

Our World Missions

By Karl F. Krauss

The field is the world—not just our corner of it! It took a long time for our Wisconsin Synod fully to realize this truth. The early years of our synodical work were chiefly *Sammelarbeit*, the gathering of emigrants from Germany into congregations. We were and for many years remained a German Lutheran group. There were actually pastors and lay members who resented and resisted the so-called “transition into English.” In my own congregation, which was organized in 1855, the constitution until 1920 contained the clause: “This congregation shall remain German forever.” There is no doubt in my mind that this fact hindered the development of domestic and world missions. In fact, the official minutes of our Synod were kept in the German language until 1935!

In the early 1940's the need and desire for world missions made itself felt and heard, especially in the Michigan District of our Synod. The thought was carried into the Synod at the 1945 convention at New Ulm. It took three conventions before this led to action and world mission work became a reality that has grown steadily ever since. Today it is an accepted fact and a most important part of our synodical work. Such is the grace and goodness of our God and Savior!

It is true that the need for heathen mission work was in the minds and hearts of some in the Synod and came to the fore in 1880. From the very beginning offerings were gathered for heathen missions. At mission festivals services were devoted to mission work among the heathen. It is equally true that heathen or foreign mission work, if not actually frowned on, was by some treated with indifference. The records reveal that so-called mission endeavors were limited to *Sammelarbeit*, the gathering of German Lutherans. In fact, even this work was not extended to include other ethnic groups—Poles, Lithuanians, Scandinavians, Finns, and Bohemians. This policy was maintained on the basis of Matthew 10:5–6: “Go not into the way of the Gentiles ... but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” which was applied to mean that the Synod's immediate mission call was to take care of the scattered sheep of the German Lutheran household of faith!

In the 1890's it was argued that the natural limits for the extension of the Wisconsin Synod were the geographical areas of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Michigan. It seemed an unsound policy to jump several states in order to expand. Now, it must be kept in mind that expansion meant the extension of gathering German Lutherans into new congregations of the Synod. This, strictly speaking, was not mission work in its real sense. Gathering together scattered believers is not the same as searching for and winning lost souls. Our Lord and Savior said: “The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*.” He also said: “As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you.” He Himself made it a point to win the heathen. He sent Paul and others to preach to the Gentiles. It was certainly not of mission work that the Lord said: “Hitherto shalt thou come; and no farther”!

One can understand that our fathers placed the emphasis on the strengthening of the stakes to the virtual exclusion of the lengthening of the cords. But all Scripture is written for our learning and guidance. The Isaiah passage (54:2) does not limit; it directs us to do both and neglect neither one, as the Germans are wont to put it: “*Das eine tun und das andere nicht lassen.*”

There had been those, even in the early days of American Lutheranism, who felt called to do mission work among the Indians in our country. The early Franconians did just that in the northern areas of Michigan. This work was hindered largely because of the Indian wars, especially in the West and Southwest. These troubles did not end until 1891. When the government adopted a more considerate policy toward its wards, it endeavored to educate them and make farmers of them. This gave impetus to Christian mission work among the American Indians.

Our Synod, too, was affected by this desire for Indian missions, and in 1883 a committee of five was appointed to “look over the existing mission societies for one of the true faith and successfully operating and lending it our support.” However, none was found. The committee was then instructed to “look for young men of piety, willing, and according to human judgment able, to devote themselves to the service of mission work

among the heathen. These are to be trained in our educational institutions for mission service, and the monies available to us for mission work devoted to that purpose.” We wonder who in our educational institutions at that time would have been qualified to train such people!

The Apache Mission

By 1889, three young men were enlisted: John Plocher, G. Adascheck, and Paul Mayerhoff. The commission then cast about for a likely area that was still without the preaching of the gospel. Having adopted the heathen-mission policy of “Americans Consider Indians First,” they settled on the Apaches in Arizona, largely due to the forts of a Rev. Cook, who was working in Presbyterian missions among the Pimas. He furnished our Synod’s scouts, Pastors Hartwig and Koch, the necessary information and later saw to it that the Presbyterians put no obstacles in the way of our Synod’s missions.

There were those who held that it was unsound to say that a church is not living up to its mission status unless it engages in heathen mission work. Notable among these was Dr. Adolph Hoenecke. They did not want heathen mission work to be considered as belonging to the essence of the church. They labeled the idea as dogmatism and pietism in this connection. Prof. Joh. Ph. Koehler said: “The mission principle that heathen mission work is the best stimulus for the church’s home endeavors remains a slogan at best.”

The actual mission work among the Apaches was begun in 1893, when our first missionaries were sent to Arizona: Plocher, Adascheck, and Mayerhoff. The first two served in the San Carlos reservation, the other in the Whiteriver-East Fork area. For reasons of health Plocher had to return home in 1899 and was succeeded by Carl Guenther, assisted by Teacher Rudolph Jens. Mayerhoff quickly acquired a mastery of the Apache language to the extent that he could speak the dialects of both reservations. He was considered an authority at Washington in the language, traditions, and folklore of the Apaches.

It is quite evident that the approach to the work among the Apaches was unintelligent, the young missionaries not receiving adequate preparatory training. It was unwise, to say the least, to train young men in this inadequate way and then send them on their own into strange surroundings which were equally strange to the authorities. Added to this was the lukewarm attitude of some in the Synod who dreaded the added cost to the budget; but there was enough enthusiasm for the undertaking among the Synod’s constituency to keep the mission alive.

The Indian Mission had its share of ups and downs. A particularly difficult time was in the 1930’s when a shortage of funds and other problems lay like a pall on the mission. The mission was supervised by remote control and undue concern was often shown for externals. Once the secretary of the board wrote a missionary asking why the chickens at East Fork laid fewer eggs than in the previous month. The writer was chairman of the special committee that investigated the depressing conditions and submitted recommendations for the correction of the sad state of affairs. Thank God, with the improving economic conditions, a change for the better could be effected, and the mission soon began to flourish.

The Apache Mission had many able and dedicated missionaries: Gustav Harders, Francis and Alfred Uplegger, Edgar Guenther, Henry Rosin, Arthur Meier, to mention only a few. Dr. Francis Uplegger was a recognized authority on the Apache language, having given it a grammar and a written language. In recent years, congregations have been organized among the Apaches, with their own officers and church councils. They are also making sizeable financial contributions for the support of the work. Within the past two years the first native Apache was graduated from our Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and assigned to labor among his blood brothers.

The Apache Indian Mission was our Synod’s only heathen mission for many a long year, in fact, until world missions were established in Africa and Japan in the early 1950’s.

At this writing there are 2,996 souls, 1,138 communicant members, 29 white workers and 11 native workers, 8 stations and 4 preaching places, 509 children in Christian day schools, 349 in Sunday schools, 71 in East Fork High School.

A valuable adjunct to the Mission is the East Fork Lutheran Nursery, which provides care for Apache orphans and is supported by extra-budgetary gifts.

The Mission In Poland and Germany

The sad spiritual need of a group of German Lutherans in Poland came to the attention of our Synod in 1923 in the form of appeals from two large congregations which expressed the desire to be served by pastors from our Synod. The General Mission Board and the Seminary faculty, who studied the matter, encouraged by the observations of Pastor Otto Engel, who had been in Poland earlier, recommended that the Synod take up the work in Poland. This was resolved by the Synod, and an appropriation of \$10,000.00 was voted for this purpose. Not too much came of this gesture for several reasons: The lack of funds, the remoteness of the field, and the difficulty of maintaining contact. On the basis of his previous experience in Poland, Pastor Otto Engel was eventually sent to supervise the work.

The actual founder of the work in Poland was Pastor Gustav Maliszewski. A former schoolteacher, he became an evangelist in the city of Lodz. Pastor Angerstein, who had published a tract in which he showed the Augsburg Lutheran Church to be out of harmony with the Augsburg Confession, was instrumental in persuading Maliszewski to enroll in the Lutheran Free Church Seminary in Berlin-Zehlendorf to study theology. Upon his return to Lodz he soon gathered a considerable following in spite of sharp opposition.

About this time Pastor Engel arrived and succeeded in organizing the group Maliszewski had gathered in Lodz. A second congregation was formed at Andrespol. In 1924 the General Mission Board issued a call to Pastor Maliszewski, and he was ordained and installed by Pastor Engel, assisted by Prof. Joh. Ph. Koehler, who was in Europe at the time and had recommended taking up this work. This is generally considered the date of the founding of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Poland.

Many obstacles and much opposition were encountered by the new church. After Pastor Engel returned home, the services of Pastor A. Dasler were secured, with the understanding that he serve for a year as Director of the Mission in Poland. Actually, he served almost two years, during which notable progress was made. After he returned, more than a year passed before a successor was found in the person of Pastor Wm. Bodamer of Scio, Michigan, who took up the work in 1929. He served as Director until the outbreak of World War II. The report of 1938 reveals that there were nine pastors serving twelve congregations, numbering 2,818 souls. The pastors were L. Zielke, A. Schlender, H. Mueller, E. Patzer, A. Wagner, H. Schlender, A. Reit, A. Knapp, and G. Maliszewski.

The outbreak of hostilities in 1939 made it impossible for Director Bodamer, who was in America at the time, to return to Poland. For a time he was able to keep in contact with the brethren in Poland by correspondence, but when our country became involved in the war, that opportunity was cut off. For more than five years no news was received from our brethren in Poland. When news finally trickled through, it revealed an appalling story of forced flight and untold suffering.

Most of the refugees from Poland reached Germany, where they added to the already chaotic conditions as unwelcome guests. Six of the pastors who fled from Poland met at Zwickau, Saxony, as they had hastily agreed before the evacuation. Their foremost concern was their former members, and they immediately began to locate them. By 1949, nine pastors were serving 10,408 souls. Things looked promising for the transplanted church, which was known as the Ev. Lutheran Refugee Church. Later on it became the Ev. Lutheran Church in the Dispersion and, finally, the Church of the Ev. Lutheran Confession.

In the beginning of the 1950's it became evident that there had been many so-called "CARE-package Lutherans" among our members. As the economy in Germany improved, the membership of our CELC declined to its present number of about 1,200 members in each Zone. From its beginning in Poland to the present time, the CELC has never really been a mission, but a subsidized church body. The only reason it is under the charge of the Board for World Missions is that there seemed to be no other place for it.

For the past 14 years a continuing effort was made by the Executive Committee to strive for greater participation in the administration of the work on the part of the laity, as well as for the assumption of

increasing financial support on the part of the congregations. Another goal was the eventual amalgamation with the other Lutheran free churches, which would avoid duplication of effort and make for more effective work. Both of these goals were realized, but not in the way we had hoped.

In June 1973 the three free churches of Germany, the Ev. Lutheran Free Church, the Old Lutheran Church, and the Independent Ev. Lutheran Church, effected an amalgamation and organic union, known as the Independent Ev. Lutheran Church (SELK—*Selbststaendige Ev. Lutherische Kirche*). In July of the same year, representatives of this merger met at Mequon with our Commission on InterChurch Relations, and representatives of the CELC and the Ev. Lutheran Church of France and Belgium, for doctrinal discussions. Agreement in doctrine and practice was reached, which was approved by our Synod in convention, August 1973, on condition that the SELK would endorse the results of the Mequon meeting and that their continued relations with the Missouri Synod would be carefully re-evaluated in the light of developments in Missouri. However, to date neither of these conditions has been met.

In May, 1974, the CELC in convention at Oldenburg, after due deliberation, resolved to seek fellowship with the SELK, with a view to organic union. According to recent communications from the CELC, the merger will be consummated with the hope of resolving existing differences later.

Nigeria

For many years our Synod's mission interest also found expression through work done as a member synod of the Synodical Conference. Work among the Negroes in America was such a joint endeavor and was thought of as heathen mission work even as was the work among the Apaches. This work developed into a foreign heathen mission when the Synodical Conference responded to an appeal from Nigeria in 1936. Pastor William Schweppe of our Synod was the first permanent worker called into this field and served as superintendent and seminary professor. He also became the first Synodical Conference missionary to Ghana. Although Nigeria was not an exclusively Wisconsin Synod mission, interest in heathen mission work found active expression in the Synod's lively support of this joint work. Over the years the Wisconsin Synod provided twelve workers, among whom were six pastors, for the mission in Nigeria. In 1963, with the Synodical Conference disintegrating, the Nigerian field was taken over by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

World Missions Proposed

At the convention of the Synod, August 1945, the Executive Secretary of the Apache Mission, Pastor Edgar Hoenecke in his report brought to the attention of the Synod the fact that we have enjoyed "one hundred years of blessings in the preservation of the pure Word and doctrine," that vast areas of the world have not heard the saving message, that the time is short to carry out our "world-wide" call and duty. He earnestly urged the convention to "take thought and action in the matter of mission work among those who have no opportunity to hear the sound of the saving gospel. May we plead that consideration of a wider mission program be undertaken with dispatch."

A lively debate ensued, in which the administrative leaders expressed their opposition, insisting that we must have a direct assignment from the Lord, a "Macedonian Call," to undertake new world missions. Having seen the deterioration of doctrine in the mission fields of other bodies, they were apprehensive of such expansion without a clear directive from the Lord. Others, among whom were especially representatives of the Michigan District, took a countering stance and moved the convention to resolve: "That the President appoint a committee to gather information regarding foreign fields that might offer opportunity for mission work by our Synod. When ready, this committee shall report the results of its study first to the General Mission Board and then to the Synod."

At the next convention, August 1947, the Foreign Missions Committee submitted the following report:

I will also give thee a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth, Isaiah 49:6. Our Lord is speaking here also to us. Our Home Missions Program has more than doubled in the last ten years, but we have a clear call to do both, Home and Heathen Mission Work. We know that all combinations of conditions will never be ideal for launching a new venture. But we are confident that if we go forth in the true fear of God, He will supply both men and money at the right time.

Foreign heathen fields where our Synod can begin work are at hand. Two such fields are located in the Orient; two are in Africa. One beckons to us from the islands of the South Pacific. The committee is giving further study to these fields and will be ready to report its findings to the convention through the General Mission Board.

The Synod resolved:

1. To dismiss the Committee on Foreign Missions with the thanks of the Synod;
2. That the Synod authorize expansion of our mission work in foreign heathen fields;
3. That the General Mission Board be instructed to continue its investigation and explore the most promising heathen fields and report to the General Committee for further instructions.

These resolutions evoked a lengthy debate, as the administration continued to oppose foreign heathen mission work.

At the 1949 convention it was reported that, “a committee composed of Pastors Arthur Wacker and Edgar Hoenecke is now on the way to Africa to do exploratory work. They left the U. S. April 29, and plan to return at the end of August or the beginning of September. Missionary Wm. Scheweppe of the Nigerian Mission will join them in Africa. No report from the committee has as yet been received.”

Upon their return the Africa Exploration Committee submitted its findings to the General Mission Board and the General Synodical Committee. At the convention of the Synod, August 1951, the following recommendations of the Floor Committee were adopted by the Synod:

1. We recommend that our Synod enter into foreign Heathen mission work in the Northern Rhodesia Field in Africa.
2. We recommend that the General Mission Board be authorized to call and send two missionaries to this field.
3. We recommend that the first year’s cost of \$34,810.00 be taken from the Expansion Fund in the budget.
4. We recommend that the General Mission Board ask the Lutheran Spiritual Welfare Commission to place a man in Tokyo...
 - a. To care for our service men,
 - b. To investigate mission opportunities in Japan.

Thus the work of world missions was launched after many long years. It required six years and four conventions to get off the ground, but we were on our way! An interesting side-light to the whole matter occurred in a General Synodical Committee meeting, when it was suggested that the establishment of a foreign heathen mission would provide stimulus among our constituency for increased financial support of our entire work. This was questioned by the general president at the time. Thereupon a soft-spoken layman from Michigan countered by saying: “Oh, I don’t know, Mr. President; if foreign missions are begun, I have \$5000.00 which I am ready to contribute, and so has my sister!” So the battle for world missions went. There is no question that the stimulus was provided!

We cannot omit to pay grateful tribute to the two men who made the long, grueling exploratory trip in Africa in the summer of 1949—Pastors Arthur Wacker and Edgar Hoenecke. It was four months of hard work

in unknown areas and amid many dangers. But it certainly proved worthwhile, because it gave the Synod concrete and visual evidence of the advisability of starting our work in Northern Rhodesia. By God's grace and protection these two brethren rendered yeoman's service in our approach to world missions. We thank them for it!

The Mission in Africa

The calling of missionaries to Africa began. Finally, after nine calls, Pastor A.B. Habben of Hastings, Nebraska, accepted the call to head the work. Mr. Paul Ziegler, one of Pastor Habben's members, was employed as technical layman to supervise construction and the physical operation of the mission station. Pastor Habben and Mr. Ziegler sailed for Africa April 20, 1953, equipped with a heavy-duty pickup truck carrying a small coach body. These mobile quarters enabled them to complete the survey of possible fields and select the site for the new mission. The truck was to serve later to transport building materials and supplies to the station. Candidate Otto Drevlow accepted the call as companion missionary and joined Habben in July 1953.

After an exhaustive survey of many fields, our representatives finally decided to open a three-pronged attack in the Lusaka area: SalaLand, Matero, and Lusaka. Matero had a substantial native population in Lusaka, 5,000 to 10,000. A group of white families in Lusaka asked to be served by our men. Being of Lutheran background, they could not very well be denied service. Social and spiritual contact with those white Lutherans was an asset for our missionary personnel that could not be underestimated. Pastor and Mrs. Drevlow, Mrs. Habben, and Mrs. Ziegler and son were all safely in Lusaka by September 1953.

At this point it will be well to report that the synodical convention of 1953 resolved to divide the work of the General Mission Board because of the expansion envisioned in the area of heathen mission work. Two boards were created by the Synod: The General Board for Home Missions and the General Board for Foreign Heathen Missions, to have the direction of the mission activities in their respective spheres as outlined, specified, and limited in the constitution of the Synod.

Returning to Africa, we note that mission work was begun in 1954 in Sala-Land. Comprising about 8,000 natives, Sala-Land had hardly been touched by the gospel because of the unfriendly attitude of Chief Shakumbilia toward missionary occupation; but we received his and the entire tribe's urgent invitation to begin our work. Of all the tribal areas, this one offered the best hope for the development of an indigenous church, especially insofar as the financial aspect was concerned. 160 acres of the finest land were granted as a mission site. The work there progressed in a natural and gratifying manner. This was true also in Matero and Lusaka. By 1959 mission work was conducted in 27 preaching places and one organized congregation, and we were reaching about 2,900 Africans. Seven schools were taught by 17 full-time and 2 part-time teachers.

In order to carry on the work of world missions more effectively, and ever to have an eye open to new opportunities, the Synod in 1959 authorized the calling of a full-time chairman of the Board for World Missions. Pastor Edgar Hoenecke accepted the call and assumed his duties January 1, 1960. Because of problems on the mission field the Executive Committee for Northern Rhodesia requested him to make a visit to that field as his first assignment.

All fields were working toward the indigenous church policy adopted by the Board. Missions were encouraged to assume more and more financial responsibilities. The objectives were not only to build a church that is indigenous financially and organizationally, but also culturally, nationally, linguistically, and liturgically. One of the essential requirements for this is recruitment of native workers.

In 1960, our veteran missionary, Dr. William Scheweppe, was given a leave of absence by the Synodical Conference Mission Board so that he might assist in the work in Northern Rhodesia. The following year he received a permanent call to this field and was joined by a seasoned pastor from the states, Pastor Theodore Sauer, who became the mission's superintendent.

In 1963, the Lutheran Church of Central Africa, as it has been renamed, could look back upon ten years of work. Thirteen congregations and preaching places had been established; there were 549 baptisms, 191

confirmations, during this decade. A system of lay preachers was devised to preach the sermon that the missionary had prepared.

In 1961, the Synod had authorized the establishment of a Bible Institute in Northern Rhodesia. Pastor E. H. Wendland was called to head the new school that was to provide a two-year course of study and training for lay-workers of the church. The mailing program continued to be one of the best means of contacting people. Work was expanded to Nyassaland.

The names of the countries in which we are working in Africa were changed from Northern Rhodesia to Zambia, Nyassaland to Malawi. The mission produces its own printed material and publications in its own print shop. The Synod of the Lutheran Church in Central Africa was organized in 1965. This is in line with the indigenous church policy. A seminary was authorized to be established in 1969. God has richly blessed the work in Africa, as the statistics reveal.

In connection with the mission work in Africa, medical dispensaries minister to the physical health of the natives. A dispensary was established at Lumano and dedicated November 26, 1961. The chairman of the World Board, Pastor Edgar Hoenecke, had been sent to supply a vacancy at Lumano in September 1961. Mrs. Hoenecke accompanied him in January 1960 to investigate medical missions and in September 1961 to negotiate with the federal authorities, to engage staff, to plan, equip, and initiate the new dispensary project. This work has been most richly blessed. A mobile unit serves the outlying areas. This project is supported by the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society and many women's organizations of our Synod.

The great field in Africa now numbers 12 expatriate workers, 97 preaching places, 4,378 souls, and 2,075 communicant members.

We have devoted considerable space to this field because it was our first thrust in world missions, and it portrays the hard work, under God, that went into its establishment after a long battle for world missions.

The Mission in Japan

In 1953 the Synod authorized the beginning of work in Japan, recommending that two missionaries be sent there. They were primarily to minister to the needs of our men in the armed forces in the Japan area. Pastor Fred Tiefel was the first of our missionaries in Japan. The beginning of his work was very auspicious. Pastor Tiefel and members of his Bible classes revised a translation of the Gausewitz Catechism, prepared and printed much Bible class instruction material, began translating the Northwestern Sunday School lessons, and indexed over 3,000 Biblical terms and words correctly translating the original meaning in Japanese. This was hard work but vitally necessary for the proclamation of the gospel in Japan.

Sad to say, by 1956 it became apparent that the intersynodical situation at that time was causing serious disruption in the Japan Mission. Missionary Tiefel charged the Wisconsin Synod with sinful disobedience to God's Word in Romans 16:17-18 by its 1956 resolutions and submitted his resignation as a missionary of our Synod. All attempts to ask him to be more patient were futile. Pastor Tiefel withdrew from fellowship with our Synod. A commission composed of the President of the Synod, the Chairman of the Foreign Mission Board, and the Executive Secretary for Japan was appointed to deal with Pastor Tiefel. This also proved futile. A final letter was sent by the commission to Pastor Tiefel and the Japanese Christians, but this was also rejected with the statement that nothing short of repentance for the sin committed by the Synod in its August 1956 convention would alter the situation. The President of the Synod appointed Pastor Harry Shiley as the new Executive Secretary for the Mission in Japan January 24, 1957, the former secretary having resigned a few weeks previously.

Pastor Richard Seeger had been given the call as the second missionary to Japan through the Assignment Committee in May 1956. He was commissioned the following October. He left for Japan with his family in April 1957 and spent the next six months at a language school in order to preach somewhat in Japanese. Thus our mission in Japan got under way a second time. Another missionary was added in the person of Pastor Richard Poetter. In 1959 the calling of a third missionary was authorized by the Synod. Pastor Luther Weindorf accepted the call, and thus the staff was rounded out with three expatriate missionaries. A new radio station,

with a potential of 3,000 listeners, was added in 1963. In the same year a fourth missionary was authorized by the Synod.

By 1964 the grain of mustard seed planted in Japan by our Synod had already become a small tree with branches spreading out in all directions. Work was being conducted in Tokyo and two prefectures at Tochigi and Ibaragi. We were the only Lutheran church in these two prefectures. Assisting in the work were three natives, Mr. Yoshida, Mr. Igarashi, and Pastor Yamada. The latter came to us from the Missouri Synod with Pastor R. Poetter because of his convictions. Pastor Norbert Meier arrived in Japan as the fourth expatriate missionary in February 1965. One student was enrolled in the seminary at this time. Each Sunday, morning services were being broadcast over the radio at Mito and Utsunomiya. Missionaries were conducting services not only in their own localities, but also in preaching stations nearby—hospitals, prisons, orphanages, and sanatoria. The two 15-minute radio programs each week proved to be the best means of entering the homes in the two prefectures where we are laboring.

In 1972 a chapel was erected at Hitachi; new facilities had been dedicated at Tsuchiura the previous fall. These latter had included a multi-purpose building designed for the church at large, the seminary program, and Hope Congregation, the modest print shop for the ministry of the printed word, the parsonage. This made Tsuchiura the hub of the gospel thrust in the two prefectures. Seven pastors continued to carry the full range of mission activity from Sunday preaching to instruction classes to preparing materials for printing, radio messages, and seminary or pre-seminary instruction. Of this number four were American (Habben, John, Meier, Poetter), and three were Japanese (Oshino, Yamada, Yoshida). Two young men were enrolled in the seminary. A teacher-vicar program, in which a New Ulm graduate was assigned to teach the missionaries' children at Tsuchiura, has proved successful.

As of June 1975 the following statistics can be reported for Japan: Expatriate workers, 5; native workers, 4; congregations and/or preaching places, 10; souls, 228; communicant members, 159. From a rather shaky start, the Japan Mission has continued to show a healthy growth, another evidence of God's grace, goodness, governance, and guidance. How true: "My Word shall not return unto Me void!"

Southeast Asia Missions

In 1960 and again in 1962 an appeal came to our Synod from the mission established in Hong Kong by Pastor Peter Chang. Contact was made and in January 1964 the Executive Secretary of the Board for World Missions was asked to visit the Christian Chinese Lutheran Mission at Kowloon, Hong Kong. Because at Hong Kong matters pertaining to inter-church relations were involved, the World Board and the Commission on Doctrinal Matters asked President Naumann to accompany the Executive Secretary. At the same time, the Committee on Relief resolved to send one of its members to look into the matter of proper distribution of relief sent to the Orient. The World Board then asked this man, Pastor Leonard J. Koeninger, to act as the third member of the official Visitation Committee.

The committee submitted an exhaustive report to the Synodical Council in May 1965. The Synod convention in August of that year resolved that the Synod enter the field of Chinese Missions by making the tentative interim Chinese Mission Program of the Board for World Missions permanent. The Synod authorized an interim "Friendly Counselor," who was also to serve as seminary professor at Hong Kong, and established an Executive Commission for World Missions. Prof. Conrad Frey had been called by the Board for World Missions as Friendly Counselor for Hong Kong, to serve in the interim for one year.

Pastor Richard Seeger, a former missionary in Japan, was called as Friendly Counselor for Hong Kong. His experience in the Orient made him uniquely qualified for his multi-faceted position. He was the sole representative of our Synod directly on the field. He served as counselor and advisor to the Chinese Church, representing the interests and concerns of the Synod in the work in Hong Kong. In addition, he was the only full-time professor in the Hong Kong Theological Seminary.

June 25, 1967, marked a noteworthy first for the Christian Chinese Lutheran Church in Hong Kong. On that day the first two native candidates for the ministry were graduated. This was surely a milestone in the history of the mission, a long step toward indigeneity.

The Voice of Salvation radio program, prepared in Hong Kong and broadcast in Taiwan, continued to bring responses to the extent that permission was requested to open a mission in Taiwan. Almost simultaneously, Pastor Martinus Tan Ing Hien and his two congregations of the Confessional Lutheran Church of Indonesia thankfully and joyfully requested fellowship with our Synod. The Board for World Missions and the Commission on Doctrinal Matters found this zealous servant of the Lord to be in full agreement with our doctrinal position. The Synod resolved to declare fellowship with him and his congregations, to make the necessary preparations for the future ordination of Pastor Hien, to allow the necessary funds for the seminary training of Mr. Godfrey Simon of Java and Mr. Dipa Pandji of Bali and to place the Indonesian field under the administrative jurisdiction of the Executive Committee for Chinese Missions.

Another open door was granted to us via Mr. T. Paul Mitra of India, whose doctrinal position was found to be in agreement with our position. Mr. Mitra and his wife were brought to our country for him to pursue studies at our Seminary. They were sent back to India upon completion of his studies to continue their work there. Mrs. Mitra is a medical doctor. A truck-van type vehicle, made possible by gifts of individuals of our Synod, was made available to the Mitras to aid them in their work, which is very difficult in India due to the hostility to Christianity encountered there. The work in India is under the supervision of the Friendly Counselor for Southeast Asia.

It appeared that our growth in our Southeast Asian Missions would depend to a large extent on the number of trained national pastors and evangelists. To achieve a larger number of national workers, the curriculum of the Hong Kong Seminary was upgraded to supply a competent, well-indoctrinated clergy.

In the three areas of Taiwan, Indonesia, and India the spread of the gospel has been slow because of the lack of pastors and evangelists. The need for expatriate counsel and advice for each of the four fields was felt most acutely. Until these needs are met, the progress will continue to be slow. However, to place a Friendly Counselor in each area would be prohibitively expensive and illogical. For that reason, the office of the Friendly Counselor was expanded to include supervision in all four areas, with periodic extended visits to all fields.

Mr. Peter Chang resigned from the Chinese Ev. Lutheran Church at Hong Kong in 1970 to devote more time to his business interests. To insure that the work would not suffer, a third man for Hong Kong was authorized by the Synod in 1971. Pastor Paul Behn, head of the Seminary, is assisted by Pastor Stephen Chu, Pastor Kenneth Seim, and Mr. Howard Festerling. After four years of faithful teaching, Linda and Lois Festerling submitted their resignations. Linda has married and moved to Hawaii, Lois returned to America to teach in one of our Christian day schools.

The most exciting news in Hong Kong was the completion and dedication of the new building complex on December 1, 1974. The first floor contains a beautiful house of worship for Grace Lutheran Church; the second floor contains classrooms for the Bible Institute and the Seminary as well as administrative offices. The third floor provides a fellowship hall. In addition, each floor contains very adequate apartments for our expatriate staff. The total cost of the center was over \$200,000.00. However, this will be paid off in less than fifteen years by the saving of rents, which amounted to nearly \$20,000.00 a year.

We have three Christian congregations in Hong Kong—Grace, Immanuel, and St. Paul. Six national pastors and vicars serve these congregations; they are Timothy Lee, Robert Kam, Matthew Cheung, Foun Jan, Joel Cheung, and Daniel Lee. Immanuel Middle School continues to operate successfully under the principalship of Mr. Howard Festerling.* The enrollment is 180 students. In addition to a competent national staff, there are four expatriate teachers. At present we have only two expatriate pastors in Hong Kong, the Friendly Counselor, John Chworowsky, and our veteran missionary Pastor Paul Behn. Pastor Gary Schroeder will join our mission staff before the end of the summer.

* Since this was written, Mr. Festerling was granted a leave of absence so that he might prepare for the pastoral ministry at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

In Hong Kong there are 198 souls, 134 communicant members. Taiwan numbers 85 souls, 60 communicant members, served by Pastor Victor Cheung and lay evangelist Chan Tung Ker. In Indonesia we have 63 souls, 17 communicant members, served by Dipa Pandji Tisna, a Balinese graduate of our Seminary in Hong Kong. In India we have 25 souls, 12 communicant members, served by Pastor T. Paul Mitra, with the prospect of a second worker in the person of Mr. Devabhushanan.

Latin America

Spanish work was begun by our Synod in 1948 when Pastor Venus Winter took up this work among the Spanish-speaking people in Tucson, Arizona. In 1973 recognition was given for 25 years of faithful service in our Latin American Mission. The 25th anniversary of our first Spanish mission was also observed with an appropriate worship service at San Pablo Lutheran Church in Tucson.

In 1963 the Board for World Missions resolved to expand our Latin America work by means of the Christian Missioner Corps Program. This was the result of a search for a method of expanding our worldwide missionary enterprises in keeping with the idea of an indigenous church policy and in view of the limited time, men, and means at our disposal. The program was designed to establish Christian nuclei in areas such as centers of population and influence along purely indigenous lines with a minimum of outlay of men and money.

This program provides for the sending of two pastors with small family responsibilities into selected areas of the world to establish national indigenous churches. They would be instructed to spend adequate time and effort in learning the ways and the language of the people. Then they were to witness for Christ wherever and however they could to gain a nucleus of believers. These believers were to be trained from the beginning in the principles of self-administration, self-support, and self-propagation of the ministry of the Word in their midst, gradually but surely eliminating the expatriate missionaries. To whatever extent at all possible, these national missionary ventures were to get along without expatriate support from the beginning; they were to provide the means for their needs as a church from their own resources and in keeping with their economic and cultural level. According to the example of St. Paul and the other apostles, these nationals were then expected to spread the gospel into other areas, as the Holy Spirit would direct.

Pastor Rupert Eggert accepted the initial call under this program and began his work in Puerto Rico in March 1964. Pastor Roger Sprain was called as the second missionary and began his work in September of the same year. In 1965 the Synod authorized the establishment of an Executive Committee for Latin-American Missions. The Board approved the plan to fan out with an evangelism program along three large circuits in the eastern half of the island where more than half of the people live. There were few other churches active in this area. Radio broadcasting was begun in 1966 over a station in Humacao, and in March 1967 over a station in Guayama. In 1971 the Synod authorized the calling of a third man for Puerto Rico.

In 1969 the Synod authorized the establishment of the mission in Mexico, which resulted from the application for membership with our Synod of Pastors David Orea Luna and David Chichia Gonzales. A seminary was also established under Pastor David Orea Luna, but unfortunately his promising career was brought to a close with his death in March 1972. The seminary established at El Paso-Juarez is at present conducted by Pastor Rupert Eggert. A chapel was dedicated at Guadalajara in January 1975. A new mission station was opened in Saltillo, Mexico, and is being served by one of our Mexican vicars. This mission grew out of the efforts of our Spanish language students who in recent years have taken their language training in Saltillo. In 1973 a chapel was erected in Juarez, and a parsonage and student quarters were built in Juarez to serve the Juarez-El Paso Seminary. A seminary and chapel building is in the planning stage for El Paso. Three vicars have recently been given both oral and written examinations, Vincent Guillen, Jose Lorenzo Perez, and Daniel Perez, and have been recommended for ordination in the near future;* they have served as vicars in Mexico for more than two years. Presently two students are enrolled in our Juarez-El Paso Seminary.

* They were ordained and assigned on June 26, 1975.

Puerto Rico really served as a springboard for our Latin-American missions, so that in 1971 the Synod authorized the beginning of mission work in South America. A most generous gift of \$144,000.00 by an anonymous donor of our Synod made it possible to begin with this work sooner than envisioned. Two pastors, Roger Sprain and Ernest Zimdars, and Teacher Francis Warner, accepted the call to take up the work in South America, concentrating on the area of Medellin, Colombia. From all reports, this was a wise choice.

Statistics for our Spanish work show that in the United States we have two preaching places, with 102 souls and 31 communicant members; in Puerto Rico there are 3 expatriate workers, serving 4 preaching places with 118 souls and 25 communicant members; Mexico numbers 17 preaching places, serving 388 souls and 48 communicant members, with 1 pastor and 3 vicars; Colombia has 3 expatriate workers, serving 3 preaching places, with 130 souls and 7 communicant members.

Sweden and Cameroon

In the early sixties Kjerstin Jonsson, the wife of a state church pastor in Landskrona, Sweden, began to translate Wisconsin Synod articles and essays for the “conservative” church press in that country. As a result the name and doctrinal position of the Wisconsin Synod became well known there. This led in 1971 to direct contacts between Biblicum, the Bible Research Institute in Uppsala, and our mission board. Through the generosity of one of the Synod’s laymen, the Sweden Conference Fund was established to make possible personal contact with the concerned Swedish Lutherans.

When several pastors left the state church, individuals and groups in our Synod were moved to contribute to their financial support, and the above-mentioned fund became the Sweden Conference and Aid Fund. A committee on Sweden was appointed to keep in touch with the developing situation.

In September of 1973 St. Matthew’s congregation in Uppsala was founded as a confessional Lutheran congregation independent of state control. Less than a year later two more congregations were organized, Our Savior’s in Landskrona and St. John’s in Yxenhult. Services at present are conducted as often as possible in at least nine places scattered over the whole of Sweden. The church is being served by seven pastors, many of whom also carry on other vocations to support themselves. In September of 1974 these three congregations joined to form the Lutheran Confessional Church in Sweden (Lutherska Bekaennelsekyrkan i Sveriga—LBKS).

At the first annual convention of the LBKS on August 15–17 the new church declared itself in fellowship with the Wisconsin Synod following a similar declaration at our convention in Watertown on August 9, 1975.

The 1975 convention of our Synod also responded to an appeal for fellowship, guidance, and assistance from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the United Republic of Cameroon. Entering this new mission field was seen as a “very fitting way to express gratitude to God for 125 years of grace.” Two pastors are to be called as resident missionaries.