

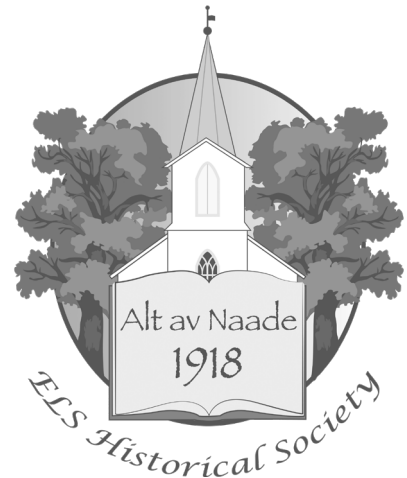
# Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

Volume 22

Spring 2018

Issue 2



## HAPPENINGS AT LIME CREEK JUNE 14-19, 1918



What did they do at that first convention of the Old Norwegian Synod?

Some excerpts from *Beretning om Synodemødet 1918* [Report of the Synod Meeting] will give some clues to the mood and the spirit of this meeting in the little white church set in the midst of fields and groves on the rolling prairie in northern Iowa.

June 14 was a Friday and the proceedings began in the morning. At the beginning of the Report this account of the opening of the convention is printed:

The synod meeting held in Lime Creek Church, Pastor H. Ingebritson's call from June 14 through 19, 1918 began with an opening sermon by President Bjug Harstad.

On the basis of the recently proclaimed ordinance that only the English language should be used in public meetings in Iowa, all sermons and all doctrinal papers were held in a large tent set up in Minnesota, one mile from the church.

The afternoon meeting began with hymn, Scripture reading and prayer, led by Pastor Emil Hansen. President B. Harstad read the following overview of the minority's position and what led to calling this meeting.

Honored assembly:

In asking for your attention, it is only in order to submit a short account of what a few members of the Norwegian Synod undertook last summer.

When the old Norwegian Synod, according to our conviction, last summer left the old house and entered into a new association, a few of us could not go along, but we gathered together in order to decide what we now should think about doing. What we were united on will best be expressed by the record of our meeting, most have seen in *Luthersk Tidende*. And some of us have, as a result of the resolution of the meeting, taken the liberty to request this meeting, according to our custom in the Norwegian Synod to discuss with each other a few teachings of God's Word, and in the light of that to consult about how under the circumstances especially

continued on page 4



## Proclaim His Wonders

*A Pictorial History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod*

A pictorial history has been published in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the reorganization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

This 312 page volume includes more than 400 photographs from the history of the synod. This is who we are. This is what we look like. Here are the wonders which God has done.

A sample of the book may be viewed on the synod's web site at: [els.org/els-100](http://els.org/els-100)

\$20 plus \$5 shipping  
Order from the Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore  
700 Luther Drive, Mankato, MN 56001 (or 800-9441722)

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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.

*Oak Leaves is published quarterly  
by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod  
Historical Society,*

**6 Browns Court, Mankato, MN 56001**

**Visit the Historical Society website:**

<http://www.els-history.org/>

## FROM THE SOCIETY PRESIDENT

The date is set. The locations are booked. The speakers are ready (or will be). There is only one thing we ask of you: that you register to attend the ELS Historical Society program on Saturday, June 16th. We will meet at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Albert Lea for presentations and supper before traveling the short distance to Lime Creek Lutheran Church. There, we will worship under the oaks just like our spiritual forebears did 100 years ago. Join us in reviewing the pivotal moments of that gathering, which brought us where we are today. By God's grace, we are **"Still Under the Oaks."**

Peter Faugstad,  
President  
ELS Historical Society 🍁

## ELSHS ANNUAL MEETING

**Our Savior's Lutheran Church**  
**320 West College St**  
**Albert Lea, MN 56007**

**3:00** Opening devotion and program  
**5:00** lunch/supper  
**6:00** travel to Lime Creek  
**6:30** devotion/service at Lime Creek  
(based on Harstad sermon)

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Watch for the special edition of *Oak Leaves* which will be distributed to all who attend the annual meeting, and those who are at the convention. The special edition includes an article written and published in 1918 in the Norwegian Newspaper Amerika, along with some other writings by Norman A. Madson

and John A. Moldstad (the grandfather of the present president.) Make sure you get your copy. It will be mailed to the ELSHS who are not present at Albert Lea or Mankato.

Erling T. Teigen 🍁

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## ANNIVERSARY EVENTS DURING SYNOD CONVENTION

Join us on June 17, 2018 after the Synod Sunday Supper for an Open House at the Ottesen Museum. Norwegian treats will be served in the Museum's back yard and the Museum will be open for visits.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, a new display is being created at the Museum highlighting some of the documents from the founding convention at Lime Creek, Iowa. Sermons and essays from the week were preserved in both Norwegian and English in the Synod's Beretning (Report). Included in the display will be pictures of some of the main speakers including Synod President Bjug Harstad and Rev. L. P. Jensen. A list of those attending the meetings will also be featured.

Two of the attendees at Lime Creek were Mr. and Mrs. Oliver and Nelsine Honsey, the parents of Prof. Rudy Honsey. Prof. Honsey often quipped that he attended the Lime Creek meetings in utero. The Museum will be displaying some of Oliver and Nelsine's clothes that were donated a few years ago by the Honsey family.

Normal hours at the Ottesen Museum are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 1:30 - 4:30 pm. During Synod Convention the hours will be changed to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 8:30 - 11:30 am.

We look forward to seeing you. 🍁





whether we ought to organize. To that certainly belongs ascertaining who it is who will stand together with us; whether we should gather into an association like our old synodical organization; and whether we should still publish a paper in order to spread and defend the old truths. It is important that we immerse ourselves in the teachings of God's word, and thereby receive light and instruction for our work.

Since our God in his wise and loving counsel has called away from their earthly life three of our steadfast brothers in the faith, namely, pastors O. T. Lee, F. A. Møller, and S. Svenuungsen, we bow in humility to his will and say with Job, "the Lord gave and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. God bless and comfort the sorrowing."

When the convention organized itself, the times for the sessions each day were 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 and 2:00 p.m. to 4:30. That left plenty of time for coffee and visiting.

Who were these people: The report contains a list of those present:

Past. Christian Anderson	Edw. Gryte	S. E. S. Huso
H. O. Anderson	Pastor L. S. Guttebo	S. S. Huso
O. H. Anderson	Helmer Hagen	Past. & Mrs. H. Ingebritson
Mrs. Martelene Anderson	Mr. & Mr. K. L. Hagen	Ida Ingebritson
Peder Andreson	Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Hagen	Laura Ingebritson
Bertha Botolfson	Mr. & Mrs. Ole Halle	Lars Isakson
Mr & Mrs. Ole Bredesen	Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Halvorson	Arnold Jacobson
John Brekke	Mr. & Mrs. Hans Halvorson	Past. L. P. Jensen
B. J. Butler	H. Hammers	Edna H. Johnson
Mrs. E. J. Brudvig	Mr. & Mrs. A. M. Hanson	Emma Johnson
J. E. Brudvig	Pastor & Mrs. E. Hansen	Mr. & Mrs. John A. Jordahl
N. E. Brudvig	Mr. & Mrs. Erik Hansen	Mrs. O. J. Jordahl
Nils Casperson	Mr. & Mrs. S. Hanson	Thora Jordahl
Mr. & Mrs. H. J. Dale	Mr. & Mrs. S. H. Hanson	Mr. & Mrs. J. Kinden
Mr. & Mrs. P. J. Dale	Mrs. S. S. Hanson	J. P. Kloster
Mr. & Mrs. A. R. Ellingson	Mrs. J. O. Harmon	P. G. Kloster
E. B. Ellingson	Mrs. O. J. Harmon	Julia Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Th. Ellingson	M. Hauge	Luella Lee
Andrew Fadness	A. M. Hilman & familie	Mrs. O. T. Lee
R. A. Fadness	Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Holm	Valborg Lee
Mr. & Mrs. H. Frøsager	L. O. Holstad	Helena Levorson
Mrs. M. H. Furness	T. J. Holstad	Levor Levorson
Mr. & Mrs. John A. Førde	J. J. Hopperstad	Margaret Levorson
E. H. Gulbrandson	Inger Honsey	Mrs. Mari Levorson
Mr. & Mrs. Hans Guldbrandson	T. G. Honsey & family	Past. George O. Lillegard
Begger Guldbrandson	Olaus Hove	Carl Ludvig
Arne Gryte	A. T. Huso	Inga Ludvig

Mrs. J. A. Ludvig	H. H. Rasmussen & family	Elmer Stensrud
L. E. Ludvig & family	Mr. & Mrs. N. O. Roalkvam	Mr. & Mrs. E. S. Stensrud
Martin Ludvig	Mr. & Mrs. Ed. Rusten	Lewis Storby
Nelsine Ludvig	Caroline Sande	Lye Storby
A. T. Martinson & family	Emma Sande	P. O. Storby & family
Mr. & Mrs. E. Mattison	H. N. Sande	Mrs. O. Styve
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mellem	N. H. Sande	T. C. Saetra
L. G. Mellem	O. O. Selstad	C. Talle
C. E. Mellem	Mr. & Mrs. O. B. Selstad	O. K. Teisberg
John Michaelson	T. O. Selstad	Prof. J. E. Thoen
Past. G. P. Nesseth	J. G. Sime	Nora Thompson
T. A. Nasset	Mr. & Mrs. O. Singelstad	Mrs. & Mrs. P. A. Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. S. T. Okland	Mr. & Mrs. O. K. Singlestad	Past. & Mrs. A. J. Torgerson
Past. Holden M. Olsen	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Siverson	Mrs. Olina Torgerson
Mrs. A. G. H. Overn	Nels Spangelo	Margaret Torgerson
A. B. Overn	Jens Spilde	Mr. & Mrs. P. G. Tjernagel
Annette Overn	Mr. & Mrs. A. O. Stalheim	B. H. Tveit
Olga Overn	Mr. & Mrs. N. A. Stalheim	Anna Thyssen
P. A. Pederson	E. S. Stene	E. K. Thyssen
Past. C. N. Peterson	Mrs. Ingeborg Stene	Mr. & Mrs. R. R. Thyssen
H. E. Peterson	Martin Stene	O. R. Thyssen
Mr. & Mrs. C. W. Peterson	Sarah Stene	Mr. & Mrs. P. A. Weberg
Søren Peterson	S. C. Stene	

The following Missouri Synod pastors were present:

Past. H. Steger, Fairbank, Ia., Pastor George Koenig, Webster City, Ia., Pastor Geo. H. Koch, Garner, Ia., and Pastor Gerh. Schmidt, Blue Earth, Minn. These pastors greeted the meeting when they came and wished the Lord's blessing on the meetings business and resolutions at its conclusion.

The largest part of the meeting was spent on sermons and doctrinal papers. Sermons printed in the report were by President Bjug Harstad and Missouri Synod pastor, H. Steger. The papers presented for discussion were "The Spiritual State of Man Before Quickening Or Regeneration" by Pastor L. P. Jensen and "The Teaching of Scripture Concerning the Unity of the Spirit and the Warning Against Unionism" by President Harstad. Some comments and

responses to the papers are printed, but it appears that much time was devoted to discussions of the papers after they had been read.

An additional sermon is included only in the Norwegian part of the report. It was preached by Pastor Holden M. Olsen of Madison, Wisconsin on Sunday, the third day of the meeting on the Epistle for the Third Sunday after Trinity, 1 Peter 5:6-11 ("Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time..."). Since the sermon was in Norwegian, it was preached in the tent two miles north of the church on the Minnesota side of the state line. We include a part of Olsen's introduction which reflects the mood of those days.



*While no picture of the Lime Creek tent is known, this tent used at the 1926 convention at Rock Dell is similar to the one used in 1918.*

### **Officers and committees elected for this meeting:**

B. Harstad, chairman; J. A. Moldstad, vice-chairman; C. N. Peterson, secretary, and A. J. Torgerson, treasurer.

Credential committee: Pastors E. Hanson, L.S. Guttebo, C. N. Peterson, together with E. B. Ellingson.

Program committee: Pastors B. Harstad, A. J. Torgerson, and J. A. Moldstad, with T. C. Saetra and J. Michaelson.

Missions Committee: Pastors Chr. Anderson and E. Hanson, with L. G. Mellem.

Publications Committee: Prof. J. E. Thoen and Pastor Holden Olsen, with P. G. Tjernagel.

Dearly beloved; fathers, brothers, and sisters in the Lord.

We are not gathered here for a jubilee celebration. The situation we find ourselves in, both as a nation and as church members, turns our hearts much more toward tears of grief than to songs of praise. Our country is at war and — such a frightening and destructive war the world has never before witnessed. The people who gave us Luther and the Reformation, have given themselves this world's god of power....

And when we consider the condition of our own dear church body— how it has lost its first love, its zeal and fervor for pure doctrine and right church principles, and how the unity of the spirit, which should gather and bind us together in the bond of peace, is broken and how a little remnant, bound in its conscience to God's word, are left behind and must suffer distress for the sake of their faith — when we think all this, then our hearts are disposed to lamentation, and we are reminded of David's prophecy "By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept When we remembered Zion..." (Psalm 137:1-3).

Some convention sessions were devoted to business. Since they were reorganizing the church body which had passed away the previous June, the organization and procedures resembled that of their former church. To one familiar with present day ELS conventions, the shape is not so different from what was put in place in 1918.

Resolutions Committee: Pastors J. E. Thoen, E. Hanson, and Holden M. Olsen, with Begger Guldbrandson and E. B. Ellingson.

Auditing Committee: Prof. J. E. Thoen and Pastor G. P. Nesseth.

The floor committees proposed resolutions, which were then brought to the meeting of the whole. Following are some of the resolutions that were adopted, The first five were printed in English.

1. We, members present of the Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, ministers, delegates of congregations and members of the congregations join together for the purpose of continuing the work of the Synod on the old basis and according to the old principles.

We therefore move for adoption by the congregations:

2. The name of this organization shall be The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church.
3. The only source and rule for faith and doctrine is the word of God as revealed in the canonical books of the Old and New Testament.
4. The Norwegian Synod adopts as its confession all the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord.
5. We elect a committee of 3 to propose the necessary changes in the old constitution of the Synod. The com-



mittee report shall be published as soon as possible, in order that congregations so wishing can consider and adopt it, The committee report to be presented for final adoption at the next annual meeting of the Synod.

Other resolutions appeared only in Norwegian in the Report:

### ***Luthersk Tidende***

1. Publication of *Luthersk Tidende* shall continue.
2. *Luthersk Tidende* shall be published each week.
3. "Evangelisk" shall be added to the name by setting it over the picture of the church so that the name becomes Evangelisk Luthersk Tidende.
4. An editor and business manager shall be elected.

### **Report of the meeting**

1. A complete Report [Beretning] of the meeting shall be published as possible.
2. At least 1000 copies of the Report shall be printed.
3. The price of the Report shall be 50 cents per copy.
4. The report shall be translated into English.
5. The sermons and lectures delivered at the meeting shall be printed in the report.
6. The Publication Committee shall be in charge of arranging printing and its final size.
7. Pastor J. A. Moldstad was elected together with the secretary to edit the report.

### **Other resolutions:**

1. The Publication Committee shall seek to publish a *folkekalender* for the synod.
2. The synod holds the Publications Committee responsible for publishing our publications and is authorized to arrange the income and disbursements according to the best method; but not in the case that no funds are available.
3. The Publications Committee shall take care of remuneration.
4. The Publications Committee is to investigate the possibility of an English hymnbook and report to the next meeting.
5. The synod's pastors are urged to, if possible, gather for smaller and larger pastoral conferences for mutual edification, admonition, strengthening each other in doctrinal unity and purity, furthering development of



*Tidende header*

the Christian life and the chief aptitudes for the ministry.

In spite of the peculiar ruling in the state of Iowa that no language was to be used in public meetings other than English, the convention adopted the following resolution. That meant that most of the papers and sermons were presented in the tent placed on the Minnesota side of the state line, two miles north of the church.

The Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church in convention assembled at Lime Creek, Iowa, June 14, 1918.

We recognize the great burden and responsibility place upon You as commander in chief of the forces of this country, now engaged in the world war.

As loyal citizens of the United States we assure You of our hearty support and our prayerful supplication to Almighty God for Your courage and wisdom to prosecute the war to a successful end and a righteous peace.

There was a Treasurers Report, but of course it was not very long. The income totaled \$1,510.70, and after expenses for *Luthersk Tidende*, had been paid, the treasurer reported a balance of 355.26. In 2018 dollars, the income was \$26,700.



*Interior of Lime Creek Church*

The meeting also elected officers and committees for the coming year to prepare for a constituting convention in 1919:

#### **Officers**

President: Pastor Bjug Harstad

Vice President: Pastor John A. Moldstad

Secretary: Pastor C. N. Peterson

Treasurer: Pastor A J. Torgerson

#### **Mission Committee**

Pastor Christian Anderson, Pastor H. Ingebritson, Mr. L. G. Mellem

#### **Subcommittee for the West Coast:**

Pastor Bjug Harstad, Mr. T. C. Saetra, Mr. E. B. Ellingson

#### **Publications Committee**

Pastor J. E. Thoen, Pastor Holden Olson, Mr. E. B. Ellingson

#### **Synod Constitution Committee**

Pastor A. J. Torgerson, Pastor Emil Hanson, Pastor M. K. Bleken

#### **Synodical Conference Delegate**

Pastor J. A. Moldstad, Prof. Holden Olson alternate

#### **Committee to gather historical data**

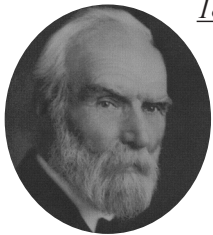
Pastor Bjug Harstad, Pastor J. E. Thoen, Pastor C. N. Peterson

#### **Auditors**

Pastor E. Hanson, Mr. Einar Tyssen 

## **SKETCHES OF THOSE WHO SERVED AS PRESIDENT**

### **Bjug Harstad served 1918-22**



1848-1933. Ordained in 1874. The only ELS president who was a first generation immigrant, Harstad was born in Norway in 1848. He graduated from Luther College in 1871, and Concordia Seminary St. Louis in 1874 where he was a student of C. F. W.

Walther, as well as other luminaries. Aside from many congregations in North Dakota,, he founded Bruflat Academy, Portland, North Dakota and Pacific Lutheran College in Parkland, Washington. He also served as president of the Minnesota District from 1884 to 1892 and then of the Pacific District from 1893-98. He was one of those who the anti-Missourians attempted to remove from office in 1885. He presided over the 1918 convention. One son (Adolph) entered the ministry in the ELS, and two grandsons, and a great grandson.)

### **George A. Gullixson 1922-26**



1866-1933. Ordained in 1893. Born in Bode, Iowa and graduated from Luther College and Luther Seminary. After a brief pastorate in Beloit, Wisconsin, his entire ministry was at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Chicago. He

brought his congregation into the synod at the founding convention in 1919. Two of his sons entered the ministry in the ELS, one grandson, and a great-grandson.

### **Christian Anderson 1926-30**



1874-1959. Ordained in 1899. Born in Minnesota, graduated from Luther College and Luther Seminary. After 1903, he served Zion Lutheran Church, north Minneapolis. The congregation was divided over the merger and a large contingent of members opposed the merger. After leaving Zion congregation,

they called Anderson and organized Fairview Lutheran Church, a few blocks away. He served there until 1928. He was at the 1918 convention. Following the merger convention in 1917, members of the minority worshiped with the Fairview congregation in their temporary chapel.

### **Helge M. Tjernagel 1930-34**



1871-1940. Ordained in 1902. Tjernagel went by the name "Henry." Born in Iowa, he graduated from Luther College in 1894, and taught at Albert Lea Academy until 1899 when he enrolled in Luther Seminary. He served



congregations in Washington state and California, and served the Alaska Eskimo Mission from 1910 to 1913. At the time of the merger, he was serving a congregation in Crookston, Minnesota. He then accepted a call to the Missouri Synod's Indian Mission in Wisconsin, where he served until accepting a call to the Saude and Jerico congregations in Iowa and joined the synod in 1923. One son and two grandsons and two sons-in-law have served in the ELS

#### **Norman A. Madson 1934-35**



1886-1962. Ordained in 1915. Born in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, he attended Luther College, and graduated from Luther Seminary in 1915. In addition to serving congregations in the Norwegian Synod, he served as an army chaplain in 1917. He also taught in the preparatory department at Luther College before being called to Bode, Iowa. He joined the ELS in 1925. He served Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Princeton, Minnesota until he was called to be the first Dean of Bethany Lutheran Seminary in 1946 where he served until his retirement in 1958. Madson was elected president in 1934, but had to resign because of illness. In 1942 he was elected again and served two terms. Three sons and two sons-in-law, as well as five grandsons and three great grandsons have served in the ministry in the ELS.

#### **Christian A. Moldstad 1935-37**



1882-1972. Ordained 1908 at St. Marks Lutheran Church in Chicago where his brother, John A. Moldstad was pastor. He was then called to serve the Norwegian Synod congregation in Boston. He succeeded Christian Anderson as pastor of Fairview Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, serving there from 1928 to 1936, when he was called to Bethany College to teach languages and religion. In 1946, he retired to Brewster, Massachusetts on Cape Cod and formed a congregation which met in his home. He served until the congregation until retiring in 1970. He was not present at the 1918 meeting, but did participate in the 1919 constituting convention.

#### **Henry Ingebritson 1937-42**



1876-1962. Ordained 1906, he was born in Iowa, and attended Luther College and graduated from Luther Seminary in 1908. After several parishes, he was called to Lake Mills in 1912 and

served there until 1944. He was at the 1918 convention. [Ingebritson was one of the last two surviving pastors present at Lime Creek in 1918. A. J. Torgerson was the last of the 13 to die, 1963,]

#### **Norman A. Madson 1942-46 – see above**

#### **Adolph M. Harstad 1946-50**



1902-1988. Ordained 1926, son of Bjug Harstad. He graduated from Concordia College, St. Paul in 1923 and from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1926. He served parish at Thornton, Iowa, Princeton, Minnesota until he was called to be chaplain at Bethesda Lutheran

Home in Watertown, Wisconsin. After retiring from Bethesda, he was visitation pastor at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin, before returning to Parkland, Washington. Two sons, two sons-in-law and one grandson have served in the ministry in the ELS. His brother Oliver represented the synod on the faculty of Concordia College St. Paul and later taught at Bethany.

#### **C. M. [Carl Monrad] Gullerud 1950-54**



1908-1995. Ordained in 1932, son of Pastor O. M. Gullerud, Princeton, Minnesota who was first listed as a member of the synod clergy in 1920. Graduated from Concordia College, St. Paul, and Concordia Seminary St. Louis, in 1932. He served Mt. Olive congregation in Mankato from 1941 to

1959, when he left to join in organizing the CLC, where he served as seminary professor for many years.

#### **Milton H. Otto 1954-57**



1914-1982. Born in Cherokee, Iowa. Ordained in 1942? Attended Concordia Colleges in Seward, Nebraska and St. Paul, Minnesota, and graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1940. Though his church home from childhood was in the Missouri Synod, he vicared under Norman A. Madson in

Princeton, Minnesota and taught school at Concordia Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. His first parish in the ELS was at Cottonwood, Minnesota from 1941 to 1946, and then the Saude-Jerico parish in Iowa until he was called to Bethany Seminary in 1957. He succeeded Norman Madson as Dean of the seminary in 1960.

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### **Milton E. Tweit 1957-62**



1908-2005. Ordained 1936. Born in Glenwood, Minnesota. He graduated from Concordia College, St. Paul in 1930, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1935. After assisting Norman A. Madson at Princeton and teaching in the Christian Day School there, he was called to Norseland-Norwegian Grove parish, rural St. Peter, from 1937 to 1958, and the Saude-Jerico parish in Iowa from 1958-1971, and Bethany and Rose Dell Trinity congregations, Luverne, Minnesota. He retired from the ministry in 1981, after serving congregations in Waterville, Iowa. Aside from his service as president of the Synod during the difficult days of the break from the Synodical Conference, he was a long time member of the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary. .

### **Theodore A. Aaberg 1962-64**



1925-1980. Ordained 1949. Aaberg was the first president to be a product of the ELS educational institutions. He attended Bethany Lutheran College and both Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Bethany Seminary, graduating in 1950. From 1949 until 1968, he served the Scarville-Center, Iowa, parish and the Norseland-Norwegian Grove, Minnesota, parish from 1968-1976. In 1976 he accepted the call to serve as president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. He resigned from this position in 1979 due to ill health. He had also served as interim president of Bethany Lutheran College from August 1977 to January 1978. One son has served in the ministry in the ELS. Aaberg authored *A City Set on a Hill*, a comprehensive history of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod from 1918-1968.

### **Joseph N. Petersen 1964-66**



1919-1997. Ordained 1945, son of Pastor Justin Petersen, Joe Petersen graduated from Bethany High School and College, as well as Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin. He graduated from the Wisconsin Synod seminary in Thiensville Wisconsin. He was ordained in 1945 and served Pinehurst Lutheran Church in Eau Clair until 1951, when he accepted a call to work in Cornwall England as a missionary. He returned to the United States in 1955 and served English Lutheran

Church, Cottonwood, Minnesota until 1958. From 1958 to 1968 he served the Norseland-Norwegian Grove parish, rural St. Peter, Mn, before being called to Bethany College to serve as student recruiter until 1978. His last two parishes were in Rochester, New York and Colorado Springs, Colorado until he retired in 1986. Two of his brothers have served in the ministry in the ELS.

### **Juul B. Madson 1966-70**



1920-2008. Ordained 1946, he was the son of Norman A. Madson. After graduating from Bethany High School and College, he attended Northwestern College, returned to Bethany College to coach and teach before entering Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, from which he graduated in 1946. He served the Somber-Northwood, Iowa parish until 1954, Lakewood Washington, until 1967, Mayville North Dakota from 1960-67. He served English Lutheran Church, Cottonwood, Minnesota for two years before being called to Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary from 1970 until he retired. A son and grandson serve in the ministry in the ELS. With Pastor Herbert Larson, Madson co-authored *Built on the Rock* for the 75th anniversary of the synod.

### **George M. Orvick 1970-76**



1929 —. A graduate of Bethany Seminary, he was ordained in 1953, served Amherst Junction 1953,54, and Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin from 1954 until 1986, when the office of president became a full time call. He retired to the Madison area in 2002.

### **Wilhelm Petersen 1976-80**



1928 —. A graduate of Bethany Seminary, he was ordained in 1953. Served congregations in Oklee, Minnesota, Madison, Wisconsin (Grace), and Mt. Olive, Mankato. He is a son-in-law of Norman A. Madson. Elected president of the ELS in 1976, he was the last president to serve while a full-time parish pastor. He was called to the presidency of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary in 1980, and served until his retirement in 1997. He was granted an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree by Concordia Theological Seminary in 1989. One son has served in the ministry in the ELS.

**George M. Orvick 1980-2002 —see above**

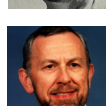
## John A. Moldstad 2002



1954—. A graduate of Bethany Seminary, he was ordained in 1980. He has served congregations in Sioux Falls, S.D., Lake Havasu City, Arizona, and Oregon, Wisconsin. He was called to Bethany Lutheran Seminary in 1994, and was elected synodical president in 2002. Two of his sons have served in the ministry in the ELS.

### “Did ya know?” Trivia:

- Fathers & sons as President—Bjug and Adolph Harstad; Norman A. and Juul Madson.
- One set of brothers served as president, Joseph and Wilhelm Petersen.
- The only president born in Norway was Bjug Harstad.
- The first president was a graduate of Concordia Seminary St. Louis and studied under C. F. W. Walther.
- The second through eighth presidents were all graduates of Luther College and the Norwegian Synod Seminary.
- The first president to have graduated from Bethany Seminary was Theodore Aaberg. The last three presidents have been graduates of Bethany Seminary.
- Six presidents attended Bethany College.
- Two presidents graduated from the Wisconsin Synod’s seminary.
- Five presidents graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.
- Though not written in the constitution, a “gentlemen’s agreement” limited terms to two consecutive terms. Two presidents were elected twice to non-consecutive terms.
- After the first eight presidents, Milton Otto was the only one who had not been “born into” the synod.
- Most presidents also served as vice-president. Those who served as vice-president, but were not later elected president, were: John A. Moldstad, O. M. Gullerud, J.A.O. Preus, Julian Anderson, E. G. Unseth, Luther Vangen, Hugo Handberg, Norman A. Madson, Jr, Paul Petersen, Glenn Obenberger.



## Secretaries

The secretaries were not subject to a term limit. Only seven have served in that office:

While the office has not been limited to clergy, all who have held the office have been clergymen.

C. N. Petersen 1917-1919

L. P. Jensen, 1919-1929

C. J. Quill 1929-34

George Lillegard 1934-52

Walther Gullixson 1952-72

Alf Merseth 1972-1996

Craig Ferkenstad 1996-

## Treasurers

The treasurers are likewise not limited in terms or to the clergy. Two laymen have served as treasurer. Today, the treasurer is appointed by the Board of Trustees and may be a lay member of the synod.

O. T. Lee 1917-1918

A. J. Torgerson 1918-1932

H. A. Preus 1932-33

Paul Ylvisaker 1933-41

Martin Galstad 1941-46

Harry Olson 1946-49

Sophus E. Lee 1949-72

LeRoy Meyer 1972-2001

O. T. Lee was not elected treasurer by the re-organized synod; he was appointed when members of the minority of the Old Synod began to prepare for the first convention at Lime Creek. He was also business manager of *Luthersk Tidende*. However Lee died before the Lime Creek convention. Pastor Sophus Lee, long serving treasurer in the 1950s and 60s was a son of O. T. Lee. 🌿

*officials pictured in order listed above*



**Membership Renewal & Registration — Annual Meeting June 16, 2018**

ELS Historical Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Membership Type: ☐ Voting ☐ Associate ☐ Lifetime

Includes Oak Leaves subscription Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ June 16 Meeting Registration (with lunch):

No. of persons \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 @ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Bus, RT Mankato – Albert Lea: No. of persons \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 @ \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Send to ELS Historical Society, 6 Browns Ct., Mankato, Mn 56001***Voting Membership:**

\$15 - individual or married couple

\$300 - lifetime

**Associate (non-voting):**

\$25 - individual or organization

*Voting Members must belong to an ELS congregation or a congregation in fellowship with the ELS. Associate Members are any others interested in the work of the ELS Historical Society.*