es enthält alle Nachrichten, die den Lutheranern wichtig sind. Es enthält auch die Meinungen der Lutheraner über die verschiedenen Fragen der Zeit. Es ist ein Blatt für die Lutheraner, die sich für die Religion und die Kirche interessieren.

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DEFINITE PLATFORM,

DOCTRINAL AND DISCIPLINARIAN,

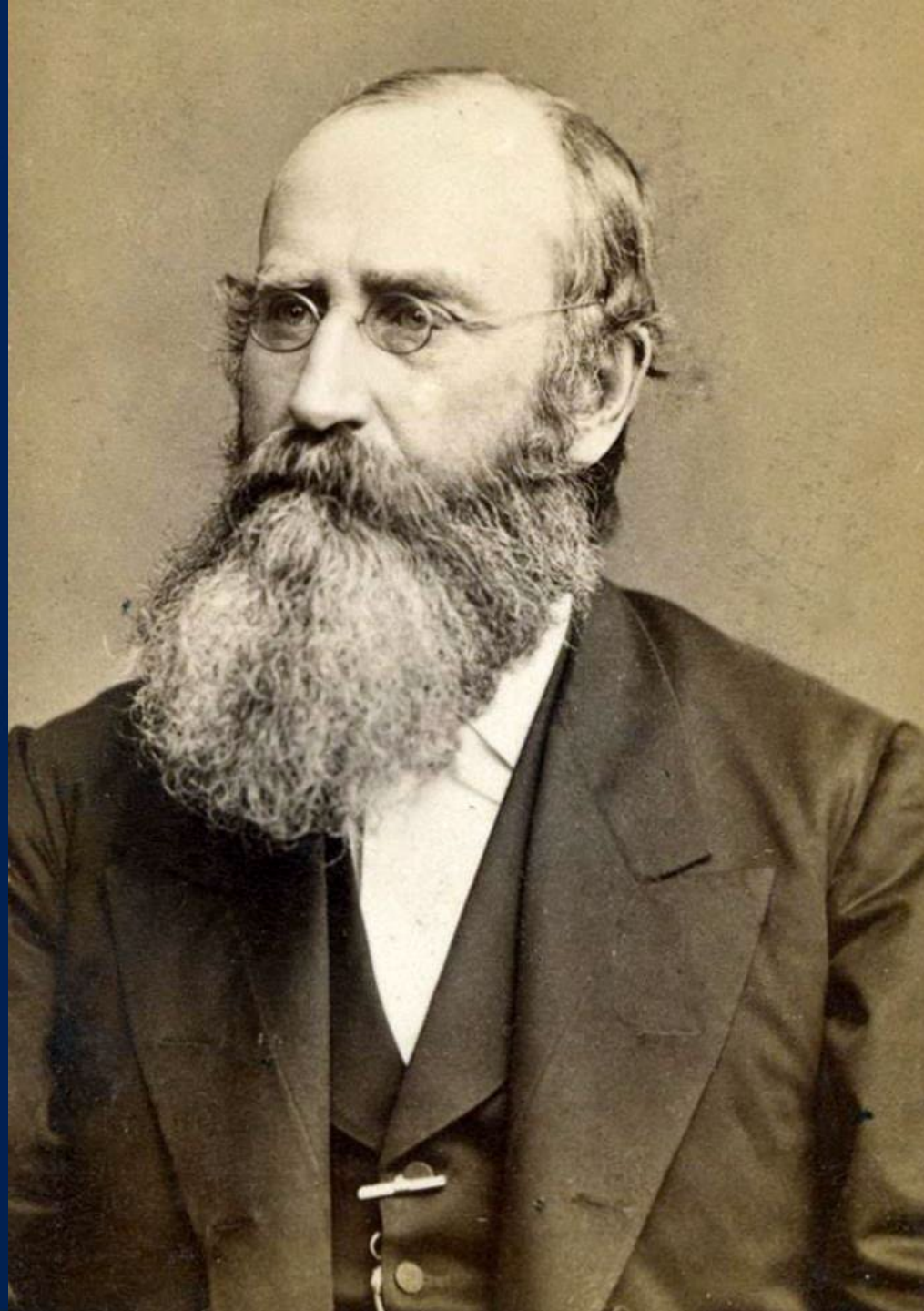
FOR
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN DISTRICT SYNODS;

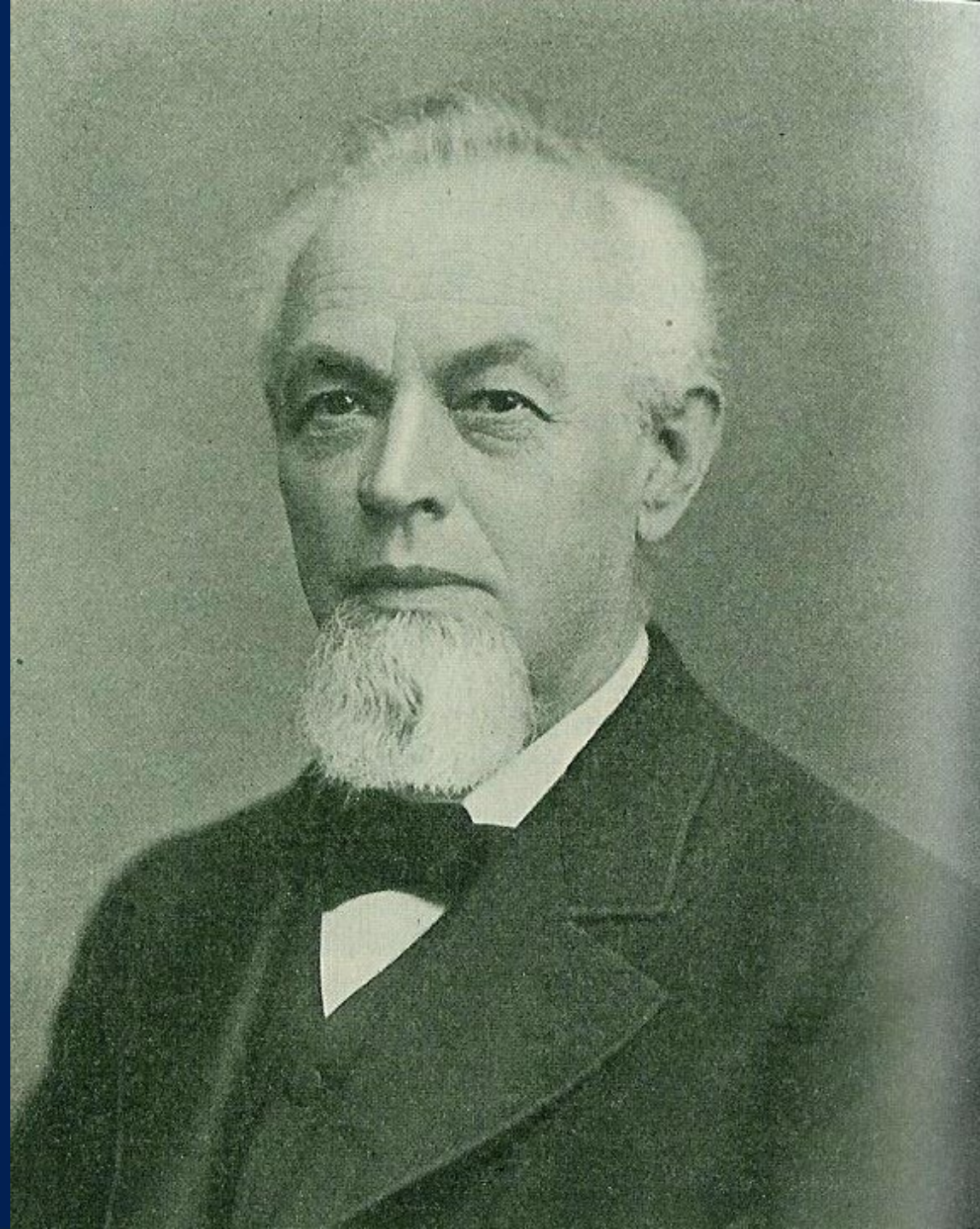
COMPILED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
PRINCIPLES OF THE

GENERAL SYNOD.



PHILADELPHIA:
MILLER & BURLOCK.
1855.







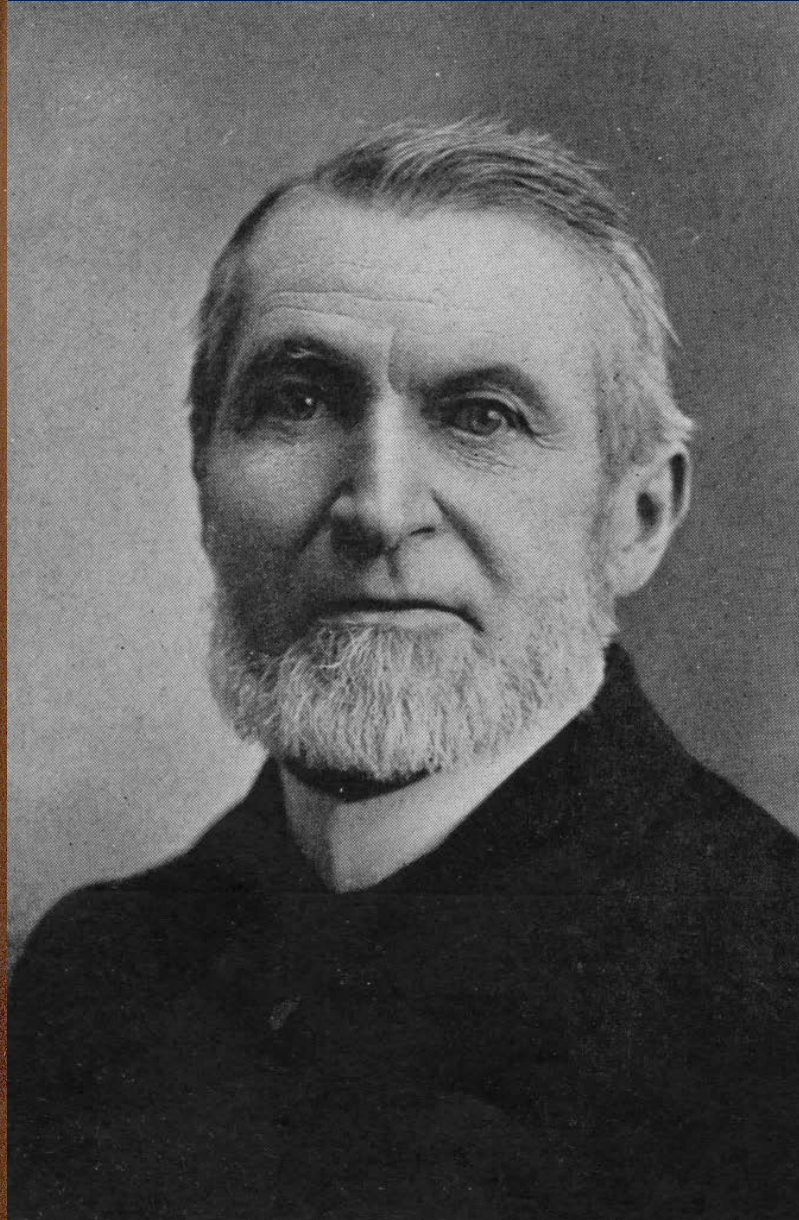


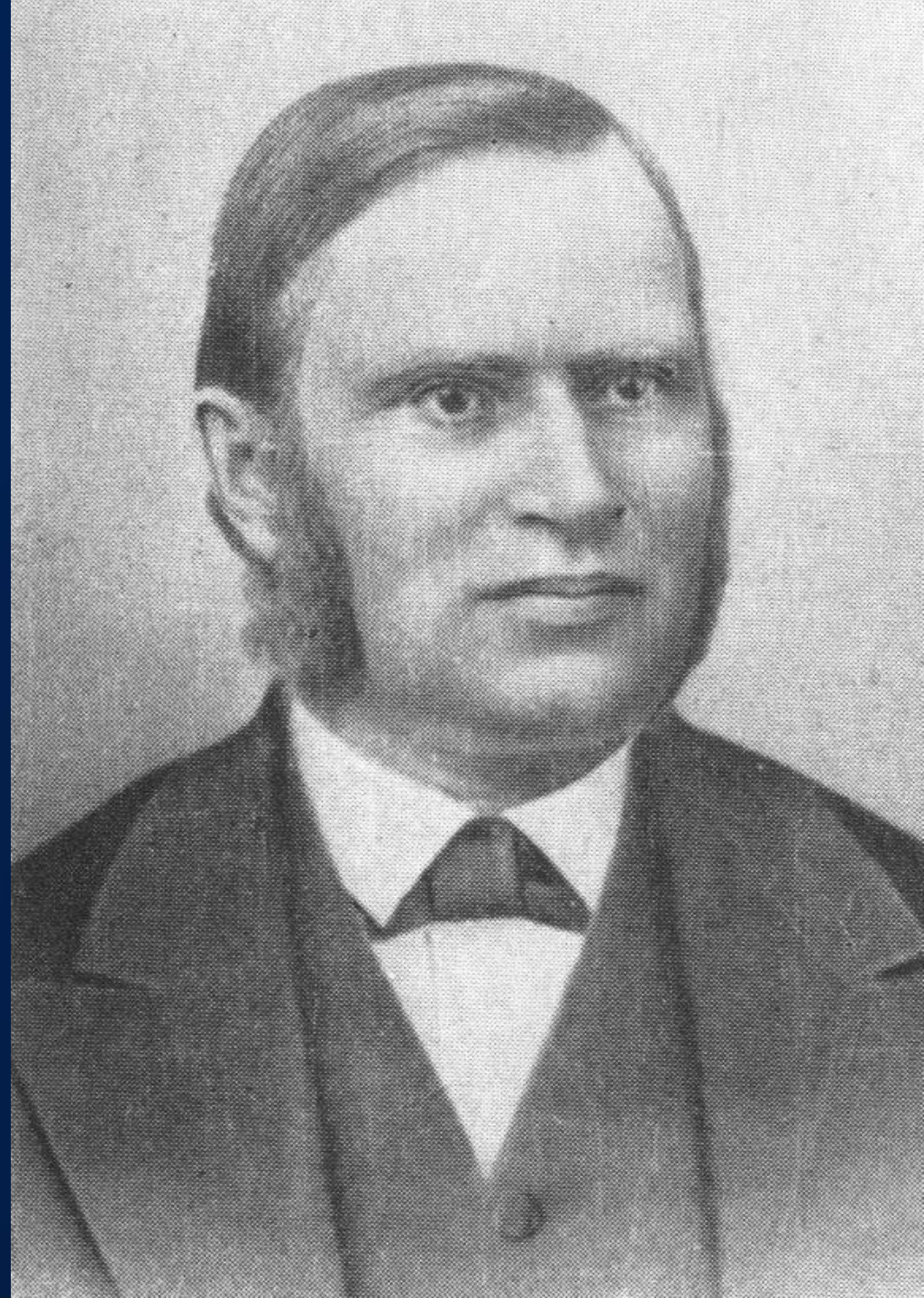
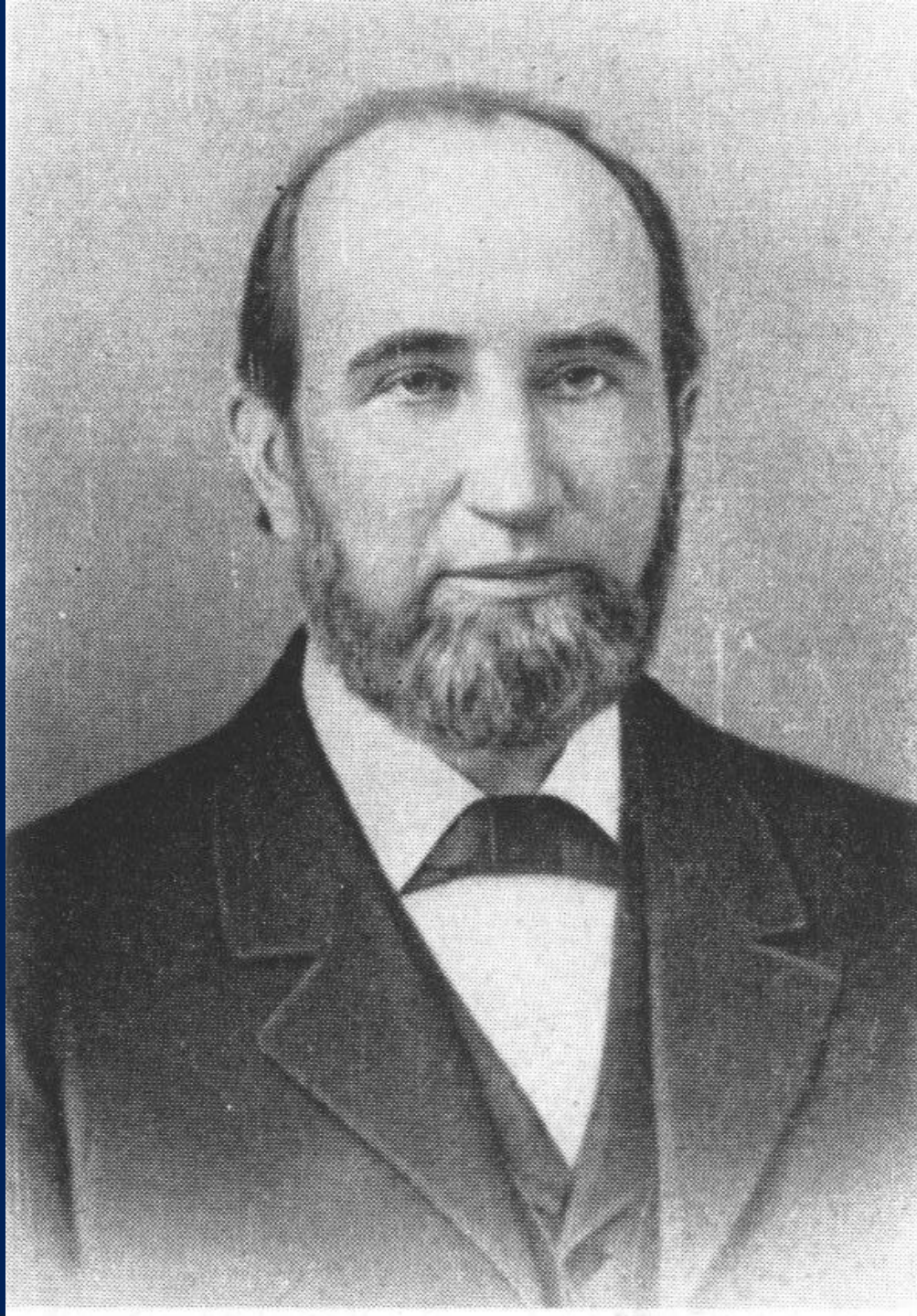
On the one hand, we openly accepted all the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, a fact which the synod pronounced virtually every year, yet on the other hand, we considered the relationship with the societies which are incorporated with the United Church and the Union to be something proper. . . . The vacillations . . . must have an end.

Johannes Bading
1868 Synod Convention

Questions arose over end times teaching (some were advocating for the false teaching of millennialism), the proper practice of church fellowship (some were fine with Reformed pastors preaching in Lutheran churches), and membership in lodges (some were allowing members to belong to non-Christian lodges such as the Masons).

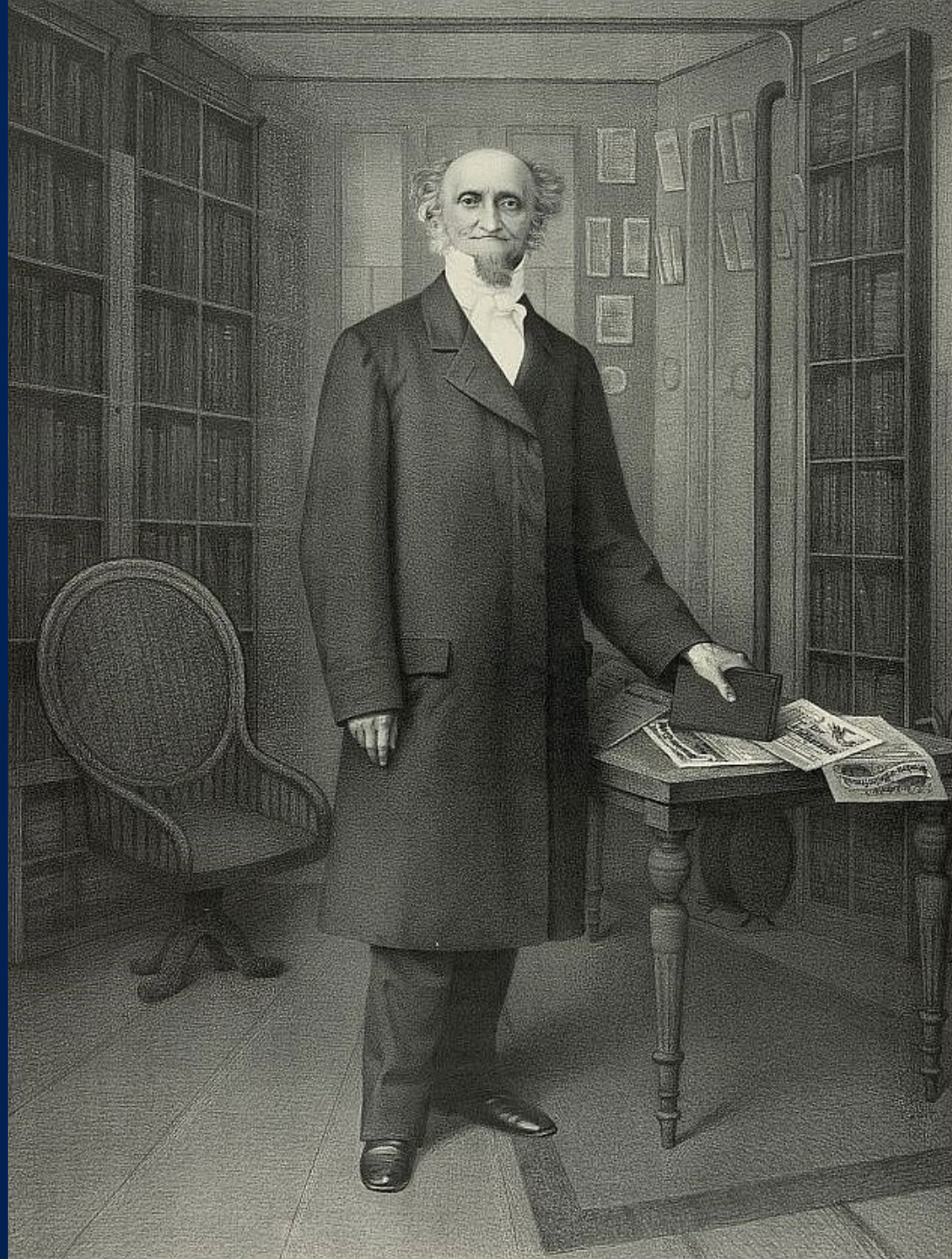
Christ Through Us, p. 40







John H. Sicker

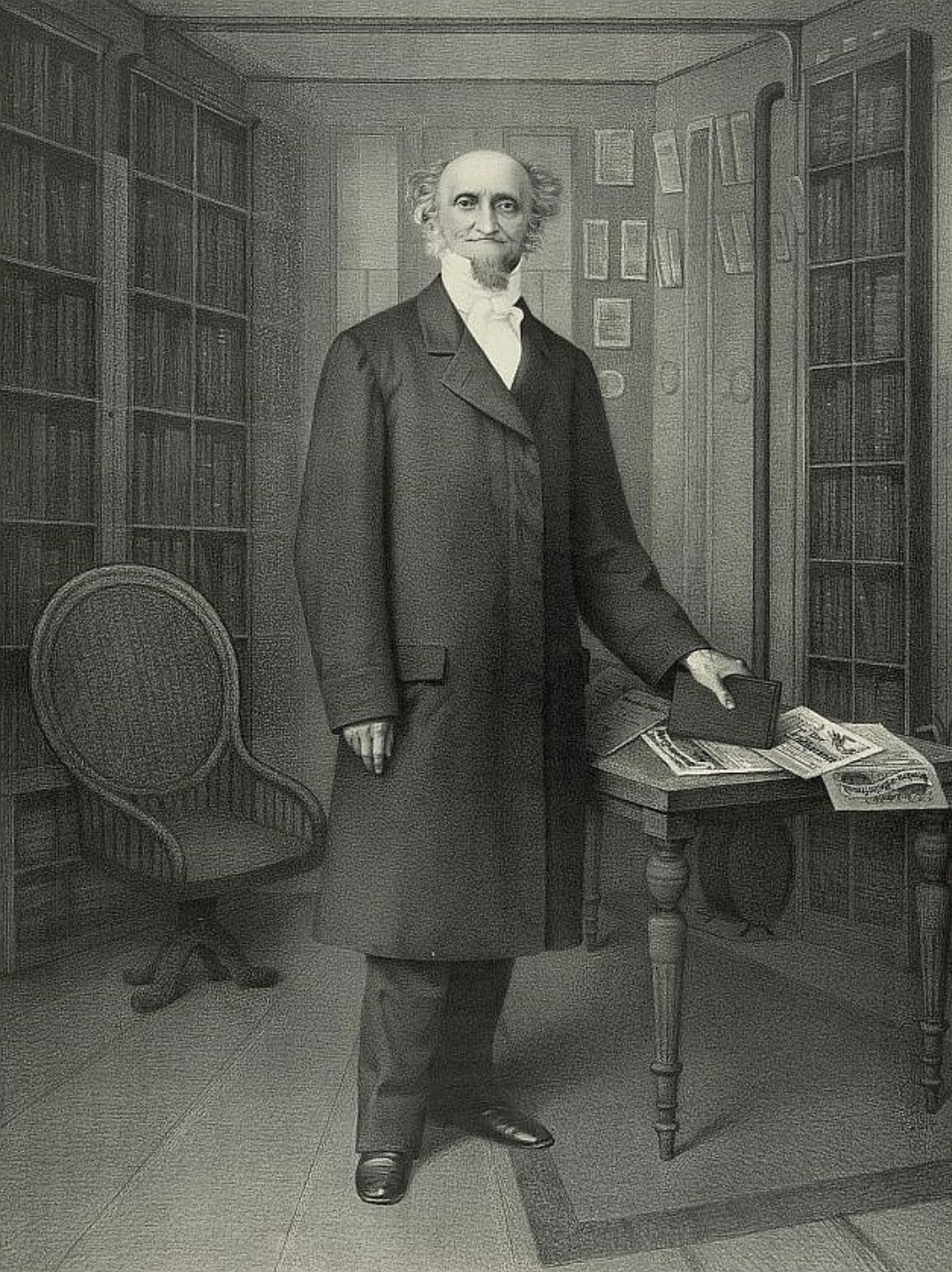


Doctrinal discussions *"revealed that there was full unity of faith. President Walther, previously the stern critic, was overjoyed. He included in his November 1 Lutheraner report the declaration: 'All our reservations about . . . Wisconsin . . . have been put to shame.'"*

The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans, p. 54





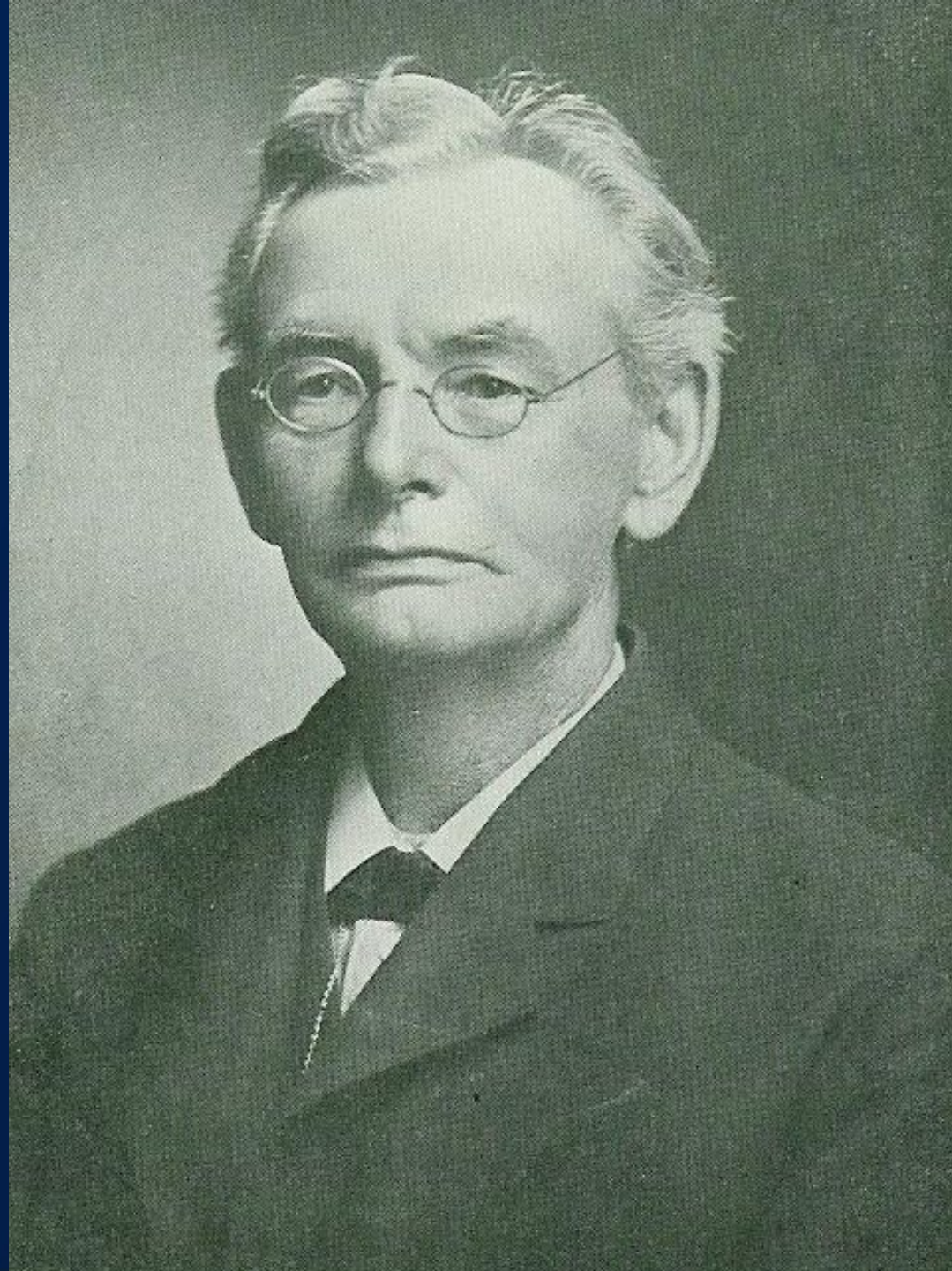
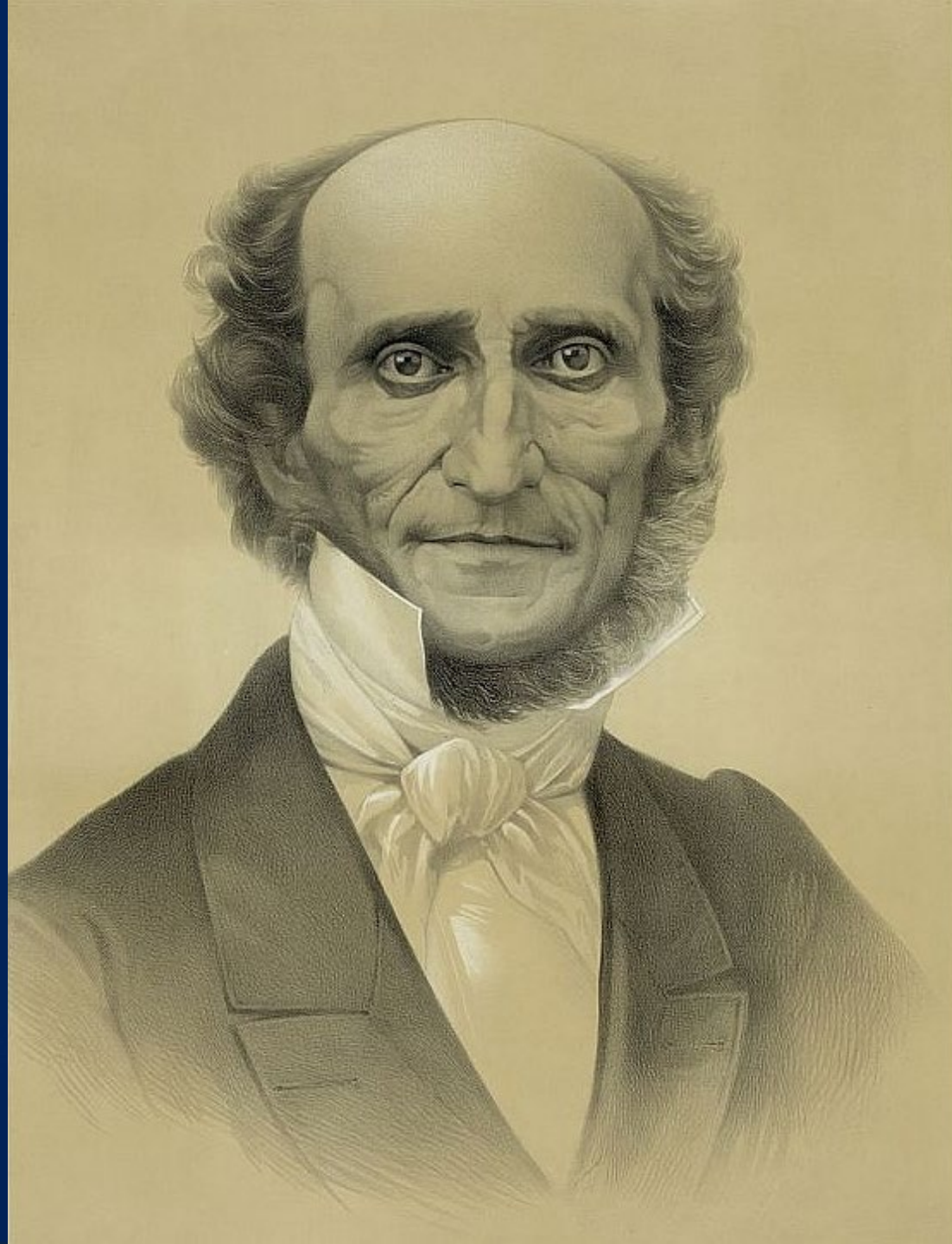


*Oh blessed, happy day!
Our children and
children's children will
speak of it and rejoice.*

C. F. W. Walther
1872 Synodical Conference

The orthodox Synodical Conference and its synods were above all to be a mission-minded Conference and mission-minded synods. Doctrinal integrity and mission work must go hand in hand.

The Synodical Conference: Ecumenical Endeavor, p. 59



The Mission Spirit of WELS: The Apache Mission

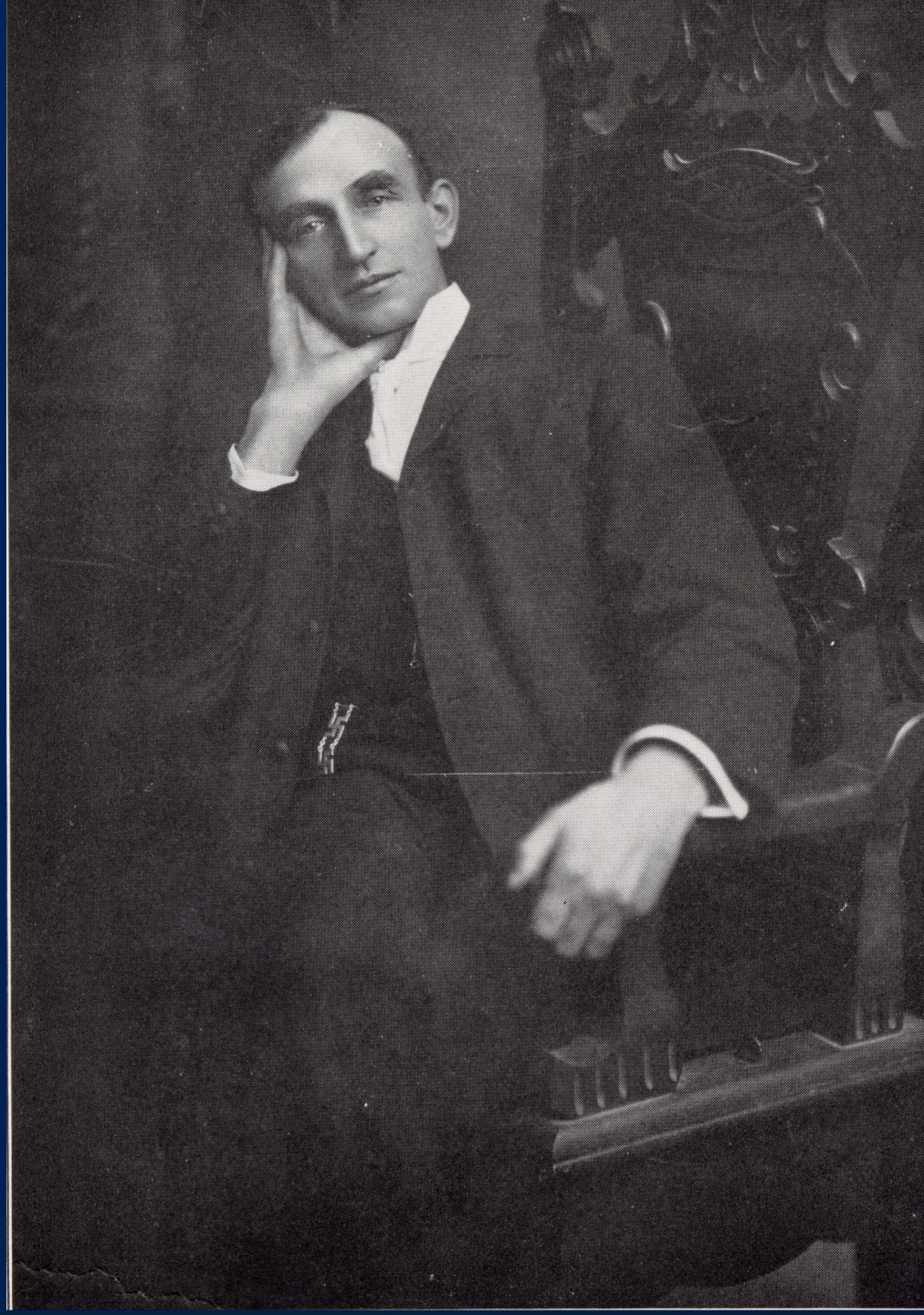


Early Growth of the Wisconsin Synod

- 1850: 5 pastors, 9 congregations/preaching places
- 1860: 20 pastors, 59 congregations/preaching places
- 1870: 53 pastors, 103 congregations
- 1880: 85 pastors, 147 congregations
- 1892: 145 pastors, 239 congregations



1893
Seminary Graduation
George Adaschek











Dec-1912











The Uplegger family. Pastor and Mrs. Henry Rosin, Dr. Francis Uplegger with daughters Gertrude and Dorothea, Pastor and Mrs. Alfred Uplegger



2. Daha-dza, yu
Nbiat'ae'hi shila
Ihidna-zhi' shilq-
nzhoni nyo
uyiwhlqts'av, shi-z
Shih nih-Ta, nshq
Nih hi-g'e Shih bil
JESUS nzhogo ar
4. Aniwta shilq-go z'













The Mission Spirit of WELS: The First Overseas Missions



Doktor Martin Luthers
Kleiner Katechismus.

Herausgegeben von
C. Gausewitz, Pastor.



Im Auftrag der ev.-luth. Synode von
Wisconsin u. a. Staaten.

Northwestern Publishing House
Milwaukee, Wis.

Doctor Martin Luther's
Small Catechism.

Edited by
C. Gausewitz, Pastor.



By Authority of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod
of Wisconsin and Other States.

Northwestern Publishing House,
Milwaukee, Wis.

341. Welche Gnadenmittel haben wir?

Das Wort des Evangeliums und die Sakramente.
(Vgl. Fr. 219 und 220.)

2 Kor. 5, 19. (Fr. 179.)

Luf. 24, 47. (Fr. 246.)

Röm. 10, 17. (Fr. 219.)

1 Pet. 1, 3, 23. (Fr. 223.)

Apgeich. 2, 38. (Fr. 219.)

Tit. 3, 5. (Fr. 223.)

1 Pet. 3, 21. Das Wasser macht uns selig in der Taufe.
(Vgl. Röm. 1, 16; Gal. 3, 2, 5; Eph. 5, 26; Luf. 22, 19, 20.)

342. Was sind Sakramente?

„Sakramente nennen wir die äußerlichen Zeichen und Beremonien, die da haben Gottes Befehl und haben eine angeheftete göttliche Zusage der Gnade.“

343. Welche äußerlichen Zeichen und Beremonien haben Gottes Befehl und eine angeheftete göttliche Zusage der Gnade?

Die heilige Taufe und das heilige Abendmahl. (Vgl. die beiden Hauptstücke darüber.)

Das Sakrament der heiligen Taufe.

344. Von welchem Gnadenmittel handelt der Katechismus zuerst?

Vom Sakrament der heiligen Taufe.

Matth. 28, 19. (Fr. 2.)

345. Warum zuerst von der Taufe?

Weil wir schon als junge Kinder getauft wurden.

Da sind wir zuerst der Gnade Gottes theilhaftig geworden, und der Herr unser Gott hat seinen G n a d e n b u n d mit uns gemacht.

341. Which means of grace have we?

The Word of the Gospel, and the sacraments.
(Comp. Q. 219 and 220.)

2 Cor. 5: 19. (Q. 179.)

Luke 24: 47. (Q. 246.)

Rom. 10: 17. (Q. 219.)

I Pet. 1: 3, 23. (Q. 223.)

Acts 2: 38. (Q. 219.)

Tit. 3: 5. (Q. 223.)

1 Pet. 3: 21. Baptism doth also now save us.
(Comp. Rom. 1: 16; Gal. 3: 2, 5; Eph. 5: 26; Luke 22: 19, 20.)

342. What are sacraments?

“Sacraments” is the name we give those outward tokens and ceremonies which have the command of God, and to which a divine promise of grace has been attached.

343. Which outward tokens and ceremonies have the command of God and a divine promise of grace attached?

Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Comp. the parts of the Catechism on these two subjects.)

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

344. Of which means of grace does the Catechism treat first?

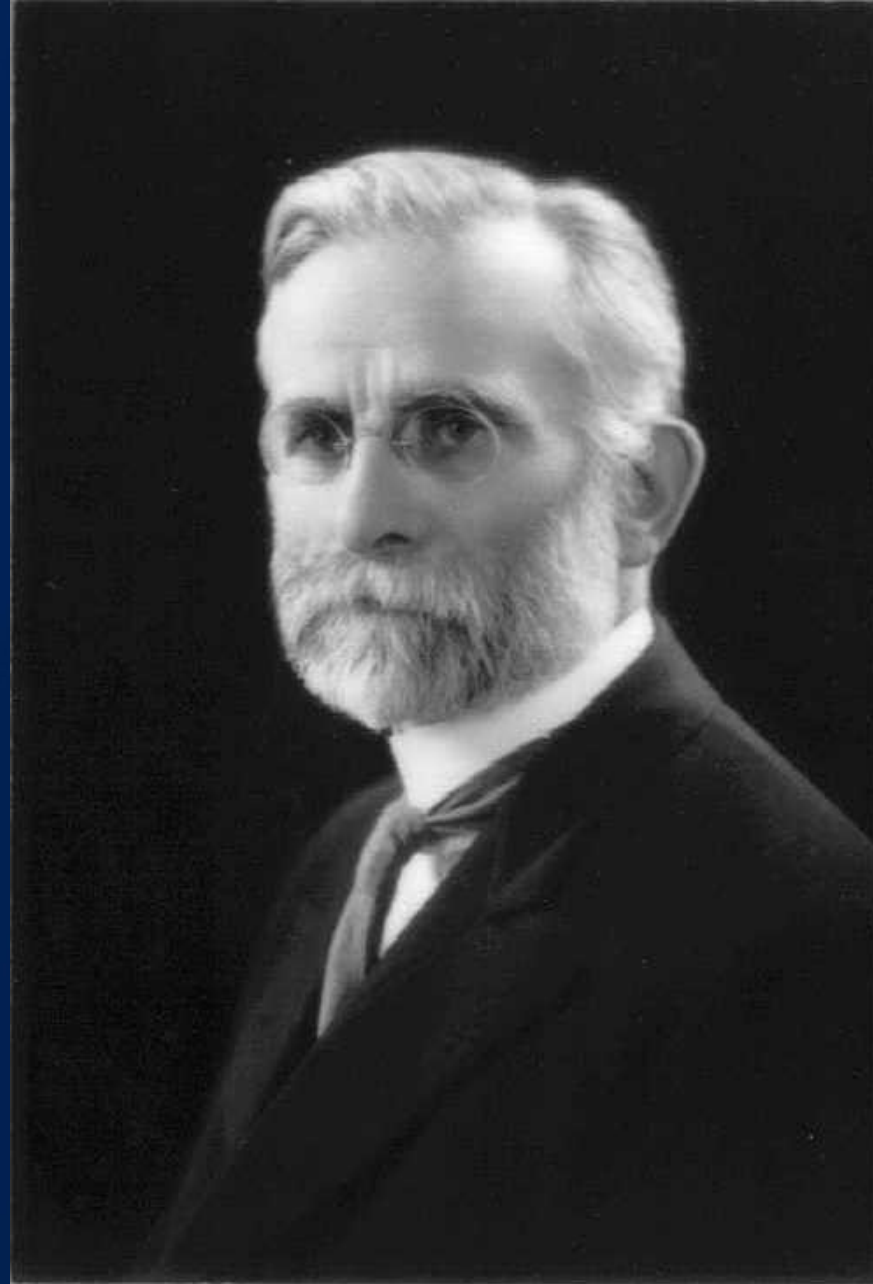
Of the sacrament of holy Baptism.

Matt. 28: 19. (Q. 2.)

345. Why first of Baptism?

Because we were baptized in our infancy.

Thereby we were first made partakers of the grace of God, and the Lord our God made His covenant of grace with us.



PROF. J. P. KOEHLER, Director







E. HOENECKE

The Work of Our Synod SIX MONTHS AFTER

"Days Should Speak, and Multitude of Years Should Teach Wisdom." Job 32, 7.

Bulletin No. 23

February, 1936

ELIHU SAID

"Years Should Teach Wisdom"

The wrath of Elihu, the youthful counselor of Job, was kindled against Job and his three friends, because, in all their years, they had not learned that God is just in all His ways and that, though deferred, His help never fails them who put their trust in Him.

Our years should have taught us the same wisdom: In the visitations of the Lord during this generation the World War, the Depression and others, what was more clear than the guilt and iniquity of man, on the one hand, and the absolute justice of God, on the other? What more evident, five years ago, than the greed and false security of men and the long-suffering faithfulness of God in preserving and restoring those who waited patiently for His help?

SIX MONTHS AGO

When we beheld the fruits of the Lord's faithfulness in the general improvement of the synodical finances last August, we certainly all read with silent approval the words of the Psalm, as they then appeared in a bulletin:

Synodical Districts	Quota		Raised	Quota	Still Due By
	6 Months	6 Months		6 Months	June 30, 1936
Pacific Northwest	\$ 1,193.52	\$ 765.58	67%	\$ 1,621.46	
Nebraska	6,415.32	4,396.18	68	8,434.46	
Nebraska	6,415.32	4,396.18	68	8,434.46	
Michigan	21,160.56	15,806.94	75	26,514.18	
Dakota-Montana	7,459.62	5,547.10	74	9,372.14	
Minnesota	39,013.98	27,687.88	71	50,340.08	
North Wisconsin	54,430.56	28,388.52	52	80,472.60	
West Wisconsin	58,657.74	28,022.90	47	89,292.58	
Southeast Wisconsin	60,323.70	24,696.77	41	95,950.63	

DAYS SHOULD SPEAK

The average performance of all the communicants in the Synod is but 54% of the six months' quota.

We have not responded, as we should have, to the challenge which the budget presented to our devotion and gratitude.

But the future is ours; our Father is ever more long-suffering in seeking fruit on the tree of faith than we can understand.

The coming days of the next five months till the close of the fiscal year on June 30th, should speak, loudly, concretely.

We surely are not willing to let the effort and sacrifice on the part of some of our fellow-communicants in doing their full share of the work to be frustrated by our own lack of zeal and response?

Rather let us redeem the time by squarely facing and meeting our unpaid balances as districts, as congregations and as individuals with redoubled efforts!

These bulletins are available to all congregations for their communicants. Orders should be sent to Rev. Edgar Hoenecke, Plymouth, Mich.

"I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. . . ."

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? . . . I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."

The Synod met at New Ulm in that same month of August. The same spirit inspired all the work that was done there.

Peace was restored, new work could be undertaken under a more generous budget, and, unanimously, the congregational representatives determined to set aside the present biennium as the time in which we would all gratefully cooperate to retire the whole synodical debt.

Six months have elapsed. No single congregation, no home in the Synod, was left without full intelligence as to the synodical resolutions.

55,000 bulletins were circulated during the month of September alone. The official synodical report was made available to all congregations unusually early.

What are the results? The following table is an index of them:

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FIVE MORE MONTHS OF GRACE!

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4					1			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31				

APRIL							MAY							JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				

HOW WILL YOU USE THEM?

TO THE DELEGATES

Lest we may have underestimated the scope of duty devolving upon a delegate to the Synodical Convention may we suggest:

Attending the Synodical Convention and helping to enact certain resolutions, policies and budgets, for the ensuing biennium is but the first duty of the delegate.

At the end of the session his work has just begun. As delegate, he owes the group which he was sent to represent a complete report on the session he attended.

As a member of the synodical

legislating body, he owes the entire Synod his loyal support and zealous representation of all the resolutions he helped to enact, wherever he can.

For the two years after the session he is to be a dependable man in the field upon whose active cooperation the Synodical executives must depend in a special measure, if the resolutions are to be carried out.

Thus, with 150 representatives active in the field, our executives may be spared much of the harassing responsibility, and our resolutions will become more than idle gestures.

Delegates to the New Ulm Synod, we depend on your cooperation!

COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD: JULY 1ST TO DECEMBER 31ST — SIX MONTHS —

RECEIVED:	1933	1934	1935
Collected from Districts	\$120,187.87	\$140,416.39	\$136,761.16
Revenues Earned	19,323.04	20,777.50	21,316.70
Total Received	\$139,510.91	\$161,193.89	\$158,077.86
DISBURSED:	162,771.01	171,235.73	175,090.09
DEFICIT:	\$ 23,260.10	\$ 10,041.84	\$ 17,012.23
DEBTS:			
Budget Debt	\$450,710.89	\$471,024.88	\$472,848.42
Church Extension Debt	194,700.17	182,764.29	179,364.29
Total Indebtedness	\$645,411.06	\$653,789.17	\$652,212.71
DEBT ANALYSIS:			
Accounts Payable		\$ 19,203.28	\$ 13,683.05
Notes Payable to Banks		94,500.00	23,500.00
Notes Payable to Members		318,471.69	395,815.37
Madison Bonds		36,000.00	36,000.00
Inmates Deposits		2,850.00	3,850.00
Budget Debt Total		\$471,024.88	\$472,848.42
Church Extension Debt		182,764.29	179,364.29
Total Debt (December 31st)		\$653,789.17	\$652,212.71

WHAT OF THE DEBT?

At the synod meeting last August a resolution was adopted to make an earnest effort to wipe out the entire synodical debt by June, 1937, by urging individuals to assume liability for sums of \$100 or more.

What has been done to carry out this resolution? Early in September President Bremner appointed a committee to draw up a program. Since early in October this program has been in the hands of every pastor in the synod. The committee has communicated by letter and through the church papers with every District President, Conference Visitor, and pastor, urging them to take up the matter without delay and to make the "earnest effort" mentioned in the resolution.

Although we have no complete report in hand, we do know that congregation after congregation has conscientiously and with energy set its hand to this work. The committee set out on its part of the work in a spirit of hopefulness, but the cheerful response that the publica-

The Work of Our Wisconsin Synod

- IN -

THE LORD'S VINEYARD

"I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labor." John 4:38
Bulletin No. 29 February, 1938

"GO YE ALSO INTO THE VINEYARD!"

A CERTAIN HOUSEHOLDER PLANTED A VINEYARD

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation." 2 Cor. 5:19.

According to the Father's eternal will of love, Jesus Christ became man in order to act as our substitute. Thus, being obedient to the Law, He satisfied God's demands on us to absolute perfection. Thus also, assuming the curse, the guilt and penalty of our sin, in His whole life, His suffering and death, He won from God for us all complete pardon, peace and the adoption as children of God. In His victory over death in the Resurrection He sealed our salvation from death and hell, and by His glorious Ascension He sent us the Holy Spirit through the Word and prepared a place for us with Himself eternally.

To proclaim this fact and to create faith in it in the hearts of men, the Holy Ghost through the Word has established the Church and preserved it through all time with truth and power.

Thus, to God belongs all the glory and from God comes all the strength of the Church through the Word and Spirit.

DEBT RETIREMENT

Our Synodical Debt has been reduced by \$100,000 since the meeting of the Synod last August.

As soon as others who have contributed to the Debt Retirement Fund release their money from the "return clause" by thus instructing Pastor K. Timmel of Watertown, Wisconsin, another \$50,000 can be paid off.

At 3% interest, this will amount to a saving of \$4,500 annually.

The Debt Retirement collection is still in progress and will be continued, until some kind of response is received from every Christian and congregation in the Synod.

Have YOU and YOUR CONGREGATION taken part in this collection?

Why should we make many words about the matter? Anyone can understand that we will all gain by an early completion of this collection.

Then let us act with one accord as men and set this thing aside! Do not hesitate or delay because of any technicality. Simply go to your pastor or committee and make an extra contribution for this purpose today, and induce the other Synodical brethren in your congregation to do likewise.

THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST, AND THE FIRST LAST

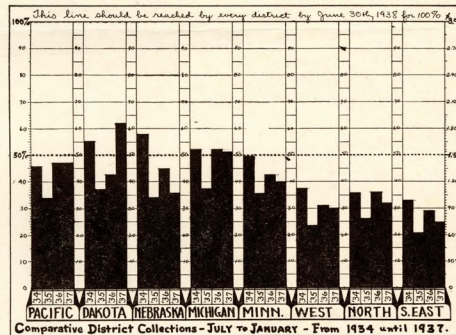
In the light of the holy deed and the mighty deeds of the valiant heroes of the glorious past, our own half-hearted efforts in behalf of the Church shelve into unimportance.

Nevertheless, our Lord has called us into His vineyard just as insistently as He called His other laborers, for work and rests equally as necessary in His eyes as the ones which they accomplished by His Grace.

If our efforts seem futile and our results unimportant, it is because we have lost sight of the central thought of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard: that all our results are due solely to the Grace of God, and not because of our work or merit. Every man receives his penny of salvation only because God is gracious in Christ.

Even the call: "Go ye also into the vineyard" is not so much a demand to perform a duty as an invitation to enjoy a privilege. Were we but to understand our work and our giving in that light, not as though the almighty and all-resourceful God need our help to accomplish His purpose, but rather that our heavenly Father condescends to permit us erring mortals to help and graciously endows our weak efforts with true value and real effectiveness, we would become more humbly alert and more cheerfully zealous to do His bidding.

Nor will we then allow defeatist despair deprive us of the joy of success. If we but faithfully continue in His Word and in the work of preaching it, our Lord will produce the fruit through the Holy Spirit, the salvation of our own souls and those of many others whom He will save through our preaching.



THE TREASURER'S REPORT FOR SIX MONTHS

	Last Year	This Year
District Collections	\$183,880.53	\$168,141.31
Revenues	18,460.81	18,334.62
Total Receipts (July-December)	\$202,341.34	\$186,475.93
Disbursements of Six Months	180,506.42	193,210.94
Surplus	\$ 21,834.92	
Deficit		\$ 6,736.81
The Synodical Debt:		
Accounts Payable	none	none
Notes Payable	414,804.39	\$332,854.48
Madison Bonds	36,000.00	36,000.00
Inmates Deposits	10,050.00	13,950.00
Total Budget Debt	\$460,854.39	\$382,804.48
Church Extension Debt	170,414.29	159,070.29
DEBT TOTAL	\$631,268.68	\$541,874.77

Read Matthew 20:1-16

OTHERS HAVE BORNE THE BURDEN AND THE HEAT

In giving the Church the commission to preach His Gospel in all the world, our Lord not only foresaw, but He also forewarned and comforted His disciples in regard to the hatred and "fiery trial" which they were to endure because of it.

Concerning this future sorrow of His friends, His frequent assurances are full of tenderest solicitude, as in John 16:33: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Taking Him at His word, the little band went forth cheerfully and dauntlessly, although eleven of the twelve were to seal their confession in martyrdom. And through the centuries the faithful little flock has persevered in the strength of His Word, despite the terrible toll of suffering and blood it cost them. Thus we have attained to our heritage of the Gospel, because others have borne the burden and heat of the day.

Not for glory — it brought them only shame in the eyes of men — nor for profit of any kind at all did our spiritual forebears continue in His Word and confession.

John explains the motive quite simply: "We love Him, because He first loved us."

LENTEN OFFERING

Penitently and thankfully we will soon again gather under the radiance of our Savior's Cross in our Lenten services.

Hearts that love Him who first so loved us that He gave Himself for us will feel constrained to find expression for their gratitude with lips and hands.

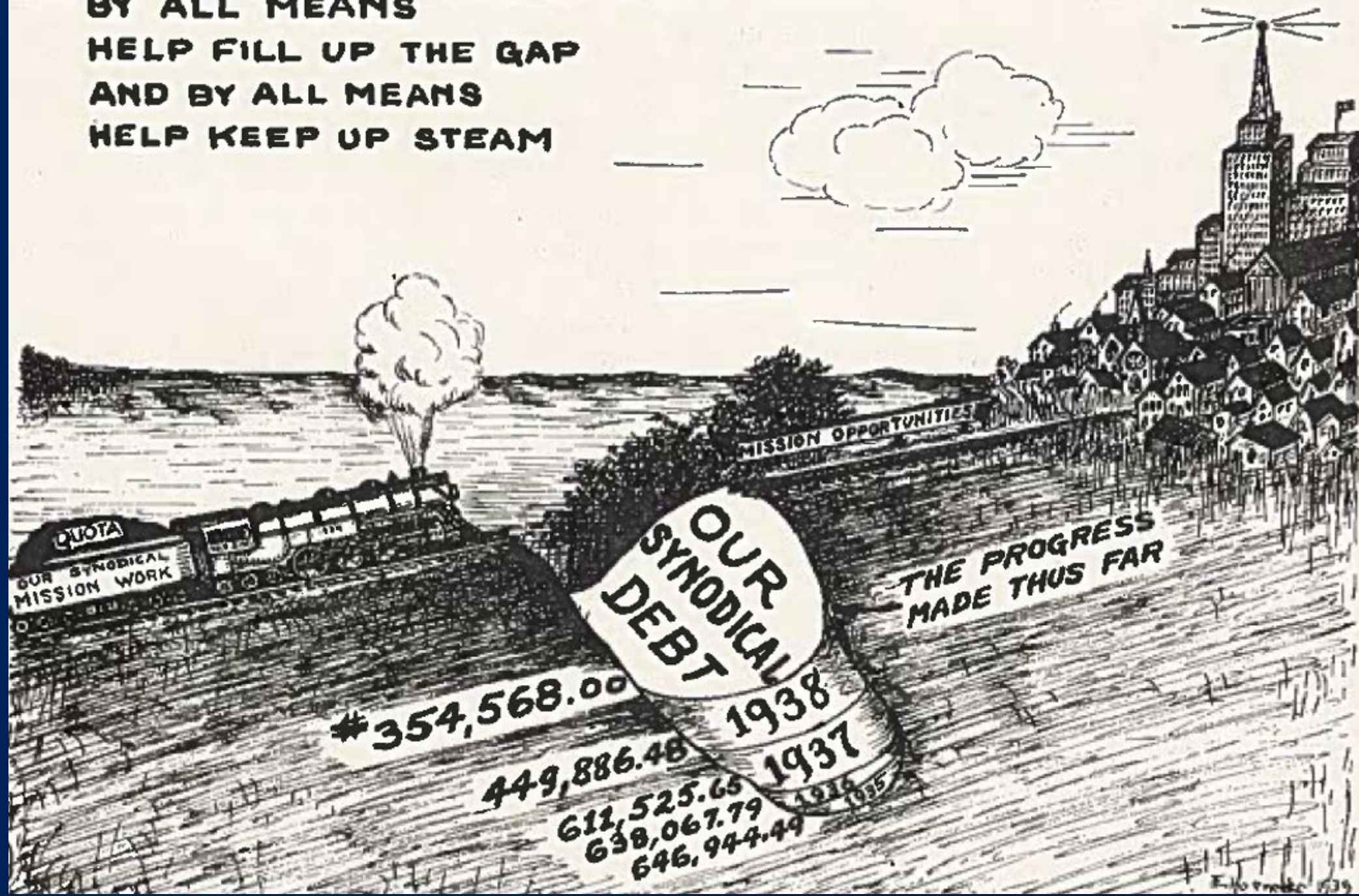
Assembling ourselves together in this holy season for special services, let us unite our hearts and hands in praise. What could be more appropriate than that we contribute with lavish abandon during this season for the missions of our Synod? For thereby we will provide for others the message of the Christ who so lavishly poured out His blood for others.

"When I survey the wondrous Cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small;
That share of me a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

These bulletins are available to all congregations for their communicants. Orders should be sent to Rev. Edgar Hoenecke, Plymouth, Mich.

BY ALL MEANS
HELP FILL UP THE GAP
AND BY ALL MEANS
HELP KEEP UP STEAM



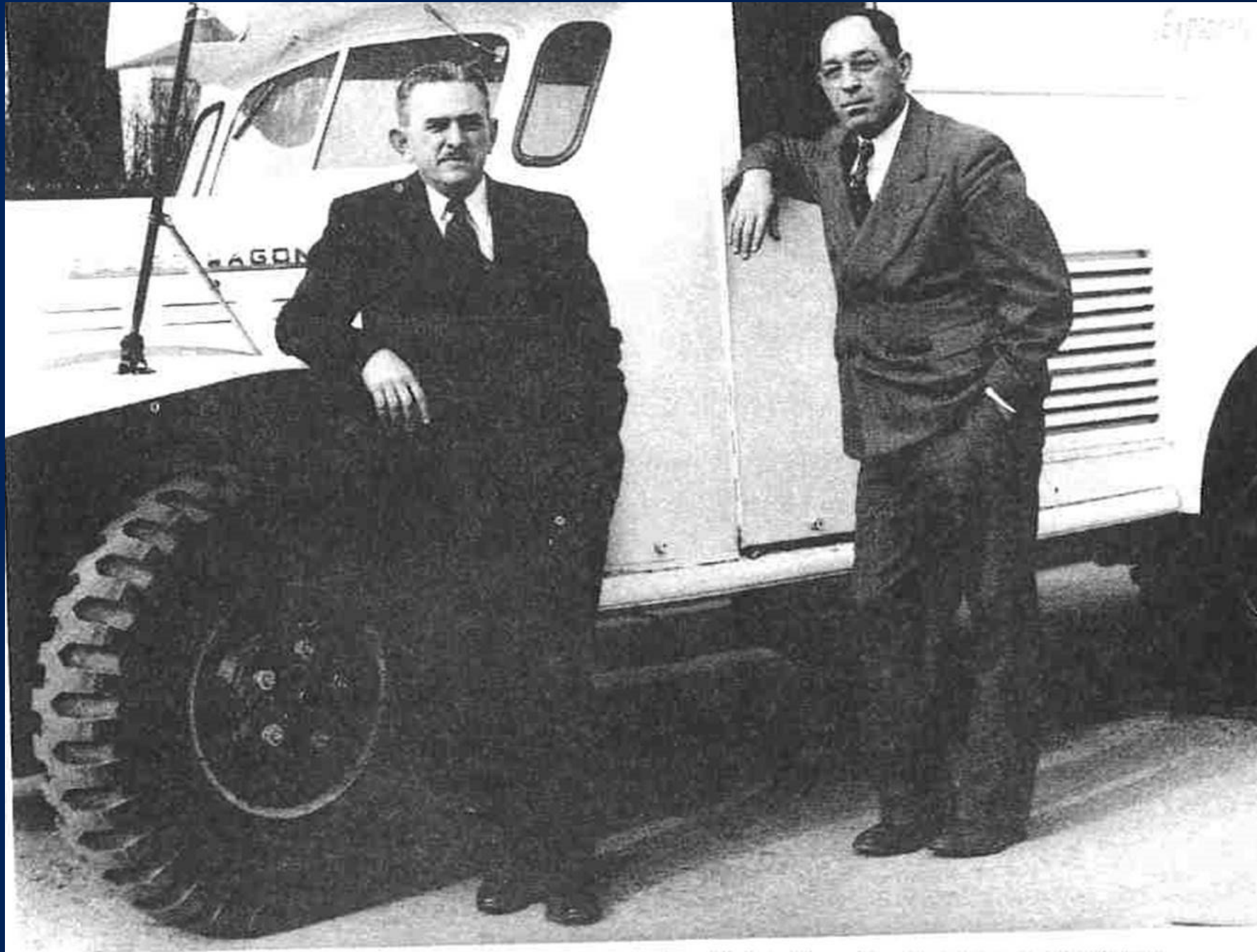
OUR
SYNODICAL
DEBT

#354,568.00 1938
449,886.48 1937
611,525.65 1936
638,067.79 1935
646,944.49 1934

THE PROGRESS
MADE THUS FAR

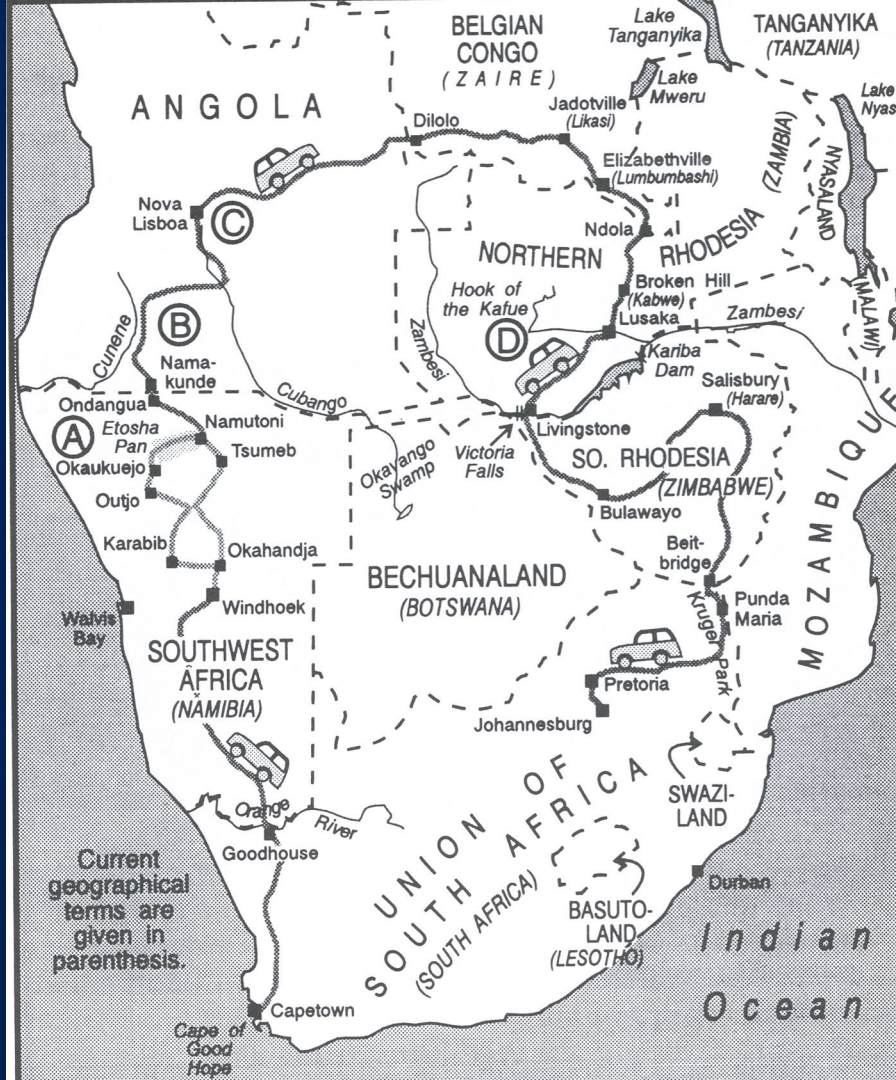
MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

QUOTA
OUR SYNODICAL
MISSION WORK



Pastors Hoenecke and Wacker on Sunday, April 24, the day before departure.





1949 MISSION TREK

- (A) Potential field among the Ovambos and Bushmen of South-west Africa.
- (B) Potential field between the Cunene and Cubango Rivers of Angola.
- (C) Potential field among the Ovambos and Okavangos in central Angola.
- (D) Chosen field at the hook of the Kafue River in Northern Rhodesia.









God's Surprising Grace in the Break with Missouri

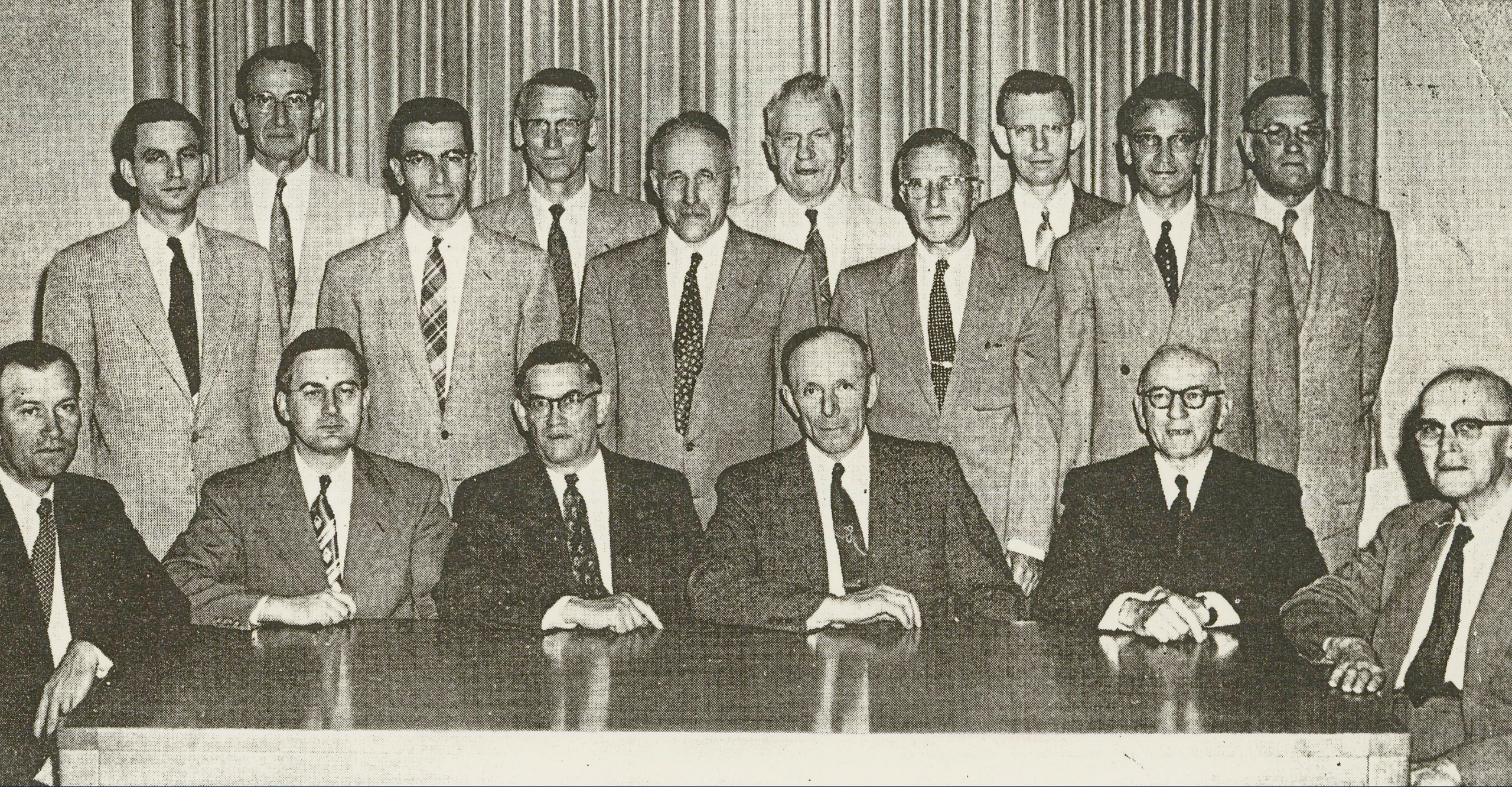


The struggle was long, stretching over a quarter century. The losses in cherished fellowships were large, touching personally most pastors, teachers, and laypeople of the synod. The results could have been tragic in the extreme, as dire prophecies of the time from without and within loudly and repeatedly proclaimed. The fact that they were not was because the Lord of the church once again did all things well.

The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans, p. 203







PRAISE YE

THE LORD

The Field is the World!





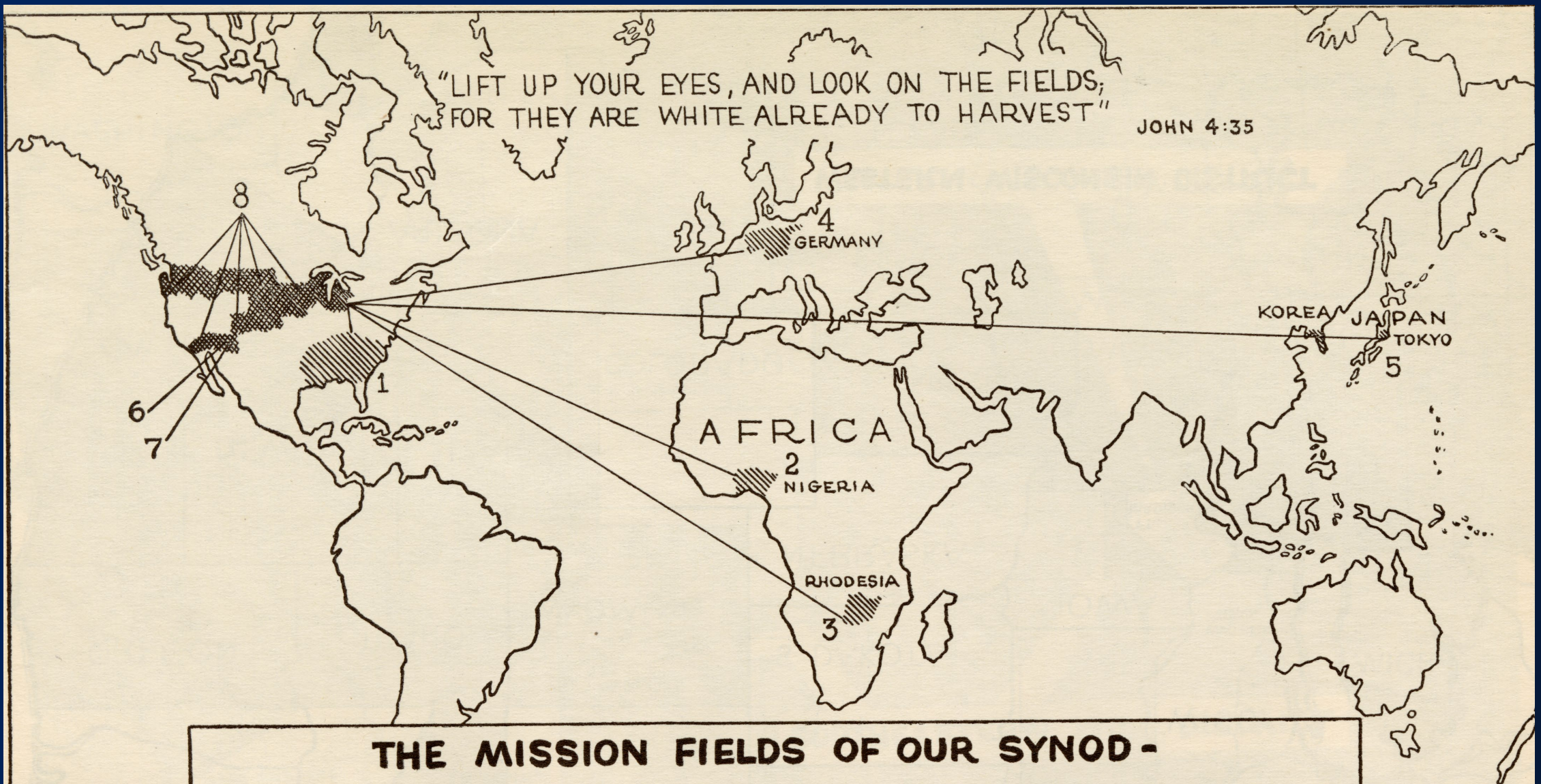


The “Golden Age” of WELS Growth: By Grace Alone



"LIFT UP YOUR EYES, AND LOOK ON THE FIELDS;
FOR THEY ARE WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST"

JOHN 4:35

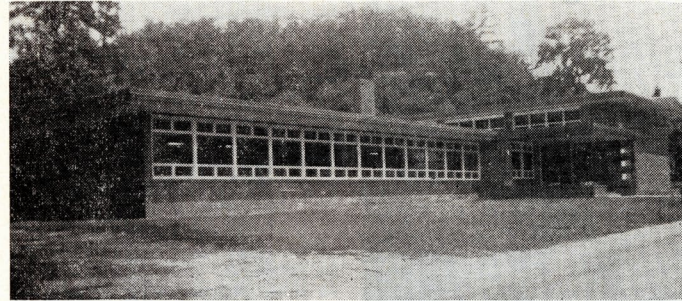


THE MISSION FIELDS OF OUR SYNOD -

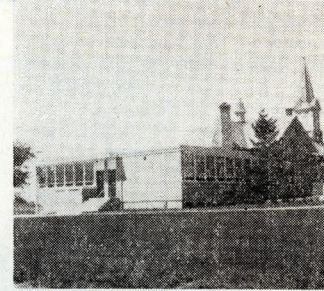
1. NEGRO MISSION IN U.S.A.
2. AFRICAN NEGRO MISSION
3. NEW AFRICAN MISSION FIELD
4. REFUGEE MISSION

5. NEW MISSION IN KOREA and TOKYO
6. APACHE INDIAN MISSION
7. MEXICAN MISSION
8. HOME MISSIONS

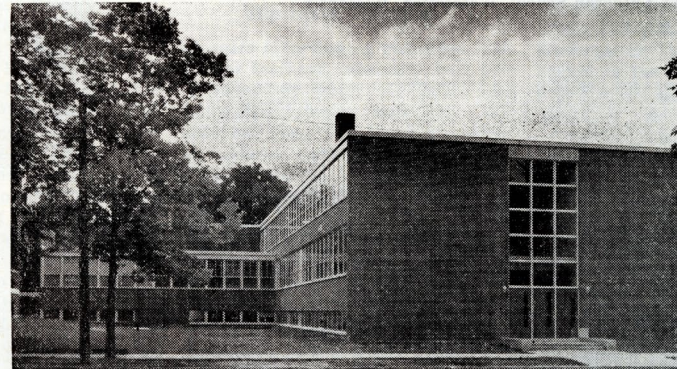
What Do These New School Buildings Say ?



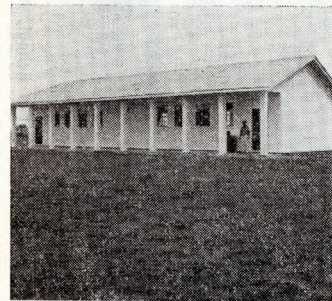
St. Paul's Lutheran School, Wonevok, Wisconsin



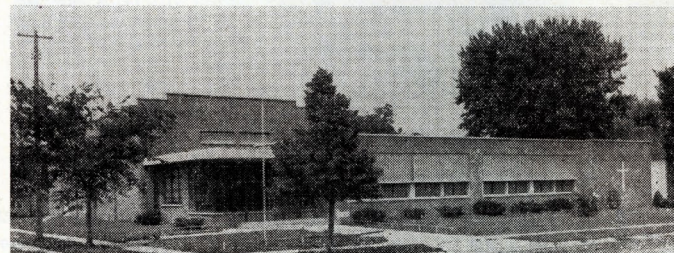
**St. Peter's Lutheran School
Collins, Wisconsin**



St. Matthew's Lutheran School, Winona, Minnesota



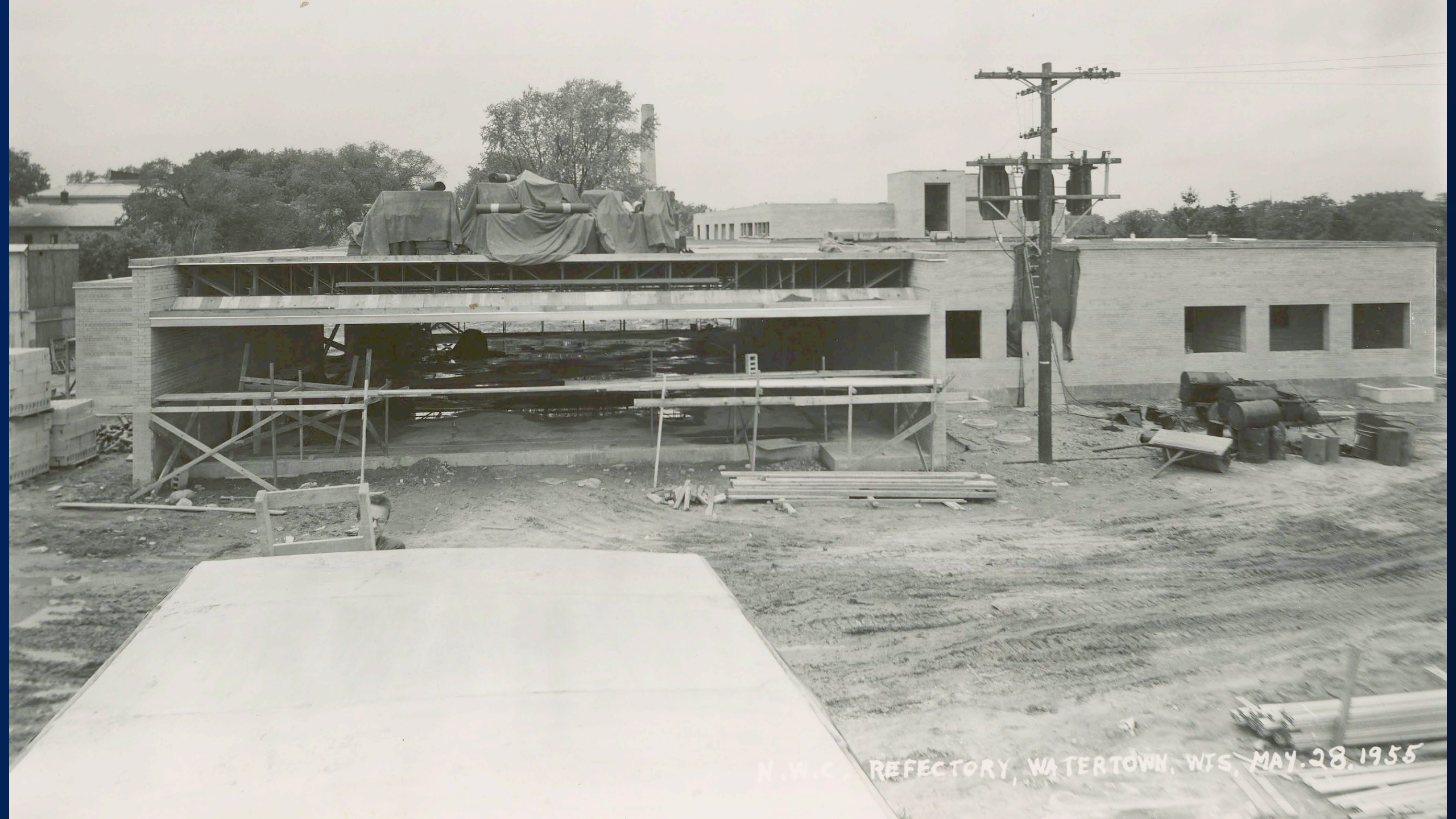
**Lutheran School at Sala Mission
Northern Rhodesia**



St. Paul's Lutheran School, Norfolk, Nebraska







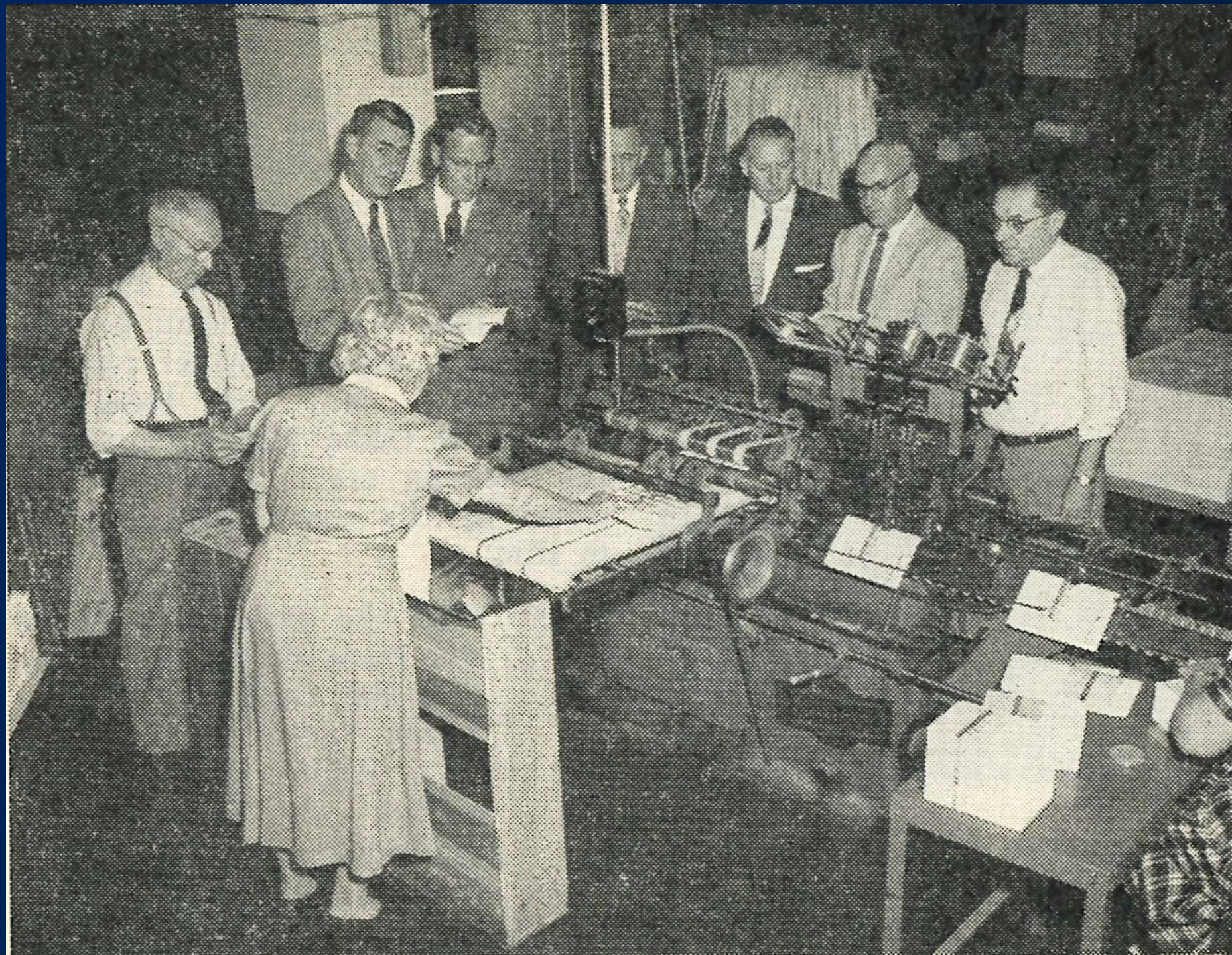
N.W.C. REFECTORY, WATERTOWN, WIS. MAY. 28, 1955

OUR SAVIOR EV LUTHERAN CHURCH









WELS Statistical Comparison

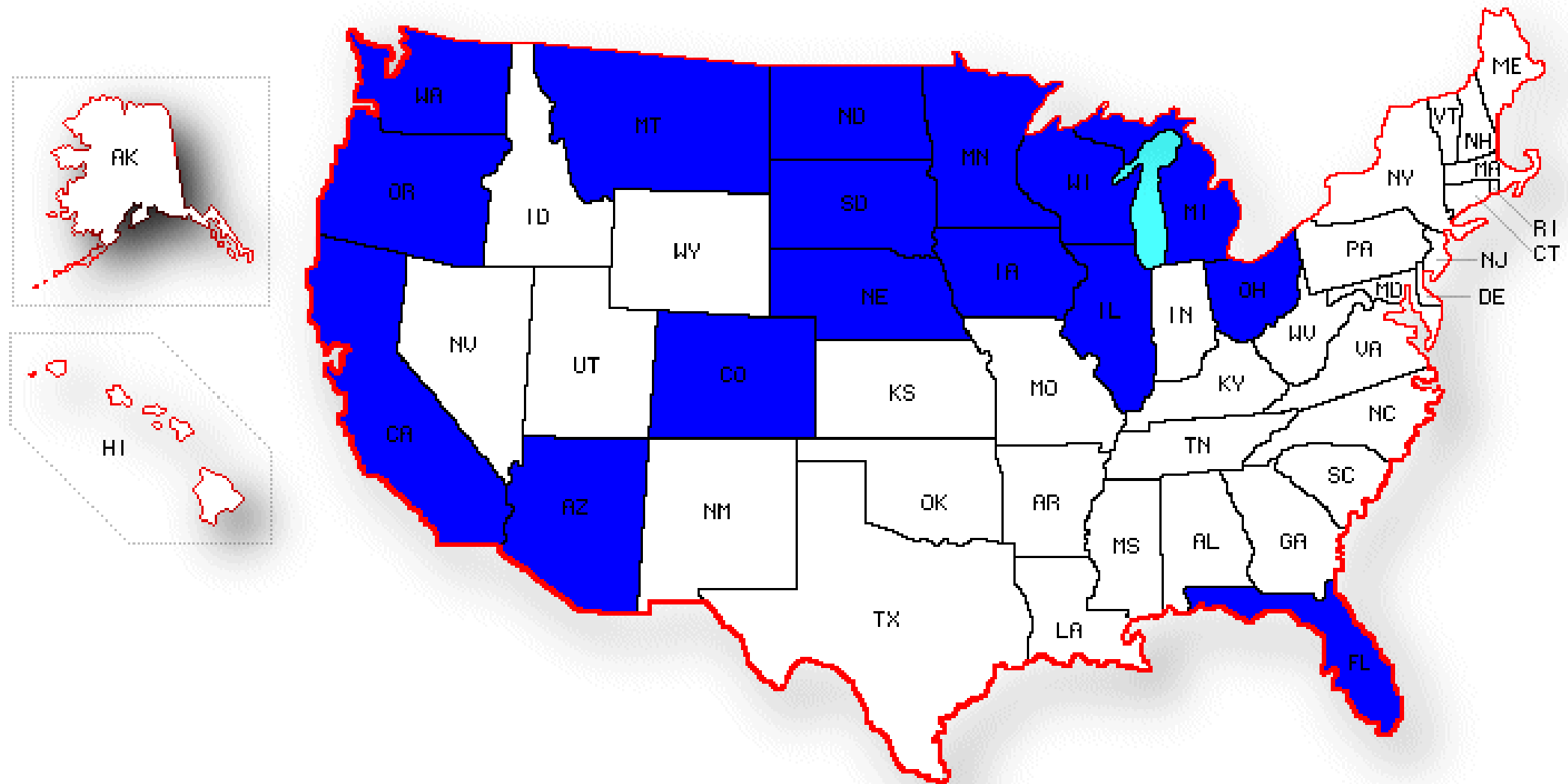
1961

- 840 congregations in 16 states
- 233,727 communicants
- 729 pastors
- 8 overseas missionaries in 2 countries
- 228 LES with 24,308 students and 800 teachers
- 9 area Lutheran high schools
- 75 seminary students and 7 professors

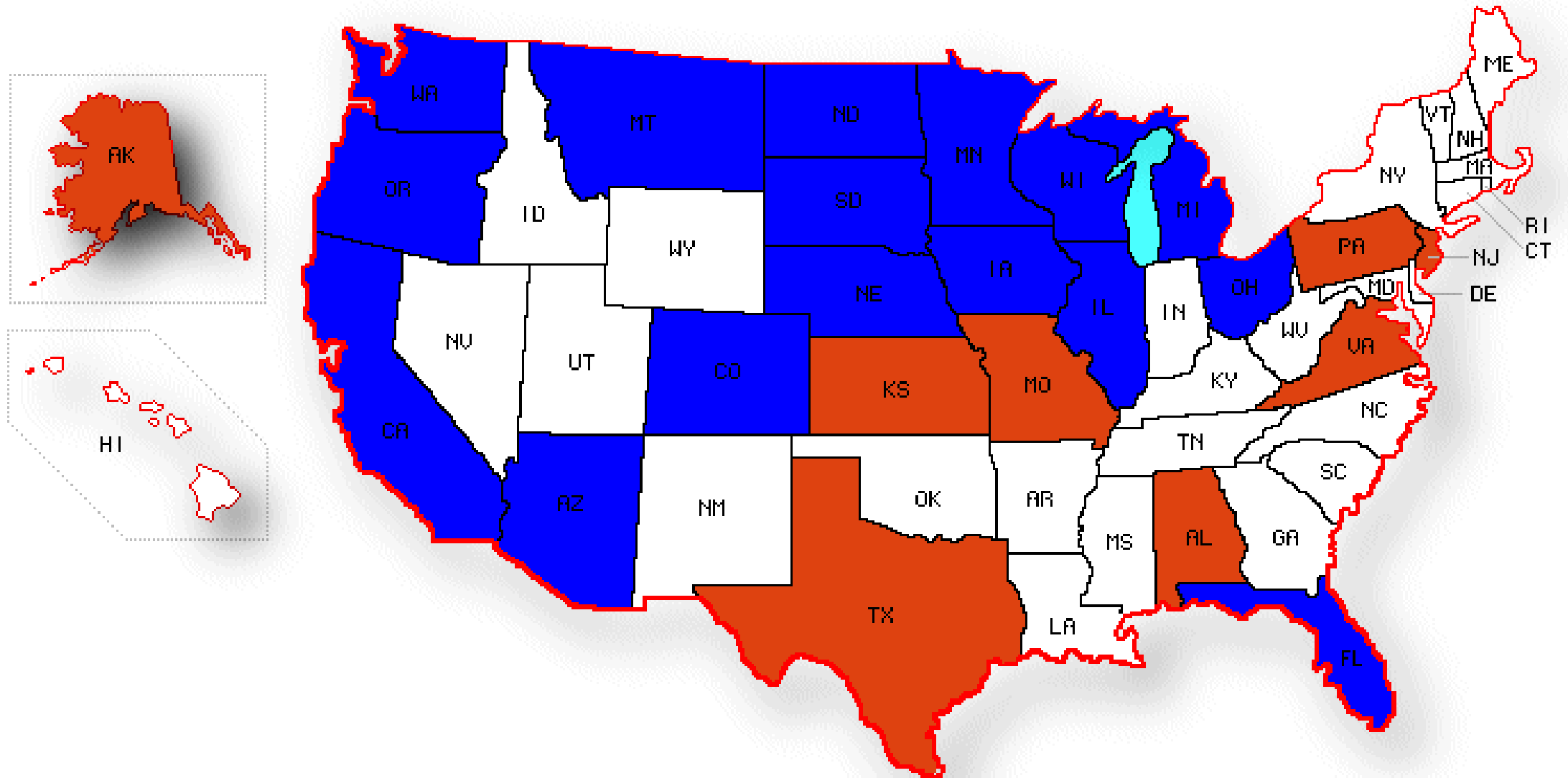
1986

- 1,190 congregations in 50 states
- 317,322 communicants
- 1,280 pastors
- 42 overseas missionaries in 9 countries
- 376 LES with 31,087 students and 1,640 teachers
- 19 area Lutheran high schools
- 218 seminary students and 16 professors

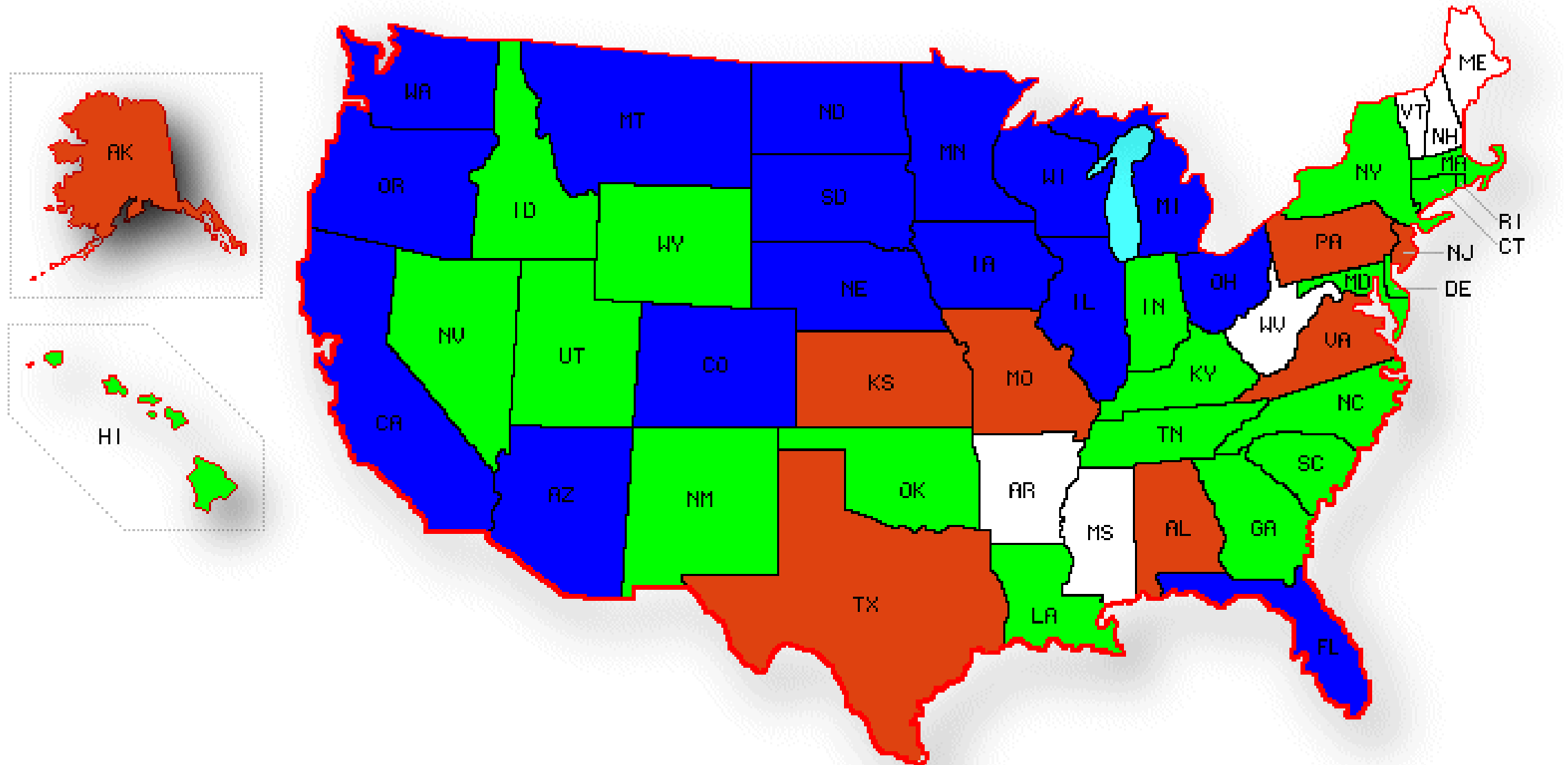
States with a Wisconsin Synod Presence—1961



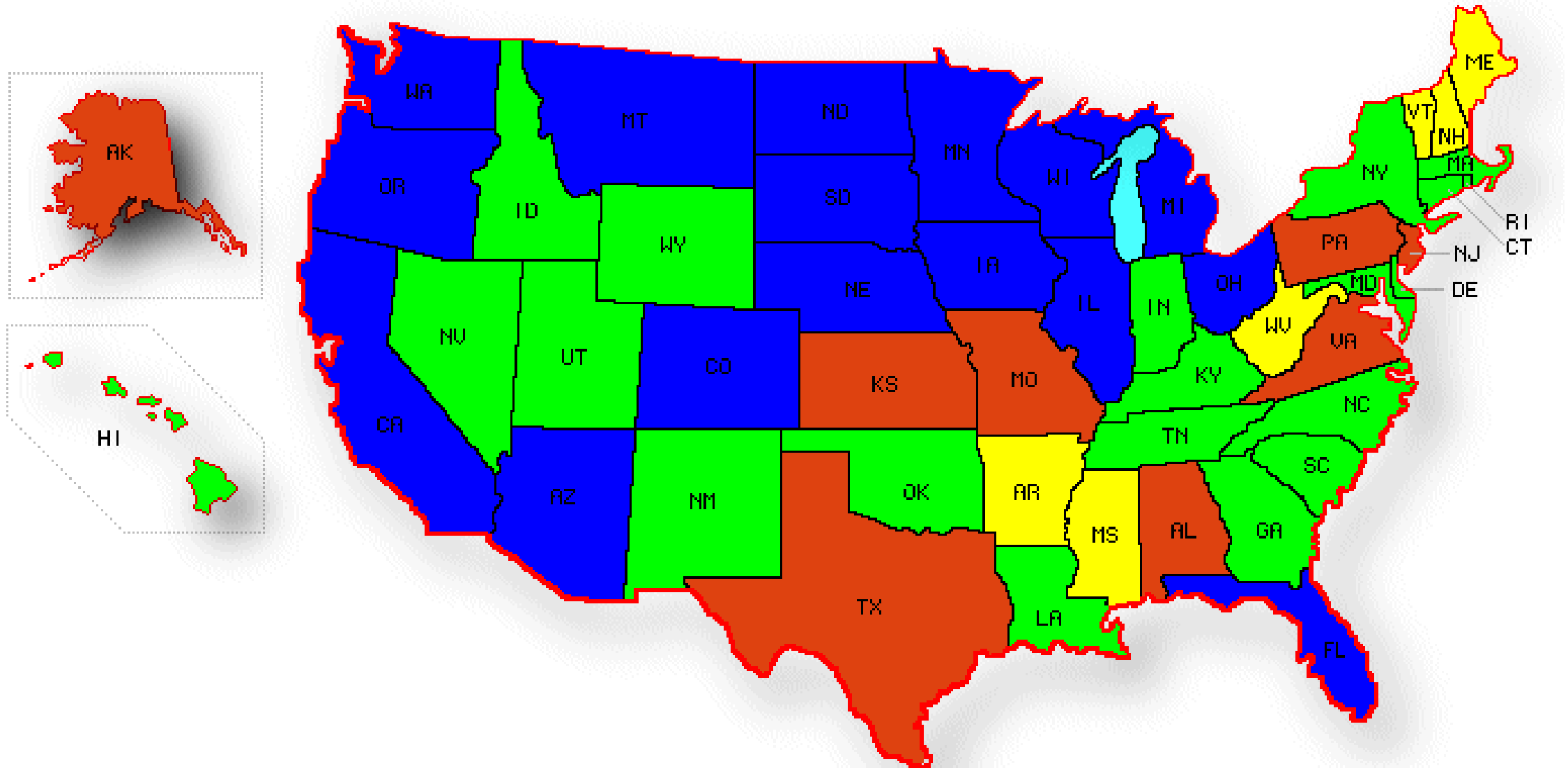
States with a Wisconsin Synod Presence—1965



States with a Wisconsin Synod Presence—1973



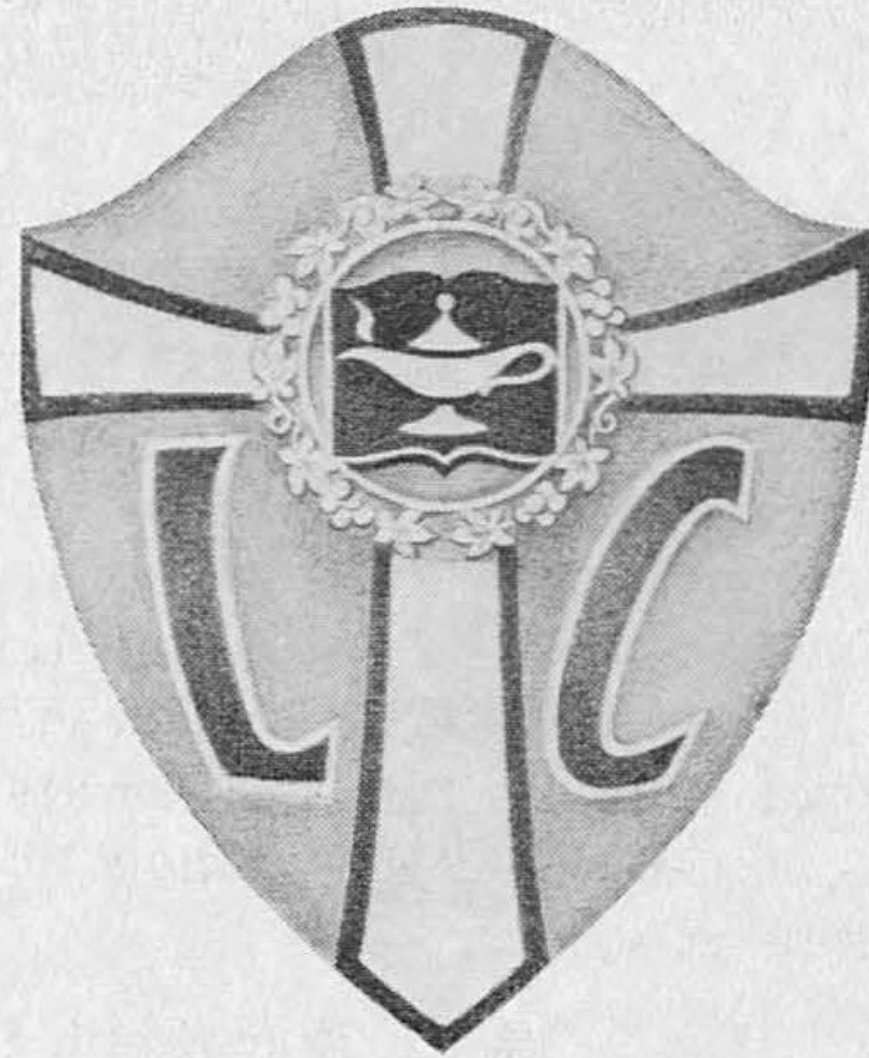
States with a Wisconsin Synod Presence—1983























Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church

NEW BUILDING.
SAME FOUNDATION:
JESUS SUNDAYS 10AM



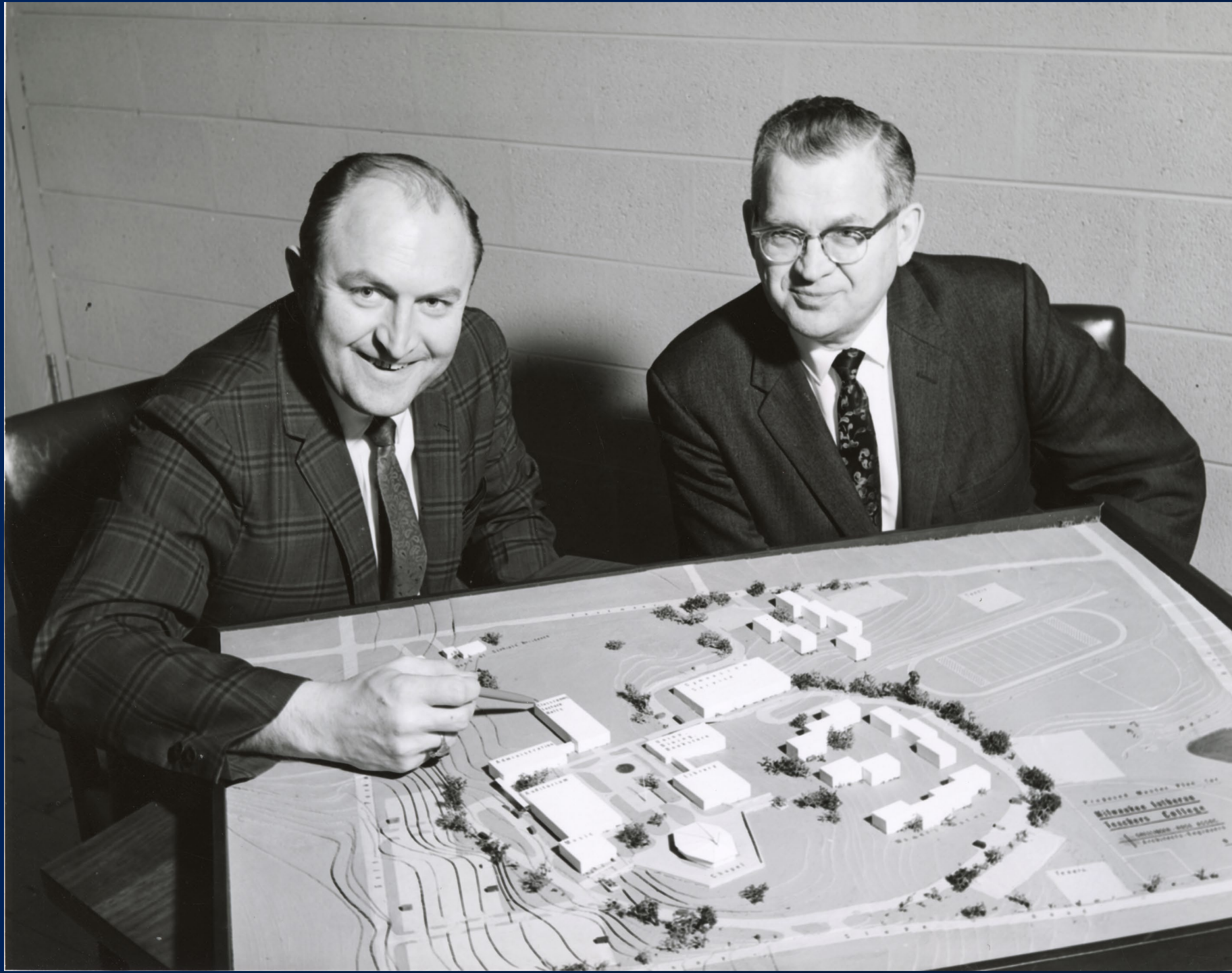
1700 Main St. Waukegan, IL 60093

A
Builders
For Christ
Project
WELS Kingdom Workers



It perhaps also could be that the very necessary and intense concentration during the late 40's and 50's on the intersynodical doctrinal struggles with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod engaged our primary efforts and strength. From this struggle, however, arose a very strong sense of confessional identity which is essential both to a sound, but also a vigorously lay-supported mission program.

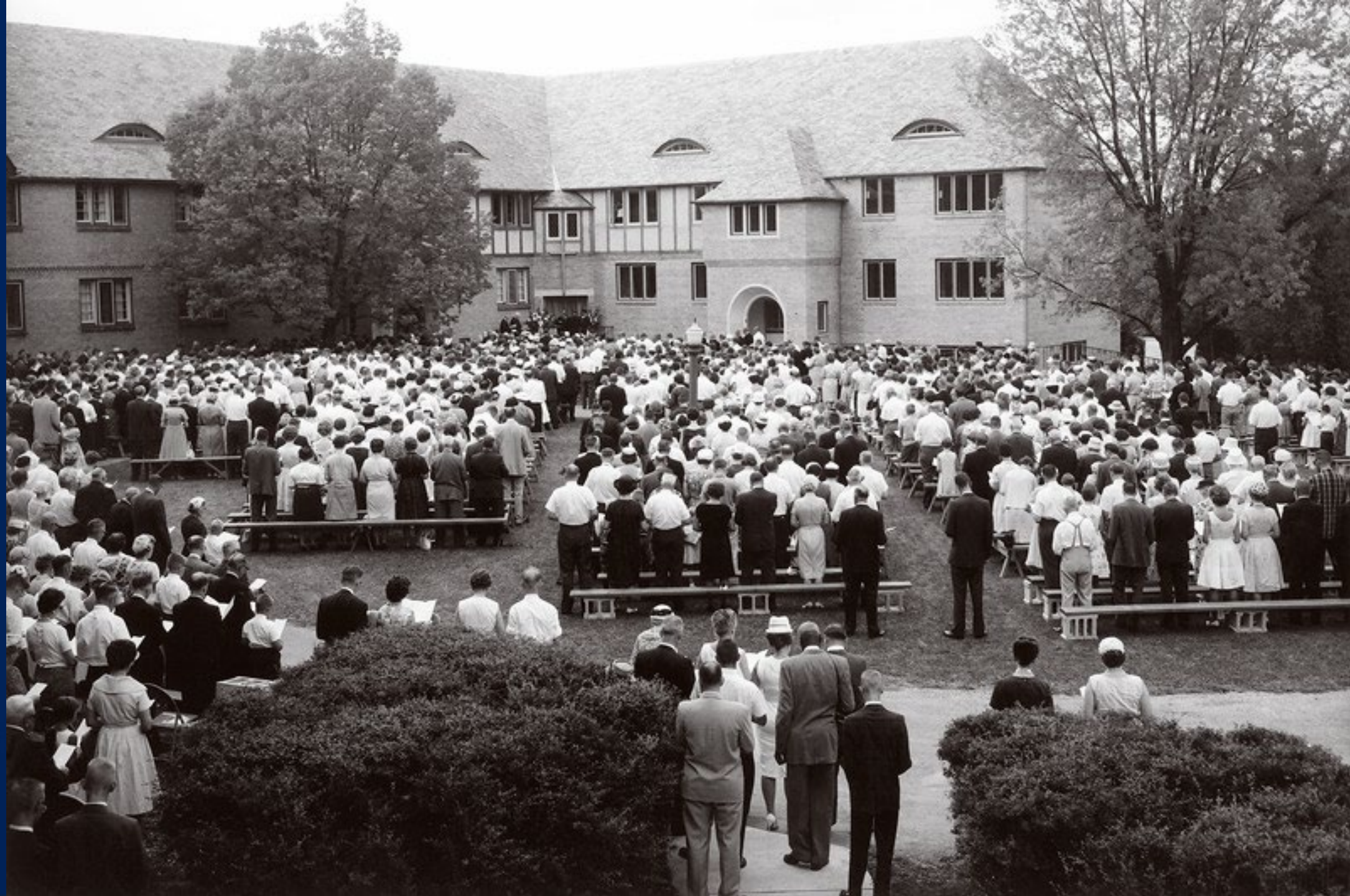
Pastor Norm Berg













Wisconsin evangelical Lutheran synod

Grace 125



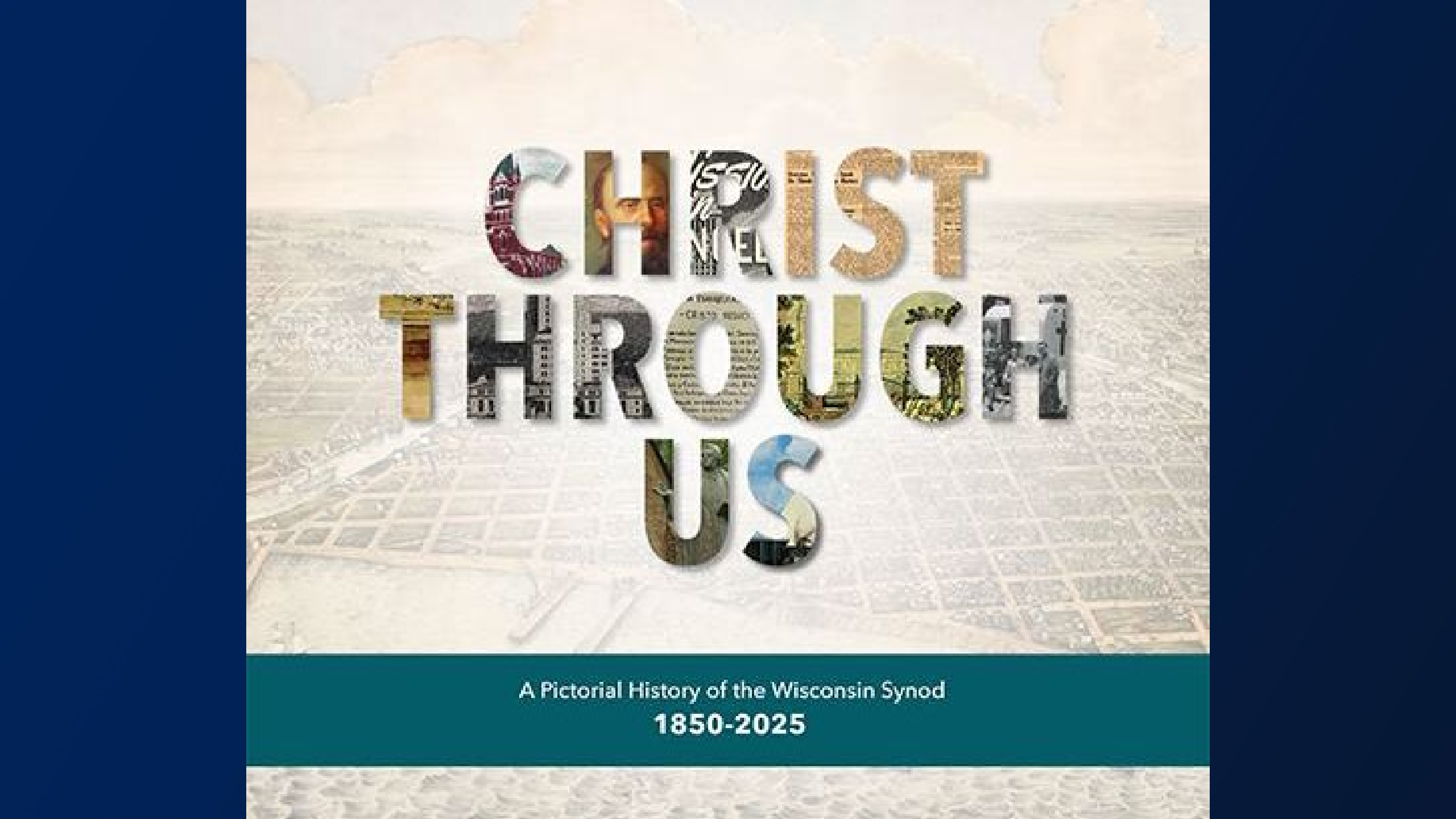
we know the Grace of our Lord

Looking back over 125 years today, we are again made aware of two great facts: one is the reality of our own weaknesses, shortcomings, transgressions, and opportunities for service lost; the other is the amazing grace and merciful kindness of the Lord, our Triune God, whose chief concern it is and always has been, that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

President Oscar J. Naumann

Education, Leadership, Stewardship: More Evidence of God's Surprising Grace



An aerial photograph of a city grid, likely Milwaukee, Wisconsin, serves as the background. A prominent church steeple is visible in the lower-left foreground. The title "CHRIST THROUGH US" is centered over the image, with each letter filled with a different historical or religious image.

CHRIST THROUGH US

A Pictorial History of the Wisconsin Synod
1850-2025

It was resolved that each preacher who is a member of our organization take an interest in working especially with the youth as well as in conducting day schools, Bible study classes, mission classes, etc.

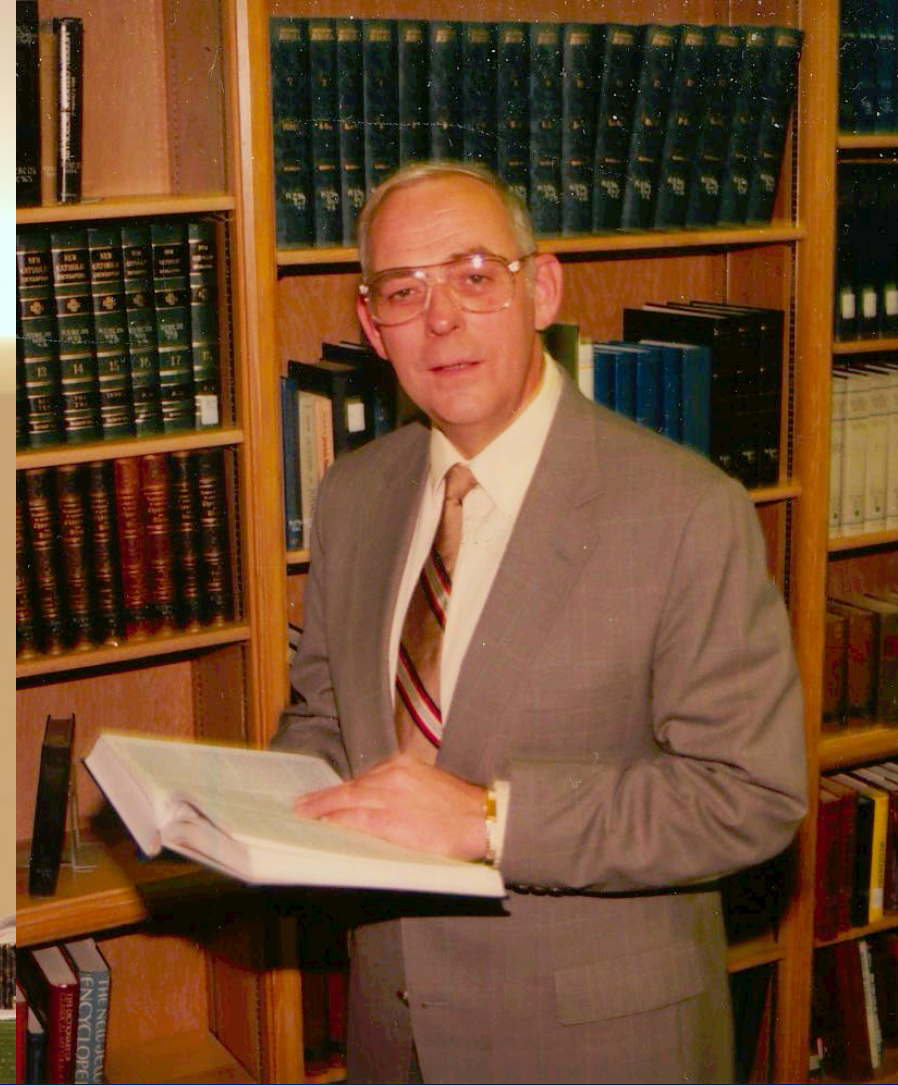
Proceedings of the 1850 Synod Convention



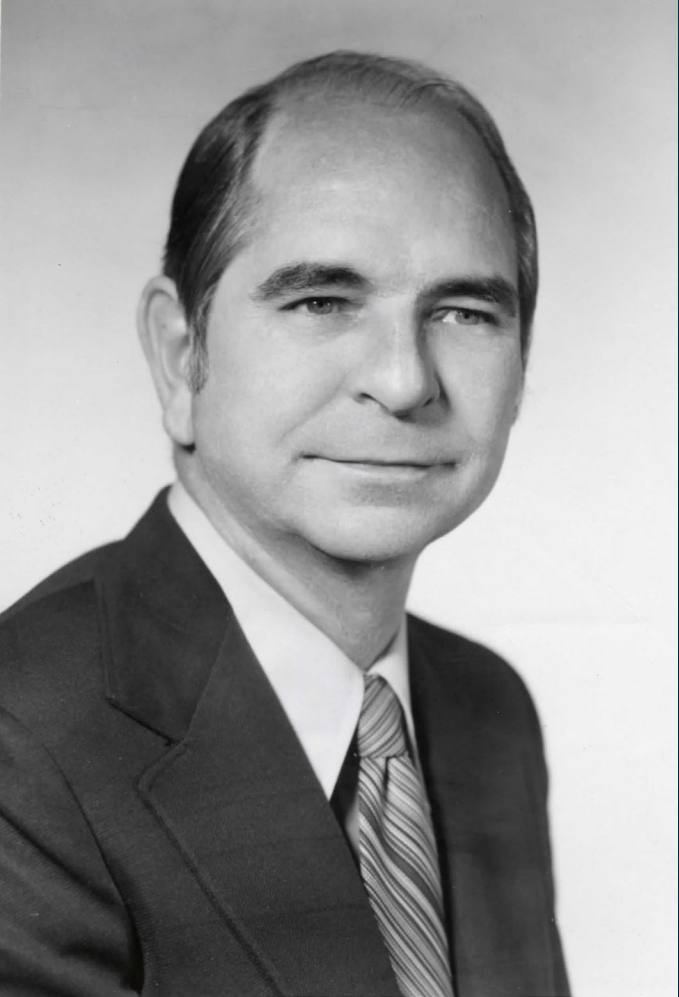
Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7)





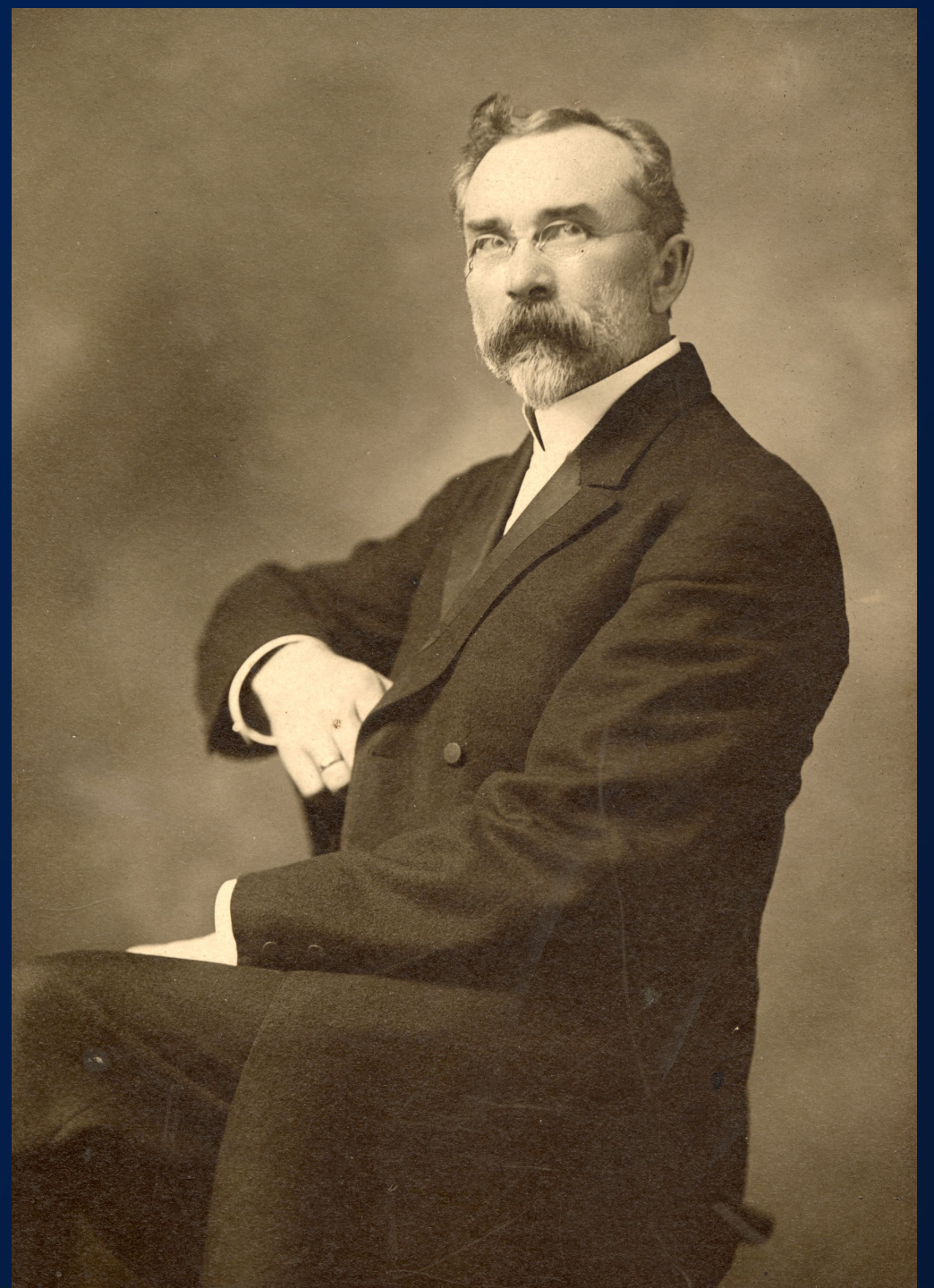




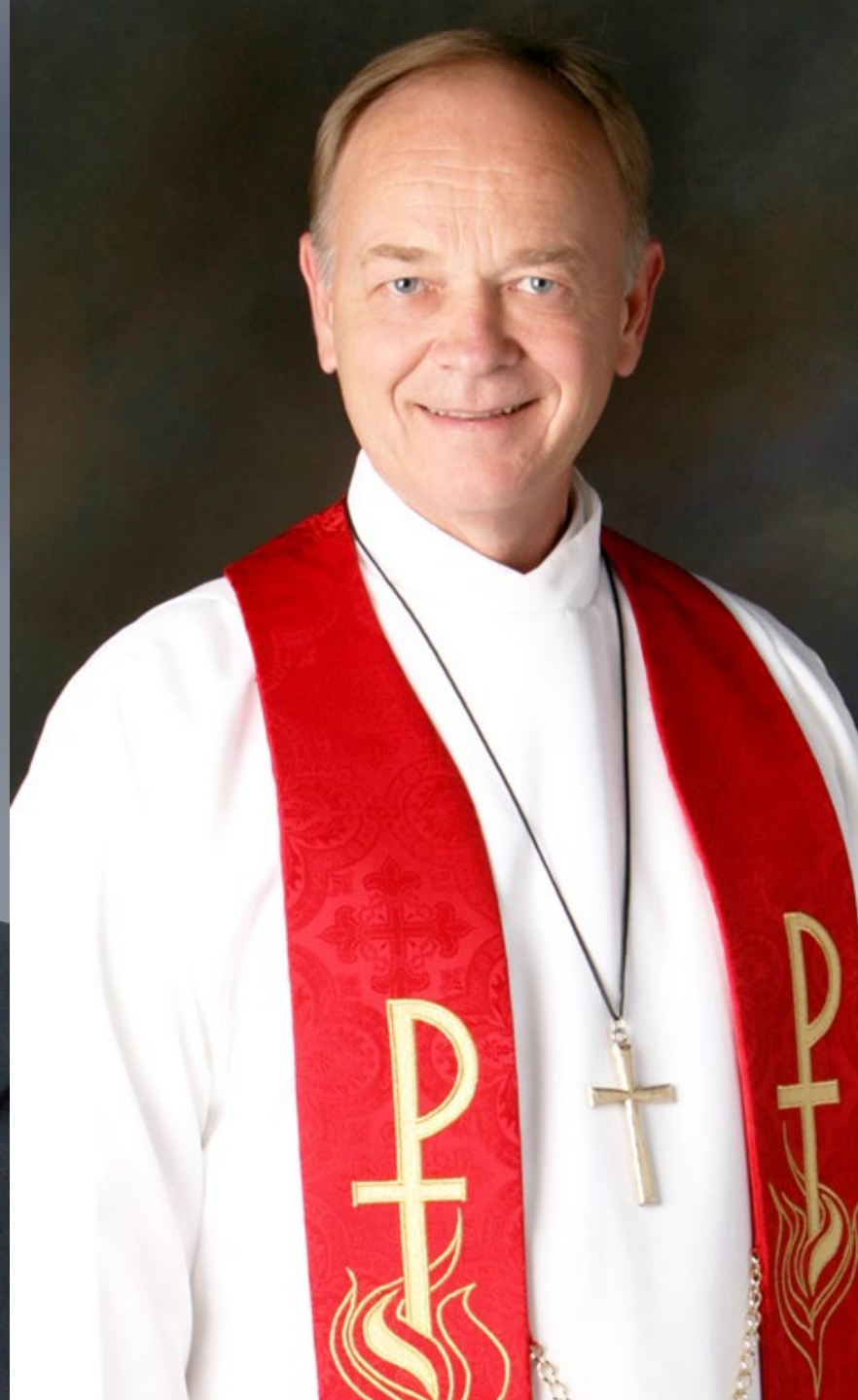
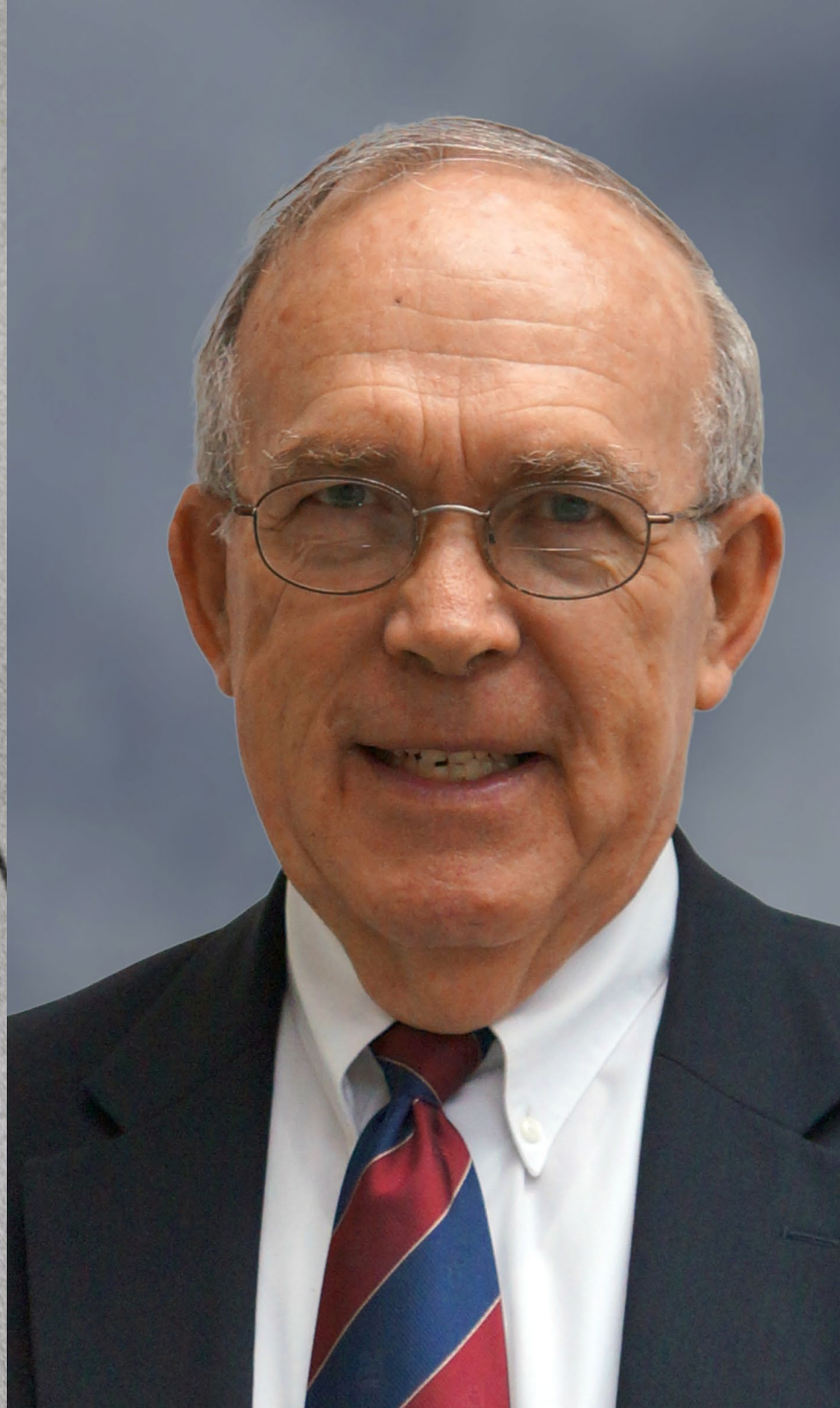


If we are to appreciate in its fullest dimensions the history of the Wisconsin Synod, we must recognize that God has graced the Wisconsin Synod not only with His gifts in our classrooms, but also with His gifts in our administration.

James P. Schaefer





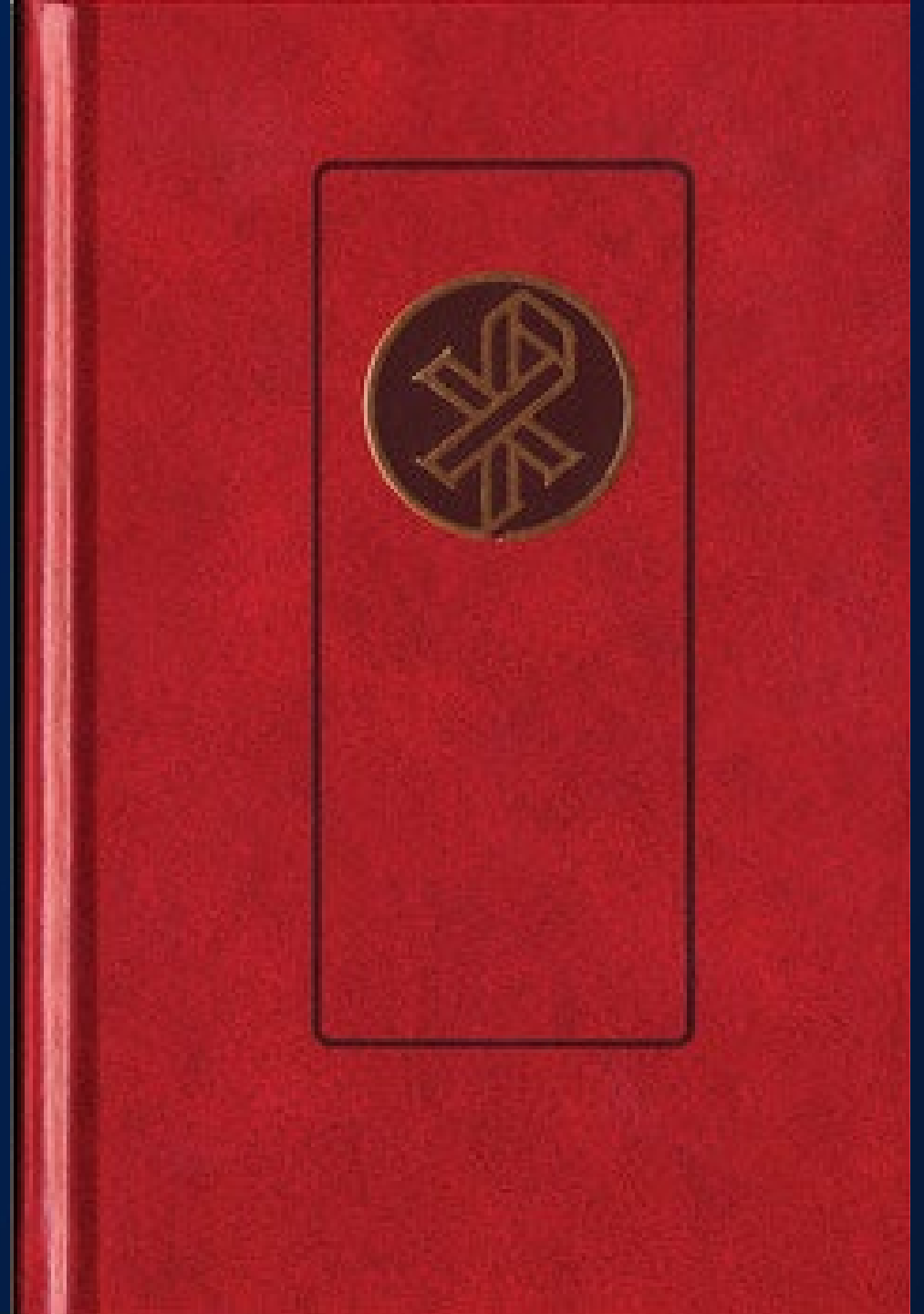


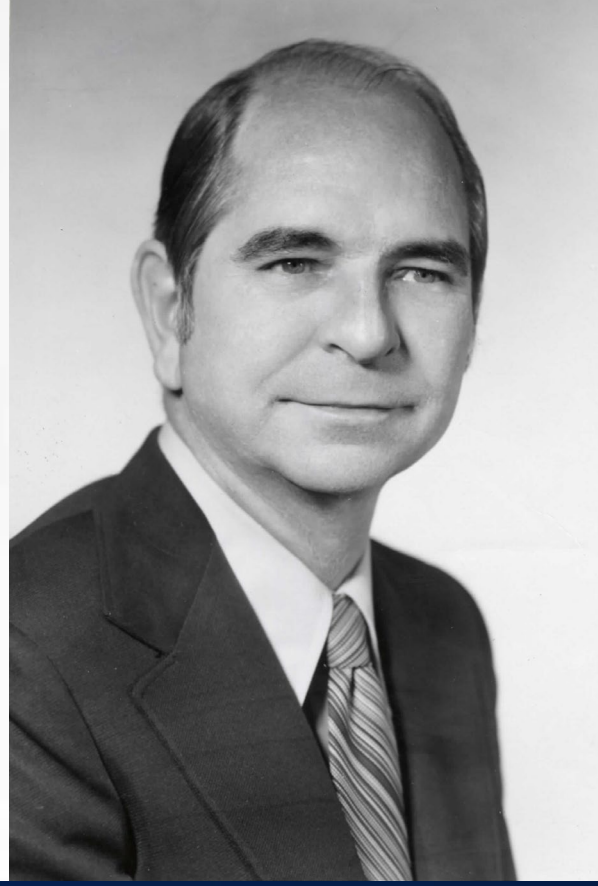


Luther's Catechism













Debt Retirement and Our Church Papers

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4
Bulletin No. 30 May, 1938

"Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations . . . And ye are witnesses of these things." Luke 24, 46-48.

Does this passage from St. Luke not mean that Christ died and rose again for the very purpose that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name? During the forty days from Easter to his Ascension to the Father our Lord Jesus did but one thing — he prepared his disciples to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name. "Go ye," he said. And again, "Ye are witnesses of these things."

Jesus will never again appear in the flesh until he shall come to the judgment. He will not again preach to men in the flesh. Nor will he send any angel to do so. The privilege and duty to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name he has entrusted wholly to his disciples, that is, to those who believe on him.

If we Christians fail him, who will preach the forgiveness which he purchased with his very life?

YE ARE WITNESSES

Christ surely did not mean only the few disciples to whom he spoke in those days just before his Ascension. If we believe and trust that he died for our transgressions and rose again for our justification, then we too are witnesses of his Resurrection as well as the first disciples were.

Nor is it only the 550 pastors of our Synod who are to be witnesses. That honor and trust has been given to everyone of us who looks to Christ for life and salvation.

A large part of our obligation as witnesses of Christ we discharge through the persons whom we call or send out to preach in our name and stead. The missions among the Indians and Negroes, the mission in Poland, the mission stations in all the States in which our Synod is represented, the institutions that have to be built and maintained in order to pre-

pare pastors, missionaries, and teachers are all our personal obligation to Christ who told us to go and preach.

A DEBT

In carrying on that work, which is your work, you have slowly been accumulating a debt during the past twenty years or more. Three years ago that debt had reached a peak of \$640,000.

PAYMENT

What has been done to reduce that debt? Several

in 1935. The fond hope that the whole debt might be paid by some five or six thousand members, each contributing \$100 or more, was far from being realized. But the Synod has decided not to rest until this debt is out of the world.

We have about 550 pastors in our Synod. In spite of repeated appeals only 285 pastors have sent in cash contributions from their congregations for this purpose. What of the congregations of the other 265?

Some can't give, some will not give, many have never been asked to give.

ROMANS 8, 32

How does any excuse sound, even though it may be a good one, when spoken in the same breath with Romans 8, 32? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things."

\$185,000

Some have given. Some have given freely. The total cash so far received is \$185,000. Of this amount the Committee knows positively that \$134,000 was given outright and will never be required back. That sum is therefore immediately available for paying debts and is being so used. \$36,000 is being held in reserve to pay off a bond issue that falls due in November of this year. When that is paid, an item of \$1980 a year in interest can with one stroke be subtracted from the cost of conducting the Synod's work.

INTEREST

There was a time when the interest charge alone amounted to \$32,000 a year. That has now been reduced to about \$20,000. That sum has to be raised through collections. Why use the collections of a hundred mission festivals a year just to pay interest?

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Two things. You can give for this purpose according as God has given to you. And secondly, you can use your voice in promoting the movement to cut the Synod free from this strangling debt. If your congregation has held back, or has let this matter die for lack of someone to speak in its favor, or has not even discussed Debt Retirement, then your voice can do a great deal.

EXCUSES

Some few have a legitimate excuse. Some mission congregations are working hard to pay their debt to the Synod — money that the Synod itself had to borrow to lend to them. Some have collected money but are withholding it till they see what other congregations are going to do. Some will not start until they see what you and you and the other man have done. Some have just put the matter off for reasons perhaps known to themselves. Some complain that they have always given and are going to let others give for a change.

things. Under no circumstances is money being borrowed that will add to the permanent debt. Salaries of missionaries and of all others in the service of the Synod were drastically reduced several years ago. Extension of mission fields was practically stopped. Candidates for the ministry were not sent out into the field, although there was need of them. Only absolutely necessary equipment for schools was bought. Only the most necessary repairs were made.

D. R. P.

Then came the Debt Retirement Program resolved upon

CHURCH PAPERS AND YOUR FAITH

Ever since Johannes Gutenberg of Mainz invented movable type in the 15th century, printing has been an almost indispensable means of the Church in helping to execute the command: "Preach the Word!"

This is true in spite of the fact, yea, because of the fact that they who hate the Gospel have developed and exploited this art to unusual perfection in laying Satan's snares.

Inconsistent with our modern purism in the matter of the food we eat is the prevalent, sloppy attitude of Christian parents who nonchalantly permit, possibly because they themselves indulge in, the reading of the poisonous products of today's book and magazine hawkers.

Since you are certainly serious in your Christian profession, you will also feel the definite need for a means of supplying regular, constructive Christian literature for the furtherance of Christian knowledge, as a safe guide through the maze of faith-destroying theories and as an antidote to the brazen sin-filth of the modern press.

This need is being adequately supplied by our Synod in three periodicals: THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN, THE GEMEINDEBLATT (German) and THE JUNIOR NORTHWESTERN.

HERE'S AN UNUSUAL OFFER

It costs you all the way from five to twenty and more dollars per year to "keep posted" by means of a daily newspaper, a Sunday supplement and a veritable avalanche of magazines. The net returns from these investments in reading matter are chiefly NEGATIVE. The attendant dangers to your proper, Christian balance are alarmingly inescapable. The gradual undermining of your Christian faith is an almost inevitable consequence. The positive advantages are hardly worth the terrible, intangible price we pay for them. Yet we continue to pay this price willingly, because of our sinful flesh.

Your church papers, however, offer you a spiritual diet of reading matter from a dependable source. Based on the uncontaminated and unvarnished Truth of the Word of God, articles and editorials on positive points of faith are stimulating and deepening. Subtle errors and sly pitfalls of our day are ruthlessly exposed and denounced on the basis of what God says in His Word. The work which you and I are doing, both in the Wisconsin Synod and in the Synodical Conference with hundreds of thousands of our brethren in the faith, is regularly and interestingly reviewed. Announcements of interest to all of us are made through these papers. Ties of unity and fellowship in confessing a common faith are bound more firmly through these periodicals, which become the voice of our entire Church in bringing one another encouragement at his particular

post and in hurling defiance against the powers of Satan in this world.

You ought to align yourself more actively and intelligently with this work by taking advantage of an unusual offer which is made at this time by our Publishing House:

Order your paper now, sending cash with order, and your subscription will begin with the next issue of the periodical ordered and continue to January, 1940.

NOTICE: SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Will you help yourself and your Sunday School by suggesting to your teachers' staff the FREE

"The Convention of the Joint Synod." Since this is the highest legislative body among us, its resolutions are binding for every district, conference and congregation of the Wisconsin Synod.

The eight districts hold their "District Synods or Conventions" in the early summer of every EVEN year. All pastors and teachers, as well as the lay delegates, one from each congregation, constitute the voting strength of these district sessions.

Each district is again geographically subdivided into "Conferences." Today there are 31 such conference groups of congregations in our Synod. They usually meet twice a year either as "Delegate Conferences," each congrega-

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS OF 1938

When the District Conventions are held this summer, they will concern themselves chiefly with matters pertaining to the entire Wisconsin Synod. For that purpose detailed reports are being prepared by the heads of all the departments of our Synod's work.

Among other reports will be the one setting forth the fact that we are not employing many men whom God has placed at our disposal for work in His Church.

(In the Synodical Conference 400 well-trained men are today standing idle in the market place. This represents an accumulation of 4000 years of study, a period reaching from more than 2000 years before Christ to our present day!)

It will also be reported, on the basis of thorough investigation, THAT ALL OF OUR CANDIDATES COULD BE USED AT ONCE. God is proving to us that Jesus' Word is true also today: "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few." He is opening to our eyes of faith vistas of large, uncut fields, already white to harvest, out in the West, in the cities and rural communities of the East and our Middle West.

God is thereby proving us, whether or not we are true stewards of His gifts: He has supplied the laborers; He is showing us the fields; — He now asks us to yield to Him the fruits of faith, so that He might make US the happy servants through whose labors He will reap this great harvest. THIS IS AN UNUSUAL TOKEN OF HIS GREAT GRACE TOWARD US!

Let us beware, lest we blaspheme by making the good God, who has both promised and given us all the required gifts in abundance, a liar, when we say that we are not able to give as much as He needs for His work! It is certainly not a matter of inability, not the fault of a depression or recession, when we fail to contribute the mite of \$3.00 per communicant for His work!

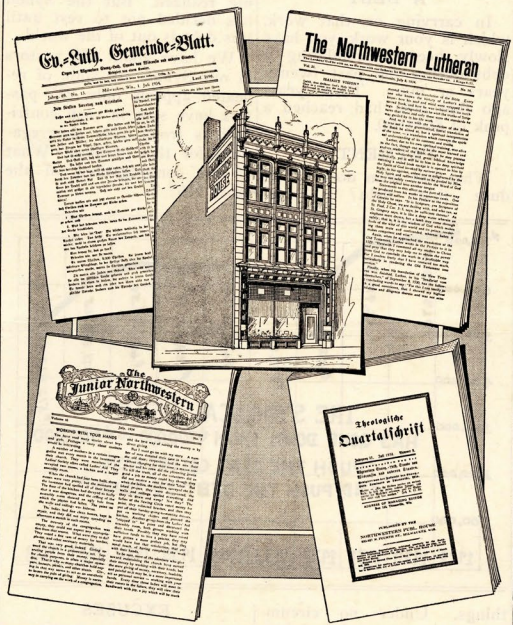
And if we fail Him in this test of faith? — "What shall then the Lord of the Vineyard do?" — "He will come and destroy the husbandmen. AND WILL GIVE THE VINEYARD UNTO OTHERS!"

God forbid!

Nay, let us go to work, EVEN NOW! Let us save the expense of a few evenings' amusement, the cost of a Sunday afternoon pleasure trip, the luxury of a few cigars and cigarettes, — how miserably does not the mere mention of this put us to shame with our niggardly giving for Mission work, — and let us bring this money as an extraordinary offering for our Synodical work.

Then, in God's name, let us encourage our districts this summer to expand our work, to harvest the fields which we have explored!

God grant it!



DISTRIBUTION of our Lutheran children's magazine, the JUNIOR NORTHWESTERN, at ONE-TENTH of the price of the Sunday "funny paper?"

FOR YOUR BETTER INFORMATION

Our Wisconsin Synod today comprises the following eight districts: Southeast Wisconsin, North Wisconsin, West Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Dakota-Montana, Nebraska and the Pacific Northwest.

The representatives of these eight districts, one delegate elected by each group of ten pastors, of ten teachers, and of ten congregations in every district, convene in August of every ODD year as

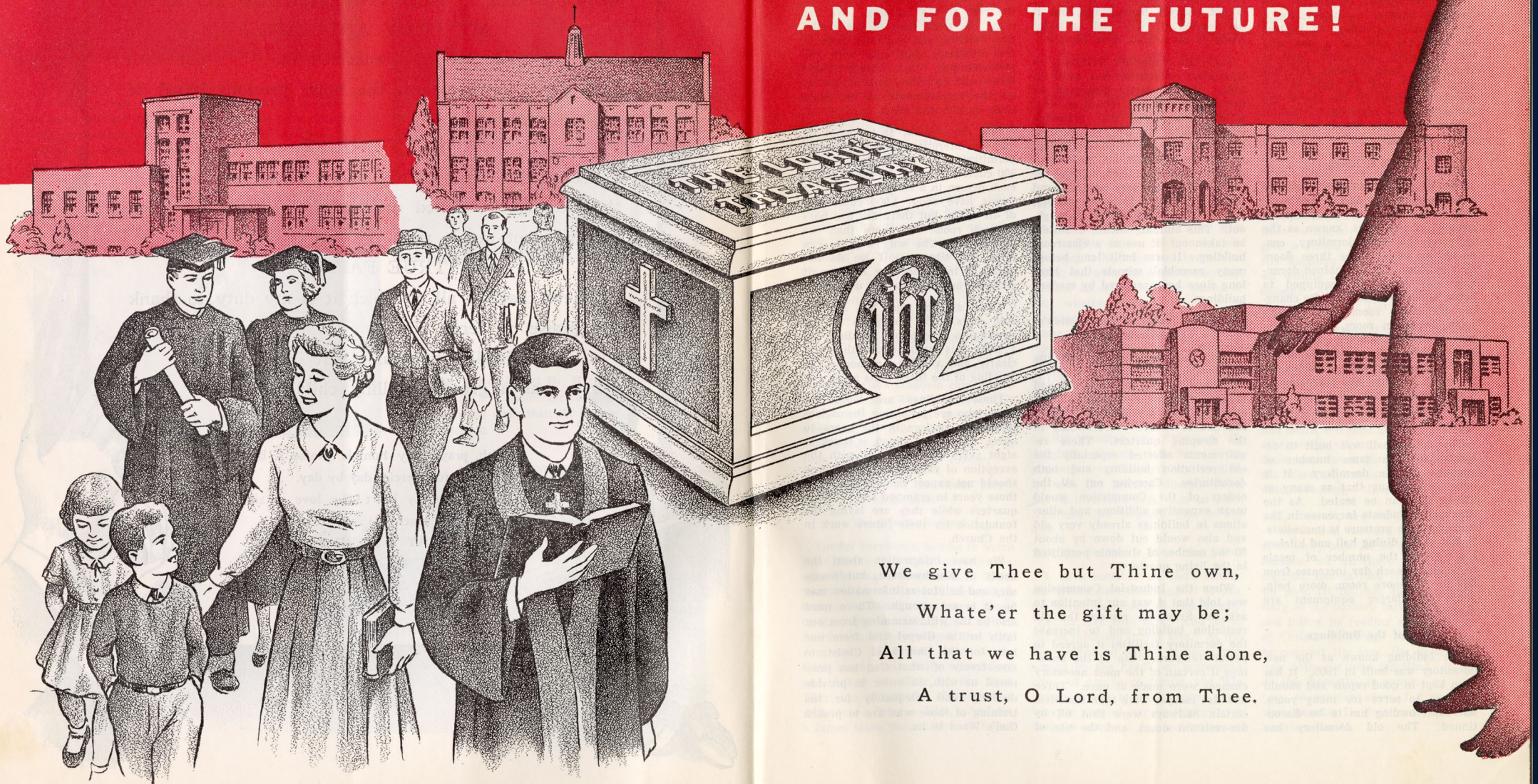
tion sending a lay delegate, or as "Pastoral Conferences," with only the pastors attending.

Our parochial school teachers also meet several times a year in "Teachers' Conferences" to study the particular problems of their profession.

Beside these, the term "conference" is also applied to the larger group of Synods, including the Wisconsin, Missouri and others, known as "The Synodical Conference." These Synods, being united in faith and confession, carry on the Mission work among the negroes in our country and in Nigeria together as an expression of their unity. This body will convene this coming August at Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

your Christmas Gift for Jesus

WILL HELP US BUILD FOR THE PRESENT
AND FOR THE FUTURE!



We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

God's Surprising Grace into the Future





All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:24)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8,9)



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2 0 2 5

CHRIST

THROUGH US

SYNOD CONVENTION

Stewards of the mysteries of God. As to our conservation of those mysteries, our record under God's grace has been remarkable—flying, in fact, in the face of history. As to our sharing of the mysteries of God, His οἰκονομία, His plan of salvation for the world through Jesus Christ, we have faltered at times. In more recent times history will record that we passed through an unparalleled period of expansion measured by any standard available to any historian. We do not know what the future holds. But we do know that God holds the future. For us that is satis superque.

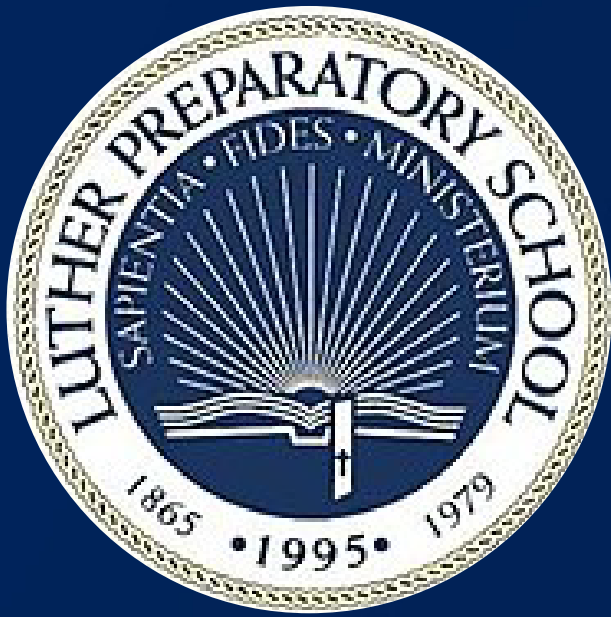
James P. Schaefer

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)











That is what I most fear—boredom. Getting sick and tired of our bread and butter: educating pastors and teachers and sharing the Gospel with those who do not have it. It is a simple program, uncomplicated and—compared with many programs—unglamorous. It is, up to now, what we have done best. There are many other desirable things that we can do together as a gathering of Christians. As we become bored with bread and butter, we reach for other goodies. Before you know it, all our priorities are mixed up and nobody knows where we are going.

James P. Schaefer

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)

The work of the Church is Christ's alone, yet he deigns to work through us. As WELS steps into its eighth generation, may his Spirit, through the Word, empower us for his purpose, multiply our humble efforts, and gather a harvest of souls into his eternal embrace.

WELS' long-range strategic plan
BORAM, p. 68

Lord Jesus, your Spirit calls and gathers the whole Church on earth and empowers it for service. Guide and preserve the work we do with other congregations in our synod. Keep us loyal to your Word, and give us courage to confess your truth boldly. Bestow on our leaders pure hearts, clear vision, and patient faith. Raise up new generations of faithful witnesses who will join us to proclaim the gospel to every creature; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.





BIRTHPLACE OF THE WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

On Christmas Day 1847, a group of German speaking settlers, mostly from Pennsylvania, met and founded the German Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church of Granville Township. By June 1848, these settlers had built and dedicated a log church on a site just south of the West Granville Cemetery. Eventually, renaming the congregation Salem Lutheran Church. On December 8, 1848, three Lutheran pastors, John Machlhauser of Grace Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, John Wetmann of St. John Lutheran Church in Oak Creek, and William Wrede of Salem Lutheran Church in Granville, met in the Grace Church hall and made plans to organize a new church body. The First German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, Machlhauser was elected president, Wetmann secretary, and Wrede treasurer. Pastor Machlhauser was entrusted with drawing up a constitution for the new synod.

The first synod convention was held at Salem Lutheran Church in Granville on May 28, 1850. Five pastors representing eighteen congregations met and adopted a constitution. This event marked the beginning of what is now the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, a Lutheran denomination within the international church.





*Just as the kingdom of Heaven
is like a mustard seed, so also
was the very small beginning
of our Synod.*

President Muehlhaeuser
1860 Synod Convention



*Not unto us but to your name be glory, Lord,
for grace so rich, so wide, so high, so free.
Abide with us till trav'ling days are over and done,
and pilgrim feet lead us home, Lord, to you.*

Kurt Eggert
Christian Worship 582:4

