

# The Assistant Pastor

October, 1942

## *The 1943 Jubilee*

The next Synod meeting will be the occasion for great rejoicing on the part of members of the Norwegian Synod. It will mark the 90th anniversary of the organization of the Norwegian Synod, and the 25th anniversary of our re-organized Norwegian Synod.

### *1853*

The first immigration of Norwegians to this country took place in 1825 when the Sloop "Restaurationen" tied up at a New York dock, and 53 Norwegians disembarked. Two more shiploads of immigrants arrived in 1836, and another two in 1837. In 1840 a third large immigration took place, and from that time there was a steady stream of Norwegian immigrants coming to establish homes in the United States. By the year 1850 it is estimated that about 18,000 Norwegians had come to this country.

There is an interesting description of conditions among these early Norwegian settlers in R. B. Anderson's "First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration," from which we quote the following (pp. 432-437):

"How our fathers toiled and how much they suffered, we, their descendants, who are now enjoying the fruits of their labors, can never realize or know; and we owe them a debt of gratitude which we can never pay. The best we can do, is to live worthy lives, and try to keep green the memories of those who did so little for themselves and so much for us.

"An interesting volume might be written, describing the life in these early Norwegian settlements. Our libraries abound in biographies of great men, kings, and potentates; but good books on life of the common people are scarce; and yet it is far more important and interesting to know all the little circumstances that sway and control a people, than it is to study the life of a prince who has but few feelings in common with the masses, and who is socially far removed from them. In pursuing the foregoing pages, have my readers thought of all the toils, privations, hopes, fears, anticipations and misgivings of our dear settlers in Kendall, in Illinois, and in Wisconsin? Have you realized what the parting with dear friends in Norway meant? Did you travel with them, in your imagination, the long weary way across the Atlantic? Did you accompany them in your sympathies on the canal boats and through the unfrequented forests on the frontier? Have you thought of the immigrant's exposures, and of his patient industry? All



---

## 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

N. S. Tjernagel, Pastor

### SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Carl Miller, Ned Bor'aug, John Natvig.  
Treasurer: Milton Boleng.  
Secretary: Fred Steensland.  
Cemetery Committee: Olis Borlaug, Juel Natvig, Miss Carrie Natvig, Mrs. John Natvig, Mrs. Otto Hanson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Carlyle Natvig, president; Mrs. Nels Ellingson, Secretary; Mrs. Martin Borlaug, Treasurer.

### JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: J. N. Anderson, Lloyd Roberson, C. O. Vigdal.  
Secretary: A. N. Anderson.  
Treasurer: Jeff A. Knutson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Gilman Robinson, president; Mrs. Alvin Johnson, secretary; Mrs. Andrew J. Johnson, treasurer.  
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Carl A. Knutson, Mrs. M. A. Robinson, Mrs. C. O. Vigdal.

---

## Services

### JERICO

First and third Sundays 9:00 A. M.  
Second and fourth Sundays 10:30 A. M.  
(First Sunday Norwegian.)

### SAUDE

First and third Sundays 10:30 A. M.  
Second and fourth Sundays 9:00 A. M.  
(First Sunday Bi-lingual Service.)  
Fifth Sundays by special announcement.

### NEW HAMPTON

Services, 9 A. M.

---

these things must be considered by the reader who would fully realize what hardships had to be endured by those who braved the dangers and privations of a new country, made homes and fields and gardens, and prepared the way for advancing civilization. To draw a picture of the life of the pioneer Norwegian settler would require the hand of a master, nor do I think the tale could be properly unfolded by any one who has not had personal experience.

"Go, in fancy, with the newcomer to Koshkonong in 1840; watch him select the site for his future home; trudge with him the long way to Milwaukee, where he enters the land at the government land office, his little family, in the meantime, living in or under his covered wagon. Foot it back seventy miles and note the happiness of the wife and children when they see him return. Watch our pioneer settler while he builds the first shelter for his family, that little log cabin or dugout with one room, twelve by fourteen or less, and an attic. Notice with what hospitality he shares these scanty accommodations with two or three other families who come the next year to become his neighbors. Think of the resignation with which they dispensed with such things as could not be had or which they were not rich enough to buy. And yet some of the settlers will tell you that they were quite comfortable in these rough dwellings, and that they had much real enjoyment. From similar homes came

many of the greatest men that America has produced.

"Then comes the turning of the sod to make fields. On the prairies, this was easy enough; but in the timber, what a lot of trees had to be removed! Did you ever see one of those huge breaking-plows? On its beam, which was from eight to twelve feet long, there was framed an axle, on each side of which was a wheel, sawed from an oak log. This wheel held the plow upright. It was a sight worth seeing, when a ten- or twelve-year-old boy drove an ox team of six to ten yoke, and the heavy, queer-looking plow, with its coulter and broad share was turning the virgin soil in black furrows two to three feet wide. And there is lots of work to be done. The husband and wife and children are all busy from early in the morning until late at night, building fences around the farm, hunting the oxen and cows on the boundless prairies and meadows, through the heavy dews, early in the morning and late in the evening. Prairie-fires sweep over the country yearly, and have to be fought by the whole neighborhood of settlers; and what little they have to sell is taken in "kubberulles," a kind of wagon made with wheels sawed from oak logs, to Milwaukee, or to Chicago, the nearest markets.

"The timber has been cleared, and the prairie has been turned, and the decaying vegetation produces malaria. The season of fever and ague has come. We visit a little log cabin, and find all its occupants sick. In this home and in these surroundings, which required all the patience and resignation that could be mustered in health, sickness wears a darker garb, and the new settlement always gets a double amount of sickness. The few distant neighbors are afflicted in a similar manner and can render no assistance. The poor invalids need stout hearts and steady nerves not to quail under their affliction, and repent the day when they resolved to emigrate; but the bridges are burnt behind them and there is nothing for them to do but make the most of it. How gloomy the world looks through these bilious eyes with throbbing temples and aching limbs! Death would be a relief to that homesick heart. There were seasons in the Fox River settlement and on Koshkonong, when nearly all the inhabitants were prostrated by fever and ague. A couple of fortunate individuals, whose constitutions were proof against sickness, would then go from house to house, give the patients some medicine, go to the spring for a pail of water, carry a pail of gruel with them, and leave a little for each patient and then return to watch over their dear ones at home. Note the happiness in the faces and the tenderness in every word as these messengers come on their daily errands of mercy. Surely these good deeds done in obscurity are written in the great book.

"We need not wonder at the friendships that grew up among those early settlers. They were thousands of miles away from their kindred, and as they lay with fevered brows listening to the howling of the wolves and thought of their neglected cattle, wasting crops and hapless lot, you can imagine what it meant to have a neighbor come in with sympathy for their sufferings and with water for their parched tongues. When the neighbor told



his deeper tale of woe, and how he had surmounted it all, the countenances of our immigrants would brighten and they would forget their pains for a time. They learned to appreciate the value of human sympathy and kindness, and they rallied from their sufferings with their natures purified and strengthened for the battle of life." (Thus far R. B. Anderson.)

These sturdy folks had come from Norway, a Lutheran country, and as we should expect, they began, in time, to establish congregations. But up to the year 1842 no Lutheran congregations had been organized among the Lutheran immigrants, and no services had been conducted in the manner to which they had been accustomed in the homeland. Family worship was doubtless held in many homes, and some laymen had preached in various places. Some of these were pious men who desired to preach the Gospel in its truth, but many were imposters who desired to draw the immigrants into sectarian churches. The lack of trained and true ministers led, naturally, to a terrible confusion among the early settlers. R. B. Anderson describes that confusion, "In the Fox River settlement all was chaos and confusion during the early years of the colony. Some of the Norwegians there were Quakers, others Baptists, others Presbyterians, others Methodists, others Lutherans, others Mormons, and some were free-thinkers; all in inextricable disorder."

It was out of this confusion that the first Lutheran pastors sought to build congregations, and a truly Lutheran Synod. The first of these pastors was J. W. Dietrichson. He was followed soon after by H. A. Stub and A. C. Preus. Not long later came H. A. Preus, N. Brandt, and J. A. Ottesen. These are the men whom we now venerate as the Fathers of Norwegian Lutheranism in America. Imbued with a zeal for the truth, they established congregations first, and then in order to bind their congregations together solidly, they established the Norwegian Synod in 1853. Their labors were not without hardships and difficulties, but the truth which they preached and fought for triumphed, and we today are reaping the results of their great work. By God's grace, the truth, after these 90 years, is still our precious and prized possession. We have every reason for observing the 90th Anniversary of the founding of our church in this country.

Our fathers founded the new Norwegian Synod on the solid basis of God's Word. But continued work and struggle was to be required to keep the church on that foundation. The church is never wholly at peace. Satan is constantly, and in devious ways attempting to inject false doctrine into the church; and it seems that the Norwegian Synod was a special target for the enemy's evil devices. The first great controversy was over the work and status of the lay-preachers. Then came the bitter debate over the question of Sunday and the Third Commandment. During the Civil War, the Slavery question became a burning question among Norwegian Lutherans. Later came the controversies concerning the doctrines of Absolution, and the Gospel and Justification. The last of the great doctrinal discussions concerned the doctrine of Election.

Through all these controversies, our fathers stood firmly on God's Word, unwilling to give way in the least particular where clear passages of Scripture made the doctrine under discussion clear. They held their position even in the eighties, when the opponents separated from them to form a new church body because of disagreement over the doctrine of Election. Those were trying times, but by God's grace they, our spiritual ancestors, left us in possession of the truth, and we have every reason to thank God now that these men and women held fast to the truths which we now prize so highly.

## 1918

An honest historian must tell the truth. And so we are obliged to record the fact that in 1917 most of our spiritual ancestors who had contended so nobly for the truth in the years past faltered, and gave way to a union which was founded on false doctrine.

A scattered fragment of pastors and congregations refused to join in that union. To them it was more important to retain the truth than to establish a large church body. Trusting in God for guidance and help, they re-organized the Norwegian Synod. That was 25 years ago. The 'little' Synod organized then has grown and flourished under God's grace. We have every reason to thank God now for the blessings which we have enjoyed as members of the re-organized Norwegian Synod.

## 1943

Our next annual Synod meeting, to be held at Bethany College, Mankato, Minn., next June, will be our Jubilee Convention. Three doctrinal essays have been planned for this convention. They are, "By Grace Alone," "By Faith Alone," and "By the Word Alone." The titles of those subjects are translations of the Latin phrases which have been the watchword and motto of true Lutheranism since the time of Luther. "*Sola Gratia, Sola Fidei, Sola Scriptura!*" The services and devotions of the Jubilee Convention will bear the ever-present thought of **thankfulness** to God for the blessings we have received.

Another important part of our Anniversary will be the publication of two small books which we hope to place in every home within the Synod. One of these books is to tell simply and briefly the story of these 90 years of the Norwegian Synod's history. The second book will tell the story of the doctrinal discussions that have been a part of our history, and will tell why the Word of God keeps us separate from the other branches of the Lutheran church with whom we are not in full agreement.

## *The Thankoffering*

One of the highlights of the Jubilee in 1943 will be the announcement of the results of the Jubilee Thankoffering which is being gathered now. Your pastor has already spoken to the voters of the congregation about the part we will play in bringing our thankoffering, but those remarks are being repeated here so that **all** the members of the Re-



deemer, Jerico, and Saude congregations may be informed.

In order to prepare the people of the Norwegian Synod for the thankoffering, a Jubilee Booklet has been prepared. The title of the booklet, "Thy People Shall be Willing," was chosen from the 110th Psalm. We believe that title is true of our people today; that is, that they will be willing to bring a real gift to God now in recognition and gratefulness for his infinitely greater gifts to us.

The booklet, "Thy People Shall Be Willing" is not a history of the Norwegian Synod, it is rather an accounting to the contributors of the Norwegian Synod designed to tell plainly and truthfully what has been done and what has been accomplished with the funds you have contributed during the last 25 years. It will also explain why we now have a debt.

That booklet is enclosed with this issue of the Assistant Pastor, and we hope you will read it carefully. We know that if you will do so there is no doubt that **you** will be "willing" to bring your thankoffering in the amount that is appropriate to your means.

The booklet offers the suggestion that you do not simply decide, on the spur of the moment, what amount you ought to give, but that you make this contribution truly proportionate to your means. How can you do that? Your attention is called to the fact that your government now expects persons of moderate means to buy War Bonds in the amount of ten per cent of their income. In the same spirit, and with the same desire to be fair, your church now suggests that you contribute to the thankoffering, not ten per cent of your income, but one fourth that amount, or two and one-half per cent of your year's income.

In other words, if your proportionate share of War Bonds is \$100.00, then your proportionate gift to the thankoffering would be \$25.00. Or if your proportionate purchase of War Bonds is \$400, then your proportionate gift to the thankoffering would be \$100.00.

Is it too much? Only you can answer that question, but it may help you to remember a few points. First, that in the Old Testament God demanded that the Israelites contribute ten per cent of their incomes to church work **every** year, and that Jubilee Thankofferings were in addition to that. Then you should also remember that in the last 25 years there has been only one real Synod-wide canvass for funds in addition to regular contributions before this. That was the solicitation that was made in connection with the purchase of Bethany College. The Norwegian Synod has had fewer such 'drives' than most other church bodies. Then ask yourself in all sincerity, whether you can afford to withhold from God what is His, whether you wish the blessings promised a cheerful giver to be withheld from you.

"Thy People Shall Be Willing!" Yes, we are sure the people of Saude, Jerico and New Hampton will be willing to bring a real thankoffering to God. We have been blessed even more than most of our sister congregations in the Synod. Most of them lost their property after the Merger of 1917, but

we kept our churches and parsonage, and our congregations remained intact. To God alone the glory Who has graciously kept the light of truth burning brightly among us these many years!

## AN IMPORTANT MATTER

By A. M. HARSTAD

Reprinted from the Lutheran Sentinel

One of the most important matters before us now in our Synod is the matter of paying our Synodical indebtedness. When you receive your Jubilee Booklet read it again and again. The indebtedness of the Synod is \$59,630.06, not counting certain items that are covered by security. The number of communicants in our Synod is 6,295. Our indebtedness being almost \$60,000.00, it means that an average contribution of about \$10.00 per communicant is needed in order to cover this indebtedness. When we hear this we are not to think that each one shall contribute \$10.00, and then think that he need not contribute any more even if he is able to do so. The fact is, not all communicants are able to contribute this much. The rest of us must make up for them. And what is more, we know that not all communicants will be reached with the plea, and hence not all will contribute. We have to face the reality that, hard as we may try, we will not reach the ideal, namely, that every member is a contributor. Those who are able will need to do much more than the average, and they will want to do so. They will not stop at \$10 when they could contribute \$100. And they will not stop at \$100 when they could make it \$500 or \$1,000.

The spirit in which the Lord wants us to give is this: that each one first give himself to the Lord, 2 Cor. 8, 5. That is the foundation for Christian giving. Giving, to be acceptable to the Lord, must be Christian giving. That means that the person himself be a Christian, realizing what Christ has done for him, appropriating it to himself by heartfelt trust in Christ's redemption, filled with thankfulness toward Christ. Then, the Spirit of God ruling us, we shall be willing of ourselves, as the Christians of Macedonia were, 2 Cor. 8, 3. It should not be so that we have to be coaxed and wheedled into giving. We will remember the word of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We will count it a privilege to be along in this work which is the most important work on earth—the spreading of the Gospel. We would not want it to be so that we were not asked to be along in this work. That would mean that God did not ask us to be along any more in doing His work.

To whom it is we must look for success in this undertaking of paying our Synodical indebtedness? To the Lord. We all should pray that He will give success to our efforts. And if we thus pray in this matter, we will also work and contribute.