

*100th Anniversary
1884 - 1984*



Bethania Free Lutheran Church

Newfolden, Minnesota

August 4th and 5th, 1984

*ROMANS 11:36, "For of Him and through Him and to Him
are all things; to whom be the glory forever."*

DEDICATION

We dedicate this book in memory of the Pioneers who trusted in God, experienced the work of faith and were led by the Holy Spirit to labor in love and build on the sure foundation, Jesus Christ.

1 Thes. 1:3 "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father."

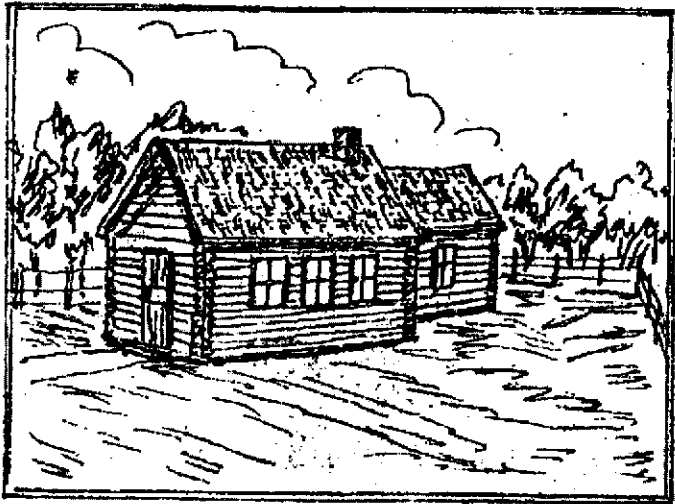
PROGRAM

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4TH, 7:30 P.M. . . . Family Luther League
Refreshments served by Luther League Officers

SUNDAY, AUGUST 5TH, 10:30 A.M. Centennial Worship Service

Sermon Delivered By Pastor Snipstad
President Of The A.F.L.C.

Dinner served by Ladies Aid
2:00 P.M. Centennial Festival Service



OLD CHURCH

*"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord."*

Psalm 122:1

GREETINGS FROM OUR PASTOR



As we stand at this milestone in the history of Bethania Free Lutheran, we rejoice and thank God for His faithfulness to us as a congregation. We also praise God for our precious Lutheran heritage. One of the characteristic marks of our heritage is effective Law and Gospel preaching.

The Law is spoken of in the Bible as the schoolmaster that leads us to Christ. On the other hand, the Gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who will believe.

Narrowly, the Gospel refers to the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross. It is upon this that the Lord has and is building His church. As our theme says, "through Him . . . are all things". Through faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross the Church is built. This distinctively sets the church apart from all other organizations.

During the past century our church has met many needs. In addition to being a spiritual lighthouse, equipping people to live for and ultimately with their Creator, the church has also been a point for social gathering. This is good. It's a joy to be part of the Lord's church. We are enriched, encouraged, and uplifted as we fellowship with one another. The Lord has brought the church together for His purposes. We as believers don't live primarily for ourselves but for Jesus. "To Him are all things." My prayer for us as a congregation is that we would be a living example of God's goodness.

The following pages stand as a record of where we started from, of how God led our predecessors. And finally this book gives us a bird's eye view of where we are today. One hundred years, drastic changes in technology and accommodations, along with a host of other things separate us from our forerunners. However, we have one spot of vital ground in common - salvation through Jesus Christ. Here we stand, and from here we launch out into our second century of service to Jesus Christ. In the sands of time we as individuals occupy not too large a space. But may we never become weary in well doing because the Word of God tells us that even in our time we will reap if we do not faint spiritually. Let us faithfully carry on the task of discipleship remembering that "from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."

Pastor Larry Haagenon

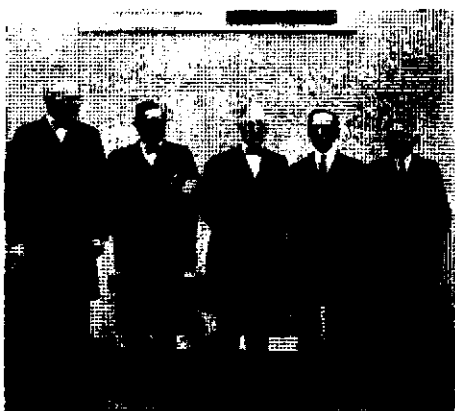
Rev. Larry Haagenon



REVEREND CHRISTIAN SAUGSTAD



REVEREND HANS OSTGULEN



**REVERENDS GILSETH, BJORNSON, RONHOLM,
HJELMELAND, AND E AAS**



REVEREND E. J. RAAUM



REVEREND GORDON BERNSTON



REVEREND E. OSCARSON



PASTOR GENE SUNDBY



PASTOR EDWIN MATHISON



PASTOR RODNEY STUELAND



REVEREND HUBERT DeBOER



REVEREND MERLE KNUTSON



PASTOR WILLIAM GOODMAN



REVEREND LARRY HAAGENSON

PASTORS

1884 - 1885

Pastor Christian Seugstad

1885 - 1886

Student Elles Berlie

Pastor Knut Birkeland

1886 - 1888

Pastor Elias Aas

1888 - 1906

Pastor Hans Ostgulen

1907 - 1912

Pastor Martin Bjornson

1912 - 1919

Pastor Albert Gilseth

1919 - 1926

Pastor John Hjelmeland

1927 - 1945

Pastor G. P. Ronholm

1945 - 1952

Pastor E. J. Rasm

1953 - 1958

Pastor Gordon Berntson

1958 - 1962

Pastor Eldor Oscarson

1963

Pastor Karl Berg

Pastor Herbert Larson

Student Pastor Robert Lee

1963 - July 1969

Lay Pastor

Gene Sundby

1969 - January 1970

Lay Pastor

Edwin Mathison

1970 - 1973

Lay Pastor

Rodney Stueland

1973 - 1975

Pastor Hubert DeBoer

1975 - 1980

Pastor Merle Knutson

December 1980 - December 1981

Lay Pastor

William Goodman

1981 -

Pastor Larry Haagenson

HISTORY
BETHANIA FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATION
MARSH GROVE TOWNSHIP, NEWFOLDEN, MINNESOTA

It was on March 27, 1884 that Bethania Congregation was organized after worship service at the Gullick Wedme home in the N.E. ¼ Section 32, West Valley Township, Marshall County, Minnesota. However, records indicate that there had been religious services in the community prior to the organization of the congregation; fourteen people were communion guests at a service in the area in the month of December, 1883. At the organizational meeting Pastor Christian Saugstad presided as chairman and Olaf Brekkestran was appointed secretary. The following were charter members:

Gullick Wedme	P. K. Green	Olaf Brekkestran
E. O. Hjelle	Elias Haarstad	Iver Ophus
Petter P. Vinje	Jens Green	Ole E. Bjornrud
A. Anderson	Ole Erickson	
Ostgaard	H. P. Elseth	Jens Webjornson

Elected as trustees were Gullick Wedme, Elias Haarstad and Iver Ophus; deacons: Jens Webjornson and Petter Vinje; treasurer: H. P. Elseth; secretary: Olaf Brekkestran. E. O. Hjelle: song leader as there were no organs or other musical instruments.

The name of the congregation was to be Bethania Norsk Evangelisk Luthersk Menighed (Bethania Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation). Pastor Saugstad temporarily served as pastor until 1885 on a free will offering which amounted to \$43.00. The constitution and order of service of the Conference was accepted. A committee of three namely E. Haarstad, H. Pederson and Ole Erickson were appointed to locate a cemetery for the congregation. According to church records the following infants were baptized in 1884: Peder Pederson, Olaf Olson, Halbert Ingvald Pederson (Elseth) and Petra Louise Green. The first couple married was Martha Schie and Mathies Hanson. The congregation affiliated with the Norwegian Danish Conference.

1885. It was decided to pay the pastor's salary of \$60.00 per year to be paid between November 15 and December 1. The report of the cemetery committee for a graveyard location in the N.W. ½ Section 5 Marsh Grove Township was accepted. Pastor Knute B. Birkeland served as pastor in 1885 and part of 1886. Caroline Bangen moved and it was seconded and unanimously approved to call theological student Elias Aas as pastor.

1886. Theological candidate, Elias Aas began serving as pastor in 1886 at \$50.00 a year and free house. More families joined the congregation from time to time. At the annual meeting at the home of E.O. Hjelle it was decided to build a log church 20 by 24 feet with shingle roof. H. P. Elseth, Ole E. Bjornrud and E.O. Hjelle were elected as members of the building

committee. Each member was to furnish 92 feet of good sound logs. At this meeting Jens Webjornson and E.O. Hjelle were appointed as Sunday School teachers which possibly was the beginning of the first Sunday School in the congregation.

1887. The log church was built at the site of the present church; it faced west and the cemetery was to the south. There was a cellar under it in which they placed a box stove. The floor boards were laid about one inch apart under the seats so the heat could come up from below and make it nice and warm. The trapdoor to the cellar was right in the middle of the aisle. The first seats were made of sawed off logs with planks nailed on top. The pulpit was octagon shaped; a few steps led up and there was a shelf for the pastor's books. It was painted black with blue trim. Ole E. Bjornrud built the pulpit. Later Ole Thompson of West Valley built an altar with railing around it and painted it white. Common chairs soon took the place of plank seats. Each member was to pay \$2.00 for extra lumber.

1888. In May of this year Martha Hjelle, Mina Sagness and Eddie Heft were the first class to be confirmed in the log church. Reverend Elias Aas resigned as pastor of the congregation in December; A. Anderson Ostgaard was to have four mission services during the year. At the end of the year the Ladies Aid was asked to pay the church debt in the amount of \$10.00; it was also decided to quite spitting tobacco on the floor. The janitor was to order three men to clean the church when needed; the janitor to receive \$5.00.

1889. In March of this year theological student, Hans Ostgulen was called as pastor and he accepted. They lived in Warren, Minnesota and he used horses and buggy or sled to serve his congregations; he was to have two holiday offerings besides wages of \$60.00. Each voting member was to pay 25 cents to parochial school.

1890. It was decided that each voting member give 25 cents towards building a barn. The congregation became a part of the United Norwegian Church.

1891. Single men were to pay \$1.00 less than families and single ladies to pay as they please to pastor's salary; it was also decided to have two months of parochial school next year.

1892. A barn was built and completed in February; a committee was appoined to speak with churches Westaker, Middle River and Folden to consider parsonage. There was a unanimous decision to support Augsburg College.

1893. Sponsors at baptisms to go forward and remain standing during ceremony and afterwards all except ladies walk around altar or whatever is

being used and give offering. From 1893 to 1897 Bethania was an independent congregation.

1894. To have Laymen's meetings July 3rd, 4th and 5th.

1895. It was decided that no church member enter a saloon or get drunk; if anyone so does one has to go through a church reprimand (kirketugt). A fence was also built around the church yard.

1897. Bethania adopted the fundamental principles and affiliated with the newly organized Lutheran Free Church where it remained until 1962.

1898. The pastor's robe not to be used anymore; no chanting before the altar. Baptism according to Swedish Augustana Synod. Intruductory words and the Lord's Prayer to be read instead of sung at communion. The church gave permission to Free church, United church and Hauge's Synod to preach God's Word in church.

1903. The congregation was incorporated; a decision was made to build a new church at the same place by the cemetery.

1904. In the spring of the year there was a meeting to decide on repairing the church but instead decided to build a new one. Land of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre each was donated by Olaf Brekkestran and Stener Green in the east end of the quarter line in Section 6 Marshal Grove township. The size of the church was 40' by 28' by 16' and a bell tower or entry 12' by 12'. The old church was torn down and stringers were used in the new building. Material and labor for the new church building cost about \$1050.00 The main carpenters were Anton Sundberg and Erik Olson. The annual meeting was held in the new church.

1905. Sunday school was held together with Bethesda Congregation.

1906. Pastor Ostgulen's resignation was accepted; a committee was named to work with the other parish churches to call a pastor. Sunday School held together with Bethesda congregation.

1907. Pastor M. Bjornson was called in the spring of the year and he accepted. Reverend and Mrs. Martin Bjornson lived in Newfolden. Bible School was held together with Bethesda congregation for five weeks. It was also decided to build a barn and outhouse and finish church building.

1908. Decided to side the church, make platform wider and add railing; also to build altar ring, paper and side the walls in the entry.

1909. There was a discussion on building a parsonage; Ole Sund to gather money for Augsburg Seminary.

1910. Ole Tvedt's house in Newfolden was purchased for \$850.00 with a payment in cash of \$700.00 and a note at \$150.00 at 8% for 1½ years; it was decided that a new barn and shed be built with the other congregation's consent.

1911. Decision to paint outside of church and fix windows; a girls' sewing club was organized.
1912. Pastor Martin Bjornson resigned as minister; student Albert Gilseth was to be called. Built a barn for the pastor by the church. There were also English services held alternating with Norwegian.
1913. There were two services in the Green Valley community.
1914. Two young peoples' meetings were held; eighteen pews were purchased. It was decided to have every fourth service in English in 1915. Three day special meetings were held with Pastor P. Nilson. The first organist, Betsy Amundson was appointed to have offering as pay.
1915. There was a first record of Norwegian and English confirmation. Special meetings of 2½ days were held with O. A. Fosse in charge. Ole Sund hired to fire in stove and was to receive 25 cents for each firing.
1916. There were special meetings with Pastor E. Aas having 2 services and C. N. Anderson having 3 days of services.
1917. Agnes Green appointed organist. Fostervold had 7 days of special services and Senator Loback also had one special service. The pastor's salary was increased from \$125.00 to \$150.00 per year.
1918. Pastor A. Gilseth resigns; Pastor John Hjelmland was called to serve. Cemetery to be resurveyed and made into lots; Olaf Brækkestran was appointed sexton. Betsy Amundson again named as organist.
1919. The girls' sewing circle had a sale. An addition was built with extra repair on parsonage.
1920. Julia Westlin was appointed to be assistant organist.
1921. It was decided to build a road north from the cemetery.
1922. Pastor's salary to be \$200.00 for the year. Road was built north from the cemetery. The last meeting of the Girls' society was held and there was a last and final report. Clara Engelsrud was appointed to help as organist.
1923. Pastor's salary to be paid semi-annually in June and December. The Christmas tree program was held together with Bethesda congregation.
1925. There was a special meeting to decide if to build basement under the church where it stands or move the church back to the cemetery; there was no decision as it would cost \$1200.00 so there was not sufficient funds. At a later date a committee was appointed to contact non-members for donations to move the church.
1926. A district meeting was held.
1927. Reverend Ronholm was called to be pastor with a salary of \$210.00 plus 2 offerings; Reverend Ronholm began his duties in June with installation in July. Clara Engelsrud is at present the organist.

1928. Special services by Reverend Halvorson; the Augsburg quartet was also here. The young peoples' organization which later became the Luther League was recorded as first held this year.

1929. The painting, "The Good Shepherd" was completed by William Windahl. Erna Tandberg was appointed organist. It was decided to invite the district meeting. There were 3 days of Northern Minnesota Laymens' meetings. Five Luther League meetings were held.

1930. It was decided to paint the floor and repair the bell tower.

1931. Ole Sund resigned as secretary after serving 34 years. Special services were held by Pastor Michaelson and laymen Johan Mattson and Vasvig. Erna Tandberg resigned as organist.

1932. To invite Reverend J. M. Halvorson to have meetings. Mrs. Otto Hjelle appointed organist.

1933. It was decided to have half of services in Norwegian and half in English.

1934. Mrs. Otto Hjelle, Mrs. Ingvald Rokke and Julia Westlin were the organists. It was decided to have the 50th anniversary celebration in 1935.

1935. On June 2nd and 3rd the 50th anniversary was held. It was planned to celebrate the 4th of July in 1936 with Bethesda.

1936. A committee composed of E. O. Rokke, A. S. Rokke and Rolf Tandberg was appointed to build a new fence for the cemetery. Ole Sund passed away; he had been a member of Bethania for 40 years.

1937. There was a Mission Sunday with speaker Missionary Reverend Ditmanson.

1938. Envelope system for offering introduction.



ORGANIST

1939. Mrs. Arnold Rokke appointed organist and continues to be our organist. A committee of nine was selected to promote church improvement.

1940. First reports written in English; also there was the first list of ushers. Church basement built and church moved back to where the cemetery is located by Elmer Johnson of Warren, Minnesota.



CHURCH INTERIOR 1940

1941. New wood for the walls and outside railing was installed. The pulpit, pastor's chair, altar and altar railing were built by Ludvig Lofgren of Strandquist.

1942. Evangelist Vasvig held special meetings.

1943. Pastor's salary raised to \$250.00. A price was set on cemetery lots: one grave \$5.00; two or three \$10.00; \$15.00 for a whole lot from non members.

1944. One mission service; three day district meeting. Church rededicated with Reverend Olaf Rogne officiating at Sunday services. It was also decided to use order of service number 2 in Concordia.

1945. Memorial service Augst 12th for Orville Strandberg and Harlan Engelsrud. Orville Strandberg was killed in the battle of the Bulge in France January 15, 1945 and Harlan Engelsrud was killed in action on Okinawa April 28, 1945. Reverend Ronholm resigned and resignation was accepted. After Reverend Raaum's trial sermon it was decided to call him. He accepted and was installed by Reverend Walter Peterson of Thief River Falls. A committee was selected to secure an altar picture. A committee was also appointed to supervise the cleaning of the cemetery and church for Memorial Day. Mrs. Arnold Rokke was organist with Verna Englesrud as assistant.

1946. Road graveled north from church. Term of deacons changed from one year to three years as of next year.

1947. There was a sum of \$100.00 given to Reverend Raaum as a bonus. Altar painting was unveiled and dedicated in memory of Orville Strandberg and Harlan Engelsrud. The church bell given in memory of the pioneers by Ole Hjelle and the communion set given by the Westlin family were also dedicated. Reverend Ronholm speaker at Thief River Falls district meeting. Special meetings by Reverend Hjelmeland. Ole Bjornrud named bell ringer.

1948. Bible Camp at Grace Lake. Tilmor Lausness to be the first to mow and care for the church and cemetery yard. There was also a golden wedding for the August Carlsons.

1949. Electricity arrived; Lenten boxes also appeared.

1950. Pastor's salary was \$500.00. There were joint tent meetings in Newfolden.

1951. Radio work was added when Reverend Raaum agreed to share with O. K. Ose the Sunday Morning Devotional Hour on alternate Sundays. Reverend Raaum was a leader in organizing the Galilee Bible Camp and Youth Night.

1952. Reverend Raaum resigned and August 24th there was a farewell for the Raaum family.

1953. Student Gordon Berntson of the Augsburg Seminary was called to preach a trial sermon in December of 1952. He was sent a letter of call in January and he accepted and began his work in July. His salary was to be \$500.00 a year.

1954. Oil furnace was installed and the chimney which had blown down was rebuilt.

1955. There was a special meeting called November 14th relative to the merger of several Lutheran church bodies. 29 votes were cast; yes votes 1 and no votes 28. On the basis of this election Bethania congregation has voted no to the merger resolution.

1956. The pastor's salary was raised \$50.00 per month with driving expense. Church reshingled with lock on asphalt shingles.

1957. Church painted on the outside. Committee appointed to plan the 75th anniversary in 1959.

1958. There was an election which was the second in relation to merge with several Lutheran church bodies. The vote was: yes 4 and no 20. On the basis of the results of the election Bethania congregation has voted no to the merger resolution. Reverend Berntson resigned as pastor of the congregation. Reverend Elder Oscarson of Everest, Kansas had a trial sermon in May and shortly afterwards he was called as pastor. He was installed in November by Dr. Walter Pederson of Thief River Falls. Serving the congregation for over four years, Reverend Oscarson resigned in December of 1962.

1959. The 75th Anniversary of the congregation was held on the 19th, 20th and 21st of June.

1961. In October of the year there was a special meeting of the congregation to hold an election on whether to merge with other Lutheran church bodies. The vote was Yes 7 - No 33. On the results of the election the Bethania congregation voted no to the merger.

1962. At a special meeting on December 7th the Bethania Congregation voted to become independent. A committee was appointed to rewrite the Bethania constitution to the American language.

1963. Andrew Lindgren, Herbert Larson, Pastor Carl Berg and student pastor, Robert Lee each served the congregation for short periods of time.



REVEREND RICHARD SNIPSTEAD

In the summer of this year the Bethania and Westaker congregations purchased the residence from Zak and Melvida Hamburg for a parsonage. At a later date the Helgland congregation purchased $\frac{1}{2}$ interest in the parsonage. On September 29th Gene Sunby was called as pastor. Bethania Congregation joined the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations as a charter member.

1965. Mrs. Gene Sundby passed away December 8th, 1965 at the age of 26 years.

1967. A settlement was made with the churches Bethlehem and Alma about the parsonage. The radio program "Trumpet of Truth" over KTRF was organized. A congregational letter was sent to the board of administration of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations insisting that the word free be inserted in the title name of both the seminary and the bible school.

1969. Pastor Sundby resigned. It was decided to call Rodney Stueland and he assumed charge in 1970. However, Layman Ed Mathison served for about six months after Sundby resigned. During Pastor Stueland's ministry many evangelistic services were held. He resigned in September of 1973. The church was carpeted and the altar ring and pastor's chair were upholstered.

1974. Reverend Hubert DeBoer of Thief River Falls served as interim pastor until March, 1975. During his ministry Bethania congregation celebrated their 90th anniversary on July 21st, 1974 and he had an important part in the anniversary. In the afternoon Reverend John Strand, President of the Association of Free Lutheran Churches was the main speaker. Pastor Ed Mathison spoke at the forenoon service. Greetings were also given by former pastors and others.

1975. Reverend Marle Knutson assumed his duties as pastor.

1976. The Bethania congregation purchased approximately one acre of land adjoining the church yard and cemetery on the north, west and south sides.



CHURCH INTERIOR, 1984

1980. A large gift of money was received which had been willed to the Bethania Congregation by Ida Johnson. Ida Johnson was a life long member of the congregation. It was decided that the total amount should be used for church improvements. A riding lawn mower was purchased; a well was drilled; an addition was built including bathrooms, enlarged entry, a lowered ceiling with insulation; and new storm windows installed. An outside entry directly to the basement was made. At a later date the outside of the church was painted. Reverend Knutson resigned September 8th. In December Lay Pastor William Goodman was hired as interim pastor. Rows of shrubs and trees were planted on the south, west and northwest of the church and cemetery yard.

1981. Hegland Lutheran Church decided to withdraw from the Newfolden Lutheran Parish but would continue with the Trumpet of Truth radio ministry.

Westaker and Bethania churches, after buying out Hegland's share of the parsonage, became full and equal owners. The Bethania and Westaker congregations agreed to build an addition and remodel the parsonage. In August the congregations decided to call Reverend Larry Haagenson. In November there was a farewell party for Lay Pastor William Goodman and family. Reverend Larry Haagenson started his duties as pastor in December of 1981. There was installation services for Pastor Larry Haagenson March 14th of 1982 with Reverend Richard Snipstad, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations officiating. The patio deck, the sidewalk was made and most of the parsonage lawn was sodded. A utility building was built at Bethania for housing the lawn mowers. It was also decided that Bethania congregation have their 100th anniversary celebration in 1984. A committee of three namely Nora Rokka, Ruby Engelsrud and William Waterworth are to make plans for the celebration.

1983. The parsonage and garage were painted.

During this centennial era many memorial gifts have been given; there have been 398 baptisms recorded; there is no doubt but that there have been 400 and possible more. Also there have been Evangelistic and other spiritual emphasis meetings in the congregation and in cooperation with other churches in the parish. There have been laymen's and district meetings in which pastors in the District have taken part. Some years ago tent meetings were held in Newfolden involving the parish. Lent services presently are held; with pastors in the Northwestern Minnesota District exchanging pulpits. This is sometimes referred to as round robin. Weekly Bible studies and prayer services are held jointly with the Westaker congregation.



Galilee Bible Camp at Lake Bronson is owned and operated by our Northwestern Minnesota District of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations and Bethania congregation is actively involved in the work. There Pre-teens and Teen-agers gather for Christian fellowship, recreation and instruction around the Word of God. Many young people have found salvation at these camp meetings. The Bible Camp also has family camps and is also rented out to

other groups for religious purposes. Parochial schools, lasting one or two months, were common during the summer months in the early years. Now Sunday School and a week of Vacation Bible School are held.

Our congregation, a charter member of our Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, actively supports the work of the Association with its Bible School, Seminary, Home and World missions and other endeavors. Several young people have attended the Bible School; some have attended the Seminary and are now serving the Lord as pastors. Sons of the congregation who have entered the ministry are Clemmence Dyrud, Amos Dyrud, David Rokke, Ralph Rokke and Philip Rokke. Others from our congregation are serving the Lord's vineyard in other ways.

The Lord has been with us and blessed our congregation during these past one hundred years; there have been struggles, hardships and also joyful occasions. We must admit that we have sometimes failed Him but He has not forsaken nor forgotten us. The challenge is before us to daily seek His grace, guidance and forgiveness and to carry on until the Lord Jesus Christ returns again for His own.

"For of Him, and through Him and to Him are all things; to Whom be the glory forever." Romans 11:36.

PRESENT CHURCH OFFICERS

Chairman, Olger Rokke
Secretary, Mrs. Rodney Liedberg
Treasurer, Mrs. Gilman Stennes
Trustees, Donald Bjorgaard
Gerald Hanson
Stephen Waterworth
Deacons, Rodney Liedberg
Gilbert Olson
William Waterworth
Deaconesses, Mrs. Ruby Engelsrud
Mrs. Ingvald Rokke
Organist, Mrs. Arnold Rokke
Sexton, Edgar Rokke
Bellringer, Gordon Bring
Janitor, Rodney Liedberg
Head Ushers, Gilman Stennes
Milo Windahl

LADIES AID

According to records the Ladies Aid must have organized soon after the Congregation was started. Records show that they donated \$10.00 to the congregation in 1893 for Bible School and also helped pay for altar and altar railing. For several years the Ladies Aid was divided into two groups - The North and the South. The meetings were held in the homes of members. After a devotional program the ladies made articles for auction sales and lunch was served. The South sales were held in homes until in 1905 but the North sales continued a few more years in the members homes. The first record of an annual sale was in 1895. Money received for certain designated articles was given to Missions and the remainder into the Ladies Aid Treasury.

In 1915 eighteen church pews were purchased for \$150.00.

After the church was moved to the present location in 1940, the Ladies Aids have been held in the church the second Friday evening of each month except November, December, January and February. Inspirational programs are given and lunch is served.

17th of May Smorgasboards were held in 1943 and 1944. Thirty Concordia song books were bought in 1943. Dinner was served at the rededication of the church in 1944. Auction sales were discontinued in 1945 and instead a Harvest Festival is held in November each year. For several years the men have been serving the aid in the spring.

Since 1947 lunch has been served each year on Memorial Day.

In 1952 kitchen cupboards were installed in the basement and tables and steel folding chairs were purchased for the dining room.

Variety sale at each Ladies Aid was started in 1953 but discontinued in 1955 when Bake and Craft sales were begun in Newfolden. Had Ice Cream Social for benefit of Galilee Bible Camp.

Purchased piano in 1958. Served dinners and lunches at 75th Anniversary celebration in 1959. Gave Honorary Membership Pins. In 1961 sewed Altar and Pulpit Cloths of white, green and purple.

In 1970 Alvin Nelson installed new ceiling in basement. Served banquet for the District Luther League Rally. Purchased and installed carpet in church in 1971. Served dinner at Annual Shipping Association Meeting in Newfolden.

In 1974 the 90th Anniversary of our church was celebrated and dinner was served.

An electric organ was purchased in 1975 to replace the organ that was bought new in 1910 for \$72.00. Hosted the Women's Missionary Federation Spring Rally at the Westaker Church in Newfolden in 1979. In the fall we had a bake sale and bazaar at the Country Market Day in Newfolden and this is being continued.

In 1981 Women's Missionary Federation Honorary Pins were given to Alice Rokke, Clara Bakke, Adeine Olson, Agnes Klopp, Hilda Fortland, Selma Brækkestran and Nora Rokke. Church basement was paneled in 1982.

1984 Purchased special anniversary plates to be sold as a remembrance of our 100th Anniversary. Several memorial gifts and other gifts have been received throughout the years. During the years the Ladies Aid has helped pay for tape recorder, mimeograph machine and other expenses of the congregation and parish.

Donations are made to many belevolences: Missions, General Fund, Praise Program, Christian Eduction, Galilee Bible Camp, Redby Lutheran Mission, Women's Missionary Federation projects, etc.

The Ladies Aid has also served for Silver and Golden Weddings and other anniversaries, Auction Sales, Ice Cream Socials and funerals.

Present Officers: President Mrs. John Rokke; Vice-President Mrs. Wesley Bring; Secretary Mrs. Milo Windaht; Treasurer Mrs. Gerald Hanson.

"And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Col. 3:17

SUNDAY SCHOOL

At Bethania's Annual Meeting, in 1886, Jens Webjornson and E. O. Hjelle were appointed Sunday School teachers. This, possibly, was the beginning of Sunday School in the congregation. However, a Children's Christmas Program, under the direction of Anders Anderson, was given in 1884 at the Gulick Wedme home.

For many years, beginning in the early 1900's and ending in 1957, the Bethesda - Bethania Sunday School was held jointly with up to 48 students enrolled. Summer Vacation Bible School was also held during these years and has continued to the present time. Bible School is now held for one week each summer, jointly, with the Westaker congregation.

Throughout the almost 100 years of Sunday School, donations have been made to various missions. Another practice of Bethania Sunday School is to present a Bible to students as they enter 3rd grade.

Sunday School continues to be held regularly from the 2nd Sunday in September, thru May. Our 1984 fall enrollment is expected to be 16 students. The officers and teachers the past year were: Mrs. William Waterworth, Mrs. Arnold Rokke, Mrs. Rodney Leidberg and Mrs. Ruby Engelerud.

TRUMPET OF TRUTH

Trumpet of Truth, a thirty minute devotional radio service, is broadcast over radio station KTRF of Thief River Falls, Minnesota every Sunday evening at 7:00 P.M. This radio broadcast is shared with the Hegland Lutheran Church of Strandquist, Minnesota and with Westaker Free Lutheran Church of Newfolden, Minnesota. The Lord has provided for us both materially and spiritually in this endeavor and we thank and praise God for that.

The officers from the Bethania Congregation are: Mrs. Donald Bjorgaard, William Waterworth and Olger Rokke. Program organizers are Mrs. Wesley Bring and Mrs. Gerald Hanson.

LUTHER LEAGUE

Work among the young people of this community was begun by Pastor Ordahl, when on November 28, 1926 the Marsh Grove - West Valley Luther League was organized. Their motto was "Let Your Light Shine" based on Matt. 5:16.

Their efforts were blessed with up to 174 members and a large choir which rejoiced as they lifted their voices in praise to God and mutual edification. The meetings alternated between Bethesda and Bethania churches. Meetings were held the first Friday evening of the month until November 1942 when they were changed to the first Sunday evening of the month. One of the fruits of this group was the giving of Testaments to young men of the community when they were inducted into the service of their country in World War 2. At the end of each year the money which remain in the treasury was divided equally between the Bethesda and Bethania congregations. This union continued for over 30 years. Since then the Bethania Luther League has continued an inspirational Family Nite service the first Sunday evening of each month, except January and February, when no meetings are held. Some of the work supported by the Luther League includes, A. F. L. C Bible School and Missions, Galilee Bible Camp at Lake Bronson, the youth from our congregation as they attend camp, Vacation Bible school and various other projects within our own church.

Our Leaguers have also been active in the Parish Youth Nite group. Prior to 1926 no record of youth work within the congregation has been found.

The present officers are: President, Stephen Waterworth; Vice President, Mrs. Bruce Bjorgaard; Secretary-Devotional Life Secretary, Mrs. John Rokke; Treasurer, Mrs. Rodney Liedberg; Advisors, Rodney Liedberg and John Rokke.

"Praise God from whom all blessing flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost

Amen"

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

1885

Karoline Otelia Sagnes
Anna Claudine Christianson

1886

Gunnar Anton E. Schie
Karoline Jenson Green
Anna Johanna Olson

1887

Sam Theodor Wedme
Erik Oskar Nordgren
Alvilde Augusta Anderson
Albertine Nordgren

1888

Edward Albert Heft
Mina Amalia Sagnes
Martha E. Hjelle
Augustinus O. Rokke

1890

Ole Hjelle
Edward Sagnes
John Louis Natwig
Patrine Dragseth
Nilsine Marie Anderson

1892

Ellef Halvor Ramstad
Carl Meyer Wedme
Carl Sivert Dahlquist
Jorgine Jensen Green
Laura Maria Webjornsen
Christi Hansen Lind
Karoline Johnsdatter Raen
Randi Gurine Wedme

1893

Johan Arnt Dragseth
Amanda Mathilda Pederson
Anna Ottine Rokke
Malia Sagnes
Anna E. Hjelle
Andraas H. Ramstad
Ide Karoline Wedme

1895

Alfred Peder Pedersen
Knut Madsen Vinje
Johan August Olafson Hegstrom
Carl Peter Holmstrom
Abel A. Ostgaard
Jonas Gustav Holmstrom
Edd Olai Natwig
Johanna Ericka Lofdal
Olufa Petrine Vinje
Clara H. Amundson
Kristen H. Lind
Anna Mathilde Natvig
Alette Mathilde Vebjornsen

1898

Adolf H. Amundsen
Adolf Severin Elseth
Martin Olai Cornelius M. Vinje
Karoline Regine Elseth
Johan Albin Johnson
Olaf Ferdinand Johnson
Johanna A. Mickelsen
Erik Olaf Renstrom

1900

Petra Lovisa P. Green
Mathilde Sagnes
Ide Andrine Natvig
Halbert Ingvald Elseth
Thorkel Ingman Thompson
Ida Bertine Thompson
Betsy Mina Larsen
Haaken Albert Dragseth
Andrea Senora Knutsen
Carl Marthin Green
Carl Olaf Kulseth

1901

Johan Theodor Green
Emil Carinas Elseth
Albert E. Haarstad
Regine E. Haarstad
Carl H. Amundson
George Halbert Amundson
Gilbert Bjorkrud
Alfred P. Vinje
Sofine Marie Vinje
Clara Pemilla M. Vinje
Petrine M. Vinje
Gina Caroline Brekkestran

1903

Leonard Edwin Brekkestran
Clarence M. Johnson
Christian O. Knutson
Paul P. Vinje
Julia H. Elseth
Inga Josefina P. Vinje
Selma Swan
Emma Christine Bjornrud
Hilma J. Windahl
Ida Elias Haarstad

1904

Olaf Calmar P. Green
Oscar Melvin Johnson
Ole Lausness
Lewis Hovde
Arthur Henry Windahl
Julia Lausness
Betsy Marie Amundson
Thes Anthonette Bjornrud
Inga Bertine M. Vinje

Lisa Caroline P. Vinje
Anna Pemilla P. Vinje

1905

Anthon Martinus Knutson
Minnie Lausness
Berent Marius M. Vinje
Ida Christine Johnson

1906

Carl Elmer Brekkestran
Conrad Olaf Engelsrud
Anna Marie Bengtson
Julia Therece Bjornrud

1908

Arthur Olai Solum
George Cornelius Dragseth
Berthina Lausness
Otelia Maria Knutson
Ruth Thomas

1909

Betty Marie Engelsrud
Emma R. Brekkestran
Torkel Bernhard Bengtson
Olger Stephanus Green
Oscar Theodor Bjornrud
Theodor Melvin Westlin

1911

Nils Heman Solum
Thron George Solum
Carl Ingvald Rokke

1912

Nellie Marie Lausness
Emma Caroline Bengtson
Oscar Brekkestran
Hjalmar Brekkestran

1913

Paul Oscar Amundson
Johanna Blise Bengtson
Conrad Oliver Bjornrud
Nella Helena Rokke
Alice Carolina Hanson
Julia Keldora Westlin
Tine Josefina Green
Hilma Judit Green

1914

Trimer Linden Lausness
Clara Wang
Selma Lausness

1915

Helmer Oliver Rokke
Ole Johan Brekkestran
Myrtle Octana Hanson
Agnes Elisabeth Green
Walter August Gaet

1918

Annabel Windahl
Amanda Luauiness

1917

Agnes Brekkestran
Alice Tandberg
Myrtle A. Westlin
Ruth Adella Hanson
Ottine Christine Rokke
Clara Marie Engelsrud
Conrad Norvel Engelsrud
Linden Elmer Hanson
Ole Stefanus Bjornrud

1919

Palma Theodora Amalia Bengtson

1920

May Brekkestran
Arnold Milton Rokke
Edwin Kennit Rokke
Elmer Malvin Bjornrud

1921

Frances Luella Hanson
Luella Tandberg
Adeline Clarenca Bengtson

1922

Gladys Petrine Westman
Hazel Charlotte Westman
Nora Karine Rokke
Oscar August Rokke
Edgar Oliver Rokke
Clemence immanuel Dyrud

1923

Henry Sigvald Bjornrud
Ella Brekkestran

1924

Henry Joel Engelsrud
Clarence Westlin
Edel Dyrud
Synneva Seielstad

1925

Inga Lavine Rokke
Norman Rokke
Olger Augustin Rokke
Johnnie Ellsworth Bjornrud

1926

Erna Tandberg
Beatrice Angeline Dyrud
Lorraine Harriet Green
Clarice Berna Seielstad
Kenneth Arnold Bjornrud
Clayton Melford Windahl

1927

Reynold Rokke

1929

Amos Dyrud
Peder Tandberg
Reuben Knutson
Milford Rokke
Einar A. Rokke
Glen Knutson
Lillian Seielstad
Eunice Green

1932

Edna Elisabeth Tokke
Otto Chester Tandberg

1934

Violet Amundson
Doris Rokke

1937

Avis Cora Engelsrud
Harlan Chester Engelsrud

1939

Shirley Ann Tandberg

1942

Betty Verna Engelsrud

1944

Merle Oliver Bjornrud
David Harley Rokke

1946

Lorraine Adelle Bjornrud

1951

Rolland Paul Amundson

1952

James Allen Engelsrud
Anita Martha Rokke
Elsie Audrey Olson

1954

Sandra Joy Brekkestran
Beverly Jean Engelsrud

1956

Gerald Duane Hanson
Marilyn Alice Rokke

1957

Wayne Dyrud Bjornrud
Donald Arvin Engelsrud
LuAnn Norita Engelsrud
Janice Virjeen Westman
Sharon Leigh Hanson

1958

Janice Yvonne Olson
Harriet Kathleen Rokke
Howard Milford Rokke
Robert Darryl Stennes

1959

Merril Stennes
Bruce Allen Hanson
Naomi Karen Rokke
Ralph Peter Tandberg
Lyle Boyd Westman
1961
John Tandberg

1962

Donald Roger Hanson
Curtis Harlan Westlin

1963

John Arnold Rokke

1966

Ralph Rokke

1968

Debra Marie Bjorgaard
Eunice Marie Engelsrud
Patricia Joy Klopp
Philip Brent Rokke
Barbara Jean Waterworth
Kathryn Joy Waterworth

1971

Vickie Bjorgaard
Bruce Bjorgaard
Timothy Waterworth
Diana Westman
James Westman

1972

Lori Bjorgaard
Eunice Rokke
Debbie Westman
Stephen Waterworth
Darrel Westman

1975

Tami Paulette Bjorgaard
John Gordon Bring
Debra Kaye Windahl
Jeanne Marie Anderson
Roger Wayne Bring
Donald Andrew Waterworth

1977

Wayne Milo Windahl
Gail Leah Waterworth

1979

Karyl April Bring

SONS OF THE CONGREGATION



REVEREND DAVID ROKKE



REVEREND PHILIP ROKKE



REVEREND RALPH ROKKE



REVEREND CLEMENCE DYRUD



REVEREND AMOS DYRUD

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES
of the
ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS
(Guiding Principles of the Lutheran Free Church since 1897)

1. According to the Word of God, the congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth.

2. The congregation consists of believers who, by using the means of grace and the spiritual gifts as directed by the Word of God, seek salvation and eternal blessedness for themselves and for their fellow men.

3. According to the New Testament, the congregation needs an external organization with membership roll, election of officers, stated times and places for its gatherings, and other similar provisions.

4. Members of the organized congregation are not, in every instance believers, and such members often derive false hope from their external connection with the congregation. It is therefore the sacred obligation of the congregation to purify itself by the quickening preaching of the Word of God, by earnest admonition and exhortation, and by expelling the openly sinful and perverse.

5. The congregation directs its own affairs, subject to the authority of the Word and the Spirit of God, and acknowledges no other ecclesiastical authority or government above itself.

6. A free congregation esteems and cherishes all the spiritual gifts which the Lord gives for its edification, and seeks to stimulate and encourage their use.

7. A free congregation gladly accepts the mutual assistance which congregations can give one another in the work for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

8. Such assistance consists partly in the mutual sharings of spiritual gifts among the congregations through conferences, exchange visits, lay activities, etc., whereby congregations are mutually edified, and partly in the voluntary and Spirit-prompted cooperation of congregations for the accomplishing of such tasks as exceed the ability of the individual congregation.

9. Among such tasks may be mentioned specifically the training of pastors, distribution of Bible and other Christian literature, home missions, foreign missions, Jewish missions, deaconess homes, children's homes and other work of mercy.

10. Free congregations have no right to demand that other congregations shall submit to their opinion, will, judgment, or decision; therefore, domination by a majority of congregations over a minority is to be rejected.

11. Agencies found desirable for conducting the joint activities of congregations, such as conferences, committees, officers, etc., cannot in a Lutheran Free Church, impose any obligations or restrictions, exert any compulsions, or lay any burden upon the individual congregation, but have the right only to make recommendations to, and requests of, congregations and individuals.

12. Every free congregation, as well as every individual believer, is constrained by the Spirit of God and by the privileges of Christian love to do good and to work for the salvation of souls and the quickening of spiritual life, as far as its abilities and power permit. Such free spiritual activity is limited neither by parish nor by synodical bounds.