

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR

1049 4th Ave. W. Owen Sound



50th Anniversary

1934 - 1984

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1000 1st Ave. S.W. - Over Sound

Rev. J. J. J. J. J.
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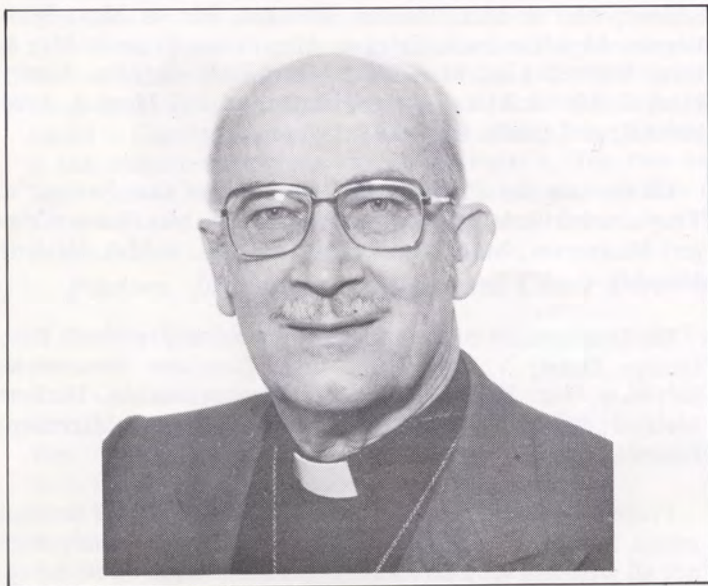
A Message From The Pastors

In the Book of Leviticus, every 50th year (the first year after 7 cycles of 7 years each) was designated as a Year of Jubilee. It was a year of new beginnings. Consequently, slaves were given freedom, poor people were to be given special assistance, accounts were to be reconciled and mortgaged land was to be returned. (Tenure of land was never permanent since it obviously belongs to God.) You can see how many people would be given a chance at a new start in life by such measures.

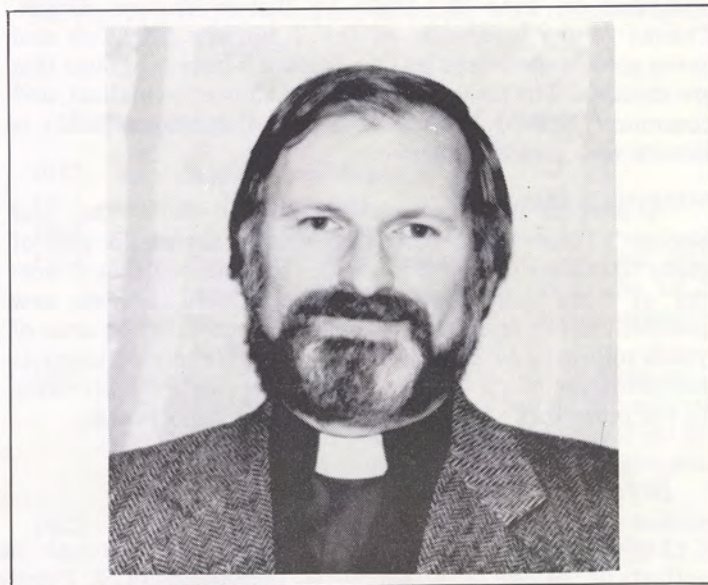
In the Jubilee Year at The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, we neglected to cancel debts and forgive mortgages. (We moderns know that property belongs to us and not to God, don't we!! We have our rights!) But we would do well to recognize that nothing in this life is permanent, that all we have and all we are has been loaned to us for our moment in history, and stewardship is a privilege, by the grace of God, not a whimsical choice, by the vanity of man.

There is a double "oughtness" as we celebrate 50 years of grace. We need to say a suitable, sincere "thank you" for all the blessings of the past. And we need to declare our commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to His Body, the Church, as we plan for the balance of our first century. Hopefully, the next 50 years will be kind to The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour and, through it, to us, as the last 50 have been.

We appreciate the fellowship of all who have helped us to express our gratitude for the past and our hope for the future.



The Rev. Henry Nuhn



The Rev. Lloyd G. Wiseman

THE HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOR

The Congregation To-Day

The members of Our Saviour's recognize the centrality of the Word and the Sacraments in the nourishment of the Church. We therefore stress the importance of Christian education and worship. With the help of the new Lutheran Book of Worship, the choirs, the lay assistants, the lectors, greeters, ushers and altar servers, the organist, the custodians, the worship sub-committee of the Parish Life Committee and the ladies who bake bread for the Lord's Supper, care for the altar, and do a variety of other works of love, much care and planning are invested in our worship together. The Services are a high priority with the pastors as well. We trust that members will not lightly by-pass these opportunities to enrich and express their faith. Prodded by the uncertainties of our times into digging deeper into the vast store-houses of God's Grace, and in obedience to the call of our Church for more frequent celebrations of the Eucharist, the congregation decided at its annual meeting in January, that it would make the Lord's Supper available to its people every Sunday beginning with Easter Sunday, 1984. In the area of Christian Education, classes from pre-school to adult are provided by the Sunday Church School under the guidance of Norma Nuhn, Superintendent. Catechetical classes for grades 8 and 9 are taught by the pastors. Training for altar servers and Early Communion classes are scheduled as needed.

The outreach of the congregation is significant. We can be proud of the services rendered through the Lutheran Nursing Home and the Seven Stars. It was instrumental in the development of Christ the King, Sauble Beach, Faith Lutheran Church, Port Elgin, and the Georgian Bay Lutheran Clustre (Lutheranch). In addition, the congregation had solidly supported Participation Lodge which celebrated Grand Opening on June 12, 1982, with the Dubrick Memorial Chapel and Involvement Centre, donated by Lutherans, dedicated on June 20, 1982, by Bishop William Huras. Thanks to the leadership of the Robinsons, the Cub and Scout groups sponsored by Our Saviour's have programs that are enviable. The pastors are active in Cluster, synodical, and community affairs. The sponsorship of a refugee family is history with pleasant memories.

A peak at the proverbial crystal ball shows that Our Saviour's future will require dedicated effort on the part of many to maintain present ministries in a manner that is worthy of those who name the name of Christ. Two new possibilities are interesting to ponder. One is in the area of youth ministry, an area where we are definitely deficient as identified again in a recent survey. A second is the provision of the other forms of residential care for older people.

Before the Beginning

Lutheran work began in Owen Sound in 1925 through the efforts of the Rev. J. L. Kirchofer, then pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Wiarton, a congregation organized in 1889. The Historical Review, published by St. Peter's for its

85th anniversary, states "the first official mentioning of a Lutheran group in Owen Sound was at the Church Council meeting on April 2, 1925."

After preliminary meetings earlier in 1925, an organizational meeting was held on October 18, 1925. A congregation, named "St. Paul's Lutheran Church", was organized and a church council elected. Twenty-one persons were present. In spite of the efforts of Pastor Kirchofer, who also organized a Sunday School and a Confirmation Class, and of his successor, Pastor E. Mangelson, the congregation floundered. The Minute Book of this group closes with a last meeting on June 22, 1928, and on this sad note "After considerable discussion in regards to the prospects of the Lutheran congregation in Owen Sound and in view of the decrease in membership, it was unanimously decided to discontinue and the pastor was instructed to notify officials to that effect".

Organizing a congregation is no small matter. Recognizing the need for a full-time effort, the Board of American Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America sent a man into the field. He was a new Seminary graduate, the Rev. George Durst, who began his work in Owen Sound in 1932. The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour was organized and chartered on Sunday, May 21, 1934.

At the Beginning

By charter Sunday (May 21, 1934), Pastor G. F. Durst had gathered together 36 confirmed members. They were: Miss Elizabeth Mink, Mr. & Mrs. John Mink, Miss Edna Mink, Mrs. Edward Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Theophiel Binkley, Mr. & Mrs. Nelson Kreutzkamp, Mr. & Mrs. James Halliday, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Brown, Miss Mildred Sprung, Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Mannerow, Miss Mitzi Dengel, Mr. Conrad Kessler, Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Metzger, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Legate, Miss Gertrude Crigger, Miss Irene Crigger, Mr. & Mrs. Wilfred Litt, Mrs. Wm. Clark, Mr. & Mrs. Henry Henkel, Mr. & Mrs. Edward Henkel, Adolf Henkel, Fred Henkel, and Luella Liebold.

Of the original 36, 6 are still members of Our Saviour's. They are: Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Mannerow, Mrs. Irene (Crigger) Mannerow, Mrs. Wm. Legate, and Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Metzger.

The first officers of the congregation were: President, Rev. George Durst; Vice-president, Mr. Theodore Mannerow; Secretary, Mr. Theophiel Binkley; Treasurer, Mr. Herbert Metzger; Benevolence treasurer, Mr. Nelson Kreutzkamp; Financial secretary, Mr. James Halliday.

Probably the charter members had reservations as to what would become of the fledgling congregation. Already then not all were active. Doubts surely came to mind when the offering plate yielded insufficient funds to pay the \$3.00 weekly rental. It is to be expected that having a "German Church"

image had its attendant public relations problems. (Owen Sound has a strong Anglo-Saxon background. Still today, in spite of all congregation's community involvements, there are some who wonder what sort of splinter group the Lutherans are.) In view of these humble beginnings, I wonder whether the charter members could have foreseen the maturity of the present congregation? And yet it is a truism that a 1000-mile walk has to begin with one step. Fortunately the group was now persuaded that there was a potential in Owen Sound and persevered.

Parish Relationship with St. Peter's Wiarton

In 1936, Our Saviour's was linked with St. Peter's, Wiarton, to form the Wiarton - Owen Sound Parish. A letter recorded in the minutes of St. Peter's reads as follows:

"The Board of American Missions of the U.L.C.A. and the Home Mission Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada are of the conviction that some of our missions now receiving support from the Board should be merged into a parish and thus contribute to the strength of each of the missions involved.

St. Peter's Wiarton, and Our Saviour's, Owen Sound, are geographically closely located, making it easy for one Pastor to serve both congregations and thus effect an economy for the whole Church."

The recommendation was approved by both congregations. The Rev. George Durst became pastor of the Wiarton - Owen Sound Parish and moved to the parsonage at Wiarton. From then until 1949, Our Saviour's was served by pastors resident in Wiarton. It was Dr. Willison who, in 1949, decided to move to Owen Sound to facilitate his enlarging responsibilities there.

This parish alignment was to last until 1970. As might be expected, the members of St. Peter's never liked not having a resident pastor. Against this background, both congregations, on August 3, 1969, approved the recommendations of the respective Church Councils that the parish relationship be terminated so that St. Peter's could proceed to secure a resident semi-retired pastor. Severance became effective on April 1, 1970. St. Peter's has since been served well by semi-retired Pastors Edgar Fischer and Bruno Ederma, and more recently, on a part-time basis, by Pastor Paul Schweitzer. As was stated in Our Saviour's Annual Report, 1969, "Our Saviour's is the daughter congregation of St. Peter's. The two have been teamed up for some 35 years. Surely each wishes the other well and we will co-operate where possible and desirable in the future".

Pastors, Interns, Organists and Choir Directors

Our Saviour's has been served almost continuously by 9 pastors:

Rev. George Frederick Durst, June 17/34 to June 30/41;
Rev. Martin John Stockman, Oct. 28/41 to Feb. 8/48;
Rev. Arthur Bernard Little (Supply pastor, Feb. to Sept./49;
Rev. Dr. Nils Willison, Nov. 1/49 to Aug. 31/52;
Rev. Wallace G. Minke, Sept. 1/52 to May 31/57;
Rev. Harry N. Lossing, Jan. 5/59 to Jan. 28/63;
Rev. Calvin G. Diegel, May 1/63 to July 31/67;
Rev. Paul A. Schweitzer, June 1/72 to July 15/76;
Rev. Henry Nuhn, July 1/77 to July 1/84;
Rev. Lloyd G. Wiseman, Nov. 15/67.

Nearly all of these men have given some of the best years of their lives to their ministry in this congregation. Hopefully Our Saviour's will some day soon begin to balance the account by giving a son or daughter for the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

In addition, 5 interns have served the congregation, mainly to facilitate the summer ministry at Sauble Beach. They were Karl Kappes, (June '65 to June 1, '66), Richard Holm, (June 1, '66 to Sept 1, '66), David Foreman, (Sept. 1, '66 to June 1, '67), Willis Ott, (June 1, '67 to Sept 1, '67), and Paul Schweitzer, (June 1, '68 to Sept. 1, '68).

Much is also expected of organists in a congregation that stresses music. Our Saviour's organists have been: Mrs. Theophiel Binkley, Mr. John Schuurkamp, Mrs. Marion Wunderlich, Mrs. Marie Weller, Mrs. Frieda Klie, Mr. William Scoffield, Miss Judy McConnell, Miss Ellen Brown, and incumbent, Mrs. Beth Tippin. Some of these organists were also choir directors. Other choir directors have been Miss Del Shade, Mr. Wm. Hill, Miss Sharon MacKenzie, and incumbent Mrs. Audrey MacKenzie.

Growth patterns are traced in the following statistics

<i>Year</i>	<i>Baptized</i>	<i>Confirmed members</i>	<i>Total expenditures</i>
1934	74	43	\$285.
1937	114	67	340.
1940	112	67	395.
1945	146	89	1,616.
1950	200	133	3,565.
1955	309	220	4,701.
1960	318	169	7,735.
1965	393	233	21,892.
1970	470	293	23,548.
1975	567	362	40,102.
1980	576	366	94,978.
1983	565	363	140,337.

NOTE: In 1977, 81 baptized members were transferred to Faith Lutheran Church, Port Elgin.

Steps along the way (Bits of History)

- 1932 - Rev. George Durst began work
- 1933 - Sunday School and Luther League organized.
- 1934 - congregation organized
- 1934 - choir organized. The congregation has had choirs continuously, indicative of its appreciation of the prominent place of music in the liturgical traditions of the Lutheran Church.
- 1935 - Altar Guild formed. Later known as Women of the Church and then as Lutheran Church Women, this group disbanded in 1969 so that ladies could do their work through the committees of the congregation. L.C.W. was re-organized in 1977.
- 1942 - Women's Christian Temperance Union building, previously rented, was purchased at a cost of \$2,200 with \$1,200 raised by time of purchase.

- 1949 - parsonage on 4th Ave. E. purchased for \$7,000. Dr. Nils Willison, first occupant.
- 1959 - monthly radio broadcasts of the Service on C.F.O.S. begun before 1950 (it is not clear from the minutes when they were begun) were discontinued because "fan" mail over the years indicated a limited audience and because of dissatisfaction with delayed rather than live broadcasts and fear of competition on T.V.
- 1961 - Service Book and Hymnal introduced. It was affectionately known as "the red book".
- 1963 - The Sheridan home (1049 4th Ave. W.) was purchased for \$35,000. and remodelled, for an additional \$4,000., by men of the congregation under the direction of Mr. Aaron Litt. 170 attended the first service in the new Parish Hall.
- 1963 - The old church was sold to the Christian Science congregation for \$15,000.
- 1963 - Conn organ, still in use, purchased.
- 1964 - The Pfeffer home (1069 4th Ave. W.) next door to the Parish Hall, was purchased for \$22,500. and became the new parsonage. The first occupants were the Diegel family. The former parsonage was sold.
- 1964 - with the spirited leadership of Pastor Diegel, a summer ministry was begun at Sauble Beach. Christ the King soon became self-sufficient. But congregational sponsorship helped by providing a legal entity to hold title to the property, by attracting Missions grants (made available only to organized congregations at the time), by providing volunteer help for repairs to the chapel, moving a small residence to the site and by making pastors available for Sunday service. Attendances at Christ the King have always been gratifying.
- 1964 - Cubs and Scouts organized. The 5th Owen Sound Troop having been blessed with excellent leadership, enjoys an excellent reputation. The congregation is proud to be the sponsor.
- 1965 - Fund raising for a new church, under the direction of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement, raised \$30,500. Groundbreaking took place on Sept. 12 and the date stone was laid on Dec. 17. The contractor was Fould's Construction. Karl Kruschen of Kitchener was the architect. Sigmund Zippel was the Building Committee chairman. Walter Mannerow and Pastor Diegel served as owner representatives. The cost of the new building was \$85,000., Lutheran Brotherhood assumed a \$50,000. mortgage at 6% per annum interest, to be amortized over a 40-year period.
- 1966 - On May 15, the new church was dedicated. The over-all attendance at the 3 Services of Celebration was 1,229. Pastor Diegel wrote in the Parish Register, "A glorious week of celebration ended, we turned to the future filled with confident hope that God will give us the wisdom to make full use of our facilities, to His honour and glory".
- 1968 - Keenage Club organized with Mrs. Mary Weppler as charter president. The Club outgrew our space and moved to Westside United Church in 1976.
- 1969 - The Seven Stars Thrift Shop opened. Staffed by volunteers, it first operated out of the upstairs of the fellowship hall. It then moved to a large garage on the Melbourne Place property. It is now located in a bright, spacious basement area of the new nursing home building.
- 1969 - Port Elgin Preaching Point established. For some 10 years, summer services had been held at Port to serve a large number of Lutheran vacationers in the area. Because of a growing number of resident Lutherans, a request for Our Saviour's to hold Services on a year-round basis was honoured and a preaching point was formed. On Sept. 5, '76, with installation of the Rev. Marvyn Dubrick, the preaching point became an Eastern Canada Synod mission -under -development. Our Saviour's gave its blessing and prayed for God's at a Service of Godspeed on Sept. 12, '76. When on Charter Sunday, May 22, '77, Faith Lutheran Church, Port Elgin, came into existence as an organized congregation, Our Saviour's was proud to transfer 81 baptized members to Faith.
- 1971 - On May 23rd, Melbourne Place Nursing Home was dedicated. When the Grey County Board of Education was planning to vacate its offices next door to the church, the Church Council authorized a feasibility study to examine the building's suitability for nursing home purposes. The building was purchased for \$51,000., remodelled and furnished for another \$50,000. and was ready to admit its first patient on May 11th, 1971. A licensed nursing home, it accomodated 29 patients.
- 1974 - 40th Anniversary of organization was celebrated with special Services and by the burning of 2nd mortgage on the church building. The congregation raised \$16,600. in 2 months in order to pay off the mortgage.
- 1976 - New addition to the fellowship hall was built at a cost to the congregation of \$20,000. for materials. Labour was paid by a federal government grant secured by the Montessori Nursery School. The addition provided for an enlarged fellowship hall, a new modern kitchen and doubling of the size of the upstairs classroom rented by the nursery school since 1974.
- 1977 - The parsonage was sold in Nov. for \$41,000. The proceeds were used to purchase G.I.C.'s. The interest helps pay for the pastors' housing allowances.
- 1979 - On March 3, the new Lutheran Book of Worship was dedicated. With the help of a well-planned introduction, the congregation had already learned to appreciate the joyous mood of its liturgies. It is affectionately known as "the green book".
- 1980 - The dedication and grand opening of the new Lutheran Nursing Home (formerly Melbourne Place) took place on Oct. 5th. The modern building, built by Graham Construction, cost \$420,000. It accomodates 30 residents in a safe comforable, spacious and cheerful environment. An infirmary, a medical exam. room and a whirlpool bathing system are among the services and conveniences we could not previously give.
- 1982 - In June, at a special celebration, the congregation marked the 40th anniversary of the ordination of Pastor Henry. Members, friends, and former parishes took advantage of the occasion to show their respect and affection for Pastor Henry and to give him a preretirement gift - a 1982 Honda. Pastor Henry's retirement takes place on July 1, 1984.

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- 1983 - The Dedication of the Mary Shipley Memorial Solarium, an addition to the Lutheran Nursing Home, took place in September.
- 1983 - In preparation for a joyous celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the congregation, "Project 50" was undertaken to provide capital funds of \$24,000. required for a variety of renovations and improvements, including a new roof on the church (2" blue styrofoam insulation, re-sheeting and asphalt shingling), a new garage for the storage of the tractor and other equipment, conversion of a storage area into a bright, new classroom known as "Luther Lounge", a pantry for the kitchen, a new sign, and a glass enclosure around the main entrance. At the time of writing, the campaign has just passed the \$17,000 mark. The hope of the Church Council is that the response will allow also the replacement of carpetting in the church and redecorating in the church and in the narthex.
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- 1984 -

The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, Owen Sound, cordially invites you to share in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the formation of the congregation. Special services will be as follows and you are invited to any or all of them. All are at 11:00 a.m.

- APRIL 29 - Former pastor, the Rev. George Durst, retired, will preach-Luncheon to follow.
- MAY 6 - Former pastor, the Rev. Calvin Diegel, now pastor of St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Brantford, will preach-Luncheon to follow
- MAY 13 - Former pastor, the Rev. Wallace Minke, retired will preach-Luncheon to follow
- MAY 20 - Former pastor, the Rev. Paul Schweitzer, now pastor of St. Peters, Wiarton will preach-Luncheon to follow
- MAY 27 - Bishop William Huras will preach. Anniversary Banquet - see details below. Bill Scoffield, former organist will play for a recital at 10:45 (come early!) and during the offertory and the postlude.

Anniversary Banquet

Sunday, May 27th at 1:30 p.m. (following service)
Bayshore Community Centre
Country style roast beef dinner catered by the Annan Ladies, Bishop Huras, Speaker
Greetings from church and civic leaders
ALSO celebration of Pastor Lloyd Wiseman's 25th Anniversary of ordination
COST \$10.00 per person

LUTHERANS IN GREY AND BRUCE COUNTIES

Lutheranism as a movement in the Christian Church is dated traditionally from October 31, 1517, the day Martin Luther posted 95 Theses or statements of Bible-centred faith on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, calling for renewal and reform in the church of that day. The term "Lutheran" first was applied in a derogatory way to the followers of the 16th. century reformer. Luther objected to the name. He wanted the identification only of "Evangelical" or "Christian" as expressive of his stance of faith. But the name "Lutheran" stuck - and it has for more than 450 years! It is one of the few branches of Christendom which has come to be identified with its leader, although the official designation of the churches bearing his name usually has the descriptive and substantive adjective "Evangelical". Lutherans were the first "Protestants" as the protestors came to be called following the Reformation, not so much in the sense of being "against" but of asserting faith positively and earnestly "for" the Evangelical position.

With Bible and hymn book and catechism packed among their belongings as they left the countries of northern Europe in hope of a better life, Lutherans formed an important tributary to the stream of immigrants which poured into the New World of North America.

The first Lutheran worship services in Canada were held during the winter of 1619 at Churchill on Hudson's Bay by the group of Danes under Captain Jens Munck and with Chaplain Rasmus Jensen. By royal appointment, Munck and 65 men, the majority of Lutheran faith, had set out in two ships in search of the North West Passage, arriving in the area of Port Churchill in early September 1619. Bitter cold and driving storms set in almost immediately and they were forced to spend the winter there, ill-prepared and experiencing unbelievable conditions of cold, starvation and scurvy. Christmas Day was celebrated with Holy Communion. In the opening months of 1620, death came to all but four survivors, including the Captain. On July 16 they sailed the smaller ship on the homeward journey, arriving in Norway on Sept. 25. A day-by-day diary, chronicling the experiences of that terrible winter, is on deposit at the University Library of Copenhagen. Thus, six years before the Jesuit priests arrived in Quebec and before the landing of the Pilgrim fathers, Lutheran Services were conducted and Holy Communion was administered by the Rev. Rasmus Jensen, whose body lies mingled with the soil at Port Churchill, commemorated by a monument or Cairn erected by the Canadian Historical Society in 1931.

The honour of being Canada's first Lutheran congregation, however, goes to St. George's of Halifax founded by German settlers who accompanied Lord Cornwallis as Halifax was founded in 1749. The church building, constructed in 1755 is shared with the Anglican church for the past 150 years. Not far away, in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia stands Zion Lutheran Church founded in 1772, the oldest continuing Lutheran congregation in Canada.

Lutherans in Canada increased in numbers substantially after the American revolutionary war, when large numbers of Americans of Palatinate German background immigrated to Canada, establishing congregations in Dundas County along the St. Lawrence River. The first services were conducted by lay readers. A frame church was built at Williamsburg in the spring of 1789. In the early days services were held in other parts of Dundas County in farm houses, schools and even barns. Samuel Schwertfeger became the first resident Pastor in 1791. He died in 1803. There followed a disruptive interim with lack of Lutheran leadership, but the staunchest Lutherans maintained their heritage until the arrival of Rev. Herman Hayunga in 1826. In 1984, Dundas County Lutherans are celebrating their Bicentennial.

In the years following the War of Independence, many Lutherans from the U.S., loyal to the crown, were given grants of land. The majority settled in the Maritime Provinces, on the shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, and, as mentioned, in Dundas County along the St. Lawrence. Pioneer churches include Maple (1806) and Unionville (1794). Not long after the arrival of the Loyalist German Lutherans, waves of immigrants poured into Ontario and by 1861 it was possible to organize the first Lutheran Synod. A little later, as the west was opened, large numbers of German, Scandinavian and Icelandic Lutherans were among the pioneers and founders of Western Canada.

It may be interesting to note that, although in a minority position in many parts of Canada and Ontario, Lutheranism with about 70,000,000 baptized members, forms the largest group among the Protestant bodies of the world. Only Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches claim more followers among Christian bodies. The Lutheran World Federation, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, reports church bodies and organizations in 80 countries. In Canada, Lutherans rank third in size among Protestant church groups. Members of the United and Anglican churches occupy the top spots. The total number of baptized Lutherans in Canada exceeds 300,000 while in North America it approximates 9,000,000.

Lutheran congregations exist in only 4 of the 16 townships of Grey County, Sullivan, Holland, Bentinck and Normanby, and in Owen Sound. These constitute the western townships of South West Grey. However, our Lutheran history is concurrent and interwoven with the south eastern townships of Bruce County, especially Carrick, Brant and to some extent Elderslie, with a more northerly congregation at Wiarton and a more recently organized congregation at Port Elgin. These townships and congregations constitute a rather narrow corridor along the Grey-Bruce dividing line. The accompanying map indicates this, listing all of the Lutheran congregations' locations, names, and year of organization. A more complete map showing the boundaries of the two counties on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay would make this narrow corridor of Lutheranism more vivid and in fuller county perspective.

My own roots are in the Nuhn, Maes and Roeder families of Normanby Township in or near Ayton, and in the Keady area of Sullivan Township where my paternal grandmother, Wilhelmine Kuhl, came from the forebearers of the presently numerous Kuhl clan.

The historical summary which now follows is intended to provide general information and observations, rather than to deal with any of the specifics of the organizations of all of the churches. My resources are the following, primarily, either for basic information or interesting quotes. (1) A HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA, Vol. 1. by Carl R. Cronmiller, prepared at the time of the Centennial of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada in 1961. (2) Photo-copy excerpts from "Grace and Blessings" by Dr. Frank Malinsky of the Ontario District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, on the occasion of that District's 75th. Anniversary in 1954. (3) The JUBILAEUMS BUCHLEIN (in German) published in 1911 to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada - a veritable treasure trove of text and photographs, a rare volume in my library which I treasure greatly. (4) Memorial booklets of various congregations as they celebrated Centennial or other anniversaries.

Settlement of the north-west area of Ontario (Upper Canada) became possible when the Canada Company, formed by John Galt in 1824, acquired a compact area of 1,000,000 acres near Lake Huron, known as the Huron Tract. Immediately, this company began to bring in settlers to whom they sold the land. Dr. Malinsky's book provides this most interesting historical background information.

"When surveyors of the Canada Company laid out townships on both sides of the Huron Road west of Stratford and ran a line dividing the Huron Tract from the enormous blank space to the north, they referred to it as "Indian Lands". The fact is that, with very few exceptions, the foot of the white man had not trodden upon this vast territory known later as the "Queen's Bush." It extended roughly in a square from Listowel north to Meaford, thence westward to Sauble Beach, south to Kincardine and back to Listowel. This tract was ceded to the Crown by the Indians, in 1836, in a treaty with the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head.

"To make the Queen's Bush accessible to settlers as well as to explorers, traders, missionaries (also to surveyors and to land agents), roads were built by the government: First, the Garafraxa Road from Fergus to Owen Sound, then the Durham Road, from east to west, and crossing the Garafraxa at Durham. Over these roads - primitive in 1850 but paved highways now - came the settlers of the Queen's Bush, among them a large number of German Lutherans. The Land Office for them was located at Durham. Lutherans in Howick, Normanby, Carrick, Brant and Sullivan Townships came about 1850. At a later date, Lutherans came by way of the Elora Road, too."

The following quotation is very interesting: "The Land Office was located in Durham. On making application there for land, the settler received a 'Location Ticket' after first giving his name, age, condition, trade or profession, whether married or single, and if married, the name of his wife, the number of children, and their names and ages, where he was from and the township in which he wished to settle, also a certificate of good character from a clergyman. On receiving his 'location ticket' it was required that the settler take possession of his lot within thirty days after the 'ticket' was issued, put in a state of cultivation at least twelve acres of land within four years, build a house at least 18 feet x 24 feet, reside on the lot until all conditions of settlement were fulfilled, when he would receive a title to the property issued by the Crown."

Dr. Cronmiller's book provides further general information (p. 144) "In the counties of Huron, Perth and Bruce, as well as into neighbouring counties, a few Lutheran settlers had taken up homesteads by the middle of the 19th. century, and were followed by others of the same faith in the early 50's. Protestants from Mecklenburg and North Germany settled in the easterly part of Brant township, Bruce county. In the same county, in the township of Carrick, a large group from Germany and Alsace settled in the vicinity of Formosa 1853-54. Many were Roman Catholics but a fair percentage were Lutheran. About the same time, Lutheran settlements were made in Normanby, primarily in the western and south-western parts of the township. Sullivan township also received an influx of Lutheran settlers in the early 1850's."

To become somewhat more specific, we note that soon after the opening up of the Queen's Bush by the construction of the Garafraxa and the Durham roads, a goodly number of German Lutheran settlers began to drift into Normanby township via Durham where the land office was located. In the neighbourhood of Lauterbach (south west corner near Clifford) they felled the trees and cleared land for cultivation. These pioneers were not only bent upon eking out an existence or providing for the body; they gave serious thought also to the minds and souls of themselves and their children. Their strong Lutheran consciousness was a big factor in their heroic enterprise. They brought their Bibles, hymn books and catechisms, resolved to establish their new homes in the name and fear of God. Of equal importance to clearing the land and building homes and barns, was the desire for a House of God and a place of worship for themselves and their children. Soon after their arrival in 1850, they erected their own private school, engaged a German teacher and began the education of their children.

The desire for spiritual guidance from the Word of God caused them to seek a Pastor. After a number of "itinerate preachers" - some of very doubtful qualifications - had imposed upon them, they agreed to form a congregation. The first Pastor called was F. W. Wunderlich of Waterloo who began in the fall of 1858 and organized the congregation. Divine services were held in the school. After 6 years, he was succeeded by Rev. Christian Behrens, who at the time was Pastor of St. Paul's

Normanby, about 4 miles north. The first church, a modest frame chapel, was dedicated during his pastorate in 1865, and known as St. James', Normanby. Pastor Behren's pastorate ended with his death within 3 years. The congregation has the distinction of being the oldest of the Lutheran churches of Grey and Bruce. Regrettably, during the next pastorate, that of F. Ehinger, who also served both St. James' and St. Paul's, a sad page in the history of the congregation was written. A storm broke loose concerning the deed of the church property; all attempts at reconciliation failed and the congregation split. The majority retained possession of the church but shifted it several feet farther north, on a technicality of law, while the minority erected a new church, also St. James', just a short distance away. Eventually, the original congregation became a member of the Missouri Synod, while the second St. James', organized in 1864, has continued in a parish arrangement with St. Paul's to the present day. During Ehinger's pastorate at St. James' and St. Paul's, and also at St. Johns' in Carrick, Zion congregation in Ayton (1868) and St. Peter's in Neustadt (1869) were organized.

Reference has already been made to St. Paul's, Normanby and to its Pastor, Christian Behrens. Without stretching the truth, it may be said that this congregation was a kind of mother church, and its Pastor, Behrens, the patriarch or father of Lutheranism in Grey County and in Brant and Carrick Townships of Bruce County.

The beginnings of St. Paul's, Normanby, on the 12th. Concession south of Neustadt, date back to 1859, when the Lutheran people of the district petitioned the more southern churches for a Pastor who would nourish their spiritual appetites as they themselves attacked the virgin forests, hewed logs into timber for houses and barns, planted their precious seeds and established themselves as "men of the soil". A Pastor was sent in the person of Charles Rechenberg, who conducted the first service of worship on Sept. 25, 1859, and organized St. Paul's congregation with 37 members, most of them heads of families. It is recorded that the offering received at the first service was \$1.15 - a mere pittance today, but undoubtedly involving many sacrificial "mites" of those pioneer days.

The first resident Pastor was Christian Behrens, who served the congregation from Nov. 1861 to Sept. 1868. Behrens was born in Hanover, Germany, in 1817. He attended the University of Berlin and was prepared for foreign mission work in the Gossner Mission. For 11 years, he served as a medical missionary in India. The Sepoy rebellion forced him to flee from India and, in doing so, he suffered an injury from which he never fully recovered. Upon his return to Germany, he was commissioned for work in Canada, beginning his labours in the Normanby-Carrick area. He proved to be a zealous missionary, travelling from place to place on horseback. He carried his Bible and a medical case, for he was not only the first resident Pastor, but also the first medical doctor in the district. Often, when he returned from his extended trips, he would find many sick folk waiting for him at the log cabin of Jacob Weber where he first made his home. Besides serving St. Paul's, Normanby and being the area doctor, he served St. John's Carrick, St. Peter's in Brant, and he organized St. James', Normanby in 1864, St. Peter's in Sullivan in 1865 and also served the Lutherans in Hanover. His large parish of 662 souls in six congregations, necessitated many miles of travel over poor roads. The large parish was divided in 1867, but he continued to serve in Normanby and Carrick until his death on Oct. 14, 1868. The esteem in which he was held was manifested by the attendance of over 1000 people at his funeral, this at a time before telegraph or telephone could give immediate announcement. In 1937, a cairn, situated in front of St. Paul's church, Normanby, directly across from the cemetery where he was buried, was erected to his memory.

A multitude of names inscribed on the pages of history could be referred to at this point, but these are beyond the scope of this presentation. One among the many who served congregations in Grey and Bruce was the Rev. Ernest Neuduerffer who served a Lutheran congregation at Santa Leopoldina in Brazil. In 1887, he accepted a Call to the Normanby-Carrick Parish where he laboured for 28 years. His last 5 years of active service were as Pastor of St. John's, Ayton, which he had organized in 1890. I was one of the last to be baptized prior to his retirement, and my Baptismal certificate bears his signature. He died in Moorsetown, N.J. in 1936 at the age of 87. Two of his sons, Ernest and August, served for many years at Rajahmundry, on the India Mission Field. The son of August Neuduerffer, Frederick, was a classmate at college and Seminary in Waterloo, and a fellow ordinand on June 7 in 1942. He has continued the missionary traditions of his family by serving as Mission Secretary first for India and then for Malaysia up to the present.

Congregations were organized in Hanover, First St. Matthew's in 1862 and St. Matthews in 1873. There were some of the ramifications of membership in various Lutheran Synods which I cannot detail, but prominent among the Pastoral names of the two congregations are Mackensen, Denef, Kuder and Tweitmeyer.

In 1858 and 59 a number of families from West Prussia and Muhlenberg, who had previously resided near Preston, Ontario, came to Sullivan Township. One of the leaders, John Mannerow, sent a letter to Rev. Wurster in Preston, asking to be supplied with a Lutheran Pastor. In the spring of 1862, Christian Behrens of Normanby township came on horseback to conduct the first Lutheran service at the home of Ernest Leuben. He served them until 1865, in which year the congregation was organized and a log church was built. The present stone edifice, 3 miles south of Desboro, was erected in 1881. The congregation celebrated a century of faith in the restored church in 1981. A daughter congregation of St. Peter's in Sullivan, St. James' in Williamsford, was organized in 1888. A church was erected and the congregation has been served by Pastors residing in Desboro. A second congregation, St. John's in Desboro, was organized in 1900. It had a daughter congregation, organized in 1921 as St. Paul's, in Marmion. It had been meeting since 1925 in the former Sharon Methodist church, left vacant after church union had been effected. The congregation was recently merged with St. John's.

A brief summary of the historical roots of other Grey-Bruce congregations (detailed descriptions of which are beyond the scope of this article) includes the following as gleaned from Dr. Carl Cronmiller's history.

St. Peter's, Neustadt, was founded in 1869 by Pastor Ehinger. The congregation split in 1870, resulting in the existence of St. Peter's and St. Paul's down to the present, with various Synodical relationships, but both currently Eastern Canada Synod.

Settlers of Lutheran and Reformed faith decided to organize St. John's church in Elmwood in 1884. A first church was built in 1885-86. Christian Spring was the first Pastor in 1886. The present church was dedicated in 1936. For much of its history it has formed a Parish with St. Peter's, Brant.

Trinity, Walkerton, was organized in early 1880, earlier services having been conducted by J. Lautenschlager. After services had been conducted in various places for 5 years, a church was erected in 1885. It continued, with enlargements, until 1982, when the present fine edifice was dedicated. St. Matthew's, Mildmay, a sister congregation was organized in 1889 and a church building was erected in 1890. For many years, it formed a Parish with Trinity, Walkerton, but, in more recent years, the Mildmay Pastor has also served St. Paul's, Neustadt.

St. Mark's, Chesley, was founded in 1892, with seven families. Pastor U. Berner, from Brant and Elmwood, was the organizer. It was an integral part of the Brant-Elmwood Parish for years until 1919, after which there was a relationship with a group of Port Elgin Lutherans. The Rev. C.C.J. Maass was first resident Pastor, serving from 1919 to 1928. The present church was built and dedicated in 1937 during the Pastorate of Rev. Harry Baetz.

The first services in Wiarton were held in 1887 by Pastors Neudoerffer and Veit. St. Peter's was organized in 1889 by Pastor Herman Tweitmeyer who served there until 1893, and then at St. Matthew's, Hanover, for 34 years beginning in 1896. Our Saviour's in Owen Sound was organized in 1934 with a charter membership mostly of Lutherans who, having come from various Grey-Bruce congregations, had settled in Owen Sound. George Durst was the first Pastor. For a number of years, Wiarton and Owen Sound were combined in one Parish. Renewal of year-round work in Port Elgin was begun from Owen Sound, in 1969, as a preaching point served by Pastors Paul Schweitzer and Lloyd Wiseman. Faith Lutheran Church was organized in 1977 and Rev. William Shafer was called as the first resident Pastor. A fine new church was dedicated on May 1, 1983, after years of services in the Anglican church.

(The major content of this article was presented as a paper at the 11th Annual Church Service of the Grey County Historical Society at the pioneer Leith United Church on June 19, 1983.)

- Pastor Henry Nuhn



The Rev. George F. Durst



The Rev. Martin J. Stockman

THE LUTHERAN CHURCHES
OF GREY-BRUCE

To Wiarton
+ St. Peter 1889

OWEN SOUND
Our Saviour's 1934

To Port Elgin Faith 1977

ARRAN
ELDERSLIE

BRUCE COUNTY

GREY COUNTY

DERBY
SULLIVAN

SYDENHAM
HOLLAND

Marmion
+ St. Paul
1921

+ Desboro
St. John 1900
+ St. Peter 1865

Chatsworth

Williamsford
St. James 1885

St. Mark 1892
Chesley

BRANT

BENTINCK

GLENELG

Garafraxa Road

Elmwood
St. John 1886

St. Peter 1877

St. Peter 1868

Walkerton

Hanover

Durham Road

Durham

Trinity 1880

First St. Matthew 1862
St. Matthew 1873

CARRICK

NORMANBY

EGREMONT

St. John 1859

+ St. Peter 1869

Neustadt
+ St. Paul 1870

St. Paul 1859

Mildmay
+ St. Matthew 1889

Ayton
Trinity 1950
(St. John 1890
Zion, 1868)

Lauderbach
St. James 1858
St. James 1864

To Mt. Forest

RECOLLECTIONS

"A very small devoted group of people who, in the midst of a deep depression, made the foundation of the congregation a possibility."

That's how Pastor Durst recalls our founding fathers - those few dedicated Lutherans who were our charter members.

Only they can tell us about it: Norma and Herb (Papa) Metzger, Ted and Lizzie Mannerow, Irene Mannerow and Minerva Legate.

Along with Pastors Durst, Diegel and Minke, they searched the back roads of their memories to help us capture a glimpse of those early years. This is how the story is told.

It's like a coin with hard times on one side and warm and loving fellowship on the other.

"Pastor Durst, how he ever survived I don't know."

"The organist got 35 cents a Sunday and the church rent was \$3.50. If we were lucky we got that. I had to fill in sometimes."

"We'd count the money right there (after church) and hand it out wherever it had to go. If there wasn't enough you got more out of your pockets."

"When Bernice was Christened I paid (collection) in the morning. Then when we went back at night I put in 50 cents. On the way out the usher gave it back. He knew I already paid once that day."

Once, on the occasion of a special gift:

"I knew if I put in my whole \$3.00 it'd be as much as all the rest gave together."

The other side of the coin was much more brilliant.

"We were just like a big family."

"When there was a picnic I'd make it a point to call everybody and they'd be out."

"A winter never went by that we didn't go tobogganing and snowshoeing and at Halloween I'd wear my Christie."

"The ladies would do quilting. One time the pastor came to call and stayed all afternoon eating buns."

"It was about the first place we ever took our children. We enjoyed each other's company very much. Everybody shared - things were tough - everybody pitched in."

"If we had a picnic or a pot luck everybody'd go. You had to or it wouldn't have been worthwhile."

"If someone was away you sure knew who it was."

Even the new member who was just learning English enjoyed the fellowship of the congregation. She had learned enough words from her neighbours at the firehall to compliment the social committee:

"I had a Helluva time here."

Fixing up seemed to be as much a part of congregational life as worship and social gatherings.

"There was a job for everybody."

“(We) remember with thanksgiving the thousands of hours of work Walter Mannerow gave to the congregation.”

“I never saw Walter. I’d phone the church. Sure enough they’d say, ‘Walter is under the sink.’ I’d say, ‘Tell him to come home right now’.”

“Those pigeons left enough manure in the belfry to plant a garden. We had to get rid of that so we got up there with a B.B. gun and a flashlight. We had quite a time getting rid of those pigeons.”

“The two council vacancies were filled by the first two I asked.”

When the pastor wasn’t there:

“I had to read quite a few sermons - ‘Do as he tells us, not as he does,’ eh.”

“When we put the new roof on - those old boards were two feet wide and two inches thick. You could look up and see the sun shining through but it never rained much. I got out of the hospital and got up on that roof.”

“I spent a lot of time around there. Anyhow it didn’t hurt me.”

Of course everyone tried hard to ensure that the very best effort was put into providing a suitable atmosphere for worship - especially the organist.

“I’m not sure where we got that old organ. Some other church probably didn’t want it.”

“The noise of the organ pumping was louder than the music. So Ted and Walter put a vacuum cleaner motor in the back to stop the pumping.”

“One Sunday a piece came off that organ. So the organist, I can’t just remember his name, he just stopped playing and held it up in the air.”

“Well, it was an old thing to begin with. Half the time it was out of tune.”

“My second most vivid memory is the wedding scheduled one Saturday in December, on the day of the Santa Clause parade in town. At the rehearsal the evening before I had pointed out to the guest organist that we had an electric blower for the 2-bank reed organ. She said she preferred to pedal with her feet so she could control the volume better. The bride lived on the east hill and she and her party were stopped by 2nd Avenue East being blocked off for the parade.

With the church full of guests, the organist nobly pumped the organ with her feet for a full hour until the bride and her party could get across to the church. After the ceremony, the organist said to me she didn’t know if she could get off the little round stool, or stand, or walk. I said, ‘Why didn’t you turn the blower on?’

‘I never thought of it,’ was her reply.”

“Ted still has the old fan off that organ.”

While the organist was struggling to be heard above the noise of fans and pumping, the congregation squirmed in the straight backed ice cream parlor chairs.

"They were very wiggly if you didn't sit straight."

"Dusting chairs and moving lumber and, of course it was Lent, and sure enough, we didn't dust enough."

It wasn't long before the noisy, wobbly chairs went the way of the pigeons and pews were put in.

"Everybody bought one of those chairs for 25 cents."

"Walter got the ones that were left - a whole truck load - fixed them with new seats and sold them for \$10."

The furnishings presented their own peculiar set of difficulties for our first pastors.

"Every time he came he had to bring an egg crate to stand on."

"Everybody said that the pulpit was much too big for the church. Maybe we got a bargain on it. We didn't look gift horses in the mouth."

"I remember one who had to stand on a stool."

There was a loyalty and a steadfastness about the members of that first congregation that poverty, circumstances and foul weather could not sway.

"Once there was such a blizzard during Lent there was only Ted, Mr. Brown and me."

"Customs - can you think of any that aren't different now. I don't go in for all this stuff but I'm not going to quit church over it like some do."

That's right Papa. What could be more beautiful than Christmas trees aglow in the gentle light of real candles?

Throughout the glimpses, the recollections into days gone by, the fondest, most dear memories came from the people recalling their pastors and the pastors remembering their people.

"A pastor had to have a big heart and a lot of patience to go ahead Sunday after Sunday with only 5 or 6 people."

"One time the pastor landed in at Wiarton at night and had to sleep on the bench."

"I'll never forget that morning. We were all there. Pastor Durst's mother was killed coming up to hear him preach."

"We never seemed to get enough collection to pay the minister."

"When he left we bought him a couch. It cost \$75."

And as the pastors look back:

"My first impression on arriving in the parish was seeing the parsonage...and wondering how a family of 6 was going to fit."

"Perhaps you have never been in the parsonage on Fourth Avenue East. It certainly was not the greatest and did not come near the picture that had been painted for us."

"...to remember a few of the good things. On the first night in Owen Sound a council meeting where they told me they were building a new church and invited me to look at the lot."

"Remembering so fondly the parsonage on Fourth Avenue West."

"My ministry there was one of the happiest periods of my life."

Some day, perhaps we too will look back and, God willing, a pastor will say of us.

"QUITE A FEW OF MY CO-WORKERS ARE NOW IN THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN HEAVEN. I AM HAPPY TO HAVE KNOWN THEM. WHILE ON EARTH, THEY MADE MY LIFE MUCH RICHER. CORDIALLY, GEORGE."

- Sue Carruthers

HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN NURSING HOME



MELBOURNE PLACE
May 10th, 1971 - April 29th, 1980



LUTHERAN NURSING HOME
April 29th, 1980

In the summer of 1970, the Lutheran Church of Our Saviour learned that its next door neighbour, the Grey County Board of Education was vacating and selling its office building at 370 10th Street West. The Church Council agreed to a feasibility study to determine whether a nursing home operation would be viable. The advice of Health officials, fire prevention officers, accountants, plumbers and electricians, together with Pastor Lloyd's previous experience with the planning of a home for the elderly, indicated that it was indeed viable. It took some gentle persuasion, but the congregation approved the offer-to-purchase at a meeting on May 10th, 1970. Ours was the only legal tender the Board received. Moving the Board Officers out of Owen Sound was a political "hot potato" at the time. To sell the property too cheaply would have fanned the flames. It therefore took several months of hard decision-making and a slight increase (from \$49,000. to \$51,000.) to win acceptance of our offer.

Ted Urstadt Construction was engaged on a time-and-material basis to do the renovations as required by the regulations of the Nursing Homes Act and to make the building functional as a licensed 29-bed nursing home. With the help of considerable volunteer effort (John Guse, for example, worked several months free of charge and Louise Miller did nearly all the prime coat painting), the renovation costs, including the nurse call and fire detection systems, were kept to a modest \$50,000. The first patient was admitted on May 10th, 1971. The Dedication and Open House took place on Sunday, May 23rd, 1971. The Home, assuming again its historical name of Melbourne Place after its original owner, Melbourne Kilbourn, was filled to capacity within two months. All this took place in the "nick of time", for just then the Ministry of Health announced a freeze on nursing home beds, a freeze that has experienced only a few mild spells across the Province over the decade.

The old building provided a homey atmosphere that the patients liked and, at first, were reluctant to leave. However, with the Ontario Extended Care Program of 1972, came more and more heavy duty nursing care for the Nursing Homes while ambulatory, more independant residents, were directed into homes for the aged, rest homes and lodges, and rightly so. In 1971, nearly all our 2nd floor residents could come downstairs unassisted. At the end, only 3 or 4 were able to do so.

The Management Committee looked at an addition that would give us either an elevator or enough ground floor space to accommodate 29 patients. The costs were prohibitive in view of the grand old age (130 years) of the building.

The decision to build a new home was approved by the congregation at a meeting on September 18th, 1979. Careful planning and good weather allowed the contractor opportunity to have the new building closed in before winter set in. In a design-build arrangement, Clarence Graham Construction provided a functional, well-built, aesthetically pleasing building within dollars of the budget of \$420,000. including landscaping, some new equipment and demolition of the old building.

The new Home has 4 wards, 3 semi-private rooms and 7 private rooms. The dinning room, parlour and sitting room are far more spacious than in the old building. An infirmary, a whirlpool bathing system and a medical examination room provide conveniences and services we could not previously give. The patients have come to enjoy their comfortable and pleasant home.

The new building also houses, in a spacious basement area, the Seven Stars, a thrift shop operated by the ladies of the congregation. The Seven Stars, for 8 years, had occupied the brick, two-car garage that had to be demolished to make way for the new building.

The designer, Barry Mellish, puzzled long hours over how to place the new building on the property so as not to interfere with the operation of the old building during construction and so as not to lose the trees. He succeeded. We lost one tree, a stately pine that became the board fence for the enclosure at the west end.

With the help of a Canada-Ontario Employment Development grant and a generous memorial donation, an addition known as the Mary Shipley Memorial Solarium, was constructed in the summer of 1983. Windowed on 2 sides, it is a bright and cheerful room that provides space for indoor gardening, baking, crafts, reading, entertaining guests, and so on.

Thus far, we have had the sacred trust of the care of 165 residents, nearly all for the latter part of their earthly lives. We do not take lightly the trust and confidence that is placed in us by our residents, their families, the community and the medical profession.

As the congregation celebrates its 50th anniversary, its members may rightly feel satisfied that it is helping to provide a genuine, loving service to its community, its part of the world God loved so much that He gave Him only Son.

THE SEVEN STARS

A Story of Love

(A re-print of an article in the Aug.-Sept., 1982, edition of The Canada Lutheran.)

OWEN SOUND, Ont. — For two years the Seven Stars meant nothing more to me than a meeting date that appeared in the Sunday bulletin from time to time.

One day at a committee meeting I asked, "What's the Seven Stars, anyway?" — It's a group of ladies who take used items and repair them for resale. They have a little shop over in the garage beside the nursing home, I was told. What a funny name, I thought to myself.

After that, from time to time, I sent my husband with a box of things from our house to drop off at the old garage on his way to work.

One day I was putting up posters for another project and someone suggested I put one up at the Seven Stars. It was to be my first visit. I opened the old, awkwardly fitting door and stepped from the bright afternoon sunshine into the darkness of an artificially lit garage.

And there she was - Louisa - sewing patches together to make a quilt because a family was using the father's overcoat to keep the children warm at night. She was toiling away on an old beat up sewing machine - gloves on - cold - damp - a space heater blasting away beside her. All around great mounds of things, clothes mostly, were piled in neat bundles. Shelves were stacked and labeled, shoes lined up against the wall and racks just bursting with hangers. So this is Seven Stars? I asked - but I couldn't wait to get out.

Time passed and I was asked if I had a free afternoon a month to work at the Seven Stars. I don't know what to do? You will have a helper. So I agreed.

Prepared for the dingy, cold dampness - I entered again. But "someone" had insulated - hung new lights, put old matting on the cement floor - added a window - made more shelves. "Someone had also cleaned up the attached shed and hung a curtain between it and the shop. This was now the sewing, repairing and storage area - still very chilly, but, oh so very organized.

I wondered, who is the Seven Stars?

The pity I felt for my first customers made me embarrassed and uncomfortable. I watched while mothers with tiny babes looked for something warm and practical and young girls - probably high school-age - looked for something that wasn't too out of date or matronly. It was hard to take even their quarters and dimes. Instead I wanted to say, "Help yourself!"

Then Mary called to say a family was on the way with three children. She told me their ages and asked me to start looking for things they could use. They have practically nothing, she said, and were not to be charged. If they specifically needed anything I could not find for them in the shop I was to write it down and Mary would see that they got a voucher to buy it at

a store downtown. I began busily collecting together all sorts of stuff - nervous about what I would say.

They were such a nice family - noisy, happy, mischievous kids - just like mine. The parents were shy, almost apologetic and of course, I felt so inadequate - offering only the bundle that I had collected together. I wished I could have given the father a job and the mother a nice sunny kitchen like mine with cupboards full of groceries and then taken them all to a movie.

I went home with a thankful heart and a contented soul. I told my family about the one I'd met that afternoon. My children knew the boy from school - all the kids call him FLEABAGS, they said. I was horrified and heartsick - remembering the sad and tired look on that father's face and the quiet gratitude of the mother.

These people lived in my town and, like Seven Stars, until that day, had been strangers to me.

As the weeks went by I began to recognize familiar faces - the regulars and they recognized me. We were almost friends except for the wall that made me thankful I was not them and made them long to be me.

Let me tell you about the Seven Stars.

Mary Golem is the backbone. A retired public health nurse, Mary is keenly aware of the struggles and needs of many of the families who "shop" at Seven Stars. She has a desk set apart in a quiet corner where she offers counselling and aid. She helps people work out budgets and issues vouchers and sometimes \$10. or \$20. cash to help out in emergencies.

For almost a year she has been buying drugs for a family with two celiac children. She taught one mother how to feed five on \$40. a week - checked her cupboards, took her shopping and showed her how to make a pot of homemade soup.

In her quiet corner Mary has listened to people who were too intimidated by social workers to benefit from agencies. She believed the woman who said her purse was stolen and the man who said he'd pay her back (and he did).

Last year treasurer, Elaine Ruhl, banked \$8,167 and Seven Stars gave away \$7,661. - mostly in food vouchers. But the aid takes on any form from buying sheets for a man coming out of a halfway house to paying bus fare for a mother to visit her child at the Hospital For Sick Children.

Minerva Legate, who has worked at Seven Stars every Wednesday for two years says it's the best day of the week for her.

I like to see a mother who only has 75 cents buy something for her children. I like to help her hunt it out...and see every child gets something even if it's free," she said, "one woman went out with tears in her eyes."

All the ladies who've worked at Seven Stars have, themselves, gone home richer.

Here is Mary's story:

The idea for Seven Stars came from Pastor Lloyd (Wiseman). Through a Public Health nurse, who operated a relief centre from her garage, he became aware of a need for inexpensive clothing by disadvantaged people in our community.

The name was his idea, too. It resulted from a meeting at which seven interested church members attended. (Also, "Stars", in a light vein, has a romantic association; more seriously, stars are symbols of hope. And "Seven" is a biblical number for wholeness. "The Seven Stars", therefore,

bears no hint or suggestion of judgment. As a by-product, it is the cause of some levity whenever people confuse it with "Five Stars", a brand of fire-water. That was about a dozen years ago.

The earliest beginning of Seven Stars took place in the Sunday School room upstairs and the clothing had to be brought out and put away in a closet each week. When we acquired the Melbourne Place (nursing home) property, Seven Stars was moved into the garage on that property.

The early staff members were Margo Woerrlein, Beth Klages, Louisa Miller and Betty Lee. Louisa and her husband, Percy, carried on for several years, often without any assistance. The building was uninsulated, hot in the summer and cold in the winter, but in spite of the uncomfortable quarters, they laid the groundwork for much more than a used clothing centre.

The Christian love and caring which Louisa and Percy extended to their customers in that cold drab garage inspired several women of the congregation to carry on when Louisa's health failed. Louisa and Percy truly put into action the words of Christ, himself, when He said, "In as much as you have done it unto the least of these Brethren, you have done it also unto me."

On January 3, 1977, the Seven Stars Committee met for the first time to assist Louisa in her labour of love. The members were Louisa Miller, Elaine Ruhl, Betty Lee, Sally Vanwyck and Mary Golem.

The purpose of the Seven Stars was defined as, "The helping of needy persons and families in our community to procure clothing, and to do any other charitable activity which would be brought to the attention of and approved by the committee."

In May 1977, Louisa was unable to carry on and the Stewardship and Outreach Committee referred the responsibility of the Seven Stars to the Lutheran Church Women. On May 30, 1977, nine members of the LCW met to consider the fate of the Seven Stars. They were Sally Vanwyck, Ruth Tuck, Donna Campbell, Jean Johnstone, Ollie Schoenhals, Elaine Ruhl, Mildred Smith, Mabel Crigger and Mary Golem.

They decided to carry on until the end of June when it was customary to close for the summer. When that time came there was enough enthusiasm to keep the store open during July and August.

By August 1977, Pastor Henry (Nuhn) and Norma had arrived and Norma put her shoulder to the wheel and we soon realized that Norma had a natural flare for this kind of enterprise. The used clothing store became the "thrift shop" and countless hours were spent in making the building a more comfortable place to work in.

Before winter, the building was insulated and as the sales went up we were able to have the walls panelled and a new ceiling installed. Those who helped with the renovating included, Chris Lee, Harvey Golem, Ron Johnstone, Bill Mannerow, Ken Ruhl, Art Evers, and Bruce Barry. Harvey Golem also put in many hours of maintenance and repairs and it was sad to see all that work dismantled when the building was demolished to make way for the new Lutheran Nursing Home.

The doors of the Seven Stars Thrift Shop were closed on June 30, 1979.

However, the Board of Managers of the Nursing Home saw fit to include accommodation for the Thrift Shop when planning the new home. Again much work went into insulating, drywalling, and painting. Harvey Golem was our main support in getting all the heavy jobs done and the Seven Stars was open again on June 4, 1980, less than a year after the old building was vacated.

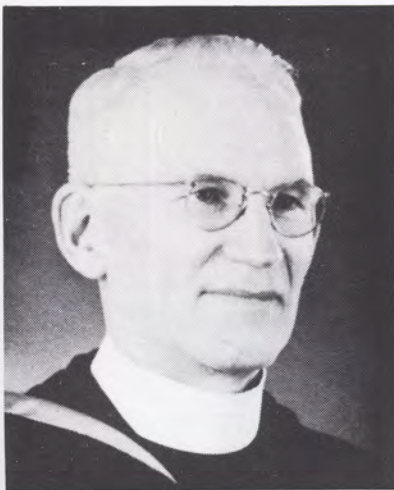
Norma Nuhn says we have now come of age and are worthy of stating our philosophy:

The Seven Stars Thrift Shop is a vehicle through which Christian love can be extended within our church membership. We believe that hearts, and lives are enriched by friendly, loving, caring, non-judgmental Christian women. We

believe also that we can learn from and enrich each other as well as those whom we seek to serve. Everyone who enters the Thrift Shop should go out a little happier for their experience. We must put service ahead of profit and keep reminding ourselves that everything in the store has been freely given for the purpose of helping others. Let us adopt the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi.

"Lord make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me show love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen."



The Rev. Dr. Nils Willison



OUR BISHOP
The Rev. Dr. William D. Huras



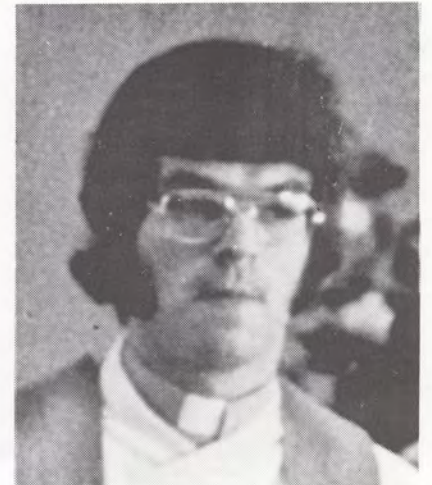
The Rev. Wallace G. Minke



The Rev. Harry N. Lossing



The Rev. Calvin G. Diegel



The Rev. Paul A. Schweitzer

