

## "...And graciously hath helped me."

**1947.** The Marshall Plan was announced to provide economic and technical assistance to Europe. A Hungarian engineer in England invented holography. The transistor was invented in Bell Laboratories which would eventually replace vacuum tubes. The zoom lens covered baseball's world series for television. Puerto Ricans were allowed to elect their own governor. India became independent and was partitioned into India and Pakistan. The Dead Sea scrolls were discovered at Wadi Qumran. The sound barrier was broken in the first supersonic flight. Jackie Robinson became a Brooklyn Dodger, breaking the color barrier in professional baseball. Meigs Field opened in Chicago as Northerly Field. The Chicago Transit Authority was formed. A second great black migration to Chicago began. Bethlehem celebrated 75 years of our Lord's gracious help. Midweek Lenten services were to be held at the regular times: German 7:30 pm, English 8:30 pm. No German service on Good Friday morning. An Athletic Club was begun by Mr. Gavin and Mr. Hinrichs.

The Young Women's Charity Circle was organized as a club in February. The members were interested in helping the poor and needy. A hundred gifts were donated by the members last Christmas and taken to the Orphanage at Addison, Illinois. Three families were adopted in Europe (Germany, France, Poland) and a total of 17 boxes of food and clothing were sent to them. There were thirteen members. Officers were Miss Esther Thiel, Miss Lilly Mueller, and Miss Martha Bensch.

Rev. Arndt, Mr. Mirow and Mr. Jaeger were each given \$100. in recognition of their extra services during the pastoral vacancy. Sunday School and German service were at 9:30 am, English service at 10:45 am. The Mixed Choir had 25 members. Officers were Wilfred Thiel, Mary Ann Berg, and Vangel Mathwick. Ushers at Sunday services included Gilbert Thiel, Otto Eckert, Richard Eckert, Theodore Elsholz, Leroy Dullin, Edward Ulbricht, Ralph Hauth, Frederick Harms, Edward Woltman, Herbert Betke, Wilfred Thiel and Gordon Kruse.

A local Lutheran Women's Missionary League was organized and joined the Northern Illinois District of the national organization. Mrs. John Hendley was elected as the first President and Mrs. W. M. Mirow as the first Secretary-Treasurer. Quarterly meetings were held on Thursdays.

Boxes to collect for German relief put at entrance of church. Fifty new hymnals were purchased for the German service. Miss Vangel Mathwick was hired as teacher.

In April, the Rev. Samuel E. Rathke, Service Pastor and Hospital Chaplain, of Los Angeles, California, and at the time temporarily stationed at Waukegan, Illinois, was extended a call to Bethlehem. This was the fourth call made to a pastor during this vacancy. He was installed on June 8 upon authorization of the Rev. A. H. Werfelmann, President of the Northern Illinois District, by Visitor O. F. Arndt, Pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Skokie.

Mrs. C. E. Kasten, the President of the Von Bora Ladies' Society reported: "We have assisted needy members of our church to the extent of over \$1000. Several thousand more were given towards painting, remodeling, the purchase of tables, chairs, dishes etc. School benches took another \$1000. Installed electric lights in the church in 1914. Loaned the congregation \$1000. Of this \$900 was donated as part of anniversary gifts at different times. The cash gifts for anniversaries amounted to around \$5000 with special gifts of \$800. In 1942 the church organ was purchased at a cost of \$2500. To this must be added about \$400 or more for rugs which were being bought for the congregation at this time, and a 75th Anniversary gift to the church of \$750. The Society is a member of the Child Welfare Auxiliary, the Old Folks' Home Auxiliary and recently joined the Lutheran Women's Missionary League. In turn we served

for Pastoral and Teachers' Conferences, as well as the Circuit Meetings. During the last war we sponsored a sewing and knitting unit for the American Red Cross, sewing regularly once a week for a full day. On October 5, 1947, only a few weeks before the Diamond Jubilee of the congregation, the Ladies' Aid celebrated its 35th Anniversary in a special service at the church, and with a dinner and entertainment at the school for the members and their immediate families. During these 35 years the Aid had grown from 34 to 110 members. Officers were Mrs. C. E. Kasten, Mrs. J. Nieman, Mrs. H. Kruse, and Mrs. C. Poole."

Wheat Ridge Seals for the support of tuberculosis sanitorium at Wheat Ridge, Colo. were all sold by the Walther Leaguers. An adult Bible Class was conducted by the Seniors while the Juniors meet with the Sunday School in its Bible Class on Sunday morning. Topic discussions upon current events in the church, school, business, and the world were presented at nearly every meeting. Members of both societies entered the Talent Festivals sponsored by the Walther League, presented numerous plays, and, up unto the time of World War II, both Leagues sponsored Reunion Services for the confirmation classes of the preceding past ten years. Leaguers caroled at the hospitals and the homes of shut-ins. For several years the Walther League Messenger and the Lutheran Witness were placed in the Evanston Public Library and Evanston Hospital by Leaguers. A food and clothing campaign for starving Europe was conducted by the Leagues. Officers of the Senior Walther League were Miss Ruth Wahls, Miss Elsie Kiel, Miss Ann Ramos, and Miss Louise Nieman. Officers of the Junior Walther League were Ralph Schuett, George Richards, Miss Darlene Grauman, Miss Lillian Woltman. Miss Lillian Ecker and Miss Norma Graper were Junior Counselors.

Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of Bethlehem Congregation on November 23rd included Pastor Gehrs to deliver the festival sermons in German at the two forenoon services, and the Rev. O. F. Arndt the English sermon in the evening. The Sunday School gave \$200 from its treasury as a thank-offering to the Church for its 75th Anniversary. Staff of Sunday School was Mr. John A Jaeger, Supt.; Mr. Carl Grass, Miss Vangel Mathwick, Mrs. Ervin Elsholz, Miss Dorothy Harloff, Miss Martha Bensch, Miss Marie Kiel, Mrs. Evelyn Steffens, Miss Elsie Kiel.

Installation of officers was held in the English service on the first Sunday in January.

Officers of the P.T.A. were Mrs. Victor Nelson, Mrs. Harold Karsten, Mrs. Fred Harloff, and Mrs. Edward Schippman. Members of the Counting Board were Raymond Thiel, Herman Kruse, Gustave Sellman, David Stewart, Charles Thiel, C. G. Gavin, William Schreiber, Raymond Dorband, John Kluge, Harry Thiel, and Alvin Berg.

An outdoor bulletin board was erected in front of church as a memorial to the four young men who gave their lives for their country.

**1948.** The Long-Playing record was produced on a vinyl disk. Land's Polaroid camera printed pictures in a minute. Public clamor for television began; the FCC froze new licenses. The Jewish state of Israel was established and first war occurred between Israel and the Arab states over Palestine. Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in India. The World Council of Churches was established. Cordelia Cox became the first woman to head a major U.S. Lutheran agency as director of Lutheran Immigration. The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States changed its name to The Lutheran Church-- Missouri Synod.

Bethlehem's Athletic Club was allowed to use one of the pool tables and Mr. Hendrichs allowed to purchase the other for \$25. Mid-week Lenten collections were to go to Units for Europe, Synod's Relief

plan. The chairmen of various boards were appointed to serve with Pastor Rathke in revising the constitution. Charge for rental of school hall by members only was set at \$25., including \$12 for janitor service, \$3. for Ladies' Aid for use of dishes and \$10. to the church. No alcoholic beverages were to be served. English services last two Sundays in July and first two in August were at 8:00 am instead of 10:45 am. "A motion was made and carried that we send an excuse instead of a delegate to the Northern Illinois district Convention." The bowling schedule was revised so voters don't bowl on the evenings of voters' meetings. A new constitution was approved and sent to Northern Illinois District officials. Permission was given to start Cub Scout den under supervision of the Board of Christian Education and the P. T. A. Staff salaries were increased 15%: pastor \$3450.; Mr. Jaeger, \$2972.; Mr. Mirow, \$2896.; Mr. Grass, \$2222.; Miss Mathwick, \$1725.; Mrs. Jaeger, \$661. An every member canvass was made to raise funds. A brass missal stand, candle sticks, and candelabra were presented to the church. The Building Fund became the Church Building Fund.

**1949.** The U. S. recognized Israel as a nation. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was established. RCA offered 45 rpm records. Community Antenna Television, forerunner to cable, was formed. Luis Munoz Marin was inaugurated as the first elected governor of Puerto Rico. The first credit card was issued. Mao Tse-tung declared the People's Republic of China.

At Bethlehem, 50 new English hymnals were purchased. The Poor Fund was retained as a separate fund and not placed into the general treasury. A Bethlehem 8th grader ranked highest among 500 students from all Evanston schools taking exam and two others are in the top 50.

The Ladies' Aid presented the Pastor with a car, using his old car as a trade-in. The Men's Club bought a wire recorder to bring the church service to our shut-ins.

**1950.** U.S. Forces entered combat in Korea. Regular color television programs were transmitted. A.C. Nielsen's Audimeters tracked viewer television watching. The National Council of Churches was founded. Senator McCarthy began Anti-Communist hearings. Walter A. Maier, professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, executive secretary of the Walther League, and first speaker on the Lutheran Hour, died. The Kingery expressway opened. The population of Evanston was 73,641. Beth Emet, the Free Synagogue, was organized at Evanston. The Unity Center of Christianity was founded in Evanston. Bethlehem began the year with 943 communicants, 102 children in the Day School and 133 in the Sunday School. Pastor Rathke received a call from his former church in Wisconsin, but by a unanimous vote was asked to remain at Bethlehem, which he accepted as the Lord's will.

**1951.** There are one and a half million TV sets in U.S., a tenfold jump in one year. Cinerama introduces a wide, curved screen and three projectors. Computers were sold commercially. Still cameras got built-in flash units. The Orthodox Lutheran Conference was formed. Chicago's Dearborn Street subway was completed. The Edens Expressway opened. George Stephen, an employee at Weber Brothers Metal Works in Chicago, fashioned two unrelated metal shapes into a kettle-shape grill and began selling them as George's Barbecue Kettle. In 1965 a division of Weber Brothers became Weber-Stephen Products Co. Back-yard grilling took off. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's apartment buildings at 860 and 800 North Lake Shore Drive were completed. At Bethlehem, Mr. John A. Jaeger accepted a call to New York. A lot was purchased on Wilder Street for \$3100 for the purpose of erecting a new parsonage. Miss Edith Kruse became Organist and Choir Director.

**1952.** 3-D movies offered thrills to the audience. Bing Crosby's company tested video recording. Sony offered a miniature transistor radio. Univac projected the winner of the presidential election on CBS. Telephone numbers added area codes. Puerto Rico adopted a constitution and became a commonwealth. The first contraceptive pill was introduced. The CTA became the exclusive provider of Chicago bus, rapid-transit, and streetcar rides. The first self-service meat department was opened by Jewel Tea. The new parsonage at 1406 Wilder was completed at a cost of approximately \$22,000. New basketball uniforms were bought with an offering at the church door.

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