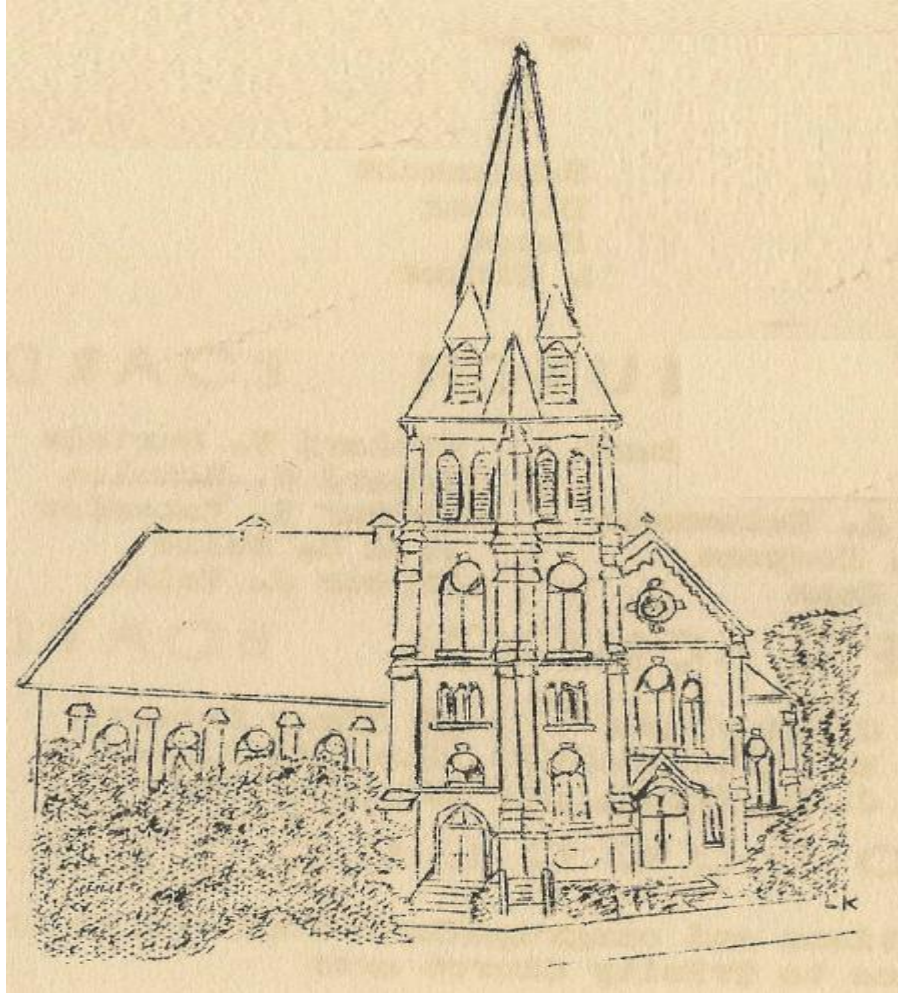


1841

1936

# 95 YEARS OF GRACE



A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF  
TRINITY EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SPRINGFIELD, IL  
NOVEMBER 29, 1936

# NINETY FIVE YEARS OF GRACE

## EARLY BEGINNINGS

The early history of our church is lost to a large extent in the fog and haze of by-gone years of which we have few or no records. It reaches back into the days when many of the common conveniences of our life had not even been invented, as the telephone and telegraph, photographs, and the phonograph, now already largely discarded as outmoded. It reaches back into the days when candle light was commonly used for the illumination of the home, when our grandmothers knew nothing of the possible convenience of a sewing machine, even bathrooms were unheard of. It reaches back beyond the days when Springfield's streets were illuminated by gas, before even the first street was equipped with a pavement of planks.

About the year 1841 Pastor Daniel Scherer, who has been called the "real pioneer of Lutheranism in Illinois" and who diligently travelled up and down the state pursuing his mission work, also came to Springfield, a sprawling village of about 1200 people. Travel was not fast and convenient in those days, for this was some months before the first railroad came to our city, and on wooden tracks at that. Pastor Scherer came from Hillsboro, where he was resident pastor, and on September 19, 1841 preached to a number of his people who had moved to this city, possibly drawn by the fact that the capital had been moved here four years before, and to eight other residents of the village. On that same day the little group organized the "Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of

Springfield". This meeting was held in the home of the Rev. Francis Springer, which was located across the street from the home of Abraham Lincoln. Pastor Springer was a member of the Synod of the West, affiliated with the General Synod. For some years services were held, in private homes and rented halls. A Sunday-school was organized at once to serve the children.

We do not know when Pastor Springer's pastorate ended, but we find, the following ministers serving in the years that followed: Ephraim Miller (1852-1854), Conrad Kuhl (1851); Simon W. Harkey (1852-1854), later president of Illinois University, which was not the present University of Illinois, but the institution occupying the site of the present Concordia Seminary.

An interesting item is that on Easter, March 27, 1853, fifty three persons partook of Holy Communion in an English service, whereas one week later thirty one partook of the Sacrament in a German service. This clearly indicates that the congregation originally was predominately English, even as all our earliest records were written in English. But the German people were served as well as possible. The German contingent however continued to increase with the result that on December 16, 1854 the congregation decided to sell its property including its church in the course of erection on Third Street between Washington and Adams Streets, to the German people. These men organized under the name "Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische Eirche" (German Ev. Lutheran Church) also belonging to the General Synod. The English Congregation (the present Grace Lutheran Church) again conducted its services in rented buildings but used our church for Holy Communion, and the two pastors exchanged pulpits.

#### The Congregation Becomes German

Since the year 1855 there were two Lutheran congregations in Springfield, a German and an English

one, both belonging to the General Synod. In this year Pastor F. W. Eggerking was called to serve the congregation, and it was during his tenure of office that the first move was made to establish a day school. But nothing came of this until Pastor Theodore Huschmann was called on Dec. 11, 1859, Pastor Eggerking having resigned on Nov. 1. In the call sent him by the congregation, which then numbered about 300 members, Pastor Huschmann was also required to teach school, and all this for a salary of \$300.00 a year.

With Pastor Huschmann we come to a period in the history of our congregation which is still remembered by the old members, some of whom were baptized by him. He seems to have been a very able and energetic man with distinct tendencies toward orderly and sound Lutheranism. As requested in his call he taught school for a year and a half, until a teacher was secured; to him we owe our earliest church records, and he not only faithfully kept the records from the beginning of his pastorate, but he also carried them back to the year 1851, thereby rendering future generations a highly valuable service; he also inaugurated evening services and special Lenten services. His exactness is shown by his entries of confirmands, where he gives not only the names of the children, but also the term of study and the text books used. His first class was instructed from February 14 to May 24, 1860. It was in this same year that the church also adopted its present name, Trinity. These and other actions indicate that the congregation was gradually assuming a firmer and more distinctly Lutheran character. Owing to doctrinal difficulties, the nature of which cannot be ascertained, Pastor Huschmann was released on October 26, 1862, and on December 21 of that same year the congregation decided to obtain a pastor from the Missouri Synod, if at all possible, after it had previously resolved to sever its connections with the General Synod. These were the early days, days of small

beginnings, of stumbling efforts, of a congregation feeling and finding its way, unconsciously being led by a Higher Hand to a larger destiny. These were the days when the organist was also the janitor, occasionally also exchanging duties with the teacher; days when the church funds were raised in part by the renting of pews at \$2 and \$3 a pew. During Pastor Buschmann's days, the Church Board consisted of such men as Henry Van Horn, John Bergmann, John G. Zapf, Philipp Scharf, G. Blumer, A.D. Maier, Philipp Hagedorn and Christ Laura. One of those, J.G. Zapf, reached the extreme old age of ninety five years and was buried by the present pastor of the church in 1921.

The appearance of such well-known names as VanHorn and Zapf serves to link the early days with the next period in the history of the church.

#### Missouri Synod Affiliation

March 1, 1863, Pastor William Bartling, member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, was installed as pastor of Trinity Church by the Rev. J.F. Buerger of St. Louis with the renowned Prof. C.F.W. Walther assisting. From the quaint record of the treasurer of the church we glean the following items which are not only naive but also quite illuminating. Pastor Bartling's salary was \$400.00 a year; he received \$18.10 for freight and traveling expenses in coming here; on the date of his installation there was paid to the two pastors "Pienger" (Buenger) and "Walter" the sum of \$7.50 for traveling expenses from St. Louis; the first collection for a Missouri Synod purpose was taken on Easter of 1863 and netted \$21.25 for poor students; regular Sunday collections ranged from \$2 to \$7, while those of the evening services seldom exceeded \$2, with occasional notes that there had been no collection at all. The first fund for the poor was established in 1864.

With the purchase of property on Jefferson Street, between First and Second Streets, for \$4,500.00, the congregation took a long step forward in 1865. A house on this property was remodeled to be used as a school, the work being completed by April 1 of the next year. On this property a modest parsonage was also erected in 1868 at a cost of \$1,400.00. This external growth was the result of steady internal and spiritual progress which showed itself in such action as the introduction of "Christenlehre" (catechism services) on Sunday afternoons; the adoption of an anti-lodge paragraph, etc. In 1879 Pastor Bartling accepted a call to Chicago to become the sixth Lutheran pastor in that city, where his nephew is still pastor. The congregation was, however, not long to be without a shepherd, for on May 1 of the same year Pastor August Herrmann Burkhardt was installed. It was during his pastorate that the congregation took a step very important for its whole future history. On March 3, 1872 it was resolved to join the Missouri Synod and Jacob Neu was elected as first delegate. Nor was this resolution made lightly. The constitution of the now synod had been carefully studied for some years, and the decision to join was reaffirmed a month after it was first made. Pastor Burkhardt, an able and faithful shepherd, was not permitted to serve the flock very long. He soon fell ill and Pastor Theodore Bensen was called as his assistant July, 1873.

On October 12, 1873, the congregation took an action which later proved to be of tremendous importance not only to the congregation, but to the whole Missouri Synod. On that day the congregation decided to buy the Illinois University for the price of \$6500 for the purpose of holding it for Synod to be used as a college for girls, more especially for the training of women teachers in our schools. This is one of the actions of the fathers which goes to show how farsighted they were. Pastor Buenger of St. Louis attended the meeting and largely directed the whole action.

The first trustees of this college were H.W. Rokker, John Bressmer, Henry Bolte, Fr. Fetser, Henry, Van Horn, Michael Riefler, and Charles Lange. Pastor Burkhardt was to be the first president. We also note among other things that Student H. Katt of our St. Louis seminary and a brother of Our Mrs. Louise Wessel, was selected to canvass the congregations of Synod for assistance in the form of shares in the undertaking. What became of this girls school will appear later on.

In 1874 the congregation was plunged into deep sorrow by the death of its faithful pastor. Poor health had forced him repeatedly to take extended leaves-of-absence. While at Kimmswick, Mo., he died on August 25, and a few days later he was also buried there. One of the windows in our church has been placed in his memory.

After the early death of Pastor Burkhardt, the congregation was left in charge of the assistant pastor, Theodore Bensen, for about a year. After he left in 1875, the congregation obtained the services of Pastor Frederick Lochner of Milwaukee, a man well and favorably known as one of the early father's and founders of our Synod and an intimate friend of Dr. Walther and the outstanding men of his day. Pastor Lochner was acknowledged as the authority on liturgics, publishing a volume which for many years ranked as the best treatise on that subject, and also a small magazine which is still much sought after and highly prized. He also wrote a children's Christmas liturgy which was classic and which to this day has remained the basis of all our Christmas liturgies. In view of this, it is one of those strange inconsistencies that the congregation up to the year 1921 had a very meager and insufficient liturgical service. Pastor Lochner was also the author of sermon books, a book for family devotions, etc. He took part in the preliminary discussion which led to the founding of our Synod, at which

time he was pastor of a Congregation in Toledo, Ohio, But he is not listed as one of the charter members, perhaps because of the agonistic attitude of his congregation.

He came here at the age of fifty-three years, somewhat ailing in health, but still his ministry was blessed in various ways. The old chronicler makes mention of the fact that he was the first to serve a group of people in Chatham, IL and that he preached at the dedication of our church there (1879). It is further recorded that he instructed a negro, Berkhalter by name, and a certain space in church was set aside for negro people. This no doubt led to the founding of Holy Trinity Church, the present negro congregation in Springfield. His interest in mission work among the colored folk is also evident from this that he was the first editor (1878-84) of the "Missionstaube" a paper published mainly in the interest of this mission. He also liked to deal with the lodge controversy, which in the days of Pastor Burkhardt had come to such a climax that a group seceded from the congregation and formed St. John's Lutheran Church which took the well known liberal attitudes on the lodge question.

It was during Lochner's days that one of the very important dates in the history of Synod occurred in Springfield. The Illinois University had been bought for the purpose of establishing a school for girls. These plans did not work out successfully and after a long and heated debate at the convention of Synod in Ft. Wayne in 1874 it was decided to remove the practical seminary from St. Louis to Springfield. Pursuant to this resolution the lower classes, the so-called pro-gymnasium or academy, moved into the institution in the year 1874, and in the following year Pastor Lochner's old and dear friend, Prof. F.A. Craemer, moved here with the seminary classes as president of the institution, in which position he continued until his death on May 3, 1891. He also served the congregation faithfully and well, as

assistant pastor (1876-87) and later, during a vacancy. In these capacities he also often occupied Trinity's pulpit, but not always to the complete satisfaction of our worthy old fathers who preferred to hear their pastor Lochner, and who finally protested in all due form that Prof. Craemer's sermons were "too long, too technical, and not clear enough". Undoubtedly both parties profited by the resulting discussions. At all events it did not seriously disturb the good relations existing between "Onkel" Craemer and the church, for he continued to serve as faithfully as before and the congregation also duly and gratefully acknowledged his services. Pastor Lochner, of course, was much interested in the seminary. He served on its first Board of Control together with, H. Van Horn, John Bressmer and H. Bolter. He was also professor of liturgics and hymnology during the years of his pastorate there. Add to this his literary labors, the fact that the church had grown to number 700 souls, and that important improvements were made during his incumbency, such as the purchasing of a new organ ( \$900) and the building of a new school, and it will readily be seen that he was heavily burdened. His health also continued to fall and in 1887, he resigned, much to the regret of his congregation. .

We next find him serving as assistant pastor of Trinity, Milwaukee, where he was privileged to celebrate his fiftieth anniversary in office. Professors Herzer and Simon were sent to Milwaukee to convey the congratulations of our congregation. Despite his feeble health Pastor Lochner lived to the ripe old age of eighty years and was called to his reward in February, 1902. During the ensuing vacancy Prof. Craemer faithfully served the church as pastor and it was undoubtedly due to his energetic action that it was proposed and decided to build a new church. This was not a new thought, for the old church had been offered for sale fifteen years before this at the price of \$3,000.00

but nothing was done about it until the above mentioned resolution was passed and after that our fathers proceeded with very commendable vigor.

The congregation issued a number of calls in vain during an interval of about six months. Among those called were Reinhold Pieper and J. Herzer, both of whom later became professors at the local seminary. The congregation rejoiced greatly when the Rev. George Link of Fraser, Michigan, was installed as pastor on February 5, 1888.

### Building

The plans for the erection of a new church now went rapidly forward. The present church lot at Second and Monroe was bought for \$4,800.00. Excavation was begun about the middle of July and the cornerstone was laid September 23, 1888. Mr. C.D. May of St. Louis was the architect. The erection of the building took almost exactly a year, for it was dedicated on September 22, 1899, the total cost being listed at \$30,867.79. The dedicatory services proved to be one of the memorable events not only in the history of our church, but in the whole city of Springfield. According to the report in the Illinois State Journal of the next morning excursions were run for the celebration from the following points: St. Louis(2), Decatur, Jacksonville, Peoria, Pekin, Jerseyville, :Bloomington, Carlinville, Lincoln, Chicago, Taylorville, Litchfield, Collinsville, Staunton, and Mt. Pulaski. The day was one of ideal fall sunshine. When Pastor Link and the contractor, Mr. J.L. Toenjes, stood at the church doors to open them in the name of the Triune God, they looked down upon a mass of 5000 people extending two blocks on Monroe Street and on Second Street. After the ceremonial opening of the doors the church was filled to overflowing in fifteen minutes

while the rest of the crowd gathered under the windows to hear as much as they could. Pastor Bartling preached in the morning, Pastor Lochner in the afternoon, and Pastor F. Zahn of Woodford Ky. held an English sermon in the evening. Thus was dedicated the house of worship which has served us for forty seven years and which, we hope, will continue to serve us for many years although it is beginning to show the signs of age and will soon need a complete renovation, the plans for which are now under way.

In view of the fact that this congregation had to provide room in its church not only for its 940 members, but also for the seminary, which at the time had an enrollment of 200 and more, the sum of \$4,148.55 was contributed by other synodical congregations toward the erection of the building which was written down as a "magnificent addition, to the churches of Springfield"

As we look over the old, very' carefully kept record of our fathers who constituted the building committee, we cannot help but vote them a full measure of credit for able and competent work and the church as it still stands today is a monument to their faithfulness and efficiency. This building committee consisted of the following; Pastor George Link, John Bressmer, A. Schuppe, Henry Paul, Frank Harbauer, Sr., and Henry Bettinghaus, who also served as general superintendent of the project. The committee in charge of arrangements for the day of dedication was: J.L. Toenjes, H. Sturm, Fred Sell, A. Schuppe, Henry Van Horn, Justiceo Fifer (so the newspaper spells it), and Jacob Neu, who kept the financial records till the last penny was paid in 1905.

The pulpit of the new church was very ably filled by Pastor Link, a very forceful pulpit orator, whose sermons were quite often striking models of concise brevity and completeness. Besides his pastoral work he labored hard to reduce the indebtedness on the church building which must have been rather large. When Pastor Link left the congregation, in

1892, there still was a debt of \$10,129.45 on the property. As indicated, the church did not enjoy the services and preaching of Pastor Link very long, for after but four years he followed a call to Red Bud, Illinois, where he served until 1901. Later he served for some time as assistant to his son, the Rev. George Link, Jr., in La Porte, Indiana. Having grown old and feeble he moved back to Springfield and passed his declining days in the midst of the congregation which he had served, tenderly cared for by his wife and son, Charles F., well known to the most of us. The old pastor fell asleep peacefully on September 21, 1908, and was laid to rest in beautiful Oak Ridge, where both he and his wife now await the resurrection of the just.

Pastor Link was succeeded in September 1882 by the Rev. Martin Luecke, of Troy, Ill., who was installed by Prof. J. Herzer, the vacancy pastor. Pastor Luecke proved himself to be one of the ablest and most gifted pastors of our church. He was a careful manager and succeeded in reducing the church debt to less than \$1000. He was very faithful and efficient in the personal pastoral care of his people and showed this by introducing organized welfare and poor relief work in the church on a scale which was never approached before or after. It was as a part of this work of the congregation that he became the prime mover in the founding in April, 1897, of Springfield Hospital which for many years was fostered and largely maintained by our church also as a missionary agency. He also wisely but firmly drew many of our people out of secret societies and definitely settled the lodge question in our church. He introduced English services, the congregation deciding to have one such service a month. Besides those and other activities he also showed his versatility by writing several historical books and: Bible helps. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that his ability became recognized in wider circles. As a result he was called to the presidency of Concordia College in Fort Wayne on February 15, 1903.

The congregation was very reluctant to see its pastor go and it was only after several long meetings that it gave its consent and regretfully granted its pastor a peaceful dismissal into a wider field where he labored with signal success and died at the height of his activity in 1926.

In looking back upon his eleven years of service we do not hesitate to lay as a memorial wreath upon his tomb the acknowledgement that in him the Lord had given the Church a highly able and brilliant servant who worked faithfully and humbly and under whose ministrations the congregation and congregational life flourished and prospered.

After his departure Prof. J. Herzer again served as vacancy pastor and after Pastor Wagner of Decatur, Pres. Albrecht of our Milwaukee Concordia, father of our Prof. W. Albrecht, and Pastor Brauer of Crete, Ill., had -been called unsuccessfully the call was extended on August 2, 1903 to the Rev. Frederick Brand of Pittsburgh, Pa., who accepted it and was installed on October 19 of that year.

In Pastor Brand God gave the congregation a worthy successor to Pastor Luecke. He also proved himself to be a man of outstanding ability not only as an eloquent preacher and practical pastor, but also as a leader in the wider affairs of Synod. In 1907 he was elected first president of the Central Illinois District, which position he filled till 1917 when he was made one of the vice-presidents of General Synod. During the troubled days of the World War he served as chairman of Synod's committee on matters related to the war. He displayed his pastoral and missionary ability by serving the boys at Camp Lincoln and by establishing, with the assistance of Mr. R.J. Schoknecht, a Sunday-school and congregation in Thayer (1911) which was later combined with the church at Chatham.

During his time also our present school building

was erected in 1906. It was built in the remarkably short time of four months by Mr. G. Bettinghaus, father of our present treasurer, at a cost of \$12,599. 60. The dedication services took place on October 28 as a part of the Reformation Festival services. The cost of this building was defrayed by the sale of the Jefferson Street property for \$15,000. The sale of this property, however, also made necessary the purchase of a new parsonage. The house at 117 W. Washington was purchased for \$8,500.00

A little later, in 1910; the Christian Church offered its organ for sale at \$1500.00. The offer was accepted and in the fall the organ was dedicated. \$1961.77 had been collected to cover this item, and the \$461 balance likely helped make it possible for the treasurer to announce on January 1, 1911 that the congregation was free of any debt.

Since its beginning in 1895 the branch school in the college district has continued to grow until it was felt advisable to build a school in this territory henceforth to be known as Immanuel. This was to be a memorial to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the dedication of our church which was celebrated October 1, 1914. Lots on Matheny Street were purchased a year later for \$1700.00 and in 1916 the school was erected as it stands today at a cost of \$16,556.78. Hr. E.C. Bartz was the builder, and the building committee consisted of the following: G. Stach, A.G. Buth, C. Grannemann, E.H. Richter, H. Ostermeier, Smolnik, F. Volle, Meyer, Fred Buecker, Charles Link, and the pastor. The cornerstone was laid on June 18 and the dedication services were held on November 25, 1916. The next day school opened with 74 children in the three grades taught there.

The congregation realized that the work was becoming too heavy for one man. Candidate Paul Krey was called to serve as assistant, mainly in the Immanuel district. At the same time the English services were increased to two a month.

After seventeen years of service in our congregation Pastor Brand accepted a call from Synod in 1921 to become its Director of Foreign Missions. The congregation could not deny the importance of this call and regretfully released him to work in this wider field. Since that time he has lived in St. Louis from where he has directed this part of our mission work in the interest of which he also personally visited China and India. In this year, 1936, the Lord of the Church graciously permitted him to celebrate his fiftieth anniversary in office, and our congregation as well as many members personally sent him their sincerest congratulations and joined in thanking God for what He had done to and through him.

And so Trinity Church was again without a pastor. Prof. Theodore Engelder kindly served as vacancy pastor while the congregation called Pastor J.F. Boerger of Racine, Wis. After he had declined the call was extended to the Rev. Paul Schulz of Cincinnati, Ohio, in February, 1921. He accepted the call, but since the congregation had the services of Pastor Krey as assistant it consented to have Pastor Schulz remain in Cincinnati until Easter. In the interim the old, parsonage on Washington Street was sold because the location was no longer desirable. And so Pastor Schulz and his family found no parsonage ready for them upon their arrival, but were very kindly cared for in the homes of Mr. C.F. Link and Mr. F.W. Siebert. After a short delay the present parsonage at 1200 S. Second Street was purchased for \$8525.00.

Pastor Schulz was installed on April 17 and Pastor Krey, the assistant, followed a call to a Norwegian congregation in Chicago. Since his work consisted mainly in teaching school at Immanuel, it was decided it would be more advisable to call an experienced teacher for this position and Pastor Krey therefore became available for a call as regular pastor of a congregation.

The year 1922 was marked by two memorable celebrations

namely the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. R. Schoknecht who has served this congregation longer than any pastor or teacher, his years of service having now reached the impressive total of thirty nine. In this year the congregation also celebrated the eightieth anniversary of its founding in several splendid commemorative services. For this occasion the interior of the church had been redecorated, and a number of gifts were also made as memorials.

In 1922 it was also decided to liquidate the debt remaining on the Immanuel property, namely \$10,000.00 and on the third Sunday in November a total of \$7583.30 was collected, which together with notes that were donated proved sufficient to pay the debt.

A number of changes were quietly but quite forcibly making themselves felt in the church. One of the most important was the change from the German to the English language. There can be no doubt that the congregation had grown to be very English and a number of provisions were made to adjust the language situation, such as having German and English services on alternate Sundays. But this and other measures proved inadequate and the question was really only solved when the congregation introduced the plan which had been put into successful operation by the pastor in his previous charge, namely, to have services in both languages every Sunday morning. The first arrangement was German at 9.30 and English at 10.45 which in 1924 was changed to the present order, English at 9.30 and German at 10.45. From then on the English work made astounding gains and the fact that practically the whole congregation without any urging or persuasion turned to the English is quite definite proof that the large majority of the people had indeed some years ago become predominantly English in their speech and thinking. Those who preferred German were, however, not neglected and German services are still conducted faithfully every Sunday morning although the number of those who attend them is con-

constantly dwindling and now averages from forty to fifty. Since the English work has come to the fore the full English liturgy has also been introduced.

Conditions in Immanuel were clarified and Trinity Church released about 200 members for the purpose of organizing a congregation in this district. Candidate George Klein was called as pastor and installed on October 3, 1926. In 1928 a congregation was organized with the financial aid of Trinity Church and the promise that Immanuel would receive the property as a gift whenever it became apparent that the congregation was firmly established and practically self-sustaining. The organization of this church was again a long step forward, and whereas there were formerly but two of our churches in this city, the negro church and our own, we now have besides these Immanuel Church and Concordia Church which also received a number of its members from our church. Pastor Klein accepted a call to Chatham and was succeeded by the present pastor, the Rev. Otto H. Beer, in 1931.

Owing to the depression rather than far-reaching plans for relocating our whole church property went awry. It is evident that we have not room on our present lot for both church and school and, hence after long deliberation a movement was begun to put up new buildings in another location and about \$75;000 in pledges had been secured when the hard times came upon us and it seemed wise to desist. But a concrete outcome of this was that the church did buy more land, namely four and one half lots at the corner of First and Adams Streets. Those lots as well as the street assessments are not being paid for directly by the church, but by societies belonging to the church, and at the present writing there is but a small unpaid balance. According to present sentiment the church shall remain where it is, but at an opportune time a new school and parish house shall be erected on those lots.

## SOCIETIES

The foregoing reminds us of the activities of our societies. We find that Young Ladies Society existed as far back as 1870, and soon thereafter a Young Men's society is also mentioned. Still later we read of a "Concordia Society" which seems to have been a joint organization of the above two. Our present young people's society was organized shortly after Pastor Schultz took charge, and after the usual first faltering steps became firmly established and in 1924 joined the International Walther Longue. A Junior division followed this example in 1930. Our Senior division today has about ninety members enrolled, while the Juniors count sixty four. Both societies are in flourishing condition and have contributed much towards various purposes of the church, e.g. , the ladies' rest room was equipped, and the bulletin board furnished by the Seniors, who today also are carrying the lion's share of the assessments on our newly purchased lot. The Juniors bought our folding chairs, the hat holders in the pews, etc. Their one big annual effort is their drive to gain subscriptions for our church papers.

The Ladies' Aid society traces its history back to the date of its founding in 1880 as the Tabea Verein. It is therefore the oldest of our organizations and has constantly been interested in taking care of the appearances of the interior of our church as also in its welfare generally. A Ladies' Aid is mentioned as early as 1874, and quite typically, the mention is made in connection with the making of our first church seal. This society has greatly expanded its membership and program and today has a membership of over a hundred, and is thus also the largest of our societies.

The church has also always had a Choir. The minutes of the congregation mention this organization as far back as 1865, and in 1872 we find the treasurer making regular payments to the choir out of congregational funds. Evidently, though, the choir did not always flourish, for repeatedly we find resolutions requesting the teachers to organize a choir. The choir does; however, seem to have been a rather definite organization since the days of Teacher Wilk. Today the choir has come into prominence, for beginning in the early part of 1936 it has regularly beautified our services with the singing of the Introits. It is being directed by Mr. Diesing.

For some years it was felt that some provision should be made to get Lutheran families that had moved into town better acquainted with our people, and hence the Married People's club was organized two years ago on a very informal basis, and just because of that it has admirably served its purpose. About eighty have joined this group.

#### Plans and Prospects

As the years go on, it is becoming evident that the church will have to undergo a complete renovation and a far-reaching program, extending over a number of years is being carried out along these lines. A good beginning was made by the Married People's Club when it took in hand the renovation and rebuilding of our church windows at a cost of about \$550. The Ladies' Aid, which had previously had equipped the church with new altar hangings, communion ware, etc., fell in line by having a new carpet laid at a cost of \$977.00. A Repair Fund has been established for the purpose of paying for such things as the renovation of the exterior of the church, etc., while it is hoped that enough donations will be forthcoming during the next five years to equip the church with new pews, altar and pulpit, and organ by the time we celebrate the hundredth anniversary.

## H E L P E R S

As was the case with former pastors, so the present one also was called upon to serve Synod in various capacities, e.g., as chairman of the District Mission Board and of the District Board of Education, as secretary and later as chairman of the Board of Control of Concordia Seminary, as president of the Central Illinois District succeeding Rev. Heyne of Decatur on numerous committees, and since the fall of 1932 as member of Synods Board of Directors, in which capacity he also visited our missions in South America, for which purpose the congregation granted him a four months' leave-of-absence in the first part of 1936. Although the Board of Directors offered to pay for additional help the congregation declined this and Pastor Koppelman kindly took over all the work during the pastor's absence.

All this additional work of course made it necessary that the pastor have some help. Therefore the District paid the salary for an assistant while he was president. Candidate Walter Lieder served in this capacity for one year (1931-32) and then accepted a call to St. Louis where he is now pastor. There upon Candidate Herman H. Koppelman was engaged in the fall of 1932 and was salaried by the congregation and the Board of Directors. In 1934 he received a regular call as assistant pastor and was installed June 24. It is recognized on all sides that although the pastor has been relieved by his assistants, there still remains much to be done by both of them in a congregation numbering 1500 souls, for this church always has been a very busy one, having many meetings and Services and mission work, sick visiting, etc., and more work of a transient nature than other congregations because this is the capital of the state.

# OUR SCHOOLS

An institution that has contributed tremendously toward the growth and firm establishment of the congregation is our church school. Space will not permit to give an extended account of the history of our schools, but the following items of interest should be noted. A history of Springfield tells us that Pastor Springer conducted a school as early as 1840 at Fifth and Miller Streets, but this may have been his private undertaking. In 1859 it was resolved to open a church school. In 1860 this resolution was reaffirmed and a Mr. Wevier was engaged as first teacher under Pastor Huschmann. He resigned on November 12, 1860 and was succeeded by the church organist and janitor, Adam Meisel. A building was rented for \$6.00 a month to house the school and in 1866, when the Jefferson Street property was purchased a house standing on the plot was remodeled for a school. Here classes were held, six hours a day, we are told, and the children sat on benches ten feet long. A further sign of progress, at least in the opinion of the children, was the first school picnic with free lemonade hold in 1866. The purchase of this property and the locating of the school thereon marked a distinct improvement in school conditions which had languished for some years owing to some extent to the very rapid succession of teachers, to some of whom this title may be applied only by a violent stretching of charity. But even if they all had been bona fide and excellent teachers, the very fact that up to the present time we have had fifty six teachers of record (including students and some temporary helpers) was not conducive to stability and high school standards. Among those who taught in this school are Carl Seifert (1867-69); Samuel Garbisch (1870-73); Frederick Schuenhoff (1873-77); and Benjamin Gotsch, who came here in 1877.

In 1880 a one-story school was erected on Jefferson Street on the location now occupied by the Schulz

Baking Company, where some of the beams of the old school may still be seen in a part of the building. The building committee consisted of J.L. Toenjes, H. Bettinghaus, Fr, and Philipp Fetzner H. Paul, J. Bressmer, B. Gotsch (teacher), and Pastor Lochner. We are told by the old chronicler that the enrollment of this new school was 106 of whom some seventy-four were children of members and thirty-two strangers of whom nine were "Americans". Evidently our people did not feel quite at home in the United States even at this late date.

In this building school was now conducted for twenty-six years with the following as the main teachers: B.Gotsch (till-1888), Gustav Garbing (1883-87), Alwin Wilk (1887-1897) and R,J. Schoknecht, who came to the main school in 1899. Soon after this building was opened, a second class was begun to which Gustav Gerbing was called. It was due especially to his efforts that the standards were raised considerably and the congregation also came to a better realization of the value of a good school and expressed this by increasing the salary to \$50.00 a month. In fact the school had so good a reputation that it was even attended by the children of ministers of other denominations. When Mr. Gerbing accepted a position in Des Peres, Mo., (Orphan's Home) the congregation suffered a distinct loss, which was felt the more because Pastor Lochner resigned about the same time.

In June of 1887 Candidate Alwin Wilk from our Seminary in Addison was called to promote the work in English and music, and to conduct the choir. It was under him that English United States histories (demanded by state law) and spellers and readers were introduced, and then only after long insistence on his part.

Because of a decreasing enrollment, owing to some extent to the distance some children had to go, one of the teachers, H. Lueker (1892-95), was instructed to open a mission school in the seminary territory. This

branch school was opened on August 26, 1895, in an old frame building, corner Twelfth and Matheny Streets, on the seminary grounds. This building has since given place to the seminary dining hall. In the main school Mr. Lueker was replaced by a woman teacher. He, however, taught at the new school for only four months, and after that students were put in charge until 1897 when Mr. Schoknecht arrived. When Mr. Wilk accepted a call to Chicago two years later Mr. Schoknecht was transferred to the main school where he has since been active. August Besch was called to the branch school at this time and served from 1899 to 1904.

So things went on until 1906 when the present building was erected directly in back of the church. This was and still is a thoroughly modern building, well constructed, and as well arranged as is possible on the rather narrow available space. The branch school had classes only up to the third grade, and after that the children came to the main school. In 1909 it was found necessary to add another man to the teaching force and Mr. Frederick C. Diesing was called to take charge of the middle classes. Three years later Mr. Robert C. Runge was called to take over the lowest grades which had up to this time been taught mostly by women teachers, amongst them also our Mrs. R. J. Schoknecht. When Pastor Schulz arrived he found the school, in the competent hands of these three men, Schoknecht, Diesing, and Runge. The enrollment increased so much since then, however, that it was necessary in 1924 to engage a fourth teacher in our school, and from that time the first two grades have been in the hands of women teachers, the first of whom was Miss Erna Ostermeier, and the present one Miss E. Winker. The fact that our present teachers have remained with us for so long a period of time has given the school more stability and prestige and distinctly improved its standards, until today it is ranked among the city's best. It is remarkable that we have a staff of teachers who have served us so long: Mr. Schoknecht thirty-nine years, Mr. Diesing, twenty-seven years, Mr. Runge, twenty-four years, and Miss Winker, seven years.

In 1916 the congregation erected the present Immanuel School and church building on property it had purchased at Sixteenth and Matheny Streets. Here conditions were also stabilized by the fact that competent teachers remained in the school for a longer time than previously. Among those who served efficiently and well were the teachers A. Maurer (1913-29), H.G. Fischer (1921-26), now of Peoria, and H.E. Bundemthal (1927-31), now in St. Louis.

The highest joint enrolment was 308 in the year 1926. Shortly after this it was found necessary to revise this enrollment because many parents were merely sending their children to our school for an education with no intention of having them join our church, and so the number was drastically reduced, but it again increased and today stands at 176 for Trinity and 80 for Immanuel School.

SUNDAY - S C H O O L

Another educational agency carried on by our church is a Sunday-School which was founded together with the church, languished and died, was supplanted by the "Christenlehre" and again was revived in the days of Pastor Luecke, and today is in a flourishing condition. It and the two Bible classes held in conjunction with it are taught by fourteen teachers under the superintendency of Mr. Runge who is assisted in the Junior and Primary departments by Miss Winker. Owing to the fact that a number of our children live a far distance from the church, a branch Sunday-school was opened on November 23, 1930 in the West Grand School on the Chatham Road. For some years this was conducted by Mr. Diesing, until he turned it over to the assistant pastor in the early part of the year. Three teachers besides Rev. Koppelman are busy here.

## OUR LAYMEN

A church is not built by its pastors only, but by the whole spiritual priesthood of its members. Thus we find that also in our church a number of men have given long years of service as members of the Church Board and otherwise. He who served us longest and who well deserved the vote of thanks accorded him when he retired from active service at the age of seventy-three was Henry Van Horn, who labored faithfully in various ways for nigh onto half a century. Next in order in point of years of service is Mr. Herman G. Goering, still actively interested in our church. He is the only member ever elected to the Board twelve successive terms and therefore serving twenty-four years without interruption. Next there is H. Paul, who served for twenty-one years.

Others who have served us for ten years or more, some of whom have passed to their reward and others who are still with us, are John Bressmer (10), Henry Bettinghaus (10), G.C. Bretscher (10), Fred Gaede (14), ?. Hamann (10), C.A.Heinemann (since 1923), John Hoffman (20), Henry Maurer (16), A. Merkel (16), John Mass (10 and since 1930), Jacob Neu (18), Henry Ostermeier (15), Louis Reiss (12), August Schuppe (15), Henry Sturm (18), Frank W. Siebert (14); Fr. Sell (14), W.C. Vogt (11), and F. Yaeck (10). Other prominent laymen who are still better remembered among us and who served as members of the Church Board but not for such a long period are Leonhardt Boehner, George Bettinghaus Sr., John Birnbaum, John Doerfler, Frederick and Philipp Fetzner, F. Feuerbacher, G. Grannemann, Daniel Pfeiffer, John Raps, John Sturm, Fred Volle, Sr., and John G. Zapf. A very unusual occurrence that deserves more than passing mention is the fact that in one family the men of three generations have served the church as officers, namely, Henry, George, Sr., and our present treasurer, George W. Bettinghaus. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant".

BULLETIN FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
November 29, 1936

CHURCH CALENDAR

Wed. 7.45 p.m. MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICE, ENGLISH  
Thu. 10.00 a.m. Ladies Aid Sale and Luncheon  
8.00 p.m. Senior Walther League  
Fri. 7.30 p.m. Junior Walther League

CHURCH RECORD

Married: Martin Schulz and Miss Louise Schmidt on  
Thanksgiving Day, November 260  
In Memoriam: Harry F. Kruger died November 25 at the  
age of 67 years, 9 months, and 14 days and  
was buried on November 280

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY: 670, 41: 88 Total 799  
Attendance on Thanksgiving Day: 433

BIBLE READINGS

Mon. Hag. : Building the Temple  
Tue. Mal. 1, 1 - 12: The Forerunner  
Wed. Heb. 1, : Revelation  
Thu. Heb. 10, 1 - 18: Sacrifice  
Fri. Heb. 10, 19 - 31: A New and Living Way  
Sat. Heb. 11, 1 - 10: Faith.  
Sun. Heb. 13, 1 - 13: The Same For Ever

Another ANNIVERSARY SERVICE will be held this evening at  
7.30 o'clock. Dr. Hemenauer of Concordia Seminary will  
preach and of course, you will be present to help make this  
an outstanding day of thanksgiving and praise. - - - If you  
received no envelope there are still some in the pews, and  
if you could bring no offering this Sunday you may still do  
so next Sunday and help Trinity pay its debt of \$2600.

THE ADULT CLASS

is still open for membership and if you know of any  
prospects kindly let us know AT ONCE !!!

The LUTHERAN ANNUAL and the KALENDAR will be put on sale  
next Sunday. Price: 15¢

## A D V E N T S E R V I C E S

will begin with the first service on Wednesday at 7.45. These services will be English. While the Lenten mid-week services are usually well attended, we regret the fact that this is not the case with the Advent services Why? Are we so taken up with external preparations for Christmas that we cannot lift up our hearts to receive the real Christmas blessing which is the Christ-child? That would so sad. So let us all join in being present in these services.

## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SALE .AND LUNCHEON

of the Ladies' Aid will be hold this week Thursday in the basement hall, opening at 10 a.m., while serving will begin at 11. The ladies invite you very cordially to visit then on that day. - - - Christmas cards will also be on sale.

The THANKSGIVING DONATIONS for the poor were quite generous and we could send about twenty baskets to the needy. The collection for the relief fund taken on Thanksgiving Day amounted to \$79.37. The Juniors were quite successful in their efforts to gather subscriptions for our church papers About 140 Subscriptions were turned in on last Sunday afternoon by the teams. If you have not yet renewed your subscription or wish to place one, kindly see Rev. Koppelman or one of the Juniors.

WHEATRIDGE SEALS ARE IN THE MAILS We hope that you will be able to use and buy all that are sent you, and if you need more the young people can supply you. All funds secured through these seals are used for charitable work at our Lutheran Sanitarium for T B patients in Wheatridge, Colorado. We are to do good to all men, but especially to those of the household of faith and that means our fellow Lutherans, although we may not know their names.

Today we celebrate the 95th anniversary of the very beginning of our church. Let us show our appreciation for this gift, by working hard for its success!

And so, by God's blessing, and under His divine guidance Trinity Church has come down the years from 1841 to 1936. In the march of human events that is a long pilgrimage, and due to human frailties few organizations live and prosper for so long a period. The history of our church also reveals to us many imperfections and sins. It is certainly not due to our strength, powers, and wisdom that our church continued to 'grow and flourish. But the Lord Himself was with our' fathers, led, guided, and blessed them, and it is owing solely to Him that Trinity Church stands today after 95 years, not as an old, feeble, and tottering church, but as one that has rather grown stronger with the years, and that today still occupies a prominent position, not only among the churches of this city, but also among the churches of our Synod. May He be with us as He was with our fathers.

SOLI  
DEO  
GLORIA

(The data given in this brief sketch were compiled from the various records of our church and many other sources over a long period of time by the assistant pastor. Both pastors cooperated in writing this history as it comes to you. Recognition should also be given a number of our young people who assisted in the mechanical part of this undertaking.)

**OUR PASTORS**

Paul Schulz  
Herman H. Koppelman

**OUR TEACHERS**

R. J. Schoknecht  
F. C. Diesing  
R. C. Runge  
Miss E. Winker

**THE CHURCH BOARD**

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| George W. Bettinghaus | Richard W. Martens |
| Otto H. Droste        | Edward V. Schulze  |
| Clemens A. Heinemann  | Arthur B. Vanselow |
| Louis W. Koopman      | Fred G. Volle      |
| John H. Maas          | Wilbur J. Volle    |

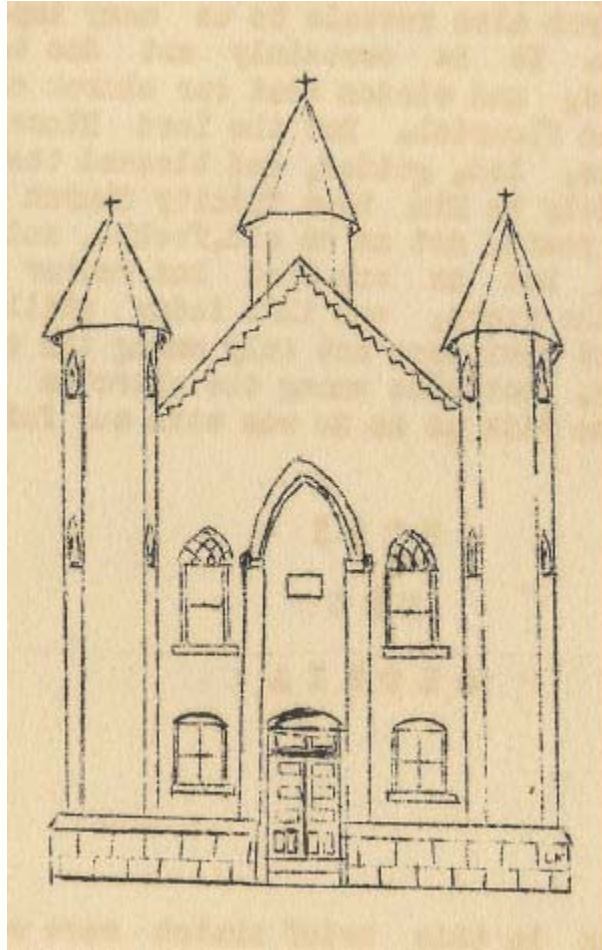
**THE SCHOOL BOARD**

|                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| William C. Bierbaum      | F. Elmer Roberts |
| William H. Pillischafske | Jacob Stolleis   |
| William J. Profrock Jr.  | Edgar G. Wolf    |

\* \* \* \* \*

Institutions and congregations that owe their existence to  
Trinity Church are:

- Concordia Seminary
- Springfield Hospital
- Holy Trinity Church, Springfield
- Immanuel Church, Springfield
- The congregation at Chatham
- The congregation at Thayer
- The congregation at Farmingdale



OUR FIRST CHURCH