



THE BAVARIAN CONNECTION

The Gospel Rules

It was a devotion to Scriptural truths that provided the driving force behind the Saxon emigration to Missouri. Similarly, another group of Germans, this time from Bavaria, loved the Gospel to the extent that they felt compelled to spread its wonderful message to America. Their initial efforts concentrated in the states of Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio; and it was the union of these Lutherans with other Lutheran factions, particularly the Missouri-Saxons, that led to the formation of the Missouri Synod. The Bavarians, then, with their confessional Lutheran stance and reliance on Gospel, are a prominent factor in Trinity's roots. In addition, there are some close personal ties between the Bavarians and Trinity as two of their leaders, Pastor Lochner and Professor Craemer, occupied Trinity's pulpit here in Springfield during the 1880's.

The story begins with a rugged horseback riding missionary, Friedrich Wyneken. Emigrating from Germany in 1838, Wyneken became pastor of two Lutheran churches in Indiana, but he also roamed over the early frontier states of Ohio

and Michigan. Often gone from his home for weeks on end, laying his head wherever evening found him, Pastor Wyneken filled the spiritual needs and preached the Gospel to the scattered Lutherans. He was appalled at the lack of Lutheran clergy in the huge area and wrote extensive appeals for help. His writing was graphic and related the sinful state that existed among the German Lutherans on the frontier when they were deprived of the Gospel.

One booklet in particular, *An Appeal for the Assistance of the German Protestant Church in North America*, had a profound effect as it was distributed throughout Germany. Eventually it came into the hands of Johannes Konrad Wilhelm Loche, the Lutheran pastor of a church in a small town in Bavaria with the unlikely name of Neuendettelsau. Ordained in 1831, Loche was described as "a Biblically-oriented, confessionally-bound Lutheran." As such, he was, as the Saxons were, at odds with the "rationalism" of the state church.

Moved by Wyneken's appeal, Loche, who became a widower while

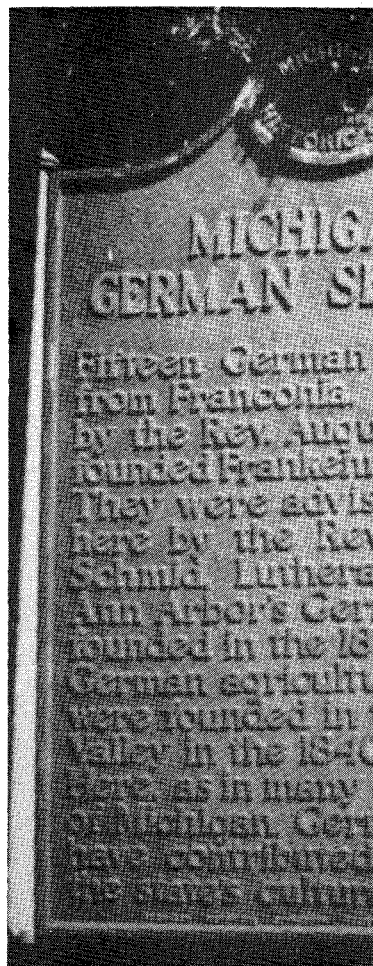
"Tell of all his wonderful acts!"

very young and never remarried, committed his life to Lutheran efforts in an America that was growing rapidly in the mid-19th century. He trained and sent pastors and teachers, raised financial relief, established seminaries, sent missionaries to work among the Indians, and sent groups of Lutheran colonists to settle in the primeval forests. Working from his small village in Germany, he directed the efforts of a host of Lutherans across the Atlantic. He was also instrumental in the genesis of our beloved Missouri Synod. In fact, some Lutheran historians give Pastor Loehe, a man who never set foot on American soil and possessing a name unfamiliar to most of us, equal credit with the venerated Dr. C.F.W. Walther in the formation of the Missouri Synod.

He began by appealing for funds and ministers for America. "Unite for Immediate action," he wrote. "Don't spend time deliberating. Hurry! Hurry! The main thing is to save immortal souls." He was greeted with many successes, but he always wanted more ministers, teachers, and missionaries, so his parsonage became a seminary to train them. Although Loehe recognized the need for sound theological training, his school was considered a "crash course" to get many "emergency" ministers into the field as quickly as possible. Springfield's Concordia Seminary was often called a "practical" seminary, and the origin goes back to Loehe's parsonage in Germany.

The horseback missionary, Pastor Wyneken, returned to Germany in 1841-43 and visited Loehe. They worked to raise sup-

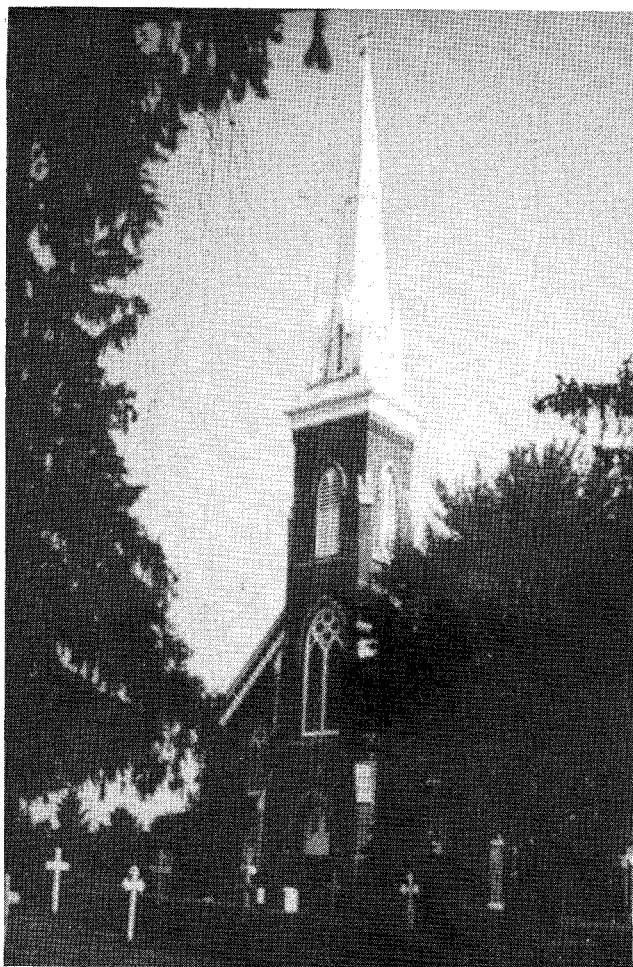
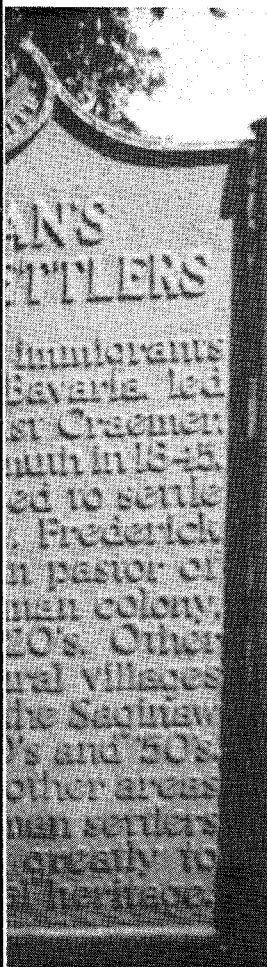
port and published a new booklet, *The Distress of the German Lutherans in North America*, which proved to be very successful. Back in America, Wyneken eventually became the second president of the Missouri Synod. (His son, Rev. Henry Wyneken, was a professor here in Springfield and a member of Trinity from 1876 to 1890. During this time he served two area congregations and founded the "colored mission" in Springfield.)



A plaque commemorating the

As mentioned, Pastor Loehe sent groups of Lutheran colonists to settle in America. In this manner, Loehe's exertions had a direct impact on Trinity's history for the first small group was headed by Friedrich August Craemer and included a ministerial candidate, Friedrich Lochner, a former copper engraver. Craemer had read Wyncken's appeals and decided that God had deigned him for mission work in the New World.

Today, Frankenmuth, Michigan, is a bustling tourist town based on its Bavarian heritage, but in 1845 it was only a promising spot in the forest along the Cass River. It was to this site that Rev. Craemer led his stalwart flock. It had been a harrowing trek; and their sailing vessel, the *Caroline*, had ran aground once, weathered six storms, collided with another ship, and dodged numerous icebergs. Disease also plagued the small



Bavarian emigration.

St. Lorenz Church in Frankenmuth.

group. Lochner had been ordained and conducted services enroute. Some of the settlers came from Franconia, an area in northern Bavaria; so they named their settlement Frankenmuth, courage of the Franks. Other groups sent by Loehe settled towns with

Franconian names

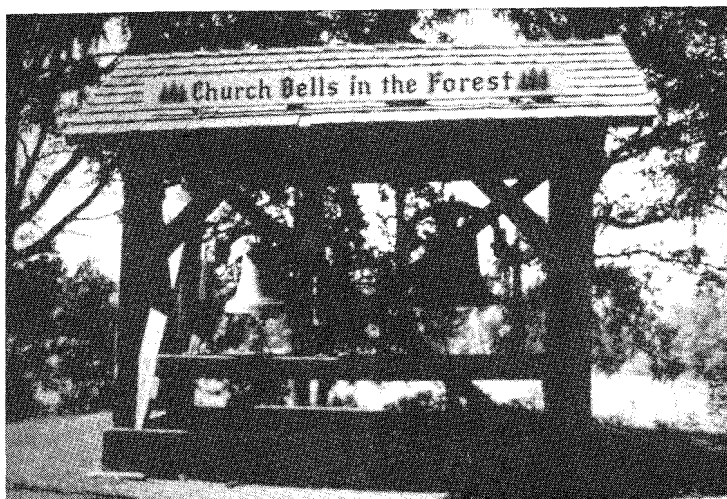
Frankentrost (consolation of the Franks), Frankenhilf (aid for the Franks), and Frankenlust (joy of the Franks). Other German Lutherans towns grew in the area.

Despite hardships on the frontier and disagreements among them, the colony fulfilled the mission it was sent for including missionary work among the Chippewas. Craemer left in 1850 for the Fort Wayne Seminary and was its president as the seminary moved to St. Louis and then to Springfield. While president of the Springfield Seminary, he was Trinity's Assistant Pastor under his old

Bavarian friend, Pastor Friedrich Lochner.

When Frankenmuth was founded in 1845, the settlers established a congregation called St. Lorenz which became a charter member of the Missouri Synod in 1847. In 1880 they erected a magnificent new church building and at its dedication their original shepard, Professor Craemer, gave the dedication address. Nine years later he participated in the dedication service of our church building here in Springfield. He had exhorted Trinity's voters assembly to build a new church; and when it was finished, it bore many striking similarities to the St. Lorenz Church.

Today the true Gospel continues to be proclaimed in both churches (St. Lorenz has both English and German services) and Trinitarians will enjoy visiting Frankenmuth and appreciating the common heritage.



This structure contains "Church Bells in the Forest," three bells brought over by Rev. Craemer's colonists.