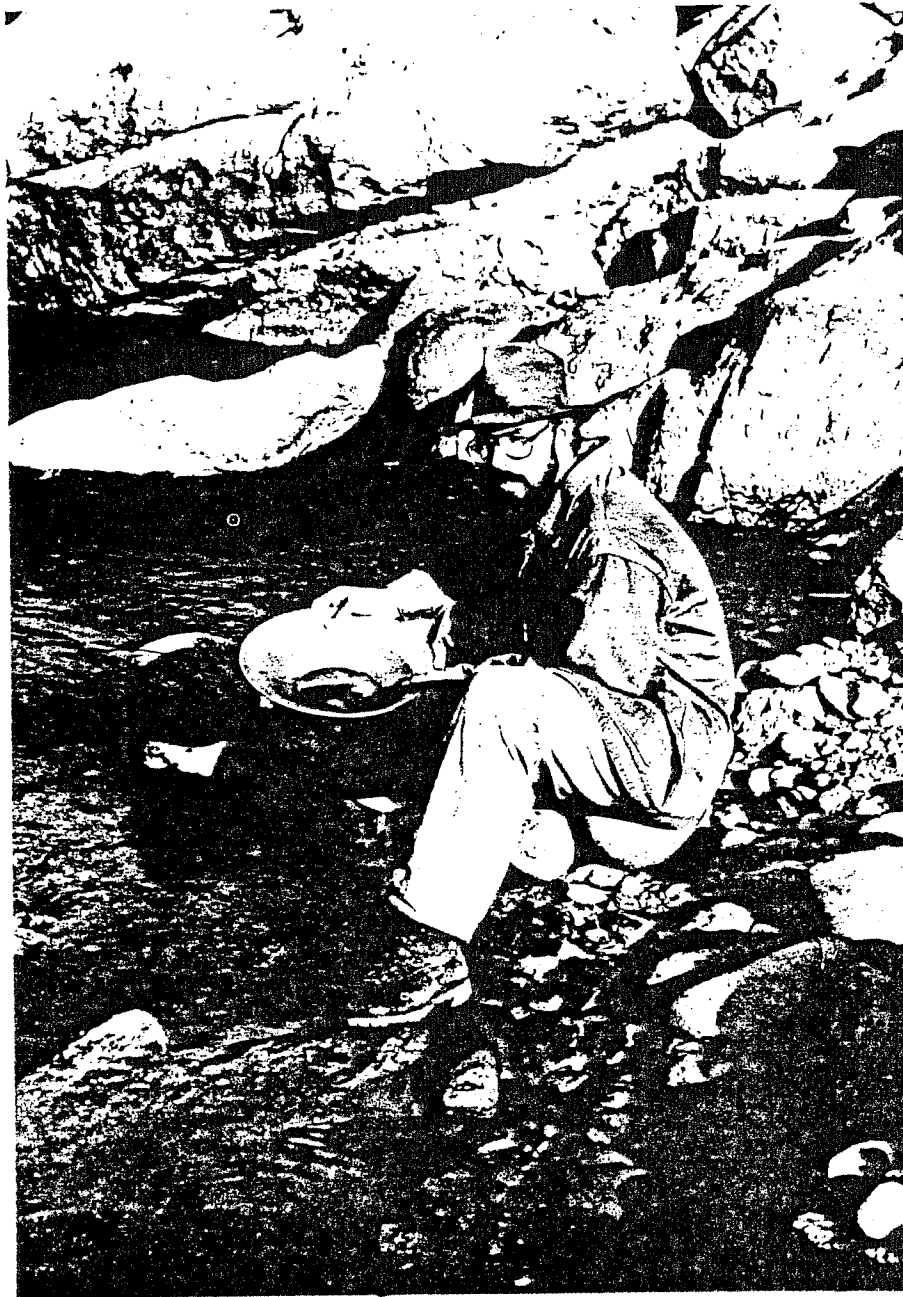


The Mining of Souls in California



A Study of the WELS in the California Mission Field

by

Frederick A. Voss

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library

11831 N. Seminary Drive. 65W

Mequon, Wisconsin

1982

Gold

Gold is usually found in two forms, in veins or lodes; and in river beds or near them where the metal is called alluvial gold. Gold is also found with other elements such as copper or iron but usually with silver. The simplest form of gold mining is panning, which applies to alluvial gold. The miner shovels sand and gravel that have gold in them into a pan which he tilts slightly and works with a rotation motion. The particles of gold, being the heaviest, sink to the bottom of the pan while the lighter materials are washed away. It was this method, while being wasteful, that was practiced almost entirely during the opening of the great gold fields.

On the Cover: The author tries his hand at finding the elusive metal ... gold. The author not only became acquainted with this kind of "gold mining" but he also received first hand training in the mining of souls in California, the Golden State under the vicarage of Pastor Robert Hochmuth of St. Andrews Lutheran Congregation, Sacramento, Ca. Hence this paper is a result of a year of study and observation in this field.

Acknowledgments

The author of this paper realizes that a paper of this magnitude could never have been finished if not for the assistance of many key persons. The thanks given here will never be enough to show fully the appreciation I have for the help given, yet allow it to inform the reader of those who gave their time, talent, and advice: Pastor Paul Heyn and Armin Keibel for their countless materials and interviews, Pastor Robert Hochmuth for numerous tid-bits of information on missions and also for statistics concerning our mission field in California, Pastor Larry Zweig and his secretaries for the expansion maps, a special thanks to all those pastors in California who felt it important to send me material on their churches, Dr. Gary Hochmuth for his concise assistance on Northwestern Lutheran articles on California Missions, Mr. Jay Eberly for his indoctrination concerning Gold Mining methods of California, and last but certainly not least a very special thanks to my future wife Carolyn, who was able to decipher my handwriting and by whose effort this paper was typed. Again many thanks...

Memoriam

Pastor Paul P. M. Heyn

1909-1981

" A pioneer home missionary and California's vereran mission board member, Pastor Paul Heyn, was called to his eternal rest on December 6, 1981. Friends and coworkers from Arizona, Nevada, and throughout California gathered at St. Mark's Church, Citrus Heights, to offer consolation to his wife, Helene, and their five sons and families...

Paul Phillip Martin Heyn was born August 29, 1909, to Herman and Alma (nee Richter) at Adrian, Michigan. He attended Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Northwestern College, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, graduating in 1934.

He was ordained and installed at Jehovah-Zion, Detroit, Michigan, on September 16, 1934. Pastor Heyn served three years at Detroit, thirteen years at Zion and Our Shepherd, Warren, Michigan, and three years at Emmanuel, Tawas City.

Helene Berg became his wife on June 27, 1935.

They were blessed with five sons: John, Ted, Paul, David and Thomas. Surviving relatives also include a sister and a brother.

In 1954 Pastor Heyn came west to serve Redeemer Congregation, Tucson, Arizona. He then accepted the call to become the third WELS pastor in California

and established Our Savior Congregation, Pomona, where he resided from 1957 to 1967. During those years he initiated WELS home mission work in the San Francisco Bay area, in Garden Grove, San Diego, Yucaipa, and La Habra. In 1967 he moved to La Mesa, California, pastoring Shepherd of the Hills Congregation until he retired from the full-time ministry in 1972. During those years he also was pastor of the congregaton at Alpine and undertook the work in Hawaii and in Escondido. After his retirement he served on a limited basis at Bishop in Santa Barabra County, initiated the work in the Reno, Nevada, area and helped at Hope, Congregation, Penryn/Newcastle, where he was a member at the time of his death. Pastor Rick Curia conducted the burial rite." NWL Feb. 1, 1982.

Robert Hochmuth

The author of this paper is deeply indebted to the late Pastor Paul Heyn. The following pages will attest to this. His memoirs and a personal interview helped this author see more clearly the early mission field and the dedication and zeal that God's servant, Pastor Heyn, illustrated during his years in the California.

Certainly Pastor Heyn's death has touched many people in the mission field of California and beyond. The void created when he left will be one that is hard to fill but let St. Paul's words in Romans 8:28 be

our comfort,"And we know that in all things God works
for the good of those who love him, who have been called
according to his purpose."

INTRODUCTION

Not too long ago when the price of gold was steadily rising a new push or Gold Rush to California was noted by the media. Again the yellow metal was drawing people to the Golden State but not in the way it did over 130 years ago when the cry of "Gold! Gold at Sutters Mill!" was heard around the globe. James Marshal, a millworker of Captain John Sutter, caught the glint of a flake of gold the size of the tip of your little finger in the millrace on the American River at Coloma, California, and the Gold Rush was on.

No doubt just this fact brings to mind the scramble of people that made California a state overnight. A state that was being filled with people who had a lust for the precious yellow metal. The lure of gold was no discriminator as it drew people from all classes of life and from all kinds of religious backgrounds. In many cases gold became to the miner what gambling is to the compulsive gambler or alcohol is to the alcoholic. This is evidenced by the fact that a rifle was always only an arm's length away, and men never hesitated to use it to protect their claims. The law of the survival of the fittest seemed to fit here, and it caused chaos...a new total lawlessness in some cases...California in these days was "The Wild West."

In 1860 San Francisco was decried for its crime and debauchery. The city swarmed with murderers, thieves, burglars, gamblers, prostitutes and swindlers of every kind...all this

was accompanied by the gurgle of vast quantities of hard liquor, the consumption of which, according to some authorities, probably reached its peak in 1890. At that time, there was about one saloon for every 96 inhabitants and about 2,000 unlicensed bars! Definitely here was a field white for harvest and starving in their need for the Gospel message.

It is very evident that along with this precious yellow metal that was discovered in great quantities, a new "Mother Lode" was forming in California, one whose value was of much greater worth than gold, that is the ever increasing number of souls...sheep without a spiritual shepherd.

This writer intends to tap the resources available in order to present an accurate picture of The Mining of Souls in California...A Study of the WELS in the California Mission Field.

To say that the Gold Rush of 1848 caused a small stir in the Mid-West would be putting it lightly. In fact, the greed and hopes of striking it rich even affected the Lutheran church at this time. Not only was gold the magnet that was drawing people but also the lure of of a new frontier...freedom to roam and a freedom to do as one pleased in a land that was pictured as a close second to the Garden of Eden...sunshine, moderate temperatures, plenty of land for all, majestic mountains, and literally something to please everyone.

Indeed it is evident that this caused Pastoral problems as Der Lutheraner, a fortnightly periodical of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states, under the editorship of the Lutheran pioneer, Dr. C. F. W. Walther, in its issue of May 14, 1850, printed the following dialog (freely rendered and condensed by the author), presumably between a pastor and a parishioner who was smitten with the urge:

"A. Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

You believe this, don't you?

B. Of course I do. What Christian would deny this?

A. Do you really mean what you say?

B. Why do you doubt me?

A. Because you want to go to California!

B. But can't I be a believer and go to California?

- A. Well...I know you have been having hard times around here, but do you think that going to California is going to help you?
- B. I don't see why not.
- A. Because the clear command of God says otherwise. You have a wife and two promising children. Does that mean you are bereft of all hope?
- B. Three years ago, in 1847, you might have been right; then I had plenty of hope.
- A. Just as you now have hope for California?
- B. Indeed, between California and our poor country here, there is a big difference.
- A. Agreed; but God says that in the sweat of your brow you should earn your bread. If this seems too much for you, remember that is the way God has arranged it. What could you possibly accomplish by an adventurous trek to California?
- B. How can you ask? You know very well what they are finding there. Isn't it worth it to make a big find and be freed from all earthly need?
- A. But you must know that many go in vain and find nothing.
- B. Well, you see, it's right here where I trust in God!

- A. So you trust in God when going to California; why don't you trust in God here with us?
- B. Of course, I don't doubt that God can help me here too, but I think it is a much surer thing to try one's luck out in California instead of starving to death here in...County.
- A. No, my good man, your plan proves that you do not trust in God, because you feel compelled to seek another and much surer God by going to California and thus to lose body and soul. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God."¹

Although the final outcome is not stated, certainly the point was proved that Lutherans were emigrating to California in search of a better, wealthier life. The fact also remains that many stayed in spite of not striking it rich. So many, in fact, that before the gold rush was over, there was a growing concern for the flock without a shepherd on the Pacific Coast.

Even though the population was not much in 1860, about 90,000 in California, that number was increasing daily as people poured in over the mountains and others braved the long sea journey and put into port at San Francisco. One can imagine the variety of people from many different nationalities and because of this factor, it was difficult to unite them in any kind of effort, much less in spiritual matters.

Richard T. Du Brau writes in regard to this point.

"Lutherans in the Eastern three fourths of the United States were still more or less in the formative stage and had their own problems.

There were never at any time, not even until the time of this writing, sufficient workers available for the Pacific Coast.

In addition, American Lutheranism suffered from traditional language limitations, and it must be admitted with more than mere regret that a divided Lutheranism seriously hampered best results and God-pleasing progress in the building of Christ's Kingdom in the West."²

In spite of the many obstacles thrown into its path, Lutheranism made its debute in California in 1849 when Pastor Fred H. Mooshake, who was a graduate of the University of Goettingen, arrived in San Francisco. Even though there is no record of his being sent by any Synod, his ordination was certified by the New York Ministerium of the General Synod on September 7, 1847.

Pastor Mooshake worked among the Lutherans until the year 1860 when he resigned. It was this time that the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states took it upon itself to finance two missionaries to California. Especially after receiving a "Macedonian call" from a very concerned German Lutheran. Pastor Jacob Beehler, a graduate of the Seminary in 1860, and the only English speaking student at the St. Louis Seminary, became the father of Lutheranism on the Pacific Coast.

Thus, Lutheranism got its foot in-the-door so to speak and from there, the only way was to open that door wider and wider with time, finances, and men that were dedicated to spreading the Gospel message both to those who struck it rich and especially to those who lost in their gamble for the precious yellow metal.



*FIRST PACIFIC COAST DISTRICT PRES-
IDENT, J. M. BUEHLER*

But where during this exciting era was the Wisconsin Synod? While men were scrambling to stake claims and satisfy their lust for gold, three men in the Mid-West were seeing the need to consolidate their spiritual efforts. Muehlhaeuser, Weinmann, and Wrede, men sent by the Langenberg Mission Society in Germany, got together at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the hall of the Gnaden-Gemeinde on the 8th of December, 1849. The result of this meeting was "Die erste deutsch evang-luth. Synode von Wisconsin."³ So at the moment, the infant Wisconsin Synod could not rise to the occasion and head West or direct its efforts to California because it too was a mission subsidized by German mission societies of Barmen and Langenberg. Keeping this fact in mind, it is easier to see why outreach for missions seems to be so slow. However, one cannot make the assumption that the



Pastor Johannes Muehlhaeuser
First Synod President
1850 - 1860

tiny Wisconsin Synod was not mission minded. Eric Hartzell in his paper, "Mission Zeal of the Infant Wisconsin Synod", writes,

"Even though this desire to establish a synodical independence syphoned off a great deal of the already meager resources, mission work was done both at home and abroad from the very start...the work of the 'Reisepredigt'; the support of the Immigrant Mission in Castle Garden, New York and others like it; large contributions sent to Theodore Harms in Hermannsburg; concern shown for work among the Jews; aid and contribution for the Missouri Synod's work among the Negroes of the South; the reports of many mission festivals among the home congregations; and the abundance of mission related articles found in the 'Gemein-deblatt'".⁴

Indeed, even in such a small body of Christians, there was a desire to spread the word and obey the Great Commission of our Savior. That mission zeal did not diminish as the Synod grew. In fact, the people became more and more aware of the

mission field that was at their back door. An interesting incident shows us this concern in the fledging Synod. In 1876, Pastor Drewes, former mission inspector at Hermannsburg and theological teacher of a number of pastors in Synod, came to America with two things in mind...to work among the heathen Indians and also to reach the unchurched Germans with hopes of starting congregations among them. Our Synod gave him \$500 to carry on his work and also to check out the prospects for Indian missions in the future and also to serve the unchurched Germans along the way. Unfortunately, this did not work out as well as planned for Drewes ended up in the Golden State serving Germans there. Since Wisconsin did not feel the need to reach all the way out to the West Coast when its own state was not taken care of, the support of Drewes was withdrawn.

After this disappointment, mission efforts were focused on the Indians in Arizona in the year 1883 again. That occupied the minds and finances for a number of years, but the lure of the Great West was still there, and the door was opening for missions in Tacoma, Washington, and Pasadena, California.

A mission request came from a former parishioner of Pastor Jaekel's in Milwaukee. It seems that there was a nucleus of ten families in Pasadena, California, who needed a pastor. So a committee was sent to check out the situation and report concerning the prospects. Here is the encouraging yet frustrating report of that committee:

"Bendler and Praeses von Rohr went west, down to San Francisco, and returned with the report that the West is beautiful, perplexing, and expensive; still a land of the future,

but then abounding with prospects. This is confirmed, too, by our Missouri Synod brother, Pastor Buehler (Beehler), who has become so dear to us, and forced us to stay with him. His judgment ought to be respected, for he has preached the Gospel in San Francisco for over a generation...The Missourians are at work in the West, and their work ought not to be hampered. But the Tacoma congregation has a right to remain with us and should not be forced to unite with Missouri. It might do to suggest union with Missouri, but if she wants to stay with us, we dare not abandon her. Of all the Lutheran churches, she has the best location in the city and greatest prospects. In case we are going to continue the mission, we ought to place two or three pastors there."5

These reports had an impact on the Synod so that the Pasadena opportunity slipped out of sight and Tacoma was supported.

The expansion policy of the Wisconsin Synod took off from here. In fact, Praeses von Rohr stated in his 1890 report that the home mission's goal must be to acquire new fields. However, the wheels were turning quite slow because the Synod had more than enough work in the existing fields to keep it occupied. From the dealings with the Missouri Synod in both Arizona and California, there developed a "gentlemen's agreement" that more or less stated that the Wisconsin Synod would direct its mission efforts in Arizona since we had established a mission among the Indians while the Missouri Synod would take the lead in California.

During the intervening years, 1890's through to the year 1950, the Wisconsin Synod not only grew in the Mid-West but also reached out to other states. However, this paper will not touch on those years for that is a story in itself. We are about to again enter the Golden State for in February of the year 1950,

Pastors Armin K. Keibel and Frederick G. Knoll arrived in Los Angeles. Thus the Wisconsin Synod officially began to "Mine the Souls in California."

The Early Years: Pastor Armin K. Keibel
and Frederick G. Knoll

34

Taken from the
Northwestern Lutheran Annual 1952
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin
and other States



MAP OF LOS ANGELES

Printed by NORTHWESTERN PUBLISHING HOUSE
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

II.

The Early Years: Pastors Armin K. Keibel and Frederick G. Knoll

The California that our first missionaries saw was much different than the California during the Gold Rush days. Now the major shift of people that were pouring into California at the rate of 10,000 to 13,000 per month was not caused by a lust for gold, rather it was the sunshine, agriculture, oil, and movies that drew a new breed of people who, as people 100 years before this, were interested in getting rich and living in a new, exciting and growing frontier. At the time (1950),

"the thousands of oil wells in Southern California produced over 300 million barrels of oil in a year. As for the motion picture industry, its 30,000 employees are paid \$300,000,000 a year."⁶

The general economy of the area was very good and prosperity was in the sunshine and the air.

The Wisconsin Synod's step into California was not one that was taken without careful consideration. Six years before the initial calling of the two missionaries Keibel and Knoll, the General Mission Board of the Wisconsin Synod began to discuss the possibilities of extending into the State of California. One of the reasons being the number of requests for Wisconsin Synod churches to care for the souls of the number of Wisconsin Synod people who had moved to California. One such lay person was Mr. Carl F. Loeper who sent numerous requests to the Wisconsin Synod for aid.

Mr. Loeper was instrumental in getting the Wisconsin Synod interested in work in the Los Angeles area. Not only with his persistent letter writing did he show his zeal but also with his devotion and undying enthusiasm. He served for many years as a lay member on the mission board and also on the council of St. John's of Tarzana, California. He is truly a man whom God has blessed our Synod with and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude.

After years of waiting, permission was granted to enter the mission field of California. However, this permission was gained only after the venture had been given the O.K. by a Synod convention. Some of the reasons cited for the move to a new field were,

"that Arizona was relatively well covered, and that there is a great population trend, including many Wisconsin Synod people from the Mid-West toward the Pacific Coast. California moved from fifth to second place in population in the United States in the last ten years. A third point: the Arizona Mission Board saw that there are many fields open in California."7

In view of the "gentlemen's agreement" that had existed for so many years between Wisconsin and Missouri, the Southern California District of the Mission Synod was contacted and the matter was discussed. They had no objections in fact they were very happy to have the Wisconsin Synod in the Los Angeles area. Pastor Keibel even indicated that the area Missouri Synod pastors were helpful in orienting them. Pastor Keibel also remembers that the Missouri Synod pastors were happy that we respected their work enough to locate in areas where they were not working. It seems that many ALC, LCA, etc., churches built close to Missouri Synod churches. Pastor Keibel remembers a certain Pastor Weber

(Missouri Synod) remarking on this encroachment with these words, "Every church has to have a sewer!" In other words, a place where those who cannot stand pure doctrine can go.

At this time, there were about 250 Lutheran (Missouri) congregations for a population of ten and a half million which was about 1 for every 42,000! Pastor Schmitt, a former Wisconsin Synod pastor who worked in the mission field for Missouri Synod, encouraged our new missionaries with the words, "You have two missionaries, you should have seven!"

In February of 1950, Pastors Keibel and Knoll began their task in the overwhelming City of Los Angeles. The first order of business was to survey the city and pinpoint two areas in which to begin work. After about three months of intensive study of "population, types of residents and employment, the members, kinds and locations of churches, and available property values, zoning data, trends and potentialities," the two areas of Tarzana and Mar Vista in North-Western Los Angeles were chosen. (See map.)

Pastor Keibel, in a personal interview I had with him, talked in depth about those early months and years in the mission field. It was a learning experience from the beginning but one that he has enjoyed. Although he did have some mission experience in Milwaukee before he came to California, he found the mission field was much different in California because "People seem to leave their religion behind when they cross the mountains."

After the initial survey was completed and the two areas were picked, then during the summer months of 1950

canvassing was done. In this area,

"5,700 people were accounted for, with 45 denominations encountered. Leading the list were 950 Catholics, followed by 460 Methodists and 440 Baptists. Lutherans polled 300, or about five percent. One thousand six hundred adults were listed as unchurched and 460 children as not being baptized."⁸

Definitely this was an area in which they could work and spread the message of a Savior to all.

During those summer months of 1950, all time wasn't spent in canvassing. Land search was also undertaken and a small plot of land was purchased (under one acre) for the sum of \$8,600, a new high for Synod. Later, an additional half-acre was purchased for \$4,000. In addition to this, Pastor Keibel had the foresight and "from his own funds and considerable sacrifice held Lot #10 (the land on which the parsonage is now located and the grass area in front of it) until such a time that the Synod was able to allocate the necessary funds to purchase it for the congregation."⁹

The original plan was to begin services at both Wisconsin Synod missions at the same time. However, St. John's of Tarzana was delayed by matters we will touch on later. Pastor Keibel was determined to begin worship services in the Synod's centennial year and therefore, on December 24, 1950, the first service of the Wisconsin Synod was held in a rented store building, humbly set between a realty office and a plumbing shop. This was three blocks away from the land they had purchased for their church.

Pastor Keibel was anticipating quite a crowd for that first service. He had done a good bit of canvassing and



THE REV. ARMIN K. KEIBEL

Pastor of Gethsemane. Came from Milwaukee, also served in Iowa. Taught religion at Milwaukee Lutheran High School. Attended Concordia and Northwestern colleges, and the Seminary, in Wisconsin.

advertising, even putting up placards and posters. Coming from the Mid-West, he expected that that small store building would be overcrowded with people eager to hear the story of the Christ child. He even printed about one hundred bulletins. Much to his disappointment, only 24 people attended. Welcome to California! As if that wasn't enough to humble someone, the attendance for the months that followed was at times very difficult to understand as they averaged about fifteen people a Sunday with a high attendance of 33 Easter Sunday and a low attendance of 3 on Ascension Day...the organist, her visiting lady friend, and Pastor Keibel. Such attendance prompted him to think of the Bible translator Moffett who was the only one who attended a service once, and that experience prompted him to become a missionary.

In spite of the shock of a poor attendance and no doubt the disappointments that came with it, Pastor Keibel continued preaching Jesus Christ crucified and slowly but surely the congregation by the Holy Spirit's power began to grow. In fact, Pastor Keibel relates a story that shows just how the Holy Spirit worked in this small mission congregation. He began to instruct the husband and wife of one family in the neighborhood, and before he knew it, there were five families involved in that adult instruction class...word of mouth brought neighbors by the Holy Spirit's power!

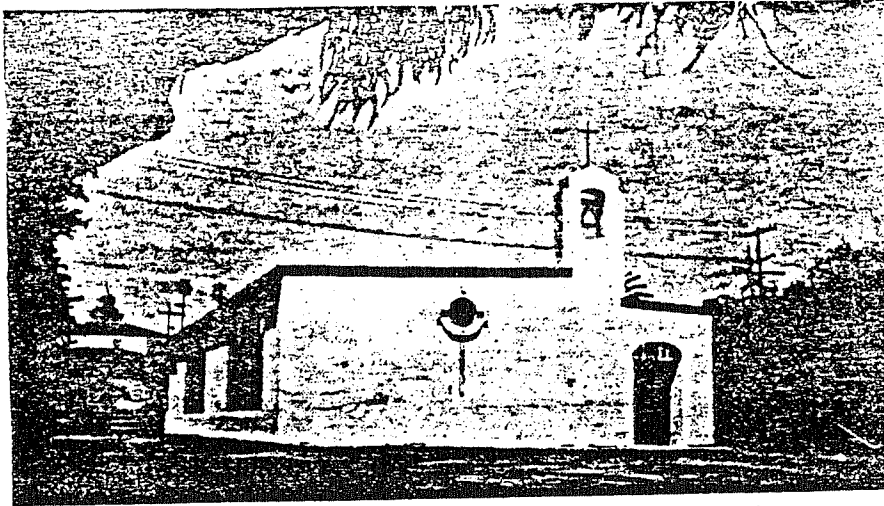
After worshipping in the rented plumbing shop for six months, construction of a two room chapel, 76 x 24 feet, (now known as the Parish Hall) was completed in June of 1951 at a cost

of \$14,600 through a Church Extension Fund loan. This building was to serve as both the worship center and as the educational plant.

Pastor Keibel had very much praise for the Synod's policy concerning the opening of Christian day schools in California. The Synod realized as did Pastor Keibel and his members that there are "values and goals in Christian education that technological progress of philosophical shifts do not and cannot touch."¹⁰ Therefore, the Synod gave the congregation permission to open a school in 1953. However, it was not until September 8, 1954, that Gethsemane Lutheran School opened with 12 students and one teacher, Mrs. Bette Feiock, formerly Miss Bette M. Heil.

Gethsemane Lutheran Church continued to grow, and in September of 1957, it dedicated a new church that cost \$25,000 from Church Extension Funds, plus another \$5,000 for furnishings. In fact, two years later a seven rank pipe organ was installed by the members themselves! It is interesting to note also that congregations in the Mid-West did not forget about the new mission field in California and were eager to help where they could. In Gethsemane's case, a 1,200 pound bell was given to them by a sister congregation in Bay City, Michigan. On October 12, 1963, it rang for the first time calling God's children to His house of worship.

Pastor Keibel's stay at Gethsemane lasted until the fall of 1966 when he accepted a call to a new mission at Concord, California. Incidentally, only a few months later, Gethsemane



GETHSEMANE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

3734 Centinela Avenue, one block north of Venice Boulevard. The chapel is basically a two-room school, 24 ft. by 76 ft. It will seat over 150 persons.

went off of mission subsidy (April 1, 1967) and became a self-supporting congregation.

Pastor Keibel, as one of our first missionaries in California, certainly used his talents to the glory of God in the Los Angeles area. It is by God's grace and Pastor Keibel's countless hours of work that our first church in California grew into a congregation that supports itself and others.

Pastor Victor C. Schultz, formerly chairman of the Arizona Mission Board, was installed January 29, 1967, soon after Pastor Keibel left for Concord. Pastor Schultz also saw the need

for mission work in this area and he took on exploratory mission work in the Torrance area and even conducted services for what is now Zion Evangelical Lutheran, only one of the many daughter congregations of Gethsemane. Pastor Schultz worked at Gethsemane until the Lord called him to Sun City, Arizona, in 1971.

Pastor Donald A. Seifert became the third resident pastor of Gethsemane on January 16, 1972. A number of changes have taken place since God has placed him into this position. The grade school suspended operation in June of 1973 because of a limited enrollment and rising costs of operating. However, a sister congregation, St. Paul's First Lutheran in North Hollywood, agreed to give Christian training to Gethsemane's children. Also the economic change in the past few years has affected the area surrounding the church so that the mission challenge that confronts Gethsemane now is greater than at any time in its history. However, the Word of God is still there, and it is still being preached in its truth and purity. Again by God's grace and His power and through the men He sends to work in this church, the challenge will be met. By His grace, the mission work begun here will continue as lost souls are shown their Savior.

But what happened to the other Wisconsin Synod congregation that started only months after Gethsemane in the year 1951? Pastor Knoll was not unfamiliar with mission work since he had been working in our mission field in Arizona "where he founded and served Redeemer Church of Tucson, Arizona. He had also served missions in Mesa, Douglas, and Bisbee-Warren."¹¹ He was a pioneer in that mission field and ably qualified as one of

first men called by the Lord into the California Mission field.

The field in which he began his work after the initial joint six month survey was in the City of Tarzana...a part of Los Angeles, 18 miles northwest of the Civic Center, in the beautiful San Fernando Valley. At this time it was an area that was rapidly developing. Tarzana was well known for its semi-ranches and estates, but small subdivisions were cropping up here and there. At this time, Tarzana had only three other churches and the closest Lutheran church was five miles away.

Very soon after Pastor Knoll began to work in the area, a worship site was purchased in an excellent location at 5525 Lindley Avenue, near Burbank Boulevard and just three blocks north of Ventura Boulevard. However, finding a place to worship became a problem for there weren't any storefronts or buildings that could even be rented. Finally, they decided to purchase and remodel a used steel bank building, (Quonset Hut) that cost \$3,500 and another \$8,000 to move and remodel. Pastor Knoll was a very busy man during these months for he had to deal with "brokers, lawyers, architects, engineers, movers, contractors, and the exacting building and zoning departments of the City Hall."¹² He also ran into problems because the Wisconsin Synod was not incorporated in the State of California.

Finally, the City of Los Angeles' inspectors gave the okay to St. John's building and on February 4, 1951, they had their opening service. The attendance was much better than expected with 70 in attendance. The subsequent Sundays proved to be very indicative of the need for missions in California as



THE REV. FREDERICK G. KNOLL

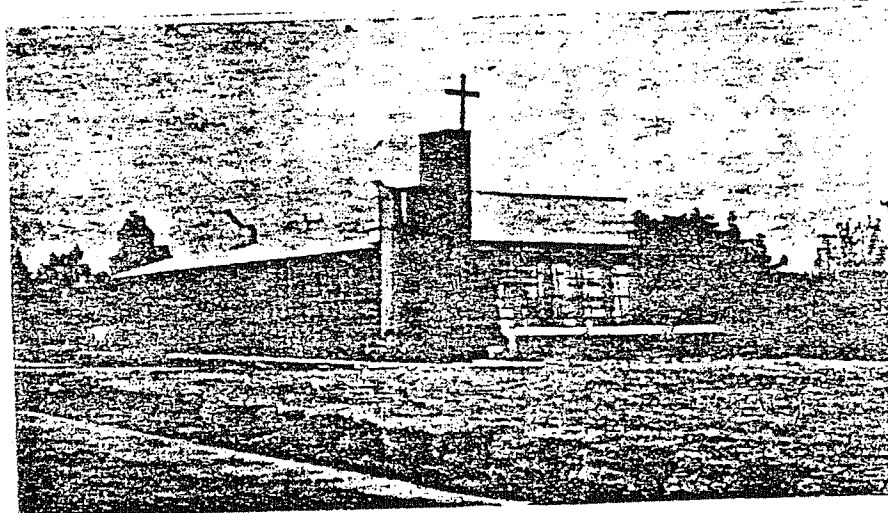
Pastor of St. John's, Tarzana. Formerly of Tucson, Arizona. Was chairman of the Arizona Mission Board for six years. Attended Concordia and Northwestern Colleges, and our Seminary in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

attendance reached as high as 100 during the first year with a low of 30.

"Sunday School enrollment is over eighty, with about fifty-five average per Sunday. There are 20 in Bible class, and 8 adults and 7 children in instruction classes. Souls number 100, including 20 communicants."13'

Another indication of the need for God's message of the salvation of souls for this area can be seen in the enrollment for their Vacation Bible School which was 100 children! This truly was an area that was white for harvest.

St. John's continued to serve the Lord in this humble but adequate site until April of 1953 when it was condemned by the State of California Division of Highways for the Ventura Freeway. Property was then bought on Corbin Avenue a long block from the freeway. Construction of the new church was started in

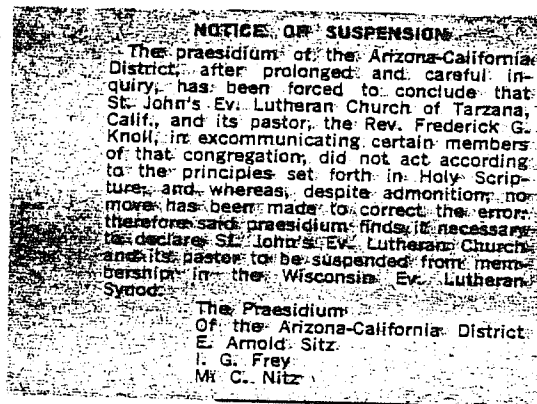


ST. JOHN'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

5525 Lindley Avenue, just north of Ventura Boulevard.
The church (formerly a bank) will seat 150 persons. When the planned church is built, this unit will be used for educational purposes.

February of 1957, the cornerstone was put in place on April 14, 1957 (Palm Sunday), and the new church was dedicated on June 30, 1957.

There is a sad chapter in the Church's history. In the March 6, 1966, issue of the Northwestern Lutheran, the following notice of suspension was published. Later it rescinded



the un-Scriptural excommunications in order to be received back into the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. It was received back into the WELS sometime before 1969.

Pastor Knoll continued to work with mission zeal at St. John's until he retired on March 11, 1973. For 23 years, he had worked in the Lord's vineyard in California. His work helped bring God's word to many people during those years.

On that same day in March, Pastor Hermann John was installed and has remained pastor at St. John's as of this date. During his stay the church in 1974 joined with Messiah of North Hollywood in cosponsoring the "Word of Life" radio broadcast on KGIL for two years. Also, in 1977, they celebrated the twentieth anniversary of their church dedication. Even though the

church is still regarded a mission (i.e., receives mission subsidy), it is proclaiming the whole counsel of God in a valley of some one million five hundred thousand people. A valley in which there are only three WELS congregations. Finally, a valley which has a high percentage of Jewish people living there. St. John's of Tarzana is still in an area that is white for harvest as it was 32 years ago. May God continue to bless the work being carried out there.

The problems encountered by our first two missionaries were great; however, the joys were greater as the pure Word of God was brought to the Los Angeles area. Pastor Keibel in his interview with the author confessed that the mix of the experienced Mid-West members with the new converts certainly helped in the missions. The experienced members added their knowledge of church life and new converts added the zest and eagerness. Together, standing on the solid foundation of God's Word, their dedication made his time very rewarding in the years he spent in California. These factors, God willing, will add to the years that lie ahead for him as one of God's missionaries in California, mining the souls that are there.

III

Organizing the New Field...the Motherlode



Courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company, Los Angeles, Calif.

III

Organizing the New Field...the Motherlode

It did not take Pastors Knoll and Keibel very long to realize that the land of California was rich in souls...more than they could ever hope to take care of. They saw the need for more missionaries in a land that was continually growing in population and lost souls.

Therefore, the Arizona-California mission board began calling a third missionary to the field in 1954. As was usually the case, a number of men turned down the call. Paster Paul Heyn, in an interview I had with him, confessed that this was a very prevelant problem for a number of reasons. First of all, not too many men wanted to be so far away from friends and family, secondly, California was still a land of unknowns, and thirdly, they were calling some pretty high powered men...even Seminary professors!

In spite of the number of turned down calls, Pastor Marguardt of Schofield, Wisconsin, accepted the call in 1956 and began working in the Duarte area. However, an interesting turn of events took place that, as Pastor Heyn puts it, "flabbergasted" the Arizona-California Mission Board. Pastor Marguardt's former church in Schofield began calling to fill his vacancy, but, after two unsuccessful calls, they called him back. Strange enough, but stranger yet, he accepted! After this set back, the board continued to call for a total of 3 1/2 years without success.

In December of 1956, the position was filled. Pastor Heyn tells the story of his call to the California mission field:

"Then in December, 1956, President E. A. Sitz asked me to leave the D.M.B. meeting for a short time. When I returned, they handed me the call, Sitz saying that President G. Press of Michigan had recommended me. It was my turn to be 'flabbergasted!' I became the third California missionary of the Synod."¹⁴

Our Savior, Pomona

In the spring of 1957, Pastor Heyn came to California and began work in the Uplands area. His call stated that he work in the San Gabriel area...that's quite a large area to be sure! After two months of living in a motel, canvassing, and exploring, the District Mission Board met on May 9, 1957. Pastor Heyn had narrowed down the possibilities to three, and from those three, the area of Pomona was chosen. Incidentally, Pastor Heyn on this initial survey also surveyed "Orange County south of Garden Grove, called Midway, or Westminster."¹⁵ But because of the lack of an adequate sewer system, that area was ruled out until later on.

Pastor Heyn was familiar with mission work having served in our Arizona mission field for three years, and immediately he began looking for land and a place to worship. This was much easier said than done. Not only did the price tags on the land hinder that search, but also the availability of a good location took a lot of time and patience on the young Pastor Heyn's part. Meanwhile, he was also searching for a place to hold services. This was extremely frustrating. Pastor Heyn related the reason why. He tells of how he had spotted an ideal location...new

neighborhood, school, no church in the area. This was before Easter, so he returned after Easter and in front of the school was a sign...ALC meeting here Sunday mornings. On top of that, Pastor Heyn wrote,

"The public schools in Pomona and Claremont would not allow us to hold church in any of their buildings. We tried all the halls, recreational buildings, convalescent homes, stores, etc., but found no suitable place to hold services in north Pomona."¹⁶

At first, services were held in the parsonage, with the Martin Schultzes of Yucaipa and others. Finally, a large house was leased for two years at 180 East Central and dedicated as a church and parsonage on August 29, 1957. The living room was made into the chapel area (14 x 28), and the dining room (14 x 14) was used for extra seating. The chapel furnishings were provided by the sister congregation of Tarzana, and they even had a small pump organ to make the humble surroundings sound forth praise to God. Pastor Heyn writes,

"At first we left the living room, dining room and front hall for church purposes. We lived in the rest of the house. On Sunday morning we lost most of our privacy. As time went on, the Sunday School gradually took over the whole house."⁷

Very soon after the leasing of this large home on East Central, the Synod's Board of Trustees purchased land at 250 East Grove, near the intersection of U.S. 66 and State 71, Garey, as the future site of the new church...cost for the three acre orange grove was \$18,000, a real bargain at this time and especially this location.

The congregation was organized in 1958 with 48 communicants. W. E. Foster of Los Angeles was contracted to draw up plans for the building, and in February of 1959, Pietz Construction Company of Pomona was given the contract to build. Ground breaking took place on March 1, and the cornerstone laying, on May 10, 1959. Dedication took place on August 30, 1959, in a beautiful chapel that was erected for \$34,500. It was able to seat up to 250 people when the overflow seating was used. Attendance at the dedication service was 166 in the morning and 215 in the afternoon. The membership at that time was 90 communicants.

Pastor Heyn, many times in our interview and in his paper, speaks of the enthusiasm and dedication of the people in his new mission. Not only did they donate their time, labor and money (\$15,000) in helping complete their new church, but also they were determined to get a school for their children. Even though the local Mission Board advised against such a project so early in their history, the congregation went ahead and independently started a school. During the summer of 1961, Miss Barbara Winter, daughter of our Spanish missionary, was called to be the first teacher. On September 11, 1961, the school opened with a special service. The enrollment at that time was 15 children in grades one through four.

Fortunately for the mission field in California, Pastor Heyn did not devote all his time and effort to his congregation in Pomona. Rather, the Lord made use of his talents throughout California. Pastor Heyn definitely had a special gift that enabled him to work with untiring zeal in the Lord's vineyard in California as the next pages will attest to.

The need for a shepherd was not only felt in the southern part of California, and for many years there had been requests for services. When Pastor Heyn came to Pomona, this was also a duty that confronted him. For a year and a half, Pastors Heyn and Keibel shared the responsibility of having a service in the San Francisco Bay Area for a number of Wisconsin Synod families. However, this was not a small journey by any means! Pastor Heyn in the Northwestern Lutheran draws this comparison of that trip:

"If one of the pastors in Watertown, Wisconsin, would conduct his service on Sunday morning, then drive to Milwaukee and take a plane to St. Paul, Minnesota, where someone would meet him and take him to New Ulm for an evening service, you would say that would be fantastic, yet the same and greater distances were traveled in order to provide these people with Sunday services!"¹⁸

During this time period, the Synod was calling a fourth man to our mission field. Pastor Robert Hochmuth was the man whom the Lord called to serve in the Bay Area. We will meet him a little bit later on as he begins his work in the Golden State.

It was during this time period that the Wisconsin Synod began to grow in California. Part of this was due to an increase in awareness that the Wisconsin Synod actually was becoming established by God's grace in the fastest growing state in the union. That awareness was coupled with the fact that Pastor Heyn had relocation cards sent to every congregation in the WELS. These cards could be used by relatives and friends of those people in the WELS who moved to California and were not attending a church. These cards could also give an indication as to where the Mission

Board could look into starting another mission. Pastor Heyn recalled one such card that he received from a man who had a relative that lived near Redding, California. He wondered whether Pastor Heyn would drop in on him...Redding, California, was about 1,000 miles away! Pastor Heyn spent countless hours and drove thousands of miles checking out prospects. Such zeal for our Lord's work helped build a solid foundation for further work and expansion in California.

Pastor Heyn's involvement in Northern California missions was limited to an extent. Pastor Heyn, in his memoirs, wrote:

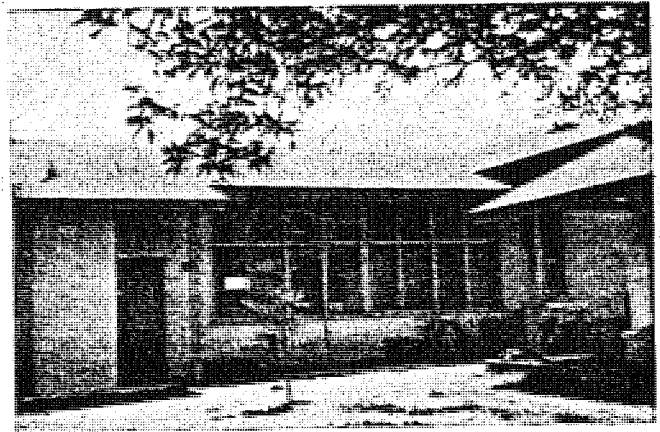
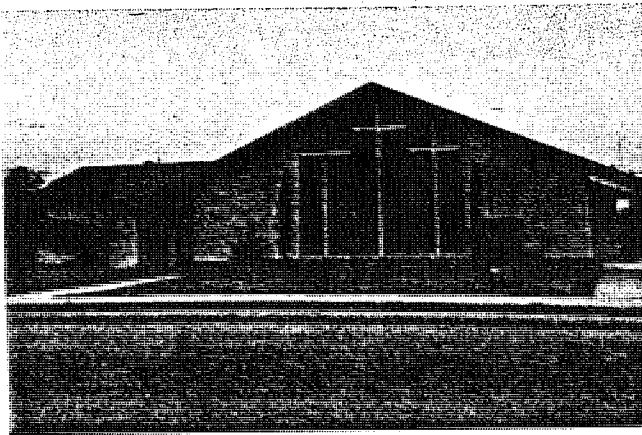
"Generally I did what was necessary (to) implement our decisions in southern California. Hochmuth did the same for our missions in northern California. Occasionally, as chairman, I had to go up north to look at property, meet with our missionaries or the congregation, when some major decision had to be made."¹⁹

It needs to be mentioned at this time that a new Mission District had been formed...The California Mission District. The need to have a District of its own was very evident. California missions were spreading - four in the area around Los Angeles and three in the San Francisco Bay Area. All of this, namely the new District and Board, took place when the Arizona-California District memorialized the Synod to make California a Mission District at the District Convention in East Fork in June, 1960. A year later at the Synod convention in August, the Synod formally established the California Mission District. Pastor Heyn wrote:

"On November 2, 1961, a meeting was held at Tarzana to organize a California Mission Board. Those elected to the board were

Robert Hochmuth for one year, Mr. Carl Loeper for two years and Paul Heyn for three years. Hochmuth was chosen to be the secretary and I became chairman."20

And so the stage was set. California was now recognized as a Mission District and had a Mission Board to guid the development of God's work in the ever expanding mining of souls in California.

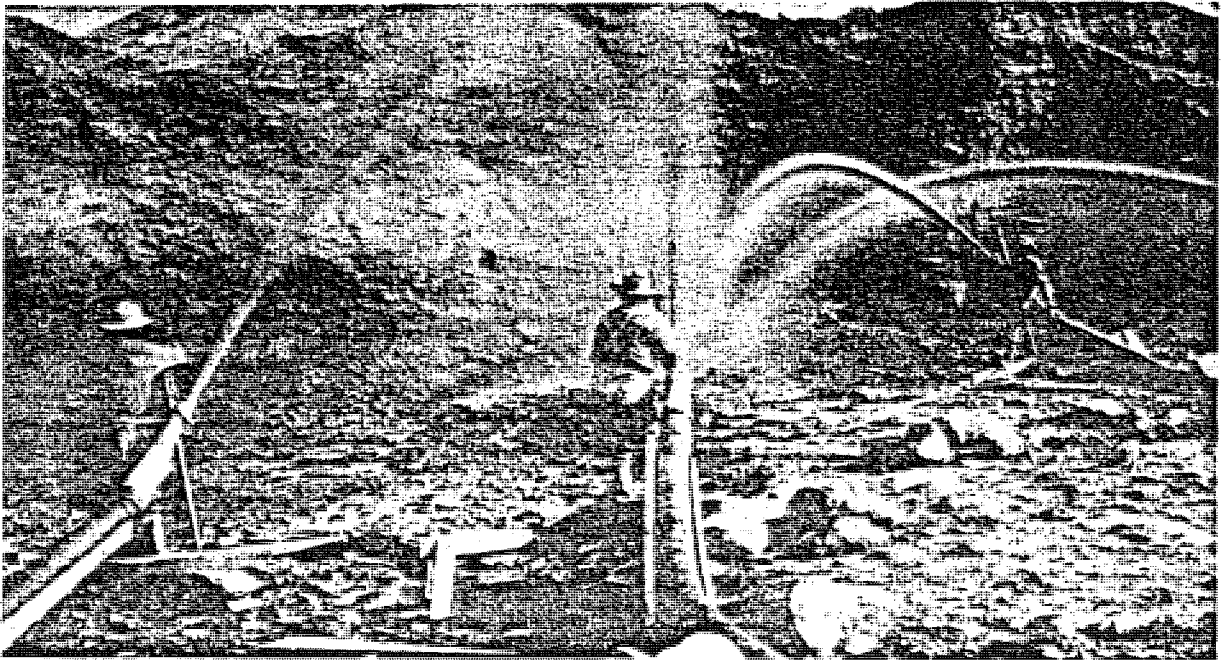


Our Savior Church and School, Pomona, California

IV

Northern California is Rich in Souls Too!

HYDRAULIC GOLD MINING. Washing the gold from the hills by powerful jets of water, 1866 to 1936 (peak year of this operation: 1886). (Library of Congress)



Northern California is Rich in Souls Too!

With the installation of Pastor Robert Hochmuth in Santa Clara, a new phase in the mission work in California began. One might almost look at it as a two pronged offensive. It was the original plan of the Mission Board to try to establish missions in California, first of all within 100 or so miles and then to gradually fill in the spaces until California Lutherans of Wisconsin Synod backgrounds could easily drive to one of our churches. Another consideration in the planning of the development of our mission field was the establishing of missions in those areas that were swiftly developing. An excellent example of this is our first mission in Northern California.

One might ask the question why San Francisco was not the Mission Board's first choice and rightly so. What city in California does one from the Mid-West think of besides Los Angeles except San Francisco? Yet statistics showed

"that San Francisco County only increased by 243 persons in the period from 1950-58, whereas the two Bay Counties of San Mateo and Santa Clara increased by 71% and 87% during the same period. This totals 404,000 for San Mateo County, which is just south of San Francisco; and 543,000 for Santa Clara County, which is farther south."²¹

Definitely, the influx of people determined the Mission Board's decision together with a request by several Wisconsin Synod members from that area.

Peace, Santa Clara

In 1957, as mentioned before, the Wisconsin Synod responded to those appeals. Pastors Paul Heyn, Walter Diehl, and Armin Keibel served the group with occasional communion services in their homes beginning October 27, 1957.

However, in the summer of 1959, Pastor Robert Hochmuth accepted the call and moved his family to a rented house in Santa Clara. Napredak hall was the site for the services and Sunday School beginning October 28, 1959. Incidentally, services were conducted over the barroom of a social hall. Pastor Hochmuth was installed on January 24, 1960, and at this time Peace congregation was organized with eleven families.

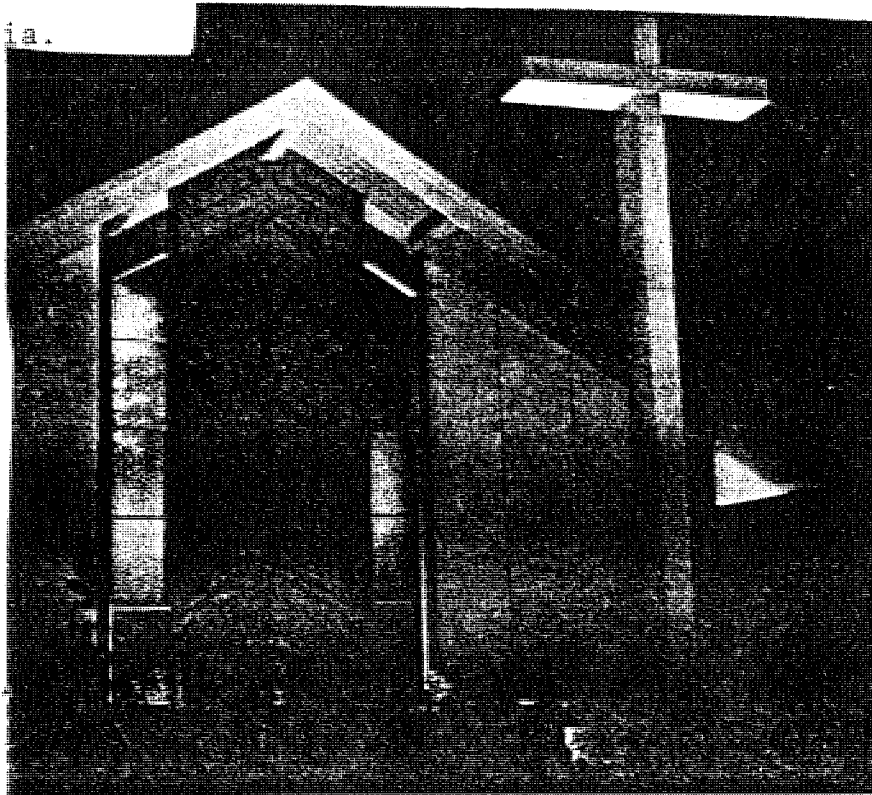
As was the case with many California missions to follow, the acquisition of land caused much consternation for this young church. In the brief history recorded in their dedication service folder, the following excerpt was taken:

"A long and often disappointing attempt to secure a site continued for 18 months. The Pomeroy site was obtained in July, 1961, but a zoning moratorium held up development, which was finally accomplished at a new improved cost of \$37,000 for the 68,000 sq. ft."²²

Finally, after much planning and work on not only Pastor Hochmuth's part, but also on the congregations part, the church was finished and dedicated on October 6, 1963. Landscaping and permanent items installed were the result of hours of effort of members and friends as well as gifts and memorials.

"The free-standing exterior cross was given in memory of a young charter member, Mr. John Schultz, who worked for the founding of this Wisconsin Synod church for his family, though it was 50 miles from their home."²³

Certainly the Lord blessed this mission richly from its humble beginnings and continued to shower His blessings upon this the Wisconsin Synod's first mission in Northern California.



PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, Santa Clara, California, rejoices over this new house of worship.

Christ, Lodi

Another congregation that followed close behind Santa Clara was Christ Church of Lodi. The remnant that started Christ Church had been a part of an ALC church who had split off from that body because of doctrinal differences. They appealed to our Synod before April of 1960 for assistance. Pastor Heyn in his memoirs wrote,

"President E. A. Sitz authorized Hochmuth to meet with them on April 5. He also sanctioned their purchasing a second hand church and promised to help them..."²⁴

Pastor Walter Pifer of Alhambra became their vacancy pastor until Gotthold Zimmerman accepted the call and was installed March 19, 1961.

This church was unique to California at that time because they conducted German services. In fact, more people attended the German services than the English! By September 12, 1961, they were able to dedicate their remodelled church which is still in use today.

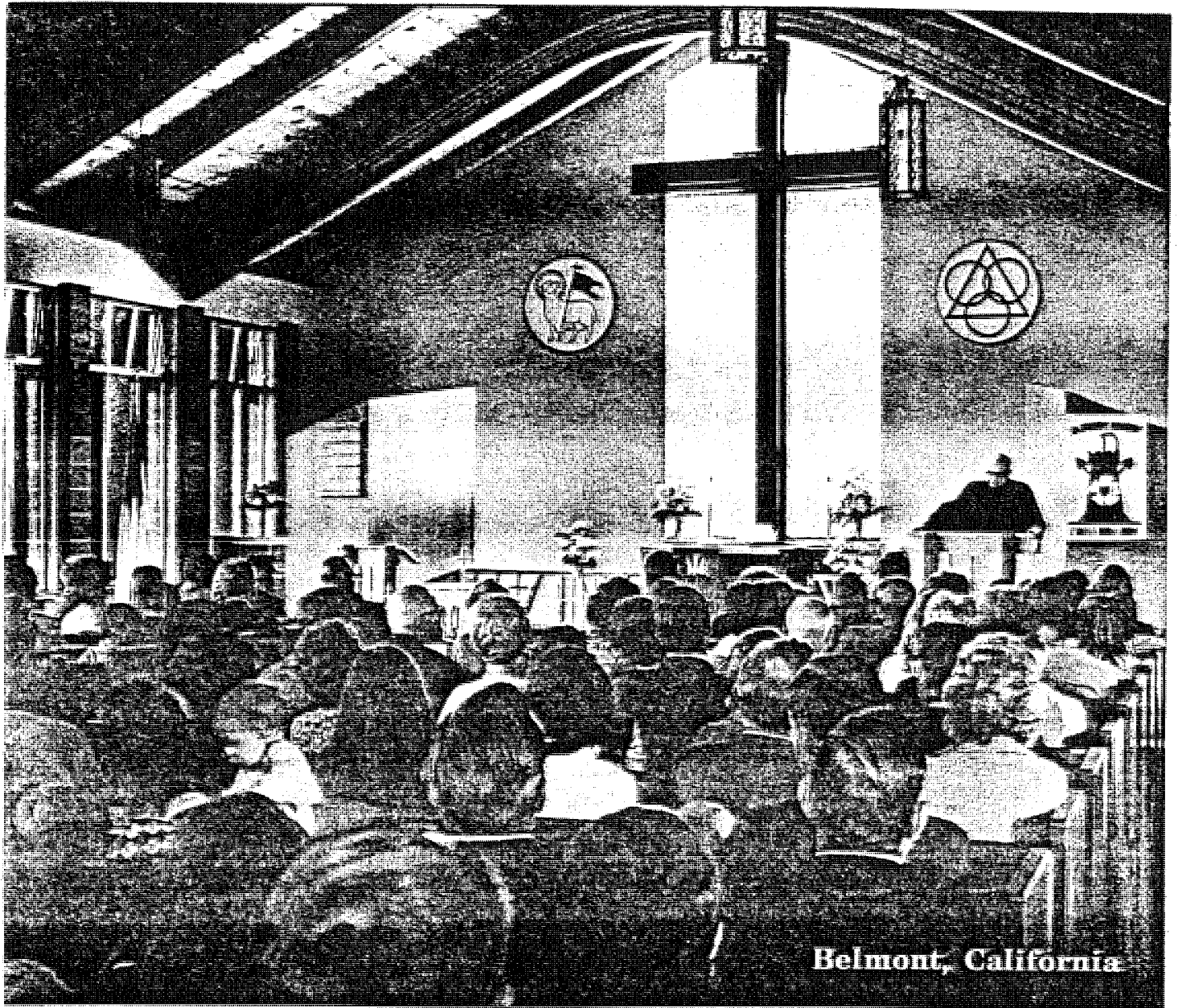
Just in passing, the Lodi congregation has had two pastors and one vicar since Pastor Zimmerman...Pastor Norman Sauer, who served faithfully until his death in 1982, and Pastor Ernest Zimdars who came from Columbia, South America, to take his place. The only vicar was Dan Gawrisch, a classmate of the author.

Gloria Dei Belmont

Meanwhile, the Mission Board began calling another man for the San Francisco Bay Area since it was not a good thing for one pastor to be isolated for too long. Pastor Heyn wrote,

"Those called were Ted Sauer, Harry Shiley, Jack de Ruiter, Roy Hoenecke, Ted Stern, and Robert Waldschmidt. He accepted and arrived in August, 1960."²⁵

The first facility that they were to rent was a Masonic Lodge in San Carlos for the Sunday morning services. By July of 1961, the attendance averaged between forty and fifty. While conducting services at this rented facility, this fledgling group took steps toward organizing and incorporating. The meeting place was at the home of one of the original members on May 27, 1962.



As we have seen with many other congregations, land acquisition caused a major problem. Investigations were made and negotiations were entered into for no less than 13 parcels of property. Finally, on January 2, 1964, the present site for their church, including the parsonage, was purchased for the price of \$95,000. It wasn't until a year later that the excavating contractor began work on the new site. There were many delays caused by the heavy rains, but finally, with a temporary occupancy permit, Pastor Waldschmidt conducted the first service in the new church on August 1, 1965. Concerning the dedication and cornerstone laying, Pastor Waldschmidt wrote,

"On October 17, 1965, your only San Mateo County and San Francisco County congregation was able to dedicate its new church to the glory of the Triune God...the church is built to accommodate 200 worshipers. In the lower level of the building, an 1800-square foot area, we contemplate a two room school, the membership hoping for realization of this hope in the near future...a total of 225 worshipers attended the two services from all points around the San Francisco area."²⁶

Presently, Pastor Geiger is at Gloria Dei and the congregation has a Christian Day School.

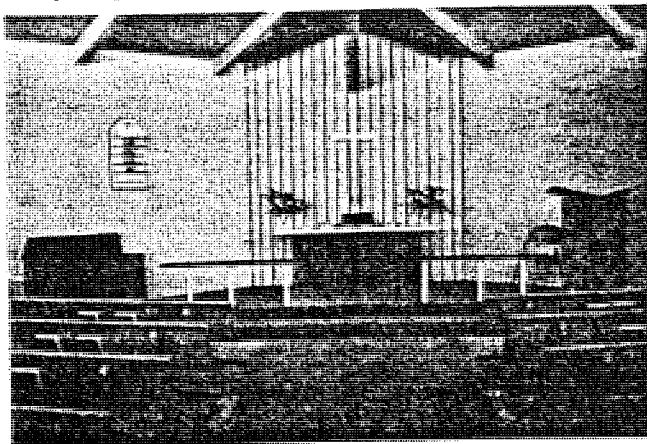
Apostles, San Jose

Since we are in Northern California for the moment, let us focus on another congregation that germinated during this expansion period of the early 1960's. At this time Pastor Hochmuth was actively in the Bay Area. Part of his duties included surveying areas for new missions. In the summer of 1963, Pastor Hochmuth conducted an exploratory Vacation Bible School in rented quarters on Senter Road and had a sizeable attendance of 50

children. The response to this Vacation Bible School was so encouraging that the California Mission District Board for Home Missions began intensively looking for land in the South San Jose-Edenvale area.

In the spring of 1964, the present church property was purchased and on June 7 of that year the first services and Sunday School were held. Thirty-two persons attended the first service. For the next five months, services were held in the Youth Center adjoining the Almaden School, 1090 Downer Avenue. Jon Mahnke, a Seminary student at the time, helped Pastor Hochmuth during the summer months.

By the time fall rolled around, a new place of worship was needed and since everything was so new in the area, there were no meeting halls that could be rented. Believe it or not, a room was rented above the Silver Dollar Saloon in Frontier Village Amusement Park! Even though it seemed an unlikely place for a church service, it was really quite a blessing to have any place at all in which to worship. Pastor Hochmuth and Pastor Walderschmidt conducted services until Pastor David Valleskey was installed as the first full-time pastor on February 28, 1965.



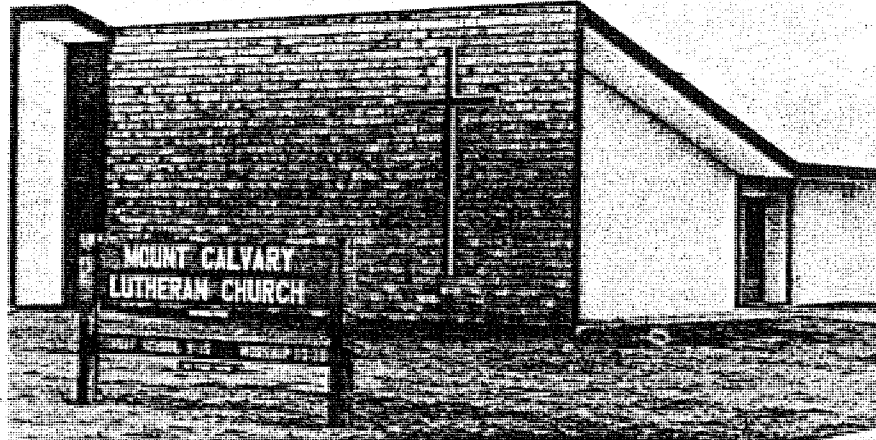
IN SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, our fellow Lutherans of Apostles Church now worship here.

On June 28, 1966, Apostles was accepted as a member of the Arizona-California District of the WELS, and on September 25 of that same year, their new church was dedicated. On February 14, 1970, the voters' assembly approved the opening of a Christian Day School, and in September of this year, the school was opened with an enrollment of 49. The congregation went self-supporting in 1971, and currently has two pastors - Pastor David Valles~~Key~~ and Pastor Scott Klein.

Mount Calvary, Redding

Another Northern California mission that was started during this time had interesting beginnings...in fact, one might say that the Mission Board in California received a "Macedonian call" from Wisconsin to start it! Pastor F. G. Kosanke of Kimberly, Wisconsin, sent a letter dated March 6, 1964, to the Wisconsin Synod Membership Conservation office with the report that two families from his congregation would be transferred to the Redding area with Kimberly-Clark. He wondered if others might be coming, too, and how these people might be served spiritually.

When it was learned that others moved with the company, the Mission Board was quick to act and our pastors from Lodi, Belmont, and Santa Clara agreed to come to Redding once a month on Sunday evenings to serve these people on an exploratory basis. The first service was held at the Linn and Fulberth Funeral Chapel (Court and Placer) on November 1, 1964, with Pastor Gotthold Zimmerman of Lodi preaching. Nineteen people were in attendance.



This is the first unit of our mission congregation in Redding, California. It will be the parish hall of a church to be built later.

The area looked promising after nine months of services, so the California Mission Board called a Seminary graduate to serve Redding part-time from the Sacramento area, 170 miles away. Thomas B. Franzmann was installed as Mount Calvary's first pastor on June 25, 1965.

After one year of this difficult arrangement, Mount Calvary received another Seminary graduate, Joel W. Prange, who was installed as the first full-time pastor on July 24, 1966. Incidentally, Pastor Prange is still the shepherd of God's sheep at Mount Calvary.

In 1967, 3 1/2 acres of land were purchased on Alta Mesa Drive for \$15,000. However, ground breaking did not take place until June 15, 1969, and dedication of the first unit came on October 5, 1969. The congregation adopted a Constitution and was organized on January 5, 1970. A total of 35 members signed the Constitution as charter members. The congregation became a voting member of the WELS in June of 1970.

Presently, Mount Calvary is looking ahead to expanding both its church and its school (one addition was added in 1975) to allow for the increasing worship attendance, the need for more Sunday School space, and for the kindergarten program. Currently, the congregation has 219 baptized members, 157 confirmed, and an average Sunday attendance of 138.

St. Mark's, Citrus Heights

The beginnings of St. Mark's congregation of Citrus Heights, California, was tied together with the beginning of Mount Calvary. It was the decision of the California Mission Board early in 1965 to call a missionary to serve chiefly in the Sacramento area and then also to serve the Redding congregation. Sacramento had been recognized as a potential area for many months because it was a growing metropolis, also there were already eight Wisconsin Synod people living there.

In May of 1965, Pastor Thomas B. Franzmann was ordained and commissioned as missionary to this area.

"Twenty-one people attended the first worship service, held on July 25, 1965. The place of worship then, and for the next two years, was the Lind Brothers Mortuary Chapel on Manzanita Avenue. During these two years, congregational meetings and classes were held in the pastor's home. Less than a year later, the young congregation, with a loan from the Synod's Church Extension Fund in the amount of \$35,000, purchased a 4 1/3 acre site on Sunrise Boulevard, anticipating the future development of the area."²⁷

This proved to be a fine move as today this area indeed has become a thriving area and the church stands in a very prominent place...on a hill overlooking the busy Sunrise Boulevard.

During those first infant years, the members gathered every Saturday and some weekdays to work on the church pews and furnishings. Palm Sunday, 1967, marks the date for ground-breaking and the dedication of the first church building was on September 10, 1967. There were 43 communicants at the time.

Incidentally, Pastor Heyn was also active in the land search for this church. In fact, he recalls discussing the plans for the church building with the architect. He wrote,

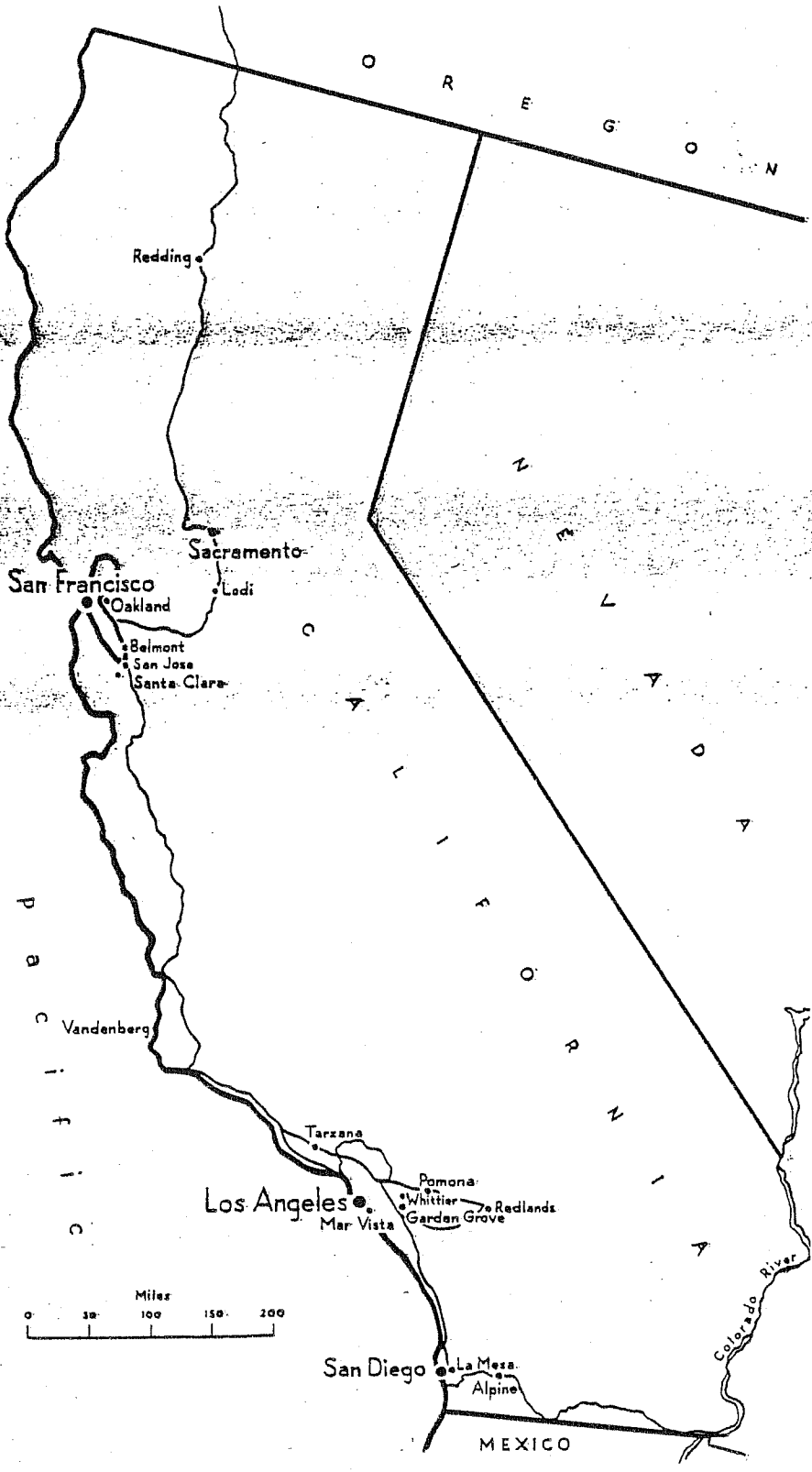
"When I told the architect that his original looked too much like a bowling alley, he was offended, but did come up with a better facial appearance."²⁸

This congregation was richly blessed by the Lord in the years that followed as the membership began to grow. Along with that growth came the ever increasing need for a school. In the fall of 1970, that need was filled as the school was started and there were 24 children in grades kindergarten through fourth. One year later the upper grades were added. Later in 1972, a new school building was dedicated.

As a result of a long-range planning committee's research,

"the congregation purchased the portable school building, effected a trade which exchanged two acres of Sunrise frontage for 3 1/2 acres of Birdcage frontage plus cash, and began planning for the permanent sanctuary."²⁹

As of this writing, the new building is being finished. It will seat 400 and Lord willing, it will be dedicated in late spring or early summer. Current membership stands at 560 communicants and 830 souls. The pastors are Pastor Thomas D. Franzmann and Pastor Robert Johannes.



Bethany, Concord

Let us take a look at one more Northern California mission that rounded out our Synod's efforts in Northern California at this time. Besides taking care of Belmont, Pastor Waldschmidt helped out at San Jose. He also conducted monthly services in the Oakland area, first in private homes, then at the Jenny Lind Hall, on Sundays at 11:00 a.m., with an average attendance of 30. These regular services began in March, 1965. Pastor Heyn conducted services here when Pastor Waldschmidt was on vacation. However, this situation was not working out very well since growth downtown was not good. Therefore, the church services were moved to the Veterans Hall in Concord in February, 1966. Pastor Armin Keibel was called and installed on October 2, 1966. Since that time, the church has grown and has even started a grade school which the members and Pastor Keibel are very grateful for.

The expansion of the Wisconsin Synod in Northern California during the early 1960's was a step in the right direction...one that helped us get our feet on the ground. If one takes a look at the map, it is very easy to see that there is some rhyme and reason for the placing of these congregations. These were the basic foundations for further expansion in this area. These were the stepping stones that would lead to the opening of more missions to spread the Gospel message and mine the wealth of souls that the northern area held.

Southern California Expands its Mines!



Southern California Expands its Mines!

The early 1960's held a lot of potential for Southern California as well as the northern part. For the sand, sunshine, and black gold continued to be a drawing card. Our Synod's response was one of a continued program of outreach into the unchurched areas. We were not only interested in seeking out our own families of former WELS members that had made the move to California, but also, there was a certain urgency to attend to the needs of a state that contained many people who did not know their Savior.

King of Kings, Garden Grove

The year 1960, summer, marks the historical beginnings of King of Kings Evangelical Lutheran Church. Pastor Heyn wrote in his memoirs,

"In May of 1960, the Arizona-California Mission Board asked the General Board for permission to begin work in Orange County and requested \$18,000 for land. After we had the authority, I looked for land and Armin Keibel looked for a place to hold services. We even talked to Mr. Knott about using the 'Chapel of Reflections' at Knott's Berry Farm. We were able to lease the Stanton Lions Club for one year at \$25.00 per Sunday. For advertising purposes, we chose a name: King of Kings. (Our nickname for it was St. Daniel's.)"³⁰

Exploratory services were first held on the first Sunday in October of that same year, 1960, in the Lion's Club in Stanton. Four families manifested an initial and continued interest in the

new mission and became the nucleus of the mission. Thirty-nine families with 67 members signed the Guest Register at the first service. Most were from sister churches of Gethsemane, in West Los Angeles, and Our Savior, in Pomona.

Pastor Keibel and Pastor Heyn then took over the services alternating Sundays. This was an 80 mile round trip for Pastor Keibel. Services were held at 8:00 a.m. originally, and then at 8:30 a.m. later. In this way, Pastors Keibel and Heyn could return in time for their own services. Mrs. Heyn likes to tell the story of how the ushers would stand there waiting in the driveway until they saw Pastor Heyn's car approaching and then they would signal the organist to start the first hymn. Pastor Heyn told of how he was only late for one service and that was the morning that the fair was going on. There were over 100,000 people attending the fair, and one can imagine the traffic surrounding Pomona. However, just like to mail, Pastor Heyn got through by driving in the parking lane! He went all the way around the city and came in from the east...he was only about five to ten minutes late!

"The organizational meeting took place on January 29, 1961. Attendance ranged from 17 to 25. Later that year, services were moved to Honold's Hut in Garden Grove. The months that followed proved to be a period of test and trial for the fledging congregation."³¹

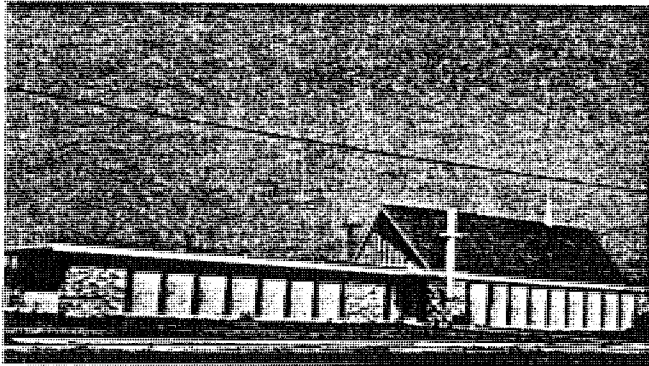
Truer words have never been written. The history of this congregation's numerous setbacks may have even caused Jeremiah to wonder as pastor after pastor declined their call for a full-time pastor...and search was unsuccessful also. Pastor Heyn commented that the Orange County brokers wouldn't even talk to them because

they only had a mere \$18,000 to spend. A great deal of personal work had to be done if they wanted to check on some property. Problems seemed to multiply as the attendance dwindled and "the history of King of Kings" indicates that setback after setback strengthened this small body's resolve to stick it out...

"Certain that, when God willed it, all obstacles to the success of their mission would be removed, they continued steadfast in their faith."³²

God did answer their prayers and finally in December of 1962, a site at the corner of New Lope and Trask was purchased - a retired orange grove. Purchase price was \$48,000. What a buy! This property had been in escrow for two years. The telephone company had wanted to put an exchange in here, but the people of the community objected to this. After two years of hearings, Mr. Del Gierke, a real-estate salesman as well as a member of King of Kings, found and recommended this piece of land. The owner was willing to sell it to the congregation for the asking price two years before that. Meanwhile, the land prices in the area had sky-rocketed so the piece of land was worth possibly close to \$70,000! Not too long after King of Kings' first pastor, Joel Gerlach, approached Pastor Heyn once and told him he had an offer of \$100,000 for the piece of property and wondered if they should consider selling. Pastor Heyn said no way! After all the hassle they had gone through to get it, nothing could make them sell!

God also answered their patient prayers for a minister when Pastor Joel Gerlach accepted the call to King of Kings on December 11, 1962. On January 27, 1963, Pastor Joel Gerlach was



KING OF KINGS LUTHERAN CHURCH at Garden Grove, California, was dedicated October 4, 1964.



PASTOR GERLACH RECEIVING KEY TO CHURCH at the dedication ceremonies.

installed as the first full-time minister. The Lord certainly blessed his efforts and the congregation for the statistics of the following year show that the membership had reached 142 souls and 81 communicants.

Pastor Gerlach writes this about those first years at King of Kings,

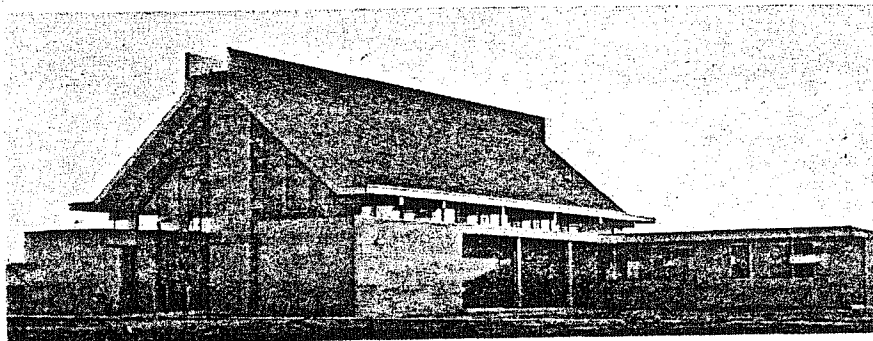
"Honold's Hut was a humble place to worship. Stuck between a garage and a fire station, it accommodated such unlikely organizations as the Overnight Citizens Club and the retired Detroit Policemen. But on Sunday mornings for more than two years it was for us a house of God. There were disturbing distractions, fire sirens and compressors for air hoses to clean the trucks, ringing phones and little children with noses pressed against the screens, peering inside to see the strange goings on.

People didn't always get inside... one L.C.A. family seeking refuge from liberalism arrived late one Sunday and

couldn't get in. So they sat outside without any shade to shelter them. As I made my way to them at the end of the service, I expressed my regrets for their inconvenience. The man said: 'you don't have to apologize for anything, Pastor, we got what we came for...' 33

From that humble beginning, God's Word in its truth and purity began to be spread in an area that is still expanding. The prospects are numerous...the souls to be "mined" are countless. King of Kings continued its work, and on April 11, 1965, a day school was begun in a fellowship hall. A year later, on September 11, 1966, a four room school was dedicated. In the fall of 1970, Pastor Gerlach accepted a call to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and was replaced by Pastor Marcus Nitz who was installed March 14, 1971. Pastor Nitz is still the shepherd of this congregation and continues to exhort his congregation to reach out to those who still do not know their Savior.

Reformation, San Diego



Deeply grateful for this new house of worship is Reformation Ev. Lutheran Congregation, San Diego, California.

Once word began spreading around that the Wisconsin Synod was becoming established in California, requests for aid soon followed. Some were attended to immediately, others had to

be put onto the back-burner until it was financially feasible or until manpower could be obtained. Others, by their determination, were able to at least get exploratory status so that services could begin. Such was the case in San Diego with Reformation.

"Already in August, 1959, the Arizona-California Board asked the General Board to start a new mission in San Diego. But it was not given permission to call until after January 1, 1962. We called eight different men before October 15, 1962, including Ed Hoenecke and his brother, Professor Gerald Hoenecke."³⁴

Finally, at the request of the Wisconsin Synod families that were in San Diego, the Mission Board initiated services in San Diego on Sunday, October 28, 1962, at the Palm Chapel of the Catamaran Motor Hotel in Pacific Beach. Originally it had been the dining room of the Scripps Mansion. This was a small wedding chapel that could accomodate approximately 50 people. The attendance grew from an average of 26 in 1962 to 76 in 1964. Pastor Heyn conducted the first service which was attended by 31 persons.

"The second service was conducted by the Reverend Fred Loeper of Phoenix, Arizona, on November 4, 1962. Thereafter, the Reverend Edgar Hoenecke, Executive Secretary of the Board for World Missions, commuted from Mesa, Arizona, by plane to conduct Sunday services, until the first resident pastor arrived in 1963."³⁵

On August 4, 1963, the Reverend Lowell K. Smith was ordained and installed as the first resident pastor of Reformation Church in a service at the Palm Chapel. Early in 1964 the congregation relocated to the Pacific Beach Woman's Club. On May 24, 1964, the congregation adopted a constitution and was officially

organized. There were 53 charter member communicants. 1964 seemed to be a big year for Reformation for in October, after considering many different church sites, the congregation approved the selection of a two acre site on Mt. Abernathy Avenue in Clairemont.

Reformation was incorporated on February 18, 1965, in the State of California in the same year the property purchase on Mt. Abernathy Avenue in Clairemont was finalized. However, it was not until May of 1966 that the ground breaking ceremony for the church building was held. The cornerstone dedication service was in September, and the Dedication Service of the completed building was held on December 18, 1966. As was the case in many of the WELS missions in California, the entire congregation took part in the building program with many hours of loving labor donated for completion of the building.

An important event that occurred in 1968 was the congregation's vote to become independent of mission support of the Wisconsin Synod. The decision was reached at the time of the sixth anniversary of the congregation. Later in 1970, the congregation was also blessed by the opening of the christian elementary school.

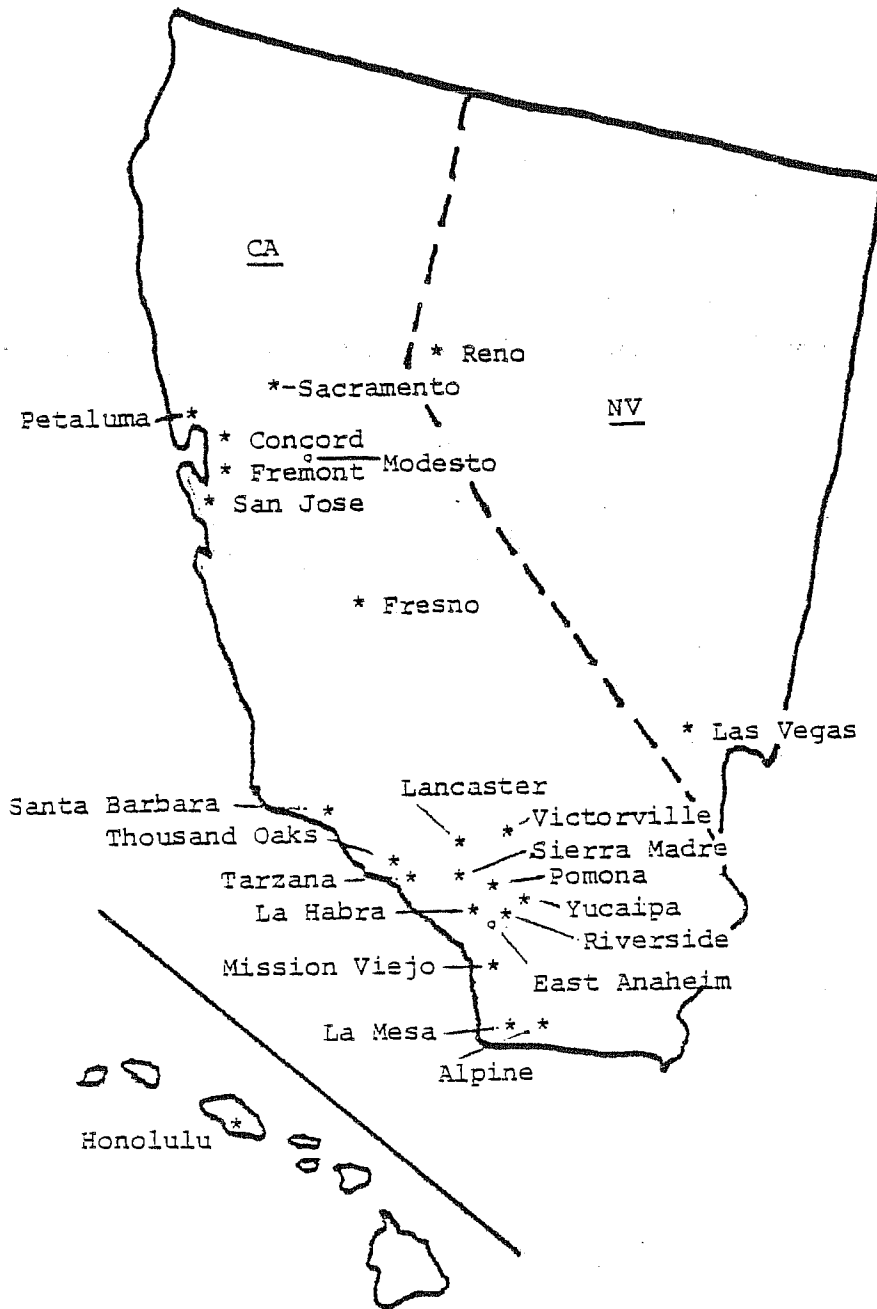
As of this writing, Pastor Smith is still the Lord's worker in Reformation of San Diego...the church is growing and the pure message of God's Word is still being preached in an area that definitely is still white for the harvest.

Fortunately, Reformation Lutheran Church served in another capacity in the San Diego area and that was being the

mother congregation to Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa, which was begun in March of 1965, and Ascension Lutheran Church of Escondido, which was begun in 1968.

CALIFORNIA MISSION DISTRICT MISSIONS

- * - mission congregations
- o - exploratory fields
- + - subsidized congregations
(older missions)



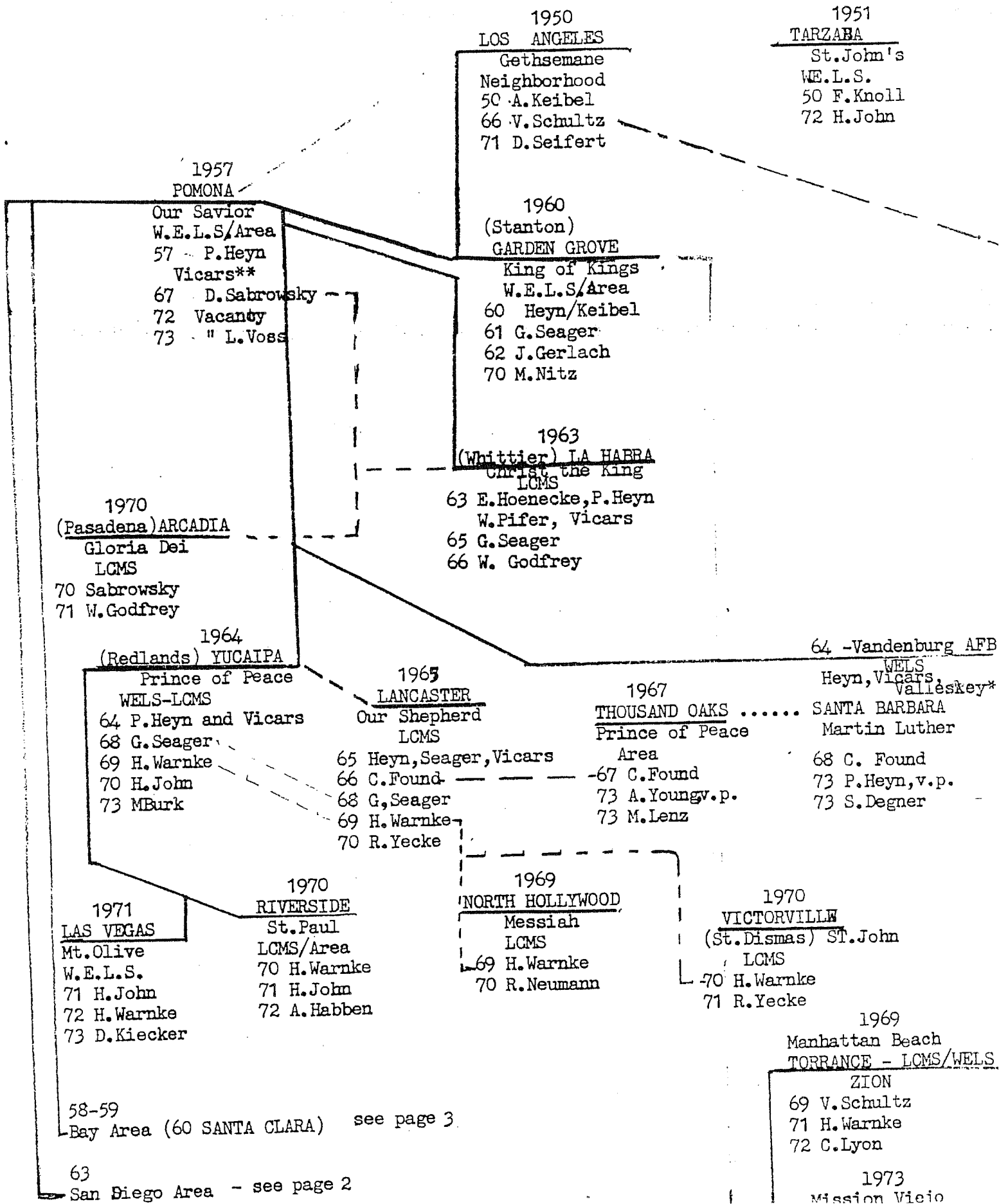
CONGREGATIONS:

- East Anaheim CA - Mission
Pastor W. Godfrey
- Reno NV - Shepherd of the Mountains
Pastor H. Warnke, Dist. Miss.
- Sacramento CA - St. Andrew
Pastor R. Hochmuth
- Petaluma CA - Living Word
Pastor P. Huebner
- Concord CA - Bethany
Pastor A. Keibel
- Fremont CA - Bethany
Pastor B. Terrell
- San Jose CA - Mt. Calvary
Pastor F. Bivens
- Fresno CA - Shepherd of the Valley
Pastor J. Boehringer
- Las Vegas NV - Mt. Olive
Pastor D. Kiecker
- Santa Barbara CA - Martin Luther
Pastor S. Degner
- Lancaster CA - Our Shepherd
Pastor R. Yecke
- Victorville CA - St. John
Pastor G. Scheuerlein
- Thousand Oaks CA - Prince of Peace
(vacant)
- Tarzana CA - St. John
Pastor H. John
- Sierra Madre CA - Gloria Dei
Pastor A. Schroeder
- La Habra CA - Christ the King
Pastor W. Godfrey
- Pomona CA - Our Savior
Pastor J. Humann
- Yucaipa CA - Prince of Peace
Pastor M. Burk
- Riverside CA - St. Paul
Pastor A. Habben
- Mission Viejo CA - Living Word
Pastor A. Beyersdorf
- La Mesa CA - Shepherd of the Hills
Pastor M. Lenz
- Alpine CA - Alpine
Pastor A. Clement
- Honolulu HW - St. Paul
Pastor W. Wietzke
- Modesto CA - Exploratory

California Mission District Mission Board:

- Rev. R. Hochmuth, Chairman
- Rev. P. Heyn - W. Dedert - C. Loeper

DEVELOPMENT OF W.E.L.S in CALIFORNIA

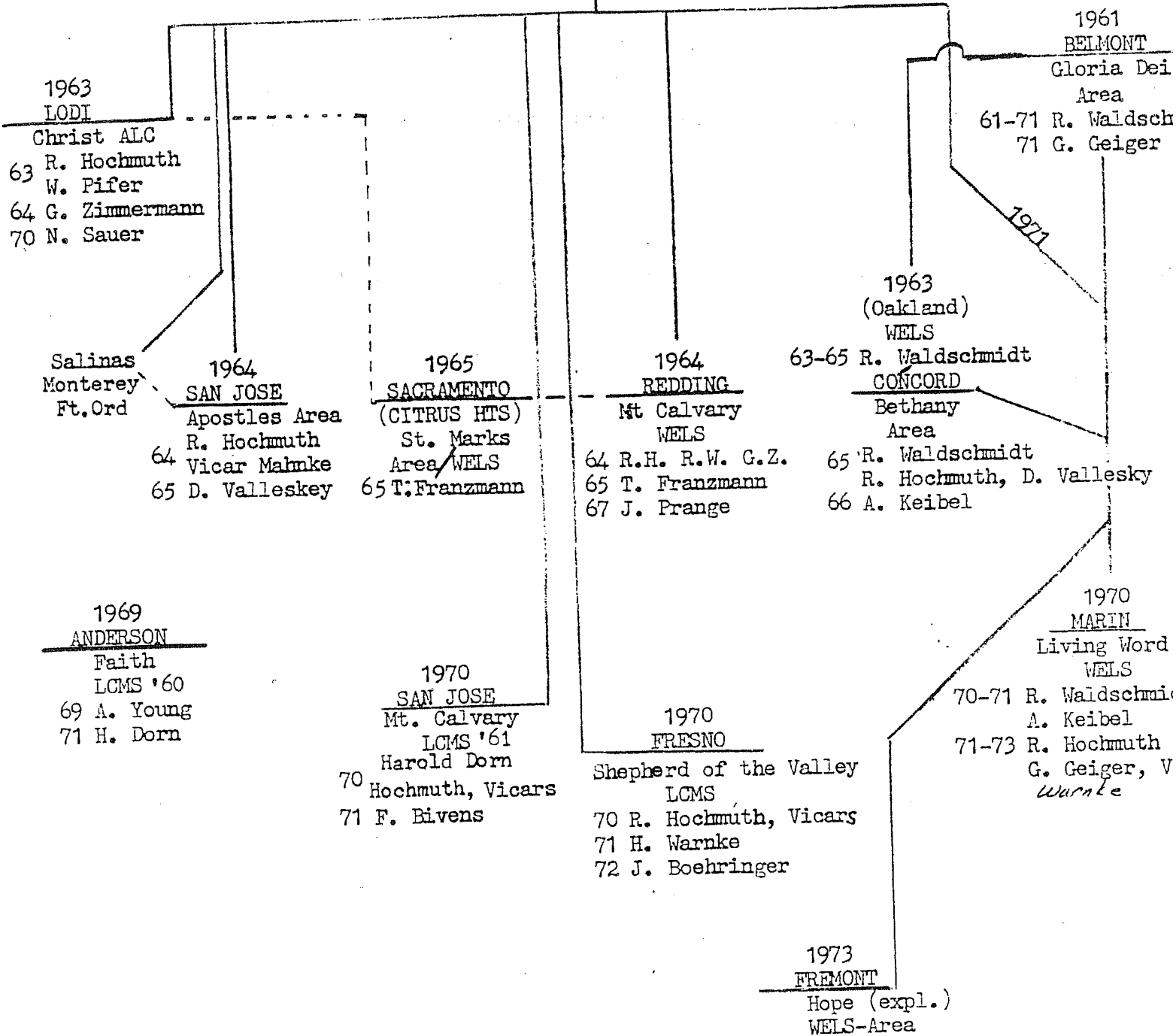


San Francisco Area

Pomona 1958-59

1959
SANTA CLARA

Peace
WELS
58-59 P. Heyn
59 R. Hochmuth, Vicars*



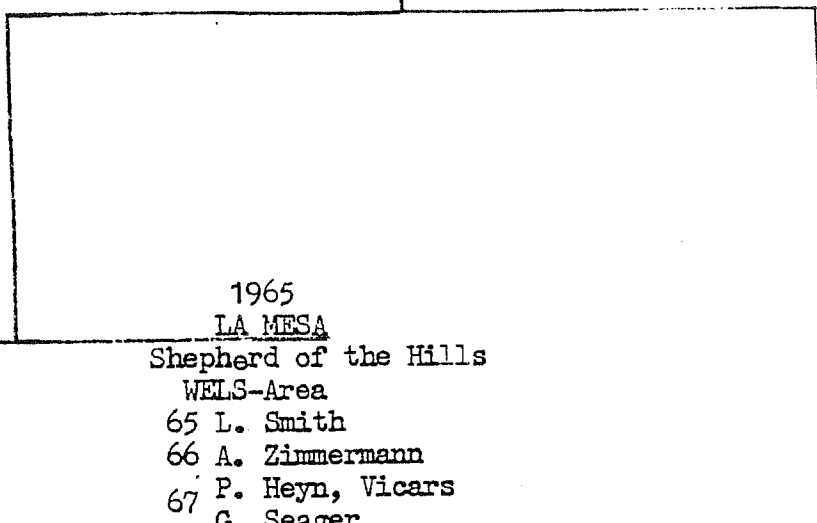
*J. Boehringer, P. Schmiege, B. Terrell, R. Koester

San Diego Area

Pomona

1963
SAN DIEGO
Reformation
WELS

- 63 E. Hoenecke (Phoenix)
- 63 P. Heyn et al.
- 64 L. Smith



1965
ALPINE

- Alpine Luth.
- LCMS (55)
- 65 E. Hoenecke
- 66 A. Zimmermann
- 67 P. Heyn, Vicars*
- 70 R. Hellmann
- 73 Vacancy

1965
LA MESA

- Shepherd of the Hills
- WELS-Area
- 65 L. Smith
- 66 A. Zimmermann
- 67 P. Heyn, Vicars
- 67 G. Seager
- 72 W. Wagner

1968
ESCONDIDO

- Ascension
- WELS-LCMS
- 68 Smith, Hoenecke
- Heyn, Vicars
- 69 G. Seager
- 70 L. Lange

1969
HONOLULU

- St. Pauls
- WELS
- 69 Heyn et al.
- 70 W. Wietzke

1969
CARLSBAD, (Oceanside)

- Beautiful Savior
- LCMS
- 69 G. Seager
- 70 L. Lange
- 71 J. Mahnke

Mission Viejo

*C. Otto, C. Lyon, L. Retberg

CALIFORNIA CONGREGATIONS RECEIVING MISSION STATUS 1966 - 81

San Jose, Apostles
Concord
Thousand Oaks
Ventura (since closed)
Lancaster
Escondido
Carlsbad
Torrance
Fresno
San Jose, Mt. Calvary
Redding
Riverside
Santa Barbara
Mission Viejo
Victorville
Fallbrook
Fremont
Sacramento
Petaluma
Sierra Madre
Yorba Linda
Modesto
Santa Maria
New Castle
Chula Vista
Rancho Cucamonga

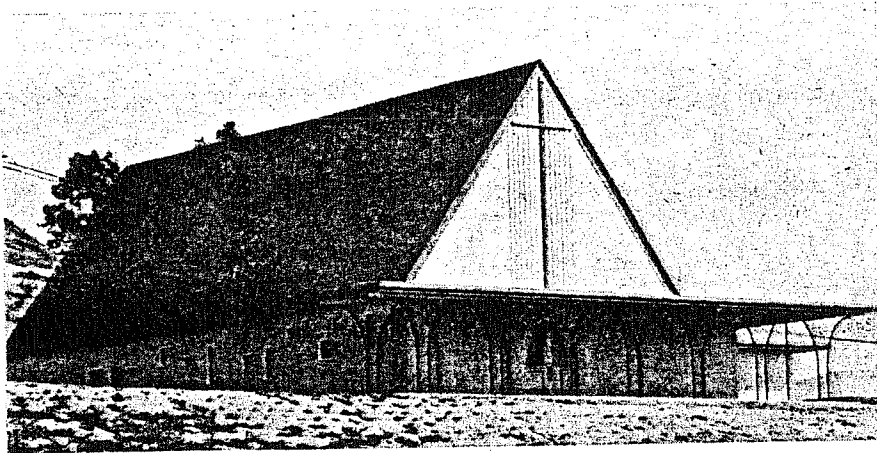
Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa

Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa, by God's grace was also a result of the untiring efforts of Pastor Paul Heyn. He was called into this area early in 1967 and remained pastor here until his retirement in 1972. However, the need for new mission congregations in the San Diego area was felt very early after Reformation of San Diego began services. There was only one Wisconsin Synod congregation in the San Diego metropolitan area of one million people. In the February 2, 1969, edition of the Northwestern Lutheran, Pastor Heyn wrote,

"On March 21, 1965, Wisconsin Synod services were held at Alpine, 30 miles east of the Pacific, and at Grossmont College in El Cajon, 15 miles east of the ocean. The 19 communicants of this mission chose the name Shepherd of the Hills Ev. Lutheran Church. The Rev. E. Hoenecke preached at Alpine and the Rev. Lowell Smith conducted the services at El Cajon and San Diego until September, when the Rev. Arnold H. Zimmermann was installed at Alpine and Shepherd of the Hills. In January 1967, Pastor Zimmermann asked to be released from his call."36

Pastor Heyn was installed on April 9, 1967, with Executive Secretary Ed Hoenecke doing the preaching and the installing at Alpine in the morning, and another service was held in the evening at Shepherd of the Hills. Pastor Found conducted the installation, and Pastor Joel Gerlach did the preaching. Concerning the set-up here in La Mesa, Pastor Heyn wrote,

"The church services for Shepherd of the Hills in La Mesa were held in the music room of the Grossmont College. Behind the blackboards there was a closet, which we could use to store our moveable altar and small organ...



The new Shepherd of the Hills Ev. Lutheran Church in La Mesa, California, which was dedicated October 27, 1968.



(Above) This attractive, ranch-style parsonage was also dedicated by Shepherd of the Hills Congregation on October 27, 1968. The hillside on which the church and parsonage are built rises behind the house.

(Left) Pastor Paul Heyn, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Congregation, stands at the entrance to the new church.

The college facilities worked out well for our church services and the Sunday School and Bible classes. But it did not identify us with any neighborhood in La Mesa, since it was on the northern edge of the city. It was not a good set-up for doing mission work."³⁷

In spite of some difficult times, land was purchased and ground breaking took place in November of 1967, but it was April of 1968 before all the building regulations were met and the construction began. When all the costs were added, the modern Spanish style church, which seats 184 in the nave and has room for 49 in the balcony, cost \$56,000. There is even a folding door between the sanctuary and the educational wing that permitted the seating of another 100 people on special occasions. The church was dedicated October 27, 1968, with 362 people in attendance for the two services!

Pastor Heyn recounts an interesting incident that took place before the church was dedicated. It seems that during that summer, the parsonage was nearly ready for occupancy, so Pastor Heyn and family gave up their apartment and took a two week vacation to their cabin in the mountains fully expecting that the plumbing and electrical work would be finished and the floors would be ready for linoleum and carpeting. He writes,

"We had anticipated coming back to a house about ready for occupancy, but not a thing had been done while we were away! We had given up the apartment. We had no place to go. So - we moved a few things from the garage into the house and slept there using the construction privy as a toilet and a hose for water. When the members found out what was going on, they insisted that we move into a motel. We found an inexpensive one and lived there almost two months."³⁸

Finally, the day came when both church and parsonage became functional and then the mission work in this area took form. The congregation experienced growth. Pastor Heyn wrote,

"With these facilities and the regular use of the Word of God, the church began to grow, especially when we changed to a 10:30 service."³⁹

As time passed on, he was able to incorporate Vacation Bible School and Sunday School, and the church certainly was blessed so that it even has a school at this writing. Pastor Heyn recounts one humorous incident while the children were portraying various Bible stories. He wrote,

"One time, when they were depicting the story of the Three Men in the Fiery Furnace, the fire department went right by the church with sirens screaming. That brought down the house!"⁴⁰

Shepherd of the Hills certainly was blessed in many ways and served to continue the work of bringing lost souls to their Savior. Pastor Heyn served Shepherd of the Hills congregation until he retired from the full-time ministry in 1972. Pastor M. Leng became the Shepherd. Pastor Mark Smith is now the minister serving God's flock in this area.

Alpine, Alpine, California

Another WELS congregation was functioning in the San Diego area also during this same time span - 1965, and that was Alpine Lutheran at Alpine, California. As mentioned previously, this congregation was a dual parish together with Shepherd of the Hills. They began meeting in the Women's Clubhouse in the center

of town which proved to be interesting since the hall had a stage and a grand piano. In the early years, this congregation had a different preacher almost every week as the vicars, Pastor Heyn, Arnold Zimmermann and the Hoeneckes all took turns serving this small congregation. Unfortunately, the lack of a church home, as in many cases in California, caused a slow growth rate. Also, there were some problems connected with the issues of fellowship and scouting that caused a drop in attendance.

The congregation weathered the storms and purchased the property at 2040 Tavern Road. The property already had a building on it which had been a woodworking shop and a small apartment was attached. Pastor Heyn wrote concerning this,

"In July, after we acquired the property in Alpine, we began to remodel the building to suit our needs for church and living quarters for the vicar. I tried to help as much as I could. Mr. Daniel Westphal, Sr., was chosen as chairman of the building committee. He did a lot of the work himself. The vicar and others also helped. On November 28, we put the red carpet down the aisle and curtains on the windows. It was ready for Dedication on December 3, 1967."⁴¹

The growth was modest at first, 32 to 34 communicants at Alpine. These people were ministered to by regular Sunday services, Bible classes, and Sunday School. Vacation Bible School became a regular program in the summer and Instruction classes for the youth also played an important part in the nurturing of this congregation.

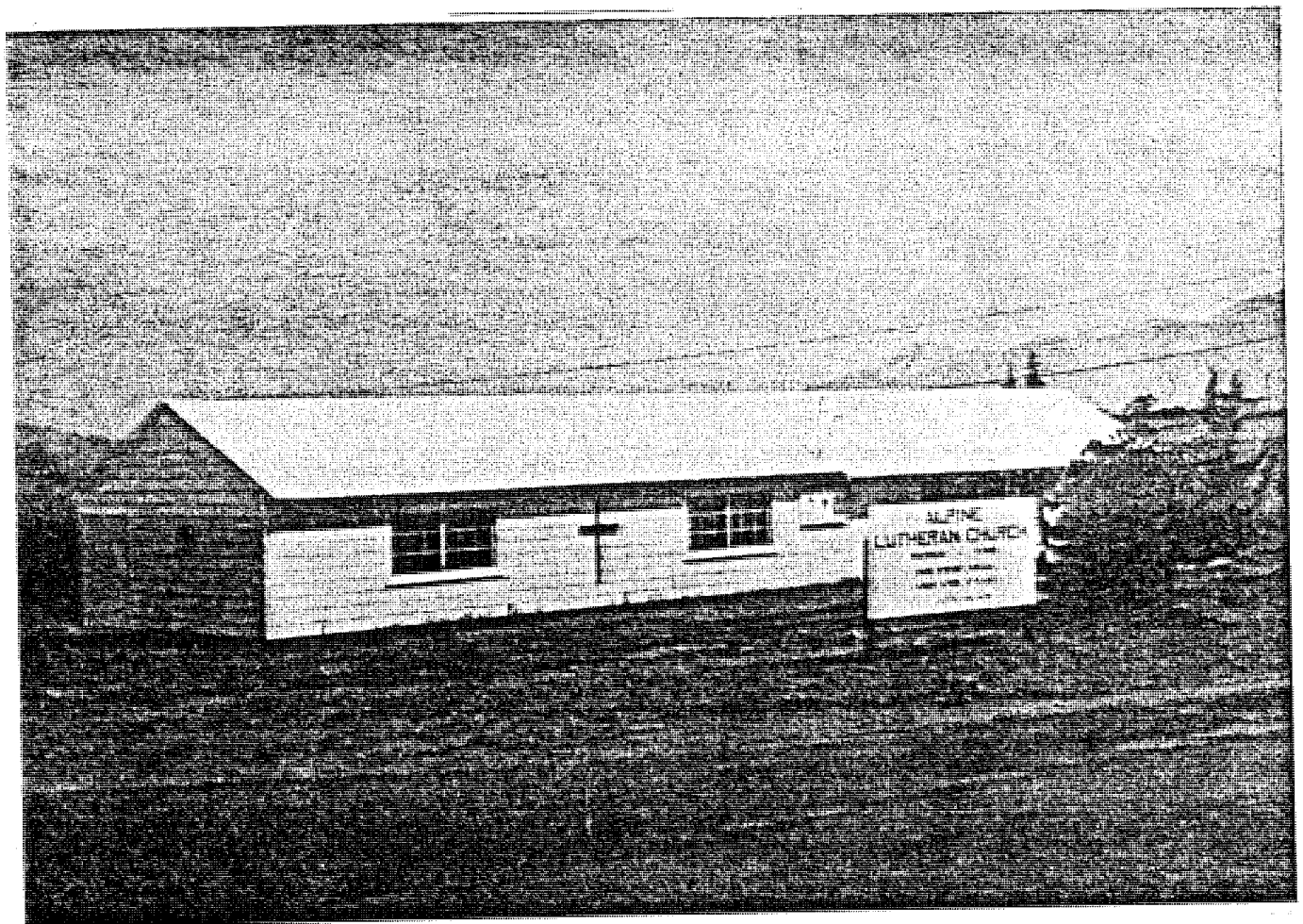
The next couple of years brought some changes and growth to the small congregation at Alpine, and as a result of that growth, they called Robert Hellmann to be their first full-time pastor.

He took over the spiritual care and guidance.

During his first summer there at Alpine,

"The Alpine church was spared from the ravages of a fire, which swept through the whole area, killing several people and doing millions of dollars worth of damage."⁴²

In spite of the fact that the church was in the path of the fire, it was spared by God's grace. The fire swept by it twice, once east and west, then north and south. Amazingly, none of the members lost homes even though they, too, had been in the path of the fire. The Lord certainly held his protecting hand over this small band of His followers. By 1980, Alpine had grown to 45 communicants.



At the present time, the Alpine congregation is a subsidized congregation of the Synod. It is being ministered to by Pastor Terry Nuckolls who is pastor of Risen Savior, Chula Vista, California.

Ascension, Escondido

A fourth congregation that became instrumental in working in the San Diego area is Ascension, Escondido. Again Pastor Heyn took the lead in setting the wheels in motion and helped this congregation in its early years. After a few organizational meetings with a small nucleus of WELS people and a few prospects, the first service was held on April 21, 1968, in a women's clubhouse in Escondido. Since it may seem that Pastor Heyn was almost everywhere at once, it needs to be noted that he had some very competent help in his vicars and also in three men...Pastors Ed Hoenecke, Gilbert Seager, and Hugo Warnke.

Pastor Hoeneck was mentioned earlier in connection with World Missions. He was Executive Secretary for the World Mission Board. Pastor Gilbert Seager in June of 1967 was called by the California Mission district as a General Missionary. He was working at Yucaipa but was soon to help out at Escondido. Hugo Warnke, who became a blessing to the mission work in California, was a Missouri Synod man from Oceanside who had recently passed his colloquy into the Wisconsin Synod. He was installed at Yucaipa to take care of the Redlands area and Lancaster. Pastor Heyn writes,

"With the move of Gilbert Seager to the south and the call of Hugo Warnke as Mission Developer, another new phase of mission work began in our District. Both were ardent missionaries..."⁴³

Behind each of these men is a story in itself.

From its humble beginnings, Ascension Lutheran sent down its roots in one of the fastest growing towns in Southern California. In 1970 it had 52 communicants and 84 souls. On July 13 of this year, Lyle Lange was installed at Escondido and from there the congregation has grown to 118 communicants and 166 souls. Also a Christian grade school is being operated. Pastor Hugo Warnke served this congregation as well as Pastor Lange. The present pastor, Charles Cortright, is a 1981 Seminary graduate.

Christ the King, La Habra

Other Southern California churches also were experiencing the same kind of joy over a growing membership through the efforts of outreach and new mission stations. Let's just take a brief look at work being done in the ever growing "Golden Fields of Souls" in California. Let's backtrack a few years and pick up a congregation that had its beginnings in 1963. With the encouragement from Pastor Paul Heyn of Pomona, then the chairman of the California Mission Board, and Pastor Joel Gerlach of Garden Grove, the group of families of Lutheran background, who had left other Lutheran churches because of the liberal trend within the parent church bodies, decided to organize and formally petition the the District Mission Board for status as a mission congregation

of the Wisconsin Synod.

"On November 18, 1963, seven families met at the Adolph Newmann home in Whittier and formally organized Christ the King Lutheran Congregation...The first service was held in the Community Room of the American Savings Building in Whittier on November 24, 1963. There were 25 in attendance. The area pastors of the Wisconsin Synod along with Pastor Edgar Hoenecke of San Diego as Pastor Walter Pifer of Alhambra handled the preaching."⁴⁴

The congregation had no problem gaining mission status and received permission soon afterward to call its first pastor. Pastor Gilbert Seager accepted the call and was installed on March 14, 1965. However, ill health forced him to resign his call after only a year of faithful service. Fortunately in 1972 he accepted a call back to California as General Missionary and helped especially at Prince of Peace in Yucaipa until August 4, 1968. Later he served Lutherans in Escondido and Oceanside, California.

Pastor W. Godfrey was installed on June 26, 1966. He writes in their Dedication booklet concerning the congregation,

"The history of the congregation has been marked by many setbacks. Internal strife within the congregation led to the loss of many of the original founding families. Setbacks in the building program delayed the erection of worship facilities until the present time. But even as the Lord tested His people, He also blessed them and through His mercy led them to the present happy day."⁴⁵

Pastor D. Fritz accepted the call to the congregation when Pastor Godfrey accepted a call to St. Paul First, North Hollywood. Christ the King Lutheran Church is currently a mission congregation of 71 communicants and 91 souls.

In fact, the congregation was richly blessed by having two of its members, Mr. Robert Van Norstrand and Mr. Lee Vacarella, study for the full time ministry in spite of the fact that they were older men than normally attend the Seminary. Incidentally, both men are now pastors in the WELS spreading the Good News.

Prince of Peace, Yucaipa

The year 1965 was exceptional for the opening of Wisconsin Synod missions in California, five in all. We have already looked at four of them - Alpine, Alpine; Concord, Bethany; La Mesa, Shepherd of the Hills, and Citrus Heights, St. Marks. Actually, there was one congregation that started the year on the right foot and that was Prince of Peace, Yucaipa. Upon delving into this church's history, one becomes amazed by the fact that it, too, came under the watchful eye, guidance, encouragement, and leadership of Pastor Paul Heyn while he was still pastor of Our Savior, Pomona.

The congregation was organized in the Fred Hoeke home in Redlands on December 6, 1964, under the leadership of Pastor Heyn. It held its first services in a Redlands school and on January 1, 1967, it moved into temporary quarters in the Hughes Funeral Chapel in Yucaipa. It was not until March 29, 1972, that they dedicated a new worship facility.

It is interesting to note that the cost of the new church, including furnishings, architects' fees, and parking lot was \$81,000. However, a major portion of the cost, an

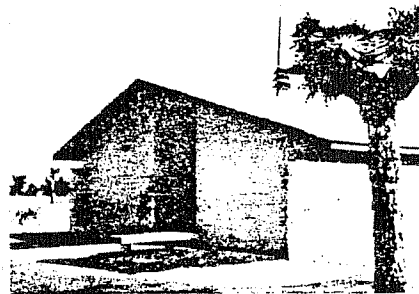
amount of \$60,000, was a gift bequeathed to the congregation in the will of Mr. William E. Becker of Redlands.

Various men have served Prince of Peace since its founding. Vicar G. Geiger (present pastor at Gloria Dei, Belmont, California) - 1967; Pastor G. Seager (1967-1968); Pastor Hugo Warnke (1968-1969); Pastor H. John since October, 1969, and most recently, Pastor R. C. Van Norstrand. However, it is now vacant. Presently, the congregation has 67 communicants and 81 souls.

Our Shepherd, Lancaster

The year 1966 produced only one new opening in the California District. Our Shepherd of Lancaster, California, held its initial worship service on February 6, 1966, in the community room of the American Savings and Loan Building in Lancaster. Again as we have noted in so many Southern California missions, it was a result of outreach and a steady effort to follow the flow of people still streaming into the sunshine state. At its first service, 40 people attended to hear the late Pastor Seager proclaim the word of life. The congregation slowly grew and in June of that year it had 15 communicants that were received by affirmation of faith following an extensive study of Lutheran doctrine. The congregation received mission status in October of 1966, and three years later, in June of 1969, land was purchased as a site for the church building. Erection of the church was begun in March of 1971, with dedication on August 29, 1971. Presently, Pastor R. D. Yecke is guiding this

flock which has 87 communicants and 116 souls.



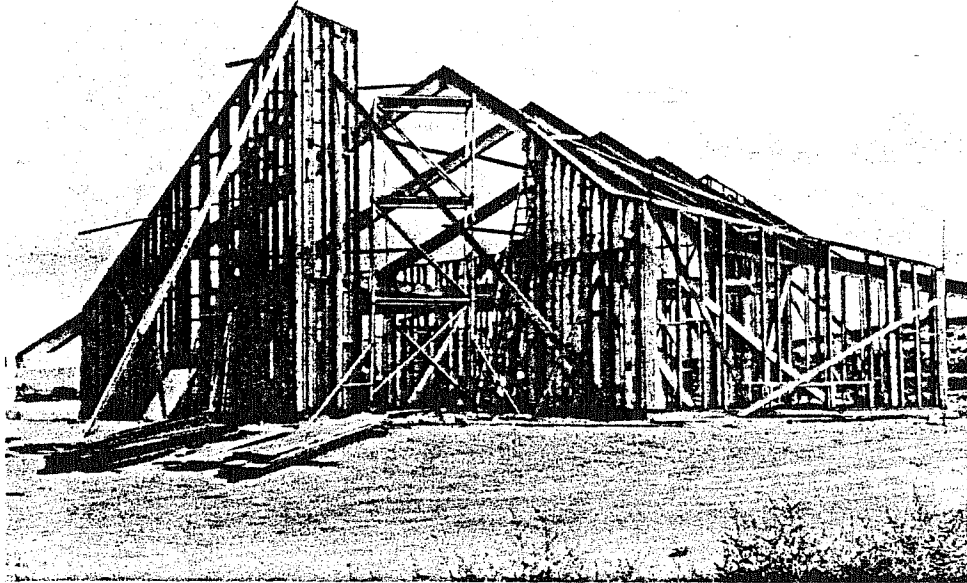
Our Shepherd, Lancaster, Calif.

Prince of Peace, Thousand Oaks

The California Mission field continued to grow as the many areas requesting aid were taken care of one by one. On March 26, 1967, the congregation was founded and began worship in a store building which they used until September 22, 1968. The congregation finally moved to the local YMCA. Finally, on April 8, 1973, their new church building was dedicated.

"Prince of Peace congregation was founded by the Rev. Charles E. Found. Five years later, in 1972, he accepted a call to Africa to serve as Publications Director for the Lutheran Church of Central Africa."⁴⁶

Pastor M. J. Lenz became pastor on June 24, 1973. At the present time, Prince of Peace is growing under the spritual guidance of Pastor J. McWaters. It has 118 communicants and 153 souls.



Prince of Peace Church, Thousand Oaks, going up. The chapel will seat 150. The congregation was without its own church home for six years. Construction should be complete as you read this.

Our Redeemer, Santa Barbara

Pastor Found proved to be a great blessing not only to his own congregation at Thousand Oaks but also to a number of missions up the coast. Pastor Found came from Phoenix to begin work further up the coast. He established his residence in Thousand Oaks. From there he started his work in Lancaster and then in Santa Barbara. This happened in the late sixties.

In a letter that I received from Pastor Steven Degner, the present pastor of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Santa Barbara, he recounts the history of Pastor Found's work.

"Santa Barbara began as a preaching station in 1969 with Pastor Found conducting services in the Veteran's

Memorial Building along the beach. Attempts were made to get a mission started in Vandenberg because of the potential growth for space exploration. This fell through in the sixties and Pastor Found's work centered in Santa Barbara with a family or two driving from Vandenberg (60 miles) to worship."⁴⁷

Actually, Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church began as Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church in the late 1960's but the name was changed because of the confusion that it caused during that time period...many thought it was related to the late Martin Luther King! The first Sunday school class was held on January 9, 1972, with four in attendance. On February 20, 1972, 12 people gathered to organize a mission congregation of the WELS.

Later in that same year, General Motors moved several hundred families to this area, and some were from the Wisconsin Synod. As a result, the nucleus was tripled and it called its first full-time pastor - Steven Degner. Pastor Degner writes,

"It should be said that Pastor Paul Heyn served this congregation for six months. His warm welcome given to me when I first came to California will always be remembered...During the seventies, people up the coast were served from Santa Barbara by regular visitation. Some were communicant members of Our Redeemer and regularly drove the 70 miles for worship. Then with the efforts of Pastor Warnke, another key man in our mission work, a church was started in San Luis Obispo then moved to Santa Maria, serving a growing population in that area."⁴⁸

God has blessed Pastor Degner's work at Our Redeemer in that it has grown to 91 communicants and 130 souls.

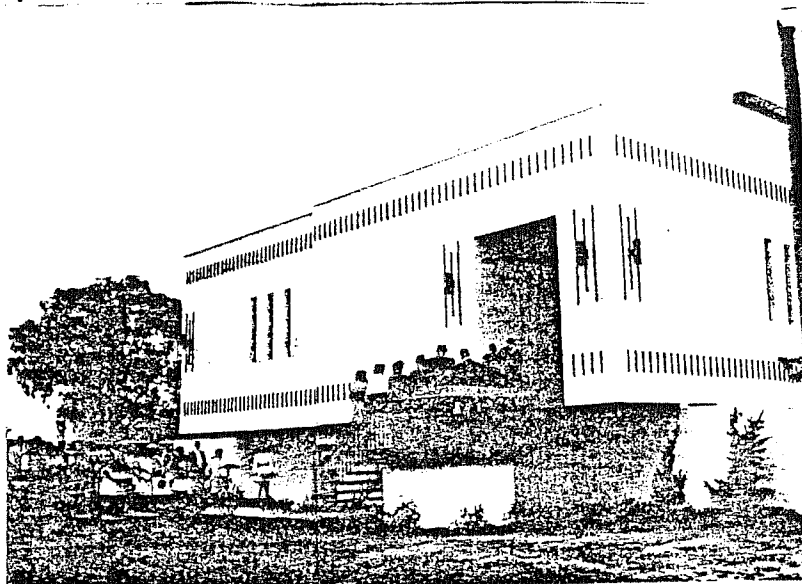
Beautiful Savior, Carlsbad

Before we leave the decade of the 60's, there are two more congregations that we need to briefly look at that had their beginnings in 1969: Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church of Carlsbad and Zion Lutheran Church of Torrance, California.

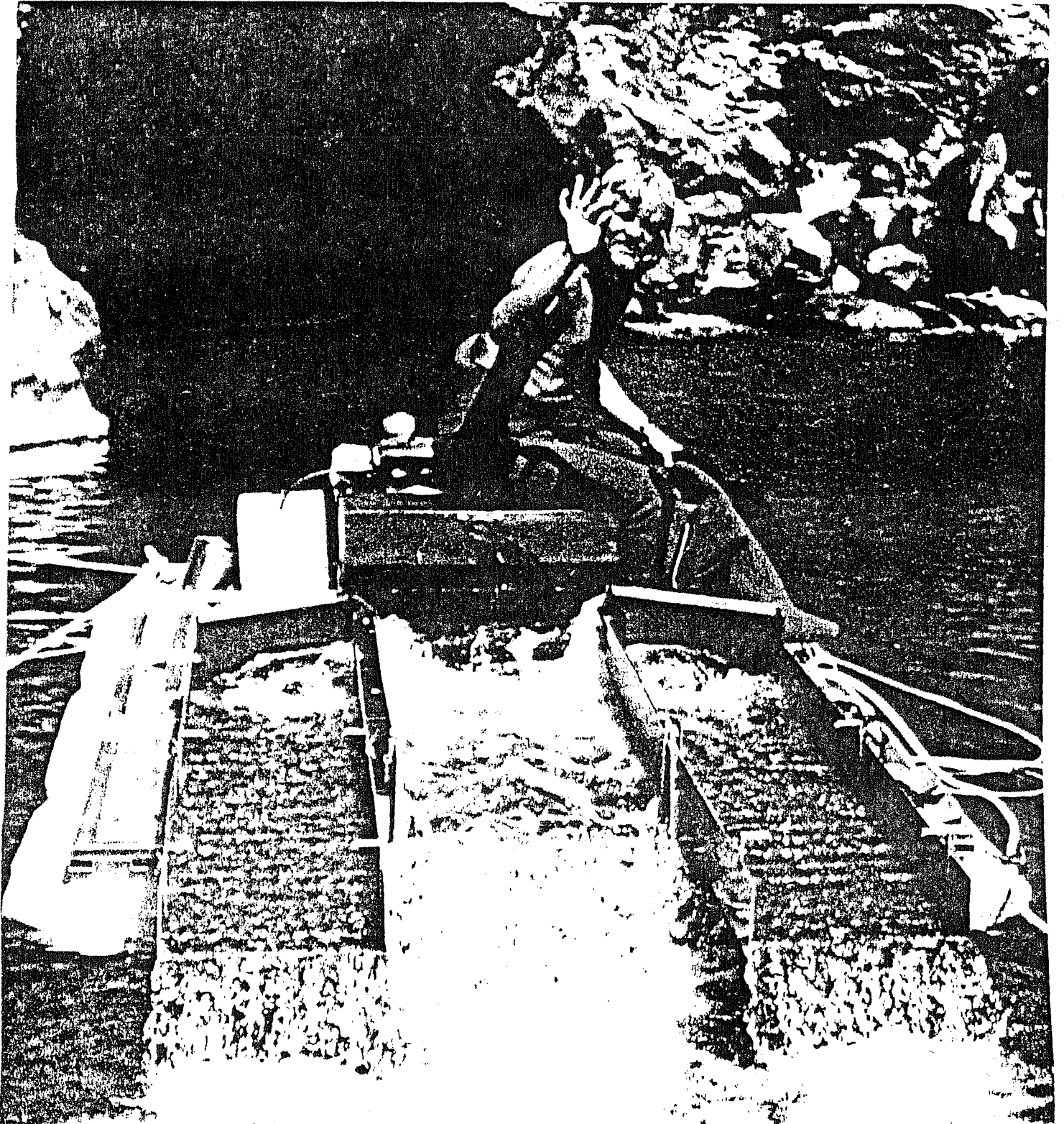
Early in 1969, Beautiful Savior of Carlsbad was begun. Services were originally conducted in Oceanside, California, but when land was obtained in Carlsbad, the location of the church was moved. Beautiful Savior dedicated its church in December, 1972, and began a Christian Day School in September, 1976. Beautiful Savior is served by Reverend Jon Mahnke.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Torrance

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church had its initial service in 1968 and began meeting a women's club. Pastor Victor Schultz of Sun City, Arizona, conducted the very first service at Zion Church. Later the congregation met in a YMCA and a mortuary chapel. It was not until August 12, 1973, that the



New Fields to Mine - The 70's and Beyond



Modern Suction Dredge

congregation was finally blessed with a home of its own. The dedication service was conducted by Pastor Curtis Lyon, pastor of Zion at that time. Since 1973, Pastor A. Schmeling has become pastor. The congregation continues to grow and has 99 communicants and 127 souls.

VI.

NEW FIELDS TO MINE - THE 70's AND BEYOND

The decade of the 60's passed and the Mining of Souls in California by the Wisconsin Synod was blessed richly by God's grace and wisdom. Just as the men in gold mines followed the veins of gold, so also WELS mission work in California was following the golden vein of souls...the large Metro areas. In the same way that the tunnels in a gold mine spread out in all directions, many times in search of new deposits of gold, so also the new decade of the 70's brought with it a renewed zeal for outreach. The mission field in California received a sudden rush of no less than 7 missions in 1970 alone! Followed by another 6 before 1975.

The trend of population movement was to the suburbs in the 70's and the mission work of WELS reflects that change also. Another aspect is also seen in the work in California that a number of Missouri Synod people became fed up with the doctrinal practices of their church body and consequently asked our Synod for aid. This became a concern that our Synod answered with a number of pastors and mission openings. It needs to be

mentioned that at this time our Synod, working through the California Mission Board, opened missions in Honolulu, 1970; Las Vegas, 1970, and Reno, 1975. Since many of the congregations started in the 70's have not provided the writer with materials on account of the fact that their congregations are small and may not even have property and/or a building, the writer will only mention those by giving some statistics: founding date, pastor, and present congregational status. Other congregations will be treated as material received permits.

Shepherd of the Valley, Fresno

In May of 1970, fifteen Missouri Synod laypeople began to protest the laxity of their congregation and synod. A letter requesting help from the Wisconsin Synod was sent to Pastor Robert Hochmuth, the Chairman of the California Mission District. After meeting with four families in June of 1970, plans to begin Worship Services, Sunday School, and Bible classes were made.

"The first Sunday School and Bible class was held July 5, 1970, at which 14 people attended. The first worship service was held the evening of July 19, 1970, at which 16 people attended."⁴⁹

During the course of the next few months, this small group of believers was served by a number of pastors and vicars from the Sacramento and San Francisco Bay Areas (Pastors Hochmuth, Dorn, Franzmann, Valesky, and Vicars Schmeige, Boehringer, and Birkhultz). During this time they reviewed the Wisconsin Synod's position on Doctrine using the Synod information guide "This We Believe" which they finished on August 30, 1970.

The first communion service was held by Pastor Hochmuth and assisted by Vicar Boehringer on September 6, 1970. Also at this time mission status was requested. From that time on the mission congregation experienced growth. Pastor Hugo Warnke began serving the congregation in September of 1970 and surprisingly enough, the congregation was able to secure a church building in the same year. They were able to buy an old LCA church building for \$75,000 with the help of an \$11,000 loan from the Schwann family of Marshall, Minnesota. The church held its first service Christmas Day, 1970, and was dedicated on April 8, 1971, by Pastor Warnke.

Pastor Al Young served as pastor in residence until May 22, 1972, when John Boehringer was extended a call and was ordained on July 16, 1972. He served until October 15, 1978, when he was commissioned as mission pastor for the Japan Mission Field. Pastor William Warnke presently serves the congregation having been installed on December 3, 1978. The congregation is currently self-supporting.

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Anderson

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church is another congregation that was not always WELS. Pastor Harry Marks writes concerning the history of his congregation,

"Our congregation was originally LCMS becoming a member of WELS in 1970 under the leadership of the Reverend A. Young.

The congregation has since been served by the Reverend Harold Dorn, also a former Missourian. Upon his retirement, I was

LOUISE PEHRSON

Services for Louise Pehrson, 79, of Redding will be held at 2 p. m. on Saturday at McDonald's Redding Chapel.

Pastor Harry Marks of Faith Lutheran Church in Anderson will officiate at the memorial and graveside services.

Louise Schultes Pehrson was born January 30, 1902 at Muenchen Germany, brought to Wisconsin when six months old, and confirmed at St. John's Church of Milwaukee by Pastor John Brenner, a president of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod.

With her family, Mrs. Pehrson came to Redding in 1917. Along with being active in civic organizations, she endeavored to help start a Lutheran church in Redding, and in 1921 became a charter member of an association called First Lutheran Church of Redding.

This group met for worship in the basement of the old Carnegie Library and other locations until 1940 when a church building on Chestnut Street was secured. In that year the group incorporated under a new name, Trinity Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and Louise Pehrson was a charter member of this church.

(more)

For over 30 years Mrs. Pehrson was active in the ladies' societies, altar guild, mission and educational endeavors of Trinity Lutheran Church, as well as rendering secretarial and other assistance to Trinity's four pastors: William Grunow, Harold Dorn, A. J. Maas, and Rudi Lenser.

In 1970 Faith Lutheran Church of Anderson became a member of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod. Mrs. Pehrson became a member of this church, ~~AND THE SYNOD~~ of her youth, and continued to serve as she was able during the pastorate of Harold Dorn.

After a prolonged illness, Louise Pehrson died Wednesday December 2nd at Shasta Convalescent Hospital in Redding.

She is survived by son George Pehrson of Redding, three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

McDonald's Redding Chapel is in charge of arrangements.

called. My fellowship with WELS came through my membership in the Federation for Authentic Lutheranism in 1971. In 1978 I joined the WELS."⁵⁰

Interesting enough, many of the members of this church came to this part of California with the paper and lumber industries that moved from Wisconsin. At this writing, only six of Pastor Marks' members originated in the WELS. At the present time, Faith, Anderson, is self-supporting.

Good Shepherd, Vallejo

Here is but another congregation that was once a member of the Missouri Synod but because of doctrinal reasons left the Missouri Synod. In fact, after two years of meetings, they were unable to see any reason to remain with the Missouri Synod, so on October 26, 1971, they withdrew from that Synod.

Unfortunately, the congregation was split on the issue and consequently the splinter group that is now in fellowship with our Synod lost all the vested interest (property, church belongings) that they had built up and paid into with their contributions. This did not hinder the spirit that they felt for hearing the true and pure Word of God. Therefore, they purchased a used nursery building and started from scratch.

On December 3, 1972, they moved into their new church home which was remodeled over the course of thirteen months. On January 13, 1974, the new church building was officially dedicated and has since served as a suitable place of worship. Recently, in June of 1980, they called their first Principal/teacher, and school was opened with a minimum of 16 students enrolled. One year later,

32 were enrolled with two teachers. At the present time, Pastor E. W. Halverson is God's called worker here.

Messiah, North Hollywood

This was another congregation that had its beginnings in the Missouri Synod, but during the doctrinal turmoil, split from the Missouri Synod about twelve years ago. Pastor Weindorf in his letter to me stated that the church was independent for a time but then joined the LCR, but found it too legalistic. Again it was independent, but then it was served by a WELS man, the Reverend Hugo Warnke.

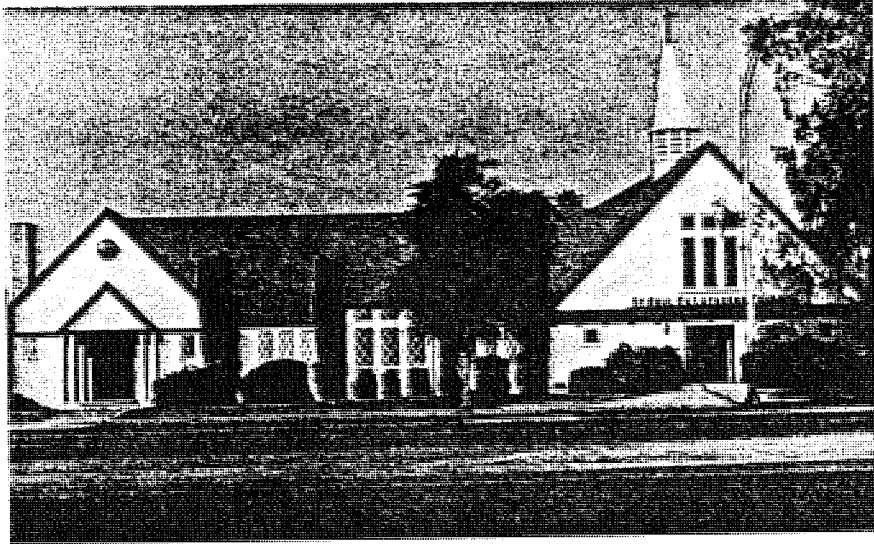
In 1970, Messiah Lutheran Church by God's grace was led to join the Wisconsin Synod through the leadership of Reverend Warnke. The Reverend Robert Neumann served the congregation from 1971 to 1978, and Pastor Luther Weindorf accepted the call in 1978 and is presently serving this congregation.

One tragic note in the congregation history involves the death of one member's 29 year old son who was killed in the DC 10 air crash May 25, 1979, at O'Hare Field, Chicago. However, the parochial school fund that was set up in his name grew quickly so that today Messiah is blessed with a school that opened in September, 1981, with 16 students, grades 1 - 8. Currently there are 108 souls, and 78 communicants.

St. Paul, Riverside

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His Courts with praise; be thankful unto Him and bless His name (Psalms 100:4)."

Indeed the members of St. Paul had a lot to be thankful for when they used this as the introduction to their dedication bulletin on Sunday, September 30, 1973. But the congregation had to wait a few years and do some growing before this day.



St. Paul Lutheran Dedicates at Riverside

The first service was held in a private home on May 3, 1970. One month later because the group had increased in size, services were held in the Riverside YMCA. Services continued there until August of 1973. On January 17, 1971, the congregation was formally organized, and on August 5, 1971, was received into membership with the Wisconsin Synod. On March 5, 1972, Pastor A.B. Habben was installed as the first resident pastor.

In 1972, the congregation received the go-ahead to buy a former LCMS congregation that had out-grown its facilities. Finally, the deal was closed and the first service held here was

in August of 1973. Since that time, Pastor Habben served the congregation until he suddenly died last year. Pastor John F. Chworowsky is now pastor. St. Paul has 325 souls and 125 communicants as of 1980 statistics.

Mission Viejo, California

In February of 1973, 17 communicants met in a rented classroom and faced a mission field of nearly one million people. More hearers gathered, and on November 14, 1976, a new church and fellowship hall were dedicated. On September 9, 1977, a school was opened. Pastor Allen R. Beyersdorf is presently serving the congregation which has 97 communicants and 159 souls.

St. John's, Victorville

"Situated on a rise overlooking Victor Valley and visible from 15 miles away, the new church of St. John Lutheran of Victorville symbolizes the existence of the young congregation and the presence of the Wisconsin Synod on the Mojave Desert of Southern California." NWL - November 12, 1978.

The congregation began in 1970 when a small bond of doctrinally concerned Lutherans in the area requested Wisconsin Synod services. They first met in private homes and later in a mortuary. Services were conducted by various Southern California WELS pastors until Pastor Gary Scheuerlein accepted the first call as resident pastor in 1974. Three years later, on August 21, 1977, groundbreaking took place for the new church and one year later, on August 20, 1978, some 125 members and friends were on hand for the dedication of this church. Pastor G. Scheuerlein

continues as the shepherd here as the congregation now stands at 78 communicants and 114 souls.

St. Stephen, Fallbrook

In 1971, the LCMS congregation in Fallbrook, California, split over doctrine and practice. The small group that remained loyal to the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions joined the newly organized FAL Church body. This small body left the church property it had helped to build in the hands of the Missouri Synod body and rented facilities from the local Seventh Day Adventist Church. It called itself St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fallbrook, California. In May; 1972, Pastor D. Heiderich was installed.

However; early in 1976, the pastor defected and the group turned to WELS for a call list from the office of the ministry. Since St. Stephen had in the mean time joined WELS a call was sent to Pastor S. Kugler of Charles City, Iowa. Pastor Kugler accepted and was installed June 27, 1976.

In Early 1977, the congregation purchased land, and on December 3, 1978, they dedicated their new worship facilities. Pastor Kugler writes,

"St. Stephen congregation owes a deep debt of gratitude to WELS officers and people for guidance and aid, both spiritual and material. The mission boards, the Synod's Board of Trustees, and many other individuals saw us safely through the transitional periods to the completion of our school complex and the realization of our fondest dreams. The Lord was with us mightily and visibly! He supplied the means, the will, and the skill to do it all."
(NWL - April 1, 1979 at page 106).

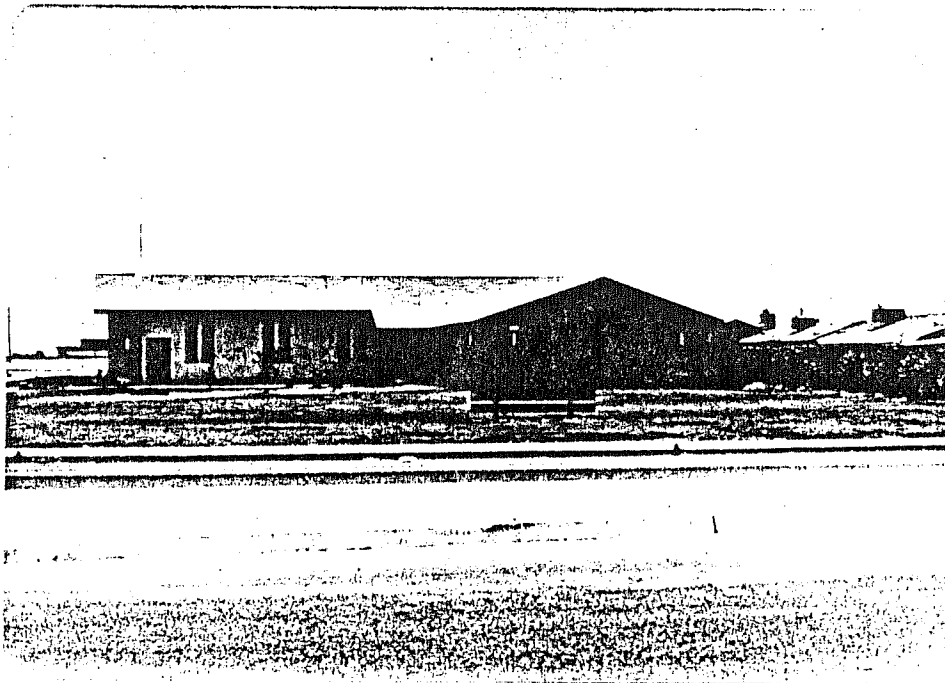
Pastor Kugler is still pastor here with a growing congregation of 91 communicants and 131 souls.

Hope, Fremont

Hope of Fremont, California, is a WELS congregation which was founded by Pastor Robert Hochmuth in 1973. It was finally able to secure land and build a church which was dedicated on Sunday, July 30, 1978. Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church is served by Pastor B. Terrell and currently has 42 communicants and 73 souls.

St. Andrew's, Sacramento

Even though Sacramento already had a WELS congregation (St. Marks, Citrus Heights), still the need was felt for another one in the south area. So in 1973 at the direction of the Mission Board, Vicar Brian Terrell, the Mission Board vicar for that year, conducted a community survey.



"After meetings with interested members of St. Mark's congregation and with Lutherans of the south area concerned for preserving historic evangelical Lutheran doctrine and practice, Pastor Hugo Warnke conducted the first service on January 6, 1974, at Holiday Inn South. The present three acre site was selected and purchased for \$48,000."51

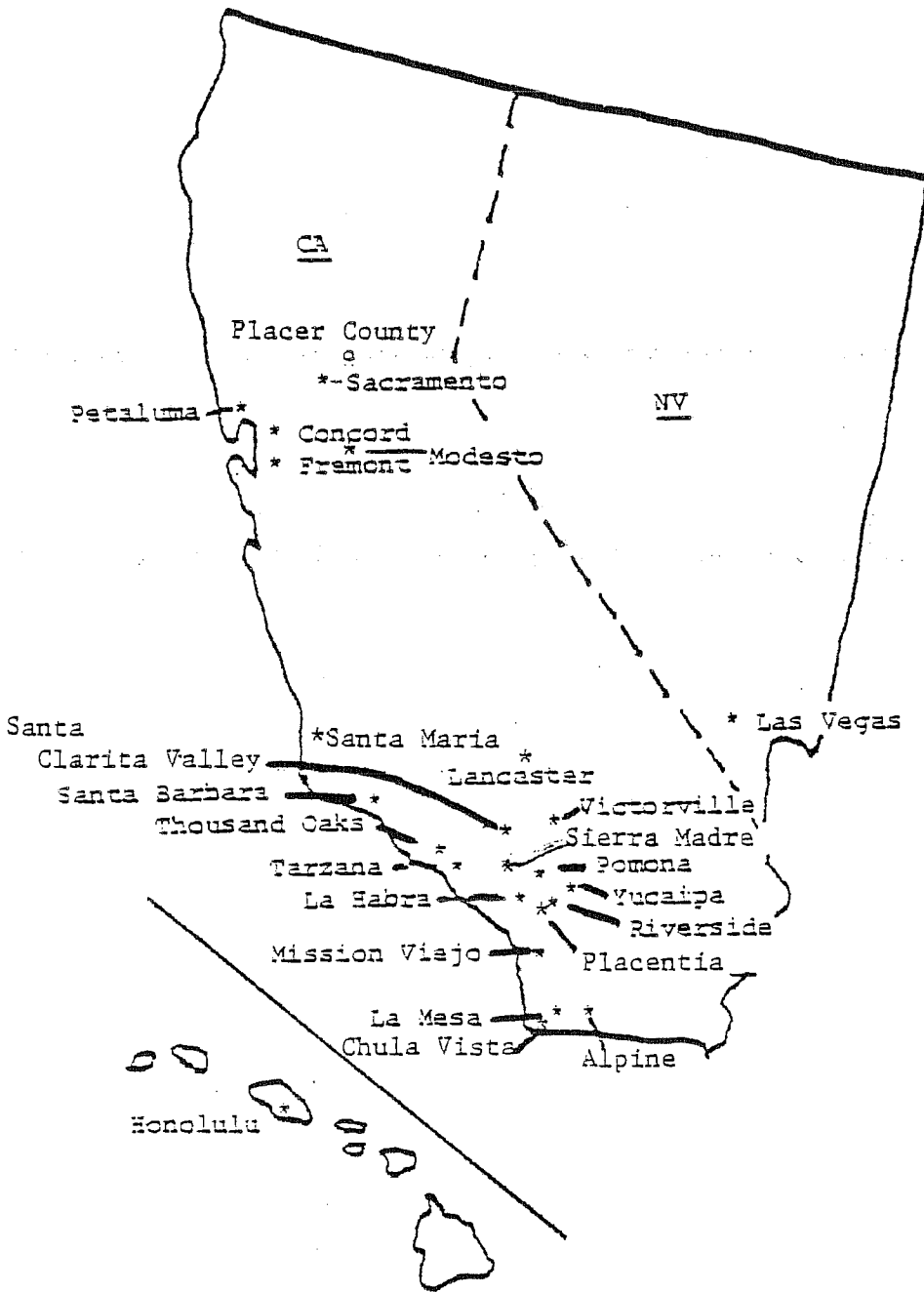
By God's grace, Pastor Robert Hochmuth accepted the call extended to him, and on February 2, 1975, he became the first resident pastor of St. Andrew's Lutheran Congregation. During the course of the congregation's history, a number of vicars assisted. Vicars Earl Noffsinger, Randy Rathjc, William Herrmann, Scott Klein, Glen Schmiede, Phil Merten, and the author of this paper.

During the spring of 1975 (March), the Southgate Daycare Center was made available to the congregation for all services, meetings and classes. A parsonage was built and dedicated on January 23, 1977, and on December 5 of that same year, ground was broken for the worship facility. At the time of dedication, the congregation had 109 baptized members, and 96 communicants. At the present time, that number has increased to 134 souls and 117 communicants.

Pastor Hochmuth has an ideal location in which to work since the City of Sacramento is very quickly developing around the church. New subdivisions, a new shopping center and a very traditional neighborhood add to the challenge of spreading God's Word. A job that the members of this congregation have encouraged by their time, talents, and their contributions.

CALIFORNIA MISSION DISTRICT MISSIONS

- * - mission congregations
- o - exploratory fields
- + - subsidized congregations
(older missions)



CONGREGATIONS:

- Alpine, California - Alpine
T. Nuckolls
- Concord, California - Bethany
A. Keibel
- La Habra, CA - Christ the King
W. Godfrey
- Lancaster, California - Our Shepherds
R. Yecke
- Mission Viejo, CA - Living Word
A. Beyersdorf
- Riverside, California - St. Paul
A. Habben
- Santa Barbara, CA - Our Redeemer
S. Degner
- Tarzana, California - St. John
H. John
- Thousand Oaks, CA - Prince of Peace
J. McWaters
- Petaluma, California - Living Word
P. Huebner
- Sacramento, California - St. Andrew
R. Hochmuth
- Victorville, California - Our Saviors
G. Scheuerlein
- Yucaipa, CA - Prince of Peace
R. Van Norstrand
- Pomona, California - Our Savior
J. Humann
- Fremont, California - Our Savior
B. Terrell
- Placentia, California - Grace
R. Kugler
- Modesto, California - St. Peter
R. Koester
- Placer County, CA - Hope
R. Curia
- Santa Clarita Valley, CA - Calvary
G. Pavia
- Santa Maria - Star of Bethlehem
W. Herrmann
- Chula Vista, CA - Risen Savior
T. Nuckolls
- Las Vegas, Nevada - Mt. Olive
D. Kiecker
- Honolulu, Hawaii - St. Paul
W. Wietzke
- La Mesa, CA - Shepherd of the Hills
M. J. Lenz
- Sierra Madre, CA - Gloria Dei
A. K. Schroeder

California Mission District Mission Board

- Rev. R. Hochmuth, Chairman
- Rev. D. Seifert
- W. Dedert, C. Loeper
- Rev. Paul Heyn, em

Living Word, Petaluma

Living Word congregation started out being a venture of Pastor Waldschmidt at Novato on September 21, 1969. He held the first of many services. During the next five years, (1969 - 1974) he attempted many times and various ways to break into the Marin County area. Finally, March of 1975 saw a move to a Seventh Day Adventist Church, Petaluma, Sonoma County. At this time, the Reverend Al Young was serving the congregation. As with many temporary church homes, the attendance fluctuated. Finally, on July 13, 1975, Pastor Paul Huebner was ordained and became the first resident pastor. On March 9, 1977, the congregation purchased a five acre site on S. Ely Road which even had a house that became the parsonage. Two years later, the modern plan for their chapel was approved by the Board of Trustees.

The chapel was completed in March of 1981, but it wasn't until July 2, 1981, that occupancy was approved by the city. The dedication service took place on July 12, 1981. Presently, Living Word has 47 souls and 40 communicants. Pastor Paul Huebner is now serving God's flock here in Petaluma.

Gloria Dei, Sierra Madre

Gloria Dei congregation is a result of a group of concerned Christians who could no longer go along with the liberal practices of their former church body, the Missouri Synod. Therefore, they split from the Missouri Synod and asked assistance from the WELS. All this took place back in 1970 as the newspaper article attests to.

Church Splinter Group to Hold First Services

Breakaway Lutherans Claim Missouri Synod Too Liberal in Doctrine Rulings

A group of about 20 church members who broke away from the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church because of the denomination's alleged liberalism has formed a new congregation.

The Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church will hold its first worship service at 8 a.m. Sunday in the chapel of the Northeast Branch YMCA, 4100 Eagle Rock Blvd., Highland Park.

The Missouri Synod Lutheran Church is the most conservative of the three largest U.S. Lutheran denominations. The church last year, however, voted to permit pulpit and altar fellowship with the American Lutheran Church, a move that was opposed by conservatives.

The new Highland Park

congregation voted to affiliate with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Sgt. Robert D. McDowell of the Los Angeles Police Department, president pro tem of the new congregation, said the Wisconsin Synod is noted for its lack of compromise on doctrine.

"Some of the professors in the Missouri Synod favor evolution and say the Bible contains myths; I could go on and on," he said.

The new congregation, formed primarily from ex-members of two Highland Park area Missouri Synod churches, will be served by the Rev. Daniel L. Sabrowsky, pastor of Pomona's Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Four years later in a letter addressed to Pastor Hochmuth, dated April 4, 1974, they wrote,

"We the voters of Gloria Dei Mission of Arcadia, California, are pleased indeed to inform you that Pastor William Godfrey, who has faithfully served us for the past three years, feels we are now ready for a full-time pastor. At a meeting last Sunday, March 31, 1974, it was unanimously agreed that we ask you to submit a call for a candidate pastor for us. We hope to hold our

first service in our newly acquired church building in Sierra Madre on May 12, 1974." 52

The result of their letter was the calling of A. K. Schroeder as Pastor. So the small body has survived a doctrinal split and continues to be nourished by the pure Word of God. Presently, Pastor Schroeder remains at Gloria Dei.

Grace, Yorba Linda

Work began in this area of northeast Orange County in 1975 with the first service held in June, 1975, at the old Women's Club Building in Yorba Linda. Incidentally, Pastor Kugler in his letter to me mentioned the fact that Yorba Linda is the birth place of Richard Nixon! This congregation was really a daughter of sorts of the King of Kings, Garden Grove, and of Christ the King, La Habra. The nucleus of people came from these congregations approximately fifteen miles away. Pastor William Godfrey of La Habra served the group on a part-time basis. Pastor Kugler also mentioned that the name "Grace" was chosen by the group because it began in the 125th year of the WELS.

In April of 1976, they were granted Land Search authority, and also, at the end of this year, they called their first resident pastor. In February of 1972, Pastor Richard Kugler of Valentine, Nebraska, accepted the call and was installed. During the latter part of 1976, the Women's Club burned down so services were moved to a neighboring mortuary chapel where they are worshipping today.

However, that may soon change for in October of 1978, they purchased 1.55 acres of improved land in a newly-developed area of Yorba Linda for \$170,000! Now the working drawings for the WEF unit should be in the hands of the GBHM.

The area that Pastor Kugler works in is one that is full of potential - 150,000 people in a seven mile radius of their church with no overlapping with other Wisconsin Synod churches. At present, the congregation numbers 68 souls and 49 communicants. It is a member of the Joshua Tree Circuit of the California-South Conference.

St. Peter's, Modesto

This congregation was organized in the fall of 1975 under the direction of Pastor Robert Hochmuth, the Chairman of the California Mission Board. Less than a year later, District Missionary Hugo Warnke became the first resident pastor. In July, 1977, Robert Koester became the resident pastor. The congregation at present numbers 56 communicants and 79 souls.

Modesto, a medium sized city in the central valley of California, is the home of the two largest canneries in the United States and the largest winery. St. Peter's serves a large area in the south central portion of the Northern California's Sierra Circuit, a circuit that stretches some 400 miles!

It is interesting to note that in an area where land is extremely difficult to come by, the Lord blessed St. Peter's congregation by supplying it with prime acreage right in the path of Modesto's growth. A Greek immigrant, who was aided by

Lutherans on his arrival in New York many years ago, sold the congregation a portion of his property. The Parsonage Dedication/Church Groundbreaking ceremony was held January 13, 1980. Since then, a church has been built and was dedicated in 1981. Pastor Koester served the congregation until he accepted a call to Missoula, Montana. St. Peter's is now vacant.

Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Santa Maria

This particular mission station was a result of work begun in San Luis Obispo where worship services were started on an exploratory basis on August 28, 1977. Hugo M. Warnke, Mission Developer for the California Mission District, was later assigned to the field. However, a month later, Pastor Warnke reported to the California Mission Board that "response from town here has been minimal with no long term prospects at all."⁵³

Pastor Warnke had his trained mission eye on Santa Maria that had produced 17 people who were making the trip to San Luis Obispo for the services. Consequently, the suggestion was taken and services at San Luis Obispo ended October 2, 1977, and on October 9, 1977, the first Sunday morning service was held for Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Santa Maria. It was held at the Orcutt Recreation Center. Attendance was 21.

Growth of this new mission was encouraging and by the end of the year, 1977, there were 45 souls and 38 communicants. On April 28, 1978, the congregation was granted mission status and at a later date, May 1, 1978, they were granted land search authority. During this time the congregation called its first

resident pastor, a Seminary graduate, William Herrmann. He was ordained and installed on July 9, 1978.

Even though this congregation is young, it has been plagued with land search problems from the start and that is a paper in itself. In spite of the many setbacks, the congregation continues in the hope that the Lord will soon provide. Presently the congregation has 86 souls and 61 communicants.

Calvary, Santa Clarita

The beginnings of this congregation can be traced all the way back to a DMB S-1 survey of the area made by Pastor Paul Heyn in the Spring of 1977. However, some members of Messiah, North Hollywood, encouraged the beginning of exploratory services (November 20, 1977). Pastor Robert Neumann began those services but soon after accepted a call to Texas. As many as 26 attended the meetings held on Sunday mornings which was encouraging.

Missionary Richard Yecke, who was at the time serving Lancaster to the north, took over the work here for a short time. In fact, this congregation was served by three different pastors in the first six months of existence!

Pastor Weindorf began to serve Calvary congregation as an extension of his call to Messiah of North Hollywood in May of 1978. The situation at the time was mother congregation - North Hollywood, and offspring - Santa Clarita. The nucleus of the congregation that was a majority (from North Hollywood, Messiah), soon became a minority as the congregation began to grow. They received Mission status on September 28, 1978.

On March 12, 1979, they requested permission to call their first resident Pastor. They went through the Seminary assignment committee and candidate George Pavia became their first pastor. The congregation continued to grow under his leadership. At this writing, Pastor Pavia has since accepted a call to Globe, Arizona. Calvary is presently calling a pastor to minister to their 69 souls and 51 communicants.

Hope Lutheran Congregation, Penryn

It is amazing how the Word of the Lord grows and in the case of Hope Lutheran Congregation it is no exception. For it was a result of the mission effort of some interested mission-minded members of St. Mark's congregation, Citrus Heights. St. Mark's provided the initial funds while the young congregation was under the watchful eye of the California Mission Board.

"The first exploratory service of the then called 'Placer County Lutheran Mission' was held on October 3, 1976, at 10:30 a.m., in Rocklin at Finn Hall. Pastor Paul Heyn, who came out of retirement to serve the new mission, conducted the service and there were 51 present. Included in that number was the California Mission Board vicar, William Herrmann, who would assist with services over the next ten months."⁵⁴

The first service that was held in the present chapel in Newcastle was held on January 2, 1977. In June of that year, Pastor Nathan Pope was called to be an assistant pastor at St. Mark's and Pastor Heyn went back into retirement. The balance of services from that time on was carried by Pastor Thomas Franzmann and Pastor Nathan Pope.

In January of 1978, Hope was officially organized as a congregation and on May 16, 1978, it called its first resident pastor through the Assignment Committee of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Pastor Curia was ordained and installed on July 16, 1978, with a record 178 in attendance!

Hope congregation had purchased property in January of 1981 and hopes to build during the summer of 1982. Present membership is 96 souls and 73 communicants.

Risen Savior, Chula Vista

In the fall of 1978, the Mission Board felt that the need here in Chula Vista was ready to be filled. For there was a nucleus of 12 communicants in a city of over 100,000 directly south of San Diego...the prospects were unlimited.

In May of 1978, Terry B. Nuckolls, a seminary graduate, was called as exploratory missionary in Chula Vista as well as Alpine Lutheran Church, our Synod's mission church in the mountain community of Alpine, 30 miles northeast of Chula Vista. On September 10, 1978, this small group of Christians held their first service in a rented classroom of Southwestern Community College.

Since that first service, there has been a steady growth of membership so that in May of 1979, Risen Savior was given mission status and land search authority. In fact, at their first anniversary, they had 38 in attendance.

Today, Chula Vista is still being blessed by God's worker, Pastor Nuckolls.

Lamb of God, Rancho Cucamonga

Lamb of God Evangelical Lutheran Church began as a daughter to Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church of Pomona, California. In fact, the number of hours spent surveying, canvassing, preparing literature, and other exploratory work, was done by the members of Our Savior. During the summer of 1980, John Baumann, a summer vicar, canvassed and conducted a Vacation Bible School that had 40 in attendance. Early that year, on February 10, 1980, the first service was held at the Alta Vista Mobile Home Community in Rancho Cucamonga. On March 16, 1980, the first Sunday School was held. From that time on, the congregation has experienced tremendous growth and has been richly blessed by our Lord.

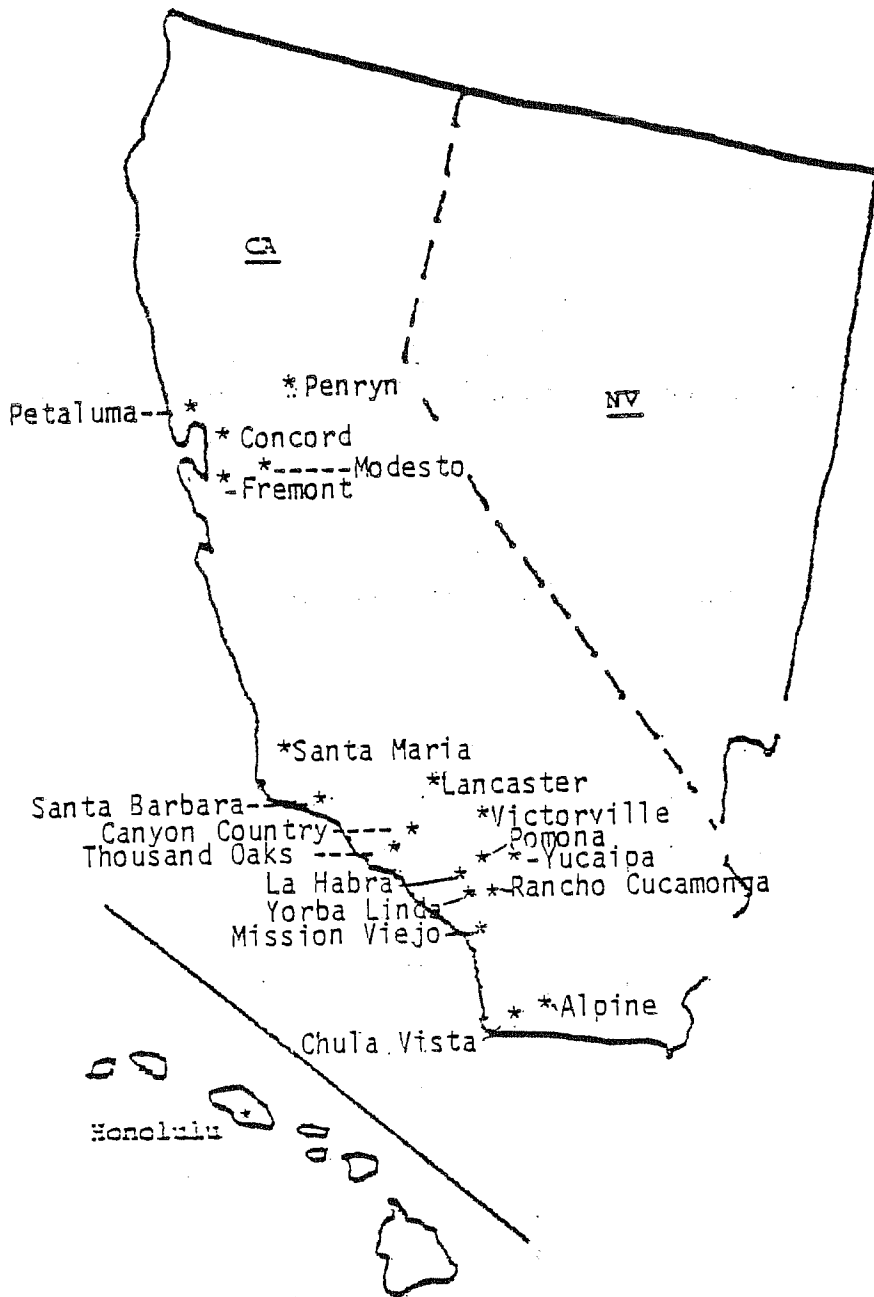
October 18, 1980, marked the calling of the first resident pastor, Glenn Wenzel. Since his installation, Lamb of God Evangelical Lutheran Church has received mission status and also land search authority. By God's grace, the congregation now has 77 souls and 31 communicants.

With the starting of our newest mission in California, Rancho Cucamonga, our story doesn't come to an end since God's "miners", in the persons of pastors, teachers and vicars continue to work spreading the Good News. The mission field in California is continually growing as people still consider the Golden State one of opportunity and the door to a prosperous future. The WELS and its workers know that the work here will never be done until the Master comes again. Therefore, the work has taken on a few new perspectives. A mission counselor in the person of Pastor Joel Gerlach was initiated last fall (1981), and his work covers a wide variety of fields...land search, new fields, helping the new and established missions cope with growing pains and other problems. Already his work has helped forward God's work in California.

Another area in which mission work is being done includes the California Lutheran High School in Southern California. Together with the numerous Lutheran grade schools that our own churches have started and maintained, the young people of our congregations can continue to be fed with the Bread of Life and to drink of the ever Living Water of God's Word.

By God's grace alone, the WELS has been working in California for 32 years! During that time many people have learned about their Savior Jesus Christ, and the right relationship that He has won for all men. May the Lord continue to bless the efforts of His workers and His people as they continue to Mine the Souls of California!

- * - subsidized congregations
- o - exploratory fields



Congregations:

- Alpine, California - Alpine
T. Nuckolls
- Concord, California - Bethany
A. Keibel
- La Habra, CA - Christ the King
D. Fritz
- Lancaster, CA - Our Shepherd
R. Yecke
- Mission Viejo, CA - Living Word
A. Beyersdorf
- Santa Barbara, CA - Our Redeemer
S. Degner
- Thousand Oaks, CA - Prince of Peace
J. McWaters
- Petaluma, CA - Living Word
P. Huebner
- Victorville, CA - Our Savior
G. Scheuerlein
- Yucaipa, CA - Prince of Peace
(Vacant)
- Pomona, California - Our Savior
J. Humann
- Fremont, California - Our Savior
J. Schmutge
- Yorba Linda, California - Grace
R. Kugler
- Modesto, California - St. Peter
R. Koester
- Penryn, California - Hope
R. Curia
- Canyon Country, CA - Calvary
(Vacant)
- Santa Maria - Star of Bethlehem
W. Herrmann
- Chula Vista, CA - Risen Savior
T. Nuckolls
- Honolulu, Hawaii - St. Paul
W. Wietzke
- Rancho Cucamonga, CA - Lamb of God
G. Wenzel

California Mission District Mission Board

- Rev. R. Hochmuth, Chairman
- Rev. D. Seifert
- C. Hester, T. Schlittenhart
- Rev. J. Gerlach, Mission Counselor

PRESENT SUBSIDIZED CONGREGATIONS IN
CALIFORNIA

*Non-resident
Have Day School +

Alpine, California - Alpine
*T. Nuckolls
Concord, California - Bethany +
A. Keibel
La Habra, CA - Christ the King
D. Fritz
Lancaster, California - Our Shepherd
R. Yecke
Mission Viejo, CA - Living Word +
A. Beyresdorv
Santa Barbara, CA - Our Redeemer
S. Degner
Yucaipa, California - Prince of Peace
(Vacant)
Thousand Oaks, CA - Prince of Peace
J. McWaters
Petaluma, California - Living Word
P. Huebner
Victorville, California - St. John
G. Scheuerlein
Fremont, California - Hope
J. Schmugge
Yorba Linda, California - Grace
(Vacant)
Penryn, California - Hope
R. Curia
Canyon Country, CA - Calvary
(Vacant)
Santa Maria, CA - Star of Bethlehem
W. Herrmann
Chula Vista, CA - Risen Savior
T. Nuckolls
Rancho Cucamonga, CA - Lamb of God
G. Wenzel

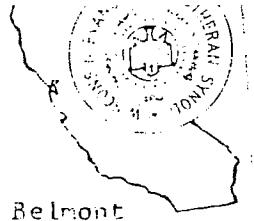
INTERESTED SUBSIDIZED:

Belmont, CA - Gloria Dei +
G. Geiger
Redding, CA - Ascension +
C. Cortright
Torrance, CA - Zion
A. Schmeling
Fallbrook, Ca - St. Stephen

Riverside, CA - St. Paul +
J. F. Chworowsky
Sacramento, CA - St. Andrew
R. Hochmuth

INNER-CITY SUBSIDIZED:

Pomona, CA - Our Savior +
J. Humann



	Acct. #	Souls	Communicants	Gain	Net gain	Voters	S.S.	Ch. Conf. Cl.	B. I. C.	V. B. S.	Bible Classes	Avg. Sun. Attend.	Ch. Bapt.	Ad. Bapt.	Ch. Conf.	Ad. Conf.	P. O. F.	Evang. calls cl.	Evang. calls lay	Synod	P.c. annual	All purposes	P.c. annual	oper. sub per mo. '82	S.S.R. p.c.p.m.	CEF repay rate p.m.	int. sub \$		
Belmont	.23	145	57	13	-3	38	35	5	7	46	10	198	8	1	3	5	0	30	2	4069	228	104,663	1079		I.S.	7.55	68		
LaHabra	.24	91	71	12	6	10	8	6	4	-	9	43	3	1	3	3	3	51	-	3353	47	23,918	337	715	11.00	7.74	51		
Concord	.26	165	111	13	5	49	80	9	5	26	12	70	2	1	1	5	2	18	3	4184	38	59,812	539		I.S.	6.55	80		
Alpine	.32	71	53	15	8		20	2	3		10	52	2	1	0	11	-	-	-	4069	77	23,868	450		13.00				
Lancaster	.34	116	87	10	3	20	34	6	5	48	12	65	6	4	5	1	0	75	4	4820	57	32,345	385	539	11.00	7.75	92		
Thousand Oaks	.35	153	118	18	3	43	37	7	15		20	100	6	0	4	2	3	24	12	9808	83	76,174	645		I.S.	8.85	50		
Pomona	.39	252	137	22	-1	32	65	7	10	200	35	151	19	3	7	4	5	? ?			61		568	1250	I-C	4.00	21		
Santa Barbara	.41	130	91	7	5	36	15	4	16	55	40	90	7	5	2	7	2	126	?	9249	102	61,380	675	100	13.87	5.35	60		
Honolulu	.42	64	40	11	0	8	14	4	3	-	8	38	4	1	0	2	1	98	12	2357	59	14,968	374	1364	12.00	4.85	21		
Fremont	.43	73	42	11	6	17	48	9	3	27	15	52	4	3	0	6	2	125	20	5291	126	26,525	631	716	14.00	1000	100		
Riverside	.47	171	110	17-13	32		44	16	19	-	25	109	12	3	3	8	2	45	?	4530	41	70,455	641		I.S.	8.45	51		
Torrance	.49	127	102	20	3	28	25	3	2	83	24	90	4	4	3	6	2	95	10	5000	80	45,484	485		I.S.	8.75	41		
Petaluma	.51	47	40	3	1	10	9	3	2	-	12	30	0	0	6	1	0	21	5	4705	117	27,130	678	633	13.75	8.95	100		
Victorville	.52	106	78			22	10			40	28	65	5	0	0	0	4	90	0	6587	87	43,914	583	682	13.17	5.25	51		
Mission Viejo	.54	159	97	7	3	42	15	19	27	123	32	145	6	7	5	4	9	200	75	6753	69	79,700	821		I.S.	9.95	81		
Sacramento	.55	134	117	15	8	28	21	5	5	59	38	89	10	4	3	4	1	25	30	9775	84	48,321	413		I.S.	8.72	81		
Reno	.56	173	125	29	15	43	15	6	20	-	13	111	9	0	3	6	17	23	1	3967	72	64,403	547		I.S.	5.50	31		
Modesto	.57	79	56	13	7	19	10	2	9	14	25	54	5	3	0	5	5	28	0	3618	65	25,166	449	468	13.65	9.90	81		
Yorba Linda	.58	68	49		-4	20	15	3	5	-	8	40	1	0	1	0	3	70	10	3032	62	27,860	569	892	15.85	4.85	41		
Santa Maria	.60	86	61	2	-3	21	25	2	2	-	21	49	3	0	0	0	0	20	0	3955	65	22,800	374	564	13.75	No site			
Bonita	.61	45	37	7	2	12	6	-	-	-	5	36	3	0	0	4	0			3475	95	19,634	531	640	14.02	No site			
Canyon Country	.62	69	51	11		11	10	3	7	-	10	50	3	0	4	5				4328	85	32,411	636	Vac.		6.00	91		
Penryn	.63	96	73	11	3		13	8	4	13	18	65	4	0	2	3	3	23	5	3400	49	31,373	430	600	15.13	4.35			
Rancho Cucamonga	.64	7	31	16	16	15	34	3	8	67	8	41	15	5	1	4	6	130	0	1271	41	13,190	425	1238	12.00	No site			
Self-supporting 1981:																													
Redding		2097				579	528			786	468	1743	142	44	46	95	75												
Escondido		1874																											
Las Vegas																													
Parrana																													
Alhambra																													

and School enrollment: Concord 14; Pomona 84; Mission Viejo 42; Belmont 41; Escondido 63; Las Vegas 15.

113,527
Synod Purposes
Avg. '82

\$ 975,494
All purposes

Avg. \$ 321

\$ 10,401
Op. sub. per mo.

Voss

End Notes

1. Du Brau, The Romance of Lutheranism in California, page 5.
2. Ibid, page 8.
3. Koehler, The History of the Wisconsin Synod, page 40.
4. Hartzell, Mission Zeal of the Infant Wisconsin Synod, page 2.
5. Op cit. Koehler, page 196f.
6. Keibel, Our Missions in Los Angeles, page 35.
7. Ibid., page 44.
8. Op cit., Keibel, page 54.
9. Gethsemane Evangelical Lutheran 25th Anniversary Service Booklet, page D.
10. Ibid., page D.
11. Op. Cit., Keibel, page 56.
12. Ibid., Keibel, page 56.
13. Ibid., page 56.
14. Heyn, Paul Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, page 12.
15. Ibid., page 1.
16. Op. Cit., Heyn, page 1.
17. Ibid., page 2.
18. Heyn, Paul West Ward Ho! Northwestern Lutheran, August 30, 1959, page 280.
19. Op. Cit., Heyn Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, paragraph 30.
20. Ibid., paragraph 15.
21. Heyn NWL, August 30, 1959, page 281.
22. Dedication booklet for Peace Lutheran Church, Santa Clara, California.

23. Hochmuth, California Mission Dedicates Chapel, NWL, November, 1963.
24. Op. Cit., Heyn Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, paragraph 13.
25. Ibid., paragraph 13.
26. Waldschmidt, To the Glory of God! NWL, February 6, 1966, page 41.
27. St. Mark's Lutheran Church Directory - Brief History.
28. Heyn, Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, Paragraph 30.
29. Op. Cit., St. Mark's Brief History.
30. Heyn, Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, Paragraph 14.
31. Dedication, King of Kings - Our History.
32. King of Kings Evangelical Lutheran Church - A History, page 7.
33. Dedication, King of Kings Lutheran Church NWL, November 29, 1964, page 377.
34. Op. Cit., Heyn - Memoirs, Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, paragraph 16.
35. "A Decade of Blessing" History of Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church 1962-1972.
36. Heyn, Paul Dedication - La Mesa, California NWL, February 2, 1969, page 47.
37. Op Cit., Heyn, Reminiscences of a Tired, Retired Missionary Pastor, ch. 3 ÷ 2.
38. Ibid., ch. 3 - 8.
39. Ibid., ch. 3 - 13.
40. Ibid., ch. 3 - 13.
41. Ibid., ch. 3 - 4.
42. Ibid., ch. 3 - 4.
43. Ibid., ch. 3 - 6.

44. Christ the King Lutheran Church Dedication Booklet - History.
45. Ibid.
46. Young, Pastor A.C., Dedication of Prince of Peace, NWL
June 17, 1973, page 194.
47. Degner, Steven Pastor, January 22, 1982, Letter.
48. Ibid.
49. Tenth Anniversary History - Shepherd of the Valley, Fresno.
50. Marks, Harry Pastor, Faith, Anderson - February 5, 1982.
51. History of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church.
52. Sierra Madre - Gloria Dei Congregation to Pastor Hochmuth,
April 4, 1974.
53. Brief History of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Santa
Maria.
54. A Brief History of Hope Lutheran Congregation.

* Omission of Calvary, San Jose, due to lack of any material - Pastor Durfey is
Pastor there now.