

The Assistant Pastor

June 1939

The Saxon Centennial

1839—1939

This year the one-hundredth anniversary of the Saxon immigration to America is celebrated. All over the United States festival services were held on Sunday, May 14. Your pastor preached to two large audiences; one in the forenoon at Waverly, and one in the afternoon at St. Ansgar.

In the fall of 1838 more than 600 Lutherans left Saxony and other parts of Germany and settled in the State of Missouri early in the year 1839. A few years later these Saxons joined other Lutherans in the Central States and organized the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states.

The Saxons emigrated to America to keep the true Lutheran faith pure for themselves and their children. Four hundred years ago the Lord had made Saxony the land of the Reformation, the birthplace and homeland of Dr. Martin Luther. The people in Saxony, in Germany, and in other parts of the world were made free from the tyranny of the Pope and from all false doctrine. They were given the pure doctrine of the Bible and once more learned the great truth that man is saved not by his good deeds, but alone by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. They were given the Bible, the Catechism, the hymn-book, the confessional writings of the Church, and the writings of Martin Luther. Luther saw to it that Christian schools were established and that the people received a Christian education.

In a nation-wide appeal for Christian schools, as a means of retaining the blessings of the Reformation, Luther warned his countrymen, saying: "The Word and grace of God are like a passing shower, which does not return where it has once been. It was at one time with the Jews, but gone is gone; they now have nothing. Paul brought it to Greece, but, again, gone is gone; they now have the Turk. Rome and Latin lands also had it, but gone is gone; they now have the Pope. And ye Germans need not think that ye will always have it; for ingratitude and indifference will not let it abide. Therefore, seize and hold fast whoever can do so; idle hands must have an evil year."

In 1817 the 300th anniversary of the Reformation was widely celebrated in Germany, but there was no general thought of keeping Luther's doctrine pure. In the same year the Lutherans of Prussia were united with the Reformed in a State Church.

In Saxony, a hundred years ago, there was a Lutheran State Church which had largely fallen away from the true Lutheran faith. Men denied that the Bible was inspired by the Holy Ghost, that Jesus is the Son of God, that Jesus performed miracles, that man is saved alone by grace, through faith.

The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches, affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

Church Directory

H. M. Tjernagel, Pastor

SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Chris Treider, Ned Borlaug, E. Firkingstad.
Treasurer: Nels Ellingson.
Secretary: G. G. Vaala.
Cemetery Committee: Olis Borlaug, Juel Natvig, Miss Carrie Natvig, Mrs. J. Natvig, Mrs. Otto Hanson.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Otto Hanson, president; Mrs. Carl Miller, secretary; Mrs. Oscar Natvig, treasurer.

JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: C. Cutsforth, Ole C. Johnson, Olaf Roberson.
Secretary: A. N. Anderson.
Treasurer: J. A. Robinson.
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Fred Amman, Mrs. L. A. Robinson, Mrs. S. T. Roberson.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. M. A. Robinson, president; Mrs. Lloyd Roberson, secretary; Mrs. Harvey Roberson, treasurer.

Standing Services

JERICO

First Sunday, Norwegian, October-May, 10:30 a. m.
Third Sunday, English, October-May, 10:30 a. m.
Saturday school every Saturday, 10:00 a. m.
Confirmation class, Fridays, 2:00 p. m.

SAUDE

Second Sunday, bilingual service, October-May, 10:45 a. m.
Fourth Sunday, English, October-May, 10:45 a. m.
Saturday school, 2:00 p. m.
Confirmation class, Fridays, 9:30 a. m.
Fifth Sunday by special announcement.

Special Services: Pentecost Sunday, May 28, services at Saude 10 o'clock a. m. Services at Jerico 2 o'clock p. m., together with the public examination of the confirmands.

June 4, confirmation services together with communion services, at Jerico 10 o'clock a. m. ~~Services at Saude 8 o'clock in the evening.~~ Sunday, June 11, is Synod Sunday. No services in either church.

Baptisms: John Charles, a child of Theo. O. Knutson and wife Tille, neé Nelson. Born March 11, baptized April 30. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. L. S. Roberson and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Munson.

Helen Darlene, born March 16, baptized April 30. Parents: Alfred L. Johnson and wife Mildred, neé Thompson. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. L. Douglas and Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Johnson.

Sonja Marie, born April 7, baptized April 30. Parents: K. C. Johnson and wife Anna, neé Sanderson. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. Sjur Sanderson, Chester Johnson and Alice H. Anderson.

Roger Harry, born March 28, baptized April 30. Parents: Alvin J. Johnson and wife Theone, neé Fauberg. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Amman, Lucile Paulson, and Harold Fauberg.

Mrs. Alfred Anderson entertained the Jerico Aid in the church parlor April 26.

Mrs. Harvey Roberson was hostess to the same Aid at her home on May 10. This was Mrs. Roberson's first experience at entertaining the Aid. She acquitted herself very creditably as hostess.

April 27, Spring clean-up-day at the Saude church and cemetery. The Aid members worked with a will and quite a few husbands were also drafted into service. Mrs. C. O. Natvig served lunch to the workers.

The Jerico Y. P. S. held a meeting Sunday evening, April 23. New officers were elected. Milton Robinson, president; Cletus Anderson, vice-president; Marjorie Ellingson, secretary; and Alorth Nelson, treasurer. The society meets on the third Sunday evening of every month unless otherwise announced.

Mrs. Ole Øren Thompson was brought back from Wisconsin for burial April 28. When her husband died seven years ago, she went to Wisconsin to make her home with her daughters. She was born in Norway March 18, 1864, and died at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. McCarthy, Danbury, Wis., April 25. Our faithful Jerico janitor, Tom Thompson, was her eldest son. During our first years in the Saude parsonage we quite often needed the help of a man for heavy labor. Ole Øren, the deceased's husband, always responded cheerfully, and for reasonable pay performed a good day's labor. We have often missed him since he died.

The Convention Offering Envelopes are enclosed with this paper. We hope all will receive their envelope kindly and bring in an offering on Sunday, June 4.

THE SAXON CENTENNIAL

Continued from page one

The Sacraments of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper were not administered as Christ had instituted them. School-books, hymn-books, and books used by the pastors in the church were full of false doctrine. Professors, pastors, and teachers considered themselves so enlightened that they despised the Word of God, did not believe it, and ridiculed the Lutheran faith as old-fashioned and out of date. The attitude of these men was that everything in religion except what man can understand by his reason must be rejected and disbelieved. This attitude is called rationalism. In our own country it is known as Liberalism or Modernism.

This downfall of the Lutheran Church was caused by ingratitude and indifference, as Luther had warned. It started in the colleges and universities, where learned men began to think themselves wiser than the Bible and their Lutheran forefathers, and it soon spread through the ministry and the teaching profession.

There were indeed faithful Lutherans left, for the Lord here also had "kept His 7000 in Israel who had not bowed their knee to Baal". But they had to accept the pastors and teachers whom the State Church gave them, even if they were rank unbelievers and heretics. Some church-members would come together and hold private services in the homes; but these meetings were forbidden and often broken up by the police.

There were a few truly Lutheran pastors left, and people would walk for miles and miles to hear a good sermon. Among these pastors were: E. M. Buerger, E. G. W. Keyl, C. F. W. Walther, O. H.

Walther, G. H. Loeber, and Martin Stephan. The few faithful pastors did not come to the knowledge of the truth in school or at colleges and universities, for these were thoroughly rationalistic, but rather through private study of the Bible, Luther's writings, and the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church. At Leipzig several students formed a club to study the Word of God and the Lutheran doctrine. To this club belonged most of the faithful pastors and candidates who later came to America.

In 1839 an Emigration Association was formed, and over 700 people from Saxony and other parts of Germany joined. Rules and regulations were drawn up for the Association, and these were signed by the emigrants. People sold their property and placed the money in a common credit fund for the payment of all expenses. The total sum was about \$89,000. In the Emigration Regulations they said: "All the undersigned acknowledge with sincerity of heart the pure Lutheran faith as contained in the Word of God, the Old and New Testaments, and set forth and confessed in the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church." Another paragraph reads: "The undersigned can, humanly speaking, see no possibility of retaining this faith pure and undefiled in their present homeland or of confessing it and transmitting it to their descendants. Hence they feel obliged to emigrate and to look for a country where this Lutheran faith is not endangered. Such a country is the United States of America; for there, as no where else in the world, perfect religious and civil liberty prevails."

In October of 1838 the members of the Emigrant Association gradually assembled in Bremen, coming from more than a dozen places, usually in larger or smaller groups. The largest group came from Dresden. It numbered 240 persons and traveled down the Elbe River on two barges. About the departure from Dresden Candidate Buenger writes: "On October 20, 1838, at 12:30 P. M., came the great moment when our deliverance began. By a previous agreement we now thanked the Lord Jesus Christ with one accord, although privately, for the hour of freedom that had struck, and pleaded with Him, as the Head of the Church, for His presence, protection, and guidance on the trip and for bringing also those whom we were leaving behind. A crowd of spectators, which had waited for several hours for our departure, accompanied us with their eyes and, no doubt, in part also with their best wishes, but for the most part with jeers."

The members of the Emigrant Association left Bremen on five ships with New Orleans as their port of landing. They were on the ocean about two months. Eight people died on the way and were buried at sea. The pastor on the first ship was Rev. E. M. Buerger; on the second Rev. E. G. W. Keyl and Rev. C. F. W. Walther; on the third Rev. G. H. Loeber; on the fourth Rev. Martin Stephan. The fifth did not have a pastor, but two teachers, a pastor candidate, and a student. Four of the ships reached New Orleans between December 30, 1838, and January 20, 1839. The fifth one never arrived; it was lost at sea with its 30 passengers. Rev. C. F. W. Walther was to have sailed on this ship, but God prevented it because He wanted to use him as the great leader of sound Lutheranism in the United States. About 634 peo-

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ple started out from Bremen, not quite 600 arrived in New Orleans. There were about 160 children on the ships. One hundred ten were old enough to go to school. Fifty were small children or babies. The youngest was Martin Tirmenstein, one and one-half months old. One baby was born on the way.

The immigrants did not remain in New Orleans, but went up the Mississippi to St. Louis. One hundred twenty persons remained in St. Louis while the others settled in Perry County, Missouri.

In 1844 Rev. C. F. W. Walther and his congregation in St. Louis began to publish the "Lutheraner," to confess the true Lutheran faith to all who cared to inform themselves on the teaching of the Saxons. This paper reached Lutherans in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and other states. When Rev. Wyneken of Fort Wayne saw it, he declared: "Praise God, there are more true Lutherans in America!" Rev. Wyneken and other Lutherans had come to America even before the Saxons. In order to help each other and to work together, Lutherans from various states met in Chicago in 1847 and organized the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states. Rev. C. F. W. Walther was made the first President of the Synod, and, next to God, it was he who founded and built the Missouri Synod.

The sound Lutheranism of this new Synod became known in America and in Europe. Here many congregations joined, and from Europe came many pastors and teachers. It allowed no rationalism, sectarianism, or false doctrine. Today it is spread over North America, over parts of South America, India, China, Europe, and Africa. It numbers over 1,320,000 souls, about 5,000 congregations and preaching-stations, over 3,000 pastors, about 1,350 schools, with over 2,000 instructors, and about 5,000 Sunday-, Saturday-, and summer-schools. The Synod has 18 colleges and seminaries for pastors and teachers, with 177 professors and 2,500 students.

In a closing summary of this short story, which is adapted from A. C. Stellanor, we note: The Lord had once blessed Saxony in particular; but it became ungrateful, indifferent, and proud, and all but lost the blessings of the Reformation. God gathered a remnant of faithful Lutherans together and sent them as a seed to America to establish the true Lutheran Church over here. He made Dr. C. F. W. Walther a leader, united the Lutherans from various States, and greatly prospered the Synod which they organized. In this manner the Lord also reached the pioneer fathers of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America with the blessings of soundly Scriptural doctrine and practice.

Lest we lose these blessings, we do well to heed Luther's warning against the destructive sins of ingratitude and indifference. These sins manifest themselves in lukewarmness regarding spiritual matters, in the neglect of church and school, in worldly-mindedness, in spiritual conceit, and in a carelessness about our soul's salvation. From the Saxons we should learn to bring the greatest sacrifices in money and personal comfort in order to keep the true Lutheran faith pure, to confess it before men, and to transmit it to our children's children. May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers. Amen.

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