

The One Sure Foundation for the Nations

The Beginning of Hispanic Outreach on Milwaukee's South Side

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“The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord.”¹ By his grace, God has allowed people from different backgrounds and cultures to stand upon his one foundation. One does not have to travel to distant missions in other countries to witness this fact. In fact, one has to look no further than Milwaukee, Wisconsin – the heart of the Wisconsin Synod to see whom God has caused to firmly stand upon his foundation.

In Walker’s Point, the oldest section of Milwaukee, stands a church on the corner of 8th and Scott Streets founded on Feb. 14, 1860 by Johannes Muehlhaeuser.² The engraving in the stone on the building which has existed since 1898 reads, “*EV. LUTH. ST. PETERS KIRCHE.*” However, the word *kirche* probably contains little significance to those who attend St. Peter’s church now as compared with those who attended two or more generations ago. Today a worshiper at St. Peter’s is more likely to use the term *iglesia* rather than *kirche*. The congregation is no longer called to worship, “*Im Namen des Vaters, des Sohnes and des Heiligen Geistes,*” but rather “*En el nombre del Padre y del Hijo y del Espiritu Santo.*” The singing of “*Ein Feste Burg*” has been replaced by “*Un Castillo Fuerte.*” In 1960, the welcome sign in front of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church read, “Sunday Services: German 8:45 am, English 10:00 am.”³ Today it reads, “Sunday Services: English 9:15 am, Spanish 11:30 am.”

Along with the changing of the times has also come a great change in the community on the south side of Milwaukee. What were once neighborhoods of German and Polish descendants are now populated with Hispanics from various Latin American countries. Church attendance during a Spanish service at St. Peter’s averages about 25 to 30 people each Sunday as the congregation continues to reach out to the community. The question to be answered here is how St. Peter’s first got involved with Hispanic outreach.

The first question might be to ask, “Why did many Hispanics choose to settle in Milwaukee?” They arrived to fill the need for workers which local tanneries desired at the time. In 1923, the Pfister & Vogel tannery workers were on strike.⁴ Pfister & Vogel sent representatives to Mexico to find willing workers for their processing plants located in the Walker’s Point area. Not only were the needs of the tanneries met, but so too those of Mexican laborers. Having lived in an economy that had always struggled, many Mexicans were eager to come and seek new fortune in Milwaukee.⁵ Pfister & Vogel recruited 100 Mexicans to help break up the strike and by the 1930s the Mexicans were arriving at nearly the same pace as the Germans had several decades before them.⁶

By the early 1960s, between 15,000 and 20,000 Hispanics were living in the Milwaukee area.⁷ They were largely pocketed on Milwaukee’s south side where 2 or 3 families would at times live together and rent a house more cheaply than in other parts of the city. There was also a pocket of the Hispanic population living on the northeast side of Milwaukee, east of the Milwaukee River. Why were there Hispanics living in two different areas of Milwaukee? One reason is there were tanneries on both sides of Milwaukee. However, the north side consisted mostly of Mexicans while the south side was mainly Puerto Ricans. Although they are two Hispanic groups, they are two different ethnic groupings which did not get along with one another. Even today they still

¹ *Christian Worship*, Hymn 538.

² *One Hundred Years*, 4.

³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴ Bauer, *The Journal*, newspaper article.

⁵ Kaestner, “145 Years of Grace.”

⁶ Bauer, *The Journal*, newspaper article.

⁷ Interview with Pastor Martin Bangert.

have their differences, however, the notion that Mexicans live on the northeast side and Puerto Ricans on the south side has disappeared over the past few decades.⁸

Many Hispanics were concentrated in the area near St. Stephen Lutheran Church of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on the corner of 5th and Scott Streets on the south side of Milwaukee. It was in 1963 that Pastor Martin Bangert of St. Stephan began to witness the changes in the south side neighborhoods. The Hispanic community was becoming more and more prominent as more Hispanics were seen walking in the neighborhoods and grocery stores catering to Hispanics were being built.⁹

Pastor Bangert saw the vast changes that were occurring in Milwaukee, but he thought that one trained in Latin American Missions ought to take a look at what was happening in the city to verify that there was mission work to be done there. In 1964 Rev. Bangert called upon Rev. Robert Gussick, a missionary who was responsible for planting many of the Missouri Synod's missions in South America. Rev. Gussick toured the Hispanic community in Milwaukee and reported to Rev. Bangert that the city was a field ripe for the picking.

Rev. Bangert knew there was no time to lose. He was aware that the Roman Catholic Church had already been busy serving the Hispanic community. Also in the area was an American Lutheran Church which had made attempts to reach out to the Hispanics, but had not proven too fruitful. With great zeal, Pastor Bangert pursued the opportunity to reach out to the changing community. However, he knew that it would be a great challenge since he did not know the Spanish language. He called the Spanish teacher at Milwaukee Lutheran High to see if it was possible for him to receive Spanish lessons. He spent six months teaching himself Spanish so that he could begin to reach the Latin Americans. However, realizing the potential scope of the mission, Pastor Bangert would eventually present the project to the South Wisconsin District of the Missouri Synod so that a full-time Spanish pastor might be called.¹⁰

At about the same time, Pastor Bangert had to take into consideration the sentiments of St. Stephan congregation. Many of them desired to leave their present location and move somewhere else because the new freeway—Interstate 43—was going up right next to the church. Pastor Bangert rallied his congregation and encouraged them to stay because of the outreach opportunity. The congregation finally agreed with their pastor.

St. Stephan congregation realized a second pastor would be needed to help carry out the outreach effort, but a second pastor couldn't be afforded. Pastor Bangert appealed for mission money from the Missouri Synod's local district and it transpired into being a request the district was willing to fulfill. Pastor Bangert calls the aid from the district "guilt money" because they had regretted that they had not done more outreach earlier with the Hispanics of Milwaukee.¹¹

With the support of the district, St. Stephen called Rev. Hector Pacheco. Being a native of Mexico City, he had originally studied to be an engineer. However, with just a year to go in his studies, he had a strong desire to become a pastor. After his aunt had convinced him that he should finish what he started, he completed his last year of engineering school at the University of Mexico.¹²

He had been a member of the American Lutheran Church and joined their seminary in Columbus, Ohio. After he completed his studies in Ohio, he was called to serve in Uruguay. While there, he had problems with their communion practices. One news article states, "Pastor Pacheco's two years there brought to a head his unwillingness to accept the 'free' attitudes on 'open communion' and the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, for example, among many of the Lutherans."¹³

Because the difficulties in Uruguay remained unresolved, Pastor Pacheco was released in order to join the Missouri Synod's seminary in Brazil. In 1960, Rev. Pacheco was received by colloquy into the Missouri

⁸ Interview with Pastor Bangert.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Schoenfeld, *The Lutheran Witness*, news article.

¹¹ Interview with Pastor Martin Bangert.

¹² Interview with Pastor Arthur Schupmann.

¹³ Schoenfeld, this is from an article from *The Lutheran Witness* of the Missouri Synod. There is no date on the copy of this article which the writer of this paper received. However, due to the mention of his arrival "five months ago," it would have been written around July of 1964.

Synod by Missouri's *Seminario Concordia* in Porto Alegre, Brazil. While in Brazil he met his wife and together they immediately began work in what is described as a "difficult" mission in Brazil. It must have been somewhat of a struggle for Pastor Pacheco, for although his wife was fluent in the Portuguese language, his native tongue was Spanish.

With an opportunity to work in his native Spanish language and to work among the Hispanics in Milwaukee, Pastor Pacheco accepted the call to St. Stephen. Pastor Bangert readied his congregation to receive the new pastor. He wrote, "With the coming of Pastor Pacheco tomorrow, it is well that we all understand to what extent we will find our congregational life changed."¹⁴ Pastor Bangert also prepared the congregation for the eventual prospect of having new people come to the church. "Please do not be 'condescending' or give 'special handling' to our new friends and neighbors. They are souls in need of Christ even as we are. No more or less than that,"¹⁵ he states. After having spent nearly four years in mission work in Brazil, Rev. Pacheco arrived in Milwaukee on February 17, 1964. He was installed at St. Stephen on Sunday, March 1, 1964 at 7:00 pm.¹⁶ News of his coming was highly publicized within the Missouri Synod and particularly throughout the city of Milwaukee.

Soon after arriving, Pastor Pacheco was quoted as saying, "I know I will be able to do nothing by myself. It is the Holy Spirit who can use me to bring these people to their Savior."¹⁷ Indeed he would need God's help to carry out the great task that had been handed to him. He would not be attempting to serve only the area around St. Stephen, rather his title would be, "Missionary to the Latin American population of Milwaukee."¹⁸ *The Lutheran Witness* stated, "(Rev. Pacheco) has been installed at St. Stephen as 'assistant pastor in charge of Spanish work' and has begun to tackle his almost overwhelming task."¹⁹

Even though it was an extraordinary task to be a Spanish-speaking minister of the Gospel for 15,000 Latin-Americans in the heart of Milwaukee, the Lord blessed Pastor Pacheco with confidence and ambition as he began to systematically reach out first to the homes near St. Stephen's between Milwaukee's South Third and Sixth streets.²⁰ When he completed that task, he already had more follow-up visits than he could manage. "It takes a lot of visiting to gain the confidence of each family," said Pastor Pacheco, "but after this is done, they open the door to others—friends and relatives. Most of my time is spent in calling at homes."²¹

Within the first five months, a regular Spanish Bible class was conducted for those who desired to attend. The addition of the Spanish Bible class made St. Stephen a very unique place on Sunday mornings during the latter half of the 1960s. During those years, the church offered three different worship opportunities—all in a different language. At 9:00 am the Spanish Bible study was led by Pastor Pacheco. At 10:00 am the English service would begin followed by a German service, both conducted by Pastor Bangert.²²

It is interesting to note that a regular Spanish service was not added at first. Pastor Pacheco is quoted as saying, "...we will not have regular, separate Spanish worship services. We are trying to bring the Latin Americans into the English-speaking community. We are working to have *one* St. Stephen congregation. I would not have accepted this call if my purpose had been to form a separate Spanish mission."²³ This would appear to have been a hindrance to outreach among the Hispanics, however Spanish services would be held later on after a few Hispanics had been confirmed.

One outreach tool that worked exceedingly well was the Vacation Bible School program. In the summer of 1964, the VBS program served 243 children. St. Stephen soon realized they would not have enough teachers

¹⁴ Note Appendix I entitled *Our New Assistant Pastor*.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ A copy of the *Service of Commissioning* is included in Appendix II.

¹⁷ *The Lutheran Witness*, cf. Footnote 13.

¹⁸ Note the copy from Pastor Pacheco's commissioning service located in Appendix II.

¹⁹ Cf. Footnote 13.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Interview with Pastor Bangert.

²³ Schoenfeld, Cf. Footnote 13.

and staff to handle all the kids on their own, so they requested help from other local Missouri Synod churches to provide the needed teachers and helpers. The program attracted children from many different nationalities that had populated areas of Milwaukee.²⁴

Two years later St. Stephen hosted 217 children despite competition from other area activities that were geared toward children. Pastor Bangert is quoted in one newspaper article from the summer of 1966 as saying, “There was practically nothing for children as this in the area until we started. Now there’s ‘Project Headstart’ and other area programs which are giving us some competition.”²⁵

The Lord blessed the work of Pastors Bangert and Pacheco during the early years. Writing in a report on the mission work in Spanish conducted at St. Stephen, Pastors Pacheco and Bangert said:

It is quite clear at this point that the Lord has richly blessed our first efforts in reaching the Latin American Community of Milwaukee with the Gospel. It has been evident to us, who are daily working in this area, that the Holy Spirit has truly showered us with blessings beyond what we had first imagined possible. Undoubtedly, much of the success is due to the faithful and intense work of Pastor Pacheco but, nevertheless, many doors have been opened to us which can only be the result of the unmerited blessings of our Lord.²⁶

By January 1965 an adult instruction class was begun and was conducted on each Friday until June 18th. The classes lasted about one and a half hours each Friday and the standards were set very high. The report goes on to say:

Absentees were not confirmed in the faith in that we felt that the first adult confirmands in Spanish must be of the highest calibre humanly possible. We could have had a class twice the actual size if we had relaxed these requirements, but we felt that our first steps must be careful and solid steps.²⁷

By June of 1965 there still were no Spanish services being conducted, but they had hoped to begin one in the near future. Not only was Pastor Pacheco conducting the Spanish Bible studies, but he also regularly conducted the liturgical portions of the English services and even preached in English approximately once every two months according to his request. By allowing Rev. Pacheco to participate in the leading of the English services, there was thought to be a definite identification and liaison for those of the Latin American community who were bi-lingual.²⁸

One great characteristic about Pastor Pacheco was his enthusiasm toward outreach. The report states:

Since the very first week that Pastor Pacheco arrived in Milwaukee he has been constantly occupied in literally going from door to door in our community. In this time he has made approximately 950 calls and has covered intensively the area bounded on the East by South 1st Street, on the North by Florida Street, on the West by South 11th Street and on the South by Mitchell Street. Nevertheless, the whole area as indicated has not been covered yet! He has also begun some calling in the Latin American community on the near Northeast side of Milwaukee.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Kotlowski, Newspaper Article from unknown source.

²⁶ Bangert, *Mission Report of 1964-65*, p. 1.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

To the best prospects with whom Rev. Pacheco came into contact received a Spanish newsletter. This was regularly mailed to 120 families. The newsletter would convey items of timely interest in the parish program, as well as a heavy dose of doctrinal and scriptural matters.

A copy of one of Pastor Pacheco's newsletters was given to the author of this paper and it is interesting to note the content of his message. A particular newsletter dated September 25, 1967 shows a shepherd who has great concern for his flock, urging them to faithfully attend services. Unfortunately, Pastor Pacheco used the law to motivate his flock with little mention of the gospel. He chose as his theme verse Ezekiel 22:8, *You have despised my holy things and desecrated my Sabbaths*. The pastor went on to say that despising the Sabbath is more than a sin it is a disgrace for everyone and for the society. He states toward the end of his letter:

Actually we have 38 members that speak Spanish in our congregation and of those we have noted an attendance of 19 members during recent Sundays, which represents a 50 percent total attendance. We also have 25 visitors (these may be people who were attending a Bible information class) without taking into consideration the catechism students. This tells us that we ought to have a minimum attendance of 40 people each Sunday. Now if you don't cooperate in coming to sanctify the holy day obediently in the house of God, and if you continue missing and despising the holy name of God, then with sadness I tell you that we will return to having our divine services only in the small chapel.²⁹

Pastor Pacheco goes on to list passages that are to help the reader meditate on what he wrote in the message of the newsletter. There was very little gospel motivation in those passages. Practically every verse was from the law.³⁰ Following the message and the passages, the church news is listed—the first item to be mentioned was the excommunication of a member.³¹ Pastor Pacheco certainly took his work seriously, but possibly lacked an understanding of how to motivate with the gospel. This is only one example of his newsletters and possibly the others contain more gospel motivation.

The response by the Hispanic community in Milwaukee went far beyond what St. Stephen had ever expected. By March of 1965, the congregation was able to baptize 26 Latin American children ranging from 3 months to 16 years old. According to the mission report from 1965, the newer acquaintances with the Lutheran Church enjoyed a wonderful relationship with those who had been long-time members of St. Stephen. On June 6, 1965, six adults were confirmed and one of these six laymen expressed interest in serving as a full-time worker in the church. Along with the baptisms, confirmations and Bible classes, the Lord blessed the congregation through other avenues of outreach to the Latin American community. In January of 1965, a "Lending Closet" was opened to provide the needy with clothing.

Because of Pastor Pacheco's abilities to speak both English and Spanish, his services were in high demand outside of the church as well. The mission report gave these comments:

There has also been continuous demand on Pastor Pacheco for his services as a translator, especially in the courts and in industrial plants defending the cases of the workers. These efforts have reaped for us and for the kingdom a tremendous amount of good will in the Latin

²⁹ Pacheco, translated from his newsletter, Sept. 25, 1967. Pastor Pacheco thought that meeting in the large edifice of St. Stephen's church would be too intimidating for the small Hispanic group. Therefore, St. Stephen's decided to set up a small chapel in the basement of the school which was located north of the church. It was Pacheco's dream that one day the Hispanic congregation would grow substantially in order to feel more comfortable worshipping in St. Stephen's church.

³⁰ He 10:22-25, Ex 20:8, Lv 19:3, Lv 23:3, Dt 5:12, Is 56:2, Is 38:13, Is 66:23, Jr 17:27, Eze 20:16, Ac 2:42, Lk 10:16.

³¹ Pacheco states in the church newsletter, "It is our sorrowful duty to announce that Mr. Antonio Velazques Heredia has been self-excommunicated, that is, excommunicated by his own choosing, from this St. Stephen's congregation. The aforementioned Mr. Velazques didn't attend the divine services for one year and two months, even though he lives one and a half blocks from the church, without being sick or without giving any type of excuse for such actions. He was warned four times during that time in order that he might return to the refuge of the congregation, but Mr. Velazques refused. Therefore Paul warns, "Expel the wicked man from among you." (I Co 5:13) (Translated from Pacheco's Newsletter).

community. It was this same approach that governed his decision to assist in teaching Spanish to selected officers in the Milwaukee Police Department. We have already reaped benefits in that these officers of the law are well acquainted with us, and when they think of a church that works in Spanish they think of us. Since newcomers into any society or community from a different culture are known to have a few more brushes with the law than is normal, this contact should prove increasingly helpful.³²

As was previously mentioned, outreach to the Hispanic children proved to be very successful for the congregation of St. Stephen. In the summer of 1965, Vacation Bible School enrollment numbered 282 children with 111 of them being Latin American. The Sunday School also had a sizable number of Hispanics with more than one-third—45 students out of 170—coming from Latino homes. Even the Day School was attracting new students. Out of the 65 students attending the school in 1965, 9 were Latin American, and the pastors of St. Stephen were confident that that number would easily double the following year without an active promotion.³³

As the Spanish congregation began to increase, so did the amount of materials that were available for the spiritual edification of its members and visitors. A supply of Bibles, and copies of Luther's Small Catechism were made available to the people. The church also invested in a number of hymnals in preparation for soon beginning Spanish worship. The Missouri Synod also made available the Spanish version of *The Lutheran Witness* called *Noticiero De La Fe*.³⁴

Lutheran Spanish broadcasts were also hitting the radio waves in Milwaukee by 1965 sponsored by the Lutheran Laymen's League. Each Sunday at 1:45 p.m. a program called "*Cristo para todas las naciones*" could be heard on radio station WLIM.³⁵ Several of the Hispanic families who attended St. Stephen were tuning into the program, but there was some disappointment in that it hadn't generated more listener response by July of 1965.³⁶

Word about the new Spanish mission at St. Stephen spread rapidly due to the good attention it received in the two major Milwaukee newspapers, *The Journal* and *The Sentinel*. Posters telling of the happenings within St. Stephen congregation were placed in local business places. Both of the pastors kept very busy spreading the news concerning the new mission to Missouri Synod churches whenever they were invited to speak at a church. Each pastor in the years of 1964 and 1965 made approximately 20 or more such appearances.³⁷

Because of the success of its outreach effort, St. Stephen was slightly effected by heightening competition from other denominations who were working within the Latin American community.

We have noted the increased tempo of the work of the Roman Catholic Church in that they have opened the "*Hispano Central*", a social service center, only 5 blocks from our location. This was and is an admitted attempt to serve people other than in a direct religious way. Their work has not been outstandingly successful. Moreover, the Roman Catholic Spanish congregation (Our Lady of Guadalupe) is further perpetuating the idea of a separate Spanish congregation in spite of the presence of two strong "Anglo" Roman Catholic congregations—both with Christian Day Schools. We have found that the Latins are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with this arrangement. It has become quite clear that the Roman Catholic Church has increased its work

³² Bangert, *Mission Report 1964-65*, p. 3.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 4.

³⁴ *Noticiero De La Fe* means "The News Bulletin Concerning the Faith." It is comparable to *El Mensajero*, "The Messenger," which is the Wisconsin Synod's Spanish version of the magazine *Forward in Christ/Northwestern Lutheran*. *El Mensajero* is published in El Paso, Texas.

³⁵ Translated as "Christ For All the Nations."

³⁶ Bangert, *Mission Report 1964-65*, p. 4.

³⁷ Bangert, *Mission Report 1964-65*, p. 5.

and staff in answer to the beginning of our work here. The work of the other Protestant groups has not been noticed or felt in anyway.³⁸

Not only were the circumstances outside of the church in the form of outreach going well, but there were also positive reactions and attitudes toward what was happening within the congregation of St. Stephen. The pastors spoke of the progress of the integration in this way:

Considering the possibility of friction or unwelcome reaction to a new mission program within an existing congregation, especially when such activity is directed to a different cultural and language group, we are happy to say that the response of the “existing” St. Stephen congregation has truly been blessed with a Spirit-filled love for the work and the people. Both the mass baptism and the confirmation of the Spanish Adult Bible Class were greeted with great rejoicing on the part of the congregation. In fact, at the time of the mass baptism in March, about a year after beginning of formal work, we were happily surprised to learn that the congregation was actually wondering what was taking us so long to get to the point of bringing these people into congregational fellowship! We can only thank the Lord of the Church that He has so filled the hearts of these Christians (for the most part lifetime Lutherans of German extraction) with a true love for their new brothers and sisters in Christ.³⁹

Of course there were a few minor problems for some in the congregation who had a difficulty accepting the new situation, but most of the incidents were minor and did not last a long time. Pastors Bangert and Pacheco worked diligently to make the Hispanics feel at home at St. Stephen. As early as 1965, they were already attempting to work the adult men of the Spanish group into the mainstream of official congregational life so that they could continue to train them for offices in the congregation as soon and as wisely as possible.

During the middle and late 1960s the influx of Latinos moving into Milwaukee continued to grow rapidly. The pastors noted that the Latinos were very mobile, but thought that this was mostly due to the addition of the interstate expressway. When it was to be built, many blocks of homes near St. Stephen were leveled.

Undaunted, the pastors were thoroughly convinced that the work of spreading the gospel to the Spanish-speaking community around them should go on. Pastor Bangert added,

We have, by the grace of God, now found entrance into the community and into the hearts of many people here. This would have been totally impossible were it not for the efforts of Pastor Pacheco. We have also been blessed in gathering a fine, but small nucleus of faithful Christians, both adults and children. It would seem to us to be disastrous to drop the work at this point.⁴⁰

From 1964 into 1970 St. Stephen’s integration of outreach work toward their Latin American neighbors was a model example of what now needed to be done by congregations in the inner city of Milwaukee. The congregation had supported Pastor Bangert’s idea to begin Spanish outreach and to call a Spanish-speaking pastor. The congregation agreed to provide working space and needed materials for the Hispanic members. The local district of the Missouri Synod demonstrated their support for the project by paying Pastor Pacheco’s salary, housing and moving expenses from Brazil. Sister congregations gave of themselves physically and monetarily to support the unique work at St. Stephen.

The Hispanic congregation itself consisted of about 75% Mexicans and 25% Puerto Ricans and both groups got along well. Even the relationship between Pastor Bangert and Pastor Pacheco was something to be

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Bangert, *Mission Report 1964-65*, p. 6.

noted as they shared ideas and responsibilities in a cooperative team effort. With the blessing of the success which God had given St. Stephen, there were probably few people, if anyone, who could see the changes that were about to take place in a relatively short time.

In 1970 Pastor Bangert received a call from Peace Lutheran Church in New Berlin, Wisconsin. He had served St. Stephen faithfully since 1960 and now he thought it was time to move on. The work at St. Stephen had been a challenging blessing for him as he watched the neighborhood and church change dramatically in just one decade. Pastor Bangert accepted the call to New Berlin, feeling confident that Pastor Pacheco could carry on the ministry at St. Stephen alone, or at least until a new associate would be called.⁴¹

Unfortunately with the leaving of Pastor Bangert, Pastor Pacheco began to undo many of the good things he was such a vital part in accomplishing previously. Rev. Bangert commented, "From the moment I left, Pastor Pacheco started doing his own thing. Being the only pastor at St. Stephen, he tried to run it like a pope. He didn't have a handle on what ministry is."⁴²

Pastor Pacheco had done an excellent job over the past six years, but without supervision he went wild. He began programs that the congregation and the district could not support and he spent money that wasn't really there for him to spend. The local district of the Missouri Synod began to put pressure on Pastor Pacheco to stop his careless activities. Instead of choosing to change his actions, he became upset with how events were now transpiring.

What was Pastor Pacheco going to do in his situation? Rev. Pacheco knew of another Lutheran church, just 3 blocks west of St. Stephen. During the early months of 1971, Pastor Pacheco began to visit St. Peter's Lutheran Church (Wisconsin Synod) on the corner of 8th and Scott Streets. He came and attended the Lenten services and with him he would bring some members of the Hispanic congregation from St. Stephen. At St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Pastor Pacheco began to speak with Pastor Arthur Schupmann concerning doctrinal issues. Rev. Pacheco claimed to have experienced doctrinal problems at St. Stephen concerning the Lord's Supper and fellowship.⁴³

After some discussion, Pastor Pacheco was ready to leave St. Stephen and come to St. Peter's—but not only would Pastor Pacheco but the majority of his Hispanic congregation made the move with him. At a special congregational meeting on April 13, 1971 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, an historic recommendation was approved.

The Church Council recommends to the congregation that the applications for membership in our congregation of 61 former communicant members of a mission congregation at St. Stephen Ev. Luth. Church be accepted and received.

The recommendation was then opened for discussion. Many questions were asked, many views were given and after a lengthy discourse on the subject a motion was made to accept the recommendation of the Church Council. A short discussion followed on the question after which on a standing vote President Baumann declared the motion carried unanimously.⁴⁴

Almost exactly 30 years ago, a Milwaukee congregation of the Wisconsin Synod began mission work among its Latino neighbors. St. Peter's hadn't knocked on one door. It hadn't handed out any fliers or put up any posters and yet they had 61 new members on their roster. St. Peter's was given instantly what had taken St. Stephen congregation seven years to create.

⁴¹ Interview with Pastor Martin Bangert.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ This is what happened according to Pastor Arthur Schupmann. However, Pastor Bangert adds that Pastor Pacheco had no problems concerning Missouri's doctrinal positions. Possibly Pastor Pacheco told Pastor Schupmann what he wanted to hear in order to escape the pressure that the local district of the Missouri Synod was applying.

⁴⁴ St. Peter's congregational meeting minutes, p. 280.

In spite of the curious changes that had transpired, God blessed the work of Pastor Pacheco at St. Peter's. After completing a colloquy at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Pacheco enthusiastically pursued his work at St. Peter's with his sheep in a new pen. Since many of the members were too poor to own vehicles, Pastor Pacheco would personally pick up his members, some of whom lived on Milwaukee's north side, and bring them to church on Sunday mornings. The English service began at 10 a.m. with the Spanish following at 11:30 a.m. Pastor Pacheco would have a Spanish service once a month with Bible studies for his flock during the other three Sundays. The Hispanic members would attend the Bible classes in the church hall across the street from St. Peter's church building and one night a week a Spanish choir would rehearse. Pastor Pacheco also ran a food kitchen for the needy. The Hispanic mission carried on with success demonstrated as it appeared on the front cover of the January 16, 1972 *Northwestern Lutheran*.

However, within three or four years after arriving at St. Peter's,⁴⁵ Pastor Pacheco began to fall into some of the same sins which had plagued him during his later years at St. Stephen. St. Peter's Church gave Pastor Pacheco money to help him in his ministry to the Hispanics.⁴⁶ When the congregation requested an accounting for this money, Rev. Pacheco was unwilling to give one.

Now feeling pressure from St. Peter's congregation, Pastor Pacheco pulled out of St. Peter's and headed further west to Ascension Lutheran Church (American Lutheran Church) on 27th and Scott Streets. When Pastor Pacheco left St. Peter's, his congregation was not as willing to follow him as they had when he left St. Stephen. The Spanish flock, distraught over the wanderings of its shepherd, went in various directions. A few stayed at St. Peter's, a few followed their leader, while still others went to join churches of their own choosing.

While at the American Lutheran church, Pastor Pacheco was able to continue his ministry there, however, according to Pastor Pacheco he did not receive a salary. In disappointment over what had transpired in Wisconsin, Pastor Pacheco moved to Texas.⁴⁷ Meanwhile Pastor Schupmann, knowing very little Spanish, requested that the mission board of the Wisconsin Synod send someone to continue the outreach to the Hispanic community, but his request was not granted. Therefore, the Spanish services and Bible study were discontinued for about 20 years, until they were started again in the mid-1990s.

It may appear easier to dwell on the eventual difficulties caused by Pastor Pacheco and his inability to use wisely the treasures God gave him. However, the Lord had a purpose—to begin outreach among the Hispanics that focused on Christ and the salvation he had won for them. Without Pastor Pacheco, Hispanic outreach in Milwaukee may have started much later or not started at all. Yet thanks to his God-given abilities to evangelize and the Holy Spirit working through the gospel he proclaimed, many Hispanics have come to know that their sure foundation is Jesus Christ. As Pastor Bangert said, “Praise God for some people who had the vision and backed it up with thoughts, planning, dollars and commitment.”⁴⁸ Today St. Stephen's and St. Peter's are still reaping the benefits of what was begun over 30 years ago as they continue to reach out to the ever-growing Hispanic population on the south side of Milwaukee.

⁴⁵ An extensive search was made to try and find the minutes from congregational proceedings starting with 1972 and following, but it was unable to be located.

⁴⁶ This was money above and beyond Pastor Pacheco's regular salary.

⁴⁷ In a recent phone interview, Pastor Hector Pacheco said, “The best thing that ever happened to me was when I left Wisconsin.” He declined to talk extensively over what occurred during his ministry in Wisconsin. Now he and his wife have retired and are living in Chicago.

⁴⁸ Interview with Pastor Martin Bangert.

Appendix I – Pastor Martin Bangert Prepares his Congregation for the Coming of Pastor Pacheco and the Great Changes About to Take Place at St. Stephan Lutheran Church.

Our New Assistant Pastor

With the coming of Pastor Pacheco tomorrow, it is well that we all understand to what extent we will find our congregational life changed.

First, we certainly will want to welcome Pastor Pacheco into our midst with the same warmth and kindness as has always been the wonderful practice of St. Stephan congregation.

The Mission Work

It is certainly God's will, and it is also our purpose that all mission work with our Latin American neighbors will be directed towards "integrating" them into our normal, regular life as a congregation as quickly as possible.

Our Part

1. It is **not** the purpose of our congregation or of our District to set up a new "mission congregation" or even a new "department" of our congregation. This is simply another part of our work as a congregation for which we have been blessed with a new worker.
2. Please do not be "condescending" or give "special handling" to our new friends and neighbors. They are souls in need of Christ even as we are. No more or less than that.
3. Don't look for sudden fantastic growth just because we have another Pastor on our staff. The Spirit of God moves according to God's timetable – not ours!
4. Adding congregational work in another language means that we will have to do some adjusting in our own schedules. This

may mean changing of service times, or meeting times, and use of some rooms.

5. Perhaps some of the new mission methods that will be used may appear odd or unusual to you. If so, remember that Christ also used "odd" approaches in His day. If you have some doubt or question on this – ask Pastor Bangert – personally!

The New Pastor's Part

1. Pastor Pacheco was specifically called to serve the Spanish speaking population of Milwaukee. Since this is his called work, do not expect him to be doing all sorts of things for St. Stephen Congregation as it presently exists.
2. Pastor Pacheco and Pastor Bangert will together discuss and decide to what extent Pastor Pacheco may wish to take part in our present congregational life. But such a decision is up to Pastor Pacheco, remembering that he is called *first* to serve our Latin American friends.
3. As this new work of our congregation proceeds, you can expect Pastor Pacheco to take an increasing part in our congregational life through boards, committees, preaching, etc., as this becomes necessary for the furthering of this mission outreach.

We trust that all of you will continue in fervent prayer that this work of our congregation will be blessed by Almighty God.

In Explanation

The above "details" were agreed upon by the Voter's Assembly and the South Wisconsin District over a half year ago. I am also sure that all of you understand that this is the only God-pleasing way in which we can carry on this new mission work as a congregation.

It should be remembered that the Salary and Housing of Pastor Pacheco, as well as his moving from Brazil to Milwaukee, is paid by our District. We, as a congregation, have agreed to provide working space and needed materials.

Rev. Martin Bangert

February 16, 1964

Appendix II – A Copy of the Service of the Commissioning of Pastor Hector Pacheco

The Service of Commissioning

Oculi – The Third Sunday in Lent
 March 1, 1964
 7:00 p.m.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
 South Fifth and West Scott
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The Rev. Hector Pacheco

Missionary to the Latin American population of Milwaukee

+ In Nomine Jesu +

Prelude

The Processional Hymn

The Lutheran Hymnal – 224

The Order of Vespers
 (The Lutheran Hymnal Page 41)

The Versicles and Gloria Patri

The Psalm Psalm 84 (Page 139)
 (Spoken Responsively)

The Lection 1 Timothy 6:11-16

The Response

The Choir “We Bid Thee Welcome”

The Hymn The Lutheran Hymnal – 485

The Sermon

The Offering

The Hymn The Lutheran Hymnal – 231

+ The Commissioning of the Rev. Hector Pacheco +

The Canticle The Nunc Dimittis (Page 43)
 (The Congregation Shall Rise)

The Prayers

Kyrie

The Lord’s Prayer

The Salutation

The Collects

For Oculi

R: Amen

For The Ministry

R: Amen

For Peace

R: Amen

The Benedicamus

The Benediction

The Silent Prayer

The Postlude

+ Soli Deo Gloria +

The Speaker: The Rev. Dr. Herbert Berner
 Vice- President – The South Wisconsin District of the
 Lutheran Church—Missouri

Appendix III – An Article Written in Milwaukee’s *Sentinel* Newspaper Announcing the Calling of Pastor Pacheco

Lutherans Call Missionary To Latin Americans Here

Missouri synod Lutherans this week called the Rev. Hector Pacheco, a Mexican pastor who speaks Spanish, to become missionary to the Latin American newcomers here.

The action, announced Friday by the Rev. Bernard O. Raabe, executive secretary of missions of the synod’s south Wisconsin district, fulfills a dream of the Rev. Martin W. Bangert of St. Stephen’s Lutheran church, 1136 S. 5th St.

Pastor Bangert alerted the district to the missionary field among Spanish speaking people on the south side and took a course in Spanish himself to try to understand them.

Start in Two Months

The call will go out Monday to Pastor Pacheco, who is stationed in Pelota, Brazil. If he accepts, his work will start in two months, Pastor Raabe estimated.

He will be “assisting pastor” to Pastor Bangert, but his scope will be city-wide. He will conduct “person to person evangelism.”

St. Stephen’s church will provide “all available space for the use of groups connected with the work, all available help for teaching and neighborhood canvassing, and all the necessary tracts, magazines, Bibles and other books,” said Pastor Raabe.

The south Wisconsin district will provide the missionary’s salary and housing.

Hope to Integrate

A neighborhood survey was conducted on two Sundays in May by 50 laymen, some of whom were students of the Lutheran lay training institute. It revealed nearly 100 Latin American prospects for the church, said Pastor Bangert. Canvassers made about 1,100 calls between the Menomonee valley, W. Scott St., S. 1st St. and S. 9th St.

“We hope to integrate these prospects into our congregation as soon as possible,” said Pastor Bangert.

When Pastor Bangert discovered the neighborhood was heavily populated with Latin-Americans, he visited several of them, and studied Spanish under Edward Bartsch, teacher at Milwaukee Lutheran high school.

However, the newcomers need someone who not only speaks Spanish, but understands their thought processes and habits, even though many of the children and their parents are bilingual, he said.

“We’ve Made a Dent”

“We’ve made a dent in this work already,” said Pastor Bangert. “We have sent out 200 pieces of Christian literature. Our vacation church school had 30 Latin-American children and our Sunday school has 25. Now the problem is to reach their parents.”

Pastor Bangert said the Rev. Robert Gussick of Guatemala, missionary supervisor of a large part of the synod’s Latin American field, had been a valuable consultant on the Milwaukee situation.

Special Thanks To:

- * Pastors Martin Bangert, Hector Pacheco, and Arthur Schupmann for sharing their memories of the history of Hispanic outreach.
- * Pastor Timothy May who took time out of his schedule to search through St. Stephen church records to find invaluable material for this paper.

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