

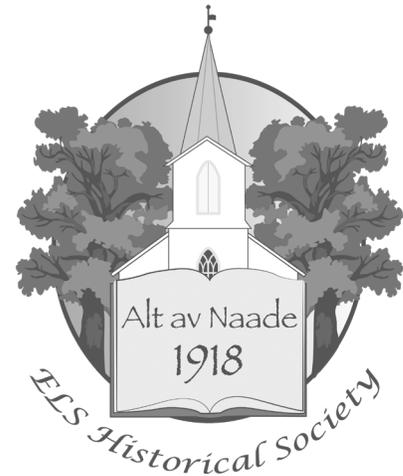
# Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

Volume 21

Summer 2017

Issue 3



## JERICO EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH 1867-2017

Many of the older congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod trace their history back to the years just before and just after the 1917 merger, and were founded as a result of divisions caused by the 1917 merger of three Norwegian Lutheran church bodies. Only a few of the synod's congregations are older than 100 years. One of them, Jerico Evangelical Lutheran Church, located near New Hampton, Iowa, celebrated its one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary in the summer of 2017. The following history first appeared in the 125th Anniversary booklet of Jerico Lutheran Church, published in 1992. The sketch of the original Jerico church was produced by Elouise Roberson for that occasion (ed.)



*Jerico Evangelical Lutheran Church*  
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Norwegian emigration to America began in 1825. By the 1830s, Norwegian immigrants had made their way to Illinois. The 1840s found them settling in Wisconsin. The 1850s marked the beginning of Norwegian settlements in Iowa and Minnesota, and by the 1860s the Norwegians were moving into South Dakota.

We must admire these early immigrants. Oftentimes, after they had reached the port of embarkation, they had to wait one, two, or even three weeks for repairs to the vessel on which they had engaged passage. Once under way, their trans-Atlantic voyage would last

an average of seven weeks. With unfavorable sailing weather, this might stretch out to ten or twelve weeks. A passenger was usually required to have a supply of food for twelve weeks. Then followed the long and expensive journey inland to Chicago and Milwaukee. All in all, in the early years of migration the duration of the journey from Norway to the settlement which was the immigrant's ultimate destination was rarely made in less than nine weeks; often it consumed as much as five months.

The first Norwegian settlers arrived at the Crane Creek settlement in Chickasaw County, Iowa in 1863. These settlers first had settled near Vermillion, South Dakota. The Civil War had broken out and there was unrest and disturbance in the air all over. The bloody Indian outbreaks at Spirit Lake, New Ulm, Willmar and other places occurred. The new settlements in South Dakota were fearful of a like fate but were at that time unmolested. The day came, however, a year or two later when they too fled for their lives. The old covered wagon, sunbaked and rickety, was hurriedly loaded, the oxen hooked on and the flight, at a snail pace, was on.

The ten families who comprised the original settlement were: Ole Anderson Mjolver, Thor Halvorson Faaberg, Soren Torbjornson Faaberg, Hans and Otto Olson Nigard, Kristian Olson Steinbakken, Mikkel Monson Ronnei, Halvor Nilsen Lysne, Jetmund Knudsen Bjerke, Helge Mathieson, and Mikkel Skare. The following year found fellow countrymen arriving at this settlement directly from the Jostedal Valley, on the Sogn Fjord, in Norway.

The young pastor, U.V. Koren, visited these immigrants

*continued on page 4*

# FROM THE EDITOR

My apologies for the lateness of this issue. It was scheduled to be printed and mailed by mid-August. In early August, your editor suffered a stroke which necessitated a two-week-stay at St. Mary's hospital in Rochester, Minnesota for recuperation and therapy. Our Lord has provided the staff there with great talents. While speaking and writing were not greatly affected by the stroke, the equilibrium was. However the talented therapists have the editor walking, talking, and typing with few hindrances. Some might question the state of the equilibrium, however. Thanks to the many who offered their prayers and encouragement, and helped in many other ways

*Erling T. Teigen*

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Oak Leaves welcomes articles of both Synodical and local significance for publication. Articles may be edited for style, clarity, or length to allow for publication. Each issue will be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Check out the Historical Society website <http://www.els-history.org/>

Coming soon:  
Old synod convention panoramic photos

## PRESERVING THE PAST

It is important to ensure that the artifacts that make up the collection of the ELS Ottesen Museum can be preserved for future generations. For this reason, the museum's Director of Programming also serves as a curator, working to preserve, protect, and keep track of the collection.

When an artifact is donated, the preservation process begins. Gloves are usually worn when handling the items to keep hand oils off of them. Each item is photographed and measured and has a description written up about it. It is cataloged both on paper and on a searchable spread sheet. The spreadsheet includes a picture of the artifact for easy reference.

Protecting artifacts on display means trying to keep them dust, light, and bug free. Many items are in closed cases or are covered when there are no visitors.

Preserving and protecting artifacts that are not on display

entails using archival quality paper and boxes to keep, as much as possible, air, water, light, and bugs away from them. Each article is individually wrapped in acid free paper and stored in special cardboard boxes. The boxes are put on shelves that are intended to keep them off of any moisture that may be on the floor of the storage room. The storage room is also kept at a fairly consistent temperature and humidity.

The entire museum collection is in the process of being cataloged. Over the years, lists have been kept of artifacts but because the collection has been moved several times, some articles have been lost to deterioration. The original lists were also sometimes vague and relied on whoever was in charge of the collection knowing what was there. Unfortunately, some of this information has been lost. By cataloging the entire collection, it is hoped that loss of artifacts and the stories behind them can be passed onto future generations 

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# ANNUAL ELSHS MEETING MINUTES

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## Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 18, 2017, 6 p.m.

Lee Theater of the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center, Bethany campus

ELSHS president Rev. Peter Faugstad opened with a short devotion based on Ephesians 4:1-3 and prayer. Approximately 70 were in attendance for the evening. A readers' theatre program entitled "From Austin to Aberdeen" was performed for the assembly which followed the progression of events that led to the eventual formation of the Norwegian Synod of the American Lutheran Church in 1918. Following the program the business meeting was called to order by Rev. Faugstad.

The secretary and treasurer's reports were read and approved. The treasury reported \$3380.73 on this date. President Rev. Faugstad reported on changes and improvements to the ELSHS website, the organization's newsletter, Oak Leaves, the publication of the fourth volume of Rev. U. V. Koren's works with thanks to translator Prof. Mark DeGarmeaux, the newly available ELS 100th anniversary medallions, and plans for the ELSHS meeting in 2018. Ottesen Museum director Becky DeGarmeaux reported on remodeling and new displays in the museum, the opportunity for visitors to "make and take" a bookmark carrying the original seal of the ELS, and her use of Facebook to increase awareness of and promote the museum.

Two positions were up for election at this time. Rev. Andrew Soule and Mrs. Marge Lillo were nominated by the ELSHS board to a second term each to fill those positions. It was moved, seconded and passed to reelect both.

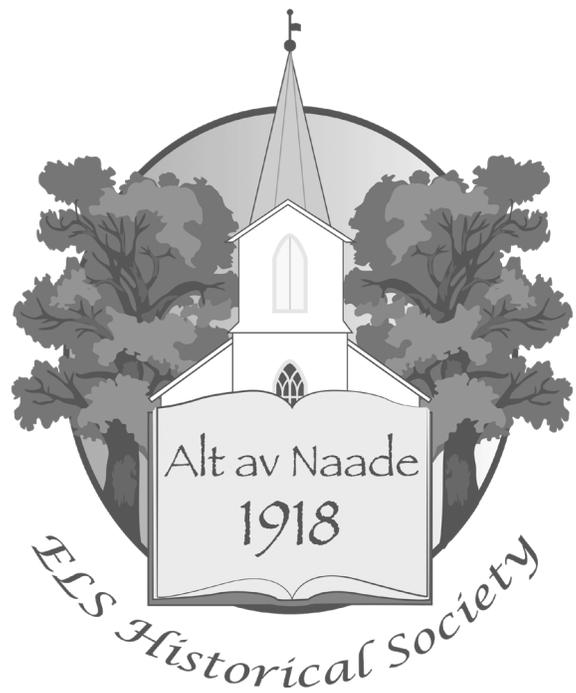
There being no old business Rev. Faugstad presented the proposal of the ELSHS board that Article III of the Historical Society By-Laws, which sets specific amounts for dues and defines levels of membership, be amended. The wording suggested by the board reads as follows: "ARTICLE III: DUES (Cf. Const. Art. VI) The Board of Directors shall establish dues for voting membership and associate membership to be ratified at an annual meeting." Following discussion and explanation of the terms "voting and associate membership" it was moved, seconded and

passed by majority to adopt the amendment.

Following adoption of the amendment, the Historical Society Board recommended a slightly increased amount for dues to \$15 per year per individual or couple for Voting Membership with a lifetime option of \$300 and \$25 for Associate (non-voting) Membership. With clarification that Voting Membership covers either an individual or a couple at the same address it was moved, seconded and motion passed. The new dues will go into effect with the next issue of Oak Leaves.

The next annual meeting of the ELSHS will take place at Lime Creek, Iowa on Saturday, June 16, 2018.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned to refreshments in the gallery. 🍁





for the first time in 1864 and, no doubt, conducted the first worship service among them. Pastor Koren lived at Washington Prairie, near Decorah, and served numerous congregations in northeast Iowa. He would conduct from ten to twelve Services here each

year.

In 1867, under the direction of Pastor Koren, a congregation was organized consisting of sixty members. It was first known as the Crowe Creek congregation. This name was used only for a few years, and the congregation was named: Crane Creek Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation.

In 1869, the congregation received its own pastor when the Little Turkey [Saude] and Crane Creek congregations Called their own pastor. A parsonage was constructed at Little Turkey. For several years, the pastor also served the Norwegian Lutheran churches at Cresco and Orleans.

A constitution was adopted in 1877 when the congregation joined the Norwegian Synod at the district convention held at Story City, Iowa. Lars Hellegaarden represented the congregation, which now numbered 380 souls.

In the 1880s, when the congregation numbered nearly five hundred souls, a doctrinal controversy developed throughout the Norwegian Synod. The question was whether sinful man could, in any way, contribute toward his own salvation.

The majority of the congregation, together with the pastor and the synod, held fast to the biblical teaching that our salvation is completely a gift of God in Jesus Christ. However, after much strife in both words and actions, a minority of the congregation withdrew their membership in January of 1889. They formed a new congregation in October of that year which also adopted the name Crane Creek Lutheran Church. That congregation soon became a member of the Anti-Missouri Brotherhood and then joined the United Norwegian Lutheran Church which eventually became a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America.

Pastor Ness writes about these days:

The question now became, who should have the right to the old church. Finally the matter, after a long and lasting number of meetings and deliberation, was solved this way; the ones that withdrew their membership bought the old church for \$600. At a congregation meeting on June 16, 1890 the congregation decided to build a new church and the cornerstone was laid [in Jerico] on October 19, 1890.

The Crane Creek Ladies Aid (C.C. *Kvindeforening*) held their first meeting on October 18, 1905 at the home of Mrs. Nils Anderson. Those in attendance at the first meeting were: Mrs. Andrew Ellingson, Miss Ida Ellingson, Mrs. Nils Ellingson, Mrs. Louie Grove, Miss Carrie Slindee, Mrs. Erik Slindee, Mrs. J.G. Rugland, and Mrs. E. Attleson (a visitor).

The Ladies Aid met twice monthly from 1905 to 1954. Until 1924 the devotions and business were conducted in the Norwegian language.

In 1917 the Norwegian Synod entered into a merger with church bodies with whom there was no doctrinal agreement. The Crane Creek and Little Turkey congregations did not join this new church body. The following year, a remnant of congregations and pastors re-organized the Norwegian Synod, which today is known as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). The Crane Creek and Little Turkey congregations joined the ELS in 1923 at the convention at Princeton, Minnesota. Representing the congregation was Andrew Braham Since that time the congregation has been known as the Jerico Lutheran Synod Church or the Jerico Evangelical Lutheran Church.

In 1924, the seventh annual convention of the ELS was hosted at Jerico. In 1960, a recessed convention of the ELS again met at Jerico.

Services were conducted in the Norwegian language until January of 1929 when the following announcement was made:

Notice, Jerico! According to the resolutions of the congregation at its last annual meeting, all ser-



*Jerico Evangelical Lutheran Church (built 1913)*

vices on the first Sunday of the month will be conducted in the Norwegian language and all services on the third Sunday of the month in the English language.

Services were conducted twice monthly until 1941 when every-Sunday services began in both the Jerico and Saude congregations. The regular use of Norwegian in the Services continued until 1945.

The congregation was marked with continued growth. Eventually the congregation reached a membership of 443 souls in 1942. At this time the Jerico-Saude parish was the largest parish in the Synod. Three pastors of the congregation also served as the president of the ELS. They were: Rev. H.M. Tjernagel, Rev. M.H. Otto, and Rev. M.E. Tweit.

In 1941 the congregation assisted in establishing a sister-congregation in New Hampton. In time, a number of members were transferred to Redeemer Lutheran Church.

A Christian Day School was started in 1947. It was

in that same year that a joint Jerico-Saude Lutheran Youth Society was formed. A Men's Club was formed in 1968.

The congregation celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the cornerstone laying of the present church building and the 106th Anniversary of the congregation on November 18, 1973.

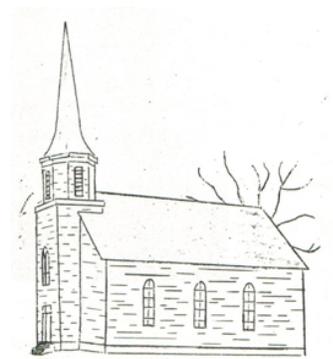
Today the congregation stands, just as it did of old, upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. In the early years, the pioneer founders established a congregation where they could worship the Savior and teach their children of his grace. They defended the teachings of the Bible through strife and difficulty. Their descendants stood firm upon the teachings of Jesus Christ and him crucified and risen. Today, the sixth generation of their descendants worships the Savior who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

## Church Buildings

The congregation has worshiped in four church buildings.

Local schoolhouses, together with the log cabin of the Jetmund E. Knutson family were the scene of many early religious gatherings.

In 1875, construction began on the first church building. It was located one mile east and two miles south of Jerico where the land had been given by an American by the name of Sommerville. The building was never formally dedicated, as the final work was not completed on the building. This building was sold, fifteen years later, to a minority of the congregation.



*First building (1875-1890)*

In August of 1890 the congregation purchased land near the village of Jerico for \$100. Among temporary meeting places was the second floor of a newly constructed store in Jerico. On Thursday, July 9, 1891 the congregation marched in procession from the store to the new church where the dedication service then

took place. Following the noon meal, a second Service was conducted in the afternoon, with the sermon being preached in English. The building was erected at a cost of \$1,700. Rev. Ness described the building when he wrote:

The church isn't very large, but beautifully furnished. The Ladies Aid had, with great sacrifice, provided the altar ware of gold, coverings for the altar, and the necessary decorations for the altar and pulpit.



*Third building (1892-1913)*

Eleven months later, the church steeple was struck by lightning and the church burned to the ground. A new church was rebuilt, within five months, to the east of the former building. The cost was \$1800. The third church building was dedicated on November 20, 1892. Upon this occasion it was reported:

Again they proved what good will and unity can accomplish. The congregation stood in considerable debt on their first church, and therefore it is the more praiseworthy that they did not give up hope, but instead with renewed zeal quickly grasped the matter in God's name. God let it happen above all expectation. The church stands again completed and dedicated. The congregation is owing on all of it, only a couple hundred dollars.



*Jerico church interior*

The congregation outgrew this building. Rev. M.K. Bleken writes:

On festival occasions all the men would have to go out in order to give the women and children a place to sit. In the spring of 1913 a building committee consisting of M.K. Bleken, H.J. Knutson, A.W. Oleson, A. Braham and Lars Aasen was elected. Subscriptions in the amount of \$10,000 had been gathered. The building committee received authority to go ahead with the work. The contract was let to G.O. Melby of Mabel, Minnesota. His contract was let for \$9,057 and the old church.

This fourth church building was constructed upon the same site as the old. Construction began in early June and was completed sufficiently so that the first Service was held in the basement on November 9, 1913. The total cost of construction was \$12,000.

The Cornerstone was laid on November 27, 1913 and the building was dedicated on May 24, 1914. In the Cornerstone is laid: 1) a Bible, 2) Luther Small Catechism, 3) a synod constitution, 4) the Augsburg Confession, 5) a report of the former cornerstone laying, and 6) a short history of the congregation.

In 1951 a four-rank pipe organ was installed. The basement was remodeled and rest rooms added in 1960. The church was re-sided, in 1975, at a cost of \$12,400.

The words of Rev. Ness yet hold true today:

May the Lord hold His hand over this new House of God! Let His word sound forth pure and unadulterated to the saving of dearly bought souls; and may He hold them in His grace and keep strife and division away from them, that the love for each other can be built up and may they rest upon the Chief Cornerstone, Christ; and then sometime, with Him, go into the House that is not built with hands, Heaven! God grant it for Jesus sake! 🍁

# OVERWHELMING MAJORITIES

Bjug Harstad

October 15, 1917

In recent years, the two words of our title, have often been heard in our synod. At first we did not think so much about them because we believed everyone agreed that the majority or human authority had no major significance for decisions concerning doctrine and matters of conscience. The word of God teaches us that conscience and the conviction of God's word is so tender and serious a thing that it cannot or shall not be ruled or mastered by humans or by the pleasure of the crowd (1 Cor. 8).

But as time went by, especially after what was said and done in connection with the *Bønskrift* [petition] of 1913\*, we came to understand that it was the vote that would bind us and that they would not seek unity by way of discussion about doctrine, not even in the peace committee that the synod itself set up in 1914.

The majority held to that until the greater part of them surrendered, even those who had declared that their conviction was so firm that they could not agree to an ambiguous basis for union. We should not judge their conscience and conviction. They must settle that themselves with their God, but we must see to it that on our part we do not let ourselves be governed in matters of faith by anything other than God's own word.

Later on, when they become more or less dissatisfied, they will say, "We had to go along; what could we do against the great majority?" That is a strange way to talk. It does not testify to the faith that there is a victory that overcomes the world. No Christian may agree with something that the Lord, who says, "touch nothing unholy or unclean" does not agree with [sww 2 Corinthians 6:17].

In reproachful pity, others ask those of us who did not go along with the majority: "What can you do? Where



*Bjug Harstad (left) with Johannes Ylvisaker, picture dated 1916. Ylvisaker had in the years just before the merger accepted the Opgjør and Austin Agreement. Since Harstad had been a district president and respected leader in the Norwegian Synod and his opposition to the merger on the basis of Opgjør was widely known we surmise that this picture taken in Parkland pictures a meeting in which Ylvisaker attempted to persuade his friend to join the merger.*

will you turn?” We would like to ask them: “Why do you ask such a question? We have confessed the faith that we have and love and which the church handed down to us. There we found our families, friends, and many others; that is where we turn to Christ alone, who reveals himself in the pure doctrine, the true sacraments, and the apostolic church order he has entrusted to us. We have no command to turn to anything else.”

Certainly, we have for many years heard and experienced how, in many ways, they attacked our doctrine and sought to disturb our church order. But they have been able to provide no justification for this from the word of God. The few attempts they have made to show that our synod should be dissolved and a new one formed are so carnal, unfaithful and wretched that they hardly deserve reply.

Even if we are few and scattered, what is there to prevent us from doing in the future what by God’s grace we have hitherto sought to do — to believe in Jesus Christ and confess his name? Where should we otherwise turn? Men are not to be relied upon — nor are majorities.

But they say: “Don’t those in the majority also believe and confess Christ?” We certainly hope so, and we shall not hinder it. But that should not stop us from clinging to the treasure, the truth we know. We cannot go along with a doctrine which explain the conversion of any two persons, that it should lie in their different responses to grace. From God’s word, we know for certain that in the unregenerate there can only be one kind of spiritual condition – darkness, death, and the natural enmity of the flesh against God. God’s inexpressible grace alone is the explanation for any person’s conversion. Only when God by grace through regeneration rescues one as an iron out of the fire, can one show a good condition: “And he made no distinction between us and them purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15: 9). It would be a sin as well to consent to a conditional gospel or absolution as an ambiguous basis for union, or to pretend that such things were insignificant in the church. Syncretism [fusion of different religions] and unionism are dangerous sins. Large numbers of people and great majorities can never be decisive for God.

In the defense and service of the truth, we are not fighting against flesh and blood, but against the wickedness or deception of the times. But this does not refer to worldly power and weapons. So far, the truth has won victories, though only few and insignificant numbers of people have stood fast on it. Great majorities often get lost, as both branches of the catholic church [Roman and Eastern] sufficiently testify.

Our particular church conditions are depicted in the seventh chapter of Judges. It is reported that Gideon had collected a considerable number of 32,000 men. But the Lord said that the people were frightened. They could rejoice in their strength and say, “My own hand has saved me.” “Proclaim now in the hearing of the people,” God says to Gideon, “whoever is fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead. And twenty-two thousand of the people returned and ten thousand remained.” So less than a third remained. The account continues:

But the LORD said to Gideon, “The people are still too many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be that of whom I say to you ‘This one shall go with you,’ the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ the same shall not go.” So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, “Everyone who laps from the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set apart by himself; likewise everyone who gets down on his knees to drink.” And the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water. Then the LORD said to Gideon, “By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.”

Thus the Lord arranged it. These three hundred men, however, vanished into a small minority against the nine thousand seven hundred, which represents the second minority [of the Norwegian Synod]. They were about to quench their thirst and walk to their place. But these poor three hundred men were scattered in three companies. The weapons they got were also very strange, not to say ridiculous, as weapons of battle. It speaks, in fact, about Gideon.

Then he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man’s hand, with empty pitchers [clay jars], and torches inside the pitchers. And he said to them, “Look at me and do likewise; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp you shall do as I do: When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, and say, ‘The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!’” So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch;

and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands. Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!” And every man stood in his place all around the camp; and the whole army ran and cried out and fled. [New King James Version]

Thus, the minority must act. Our Gideon is the Lord Jesus Christ. The eternal word of God is the trumpet, which we must hold fast with our right hand, and blow fearlessly as we see the Lord himself use it in the fight against death, against dangers and all deception. Our jars must be empty, unencumbered with the worries of life and the seduction of wealth. We should consider earthly property nothing in contrast to the grace and truth given to us in Jesus Christ. Even the jars themselves, our earthly house, must be broken down in his service. Not even our lives will we hold precious, but sacrifice in the Lord’s service, if he requires it. We also want to see that the “flame in the jars,” which our Gideon – Christ – by his Spirit has kindled in us, has oil and lives so that we do not hold the trumpet alone with our right hand. But that we can also take the flame in our left hand, let the jars go and thus hold a burning torch of love so that we can clearly see where the Savior is and does as he says and himself does — all out of love toward God.

But if we really do this, then we will have trouble. Thus, our Lord and Master himself, in his earthly life showed us how we should do it. He was not a good “mixer” such as we would like today. He received the invitation for a meal and used the opportunity to chastise and instruct. If one speaks that way now, it offends. “You ought not offend anyone.” In preaching now, one speaks over the heads of the audience and in the private confessional, one pats them on the shoulder. This has to be done to hold onto the masses. But if we do as our Lord says and does, then we must preach repentance and the remission

of sins to all people so that the heart is struck. Then alone we have promise of victory, “for the Lord and for Gideon.” But then we also get another harsh lesson to exercise us. The Lord says, “My brothers! Count it all joy when you fall into different temptations” (James 1:2). “Beloved, Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when his glory is revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:12,13). Can we do this when we get robbed and deposed? [Acts 5:41-“So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.”] We will try.

Let no false prophet spoil us in the distress of the night,  
Let no one laugh,  
spoil our comfort in the precious death of Jesus;  
Take away every wolf in sheep’s clothing;  
O good shepherd, guard your lambs!

Were we on earth no more than two,  
Still would he build and dwell  
With us with all His grace. Amen



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\* *Bønskrift, Petition, was a document signed by a number of pastors of the Norwegian Synod, including Professors O. E. Brandt, Johannes Ylvisaker, and Elling Hove which argued that while desire for union was good, it had always been the understanding of the synod that God-pleasing union could only be based on a clear unity of doctrine. The Bønskrift was, in effect, defeated when the synod voted 394 to 106 to approve the report of the majority of the union committee to proceed with the union.*



# Acorns from the ELS Archives



## Biography of a Well Spent Life

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(While T. A. Torgerson was not one of the founders of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, he had served the Lime Creek congregation for many years, as well as other congregations in the Lake Milles-Northwood, Iowa area. His son A. J. Torgerson was the first treasurer of the ELS. The following is taken from a newspaper article in 1906. Rev. Torgerson died on January 7, 1906. Since the article has no date, it is uncertain when the funeral was held)

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The remains of Rev. T. A. Torgerson, whose death we chronicled last week, was laid to rest in the Somber cemetery last Thursday afternoon.

The largest gathering ever witnessed in Winnebago or Worth counties at a funeral, had assembled to pay their solemn respects to the dear departed. It is estimated that between 1200 and 1500 people were present.

The services opened at the family residence at 11 o'clock by the reading of the funeral ritual by Rev. O. Sauer of Glenville, Minn. This was followed by a short sermon by Rev. A.J. Lea of Lake Mills. The coffin was then carried from the house by the five sons and a brother of Rev. Torgerson. Upon entering the lane leading to the church another set of pall bearers, chosen one from each of the different congregations served by the departed, took charge.

The church had been most artistically decorated. The floral offerings sent from far and wide had been arranged in a semi-circle in front of the altar and was a most beautiful testimony to the esteem and love in which Rev. Torgerson was held.

About 500 people were accommodated with seats in the church. About fifteen ministers and professors were present. These were seated on each side of the altar. Rev. Malmin of Thompson presided at the organ. Prof. Dr.



H.G. Stub of Luther Seminary, Hamlin, Minn., preached a short and very impressive funeral sermon. This was followed by short speeches of condolence and respect from the following ministers and professors: Rev. St. Reque of Spring Grove, Minn; Prof. O. Brandt of Luther Seminary; Prof. L. Reque read a letter of condolence from the Synod president, V. Koren of Decorah who could not be present on account of ill health; Rev. O. Wagness of Story City; Prof. C.K. Preus, president of Luther college, Decorah; Rev. Severs, president of Minn. District of the Missouri German Luth. Synod; Prof. E. Thoen of Luther Academy, Albert Lea; Rev. H.J. Strand of Albert Lea; Prof. Xavier of the Sioux Falls Luther Normal School. Rev. O.H. Smeby of Albert Lea closed with a talk in American.

The services at the church began 12 o'clock and continued until 3 p.m. All throughout this long period the vast throng of people listened with deep interest and scarcely a murmur was audible in the audience.

At the close of the services the coffin was carried from the church by the following ministers: A.H. Lea, O.T. Lee, St. Reque, Severs, H.J. Strand, and O. Wagness.

Rev. St. Reque performed the rites at the grave which had been beautifully decorated with white linen and evergreens. Rev. A.J. Lee read a letter of condolence to

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the bereaved family, written by Rev. N.A. Quammen of Farmington, Minn. This can go in the inside back pages. There are two pictures; try them both to see which one looks better on the page. I think I like the light one best.

“He was born the 26th day of January 1838 in the southern part of Norway, at the ‘iron works of Ness,’ one of the most beautiful spots in that romantic kingdom. His father managed a fine botanical garden with greenhouses containing plants from the remotest lands of the globe. His kind-hearted mother died two years and a half after the deliverance of this her third child, and he was brought up by her parents in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with great tenderness and care. He was baptized in infancy, as customary in the Lutheran church, and taught the Evangelical Lutheran doctrine. When he was three years old his grandparents sent him to a private school and from the age of six he went to the excellent public school of the place about eleven months every year, until he was confirmed, in the spring of 1853, when he emigrated to this country, together with his father, stepmother, brothers and sisters and other relatives. The winter 1853-4, his parents residing in the village of Winneconne, Winnebago county, Wis, he spent by going to school in the country a few miles distant, in order to be instructed in the English language. The summer following he moved with the rest of the family to Scandinavia, Waupacca county, Wis., where his father finally settled as a farmer, and where he is still living and doing well. The next three years he earned money in the city of Stevens Point, and other places, assisting his father in providing for his large family. After that time he worked on the farm at home until the fall of 1858. Through the instrumentality of his pastor, Rev. O.F. Duns, whose memory is ever dear to him, his heart was revived by the sacred power of the word of the only living God, and he became zealous to spend his life in the service of his dear Lord Jesus Christ, who had shed his precious blood for him, a poor sinner, and has bestowed his bountiful mercy upon him through living faith in him, his beloved Savior. Incited by this reverend gentleman, and with the consent of his parents, he concluded to study theology and prepare for the ministry.”

In pursuance of that purpose Mr. Torgerson entered the college of the so-called Missouri Synod, on September 1, 1858, and graduated from its theological seminary in June, 1865, having completed its nine years' course in less than seven years. In August, 1865 he was ordained as an Evangelical Lutheran minister and installed as pastor to the congregations of Shell Rock, Silver Lake and Lime

Creek, a wide field which was soon after greatly enlarged. In fact, it was not long before he was serving congregations through a district 150 miles long by 50 miles wide, equivalent in area to upwards of fifteen counties the size of Worth. His life in this community for upwards of forty years has been an open book, and the work which he has accomplished has been prodigious. In the early days of almost impassable roads he appears to have looked upon a ride of 100 miles as a mere trifle. He has been a pastor in the true sense to an army of people, and it is safe to say that the influences for good started by him are living on in hundreds of hearts and lives. For many years before his death he was president of the Iowa district of the Norwegian Synod of America and secretary of the church council. He literally died in harness, for on New Year's day, six days before his death, he preached twice, carried consolation to a poor widow, and incidentally made a drive of thirty miles. Two weeks ago last night, while in Northwood to participate in a marriage service, he seemed in his usual splendid health. But doubtless the strong machinery was breaking down under the strain of his more than sixty years of strenuous life, for it appears that he died of a general collapse of all the vital forces. His mind, however, was clear to the very last and his faith burned bright while heart and flesh were failing. More than twenty years ago he wrote this of himself: “His dearest hope on earth is that he, together with many dearer souls committed to his care, shall praise the Lord of mercy in the heavenly mansions.” Who can doubt that he is now realizing that Christian hope?

In his family life Pastor Torgerson was most happy. He was married on June 10, 1866, to Dina Anderson, a sister of Hon. Rasmus Anderson and an accomplished lady who proved to be a helpmeet indeed. Six sturdy sons who were born to them, now educated men in good positions.



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