

OUR DAUGHTER DISTRICT'S GOLDEN JUBILEE - 1970

DAKOTA - MONTANA DISTRICT

presented

to the

Minnesota District Convention

assembled at

New Ulm, Minnesota

July 27 to 30, 1970

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by

Rev. E. R. Gamm

July 29, 1970

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Rev. E. R. Gamm  
Graduate of Wisconsin Synod Seminary 1917  
Assigned to McIntosh, South Dakota parishes  
Called to Mobridge, South Dakota 1923  
Called to Marshall, Minnesota 1938  
Retired 1969

Presented by Rev. E. R. Gamm  
Minnesota District Convention  
July 29, 1970  
Dr. Martin Luther College  
New Ulm, Minnesota

To introduce myself: This is written wie der Schnabel gewachsen ist  
(as the mouth has grown; in my style and way)

Members of the Minnesota District of the Wisconsin Synod:

By the grace of God I was privileged to be at the first convention of the Minnesota district of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and other states at St. Paul, Minnesota in June 1918, as a member of the fourth conference district. It was also my privilege to be at the meeting of the third and fourth district conferences of the Minnesota district in June 1920, which organized the Dakota-Montana district at Mankato, Minnesota. It had come to maturity after 42 years of mission work in South Dakota, North Dakota and Montana. It was time to separate. The reasons for the separation are stated in the Synodical report of 1920 as follows:

1. "It would save the congregations and pastors traveling expenses and burdensome trips because conferences and Synod conventions would be held in its midst. (Actually expenses were shared by all pastors, though not always gladly, however the trips were time-consuming.)

2. Synodical officials, president and superintendent of missions would live in our midst, which could only be advantageous, because our district consisted almost exclusively of mission fields.

3. The pastors and missionaries would remain longer at their station for experience teaches that comparatively few pastors are called out of their districts."

Distance to conferences and conventions was the greatest factor in bringing about the organization of the Dakota-Montana district which is now celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and as I was a member of this district for 25 years, from 1917 to 1942, this essay will present some of the history of the district and my personal experiences.

I. The Beginning: First Missionaries in the Dakota Territory:

The first general missionary of the Minnesota Synod was pastor J. Hunziker in 1876, whose field of labor extended to the Dakota line, but he said that "he was not equal to the task" therefore desired help. That man was Christian

Boettcher in 1878, who at the end of his first year had "27 preaching places, 19 in Minnesota and 8 in the Dakota territory." His first report to the Synod in 1879 should interest us: "It was on Friday before Christmas, 1878, (December 20) when I arrived in Marshall, Lyon County, Minnesota...Finally I wish to remind you that I cannot continue to live in Marshall for any length of time due to the high cost of living and rental, and that I must support my family with my meager income...Furthermore the number of services for my family are so few, and reading services not easily arranged because only a few Germans live in Marshall who have so little interest in the preaching of God's Word, that they will not even attend services. A more suitable place to live would be in the midst of a settlement of 12 Lutheran families about 20 to 22 miles west of Marshall. A homestead of 80 acres is to had there. It is not worth very much, but for a pastor, who is not a farmer and does not desire to be one, which he should not, nor dare not do. It would be good enough if it had a dwelling. However, since the people have been living there barely a year, and are so poor that they have no bread to eat due to the crop failure, therefore, I have suggested to the committee of three for the consideration of Synod the following plan: 1. That the Synod build a home there, lay claim to the 80 acres, or 2. That Synod build the parsonage for the congregation and give title to the congregation as soon as the amount invested has been repaid. In both cases let it be done in the name of the Lord."

This is only an excerpt of his report. His proposal was accepted and in the fall of 1879 his address was Minneota, Minnesota. The parsonage, which also served as a Christian day-school, was located about six miles south and west of Taunton. It is amazing to think that his mission travels took him as far as Redfield, South Dakota, about 150 miles from his home, and that he served people in eight counties in the Dakota territory. The Minnesota Jubilee Book of 1910 lists the following congregations in South Dakota which were founded by him: Argo 1880, Germantown and Grover 1882, Havana 1881, Henry, Mazeppa and others. (Dates not mentioned.)

"Er konnte die Strapatzen nicht laenger ertragen (strenuous work)." The burden was too great for pastor Boettcher as he accepted a call to Omro, Minnesota in 1884. As no suitable men could be found (page 28) a portion of the field was turned over to the Missouri Synod. In 1887, the pastors Johl and Polzin assumed the work, followed by pastors Luebbert, Lahme and Vokert, when the field of missions was extended to Bowdle, South Dakota, which became the center of future expansion. Pastor Lahme began at Bowdle and established a church at Theodore, South Dakota in 1888. However, Zeeland, North Dakota was canvassed by pastor Lahme from Redfield, South Dakota where he must have resided for a time while serving Bowdle and

surrounding area. An opinion expressed about the Zeeland area by one of the pastors who served there, applies to much of the mission work in the Dakotas: "By and large, one must say that this field suffered much because of the frequent change of pastors and because of the lack of insight on the part of the congregations regarding the location of the living quarters for the pastors" (page 283). That problem continued to the present time. One pastor remained one month, some not much longer.

In 1907, a new era began in the Dakotas. The Indian reservation west of the Missouri was opened to the public, or to anyone who was lucky in the 1906 lottery at Aberdeen. The reservation had been leased by two cattle companies, with a dividing fence running from the Little Cannonball (Cedar) river to the Grand River, the father of one of our Mobridge professors working as fence rider. (Mr. Barney Ten Broek, member of the future church in McIntosh.) Before the lottery winners could file their homestead claims, the Indians were permitted to select a section each for husband and wife, and half a section for each child. (This information I received from an Indian in McIntosh.)

The Milwaukee Railroad built a bridge across the Missouri river to extend its line to the west coast. The little village of Everts, South Dakota, the end of the Milwaukee Railroad, where pastor W. Sauer had gathered a flock, was moved to Mo. Bridge, later called Mobridge, residences and stores included. When the bridge was completed, pastors Keller and Bartz made a mission trip to Lemmon, South Dakota where pastor W. Pankow resided later and extended his mission field south to Meadow, South Dakota and west to Hettinger, North Dakota. Pastor J. Pieper had served a settlement of Lutherans across the river from Zeeland, North Dakota in Morton County. In less than ten years there were pastors living at McIntosh, Faith, Timber Lake, Lemmon and Meadow, South Dakota and at Flasher and Elgin in North Dakota, each parish consisting of three to six congregations. In terms of miles this field reached about 150 miles west and southwest of Mobridge and 100 miles northwest. Pastor Cowalsky serving Timber Lake, Trail City and Isabel; pastor Blauert at Faith, Dupress, Red Elm, Lantry, Chase, etc; pastor Behm at Meadow, Drew, Athboy, Bison and area (umgehend); pastor Kuether at Lemmon, Shadehill, White Butte and in North Dakota, Hettinger, Hendlye and area; myself at McIntosh, Watauga, Morristown, South McIntosh in South Dakota; Swastika and Paradise in North Dakota; pastor Schlemmer in Flasher, Carson and Noel in North Dakota; pastor Limpert in Elgin, Burt, Regent in North Dakota and in Montana pastor Wittfaut at Terry, Ismay, Olanda, Wolf Point, etc. Pastor Kionka of Mobridge served Shields and Freda in North Dakota.

All these stations - approximately 30 - were served by eight missionaries. The growth on the east side of the Missouri river was quite rapid. Pastor Hertler at Temvic, Hazelton, Streeter and Hampden, North Dakota followed by pastor A. Maas,

and soon by pastor S. Baer. At Akaska, Tolstoy, Sherman and Eales, South Dakota was pastor Fuerstenau. When the field was divided, pastor W. Lindloff resided at Tolstoy and served Sherman and Onaka. (The above quoted from the 1918 record)

(Very few of these names of cities are found in the 1968 report because of merging churches. However, many new names appear.)

Other veterans, who served in the Dakota fields and who are members of the Minnesota District were: O. Netzke, E. Hertler, Th. Bauer, W. Lindloff, H. Spreinger: 50 years ago; E. Penk, W. Schmidt, P. Kuske: 40 years ago; E. Knief, J. Erhart: 30 years ago; Th. Hartwig: 25 years ago. Pastor R. Reede is one of the first graduates the the Northwestern Lutheran Academy. Many others in other Districts also served there at one time or another.

The zeal of the missionaries never ceased. Opportunities were found everywhere and with the advent of cars and better highways in less than 25 years of its existence, the district had by the grace and mercy of God, been able to extend its borders in the east to Sioux Falls, southwest to the Rapid City area, west as far as Livingston, Montana, northwest to Bismarck-Mandan to Valley City in the northeastern part of North Dakota.

The Lord continued to open more doors for the missionaries to enter in, and preach the saving gospel of Christ, so that according to the 1968 statistics, there are now eleven preaching stations in Montana and four in Canada. Detailed statistics are available in Synodical reports.

When the Dakota-Montana district was organized, the congregation of the third district of the state of Minnesota were permitted to select the district they preferred. Thus Balaton, Hendricks and Marshall became members of the new district. Balaton returned in 1928 to the Minnesota District and Marshall in 1942. Hendricks retained its membership to this date. Some of the names in former records are no more to be found, some merged with others, some were lost to the Iowa and Missouri Synods and some discontinued. There are now, besides the Eastern and Western conference, the Alberta-Montana conference and a total of 37 pastors in the district and some vacancies.

II. Rather than bore you with statistics, the transportation problem might enliven this essay, for after all, this was the number one reason for establishing a new district. The hardships that pastor Boettcher endured in the service of the Lord, traveling from Minneota, Minnesota to Redfield, South Dakota and of pastor Lahme from Redfield, South Dakota to Zeeland, North Dakota, were of a different nature. When they left home, they did not return for weeks. My trips to conferences in Minnesota were made by train and were time-consuming. Leaving

McIntosh by train at 8:00 a.m., arriving in Aberdeen at noon, waiting there till 7:00 p.m., transferring to another depot, changing again at Watertown, arriving at Fairfax at 4:00 a.m. This was more dependable transportation than by car or team. We were able to return the same week. Before the graveling of the highways, cars were very unreliable when it rained. It required five hours to travel to our convention in Zeeland in 1924, a distance of only sixty miles from Mobridge. Due to rain one morning, a number of pastors were compelled to take the train to a conference in Faith, South Dakota. A one day conference at Tolstoy was cancelled because of rain. Cars traveled in caravans on the way to a conference in Lemmon as all needed assistance in negotiating the graded gumbo roads. A visit to the home folks at Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1918, required 3½ days in a Ford, which had a top speed of an estimated 45 miles an hour, as they had no speedometers. There was always a delay of an hour or more at the Missouri river ferry at Mobridge and any rain along the route also delayed the journey. No travel across the ferry before 6:00 a.m. nor after 6:00 p.m. We were isolated in the winter, except for one season, when a pontoon bridge served the public. As the owners forgot to remove them, and with the ice break-up in Spring, all boats disappeared. In 1925, the first bridge was built across the Missouri, finally permitting the missionaries to visit one another more frequently. When we moved to Mobridge in January of 1923, household goods were moved by freight train. The car remained in McIntosh. The Lord had His designs for that also, as it permitted me to serve the vacancy, going by train to McIntosh than by car from there, until the next pastor arrived. Trips to Synod meetings and long journeys east were not only more convenient by train, but less expensive as pastors had reduced fares if they had a booklet with coupons, which were accepted for travel on certain trains.

III. The second reason for organizing a new district was because of the advantages of having the officials living in the district. Before the district was organized our first superintendent of missions lived in Wellington township, Minnesota and the next one in Stillwater and the president of the district in Red Wing. To communicate with them was difficult, as parsonages did not have phones and it required a messenger from the phone office with an additional charge of 10, 15 or 20¢ and usually messengers were not available until after school hours. At a salary of \$55.00 monthly one had to be frugal as food prices were much higher during the first world war than they are today. (Potatoes \$10.00 a cwt., sugar \$30.00 a cwt., hard coal \$24.00 a ton, gas 35¢ a gallon, interest 12%) However, certain congregations were very liberal with food supplies.

The advantages of having officials close to or in the field of activity became evident very soon. Missionaries rented any place available. The Synod

owned parsonages in Mobridge and McIntosh, supplied funds for the Faith parish. Soon after the district was on its own the superintendent of missions with a trustee, went on a parsonage buying spree, which continued until every pastor in the west river area had a home: Lemmon, Bison, Morrystown, South Dakota; Elgin, Burt, Flasher, Haynes and Hettinger, North Dakota; costing from \$1200 to \$2600 each. These were palaces compared to the store loft, rooming houses, lean-tos attached to churches and offered the privacy needed.

Services were conducted in the kitchen or bedroom of the two-room sod huts, with the sewing machine as altar, or in good weather outdoors. School houses were preferred rather than lodge halls or other churches. The famous Yellowstone Trail was graded only a few miles on the reservation, but it was not maintained and the buffalo trails were just that. All trips were by team the first year, also during the winter and spring months. Travel by team had some advantages. The members of one parish could see me coming, phone each other by barbed wire phone and have an hour to get to church. On the route to the Paradise colony, a trip by team to a farm took four hours. The sentiments expressed by pastor Boettcher were mine-- I was not a farmer. To repair an inner tube was a pleasure in comparison to driving a team, when the harness loosened or the wagon tongue fell out. It had always been said that a team will get one there. It got me into a fence corner on a blizzardy Sunday morning. The team went through the icy river at another time, but on the return it refused, so I walked to the next preaching place. A cowboy with his lariat solved the problem and brought the team to my preaching place. Rivers were dangerous. Pastor Scheitel was a victim of the Yellow Medicine river in 1892. In the spring of 1923, the Little Cannonball or Cedar river washed away several new bridges. Being warned not to cross it, rather to be taken across by boat and walk for about three miles. My team hiring at the livery stable came to an abrupt end, when the owner discovered that the harness was covered with foam. After a severe tongue lashing, I heard that driving a livery team was not in my line. They refused to give me a team.

After the reservation had opened up to new settlers, itinerant pastors followed them, but the German-Russians had a way of accepting them or dismissing them. One of them opened his Bible, laid it on the school desk, came to the front of the desk, sat on the Bible. He was told not to return as they did not want a pastor who sat on a Bible. If I were to express it in the words used in the German language it would embarrass you.

The policy of the Wisconsin Synod had always been that when a Seminary graduate was assigned to his first call he was on his own. So at the only place where I was installed, it seemed to be the proper thing to do after about four

months of preaching to organize. In the course of discussing the constitution, I was relieved of my duty, "because I read my prayers out of a book". They were a colony of Bet-Brueder. A few years later another young pastor had a similar experience. The language issue was unfortunately decided by a vote of six to five on Sunday. The leader (and every congregation had one) visited every home on Monday and the vote was ten to one for German only, so the pastor was told that he need not serve them any longer. A hurried call to the president of the district and visitor of the conference (which involved me) who made the 150 mile trip. The pastor was permitted to repeat his German sermon in English, providing someone was in the audience who did not understand the German. Had the resolution been carried out, then German services would have been conducted only once a month. Many other pastors had to learn, to their regret, the principle "this is a German church, the Germans support it, the English can have services some other time, but not at 10:00 a.m." This was not only true among the German-Russians, but in my own St. Mark's church in Watertown, Wisconsin. My own father, a member there, said that the English services can be had at any time but not at 10:00 a.m. Not until 1938 did the Dakota-Montana district begin to use only the English language at its conventions.

The people were always more interested in building places of worship than in parsonages. Before the organization of the district, remodeled schools, also churches were located at Mobridge, Red Elm, Meadow and Lemmon, South Dakota; Elgin, Carson and Flasher, North Dakota. Within twelve years churches were erected at Hettinger, McIntosh, Morristown and Paradise. In the first quarter century, the borders expanded to Livingston, Montana.

IV. Christian education was very limited. Pastor Boettcher conducted school in his parsonage four days a week in spite of his busy schedule. Naturally, the standards required now were not demanded then. The pastors had summer school, or what is known today as vacation Bible school. To arrange instruction periods for the confirmands for a parish of four to six churches, was most difficult. There was very little time for vacations as the summer months had to be utilized for that purpose; children were kept at the parsonage for daily instruction. In one congregation, members offered to keep the pastor a day and a night for each child in the family. That settled the problem of lodging.

Nevertheless, the district was ridiculed, chided and rebuked because it had no parochial schools. In 1921, one family of the Elgin congregation supported the first and only school in the district for two years. However, it had to be discontinued because and I quote: "The general mission board could not be interested to also support a teacher." Efforts were made from time to time to support Christian day schools at Bowdle, Morristown and Jamestown, North Dakota; Akaska,



Mobridge and Watertown, South Dakota. Only Mobridge and Watertown are still in existence, according to the latest statistics. Also Billings, Montana since the book was printed.

Why has it been so difficult to maintain Christian day schools? One reason is that missionaries were primarily interested in becoming self-sustaining. In 1917, the salary was \$660 which was gradually increased to \$1200 as top salary 25 years later. The records show that some were self-sustaining at \$400, \$750 and \$1,000 annually. To interest the members in supporting a teacher was impossible. Missionaries were thankful when they were relieved of the support from Synod's treasury. However, a valiant effort had been made by the district to obtain permission from the state for pastors to teach the children. Some of us received our credit ratings from Northwestern College and the Seminary, which were accepted by the Department of Education in Madison and were accepted by the State Department of South Dakota. By the authority of the district, we lobbied unsuccessfully February 22-26, 1929 at Pierre, South Dakota, for a law to dismiss school children for one year, to be taught by any pastor having a teacher's certificate. We had hoped to gather all children of a parish at one place.

Prior to that, Christian education was discussed at every conference. Finally, the pastoral conference of the district meeting at Raymond, South Dakota, in 1927, formulated an appeal to Synod:

1. "To consider the need of a Synodical institution in our midst.
2. To help us obtain such school, to erect it if possible west of Aberdeen.
3. That certain offers would be made to reduce the cost to a minimum."

Other conferences appealed to Synod to support such a project.

Action by Synod followed that same year:

1. "The Synod authorized the founding of an academy at its meeting in August 1927.
2. It permitted the district to select the site.
3. Synod elected the Board for the Academy. Upon the request of the Dakota-Montana delegates, Prof. Bliefertnicht and Prof. Klatt were elected as advisors to the Board.
4. The Synod appropriated \$5,000 for the biennim."

Arguments to establish an Academy in the Dakota-Montana district were:

1. "The great distances some students had to travel, and
2. That the proportion of students per communicant member at our colleges were greater than from any other district."

This favorable decision by the Synod has always been appreciated.

At a special meeting in January 1928 at Watertown, South Dakota, offers were presented by: "Bowdle, 30 acres of land and \$3,000; Elgin, North Dakota: 40 acres of land, free light and water for 5 years and \$10,000; Mobridge: the use of a school to be vacated by August of that year, a plot of land of no less than 28 acres and the school house to be moved onto the selected site. Roscoe: the free use of an old school building and \$31,450, including a tract of land." Other offers were made but they were not official and not in writing. Out of 64 votes Mobridge received 51.

The Northwestern Lutheran Academy (this name was suggested by Rev. J. P. Scherf and adopted by the Board) began its first year, 1928-29, with an enrollment of 24 and Prof. K. Sievert as the first professor now completing his 42nd year there and his 50<sup>th</sup> in the Dakota-Montana district. The white frame building, directly behind the new public school, served as a class room and dormitory for the boys and lodging for the temporary custodian, a member of the congregation. A vacated 14 room hospital building on the other side of town was rented for \$75 a month and served as a girls' dormitory, the dining room for all students, the home of Mrs. Schlemmer, the first matron and the home of the first custodian and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. P. Hinder, Sr.

The board had engaged a landscape architect to select one of four sites. (Here a blue print, sketched by the landscape architect, was shown to the assembly) He, with the board, chose the 28 acres overlooking the Missouri river, now is (because of a dam construction) at the edge of a lake. He then sketched the drawings, indicating where all future buildings were to be placed. That is why the white frame building faces the city, while all others were to overlook the lowlands, river and bluffs. In the summer of 1929 the white frame building was purchased and moved, set on a foundation and repaired by the local congregation. Synod at its meeting granted the erection of a boys' dormitory which was completed in the spring of 1930 except for the second floor. In March 1930, the boys moved from a home, which had been rented for lodging, the girls were transferred to the white frame building under the supervision of another matron. It also served as a dining hall until all facilities were ready in the new dormitory.

When the new dormitory was under construction, the water pipes of the Milwaukee Railroad were discovered. As it had no easement on our property, it consented to tap into its line, if the pipes could remain. This arrangement was accepted by the Academy board. So the Academy had free water for many years. City water is now used.

The second year Prof. Sievert was assisted by his father, a retired teacher until Pastor Traub took over the duties of the second professor. Soon the

financial crash of 1929 affected the enrollment and support. Prof. Sievert's residence and the home of Prof. Traub served as the girls' dormitories. To help alleviate Synod's financial difficulties, the district had a special offering taken and paid approximately one-half of the first professorage. Prof. Traub built his own home, however lost it in the depression. The financial crash affected everyone within a few years. Two banks closed in Mobridge, one in Glenham, also in Zeeland, North Dakota, where the district kept its funds. Professor and missionary salaries were reduced by 20% and a few months later by another 10%. Pastors in self-sustaining congregations accepted what they could get as some served as treasurers of their congregations. In one year, not one call was issued to the graduating class of the Seminary, except as tutors of our colleges. The Lord withheld His blessing from the fields which looked like plowed fields in the Fall instead of fields of grain. Sweet clover and Russian thistles were fed to the cattle and housewives canned the thistles as vegetables. Yet the Lord sustained us and blessed us bountifully with a new spirit, to spread the gospel. The entire enrollment of the Academy was down to twelve students. Today more than a hundred are preparing to work in His kingdom. It must be mentioned that one graduate of Northwestern Lutheran Academy will be celebrating his 30<sup>th</sup> year in the ministry and several others have passed the quarter century mark.

Year after year proposals were made to close the Academy and transfer the students because of the lack of funds and the small enrollment, but the Lord has maintained it in spite of all opposition. A few students were expelled the very first year and a few in the following years. In spite of a sincere desire for growth, discipline was most essential in its formative years. Much could be written about the trials and tribulations of the infant school, but synodical reports tell the story.

V. The third reason for a new district, was: that missionaries would remain longer at their stations. In the 1928 report, we read: "We regret that a considerable number of young pastors have left the district after so short a service and that several older pastors have also left the district." Also, "Only a few pastors are still at their station where they were two years ago." In the 1954 report we read in the president's report: "the exodus from our district the past year was unprecedented." After 34 years that was still the complaint, that pastors remain only a few years. Eighteen years after the organization of the district only five of the 23 pastors were members of the district. Of the 40 pastors who were on the roll call in 1938, only five remained 16 years later. Of the 32 listed in 1954 only three are listed in the 1968 statistical records. (This is not an accurate record as someone might have joined the district in 1940 and who might have been

present some years after 1954). But it indicates the trend.

A careful review of the continual turn-over will reveal a few other facts. In our day, Seminary graduates had been advised to go alone into the fields of missions, as the wives may not be able to bear the rigors of the area beyond the Missouri river.. Of the early missionaries it is recorded "sie konnten die Strapazen nicht ertragen." (They could not bear the hardships) This statement appears repeatedly.

It is now almost 100 years since the first missionaries entered the Dakota territory and more than 60 years ago that the first missionary pushed on across the Missouri river. Only a few stayed longer than two years. It must be recorded that of the six professors at the Academy at least four have been there more than ten years (Sievert, TenBroek, Weyland, Pelzl). The constant turn-over in the distant mission fields was due to a longing for companionship and hardships encountered in the areas. Some such incidents related could be duplicated many times by the various pastors: the burning of a cross on the parsonage lawn was a most unpleasant experience; the placing of a skull and cross-bone symbol found at the entrance to the home of a pastor was another. Threats of various kinds were quite common. The lack of telephone communication between pastors and visits with one another were very infrequent. A conference was like a reunion. An explosion of the lignite in a heater with all the stove pipes falling down on Christmas eve, when I was at another mission field and not returning until the following day, was an unforgettable holiday evening for the wife alone for several days. Other trying experiences were perhaps some of the reasons why missionaries soon left for other churches. That the Lord had provided me with an orphan spouse, was one factor in remaining in the Dakotas for 21 years. One must recall the blizzard of March 20, 1920, when the coast train offered no service from Monday till Friday, when many died in the storm and thousands of cattle suffocated. Graduates, who took their brides against the advice of the professors, crossed the Missouri river on the ferry with eyes dampened, as beyond was only sky and country.

A church was built and dedicated in 1921 at Paradise, North Dakota: the following is the history of that congregation.

As this scene of American life has disappeared, I wish to relate some of it here: The colony of German Russians, originally emigrated from Germany to the Odessa, South Russia area, where Lutherans lived in one village, Baptist in another, Congregationalists in another. Our Lutherans at Paradise emigrated to Eureka, South Dakota, the wheat center of the United States and from there onto the prairies between the Cedar and Cannonball rivers. A Sunday in the life of this congregation would add something to the life of a missionary that is no more. This group of

eight families settled about 25 miles north of McIntosh, South Dakota. The pastor arranged to ride with the mail carrier to Swastika on the Cedar river. A member called for him there. He spent Saturday night with some member and was returned to Swastika for services Sunday afternoon. When the pastor had \$4.00 to spare for a livery team, he started very early for a 10:00 a.m. service. He arrived at the home of the nearest family after fording the river and opening from four to eight gates. With a voice that could be heard everywhere in the farm yard the father called, "Bubender Pfarrer kommt." (Boys, the pastor is coming) The boys rushed out, took the team, the suitcase, laprobes and other equipment such as a footwarmer, etc., so the pastor need not concern himself about trivial matters. The pastor was highly respected and honored. Services were conducted and the hymns sung with the tapping of the feet by the leader. Only familiar hymns dared to be used.

After the services, the pastor went for dinner, not where he was invited, but where he was told to go, to one of the sod houses which had been kalsomined every year with the favorite "Himmelblau" (Heavenly blue) and white-washed outside. The homes were immaculately clean. They did not have the comforts and conveniences of our homes; the kitchen table, straight back chairs, steel beds, no rugs, no rockers, no radios and of course, no phones; but their warm hospitality made up for any lack of conveniences. At the dinner table, only men were permitted and the pastor's wife when the pastor had to hurry to his next preaching place. The table was set with plates, knives, forks, spoons and cups. The food served was a bowl of potatoes, a plate of roast pork with the hide and immense slices of bread, no butter and no jelly. When tea was served a slice of lemon was added. The bread had been kept in refrigeration between the feather beds, serving as a "bread box". The fuel used was the cow chips, prepared by the horses stomping on the manure near the barn, dried, cut in squares and stacked. There was no outhouses which caused some problem before the church was dedicated. One member offered to build one and sell it to the congregation after the dedication. A meeting was held and an equal amount of cash, collected after the second service, from each member and the church and outhouse paid for with cash at a total cost of \$2,100. The outhouse was not useable by noon.

When the pastor left the church and the home there was always some farm produce given - eggs, cream and meat. Cakes were unknown until the pastor's spouse showed them how. Many incidents could be recorded but this is merely a sample of a life that is no more.

Missionaries become discouraged because of the many problems in the field of labor and when an error in judgment (debts, drink, Sunday labor, etc.) has been made, it is difficult to regain the confidence of the people. The wife has family

ties and the longing for home never ceases. Others can select their place of labor, but the pastor is assigned; they keep their friends (college and classmates met at conferences) but the wives must find new ones.

Nevertheless the Holy Spirit builds His church and uses the enthusiasm of the servants of the Lord in preaching the Word, so that the borders will be extended, the stones will be added. The problems of the moving ministry will always be with us. May the motto of every pastor be that of the apostle "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified". If the seed of the true Word is sown the Lord will give the blessings and in another 50 years the district will have another story to record.