

100 Years of Eternity

The Story of the
Lord's Church
at

St. Peter's,
Sturgeon Bay, *WI.*



Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library
11831 N. Seminary Drive. 65W
Mequon, Wisconsin

Mark Gass

A Word from the Author

I had the distinct privilege of serving St. Peter's congregation for one year as a vicar. Although my time there was relatively short, I believe that I really became acquainted with St. Peter's and had a feeling for what the congregation was feeling. No matter where the Lord sends me, I will treasure the many memories of the wonderful people in Door County. For this reason, I have undertaken to write a history of St. Peter's. This was more than a class assignment. It was my contribution to the church in which I learned so much. However, I did not write my paper in the regular way. Above the altar of the old church, there was a picture of Jesus. That picture now sits above the back door of the school. My paper is written from the standpoint of that picture telling the story of this church. Please note that it is NOT Jesus speaking but the picture. It is important to keep that distinction, because there are some subjective parts. I have covered the important facts as I saw them. Plus, I added here and there a bit of subjective reporting. It is my prayer that this paper will not offend anyone in any way. If I have erred in any of my reporting, I am extremely sorry. I have reported the facts as best I could get them.

As you read this paper, realize what wonderful and manifold blessings the Lord has showered on your church. For nearly 100 years, he has protected, guided and blessed. What exists in the church today, is His doing and no one else's. He is the Lord and Master of your church. Therefore, this paper is written to His Glory and Praise.

In His Humble Service



Mark Gass

Early Beginnings under Rev. Kaiser



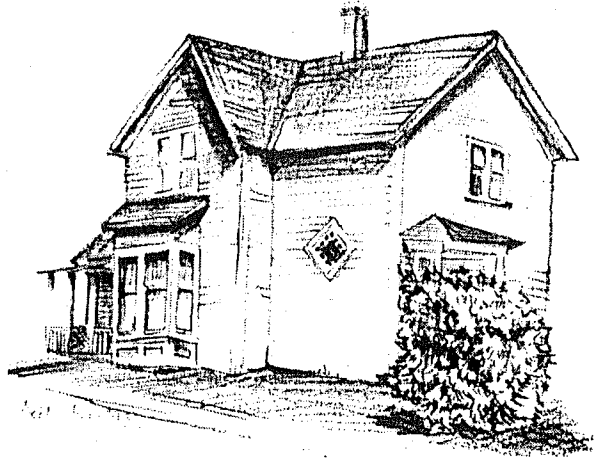
Oh, how St. Peter's has changed. I have been around for as long as anyone can remember. For those of you who don't know me, I am the picture of Christ sitting above the back entrance to the school. I was moved here when the educational building was added. For a while I was in Pastor Baganz's office. But originally I was the center picture for the altar in the old church. For nearly 100 years, I have watched St. Peter's grow. I have marveled at the tremendous growth this church has experienced. I have rejoiced when this congregation nearly burst the walls of this church every Sunday with their praise. I have also cried when I have seen some of the sad and

difficult times this church has faced. Through it all, I have seen a congregation grow for 100 years. But this 100 years is only part of the picture. From the Christian point of view, St. Peter's is celebrating 100 years of eternity, that is, the first 100 years of existing as Christ's church for all eternity. So, please, sit back and relax as I relate to you what I have seen and heard these last 100 years.

It all began in the late 1880's, when German Lutheran settlers attracted by the cheap and fertile soil of Door County came to this section of Wisconsin. Missionaries followed them to minister to their spiritual needs. Pastors from Algoma and Kewaunee were the first ones to look up the early pioneers. Congregations were first organized in Nasewaupee, Sevastopol and Jacksonport. The city of Sturgeon Bay was the last to form a congregation. Early in the year 1889 services were conducted for a few German Lutherans in the home of Frank Pies. At the end of the year the Norwegian Lutherans offered the use of their building located at that time on the east end of Maple Avenue. Services were conducted at 2:30 in the afternoon by the Rev. Ferdinand Rottluf of Valmy.

On December 3rd, 1890, Pastor J. Kaiser arrived in Bay View. Pastor Kaiser also went by the title "Doctor," since he was a doctor of medicine. He had passed a colloquium on theology before the Minnesota Synod and he was ordained and

installed by Pastor Epling of Algoma.



The First Parsonage

January 11th, 1891 marks the birthdate of this church that I have proudly watched over these many years. The Chairman Pastor Dr. Kaiser emphasized that the meeting on January 11th had been called for "the purpose of establishing a Christian congregation according to our creed and founded on the Holy Scriptures and states regulations." Thereupon the congregation agreed on the following resolutions:

1. The congregation shall be incorporated under the name of "Evangelical Lutheran St. Peter congregation at Bay View, Door Co. Wis.
2. Trustees, chairman or Pastor can serve on the business committee.
3. As trustees and elders the following persons were elected: Loius Bramming, Herman Klitzke and Jacob Wiesner.
4. To begin the construction of the church building of

our own as soon as possible and the trustees of the congregation be authorized to begin collecting funds for that purpose.

At the time of this meeting, there were only 15 parishioners. But they still decided to build a church of their own. Out of the love and faith in their hearts for their Savior, on that very same day this small group of believers had pledges amounting to \$300. They agreed to buy a lot at the estimated price of \$150.00. They also decided that the church building would be 50x30 feet. The congregation was able to borrow money from Rev. Bergholz in Kauwanee. Everything was "go" for the building of the small little white church in which I was placed for so many years.

The construction of the church progressed very rapidly. By March of that year lumber had been cut from the forests of the members and was being hauled to the sawmill in Forestville. The corner stone of the new church was laid on April 26th, 1891 at 2:30 in the afternoon. Pastor J. Kaiser preached the German sermon and Pastor Ebling of Algoma preached the English sermon. However, great difficulties soon arose. Members performed a large part of the work. During the summer months work discontinued because the farmers were busy with their crops. Also, changes had to be made among workers because some were not doing a satisfactory job. Finally, on November 1st, the

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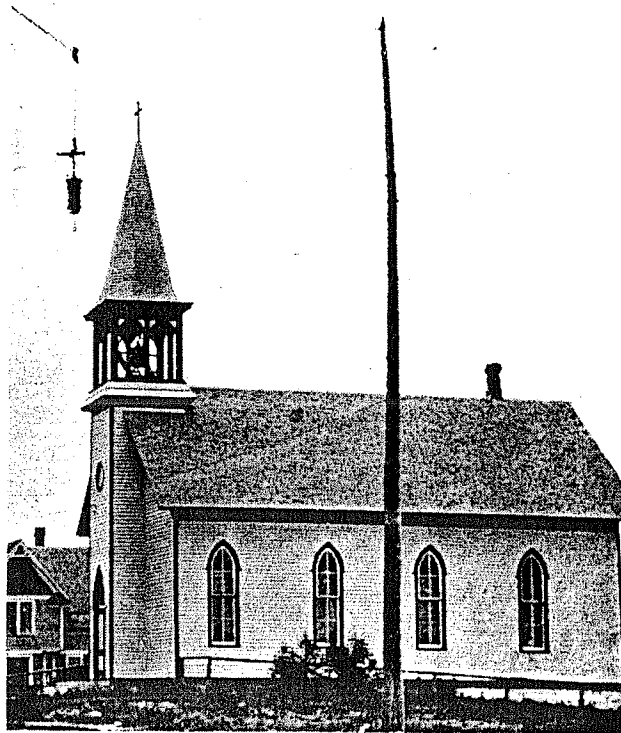
new church was dedicated. The morning service was conducted by Prof. A Ernst of Watertown, Wis. while the afternoon services were conducted by Pastor Leukemann and Pastor J. Ebbeling. The building was valued at \$1800 and the young congregation was in debt \$500. Yet, I saw the members greatly rejoicing when their small but very beautiful church was complete. This young congregation looked forward to a promising future. Even the editor of the Advocate predicted that the new congregation would thrive although the village was smaller than some others in the county.

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Great was my joy at that time. But soon I looked with sadness on a congregation that had to very abruptly end the ministry of Pastor J. Kaiser. Pastor Kaiser identified himself with an anti-Christian Lodge and served as chaplain. This action tore the young church apart. Yet, this young congregation was composed of some strong Christians and they did not weaken in their position against the lodge system and its false, theistic, Christless religion which has no saving power. The trustees had to take strict measures which culminated in locking Pastor Kaiser out of the church. This action took place in November of 1892. Pastor Ebbeling once again came to our aid and served us as vacancy pastor. It was sad to hear of some of our members and members of the lodge banning together under Pastor Kaiser to form the German Independant Lutheran Church. Pastor Kaiser continued to preach

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in Sturgeon Bay for this new church until July 1893 when he left for Green Bay. Although the beginnings were tough, I was overjoyed to watch as this small band of German settlers stood up for what they believed and stuck together.



Our First Church

Formulation under Kionka

After a lengthy vacancy Pastor Martin Kionka arrived in May of 1893 and was installed by Pastor Ebbeling. Pastor Kionka was just what the doctor ordered for this strife-torn church. Energetic and enthusiastic, he quickly re-organized our struggling church. At the very first meeting in June, Pastor Kionka quickly began surging ahead with new plans. A sorely-needed parsonage was agreed upon. Probably the biggest impact Pastor Kionka made upon St. Peter's was that under him, we became affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod. From the very beginning, this congregation wholeheartedly accepted their membership in this synod and sought many ways to do what they could to further the ministry and mission of this synod.

Pastor Kionka also began holding services in the Seventh-Day Adventist church on the east side of the Bay as well as in the church in Bay View and in Nasewaupee. In the fall of 1893, Pastor Kionka also opened a school for the children. By January, I was very happy when Pastor reported that there were 20 families in active membership with many more attending services. Pastor Kionka was very much interested in seeing that all our children have Bibles, so he presented all the members of the confirmation class with a New Testament. Also, in 1893, the Ladies' Aid was formed. Over the many years, I have seen what a valuable group this has been for St.

Peter's. Time and time again, these ladies have offered to do work for the church.

At the beginning of 1895 the congregation resolved to do some painting and improving. I watched with joy as the members "tastefully papered and painted the churches". Bible verses were painted. The sacristy was improved and the entrance hall was plastered. Doors were built to enter the church tower. A bell was purchased for the bell tower.

I have to admit that the money-raising procedures in those days were not always the best. The congregation resolved to set up a special Fund with the name of '10 cent Bank'. Into this fund each member was to contribute the sum of 10 cents the first Sunday of the month. If a member did not contribute at least \$4.00 yearly into the treasury he could not be a voting member.

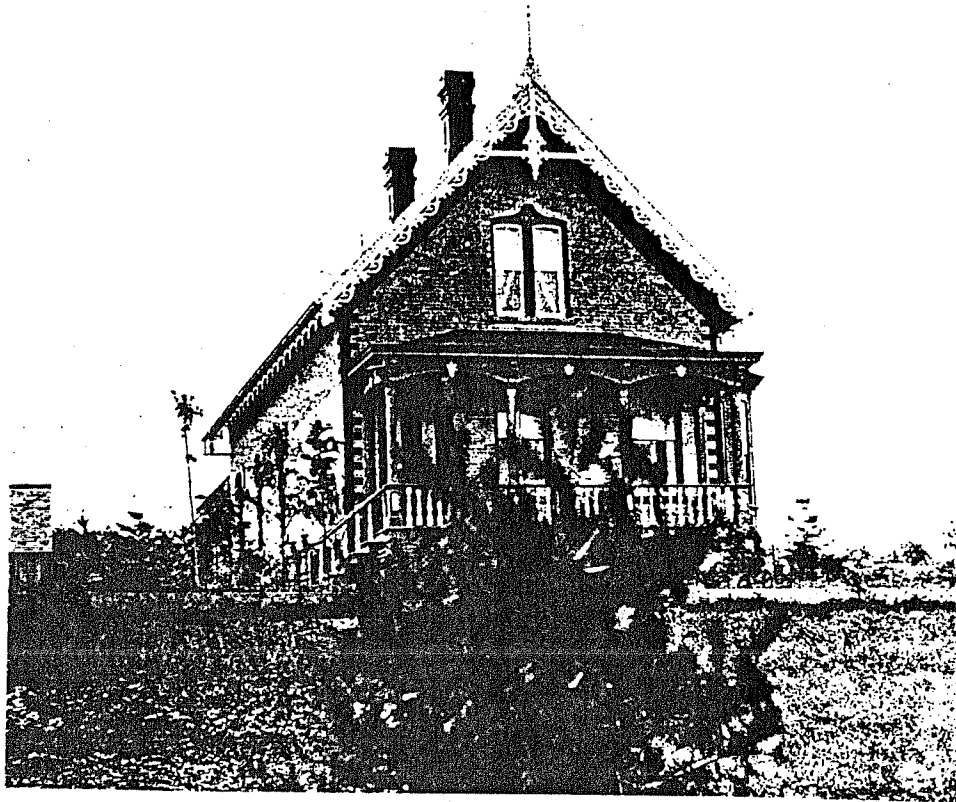
Despite it all, this young church flourished under Pastor Kionka. Later in the year in 1895, he made elaborate plans for a mission festival to be held in John Sperber's grove. An excursion train left Bay View for the grove at 8 A.M. Tickets were 15 cents for the round trip. Although I missed seeing the people in church that Sunday morning, I heard them saying that the festival was a great success. People came by rail, team and on foot. Out of the love in our hearts, we were able

to present the Seminary in Milwaukee with 53 sacks of potatoes and other vegetables.

Everything was going great. In the spring of '96, Pastor Kinoka confirmed 14 children. He taught 3 German classes a week on the east side of the Bay. But then tragedy struck. In April, the church was struck by lightning and almost completely destroyed. It was with horror that I watched the church burn around me. The solemn words of the trustees still ring out as I heard them report about the fire at their meeting on May 3rd. "On the 17th of April at 1:30 p.m. through the will of our heavenly Father our church was heavily damaged by lightning and we realized our sins in this tribulation. But we are assured of the grace of God and pray that he may be with us in the future." God was with us and by his grace we were able to repair the old structure. The fire insurance company would only give us \$690.00. This sum was hardly sufficient to build another church so we were advised it would be possible to repair our old structure. Our congregation worked hard and on July 12th, our church was rededicated. A cross three-and-a-half feet tall made of tin and gilded was added. Also, somewhat belatedly, we added lightning rods.

To show you the character of our congregation, we went ahead with the building of a parsonage. Humbled, but undaunted, St. Peter's congregation gave the church council the

go ahead to buy a one-and-a-half lot from Arthur Harris on the corner of Maple Ave and Joliet. The parsonage was built for \$100. By October of that year, Pastor Kionka and his family had moved into their new home.



For the next few years, St. Peter's enjoyed a calm period. Everything was in order. The church had been fixed and the parsonage built. The Ladies' Aid celebrated its fourth anniversary in August. I can still recall how overjoyed those Ladies were. They went out to Meyer's grove for the day and celebrated with a religious service followed by dinner and a few "harmless doings". Of course, once again St. Peter's

remembered the Seminary with potatoes and vegetables.

In 1898, St. Peter's experienced some changes. In April, the United States had declared war on Spain. Pastor Ebbling went to serve as chaplain at the front for our boys. Pastor Kionka now had to attend to both St. Peter's and the Algoma congregation. Shortly after Pastor Ebbling came home, Pastor Kionka announced that he had accepted a call to Peshtigo. He left by the end of November. Pastor Ebbling stepped in to help out once again as best he could. Despite all the efforts of Pastor Eppling, I saw no service that Christmas and no minister.

Transition under Schulze

Finally, on July 8th, I once again saw a minister and services were conducted regularly. Pastor Schulze arrived with his family. It was good to see the people back in church led in worship by their own pastor. This last vacancy came during the school year so Sunday School had not been held. I was overjoyed to see Pastor Schulze almost immediately planning for Sunday School in the fall. In September, Sunday School began at 9:30 a.m. He even offered to hold classes in Greek and Latin if there was enough interest. How we were glad when once again on Christmas we were able to worship in our church. The Sunday School even put on a very delightful program for us. In appreciation for the work of Pastor Schulze, the congregation presented him with a handsome and comfortable fur overcoat.

In the spring of 1900, Pastor Schulze confirmed 16 children. What a joy to be able to witness the confirmation of our children once again. In the spring of that year, the Lord called home one of the charter members of St. Peter's: Mr. Louis Branning. St. Peter's was heading into its 10th year of existence and Pastor Schulze was doing a fine job strengthening our church. I can still remember hearing about Pastor Schulze riding around town on his "wheel" and he was considered to be doing very well for a novice.

Meanwhile the Ladies' Aid was very busy. Each year they held some big function. In 1901, they served dinner in Erdmann's taylor shop to raise money for the mission fund. They also promised to sell ice cream and lemonade at the lowest rates if the weather permitted. The meals went for 10 cents. Unfortunately, there was bad weather so they only netted \$22.

The congregation was also very concerned about their worship. For a while there was some confusion over song books from both the Wisconsin Synod and the Missouri Synod. It was finally decided to go with the Wisconsin Synod Hymnals. Also, in 1902, they introduced a new liturgy. They borrowed this one from our sister congregation in Algoma who were using it.

In February of 1903, the church purchased a bell for the price of \$200. In anticipation of the arrival of the bell, the church was renovated. The new bell was installed in June. On June 10th, I witnessed the first time that the bell summoned the people to church. At that time, we had one of the largest bells in the county. Dedication services were held. The ladies of th church served supper and ice cream in Pagel's new building on Maple St. At that time supper only cost 15 cents and ice cream five cents.

Pastor Schulze did leave his mark on St. Peter's. He worked diligently for this growing church. It was with sadness

that we heard him preach his farewell sermon in the fall of 1904 before he left for Alexandria, Arkansas.

Once more faithful Pastor Ebbling filled in for our church.

Growing Under the Bishop of Door County

For the first time since the beginning of our history, we did not have to wait a long time for a pastor. Less than two months after Pastor Schulze left, our pulpit was filled by a giant of a man; Pastor Fred Schumann. Little did we realize what a blessing this man would be when he first arrived. With him began a new era in the history of the congregation. The debts were paid and many improvements were made in our church. For the next forty years, this gentle giant guided our church through two world wars, a depression and many other bad times.

Until the time that Reverend Schumann came, all services had been conducted in the German language. As the younger generation began to grow up, there was a growing demand for some services in English. We began having one English service a month on a Sunday evening. Also, until this point the liturgy used to be printed on a blackboard in front of the church. In January of 1905, the congregation had 500 copies of the liturgy printed so that the blackboard could be removed and each person could have their own copy.

Plans were made at this time re-decorate the interior of our church. Frank J. Stroh and C.C. Nichols redecorated the church with many members giving volunteer gifts. The church council agreed to paint the new altar built by Mr. Wm. Bade.

Mr. Bade had lovingly built the altar and donated it to the church. At that time new church lighting was discussed. However, it wasn't until the fall of 1906 that electricity was installed and the fixtures and lighting were ready in time for the Christmas program. These were graciously provided by the Ladies' Aid of our congregation.

As I look back over the many years I realize that not everything was done exactly the way we do things today. In fact, there were some things done that may be questioned today. It isn't that they were wrong, but that they could have been better. For example, years ago each member of the church had to pay church dues. In 1905, each member had to pay \$6 annually. There were many times when our church council had to visit people because they did not pay their church dues. I fear that many may have given money out of fear of compulsion rather than out of love for their Savior. There were a few instances in our history when some members were even released because they didn't pay their church dues. The matter of church dues plagued the church for a long time.

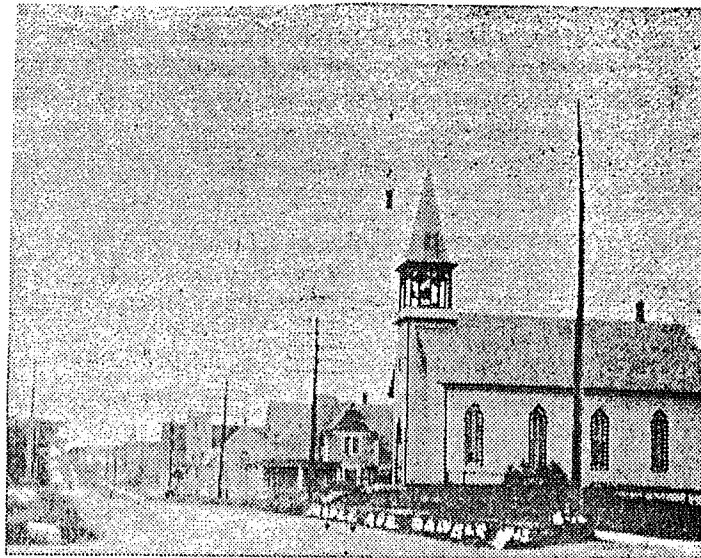
Rev. Schumann was called the "Bishop of Door County" because he served the three congregations of Valmy, Nasewaupsee and Sawyer's. Early in 1906, St. Peter's began to make his connections with the other churches a little bit easier. They installed a telephone in the parsonage. Now, Reverend Schuman

was able to talk to members in those areas without having to ride his horse out there. Rev. Schumann was also very much interested in the work of the Wisconsin Synod as was the rest of the church. In those days when the Synod was small enough to have every congregation send a delegate to the convention, St. Peter's always had a delegate assigned and a back-up man in case he couldn't make it. Every year St. Peter's put on a mission festival which congregations from all around were invited to attend. Oh, how I remember all the many times that the people of St. Peter's would hold church outside and enjoy the whole day together in Christian fellowship!

I also remember the many wonderful acts of Christian love the Ladies' Aid performed for the congregation. In 1908, the Ladies' Aid offered to paint the parsonage and the barn. These ladies did not stay in the kitchen. The signs of their work can be seen all over this church.

1910 again marked a small tragedy for our church. Early in September, a lightning bolt hit the church tower. However, we were grateful to hear that the damage was light and this time the insurance paid for it all. Despite that small tragedy, Reverend Schumann reported a 100% increase in membership in the six years since he arrived in Door County. For the first time, we also used electric lights to light the Christmas trees in church. We also installed electric lights in the parsonage.

1911 marked a year of change for the congregation. On the outside, I heard the sound of hammers and paint brushes as the roof was being resingled and the church was repainted. On the inside, I once again witnessed the ever faithful Ladies' Aid redecorating the interior. The cost of \$300 was borne entirely by the Ladies' Aid. There was also a change in the church services. More services in English were in demand. Soon, each Sunday there was a service in English and a service in German. The English language was also used to instruct the children. These changes continued to occur. But Reverend Schumann had some different changes. In 1913, two rooms had to be added to the parsonage because his family was becoming larger.



MAPLE AVENUE looked like this in 1913 and probably for some time prior to that. Biggest change in the street has been very recent. That's the old St. Peter Lutheran church building in the foreground, now a bigger and beautiful stone structure. Donated by Mrs. Charles Buechner

It was a joyful time when the year 1916 came around. We celebrated our 25th anniversary. Already in early 1915, a planning committee had been set up and a fund had been set aside for a proposed new church. In June of that year, the congregation gathered at Goerler's grove south of town. There was a free-for-all dinner provided in the Pagel building. Congregations from Kolberg, Kewaunee, Nausawapee, Sevastapol, Valmy, Forestville, Algoma, and Menominee, Michigan were invited. The guest speakers were Pastor M. Kionka, our former pastor; William Bergholz and C. Auerswald for the English sermon. About 1500 people attended. I can recall Reverend Schumann stating that the chief of police told him, "That was the largest and the most orderly crowd ever assembled in this city." To that we answer: Of course, that is what we expect of Christian people.

At the time of the anniversary, the congregation had grown to 98 families. For the past 25 years, we did have much to be thankful for. Our loving God had so richly blessed us with growth, with a church and with a fine pastor. In fact, we realized what a blessing we had in Reverend Schumann and refused to let him go. In July of 1916, Reverend Schumann received a call from the Hay Creek congregation. The congregation refused to have Reverend leave this field and

requested that he return the call. Reverend Schumann did
return the call and we enjoyed his leadership for another 27
years.

Heading into the next 25 years

Sometimes when I look back and see some of the things this congregation used to do, I have to laugh. Not that they were alone in some of these practices. Take for instance the practice of men and women sitting separately. The men would sit on one side and the women would sit on the other. Of course, it is only logical that the men would go to communion first. In October of 1916, the congregation installed hat racks on the men's side but not on the women's side.

Well, be that as it may, that year we had some very important decisions to make. From 1915 to 1917, the congregation debated whether or not to build a new church. A fund had been set up. Contractors had been contacted to find out the cost of building a new church. Finally, on May 7th, 1917, the congregation decided to rebuild the old church. A foundation of 30 feet was put under the church and a furnace was installed. The Ladies' Aid donated a new reed organ and the old one was moved to the basement for school purposes. For the first time, a kneeling bench was made to be used at the distribution of Holy Communion.

In 1918, the congregation observed Reverend Schumann's 25th anniversary. Pastor A. Spiering, president of the district, preached the sermon. It had been the practice of

Reverend Schumann to travel by horseback over his extensive field of service. But after celebrating his 25th anniversary, Reverend Schumann never again had to endure saddle sores. St. Peter's purchased a Ford car for him to lighten his ever increasing duties. Soon afterwards, a garage was built for his car.

As the United States entered the roaring twenties, Reverend Schumann was roaring up and down the roads of Door County. Soon it became apparent the work was beginning to become too much for one man. In 1920, St. Peter's asked the congregation of Sevastopol to become self-sustaining. Having experienced good growth, they were able to support themselves with a few emergency funds from St. Peter's. In 1923, they decided to call their own pastor. After building a parsonage, they called Pastor Paul Bergmann. Rev. Schumann now took care of St. Peter's and Nausawapee.

In May of 1920, Reverend Schumann received a call to Two Rivers. After much discussion, the congregation voted not to let Reverend Schumann leave as we felt that he was needed here more. It was about this time that the congregation bought for \$900 the lot next to the church on which the present church stands.

In the early 1920's, we again had problems with the dues

system. Although membership was on the rise, it seemed as if the giving wasn't. Still operating on the dues system, the congregation approved the plan to have a class system in which each member would be put in a certain class. Class I would contribute \$11, Class II would contribute \$9 and Class III would contribute \$7.50. It was the job of the treasurer to collect the money. In 1921, the treasurer complained of the rough treatment he received while trying to collect the money. In 1922, he resigned because of insults and abuses. All this from a Christian congregation?!

In 1923, there was once again some debate concerning English services. The German-speaking people in our congregation were very reluctant to change. They refused to allow an English service every Sunday. They did allow 3 English services a month.

Because Sevastopol had called their own pastor, we decided to give Reverend Schumann a \$300 raise to offset the change. Also, a bathroom and laundry were added to the parsonage.

It was only a matter of time before we demanded the full time use of our pastor. In 1928, we told Salem Lutheran in Nasawapee to call their own minister. So, they called Victor Siegler to be their pastor. In 1929, I could hear the many blows of hammers as the parsonage underwent some extensive

improvements. A cellar was put under the house and the building was shingled with fire-resistant shingles and painted. A sun-porch was donated. Inside the church, the balcony was enlarged to make room for our growing congregation.



From 1929 on, Reverend Schumann was no longer the bishop of Door County but just the pastor of St. Peter's. Although he was no longer the bishop of Door County, Reverend Schumann was admired by many and remembered in 1929 for his 25 years of service in Door county. Pastors J. Brenner from Milwaukee and C. Toepel of Algoma preached the sermons. For 25 years, Door

county enjoyed watching this gentle giant ride across the county to visit people far and near. For the last 15 years of his ministry, St. Peter's would be his only responsibility. But what a responsibility! As we entered the depressed '30's, we needed a kind, gentle, but strong man. And we had him.

The closing years of Reverend Schumann

Under Reverend Schumann, a number of groups within the church flourished and actively worked for the good of the church. To make room for all these groups, in 1931, the church put a full basement underneath its building. It was to serve as a meeting place for the various societies and school functions. New art glass windows were also installed. Water was installed in the church as well. Once again the Ladies' Aid provided for most of the funds.

In 1932, the constitution was translated from German into English. I would like to speak of two traditions that we use to have. It was the custom for each new member to sign his name to the constitution. Also, it was the custom that the constitution was read at the annual congregational meeting in January of each year. Whether good or bad, we have lost these customs. The English-speaking people also managed to have the Wednesday evening Lenten services held in English.

In 1925, our church had decided to allow young men of age 21 to vote. At that time we wanted to encourage more young men to become active. In 1932, for the first time, the congregation used young men for ushers. Lloyd and Clifford Spude served as the first ushers. John Wickman also helped them out. The congregation noticed another change in our church

service. The Pastor and the congregation would say in unison the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

Like the rest of the nation, Sturgeon Bay was suffering from the depression in 1933 and so was St. Peter's. It is at times like these that the love of a pastor for his congregation is tested. Our beloved Reverend Schumann passed the test with flying colors. He donated \$200 of his salary to help pay the dues of unemployed church members. What an act of Christian love and sacrifice!

During this year, the congregation was still struggling with the constitution. Now they wanted to change the paragraphs on the election of the president of the congregation. After much debate and revision, the constitution was accepted by the congregation. Paragraphs 11 and 15 were changed in the constitution permitting the congregation a direct vote to elect the president, rather than having him chosen by the council. The term was for one year. Hermann Dettman was elected as the first president in this way. Up until this time, the pastor has always been the chairman of the meetings. It was truly a wonderful occasion to witness a layperson standing before a group of men who had just elected him president and give the following speech:

Board members and congregation: At our last special meeting of Feb. 12 1933 you elected me president and

chairman of this congregation. I am also fully aware of the responsibility that went with that election but I assure you all that I shall try my best to enforce all resolutions and the constitution of this congregation. But I do hereby also ask the board and this congregation for your advice, support and cooperation so that we may this year work in harmony together for the benefit of this congregation and all parties concerned. May God grant us this peace for Jesus' sake.

It was a great day for the laity of our church to have someone from their midst express so boldly his confession.

Once again Reverend Schumann showed his loving concern for the congregation during the hard times of the depression. In March of 1933, he submitted the following proposals:

1. To make no major improvements or repairs at the present time which are not absolutely necessary.
2. To excuse all who have no work and no funds from contributions at this time.
3. To encourage those who have no funds but farm produce to contribute in wood and products of the farms which will be received at market price.
4. To encourage all who are financially able to increase their contribution voluntarily to help those who are unable according to the scriptural admonition:

'Bear ye one another's burdens espeically as our members are contributing one half as much and less as sister congregations in the neighborhood.

5. To pay monthly dues as these will be easier to meet than larger amounts.

6. To encourage young people to contribute to the upkeep of the cong.

7. To reduce for the time the salaries of those in the employment of the congregation as follows: Janitor: \$60, Organist: \$60. Pastor: \$1,000 but to return from time to time to the original rate as conditions present. The parties concerned accept these agreements under the conditions stated.

The question of the order of serivces arose again. There was a lengthy discussion on this question. It was finally decided to have German services once a month at the regular hours in the forenoon and to dispose of the double services which were customary in previous years. On that particular Sunday when German services would be held an English service should be held in the evening. .

1933 was a year for a number of unusual events to happen. To top the year off, something very unsual happened. For the first time that I can remember, there was no quorum for the September meeting. It was rescheduled for the following month

but the same thing happened. So there was no meeting in the fall of 1933.

In early 1934, I once again saw much unhappiness with the church services. Many people were very unhappy with the way things were in done in 1933 concerning the German services. So it was decided to have an English service at 9:30 a.m. and a German service at 10:45. Also, for the first time, we began to use envelopes for the weekly dues.

In the late 20's and early 30's, St. Peter's became interested in getting the youth back into church. For one reason or another, the youth had begun to slip away. Early in 1934, the congregation directed Reverend Schumann to re-organize the Young People Society which had gradually faded away. Lloyd and Clifford Spude were to head up the activities.

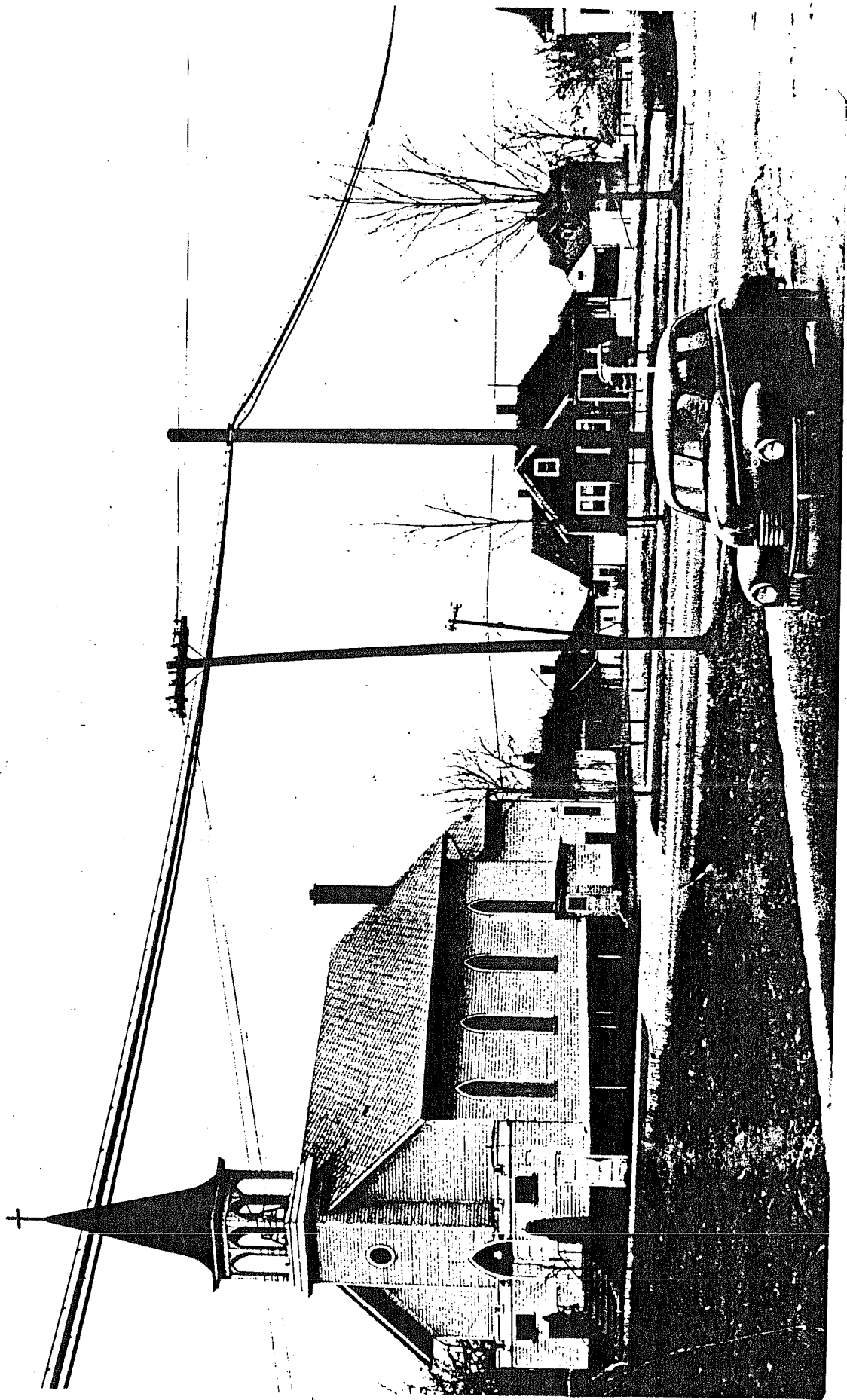
As I look back, I can't help but admire the support and the help the Ladies' Aid gave to the congregation. In 1935, they once again painted the church. Two years later, the ladies were hard at work painting the basement of the church. In the late '30's the congregation began looking ahead to the 50th anniversary celebration in 1940. In 1939 they began working on a booklet with the history of St. Peter's. The Ladies' Aid sponsored the building of an addition to the church building. During that year, I enjoyed watching the church being

renovated. The interior was finished with new wood and masonite. New lights and heavier wiring were installed. The money for this work was raised by voluntary contributions by envelope. The choir donated new altar and pulpit spreads. The AAL and Needle Club donated a new carpet in the vestry and altar-room.

Everyone had worked hard and had contributed much to the anniversary celebration. What a pleasure it was to witness the celebration on June 16th, 1940. Pastors Henning and Goese preached for rededication sermons. Surely with the Psalmist we all sang, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'let us go unto the house of the Lord'." 1940 was a year of rejoicing over God's blessings on 50 years of existence.

Also at that time, we became aware of another significant event. Soon after the work was complete on the church, we arranged for another special service in the honor of Reverend Schumann for 35 years of service in our midst. We knew that such an occasion could not pass unnoticed. Pastor C. Toepel of Algoma delivered the sermon. A special reception was given after the service in the assembly room. In recognition of his long years of service the pastor received a monetary gift. But no gift could be enough to show our thanks for our beloved pastor. However, it wasn't too long before we noticed that Reverend Schumann's health was slipping. In the fall of 1940

and in the following years, there were occasions when Reverend Schumann was not able to preach. In the spring of 1941, German services were discontinued. The President's term was lengthened from one year to three years. In the spring of 1943, Lenten services were held on Sunday mornings due to the gas and tire rationing caused by the war. For the past 15 years, Reverend Schumann had been stricken with arthritis. In June of 1943, he received the prelate rose for 50 years of service. Then, on Oct. 3rd, 1943, Reverend Schumann submitted his resignation. Out of gratitude, the congregation made him honorary pastor without any duties or obligations. With his resignation an era came to an end. He had guided this young congregation. I will always remember the gentle giant who led this congregation from youth to adulthood.



The era of Reverend Baganz

Although we missed Reverend Schumann, it didn't take long for his successor to distinguish himself as a pastor in his own right. On January 30th of 1944, Reverend Theophil Baganz was installed as pastor of St. Peter's just three months after Reverend Schumann submitted his resignation. Reverend Senger of West Jacksonport officiated at the installation. Not taking anything away from our beloved Reverend Schumann, when Reverend Baganz entered our church, it was a breath of fresh air. With this young man came new ideas and new changes.

Many things changed in that year. By April of that year, the church had done away with the church dues system and had gone to the voluntary system which we figured would work out well. Our church service changed with the advent of the new Hymnal and the new liturgy. Men and women were permitted to sit together and for the first time I saw husband and wife kneeling together at the altar and taking communion together. Our service was beautified with a new pipe organ. But probably the most significant change I saw that year was the attendance. The second Sunday after Reverend Baganz was here, I can remember that the ushers had to set up folding chairs to accomodate all the people. No one could deny that Reverend Baganz was a gifted speaker. By Christmas of that year, we had to use the High School Auditorum for our Christmas program

because the present church was too small.

What joy filled our church as we saw more and more new members joining. I can remember that at almost every quarterly meeting there were long lists of people asking to become members. One year after Reverend Baganz arrived, the congregation began to make plans for the building of a new church. For the first time that I can remember, there was also talk of having a parochial school. The original plan was to build a new church and to renovate the old church into a school for a parochial school.

In midst of our joy over a new church, we took time out to honor the passing of our beloved Reverend Schumann. On February 25th, 1945, the Lord called him home and gave him rest from all his labors. Out of respect and acknowledgement for his many years of service, St. Peter's congregation paid for the funeral expenses. During that difficult year, we also remembered four of our young boys who were killed in war: Sgt. Willard Tess, killed in Belgium, Pfc. Harold Krueger in Germany, T/5 William Herrbold Jr. and Sgt. Richard Serrahn in the Philippines. Memorial services were held for them in our church. In all, 73 of our young men and women were had served our country during WWII.

Despite what was happening on the world scene, St. Peter's

continued to forge ahead. It was decided to have student pastors help out the pastor during the summer months. Vicar Otto Zeeb preached while Reverend Baganz was ill for three months. In 1946, we purchased the lot owned by Mr Woerfel across Maple Street. However, one year later we sold the lot back to him. Meanwhile, progress was being made by the building committee.

Reverend Baganz did much to add to the educational system of our church. Soon after he arrived he started an Adult Bible Class. In 1946, a Saturday school was inaugurated for eight grades to teach the children the Bible truths together with Luther's Catechism. It has been stated that we had the first Saturday School in the country. Whether or not we can document that, we enjoyed those Saturday mornings together. Those were a time of learning and growing in the word of God. Then in 1948, a Vacation Bible School was begun to give our children additional Christian Education. Our first VBS had one teacher and 33 pupils.

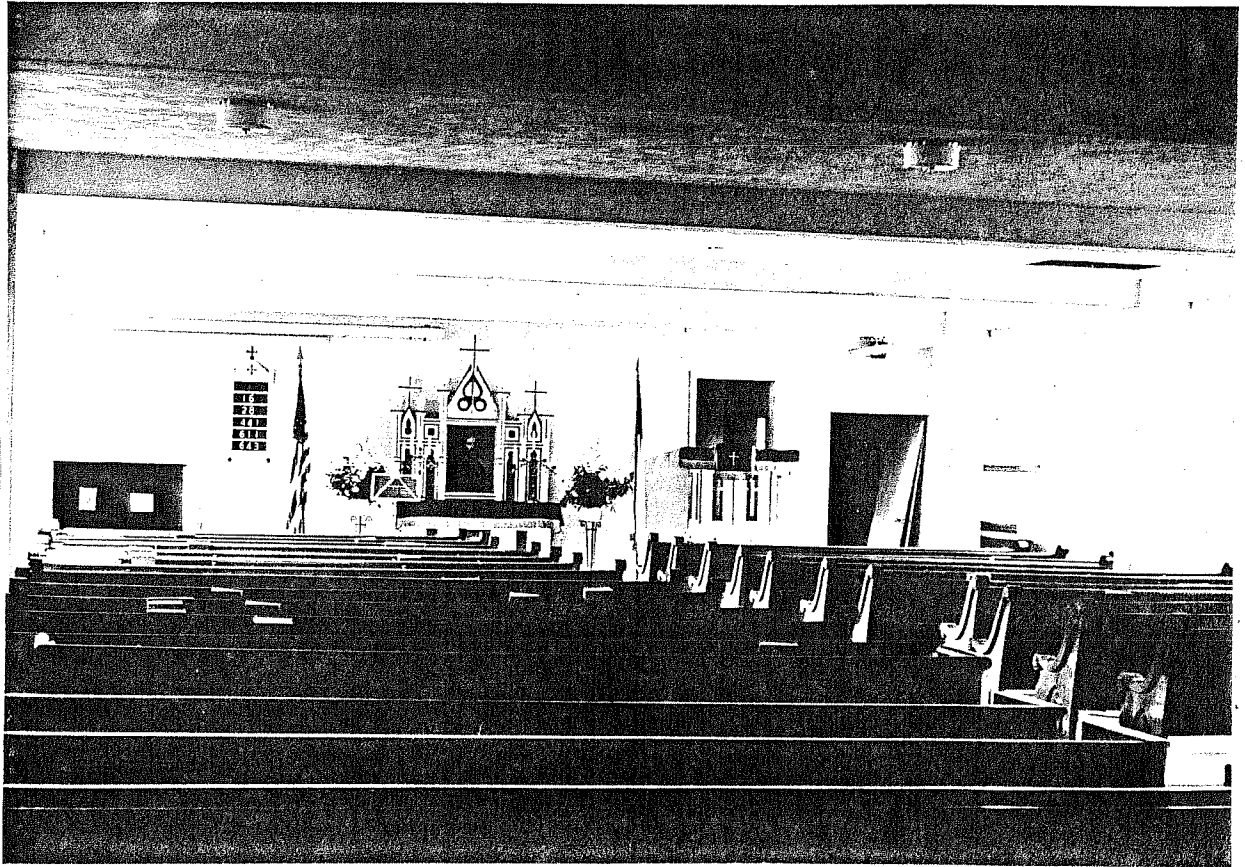
1949 stands out as another year of many decisions and changes. The children's choir was organized. Since that time, they have made 11 TV appearances. To me, there is nothing more beautiful than the sound of children singing praises to their Lord. For the next 30 years, they would add to our worship services with their songs.

In that year, the congregation also voted to sell a 60X90 foot lot next to the church. The parsonage on Joliet street was also sold. On April 24th, 1949, the building committee under the direction of Lloyd Spude reported to congregation that the cost of a new church would be \$155,000. It was a tough decision but the congregation finally decided to build the church by a 20-18 vote. Later in that year, the congregation voted to permit the council and the building committee to go ahead with the basement of the new church by a vote of 51 - 1. This had been a vote of confidence because operations had been suspended due to lack of funds.

For the next year and a half, we observed the new church slowly rising from the ground. On Feb. 5th 1950, the church gathered to discuss a call that Reverend Baganz had received. The results were 111 to 3 in favor of him staying. April 17th marked the ceremony for the groundbreaking of the new church. The Cornerstone ceremony was held on July 31st. Elaborate plans were made for this church. \$75,000 was borrowed from Zieger and Company of West Bend. It would cost 14,000 dollars alone for the stain-glassed windows which were imported from Europe.

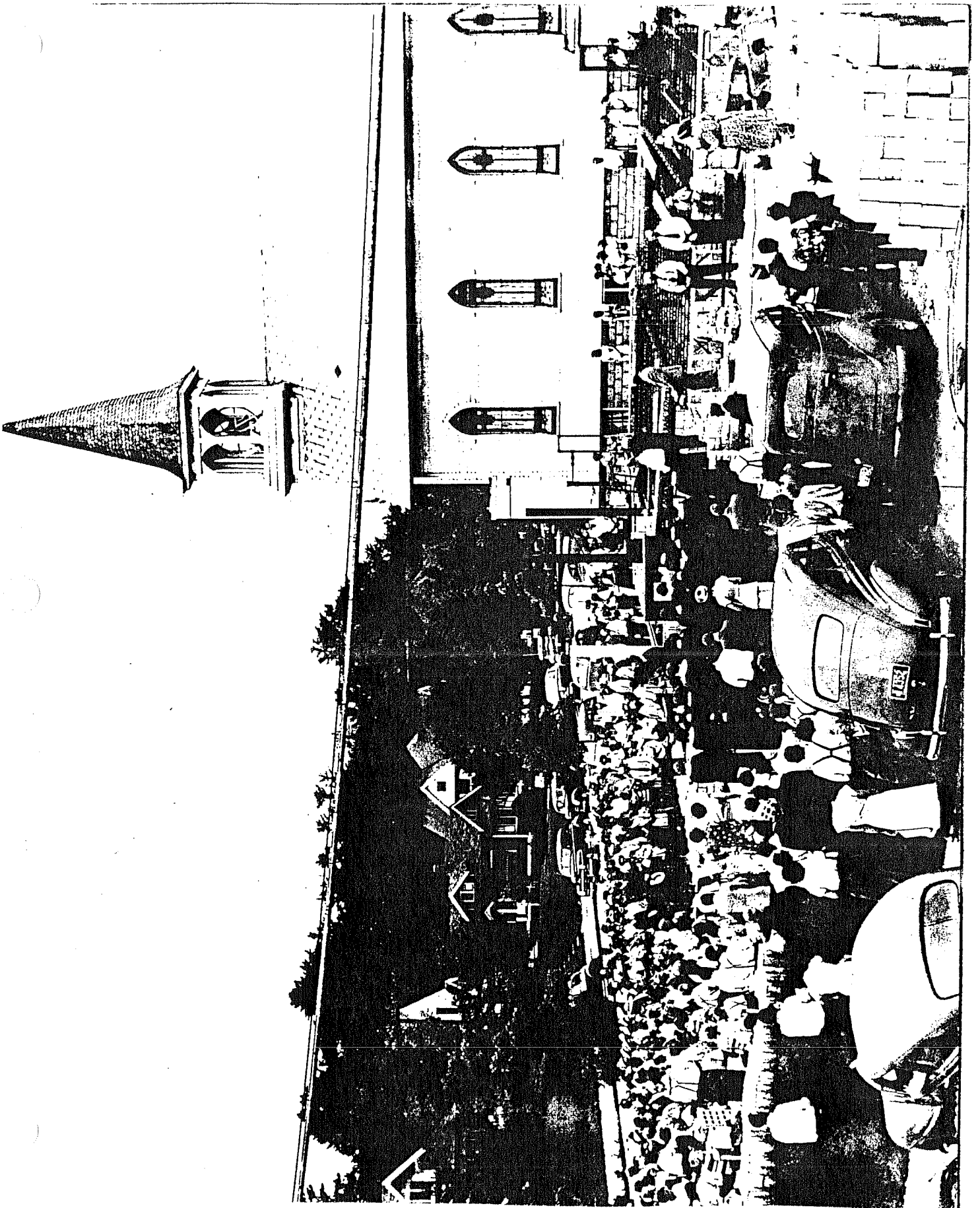
June 14th, 1951 was a sad and a happy day. It was sad because it was the last time we held services in the old

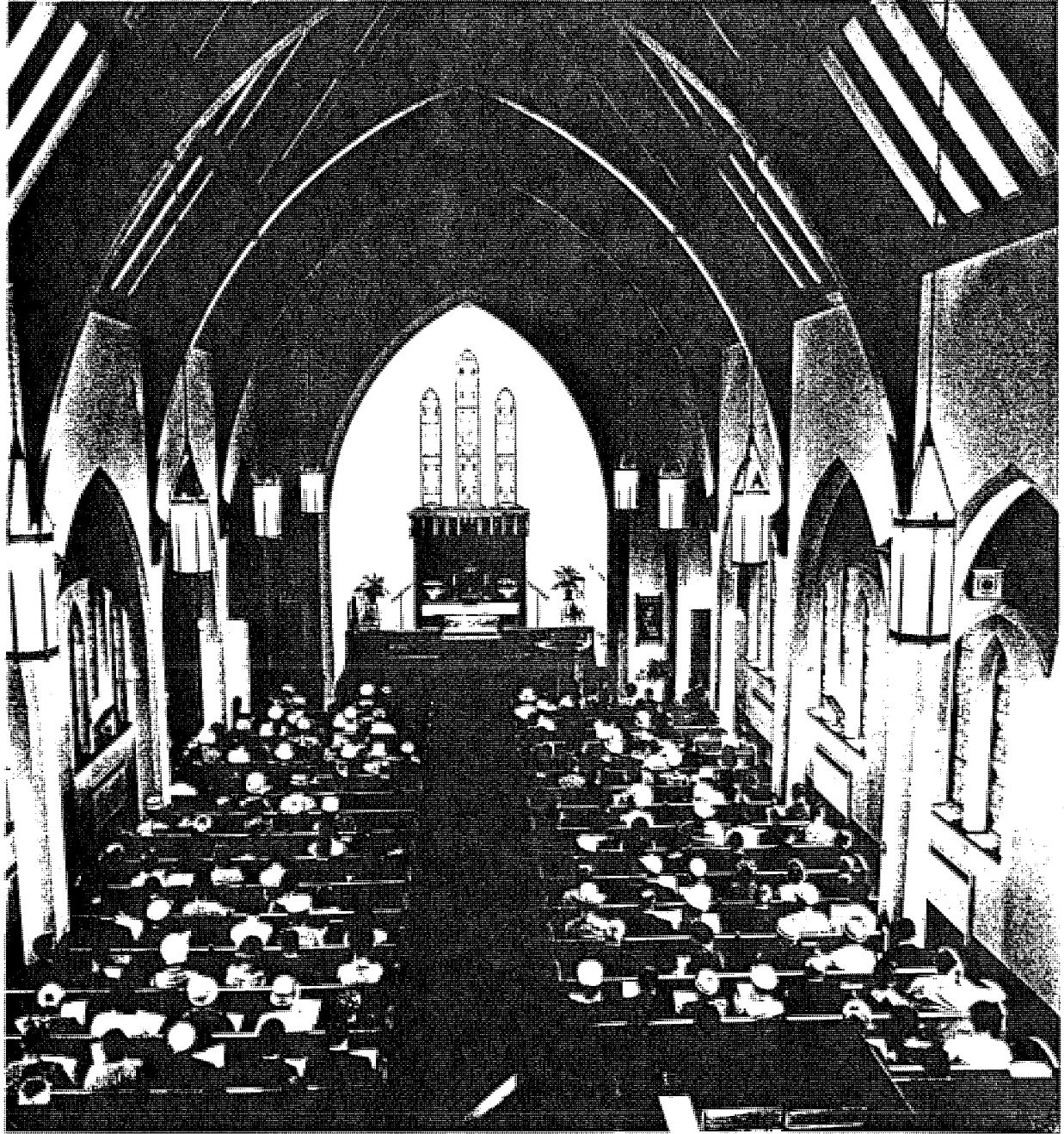
church. It was that last time that I was able to look down from the altar and witness a church service. It marked the end of the old-time church and the beginning of a new and growing church. For the next few months, the altar and the rest of the sacristy furniture was placed in the basement of the new church. Until the church was completed, services were held in the basement of the new church which was usable by this time. On that same day, the old church was razed. Sale of material from the old church netted \$1,336.21.



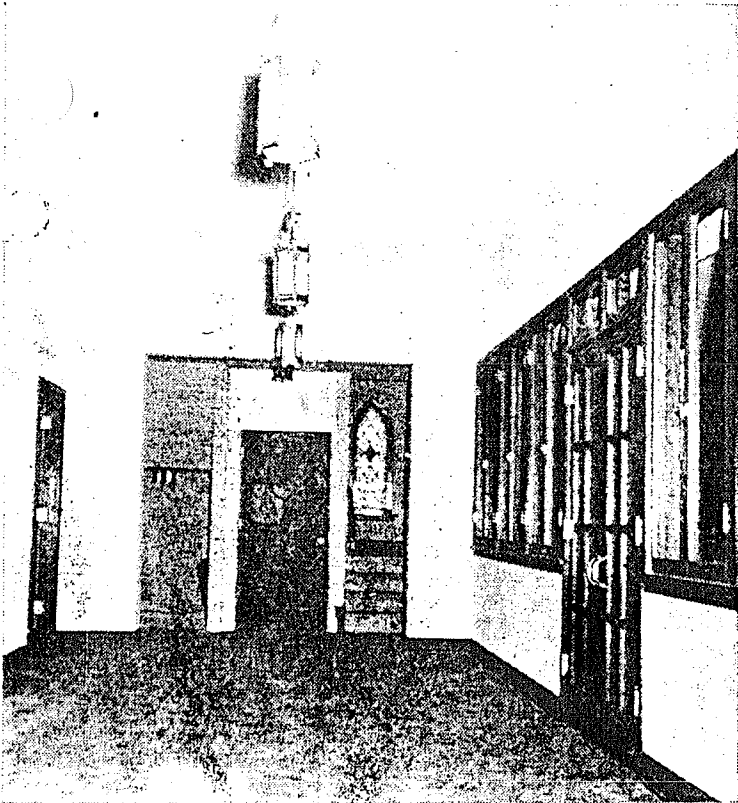
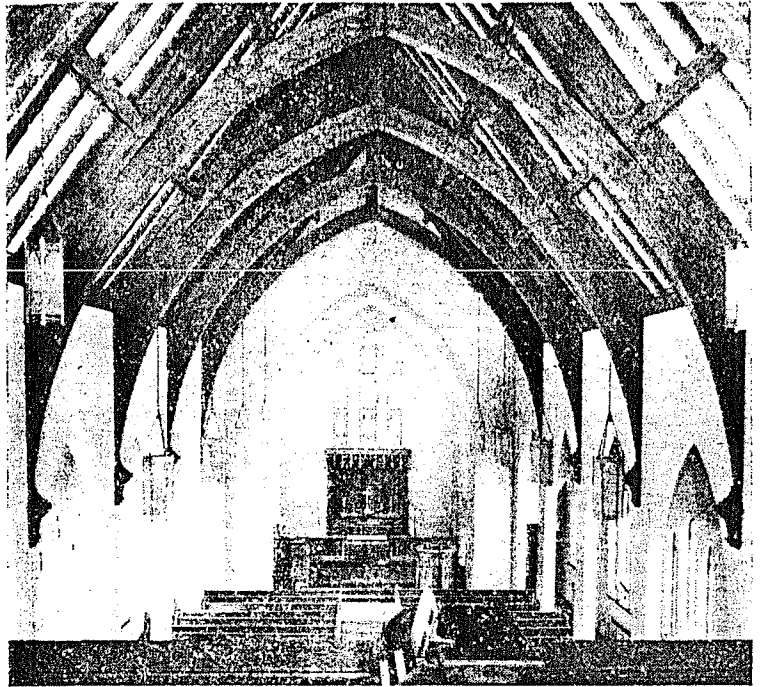
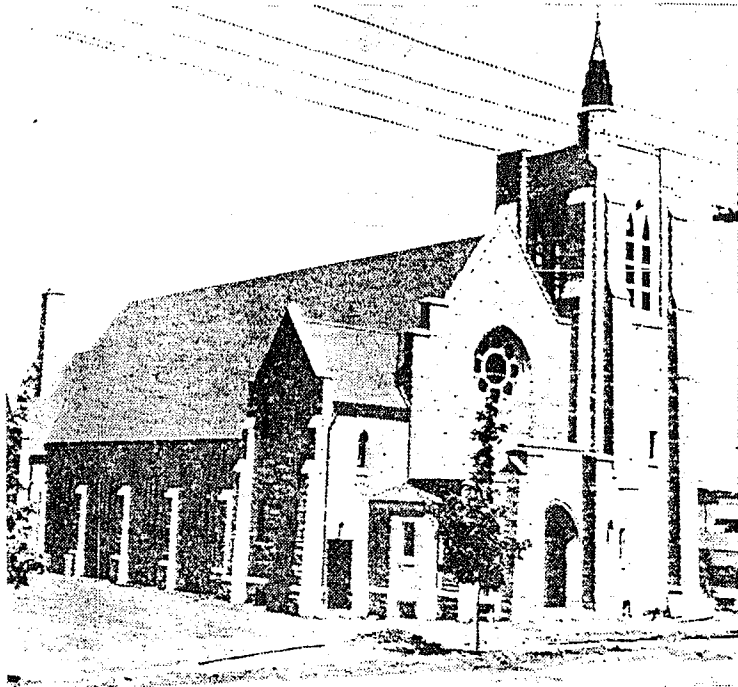
With joy and ~~and~~ a sense of pride, the members of St.

Peter's went to church on August 5th to celebrate the dedication of the new church. Rev. Walther Reinemann of Hartford preached in the morning service. Reverend Theodore Zarembo of Florence preached in the afternoon service and Professor Clarence Spiegel of Concordia Seminary, Springfield Illinois preached in the evening service at 8 p.m. That year there were 217 children enrolled in Sunday School, 100 enrolled in Saturday School and 85 in Vacation Bible School. Our church was growing. It was almost a decade at the time of the building of the new church that Reverend Baganz had served faithfully and diligently. Through him the Holy Spirit worked to make St. Peter's one of the largest Protestant congregations in the county. All praise and glory to His name!





St. Peter's Lutheran Church Ready



A BEAUTIFUL EDIFICE is the new St. Peter Lutheran church, shown from a front and side view at the top left, which will admit worshippers Sunday. The Rev. Theo Baganz will conduct three devotion services.

Within the church, which took over a year to build, is a low-ceilinged lobby, pictured directly above at the left, leading into

the nave. The nave, top right, is supported by massive arches. Beautiful in its simplicity is the chancel, bottom right. The three chancel windows of imported European glass carry symbols of the six chief parts of Luther's catechism. Through the center of the windows is the life of Christ. At the left window is his manger in Bethlehem, the center one finds Him on Calvary's cross, and at the right is His throne of glory in heaven. photos by Arnie

Growing into the new church

From 1951 on, I was no longer in the midst of activity. From the next ten years I hung in the study of Reverend Baganz. But during those years, I saw Reverend Baganz spend many late hours studying for his sermons and Bible classes. I saw new faces entering that study to learn more about God's word. So, I still was able to see and hear what was happening to St. Peter's

On the first Sunday in February of 1952, a radio broadcast of our 10 o'clock service was aired for the first time. This wonderful broadcast was inaugurated by Mrs. Llewellyn Burr. These broadcasts have continued with great success to the present time. This is a wonderful way to reach out to the unchurched or to those who can't make it to church.

The 1950's were marked by steady growth and a relatively calm period. I would say that basically the main concern of those years was to pay off the church debt. In 1954 a contribution campaign was set-up to contact those people who had pledged money for the church building and had not given. In 1955, Reverend Baganz announced that the Joint Circles had paid for the stained glass windows in the new church at a cost of \$14,000. Members were asked to give 67 cents per Sunday so

that the budget could be met.

In 1957, the lots on Pine Street were purchased by the church. Eventually these lots would be used for the site of the future parsonage. But one year later, one of the lots were sold to the Public Service. In 1958, the congregation also attempted to obtain a vicar for the coming year. The infamous scandal sheet was also dropped and now only quarterly reports were sent out to the congregation. In 1957, our Sunday School increased so rapidly that it became necessary to have two Sunday Schools. Mr. Arnold Benzow became the superintendent of the upper grades and Mr. Owen Wanke supervised the lower grades.

As St. Peter's headed into the turbulent '60's, we were all very grateful for the decade of peace in the 1950's that we had enjoyed in our new church. Much progress had been made. The various areas of education had increased. Article 11 of the constitution had been revised, creating 3 separate church boards. These boards were the Board of Trustees, Board of Elders and the newly formed Board of Stewardship. The Board of Elders was increased from three to six. The inside of the church had been painted in preparation for the 10th anniversary of the church and the 70th anniversary of the congregation. On the first Sunday in August, Dr. Alfred Von Rohr Sauer from Concordia Seminary preached the sermon for the anniversary

service.

Almost the same time that the anniversary service was being celebrated, our synod was in a heart-wrenching convention. At that convention, the Wisconsin Synod voted to break fellowship with the Missouri Synod. This move had far-reaching effects on virtually each congregation of the Synod. St. Peter's was no different, especially since our pastor had been trained at a Missouri Synod school. Although the break was necessary, there were still some people who had some very legitimate questions. On October 1st, 1961, St. Peter's adopted a resolution taking a stand against the break. I can still remember those council meetings and the quarterly meetings. There were some heated battles in some of those meetings. The resolution read as follows:

Out of love for our Savior and with deep concern for the church of Jesus Christ on earth, we feel constrained to make the following report.

WHEREAS, we cannot agree that "every joint expression, manifestation and demonstration of the common faith" constitutes church fellowship and that even an occasional joint prayer must always be classified as church fellowship; and

WHEREAS, it is impossible to clean house by walking outside, so we feel it is impossible to correct any abuses or modernistic

trends that may creep into a church body by withdrawing from that church body;

WHEREAS, we believe that suspending fellowship with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod solves no problems, but only creates new and greater ones; therefore although it is our desire to remain members of the Wisconsin Synod, be it,

RESOLVED: a) That we ignore the resolution passed by our synod in Milwaukee at its recent convention in August and be it further

RESOLVED: b) That we continue to have altar, pulpit and prayer fellowship with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod as in the past and be it further

RESOLVED: c) That we urge our synod to reconsider its position and remain in the Synodical conference to help preserve conservative Lutheranism; and be it further

RESOLVED: d) That we send a copy of this report to the officials of the various synods in the Synodical Conference.

Our congregation adopted this resolution by a vote of 56 - 2. With the adoption of this resolution, this placed St. Peter's on the list of congregations who had to discuss this matter with the Synod officials. Because of this turmoil, there was much confusion over the next few years. This controversy continued well in 1965. It also affected two calls that

Reverend Baganz received.

In May of 1962, Reverend Baganz received a call from Havana, Illinois. At a special meeting, Reverend Baganz read an article he typed up for the congregation. He stated that the congregation calling was 5 times smaller than ours. Better living conditions existed and the salary was much higher. He stated that he was disappointed in the congregation. He had given the better part of his life to the church but the church seemed willing to let things ride. He called for a change of attitude on behalf of the congregation. He stated that maybe the church members needed a hard lesson to realize their short-comings. Reverend also remarked that the congregation would have to show intentions of moving forward if he was to stay. At this, the congregation of St. Peter's overwhelmingly voted to build a parsonage and give him a raise. Reverend Baganz then stated that he was ready to accept the call, but after much thought he had decided to stay on as pastor of St. Peter's.

That was the first call that was affected by the turbulent times in the early '60's. Again, in the fall of 1964, Reverend Baganz had actually accepted a call. The congregation had granted his release. The congregation then decided to settle our position with the Missouri and the Wisconsin Synod before calling a new pastor. Reverend Baganz was to stay until

Nov. 15th to help us with our decision.

At a special meeting in October, I saw our congregation in one of its fiercest battles. During that meeting there was even a motion to join the Missouri Synod. Cooler head prevailed and all that came out of the meeting was a reaffirmation of the resolution adopted in 1961. However, two points were added:

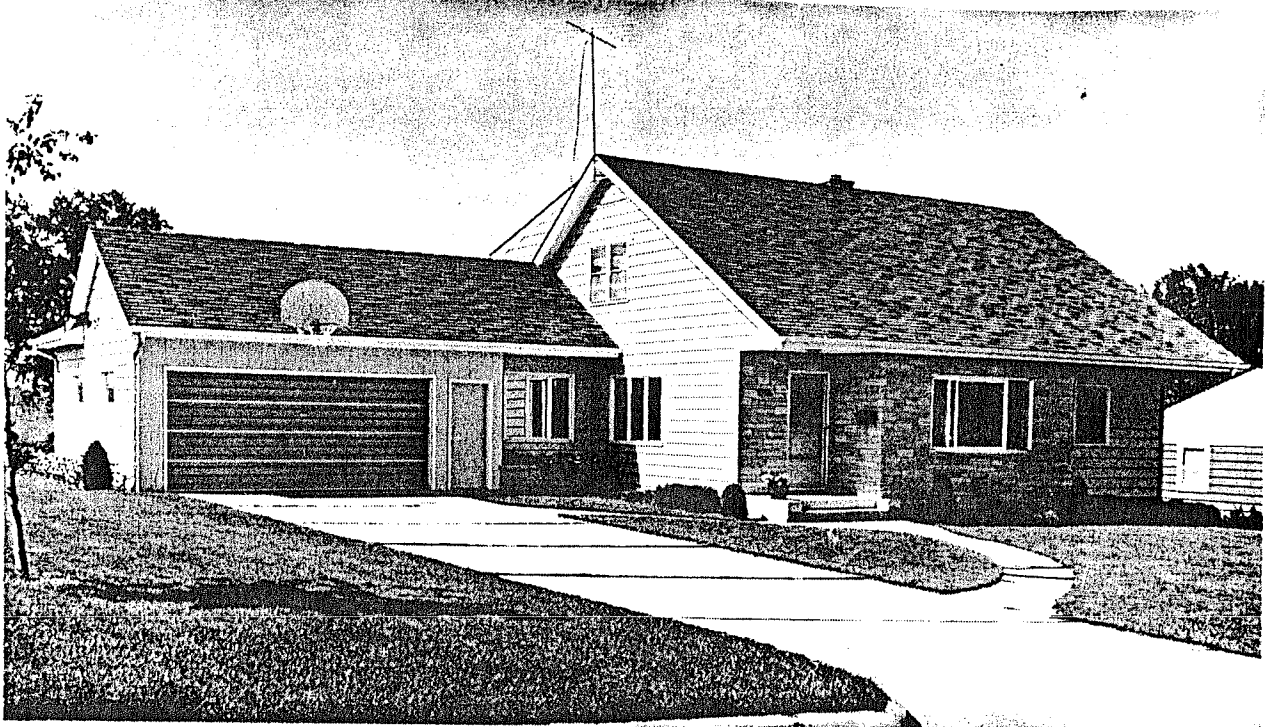
- 1) Have the synod backing on accepting members from other congregations with valid reasons.
- 2) If they do not reply within 30 days we will join another synod.

Early 1965 saw the end of this controversy. Reverend Baganz had returned the call that he had accepted in the fall of 1964. The congregation had rescinded the motion that granted Reverend Baganz his release from St. Peter's Lutheran Church. In April, the motion carried to withdraw the letter. The issue was dropped. We remained members of the Wisconsin Synod. Therefore we sent in the balance of our 1964 mission quota which we had withheld until matters were settled.

During the first five years of the '60's, there were some positive steps taken despite the Missouri Synod controversy. In 1961, we bought the property of Otis Trodahl adjacent to our property. This land was to be used for an educational building. Our school situation was in a very difficult

situation. Sunday School attendance had grown to 362. Saturday School enrollment was 203. The Sunday School classes were crowded into the basement. The older students attended at 9 a.m. and the younger ones at 10 a.m. Saturday School was also crowded into the basement from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Vacation Bible School had to be spread out to use a number of different buildings. Different classes used the VFW building on Delaware Street, the Eagles club and the back room at Andre's on the west side, besides the church basement. It had become obvious to everyone that an educational building was desperately needed.

In May of 1962, it was decided to build a new parsonage on Pine Street. The old parsonage was sold for \$8,700. January of 1963 saw the dedication of the new parsonage.



Today's Parsonage

1964-1966 were three big years in the life of our church. On the last Sunday in January of 1964, the congregation celebrated the 20th anniversary of Reverend Baganz's pastorate at St. Peter's in Sturgeon Bay. Then in 1965, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Reverend Baganz. The Reverend William Krueger of Kawkawlin, Michigan preached the sermon. That year, we rejoiced to see the Bible class reach an attendance of 100.

Meanwhile, we also rejoiced and praised our Lord for the blessing of a new educational building. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on June 7th. The cornerstone laying ceremony took place on July 26th. The building was finished and dedicated on September 27th. At the time of the planning of this building, there was again some thought of having a Christian Day School. At the present, this idea was dismissed. But thanks be to God that the builders had enough foresight to design the classrooms in such a way that someday this building could be used for such a purpose.

Finally, the last big event came in 1966. St. Peter's

gathered together to celebrate their 75th anniversary. The membership at that time was 1,319 communicant members and 1,941 souls. As we celebrated that year, we had much for which to be thankful. The beautiful house of worship, the education building which stands beside it, as well as the new parsonage were all blessings of our gracious Lord. The Holy Spirit had worked through the ministry of Reverend Baganz to increase the membership of our congregation by three times since he first arrived. From the original 15 members, we had grown to be the largest Protestant congregation in Door County. Truly the Lord had blessed us. Yet, we needed his blessings even more in the years to come.

The Final Years Under Reverend Baganz

With the building of the new educational building, I was able to watch events more closely from my new position. I was placed above the back entrance to the school. There I witnessed children coming and going as they attended school. I watched adults come to church and to Bible Class. I saw a congregation enjoying the gifts God had given them. With the growing demands made on Reverend Baganz, it was decided to give him some help. At first we were going to get vicars, but then in 1967, we called the retired Reverend Henning as assistant pastor. For the next half-a-dozen years, Pastor Henning faithfully served alongside Reverend Baganz.

In 1967, St. Peter's acquired some more land. The Riley property was once again up for sale. The congregation had failed to buy it in 1963 when it was up for sale. Because of a competing buyer, the congregation had to buy the property for \$9,000. Two years later, they made it a parking lot. That same month, the congregation bought back the Woerfel property across the street. In 1962, the congregation had been given the Schirmer property located on Egg Harbor Road. Now in September of 1967 we had received an offer from Francis Felhofer and John Kugler to buy the lot for \$10,000 and from Roland Elhers for \$375 for the easternmost 15 feet. After much discussion, it was decided to sell.

After 25 years of dedicated service, Reverend and Mrs. Baganz left for a vacation to the Holy Land. In appreciation of the many years of service, the congregation agreed to underwrite the cost of the trip which amounted to \$1400 plus expenses.

1969 saw the small beginnings of two projects for the church. The one was for air conditioning to be installed and the other was for a proposed Christian Day School. For the next decade, these two ideas would recur again and again until they were put into motion. But before I get ahead of myself, let me just tell you of a number of unrelated events that took place at the end of the 1960's and into the early 70's. In 1968, a church band was formed and continued to serve the congregation for approximately 10 years. In 1969, the big statue of Christ which is in the foyer between the church and school was donated by Mrs. George Sievers. Also in that year, the mission pledge was raised to \$15,000. In 1970, we produced a photo album of our church members. In 1972, the Joint Circles added cushions to the church pews. Also, I would like to acknowledge the members of the church council during this time period, because they began to take and an active roll in visiting delinquents as well as those families whose children did not attend school. Unfortunately, the list of delinquents was growing. 1971 was a year of great rejoicing

again for our people. On August 1st, we celebrated a special mortgage burning service.



END OF INDEBTEDNESS — Officers and the pastor of St. Peter Lutheran church participate in a mortgage burning ceremony during services held at 8 and 10 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 1. From left are Lloyd Spude, former president of the congregation, George Walther, treasurer, the Rev. Theo. Baganz, pastor, and Sven Kirkegaard, present congregation president. —Harmann

Meanwhile, the air conditioner continued to be a hotly contested topic. In Feb. of 1970, a special meeting was called to discuss the air conditioner. After some discussion on noise and whether to include ventilation, a motion was made to install the air conditioning at a price of \$15,000. The members voted by ballot and it came out 23 - 16 against installing the system. Of course, this did not end the

discussion. One year later, there was some more talk. I can remember one man getting up and stating, "Seeing that the mortgage burning is in sight we should give consideration to air conditioning." There was concern expressed that if we didn't have another project going, the level of contributions might drop when the mortgage was retired. So, a committee was formed to review this subject. One year later, in August 1972, the motion carried to install air conditioning at the cost of \$18,000. But this did not really bring about the air conditioning. The project did not get underway until 1976 when the congregation voted 54-50 in favor of putting in an air conditioning system for \$27,000.

At the same time that the air conditioning was being discussed, there were a series of meetings and votes on the Christian Day school. In March of 1970, the first of a number of committees was formed to look at the Christian Day School. However, the Christian Day School never was considered seriously until the middle of the 1970's.

At about this time, Reverend Baganz was entering the last years of his ministry. In 1974, he celebrated 30 years at St. Peter's. Already in 1972, it had been noted that Reverend Baganz was expected to retire in 1976. Therefore the congregation decided to call a second pastor. He would serve as assistant pastor until Reverend Baganz' retirement and then

take over as senior pastor. After calling two men from the field, it was decided to go with a seminary graduate. So in the summer of 1973, Pastor Gruen arrived in town. Reverend Gruen was very instrumental in helping the Christians Day School committee in its study. An avid supporter of Christian Day Schools, he did everything that he could to support and start a school. However, there was still much opposition.

From 1976-1979, Reverend Baganz gradually retired as an active minister at St. Peter's. In appreciation for his dedication to the church, the congregation allowed him to live in the parsonage on Pine Street. In return he would take care of all repairs and upkeep of the building and premises. Upon the death of either his wife or himself, he or she was to move out within 6 months. With the retirement of Reverend Baganz, an era of growth came to an end. For the next decade, it was time to look inward. The next decade and a half was a time of inward struggling. Dealing with the change in pastors and some controversial issues created much tension in the church. The next few years had to be a time of building within the church to strengthen our foundation. Whether we did that or not remains to be seen.

The decade of disturbance

When I think of the last 10-12 years, I am filled with both sorrow and happiness. Anyone associated with these last years knows of the problems that have plagued our church. Yet, despite all the arguing, the fighting and the hostility, one can see a glimmer of light. In this last decade and a half, we saw a number of pastors come and go. Vicars came and went. But the biggest change we noticed was the addition of the long-awaited Christian Day School. It is with this subject that I would like to begin.

As I spoke of earlier, it was in the early 70's that interest grew for a Christian Day School. From 1975-1977, a committee studied the proposal. In the spring of 1977, the Christian Day School committee gave its report. First of all, I would like to point out how the committee was appointed. In the preface to the report the committee states:

The committee was purposely appointed to have some members in favor and some opposed. As the committee was divided on the issue, it is a known fact that the congregation is also divided. The intent of this report is to give information to the members and

enlighten them on the issue before us from two different viewpoints-pro and con. Even if there is a difference of opinion on the issue, we pray that God will have us do that which is right and that Christian fellowship will prevail.

So, each side had its chance to present its viewpoint. Some of the basic viewpoints made in favor of the school were: A Christian Day School would present a challenge or need around which our members could rally and show their love for Christ by giving their support. We have the facilities and free transportation. Young children would be taught all subjects in the light of God's Word. Such a school would be a benefit to our community, our neighbor, our congregation, families and our children because through daily use of the Word they would be taught more and more how to live Christian lives.

On the other side, the reasons for opposing the opening of a Christian Day School were: The opening of a Christian Day School would create disharmony and friction. Most of the churches in the Fox River Valley conference which had a Christian Day School had no youth Bible Class. The children would get the feeling of knowing it all. St. Peter's has larger Bible Classes than any of them. Our present system of Christian Education was doing an adequate job. Where in the Bible does it say a congregation should teach the three R's?

Our church attendance is good. We can not provide specialty courses. Christian Day School children find it hard to mingle when going to public high school. There is inadequate outdoor space.

April 17th, 1977 spelled the first defeat for the school. After much debate, the school was defeated by a vote of 152-60. For the time being those who were in favor of the school had to retreat and wait. If this sounds like a war, unfortunately it was. It was very sad to see members of our church arguing and fighting with one another over this issue. To be sure, there were mistakes made on both sides. Everyone played a part in this turbulent time. At our January meeting in 1978, a motion was again made to start a Christian Day School. Again, this was defeatd.

It was at this time, that Pastor Baganz had gone to part-time. Shortly after that, Pastor Gruen took a call to Antioch, Illinois. All of a sudden we were without a full-time pastor. After making several calls, our congregation decided to take Reverend Baganz' suggestion and call Pastor Mattek from Kaukauna. Pastor Mattek accepted the call and was installed on August 13th, 1978. Now the congregation had to move quickly. They needed to find a parsonage. They purchased a house on Redwood St. Reverand Mattek moved into this newly built house and spent many hours landscaping around the house to give it

the beautiful look it has today.

March 1979 saw a new addition to our property. The little green house behind the church was bought for approximately \$30,000. In July of 1979, Vicar Huebner was the first vicar to occupy the house. This little green house has served us faithfully as the vicarage from these past 9 years.

Also in that year, we were greeted with a new pastor. Pastor Siirila came straight from the Seminary to be our second pastor. July 2nd was the day he was ordained and installed.

Since the beginning of the congregation and the building of the first church, the church doors had always been left open. People were free to come in at anytime to pray and meditate. Many times I would watch people come in early in the morning before work and worship God by themselves. In the fall of 1978, the flag was stolen from the church and then the old communion set plus the cross from the altar. Although these were recovered, in the fall of 1979, the doors of the church were locked unless there was some kind of meeting or service. No longer could I witness those single person worship services. No longer could the members have free access to house of God. The evils of modern society were even creeping into our community.

As we entered the 1980's, the number one question of many people was: "What about the Christian Day School?" In connection with this, at just about every quarterly meeting, I can remember men standing up and speaking out about the concerns of our church. Many men were asking about the strife and the division that has occurred in our church. Now, there were many causes to these problems. We can't say that there was one single cause. It was due partly to the change in the pastorate. With the change of pastors came changes in the way of doing certain things. Of course, people don't like change. It was also partly due to the friction caused by the Christian Day School movement. Whatever the case, those were not happy years.

Despite all the confrontation, the issue of the school did not die. On Jan. 25th 1981, there was a special meeting to discuss the starting of a Christian Day School. The actual motion was that the issue of starting a Christian Day School be brought before the congregation. This motion passed. Then there was the vote for the school. The first vote was a tie: 81 - 81. The second vote went 82 - 78 against the school. This vote stimulated a response. On March 28th, the first of a number of pot-luck suppers were started for "Concerned People for Christian Education."

One of the mistakes that were made during this time was

that some people had been voting in the past who were not members of St. Peter's and some individuals admitted voting more than once. It was important to rectify this situation very quickly. It was resolved to eliminate problem by having voter registration.

On April 26th, 1981, a motion was made to start a Christian Day School in the Fall. A second motion was made to table the Christian Day School motion. This second motion carried. This motion was tabled until the January meeting of 1982. At this meeting it was moved to untable the April 26th 1981 motion to start a Christian Day School. This motion carried with one nay. The original motion was ammended to vote on the adoption of a Christian Day School in the fall of 1982 at the April 1982 quarterly meeting. This ammendment carried. Then the amended motion was voted on. A hand ballot was taken. The motion carried by a vote of 27 - 14.

At the April meeting, the Board of Education gave a report on its meeting. The Board had met to discuss the Christian Day School and it came up with three conclusions: 1) A proper study could not be done by April 2. 2) If the CDS was approved in April it would not be feasible to start it by the fall of 1982. 3) If the congergation wanted an in-depth study done, the Board could do one by October '82. As a result of this meeting study committee was set up. A motion to rescind the

) motion to vote on the approval of a CDS. This motion carried and so now we had to wait until the fall of 1982 to vote again on the school.

Meanwhile, there were a few other things going on in the church. In March of 1981, it was decided to have Saturday evening services. Then in February of 1982, it was decided to have Lenten services moved to Thursdays, since the Saturday school had been moved to Wednesday evenings.

Then in October of 1982, we came to a very crucial meeting. A report was given on the study done by the Christian Day School committee. Much discussion followed the report. A vote was then taken as to whether or not to start a CDS at St. Peter's in accordance with a motion from the April 1982 Quarterly Meeting. The results of the vote were 56 - 45 in favor of starting a school. Finally, the long-awaited dream had come true. After 92 years of existence, St. Peter's had its own Christian Day School!

) The fall of 1982 and the spring of 1983 were very busy years. Teachers had to be called. In February of 1983, both Rhoda Lemke and Frank Corona were called. Frank Corona was called to be the principal and teacher of grades 5-8. Rhoda Lemke was called to be teacher for grades 1-4. Mrs. Seiltz was called to teacher Kindergarten. Supplies had to be ordered and

rooms had to be made ready. All went well and in the fall of 1983, St. Peter's Christian Day School opened its doors to 58 students.

In September of 1983, Pastor Siirila took a call to Taiwan. It wasn't until January 1984 that the congregation began calling. Four times we called a pastor. Two of them were former vicars. Finally in July we moved to accept a seminary graduate. Robert Schultz was assigned to our church on August 19th he was installed. Pastor Schultz moved into the house next to the school which had recently been purchased. Pastor Schultz' call designated him to be in charge of Visitation, Stewardship and Evangelism.

The next several years saw our congregation taking two steps forward and one back. Progress was slow, or so it seems to the human eye. No one knows what God has in store for us. After a number of years of haggling over the split budget, in the fall of 1987, it was finally decided to unify our budget. On such an important matter as this, it was a delightful surprise to hear that it was passed by a voice vote. Actually, to have something as important as a unified budget pass by voice vote is almost an impossibility. I have heard more than one person express some surprise over the fact that the church didn't split over the issue of the school. However, maybe this shows that through this time of controversy our church is

growing.

To be sure, our school has seen tremendous growth. Soon more teachers were needed. Sue Uecker and Paul Lutze were added. Mrs. Coronz began to teach Kindergarten. Our latest teacher, Steve Biedenbender, has come to us with special gifts in music.

Of course, there were other things going on during this time. In 1986, we celebrated our 35th anniversary of our church building. An altar guild was formed so that the poor vicar doesn't have to take care of the altar. We have been blessed with a number of gifted vicars. A young adult group was formed to try and bring back the youth of our church.

As I sit above the back entrance to the church, I watch the children come and go. I watch parents come in to talk to the teachers. I see the pastors and vicars working. To be sure, there are still many problems in our church. Problems remain which involve both the pastorate and the congregation. Much love is required: on the part of the pastors toward each other, on the part of the pastors toward the membership and on the part of the members as well. Under Christ we can break down the walls of hostility. It is safe to say that the Christian Day School was a younger peoples movement. As we approach 100 years of existence as a Christ-centered church, we

need these young people. We need them to show love. We need them to smooth over the wounds. But we also need the elderly to give us the wisdom that experience brings. The basic need that the members of this church have is to continue growing in their Christian faith and life. There is vitality and freshness in the air from the preaching of the Gospel. We can't lose it! God has allowed us to experience difficulty so that with His help we can grow and so that we can confidently step into the next 100 years of eternity. Forge Ahead, St. Peter's. With God's help, forge ahead!

