

Pastor and Professor Emeritus Wayne Ten Broek  
*A Faithful Servant*  
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What does it take to be a faithful servant? Is it a gift? Is it pure determination and hard work? Is it a zealous heart? I believe it is all of the above. The Lord gave all of them to Wayne Ten Broek and sculpted him into a great scholar, teacher, and pastor, as will be illustrated.

### **South Dakota Roots: Upbringing and Education in the Dakotas**

Born in his maternal grandmother's home in Swastika, ND, located twelve miles north of McIntosh, SD, Wayne Barney Ten Broek entered quietly into a harsh world on April 12, 1918. For the first twelve years of his life, Ten Broek grew up on the family ranch, north of McIntosh, SD. During that time, he attended a rural one-room public school through the eight elementary grades.<sup>1</sup> Speaking of his Dakota upbringing, Ten Broek remarked, "You should never be ashamed of your roots... the people that live out there know that they can't be guaranteed a good year, the next year... You appreciate the lessons that that kind of a life leaves with you... Your real attachments are to people. Simple things mean something... The simple things of life are the important things."<sup>2</sup> His mother desired that he continue his education, but was not comfortable with sending him to board in McIntosh. So, his parents sent him to the new academy in Mobridge, South Dakota: Northwestern Lutheran Academy.

High school life at the Academy in those days was fairly bland. Unlike today's high schools, education was the primary and almost exclusive concern. The school had very little to speak of in extra-curricular events. Ten Broek recalled that the Northwestern Lutheran Academy student life consisted of "nothing in the way of athletics really... Basically, I would say, sitting at the desk and studying. I can't think of anything really exciting about those days, but I did receive a very fine education. That small faculty held you to the grindstone."<sup>3</sup>

One of four classmates to graduate from the Academy in 1935, Ten Broek recalled how his desire for the ministry was kindled,

When I got to the Academy, Reverend Gamm... was the one who confirmed me and during those years always kept aglow the idea of going on to Northwestern alive in my heart. Remember these are the Depression years... The two tutors, Oswald and especially Jerry Martin also kept alive this desire, "Go on to

Northwestern!"...When I graduated, the Depression was still with us..., and so Jerry Martin took me in his car and brought me to Wisconsin.<sup>4</sup>

So began his studious scholarship and love for God's Word which would stay with him the rest of his life.

Having arrived at Northwestern College, Ten Broek remembered fondly studying and partaking in all the college life had to offer. He reminisced being spurred on in his studies for the ministry by his football coach,

We were a very close knit group... Umnus came in our freshman year as the coach. He was one man who really melded you with the idea of the ministry ahead of you. In the classrooms we were taught the hard, old way to get it, and get it, and get it. But we weren't really given the incentive to go on to Seminary... there was not that much positive push in those days. But Umnus would say, "You think this is tough, wait 'till you get out in the field and start doing mission work!"<sup>5</sup>

It was during the college years, that Ten Broek was reintroduced to his future wife, Mildred Meyer. He had met her once when he was six years old. His mother and her mother were close friends and had kept in touch over the years. Well, nothing really developed during his college years. But, he remarked, "When I got to the Seminary, the association became more friendly... we were engaged during that last year at Seminary."<sup>6</sup>

On Thursday, June 4, 1942, Candidate Ten Broek graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. However, only four men from his class of 26 candidates received calls that day. Why? Professor Meyer of the Seminary wrote in the Northwestern Lutheran,

So many men now stand ready to do the work of the church, but, sorry to say, only four of them have so far been called into definite service...That leaves 22 still available but unemployed.

In response to our prayers God gave us these men, not that we might have some numbers to parade before the public, nor that we should waste them by enforced idleness. God wants us to use these precious gifts of His. Opportunities for work are plenteous. And can we honestly say that God has not provided us with the necessary means to employ these men? Our synodical treasury may not be bulging, but what about the financial ability of the individual members of our Synod? And even if we deprive ourselves of our last penny, do we fear that God might go back on His promise that He will provide for us?

These 22 candidates are a precious gift of God to us; they are also a challenge to our faith and love.<sup>7</sup>

The Synod took the Lord up on that challenge. Ten Broek noted that another of the “real pushes for doing the mission work was the fact that the government was looking for recruits.”<sup>8</sup> World War II was in full swing. The government was looking for all sorts of recruits, and ministerial candidates who were not working in the field were still available in the government’s book. So, Ten Broek received a mission call to the Dakota-Montana District.

### Time in the Parish Ministry

History may view Pastor Ten Broek’s twelve years in the parish ministry as only one man serving “many small congregations in the Dakotas,”<sup>9</sup> but this is where his years of education were first applied to life. If one were to read the Dakota-Montana Proceedings stating that Pastor Ten Broek was, “ordained and installed... in Cavalier Mission, Cavalier, North Dakota, on Sunday, March 28,”<sup>10</sup> he might assume that Ten Broek had waited almost a year for a call. In reality, he had been sent, “In October, 1942... assigned to do exploratory mission work in Langdon and Cavalier, ND.”<sup>11</sup> So, why don’t the records show this information about the Langdon call?

Pastor Ten Broek recollected his short ministry in Langdon: “the first week I had no music... For five dollars, I bought a push organ... The second Sunday I was there, there was this man in a black suit... The fellow asked me, ‘What are you doing here?’”<sup>12</sup> It was a Missouri Synod pastor from a nearby country church. After notifying the perspective synod board members, Pastor Ten Broek was asked to withdraw from Langdon and focus on Cavalier, with the stipulation that the Missouri Synod pastor would come into Langdon and serve that congregation. So Pastor Ten Broek focused on Cavalier.

In Cavalier, Ten Broek recalled, “I rented a little room... no organ... one person in church... one person came... at times there were six or seven... from October until March... One time I was so disgusted I got my car out of storage, packed all my books in the trunk, and went

down to the nearest Wisconsin Synod pastor in Valley City, South Dakota, 200 miles away... He told me to try it again. So I did.”<sup>13</sup>

Two months later, Pastor Ten Broek was called to serve a congregation in Rapid City, South Dakota. He was installed “as pastor at Rapid City, South Dakota, by A. Eberhardt, May 23, 1943.”<sup>14</sup> “On October 30, 1943 he married Mildred Meyer in Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, WI.”<sup>15</sup> He was “there for only 2 years. That too was during the course of the war. That was a most unstable time. We had a big air-base out in Rapid City.”<sup>16</sup> It was there that Pastor Ten Broek did some “chaplain” work for the Lutheran soldiers in our fellowship service who served at Rapid City. He, his wife and first daughter, Anita, “had no house,” nor did the congregation have a “church [building].” During that time, Pastor Ten Broek “also served in Piedmont and Sturgis... as a vacancy pastor.”<sup>17</sup> He enjoyed his time there, though it was brief. About two years later, he was called to serve congregations in Henry and Florence, South Dakota.

Pastor Ten Broek said of his time in Henry and Florence: “Those were very fine congregations... real old established congregations. That is what I needed... learned by trial and error, and of course the old practical theology book by your side... I loved teaching the young people.”<sup>18</sup>



Pastor Ten Broek and the 1951 Confirmation Class. [photo provided by Anita Abraham]

During this time in his life, Pastor Ten Broek experienced one of his most heart-warming moments. One afternoon after teaching confirmation, he came home to find a man and his wife sitting in his living room. The man was a former captain of the Army paratroopers, Clare Reiter. He told Pastor Ten Broek that he wanted to study for the ministry. Clare was “one of the first second career men back in the middle ‘forties.” Professor Ten Broek fondly recalled, “I preached at his ordination and installation service.”<sup>19</sup>

During his time at these two congregations, the Lord also blessed Pastor Ten Broek and his wife with three more children, “Dorothy '46, Joyce '47, Garret '53.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Time at Northwestern Lutheran Academy (1954-1979)**

Though he had been blessed to serve these two congregations, the Lord decided that it was time for Pastor Ten Broek to move onto another field of ministry: Northwestern Lutheran Academy, his Alma Mater . Pastor Ten Broek left the congregations of Henry and Florence and arrived at Mobridge in 1954. Pastor G. Baer installed professor Ten Broek on September 7, 1954.<sup>21</sup> Notably, Professor Ten Broek also had received the “call to be the first dean of NLA in 1954. He held this position for 11 years, then served 15 more teaching Latin, religion, and ancient history.”<sup>22</sup>

In 1955, the Ten Broek’s last child, Arne, was born. Concerning his paternal involvement, Professor Ten Broek admitted, “I’m afraid that that’s where I was probably the weakest. I spent so much time in the work. My wife raised the kids I guess... We did a lot of camping. I was always there for them... As I think back now I wish I could have done more.”<sup>23</sup> But he underestimated his role as father, for he also noted, “They are all fine Christian people.” His son, Garret, remembered fondly the time spent with his father, “[Dad] took us on camping trips throughout the North American Rockies.”<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Ten Broek herself, was a “very able woman... a lot of gifts”<sup>25</sup> who complimented Professor Ten Broek well.

As a professor at the Academy, he devoted his whole self and all his abilities to equipping and challenging the students. His colleagues called him a “dynamic professor,”<sup>26</sup> “a

man with gifts... and a faithful servant.”<sup>27</sup> President Malchow noted, “I can say, very factually, that I do not recall receiving a single complaint from a student or a parent about Professor Ten Broek. That says something.”<sup>28</sup> Not surprising, his students were more than happy to share their memories about this magnanimous *magister*. Their words speak volumes of his faithfulness, his love for his students and his desire to equip them to serve the Lord in their lives:

“He always went out of his way to get us to remember Latin vocables. I will always remember that *surgo* means to rise up and he somehow related that to Surge milking machines.”<sup>29</sup>

Wayne Ten Broek was a Professor for the entire four years that I attended Northwestern Lutheran Academy. In my Junior year I attended Prof. Ten Broek's Religion Class. One day I fell asleep in class and he quietly excused all of the students and emptied the classroom so I would awake to an empty silent room. This was a rather effective cure for my sleepiness!<sup>30</sup>

I remember Prof. Ten Broek mostly for the Latin classes. Even though I was not planning to go on to Northwestern, I took four years of Latin. The only reason that I took the last two years was Prof. Ten Broek. In those days, the juniors and seniors were together for Latin. We translated Cicero one year, and ~~Homer~~<sup>Vergil</sup> the next. We admired his knowledge of the language and his method of teaching. Those two years could be murder if not for someone like Prof Ten Broek to bring it alive. I thoroughly enjoyed my classes with him.<sup>31</sup>

He seemed to really love teaching Latin. I think the enthusiasm he projected helped my interest. At Christmas time, we always spent a class singing Christmas carols in Latin. I still remember the first couple lines of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: “Rudolphus cervus nostrum, rubicundum habitat . . . .”<sup>32</sup>

One thing that comes to mind was his complete devotion to teaching. The only day I remember school being canceled due to a blizzard, at NLA, Prof. Ten Broek made it anyway. No streets were opened. He was the furthest prof but he made it ... on snow shoes. The year was about 1974? <sup>33</sup> 1975

I remember him as a man who had a lot of experience, knew his subject material well, he communicated it well to his students and always made the class interesting. In fact, there were people in my class who took the class, not because it was required for their future college studies, but because they enjoyed the class so much.<sup>34</sup>

At first, he seemed more stern and humorless than my older brother had led me to believe. In retrospect, I understand that this was his way of assuring respect from us adolescents. Later, after our respect for him was fully established, we saw the

"real" Professor Ten Broek, a warm, caring man, with a delightful wit and a towering intellect. I guess what "reached me" the most was his dedication: to our Savior, to the public ministry, and to us students.

Professor Ten Broek's explanation of the etymology of the Present Singular Imperative of the Latin word meaning "to go,"... It seems that a Roman housewife was doing her housework. (Professor Ten Broek was quite animated in telling this story, and he vividly depicted a lady sweeping.) Then, Professor Ten Broek moved next to the teacher's desk, and placed one foot on top of it. Then, the story continued, the sweeping brought a mouse out from under the kitchen counter (never mind that there were no kitchen counters in ancient Rome!), and the housewife leapt up on top of the desk, shrieking "I!" We freshmen were simultaneously startled to see Professor Ten Broek standing on top of the desk, shrieking "I!" and highly amused!

I heard Professor Ten Broek preach a few times; I remember his sermons being very well constructed and presented. I recall one sermon in particular; the subject was the Antichrist. Professor Ten Broek's years of experience in teaching served him well in teaching that subject.<sup>35</sup>

In class, he was a dynamo. He would take "parts" of characters we were studying and then speak to us in character. As the character, he would raise his voice to emphasize points, usually when it was the punch line. Which not only made us laugh, but drove the point home, as well. He would change the pitch of his voice, whine, pound on the table, stand on his chair, and pontificate--all in character.

I particularly remember when we were studying Cicero and Cataline. Prof Ten Broek would pretend to call Cataline or Cicero on the telephone, making greatly exaggerated dialing motions. When the other person came on the line, he would change his voice and begin, "Hey! Cataline!" It always riveted our attention because we knew he was going to reveal an important insight into our belabored translations.

He was always very distinguished, but he could be prevailed upon to poke fun at himself on occasion. For example, at pep rallies he might come out dressed as a cheerleader and shout, "Ab, Cum, De, Ex, Prae, Pro, Sine!" Until it became a cheer with everyone chanting. We loved that.<sup>36</sup>

Professor William Birsching, a colleague at the Academy from 1959 - 1979, recalled some girls telling him that they signed up for the third year of Latin, and had no idea why.

Professor Ten Broek had talked them into it, noting, "He was an excellent Latin teacher."<sup>37</sup>

When the closing of the Academy seemed inevitable, Professor Ten Broek knew well what was about to happen. Pastor Malchow recollected,

I doubt he would have accepted that call [to Northwestern College] if the school would have continued, because he loved South Dakota and that school was a very intricate part of his life... it was very distressing for him when the school closed.

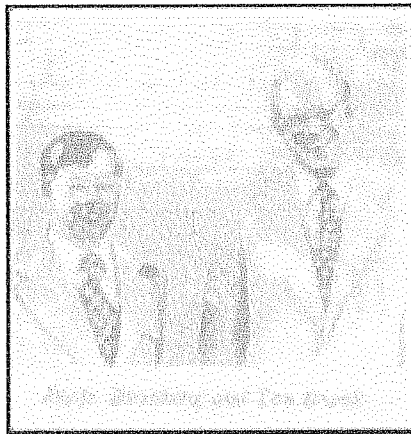


Although, he never complained about it... At our very last faculty meeting... his voice cracked and gave out because we were saying our good-byes... He was the secretary for the faculty at that time and his closing sentence was, "The meeting adjourned. *sine dei*" which means... until you are called together again... which in effect was, "This is it"<sup>38</sup>

At the speech given at one of NLA's reunions, Professor Ten Broek remarked, "One of the saddest days of my life was the day I turned in my keys, realizing the Academy had closed."<sup>39</sup>

### At Northwestern College and Beyond (1979-2000)

In 1979, when the closure of NLA seemed evident, Professor Ten Broek waited for the Lord to use him elsewhere. Simultaneously, Professor Birsching received the music call at Northwestern College and Professor Ten Broek received a call to teach "classical languages at NWC, concentrating on Latin and helping with Greek."<sup>40</sup> He was installed as a "Professor at NWC, by Karl A. Gurgel, September 9, 1979."<sup>41</sup>



Professors Birsching and Ten Broek in 1979, making a start at Northwestern College. [photo from Northwestern Today]

For eight years, Professor Ten Broek taught Latin courses, including the remedial Latin course for students who had little or no background. He also assisted with the Greek classes. He was also the student printer faculty coordinator at the college. When he realized that he was getting tired and wasn't able to put into the work the perfection it deserved, he decided to trust the Lord and the next generation with the work he had been carrying out faithfully.

After forty-five years of service, Professor Ten Broek did not want to find himself in a situation where he was too old or too feeble to do his job well. He made up his mind “never shall it be that you get to the age that you can’t really stay ahead of the game. Then, it’s time to step down.”<sup>42</sup> The Lord certainly used his servant, Wayne Ten Broek, to reach out with the gospel and to equip others to do the same. He was a shining example; a man who put to good use the gifts the Lord had given him. As Professor Korthals said, “here is an illustration of what the Lord meant by ‘Well done, good and faithful servant!’”<sup>43</sup>

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“Since 1987, together with his wife, Mildred, he has enjoyed reading, yard and garden work, woodworking, and travels across the states keeping in touch with family and friends”<sup>44</sup> As of the publication of this paper, Professor Ten Broek and his wife have “8 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.”<sup>45</sup>



Pastor & Mrs. Ten Broek in 1994 at  
St. Paul's Centennial Celebration  
Henry, SD. [photo by Karen Mischke]

APPENDIX:

Biographical Notes  
Wayne Barney Ten Broek

Born in Swastika, ND (a then rural post office, located twelve miles north of McIntosh, SD) on April 12, 1918.

Grew up on the family ranch, north of McIntosh, SD; attended a rural one-room public school through the eight elementary grades.

Spent his high school years at Northwestern Lutheran Academy in Mobridge, SD, graduating in June, 1935.

Attended Northwestern College, Watertown, WI, graduating with a BA degree in the Liberal Arts in June, 1939.

Pursued the course for the Holy Ministry at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Thiensville, WI. He graduated in 1942 with a CRM (Candidate for the Holy Ministry) degree.

In October, 1942, he was assigned to do exploratory mission work in Langdon and Cavalier, ND. While on this assignment he was ordained into the Holy Ministry in Cavalier in March, 1943.

In May, 1943, he accepted the call to be the first resident pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Rapid City, SD.

On October 30, 1943 he married Mildred Meyer in Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, WI.

Their first child, Anita Suzanne, was born in Rapid City in August, 1944.

In January, 1945, he accepted the call to serve as pastor of the dual parish of St. Paul Lutheran, Henry and St. Peter, Lutheran, Florence, SD.

Daughters Dorothy Edith (1946) and Joyce Beatrice (1947) and son, Garret Baarnt, (1953) were born in Watertown, SD.

In August, 1954, he accepted the call to be Dean of Students and classroom instructor in Religion and Latin at his high school alma mater, Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, SD.

Son, Arne George, was born in Mobridge in 1955.

He served in the deanship until 1964, when he accepted a full academic teaching assignment in Religion, Ancient History and Latin. He continued serving at the Academy as classroom instructor, registrar, and vice president until the school's closure in 1979.

During his years at the Academy he pursued summertime postgraduate work at Northern State College in Aberdeen, SD, at the University Colorado, at the University of Wisconsin, at the University of Kansas.

He served as vacancy pastor in many Dakota parishes, some for extended periods, during his twenty-five years at Mobridge.

When the Academy closed in 1979 he was called to teach Latin and Greek at Northwestern College, Watertown, WI. He served in this role until his retirement in 1987. During his years at Northwestern College he continued postgraduate studies at the University of Washington and at Millersville University in Pennsylvania.

Since 1987, together with his wife, Mildred, he has enjoyed reading, yard and garden work, woodworking, and travels across the states keeping in touch with family and friends.

**[This outline was provided by Professor Ten Broek]**

### Works Cited

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Collection of E-mails received from former NLA students of Professor Ten Broek as noted in end notes.

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Malchow, Daniel. Personal audio interview in Waukesha, WI. March 19, 2000.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Biographical Notes on Wayne Barney Ten Broek provided by Professor Ten Broek. (See Appendix)
- 2 Professor Ten Broek Video Interview, March 26, 2000, Watertown, Wisconsin.
- 3 Ten Broek Interview.
- 4 Ten Broek Interview.
- 5 Ten Broek Interview.
- 6 Ten Broek Interview.
- 7 J.P. Meyer, *The Northwestern Lutheran*, vol. 29, June 28, 1942; #13; Milwaukee, WI. pg. 204-205.
- 8 Ten Broek Interview.
- 9 Leon Piepenbrink, "New Personnel on Campus," *Northwestern Today* (December, 1979), 4.
- 10 J.J. Wendland, *The Northwestern Lutheran*, vol. 30, April 18, 1943; #8; Milwaukee, WI. pg. 127.
- 11 Biographical Notes.
- 12 Ten Broek Interview.
- 13 Ten Broek Interview.
- 14 Proceedings of the 12th Convention of the Dakota-Montana Dist., June 13-16, 1944, Bowdle, SD, p. 8.
- 15 Biographical Notes.
- 16 Ten Broek Interview.
- 17 Ten Broek Interview.
- 18 Ten Broek Interview.
- 19 Ten Broek Interview.
- 20 E-mail submitted by Garret Ten Broek, Wayne Ten Broek's son, class of 1971, Monday, March 13, 2000.
- 21 Proceedings of the 18th Convention of the Dakota-Montana District, July 17-19, 1956, held at Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, SD, p. 8.
- 22 Piepenbrink, 4.
- 23 Ten Broek Interview.
- 24 E-mail submitted by Garret Ten Broek.
- 25 Professor James Korthals Audio Interview, March 23, 2000. Mequon, Wisconsin.
- 26 Pastor Daniel Malchow Audio Interview, March 19, 2000, Waukesha, Wisconsin.
- 27 Professor Korthals Interview.
- 28 Pastor Malchow Interview.
- 29 E-mail submitted by Ginny Glock, class of 1968, Friday, February 25, 2000.
- 30 E-mail submitted by Thomas J Frey, Saturday, February 26, 2000
- 31 E-mail submitted by Steve Danekas, class of 1967, Sunday, February 27, 2000.
- 32 E-mail submitted by Keith Rabenberg, class of 1971, Monday, February 28, 2000.
- 33 E-mail submitted by Brian & Kay Kolb, class of 1977, Friday, February 25, 2000.
- 34 E-mail submitted by Glen Hieb, class of 1972, Wednesday, March 1, 2000.
- 35 E-mail submitted by Dana Rabenberg, class of 1970, Thursday, March 2, 2000.
- 36 E-mail submitted by Pamela A. (Wishard) Miner, class of 1977, Friday, March 3, 2000.
- 37 William Birsching Interview, March 21, 2000, Watertown, Wisconsin.
- 38 Pastor Malchow Interview.
- 39 Professor Ten Broek giving a speech at one of the NLA Reunions held in Mobridge, SD. Tape given by Brian And Kay Kolb, Prarie City, SD.
- 40 Piepenbrink, 4.
- 41 District Proceedings from the 32nd Biennial Convention of the Western Wisconsin District, June 9-11, 1980, Northwestern College, Watertown, WI, p. 12.
- 42 Ten Broek Interview.
- 43 Professor Korthals Interview.
- 44 Biographical Notes.
- 45 E-mail submitted by Garret Ten Broek.