

Church History
Prof. Fredrich

Vanselow 34
D. Vanselow

Pastor Paul Lucas - A Man Tried by Fire

1978

Pastor Paul Lucas is not a man of renown. As a pastor of the Wisconsin Synod he's done little to cause ripples in the world of theology. He had a relatively short career as a pastor, a mere 16 years of service in the ministry. However, we members of the Wisconsin Synod have reason to rejoice and praise God for those 16 years of faithful service. Pastor Lucas was a man who came through difficult times and came through them as a shining example of a faithful Christian pastor governed by the Word of God.

Baptized Johann Friedrich Paul Lucas, he was born in the town of Lewitz in the province of Posen, ^(which city is Posen) Kingdom of Prussia on April 7, 1842. Posen is modern Poznań, a very large city in western Poland. Paul Lucas' father was the pastor of Lewitz; his mother died when he was still a child.

During his years at the Gymnasium at Züllichan the first major event leading to Paul Lucas' theological training occurred. Paul Lucas did not consider himself a Christian during his early years, whether it was due to a faulty understanding of faith or whether he truly was an unbeliever is not clear. While at home during a school vacation, Paul Lucas contracted a contagious disease. It seems that the disease was one of the normal childhood diseases (probably red measles) most children until recent years suffered through. Unfortunately he was sent back to school before the illness had completely passed. As a result Paul Lucas

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Medison, Wisconsin

went through a terrifying ordeal. He completely lost his sight. He was sent home immediately and all efforts to reverse the blindness at home were fruitless. Unwilling to give up, Paul was taken by his father to Berlin where he was treated by several eye specialists. Apparently the treatment was a lengthy process but it proved successful; his eyesight returned to a great extent.

While in Berlin and undergoing treatment Paul Lucas received another kind of cure, a cure for his lack of faith or doubt of its existence. Two pious Christian families in Berlin showed him a concern and love which opened his heart to them. The one family was that of a Dr. Kranichfeld and the other a Pastor Knaak, pastor of a Bohemian Lutheran congregation in Berlin. The continuous Christian love and application of the Gospel gave the Holy Spirit the opportunity to work on Paul Lucas. Paul, however, attributed a great portion of his assurance to a sermon of Pastor Knaak's based on John 3:16.

Shortly afterwards Paul returned home and had a very emotional reunion with his father. After all he had recently begun to see again and had for the first time taken the objective message of Christ crucified personally. This joyous occasion was compounded by Paul's decision to study for the ministry. Pastor Knaak, Paul's father and Paul jointly settled on the Barmen Missionhaus and missionary service as the best choice for Paul and in 1861 Paul enrolled. Upon completion of his training and passing his doctrinal examination, Paul was assigned to the Wisconsin Synod and left for America in 1865.

It is significant to note in what year Paul Lucas came to the Wisconsin Synod. It was a period of transition for the

Synod and one of dismay for the Prussian Church which had for a decade and a half supplied both pastors and funds for the struggling church of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Synod was growing toward confessional Lutheranism. The Prussian Church remained strongly unionistic. The Prussian Church Council was infuriated by the Wisconsin Synod's new practice of re-examining men sent over to fill its pulpits and refusing to accept men not confessionally Lutheran.

This practice could very well have meant that there would be no Pastor Paul Lucas of the Wisconsin Synod. Greatly to the credit of the Holy Spirit's guidance, however, Paul Lucas came to a very important conclusion while still undergoing his eye treatments in Berlin. Although he highly respected Pastor Knaak and even considered him his spiritual father, Paul Lucas came to the conclusion that unionism was wrong and could not stand the unionistic practices prevalent in Pastor Knaak's Berlin church.

Upon arrival in Wisconsin in mid-1865 Paul Lucas was subjected to doctrinal re-examination by members of the Synod. And contrary to J. P. Koehler's account,¹ Paul Lucas was not immediately installed and ordained. Information seems to indicate that he was found to be shaky on the Lutheran doctrines concerning Baptism and the Lord's Supper.² He was willing and eager to learn confessional Lutheranism from a comprehensive study of Scripture. Paul Lucas studied with a Missouri Synod pastor (Amtsnachbar). It isn't clear where or when this took place, however. It would seem from some sources that this was in Princeton at his first pastorate during the remainder of 1865;³ however, the

church records of St. John's, Princeton, indicate that it wasn't until the 3rd Sunday in Advent 1866 after a year's vacancy that Paul Lucas was installed.

According to the records of St. John's Pastor Lucas was put in a tough position. The congregation was torn by strife and Pastor Lucas' evangelical approach was met with good old German pig-headedness. Within the year Pastor Lucas accepted another call. Convention reports and his obituary in the Gemeinde-Blatt place him at Reedsburg for a short period of time in 1868.

I was unable to obtain any information about Pastor Lucas' service in Reedsburg, only a matter of months. The congregation *Pastor Lucas* in Reedsburg is *St. Peter's, a member of the LC-MS since Pastor Lucas left.* ~~Faith Lutheran Church and is served by a pastor from Hillpoint, Wisconsin.~~

Although nothing could be gathered from the congregation in Reedsburg, 1868 was an important year for Pastor Lucas on the synodical level. At the previous Synod Convention in 1867 the Wisconsin Synod made a formal declaration against church union. The German societies had felt the chilling of relations for several years already but hoped to convince the Wisconsin Synod to refrain from further confessionalism. In April of 1868 the Germans finally cut off all funds and manpower to the Synod.

It was also in 1867 that the General Council was formed. Iowa and Ohio raised questions on four issues which needed clarification before they would join. These four issues were brought up at the Synod Convention of 1868: altar and pulpit fellowship, secret societies, authority of the General Council

St. Paul's in what is now the city of Franklin on Milwaukee's far south side. At that time St. Paul's was a young and growing congregation organized only three years earlier, 1865. Unlike the Princeton congregation, the Franklin congregation was well-organized and dedicated to unified effort. Since St. Paul's had been served by Pastor Brenner of nearby Kilbourne Road Lutheran Church (St. John's, Oakwood Rd.) the members began immediate construction of a parsonage and later a barn. Pastor Lucas also assumed teaching duties at St. Paul's school. At present more detailed records are not available from St. Paul's.

In 1874 according to the records of St. Paul's and 1872 according to the records of First Lutheran, Beaver Dam, Pastor Lucas accepted a call to First Lutheran, Beaver Dam. The church had been founded in 1860 by Pastor Duborg ^{and served by Pastors} Behner, Reim and Sprengling. The records of the local newspaper indicate that the church did not become a Synod congregation until 1872.

At a congregational meeting in Nov. of 1875 Pastor Lucas was faced with a real problem. The vote was 44-29 against continued membership in the synod. The reason behind the whole question of synodical membership was secret societies, (the lodge) and close communion. As already mentioned, the Wisconsin Synod had resolved in the previous decade that membership in a lodge and altar fellowship could not be tolerated among members of the Synod.

Pastor Lucas came through; he and 25 families left First Lutheran and established St. Stephen's. St. Stephen's took

over against the member synods and the millenium. Secret societies and the millenium had already been dealt with by the Synod, but altar and pulpit fellowship were in the spotlight. It was immediately remarked by one of the pastors at the convention that altar and pulpit fellowship with Reformed and Union churches was incongruous with the stand taken the previous year against church union. Another pastor remarked that it might be good if Wisconsin Synod pastors preached and celebrated the sacrament in Reformed and Union churches if asked to, but would not allow Reformed and Union pastors to do the same in our churches.

Pastors Vorberg and Kittel and Professor Martin took turns at supporting church union and altar and pulpit fellowship. The main arguments were that the Wisconsin Synod had deviated from its original confessional stand and that the Wisconsin Synod was begun as a mission endeavor of the German societies and had no business breaking off on its own.

A vote was called; the three men mentioned and Pastor Lucas voted for continued altar and pulpit fellowship. The three who spoke out broke with the synod. Pastor Lucas, however, did not. The convention minutes simply explain that Pastor Lucas' vote was cast with doubt as to which was the correct stand. Apparently some of those at the convention spoke with him between sessions and convinced him of the scripturalness of the stand against altar and pulpit fellowship. He was convinced in any event, and changed his vote.

In September of 1868 Pastor Lucas received a call from

active interest in the Wisconsin Synod, the Seminary and Northwestern College. The experience did take a toll on Pastor Lucas' health. According to R. Pieper, Pastor Lucas became quite a nervous man and his health began failing. Pieper suggests that this was the main reason for Pastor Lucas' acceptance of a call to Two Rivers in 1878.

According to the records of St. John's, Two Rivers, nothing significant happened during Pastor Lucas' term of service there. Pastor Lucas' health continued to fail and his eyesight again, also. In 1881 Pastor Lucas and his congregation decided he should make a trip to Milwaukee to visit a hospital for treatment. However, while in Milwaukee at the end of July he became seriously ill and asked that some of his synodical brethren visit him. The above-mentioned Pastor R. Pieper was telegraphed and arrived July 24. Pastor Lucas lingered on for four more days and after receiving absolution and private communion died July 28.

Pastor Lucas lived only 39 years and spent 16 of those years as a pastor in the Wisconsin Synod. Sometime probably shortly after arriving in Wisconsin he married and was blessed with a son and a daughter. From the available records all that is known about the family is that the son was attending Northwestern College at the time of his father's death.

Pastor Lucas seems to have been a quiet man at heart, not outstanding, but zealous for the Lord. His life was marked by serious trials of faith, but in each case Pastor Lucas looked for guidance from God's Word and came out a confessionally Lutheran pastor. Because^{of} his background and training in a union-minded Prussia one can only marvel that he not only became a

Wisconsin Synod pastor but also remained a Wisconsin Synod pastor as the Synod itself grew in a firm stand based on Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

Footnotes

¹J. P. Koehler, The History of the Wisconsin Synod. (St. Cloud, Mn.: Sentinel Publishing Co., 1970) p. 111.

²R. Pieper, Gemeinde-Blatt, 1881, p. 188.

³Koehler, op. cit.; Pieper, op. cit.

Sources

Koehler, J.P., The History of the Wisconsin Synod, St. Cloud, Mn.: Sentinel Publishing Co., 1970.

Pieper, R., "Pastor Paul Lucas," Gemeinde-Blatt, Aug 7, 1881, pp. 187-189

Centennial booklet of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Beaver Dam.

Centennial booklet of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Franklin.

Centennial booklet of St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Beaver Dam.

Congregational minutes of St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church.

Convention reports of the Wisconsin Synod. June 11-17, 1868, at Racine.

Letter from Pastor Strohschein, St. John's, Princeton.

Letter from Pastor Moldenhaver, Faith, Reedsburg (living in Hill point, Wis.)

Pastor Glenn Moldenhauer
Box 27
Hillpoint, WI. 53937

Duane Vanselow
6010 N. 35th St. #308
Milwaukee, WI. 53209

Dear Duane,

I apologize for this late reply to your request of Feb. 22. The information you asked for was not easy to find and not much more than the fact that Pastor Lukas did serve the congregation in Reedsburg for less than a year, the year being 1868 or possibly 1867.

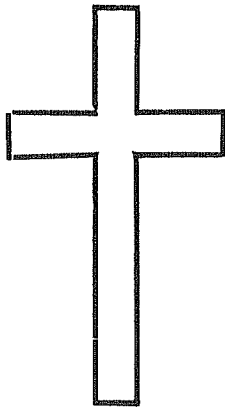
This congregation is St. Peter's of Reedsburg (LCMS). I serve Faith Ev. Lutheran Church of Reedsburg founded in 1965 by a group that left St. Peter's for confessional and somewhat less than confession reasons. One of the pastor's of St. Peter's did his best to check through old records of meetings but could find no mention of why Pastor Lukas stayed so short a time or anything pertaining to his confessionalism.

The first Lutheran congregation in this area was St. John's of Loganville. Under a Pastor Rohrlack who went to Milwaukee to meet with Dr. CFW Walther this congregation joined the LCMS. When he left to accept a call elsewhere this congregation was trying to decide where to build a new church building. The majority wanted it built on the hill in Loganville where it still stands. The minority from Reedsburg wanted it built on the plain closer to Reedsburg. They decided to leave St. John's of Loganville and call a pastor from the Wisconsin Synod. That was your Pastor Lukas who stayed with the congregation less than a year. After he left this group called Pastor Rohrlack again and he became the founding pastor of St. Peter's of Reedsburg.

I'm fairly certain that this is all the information that can be gathered concerning this Pastor Lukas from this source.

Sincerely,

Pastor Glenn Moldenhauer



St. John's Lutheran Church and School

Harvard & Clinton

Princeton, Wisconsin 54968

ROBERT P. PLESS, PASTOR
224 Harvard
295-6920

WALTER L. STROHSCHNEIN, PASTOR
Rt. 1, Box 285B
295-3193

STEVEN H. ENTER, PRINCIPAL
328 S. Clinton
295-3991

February 24, 1978

Mr. D. Vanselow
6010 N. 35th St. #308
Milwaukee, Wis. 53209

Dear Mr. Vanselow,

Received your letter re Pastor Lucas.

I cannot give you much information as our early secretarial records were lost. All I have is a bit of history from our 50th Anniversary Booklet of 1914 and from a man I buried about 20 years ago at the age of 100 years plus.

The history of St. John's prior to Pastor Lucas will enable you to understand him a bit better.

Before 1864, Reiseprediger conducted services in the area. They were pastors of the Wisconsin Synod. Sixteen members who were instructed by a certain Reiseprediger decided to establish a congregation. Pastor Kern was called and services were conducted in an empty store building in Princeton. There were many problems confronting this group and after one year pastor Kern accepted another call. There was a vacancy for about one year and then Pastor P. J. Lucas was called. He accepted and was installed by Pastor Meyerhoff of Fond du Lac on the 3rd Sunday in Advent, 1866.

Pastor Lucas was at once confronted by problems of the congregation. There were 16 members and 17 or more resolutions. The overwhelming problem was whether to build a stone or wooden building. He announced three separate meetings but very few people appeared and the meetings were not legal. A fourth meeting was announced for Dec. 26th, 1866 and it was resolved to build a wood frame building one block north of the parsonage. After these meetings they continued to squabble about the width of the side boards, the pitch of the roof and the size of doors and windows. You name it and they had it. These facts were related to me by this old gentleman who was a very mild and understanding person and not biased in any way. Just related facts as they were. Finally the building was completed in 1867 and dedicated the 4th Sunday in Advent, 1867.

Apparently these activities left much scar tissue and even though he was a kind and understanding man and his sermons were filled with love to God and man, the people refused to accept and love him. They refused to hear him. They came to church to quarrel and not to serve the Lord. (I might add that Satan has not stopped sowing seeds of stubbornness.) Pastor Lucas became discouraged and accepted a call to a church in Town Franklin, Milwaukee, Co. The congregation is not mentioned.

From the records I am forced to believe that unionism and lodges were not a problem during Pastor Lucas' time. The lodge problem occurred later.

I hope this will lead you to further information. You are welcome to visit here but there is nothing further that I can gather anywhere about Pastor Lucas.

Sincerely,

Member of Wisconsin Synod

W. L. Strohschein

St. Stephen's Centennial History 1875 - 1975

St. Stephen's was not the first Lutheran congregation organized in the city of Beaver Dam, but rather the second. It was duly organized by twenty-five staunch confessional Lutherans who, together with the sainted Reverend Paul Lucas, felt conscience-bound to withdraw from the congregation in which they thus far had held membership.

Their names follow in the order in which they appear in the first minutes of the congregation: Daniel Birkholz, John Zieske, Ferdinand Schwandt, Carl Bartz, August Kaatz, Henry Kraeger, Julius Kuhnke, Franz Boese, Frederick Nimmer, John Hoffmann, Frederick Schulze, Carl Neumann, Christian Elsesser, Christian Hinz, Godfrey Beier, Peter Birkenstock, William Hinz, Michael Mankowski, William Schultz, Robert Schroeder, August Fluegel, August Selchert, Herman Prellwitz, John Boettger, and W. Schroeder.

What prompted these men to organize a new congregation? We shall let them speak by quoting their own words: "Since the congregation in which we have thus far held membership, in a sinful manner, rejected our dear Lutheran Confession, and in a meeting held on the first Sunday in Advent, November 28, 1875, demanded of the pastor henceforth not to testify against the false religion of the Lodge, but to admit anyone to the Lord's Supper without examination, regardless of his impenitence; and since the congregation in that same meeting discontinued membership in their orthodox synod. . . we are conscience-bound to sever connections with such a gathering and meet today to organize a new congregation in which, may God give grace, all preaching and practice shall at all times be conducted in accordance with the Word of God and the confessions of the Lutheran Church.

We meet today, December 5, 1875, the second Sunday in Advent, for this our first congregational meeting in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen" (Translated from the German original)

This first meeting, called for the purpose of organizing, was held in the so-called Lawrence block, corner of Front and Center Streets. The name chosen was St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was decided to join the Wisconsin Synod and the Reverend P. Lucas was called as the first pastor.

Within a week property was purchased at the corner of Rowell and South Center streets for the sum of \$1000.00. On the small piece of land was a house and a barn. The barn was immediately remodeled into a church and dedicated to the service of the Lord.

The congregation has shown an active interest in and support of the Synod since its very beginning. As early as 1877 St. Stephen's whole-heartedly agreed to support Synod in the building of a Seminary. In the same year they sent the Thanksgiving Offering for our college in Watertown.

In 1883 the property upon which the present church stands, at the corner of West Maple Avenue and West Street, was purchased for \$1025.00. The little church on Rowell Street was moved across the Madison Street bridge to this new location. The old property was then sold.

By the grace of God the congregation grew steadily and soon the little church was too small. In 1887 they decided to build a new church. A local contractor was engaged and the church was completed the same year. The cornerstone of this church, bearing the year 1887, has found an appropriate place at the rear of our present church building. The old church then served as the school building.

A parsonage was built in 1903 and in 1905 the church bells were purchased. In 1908 the church was substantially enlarged and completely renovated by the ever increasing congregation.

English worship services were introduced in 1915; and from then until 1958 both German and English worship services were conducted each Sunday.

Due to the rapid growth of the congregation, it was decided to build a new church in 1919. This new church (our present building) was dedicated on March 14, 1920 at a total cost of \$76,000.00. The total amount had been subscribed for by the members at the time of dedication.

On December 6, 1925 the congregation celebrated its Golden Jubilee. For the occasion the church was decorated, the school house renovated and a hot water heating plant installed in the parsonage.

School enrollment had outgrown the white frame school and in 1929 a new modern brick school was built at a cost of \$68,000. It was intended to be a school with four classrooms, a confirmation classroom, and an assembly room. However, a continually rising enrollment made it necessary to convert the building into a six classroom school.



Former Church - Built in 1887

Pastors Who Have Served the Congregation



Pastor Lucas +
1875-1878



Pastor Probst +
1878-1881



Pastor Muehlhauser +
1881-1885



Pastor Goldammer +
1885-1896



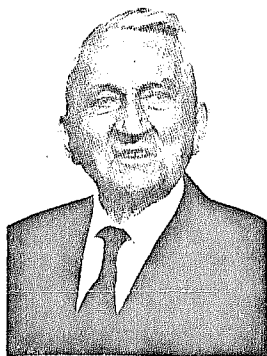
Pastor John Meyer +
1896-1902



Pastor G. Stern +
1902-1909



Pastor A. Arendt +
1909-1915



Pastor L.C. Kirat +
1915-1965



Pastor H. Johne
1957-1961



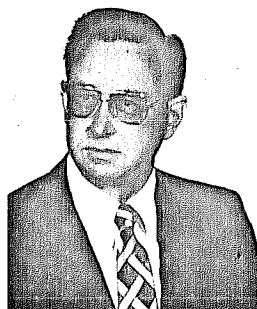
Pastor E. Huebner
1961-



Pastor D. Raddatz
1965-1970



Pastor W. Balza
1970-1974



Pastor M. Sordahl
1975-

Missing: Pastor L. Pingel
1942-1944

Beschreibung der Gemeinde.

Die die Gemeinde zu welcher wir bis dahin
 gehörten, ist nicht in gelobter Weise von
 unserm lieben Gott. Bekanntlich lobgefragt
 hat, u. in der Gemeinde. Versammlung am Advent,
 den 28. Nov. 75 ist von Pastor Quinzler, weilte,
 das Küstlein des Logen. Dieses Werk war
 zu, was zu, u. einem jeden ungegriffel das
 f. Abendmahl zu, was zu, aber so wo so
 in dem Spruch zu, was zu, da ist für die Gemein-
 de in der selben Versammlung von ihrer vork-
 gläubigen Synode wurde u. ist dahin aus-
 gesprochen das sie die frohde Drohungen der
 göttlichen Abt nicht mehr glauben. So können
 wir Gewissens halber nicht als ungläubige
 Menschen nicht mehr bleiben, sondern können
 uns mit unserm Pastor ^{in dem} von demselben, u.
 Kosten für die ~~in dem~~ Gemeinde ~~in dem~~
 Gemein. zusammen in welcher, so Gott Gnade giebt,
 allzeit ungehindert weiter gehen. Nicht u. dem
 Bekanntheit der Welt. Die wir geliebt u. gepre-

Wohlwundersoll. - Wir fallen nun zu
am 5. Dec. für den Advent unsern ersten
Gemein-Absammlung im Namen Gottes der
Mater in der Kolumbe in St. Gottes
Amen.

P. Lucas Weber
Gemein Kirchner

Johann Ziesbein ✓
Ferdinand Schwant ✓

Eurt Lenz
August Klotz

Heinrich Brüggner ✓
Julius Gubnke

Frany Böje
Dietrich Wimmer

Johann Hoffmann ✓
Friedrich Schube

Call Sonne

Carl Neumann ✓
Friedrich Elsasser ✓

Friedrich Gies
Gottfried Prager ✓

~~...~~ Peter Beckenstuck
Wilhelm King

Nicolaus Hankowki

~~...~~ 25
" Wilhelm Schütz ✓
" Robert Schroder ✓
" August Hugel ✓
" August Julius ✓
" Hermann ... ✓
" Johan Müller ✓
25 ... ✓

Beaver Creek, 1855

1. In the first of the following
 2. In the second of the following
 3. In the third of the following
 4. In the fourth of the following
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 20. In the twentieth of the following

