

THE FIRE RAGES ON

Meanwhile what was happening at Holy Trinity? Pastor Hille was steering the church into ecumenical relations with other churches. Discussions of how to practice fellowship were held with St. Paul church.<sup>225</sup> Joint services with St. Paul (the ALC church in town) became regular practice on festival days, even though Missouri was protesting the fellowship at the time.<sup>226</sup> He participated in church services with a Roman Catholic church, St. Anthony's. Watchful eyes noticed articles in the newspaper like the following:<sup>227</sup>

CHURCHES PLAN UNION SERVICE

Streator Ministerial Association is sponsoring a union service January 22 at the Central Church of Christ at 2 P.M. At this time ministers and lay people from various churches will take part in a program entitled "praise." Rev. Raymond Rickert of the First Baptist Church will be the speaker. Also participating will be Reverends P.C. Anderton, William Goodman, and Wilton Hille.

Lay people will offer prayer and special music. The congregation will have opportunity to sing together during the service. Everyone is invited to attend this union service.<sup>228</sup>

People who had at first thought that things were not that serious began to wake up. Some followed the Sherods and began to stop going to Holy Trinity. Some stopped going to church. Others started to take action. Walter Bernard (the president of the congregation) together with Jim Arrington and Ted Post arranged a meeting with SELC President Albert Marcis, Circuit Counselor Emil Velebir and Hille in Joliet. There after a private segment of the meeting in which he was severely rebuked, Hille emerged, his face very beet red.<sup>229</sup> Things looked more hopeful.

One will never know how they might have turned out in the "natural" course of events. In the fall of 1979, Hille abruptly took a call and left. Pastor Hille's eldest son Dale (who had just graduated from high school) had impregnated one of the young women in the congregation.<sup>230</sup> The Hille family left in disgrace.<sup>231</sup> The congregation was dismayed. Hille had not only been a "charismatic", but exuded a charismatic aura which had mesmerized even his opponents. The congregation had learned a bitter lesson that not all of its pastors were to be trusted.

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LODGE PROBLEM

In order to sum up the events involved in the lodge controversy at Holy Trinity the following chart is offered:

1. Around the beginning of 1977 lodge members are accepted into membership by Pastor Hille. There is scattered opposition.
2. Mrs. Sherod talks to Pastor Hille and getting nowhere organizes opposition.
3. Around the beginning of March, 1977 she writes Oswald Hoffman for information on the lodges.
4. March 14, 1977 Oswald Hoffman replies, directing her to inquire of Philip Lochhaas.
5. March 23, 1977 Mrs. Sherod writes Philip Lochhaas requesting information on the organizations and Synod policy on the subject.
6. March 25, 1977 Philip Lochhaas replies to both issues.
7. March 28, 1977 the packet of tracts on lodges arrives.
8. April 24, 1977 notice appears in bulletin regarding upcoming vote to change the constitution articles on lodges. Vote on May 1.
9. May 1, 1977 the constitution changes were ratified by the voters.
10. May 2, 1977 Mrs. Sherod writes desperate letter to Oswald Hoffmann.
11. Sometime at the beginning of May, 1977 Mrs. Sherod writes again to Philip Lochhaas requesting further information and also informing him of the deteriorating situation at Holy Trinity.
12. May 4, 1977 Wilton Hille threatens Mrs. Sherod with excommunication if she continues to oppose him.
13. May 5, 1977 Board of Elders meeting at which two elders are appointed to come and talk with the Sherods.
14. May 16, 1977 Oswald Hoffmann absolves himself of responsibility and directs her to write to Synod President and District Pres.
15. May 29, 1977 Philip Lochhaas sympathizes with Mrs. Sherod's position and sends more information.
16. June, 1977 Special meeting at which Mr. Sherod requested Holy Trinity to involve Synod.
17. Walter Bernard contacts circuit counselor Velebir who down plays the situation and urges Holy Trinity to handle the matter internally.
18. Summer, 1977 Sherod's keep membership at Holy Trinity but attend Emmanuel Lutheran in Dwight, IL.
19. January 18, 1978 Hille participates in unionistic worship service.
20. Mid-1978 Mrs. Sherod addresses letter to DP Marcus, circuit counselor Velebir, and Luther Bajus asking someone to help.
21. Fall, 1978 Hille is severely rebuked in a private meeting with pastors Marcis and Velebir.
22. Late Summer, 1979 Hille's college age son impregnates a girl in the congregation. Hille family leaves shortly after with Hille accepting a call to Spokane, WA.

### SIFTING THROUGH THE RUBBLE

During the vacancy that ensued, Holy Trinity was served by Martin H. Sommerfeld, a 1932 Saint Louis Seminary graduate.<sup>232</sup> His capable ministrations helped heal over many of the wounds that Hille had created. Quite a few who had left Holy Trinity during Hille's pastorate returned, among them the Sherod family. Others, who had been attracted by the "liberal" atmosphere under Hille, began to drift back to St. Paul Lutheran Church (ALC). But the needs of Holy Trinity could only be served by a full-time pastor. Pastor Sommerfeld, in his early 70's at the time, could not be expected to continue indefinitely.

### LAYING ANOTHER FOUNDATION

In October, 1980, Holy Trinity finally received another pastor, one who had been serving as assistant pastor in Detroit: Pastor David P. Hudak.<sup>233</sup> Since he came in 1980, Pastor Hudak has been able to calm the troubled waters of Holy Trinity down a bit. He said to me, "I've been here 8 years now, and the last one and a half have been the smoothest in terms of spiritual growth."<sup>234</sup> Needless to say from the name, Pastor Hudak is a Slovak pastor. And so with the exception of Hille and the part-time pastorate of Sommerfeld, Holy Trinity has always had Slovak shepherds to lead her flock.

Not much can be written by the present writer with regard to Pastor Hudak. In the beginning of his ministry at Holy Trinity while I was attending college at Ann Arbor, MI, I was too close to the man to gain a perspective. Now we are separated not only by distance, but by synodical boundaries as well.<sup>235</sup> He is well liked by his congregation and holds a special place in my heart. I learned quite a bit of theology from him in casual conversation. Under his direction Holy Trinity has started a pre-school which has a current enrollment of 100+ with 2 teachers and 2 assistants.<sup>236</sup> He also organized the centennial celebration which included having "spiritual sons" of the congregation come back once a month to preach. Dr. Albert Marcis, the president of the SELC District was the guest speaker at a service held out at Old #3 on October 7, 1984. The only pastor who did not come back for one of the centennial celebrations was Pastor Hille.<sup>237</sup> Pastor Hudak has also applied to have the structure of Old #3 registered in the National Historic Registry as a "historic structure." With that in mind, Old #3 is kept in its original condition when repairs are made on it.<sup>238</sup> Pastor Hudak has also revived the sense of "being Slovak" to Holy Trinity through having services every so often at Old #3 and singing translations of old Slovak Hymns. An example of such is found in the appendices.

Under Pastor Hudak's direction the following vicars have received their training: John Kiefer (1981-82), Gary Wolf (1983-84), Mark Eickler (1984-85), Daniel Mack (1985-86), David Robotzen (1986-87), Ronald Carnicom (1987-88), and Michael A.L. Eckelkamp (1988-89).<sup>239</sup>

### SMOKE SEEN OVER THE HILL

In the spring of 1983, Pastor Hudak married the daughter of Frederik V. Jensen, the ALC pastor at St. Paul's on Broadway St. in Streator. The situation was complicated due to the fact that previous to the break in fellowship with the ALC, Pastor Hudak had been trying to "put the breaks" on the close relations between Holy Trinity and St. Paul. After the break had come, he had resisted all overtures for joint services with St. Paul. Now he was marrying the daughter of the ALC pastor. The congregation watched closely. Would there now be a change of policy and a strengthening of the bonds between Holy Trinity and St. Paul as had been the policy of Pastor Hille?

Pastor Hudak publicly reassured his congregation that his upcoming marriage would not effect his theology (and in fact claimed this would only make him even stricter). But the deleterious fruit began to be produced almost immediately. Though it was contrary to all he had stood for and taught, Pastor Hudak was married in the ALC church with Marsha's father performing the ceremony. This despite the fact that the LC-MS had broken fellowship with the ALC in 1981. Many at Holy Trinity were confused at his actions, though for the most part it didn't seem to bother the congregation very much. To date the Hudak's have had two boys, Timothy and Steven.<sup>240</sup>

### A GAZE INTO THE CRYSTAL BALL

As to Holy Trinity's future... only God knows what is in store. For now at least they have a pastor whose first priority is to proclaim God's Word and administer the sacraments. There are still problems to be overcome. The congregation still has members who hold membership in a lodge that need to be dealt with on a Scriptural basis. They also have people who are confused as to what "fellowship" means, who need to be taught "Why the Lutherans can't just all get together." The role of men and women in the church is an issue that will need clarification in the future (at the present time Holy Trinity allows women to vote in the voters' assembly). It seems these are perennial issues with any church that tries to keep its doctrine and practice in line with Scripture in the twentieth century. For now at least, Holy Trinity has a pastor who cares about doctrine. Holy Trinity has stopped having ecumenical services with other churches with whom doctrinal unity does not exist.<sup>241</sup> Also, the 1988 merger of ALC, LCA and AELC into the ELCA should make it easier for the members of Holy Trinity to see the direction that St. Paul Lutheran Church (formerly ALC now ELCA) has taken.

#### The pastors of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

1884-1887	Cyrill Droppa	1964-1975	Andrew Cizmar
1887-1900	Karol Horak	1974-1979	Wilton E. Hille
1900-1907	John Yurco	1979	Martin H. Sommerfeld
1908-1921	Andrew Chovan	-1980	(vacancy pastor)
1922-1964	John Daniel	1980-xxxx	David P. Hudak.

THANKS DUE TO MANY

In conclusion, I wish to thank the many people whose cooperation made this history of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church possible. Without the cooperation of Holy Trinity's pastor, Rev. David P. Hudak, without the willingness of Holy Trinity's membership to be interviewed, this paper would have been much the poorer in content. Also I wish to thank Rev. Robert J. Daniel, Rev. Raymond A. Malec, and Rev. Milton E. Hille for their prompt and helpful responses to questions I had concerning Holy Trinity's history.

May God be with Holy Trinity as she continues to serve her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ into the 1990's and beyond.

S'bohom (God be with you).

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church changed its name to Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in 1959. Then, in 1971, the SELC became a member of the LC-MS and was renamed the SELC District.
- <sup>2</sup> This later formation of the Zion Slovak Synod, a non-geographical synod-district of the former Lutheran Church in America (LCA), is an uncannily close parallel. This information from "A History of the Slovak Zion Synod Lutheran Church in America, 1919-1976." by Edward F. Balint, St. Paul's Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bronx, New York, 1976.
- <sup>3</sup> The English word "Ogre" is derived from Hungary. Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia Vol VI) 1974, 496. The Magyars were once the scourge of Europe.
- <sup>4</sup> Pressburg's modern name is Bratislava.
- <sup>5</sup> A History of the S.E.L.C. 1902-1927, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955, by George Dolak. p. 3.
- <sup>6</sup> Actually the Slavs had been living in the land and had established their own empire (Great Moravia) before the Hungarians came on the scene at the end of the 9th century. Hence the foreigners were the Hungarians, not the Slovaks. Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia Vol IX) 1974, p. 275.
- <sup>7</sup> The following is a summary of the history of Slovakia as found in the book Slovak Americans and Canadians in American Catholic Who's Who, 1911-1981, and Slovak Ethnicity by Martha Mistina Kona (Wilmette, IL: K & K house Publishers) 1985, 53-55.

The Slovaks have been living in the land known today as Slovakia since the sixth century. Slovakia lies in the heart of Europe, bounded on the north by the Carpathian Mountains and on the south by the Danube River. There were times throughout the history of Europe when Slovak territory was much larger. Today it has approximately 49,000 square kilometers and its population is over five million.

Extensive excavations and archaeological studies show that Slovakia was inhabited as early as 5000 B.C. and that it was a witness of many ancient cultures from the Neolithic Age, or Danubian culture, which spread to the adjoining regions by 3000 B.C., down to the Roman period of the first century A.D.

The Western Slavs, ancestors of present day Slovaks, came down from the north in the sixth century A.D. into Slovakia, but before they were really established they were conquered and became subjects of the warlike Avars. Between the first and sixth centuries, many tribes and nations - Gauls, Cents, Dacians, Franks, Romans, Germanic tribes, as well as Huns - lived and fought in Slovakia.

Around 623 A.D. the Slovaks united with other Slavs, and under Samo they drove out the Avars and set up an independent state which lasted until Samo's death in 658 when once again the Avars took over and ended what was a first effort of the Slovaks for independence.

At the beginning of the ninth century, Slovakia was ruled by Prince Pribina, the first Slovak to rule his own country. As Pribina's seat was Nitra Castle, it has become known as the cradle of Slovak history. It was at the Slovak city, Nitra, in the year 833 that Adalram, Archbishop of Salzburg, consecrated the first Western Slavic church, and in 880 Nitra became the seat of a bishopric. Although Pribina was not a Christian and Christianity spread only slowly during his reign, he was a prudent ruler. He realized that because of Slovakia's geographic location, at a dangerous and strategic European crossroads, military strength and cultural cohesion were necessary if Slovakia were to survive on its own.

Because the aggressive Germanic tribes were a constant threat to the existence of the Slavic tribes, there was in the ninth century a unification of the Slavs living in the Danube Basin. These people are the ancestors of the present day Slovaks. A new state called Great Moravia was created by these tribes, and became a united kingdom under Prince Mojmir (830-850). His successor Rastislav (850-870) invited in 869 Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius to complete the christianization of his people, and to lay the foundation for the church hierarchy. King Svatopluk (870-906) found the Empire severely threatened from the east and the west and was defeated finally by the pagan Magyar invaders.

For the Slovaks, it was the beginning of the dark ages. Slovakia had a brief period of independence when Matus Cak Trenciansky took over in 1301. He was known as the mightiest of the Slovak Lords - "Dominus Vagi et Tatra". However, after only twenty years, Slovakia once again became a part of Hungary. In 1526 Hungary and Slovakia came under the rule of the Hapsburgs, and for many centuries the Slovaks were to endure conquest by the Magyars, ravages by the Tartars, invasions from the Germans, catastrophic raids by the Hussites from Bohemia, rampages from the Turks, and infliction of dynastic wars by Hungary.

The conflict between Slovaks and Magyars grew with the years until the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries when the Magyars made an all-out effort to magyarize the entire country.

After World War I when Austria-Hungary was defeated, a new state called Czecho-Slovakia was created. Slovaks and Czechs signed the Pittsburgh Agreement guaranteeing the rights of Slovaks in Slovakia and making them equal partners in the newly created republic. The terms of the agreement, however, were not kept when the Czechs, who

made up less than half of the population, assumed full power in the much publicized democracy and tried to impose their own national culture and government on a country made up of several nations.

On October 6, 1938, the Slovaks proclaimed themselves autonomous, and on March 14, 1939, the Slovak Republic was established by the Slovak Parliament. However, the new republic was short lived, as the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia was reinstated after World War II.

For one thousand years, Slovak history has been a constant struggle for national rights and for survival as a country. In spite of oppression, subjugation, privation, conquest, war, invasion, raiding, the Slovak nation founded on Christian principles, has survived, because in the words of the Slovak historian, Hrusovsky,

It is like an indestructible Slovak forest,  
firmly rooted in its native earth and age-old  
traditions. Only such a nation could survive a  
thousand years without a roof of its own.

<sup>6</sup> For further details Cf. Kohn, Hans. Pan-Slavism, its history and ideology. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953.

<sup>7</sup> Generally speaking Slavic peoples know from many bitter years of repression how precious freedom from foreign domination is. Fjeril Hess in the book A Story of Slavic Pioneers in America (Published by the "Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada", 1925, p. 53) shares one of the national songs of Czechoslovakia which expresses this love for for their own native homeland as follows:

Where is my home? Where is my home?  
Streams among the meadows creeping,  
Brooks from rock to rock leaping,  
Everywhere bloom spring and flowers  
Within this paradise of ours;  
There, 'tis there, the beauteous land!  
Bohemia, my fatherland!  
Where is my home, where is my home,  
Knowest thou the country loved of God,  
Where noble souls in well-shaped forms reside,  
Where the free glance crushes the foeman's pride?  
There wilt thou find the Czechs, the honored race,  
Among the Czechs be aye my dwelling place.

While this song is not "strictly speaking" a Slovak song (since Czechoslovakia was a union of three peoples: Czechs, Slovaks, and Bohemians) it does show the love Slavs had for the land they called their home.

<sup>10</sup> Dolak, 4.

<sup>11</sup> Dolak, 6.



<sup>12</sup> Dolak, 4.

<sup>13</sup> Dolak, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Dolak, 7.

<sup>15</sup> Perhaps an echo of those times is related in the side comment of Mary Hyduk in the interview I had with her on 12/19/88. She was commenting on the early Slovak settlers and said:

"They were very chaste. Each man had to have a wife to take care of them. They were fighters. When you're surrounded by other countries you can't survive unless you're a fighter. They were fiesty people who didn't always know best. Most of them couldn't read, so they just did what they thought was right."

<sup>16</sup> This information came from an interview with Mary Hyduk on 12/19/88. Dolak also verifies this on page 11.

<sup>17</sup> Dolak, 12.

<sup>18</sup> 75th Anniversary Booklet, 1884-1959, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Streator, Illinois, Sunday, June 21, 1959, page 5.

<sup>19</sup> Streator Daily Times Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.

<sup>20</sup> Streator Daily Times Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.

<sup>21</sup> Dolak, (page 27), supplies the information that Hossfeld was a *Presbyterian* pastor. I wonder if Dolak's information about Hossfeld is correct, however I will save my discussion of this until footnote 64.

<sup>22</sup> Dolak supplies the information that Jan Kozlej was formerly a parishioner of Droppa in the old country. Dolak, 17.

<sup>23</sup> Streator Daily Times Press, Friday, June 29, 1984. Mary Hyduk supplied the information that the man who extended the call on behalf of the group was indeed Jan Kozlej. She also claims to have a copy of the original call letter somewhere among her memoirs, but has not, as yet, been able to find it. Interview 12/19/88.

<sup>24</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

<sup>25</sup> The full name of their congregation is "Saints Peter's and Paul's Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church" (Freeland, Pennsylvania)

<sup>26</sup> From interview with Pastor Hudak 12/20/88.

<sup>27</sup> "Chronological History of St. Peter's and Paul's Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church Freeland, Pennsylvania" (a historical pamphlet put out by Ss. Peter and Paul says:

"1883, February 22, marks the date of the founding of the first Slovak Evangelical Lutheran congregation in America. At this first service there were present 16 men and 2 women. The first pastor was the Rev. Karol [Charles] Horak. The leader of the congregation was Michael Zemany. Assistance in securing the first pastor was given by Pastor Smith of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Freeland and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Pastor Horak served three years."

<sup>28</sup> Page 7 of the 75th Anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity states:

"Four days after his [Droppa's] arrival a congregation was formally organized with 49 charter members present. The actual date on which the organization of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran congregation was effected, was March 30, 1884."

<sup>29</sup> Holy Trinity, 75th Anniv. booklet, 7.

<sup>30</sup> "Chronological History ..." says:

"1886, Pastor Cyrill Droppa was called from Streator, Ill., which has the honor of being the second Slovak Lutheran congregation in America. During this year the church building and parsonage [of Ss. Peter and Paul] were erected and dedicated."

<sup>31</sup> Streator Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950 says,

"From 1879 on they met in the homes where they read the service. Finally, in 1882, they resolved to call a minister from their native land and contact was made with Cyrill Droppa who, at that time, was a young pastor serving as assistant to his father. After some delay Pastor Droppa arrived in Streator March 26, 1884."

<sup>32</sup> "The Pastors of Saints Peter and Paul Congregation" published by Ss. Peter and Paul.

<sup>33</sup> Carol Horack's name appears in many different forms. Carol is also spelled Karol. Horack is also spelled Horak. The anglicized version of Carol is Charles. Holy Trinity usually spells his name Carol Horack. Ss. Peter and Paul usually spells his name Karol Horak.

34 Yes, believe it or not, Mrs. Osborn is the youngest of 12 children and is a daughter of Pastor Karol [Charles] Horak! I talked to her this last break (Easter, 1989) and she verified some of the details which I will describe later about her father. She still lives at 119 Ninth St, Streator, IL.

35 Letter to Mrs. Harold Osborn from Ivon P. Harris dated May 30th, 1974.

36 Some of the oldest Slovak Catholics settled in Streator also. A parallel disagreement as to which Slovak Catholic church was first exists between St. Stephen's, Streator IL (founded by Rev. Joseph Kossalko (Kosalko) and St. Joseph's, Hazelton, PA (founded by Rev. Ignac Jaskovich). On page 66 of her book Slovak Americans and Canadians in American Catholic Who's Who and Slovak Ethnicity, Martha Mistina Kona says:

Once established, the Slovaks looked back to Slovakia for priests to serve them in their new country. In 1882 the first Slovak Catholic priest came to United States. He was the Rev. Ignac Jaskovich who settled in Hazelton, Pennsylvania where he established St. Joseph's Church. Then came Rev. Joseph Kossalko (Kosalko) who founded a parish in Streator, Illinois. Both of these parishes claim to be the oldest Slovak Catholic parish in the United States.... These...priests were Magyar-ones, or pro Magyar Slovaks, who had renounced their Slovak national heritage for the Magyar regime in Austria-Hungary.

37 Daniel F. Tanzone, Slovaks of Yonkers New York (Middletown, PA: Jednota Printery, 1975) 81. says:

The first such Slovak Lutheran congregation in America was the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity of the Augsburg Confession (SL. EV. A.V. CIRKEV V. AMERIKE, CIRKEV SV. TROJICE), established in 1884. A group of 49 Slovak Lutherans organized this congregation and called on the Reverend C. Dropp [sic - they spelled the name wrongly] to be their first pastor. Following this initiative by the Streator Slovak Lutherans, other groups of Slovak Lutherans organized congregations notably in Freeland, Pennsylvania in 1886; in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania also in 1886; and in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1888.

38 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

39 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

- <sup>40</sup> English version of the 50th Anniversary Booklet, 27. In contrast to this, when the Freeland, PA congregation had their first service under Pastor Karol [Charles] Horak on Feb. 22, 1883, their attendance was only 16 men and 2 women. This is noted in the "The Pastors of Saints Peter and Paul Congregation" published by Ss. Peter and Paul.
- <sup>41</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- <sup>42</sup> But what should have been the approach? Rather than coercing contributions, 2 Corinthians 9:7 should have been applied to the situation: "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." This combined with 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 should have been able to steer Pastor Droppa and the new congregation to the correct principles of giving to the Lord, namely: 1. Regular offerings ("On the first day of every week") 2. Everyone participates ("each one of you") 3. Proportionate offerings ("in keeping with his income") 4. Cheerfully given "not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.")
- <sup>43</sup> Dolak, 30.
- <sup>44</sup> Emma Hritz (12/21/88), Mary Hyduk (12/19/88), Tom Vagasky (12/22/88), Margaret Brassfield (12/21/88) and Sue Yuhás (12/22/88) all substantiated this added activity that was expected of the Pastor as the most educated person around.
- <sup>45</sup> George Plesko related to me (12/22/88) that Andy Urbanick had told him, "the English speaking settlers gave the Slovaks a hard time so the Slovaks put churches out on the fringes of town."
- <sup>46</sup> Exact ethnological data for Streator is not available to me at the time of this writing, but Pastor Hudak estimates that as of 1989 approximately 33% of Streator is Slovak. The other major ethnic groups are Polish, English, German and Irish.
- <sup>47</sup> Paula Angle Biography in Black - A History of Streator, Illinois. Published by Weber Company, 1962. page 45.
- <sup>48</sup> Margaret Brassfield (nee Sedory) on 12/21/88 said to me with more than a hint of disgust and a wave of the arm, "The called us Hungarians even though we were Slovak. They thought everybody that wasn't English was Hungarian."
- <sup>49</sup> Paula Angle, Biography in Black, 44-45.
- <sup>50</sup> The strong use of Slovak was fostered by the use of Slovak literature in the households. Religious instruction was naturally carried on in Slovak. But besides the church, Mary Hyduk (12/19/88) informed me that a man used to carry books around in a cart once a week from house to house selling Slovak novels. It wasn't unusual for her father to buy 2 or 3 at a time to read.

Also the second Slovak newspaper in America, Nova Vlast (New Homeland) was published by a Catholic named Edo Schwartz-Markovich in 1886. (Information about Nova Vlast from Martha Mistina Kona's book Slovak Americans and Canadians in American Catholic Who's Who 1911-1981 and Slovak Ethnicity. (Wilmette, IL: K & K Publishing House, 1985) 74.

- <sup>51</sup> Paula Angle, Biography in Black, 34.
- <sup>52</sup> George Plesko in an interview (12/22/88) asserted that the land for Holy Trinity was donated by the mining company. He stated this without any prompting on my part whatsoever and without knowledge of the historical parallel of the Methodist Church. It could be that Holy Trinity received the land and later thought they had purchased it. It could also be true that they purchased it for next to nothing so they could have a legal title on the land.
- <sup>53</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity. Also the 75th Anniversary Booklet on page 19 lists "Groundbreaking service for Old No. 3 Church - July 14, 1884."
- <sup>54</sup> 75th Anniversary Booklet, 7.
- <sup>55</sup> Streator Daily Times Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.
- <sup>56</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- <sup>57</sup> English version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity, 28.
- <sup>58</sup> An abbreviated account of the process of building is however given in the Times Press, Friday, June 29, 1984 in connection with the centennial celebration of Holy Trinity in 1984. Something of the research of Pastor Hudak [Holy Trinity is even now in the process of preparing a History Booklet for the 100th Anniversary. It is expected to come out perhaps in the Summer of 1989.] comes through when the article says:
- "With volunteer labor of the congregation, donated materials and stone which was cut and carried from the nearby Vermillion River, the little church known as Old #3 because of the coal mine in that area, was erected in October of 1884."
- <sup>59</sup> Andy Estvanik explained in great detail to me (01/14/89) how the stones were brought up from the river. He also explained that the extreme hardship of coal mining "led many a Slovak to hit the bottle to forget their woes." It would be a mistake to attribute all of the alcoholism problems that have existed in Streator as though it were the Slovaks fault. Pastor Hudak estimates that as per 4/11/1989 Slovak people currently comprise only about 1/3 of the total population of Streator.

- 60 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- 61 George Plesko (12/22/88) and Andy Estvanik (01/14/89) both related this astounding fact to me.
- 62 George Plesko (12/22/88) was the one to tell me of this. He attributes it to the the liturgy being done in Slovak (which the Slovak Catholics liked to hear) and to the generally friendly relations that existed between the Slovaks regardless whether they were Catholic or Lutheran. Pastor Hudak informed me, "The Slovak Catholics... were members of St. Stephen's Church." (Letter of 4/11/89).
- 63 Streater Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.
- 64 Lutheran Cyclopedia (p. 317) has this to say about Fritschel:

Gottfried Leonhard Wilhelm Fritschel (Dec. 19, 1836 - July 13, 1889). Brother of Conrad Sigmund Fritschel. He was born at Nurnberg, Germany; studied at Neuendettelsau institution of Loehe and at Univ. of Erlangen; commissioned 1856 to be prof. at the theological seminary, Dubuque, IA; ordained at Dubuque 1857; missionary in IL and IA; prof. 1857-89; taught NT exegesis, church history, dogmatics, symbolics; edited *Kirchen-Blatt* and *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*; learned English and Scandinavian languages. Works include *Passionsbetrachtungen*; *Theophilus*.

- 65 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity. The organ which Old #3 had was a "pump organ" which two boys used to pump while the organist played. Andy Estvanik gave this information (1/14/89).

Here is why I have reservations about the authenticity of Dolak's comment that Hossfeld was a Presbyterian pastor:

In the 50th anniversary booklet (Slovak version) of Holy Trinity it says:

"First they gathered in homes, but it gave them not enough satisfaction, though they gathered on Sunday with prayers and singing and reading of the Holy Bible.

There was here at that time a *German Lutheran pastor*, that baptized the infants, buried the dead, performed marriages, and other necessary functions."

and Cyril Droppa in describing his call said:

"I received a letter from a friend in America, a John Kosley, and also from a *German Lutheran pastor*, John Hossfeldter...."

One possibility to reconcile the seemingly conflicting accounts is to say that the 50th Anniversary Booklet is in reality talking about a different fellow when it says Hossfeldter (not Hossfeld). Thus according to this interpretation, Hossfeld would be a German Presbyterian and Hossfeldter would be a German Lutheran. Fritschel's protest would then be against another German Lutheran who was not in fellowship participating in the service.

Another possibility is that Pastor Droppa confused a neighboring Presbyterian minister with Gottfried Fritschel, a German Lutheran pastor who is known to have been on friendly terms with the newly founded congregation. Gottfried Fritschel was a professor at the Iowa Synod theological seminary in Mendota, IL. and therefore was not present as frequently as the friendly Presbyterian. Both Hossfeldter and Fritschel were present and participated at the dedication of the congregation's church building Oct 5, 1884. Again, Fritschel's objections would have to be against another German Lutheran not in fellowship who was participating in the service of dedication.

A third possibility is that John Hossfeldter was indeed German and had been Lutheran but had switched to Presbyterian in the years intervening between the call given in 1882 and the dedication in 1884. I consider this a remote possibility.

A fourth possibility (and admittedly the most likely) is that Hossfeldter and Hossfeld are variant spellings of the same name, a name of the Presbyterian pastor at Park Presbyterian. Perhaps he professed to believe the same as the Lutherans and so was endearingly called "Lutheran" by the Slovaks even though they knew very well that he was a Presbyterian minister. Fritschel would then be protesting against the participation of a Presbyterian in the dedication service. This seems most likely.

Note: After checking with Park Presbyterian church (4/1/89) I found out that they do not acknowledge having ever had a pastor by the name of Hossfeldter or Hossfeld. It leaves the matter just as much up in the air as ever.

<sup>66</sup> Dolak, 27. Cf. footnotes 63 and 64.

<sup>67</sup> This weakness in the area of fellowship does not seem to have been unique to the Slovaks at Streator. Cf. Dolak, 26-28.

<sup>68</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

<sup>69</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Andy and Martha Estvanik (1/14/89).

<sup>71</sup> Dolak makes a somewhat cryptic remark "The Streator congregation found it necessary to remind its first three pastors of this." The *this* he is referring to is the scriptural mandate for pastors to lead a "blameless life." Evidently Cyrill Droppa, Carol Horack, and John Yurco all left the congregation in somewhat of a bad situation to one or another degree. Unfortunately, when I probed the congregational members for details of this time period it was

beyond their personal recollection, nor did I encounter any stories of this era that would explain. Perhaps the *Historia cirkvi Sv. Trojice v Streator, III* (Streator: Svedok Publishing House, 1914) upon which Dolak bases his comments will elucidate this to a future generation.

- <sup>72</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- <sup>73</sup> "The Pastors of Saints Peter and Paul Congregation" published by Ss. Peter and Paul. Cyrill Droppa must have been destined to be a church builder, because it was under his pastorate that Ss. Peter and Paul built their first church building in 1886.
- <sup>74</sup> Dolak, ft. 50, page 31. However, Dolak also states that Droppa was still in America in 1895 (p. 17). Another interesting sidelight is that one of the pastors who later served Ss. Peter and Paul in Freeland, PA was named Daniel Droppa. He served sometime around 1920 or so.
- <sup>75</sup> The correct spelling and full name should be: Rev. George Frederick Spieker, a member of the Pennsylvania Ministerium and a professor of Hebrew at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA. Cf. J.C. Jenson, *American Lutheran Biographies* (Milwaukee: A. Houtkampt & Son, 1890) 737-739.
- <sup>76</sup> Rev. J.B. Rath's biography is included in J.C. Jenson, *American Lutheran Biographies* (Milwaukee: A. Houtkampt & Son, 1890) 603-604. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Ministerium and served temporarily as a Professor of the German language and literature. He was also repeatedly elected a Trustee of Muhlenberg College.
- <sup>77</sup> The correct spelling and full name of this man is Rev. Benjamin Sadtler, president of Muhlenberg College (1875-1886). His biography can be found in J.C. Jenson, *American Lutheran Biographies* (Milwaukee: A. Houtkampt & Son, 1890) 647.
- <sup>78</sup> Dolak, 16.
- <sup>79</sup> J.C. Jenson, *American Lutheran Biographies* (Milwaukee: A. Houtkampt & Son, 1890) 372-373 gives a more detailed version:

Rev. Horack was born in Schlesichen, Vorstadt, near Koeniggratz, Bohemia, May 9, 1856. His parents being poor and abundantly blessed with children, he could not exercise the good abilities to \*lear which he possessed, and obtain a higher education. At an early age he was obliged to assist his parents in the maintenance of their large family, and until his twenty-second year was engaged in mercantile pursuits. During all this time he neglected no opportunity to store his mind with useful knowledge.

Regarding his future life, the year 1879 was to be one of especial importance. At that period, Rev. E.K. von



Lanyi, of Cermilow, Bohemia, who was greatly attached to him, and learned of his desire for higher education, offered him free tuition at the Missionary Institute, "Kommet zu Jesu," in Preussisch Schlesien, an institution of which he was director.

The original plan was, that he should prepare himself for the vocation of teacher of schools. In the year 1882, he passed the teachers' examination, and was appointed as instructor in the parish school at Galetzien. Before leaving the seminary, however, the urgent call of the missionary committee of the General Council for young men educated as teachers, to work among their own people in North America, was received, the faculty of the seminary advised him to go, but his relatives would not listen to the idea. The spiritual need of his fellow countrymen, and the appeal to bring them God's Word finally conquered. He arrived at New York in the autumn of 1882, and with others of his college companions was assigned to the charge of Rev. J. A. Dewald, New Brunswick, N.J. where they were to be instructed in the several branches of theology. His sojourn with Rev. Dewald was to be of but short duration. The missionary committee, urged by the appeal of his fellow countrymen, decided that he should go to Pennsylvania and preach the word of God in their midst, prosecuting at the same time his studies, under the direction of Rev. E.A. Bauer, at Hazelton, Pa.

In the beginning of October, 1883, he passed the theological examination at Muhlenburg College [Allentown, PA], and on the sixteenth was ordained minister of the Gospel. He was the first Slavonian minister in the United States, and the founder of this mission. Soon after his ordination, which occurred in the "stone church" Kriedersville, Northampton Co., Pa, he journeyed back to the old home, where he married Miss Rosine M. Holececk, of Buckovina, Bohemia. After a short sojourn in the mother country, he returned at the end of March, 1884, with his wife to Pennsylvania, and officiated there until October, 1886. Although undergoing many hardships and sacrifices, his work was pleasant to him. He next received a call from the Slavonian Evangelical Lutheran congregation at Streator, Ill., wither he removed with his family in March, 1887. Under his charge this congregation steadily increased, and is now the centre of the Slavonian mission in the Western states. Here, though laboring under many difficulties, he gladly works and hopes, by the grace of God, that he may long be spared to help his people in their desires to reach a higher and better life beyond."

90 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

- <sup>61</sup> English version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity, 28.
- <sup>62</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- <sup>63</sup> Streator Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.
- <sup>64</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- <sup>65</sup> 1954 Dedication Booklet for the new building on Main St., 13.
- <sup>66</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- <sup>67</sup> The inscription is visible in the picture on page 6 of the 75th Anniversary Booklet. The translation was rendered by various people, among whom were Mary Hyduk and Margaret Brassfield.
- <sup>68</sup> Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity. A picture of him appears on pg. ixx of Dolak's book.
- <sup>69</sup> Ladislav Boor was at this time a member of the Missouri Synod and was shortly to be one of the founding fathers of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church (Boor was elected Vice-president when SELC came into existence in 1902). He came to America in 1894 and served Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church in Chicago, IL. After the 1911 SELC convention, which denounced the Slovak Evangelical Union (a pan American-Slovak fraternal organization which was becoming progressively more liberal as time went on and eventually gave birth to the Zion Synod), Ladislav Boor left the SELC. Though he left the SELC, I am not certain at this time whether he ever joined the Zion Synod which later founded June 10-11, 1919.
- <sup>70</sup> Dolak, 17. Ladislav could not have helped out before 1894, since this is when he arrived in America and began his pastorate in Chicago.
- <sup>71</sup> Daniel Bella's picture appears twice in Dolak's book. One is of Bella as a young man (ixx) the other as an old man (xx). His biography is given on page 172 as follows:

"Daniel Bella was born April 10, 1873, in Nemecka L'upca, Slovakia. He received his elementary education in his native city. In Budapest he learned the trade of a blacksmith. In November 1891 he emigrated to the United States, making his home in Chicago. Here he worked in the Northwestern Railroad Pullman Car Shop. He was a charter member of Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church of Chicago. At the age of 21, Bella enrolled in Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Ill., completing his theological studies there on June 26, 1899. His first

call took him to Trinity, Cleveland, Ohio. Here he labored until November 12, 1905, when he accepted the call of St. Paul's Slovak Lutheran Church, East Port Chester, Conn. At that time there were only two other Slovak Lutheran Pastors serving the states of New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. In addition to serving his own congregation, Bella served many widely scattered communities of Slovak Lutherans. On June 29, 1947, he retired from the active ministry, having served St. Paul's of East Port Chester (now Byram) for 42 years. He was called to his eternal rest on January 13, 1955.

In 1901 Pastor Bella entered the holy estate of matrimony with Julia Bross. The Lord blessed their union with six children. From the very organization of the Slovak Synod, Pastor Bella took an active interest in its work and served it in many capacities, as chairman of the General Pastoral Conference, as a member of the Mission Board, as Visitor of the Eastern District, as assistant editor of the *Svedok*, and as superintendent pro tempore of the Lutheran Haven."

- 92 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- 93 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.
- 94 Dolak, 31. Cf. material later given on Pastor Jurco.
- 95 English version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity, 28.
- 96 Tom Vagasky in an interview on 12/22/88 said they used to call him "Pan Horack". A "Pan" (lord) was someone in the educated class, a learned man. Mr. Vagasky said he could remember seeing him riding around and that the neighborhood kids called him "Old man Horack." Carol Horack lived on into the 1930's.
- 97 Tom Vagasky supplied this information on 12/23/88.
- 98 Dolak, 39.
- 99 Dolak, 42. He was one of the original 10 charter pastors of the Slovak Ev. Lutheran Church.
- 100 English version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity, 28. Also 75th Anniversary Booklet, 7.
- 101 Dolak, 31.
- 102 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity. A note might be added that John Pelikan was the President of the Slovak Synod (1905-13, 1919-21) and represented the Slovaks at the Synodical Conference

meeting in New Ulm, MN, August 19-25, 1908, at which the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church was accepted into membership by the Synodical Conference.

103 Tom Vagasky supplied this information on 12/22/88 in an interview.

104 Dolak, 76.

105 The Streater Daily Times-Press of Thursday, May 18, 1950 reads:

"In the spring of 1908 a call was extended to Andrew Chovan, a theology student at Concordia Seminary in Springfield. He accepted and at the close of the school term in June, with his studies completed, he came to take charge of the local congregation."

106 Translation by Mary Hyduk from the Slovak version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity.

107 75th Anniversary Booklet, 19.

108 Fry, George C. A History of Lutheranism in America, 1619-1930. (Ft. Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1979) 130. The English Synod (English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri and Other States) became a non-geographical district of Missouri Synod in 1911.

109 Fry, 130. The rupture between the Michigan District of the Michigan Synod and the Michigan Synod was just healing at this time. The Michigan Synod returned as a whole to fellowship within the Synodical Conference in 1909. The Norwegians were still trying to piece themselves together from the election controversy of the 1880's and were not members of the Synodical Conference at this time.

110 75th Anniversary Booklet, 19.

111 Dolak, 79, 146. It appears that the attempt to start a Christian day school was hampered by a lack of qualified teachers to support the school. For the 1910-11 school year Pastor Chovan and seminary student Andrew Daniel taught the school. In 1911-12 there were 24 students enrolled and it was taught by seminarian George Majoros. (Dolak, 79.) For the 1912-13 school year he again recruited seminarian Andrew Daniel. Again in 1913-14 a seminarian (John Cervenak) handled the teaching. Finally, the task proved too much to handle and the school was closed. As of 1989, Holy Trinity has still not reinstated a Christian day school, though they now have a thriving pre-school program.

Mary Hyduk told me an interesting story about Chovan's classroom on 12/19/88:

"Once when we were in school on of the big boys was acting up. Pastor Chovan got the strap and was going toward him when the boy got up and ran across the top of

the benches, jumping from row to row and escaped out of the back of the classroom. Pastor Chovan went right after him."

<sup>112</sup> Dolak, 81. It was started originally on November 15, 1906 and was printed in Allegheny, PA. However, there was no official publishing house for the Slovak Synod at that time. A picture of the first page of the *Svedok* is on xxiii of Dolak's book.

<sup>113</sup> Dolak, 151. On page 153, Dolak relates the woeful financial problems which plagued the little publishing house.

"By 1913 the debt of the Streater printery had grown to \$3,323.53. The pastoral conferences of the Synod now began discussing the formation of a publications company which would offer shares for sale. When the convention resolution to form a synodical printing company was submitted to the congregations of the Synod, of the 25 congregations and 24 pastors eligible to vote, 12 congregations and 12 voted in favor of such a project, no vote being cast against it. Shares were to be offered at \$10, and the capitol was set at \$10,000. The printing missionaries and directors were elected. The constitution of the proposed company stipulated that a shareholder be a Slovak Lutheran holding membership in the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. When the commissioners of the company met in Chicago on October 6, 1914, they, upon the advice of a lawyer, reduced the amount of the capital to \$5,000. The printing company had 32 shareholders. It was known as the *Svedok* Publishing House and was chartered by the State of Illinois on September 2, 1915. The holdings of the Synod in the former printing company [the Slovak Concordia Publishing House] were turned over to the new company. In 1919 the printery had a debt of \$2,300, which the Synod resolved to pay. At the same time the Synod voted to sell its shares in the company. After the dissolution of the new printing company, the official periodical *Svedok* was to be printed wherever the most favorable terms could be obtained.

To the above I can concur with interviews of people from the congregation who could remember some of those days. My great-aunt Emma Hritz (interview 12/21/88) showed me a picture of her and her sister (Mary Sedory) working in the *Svedok* Publishing House putting out an edition of the *Svedok*. Emma Hritz (maiden name: Sedory) worked there from 1916 till 1918 (when she was 16 years old). She said that she ran the press and her sister Mary set the type. Then they walked the "first proof" down to Chovan's house for him to proof read it. The *Svedok* Publishing House was located in the Republic Hotel, near the Santa Fe Depot. Some of the paid workers in the *Svedok* Publishing House were Emma Hritz, Mary Sedory, Andy Harbach, Bill Plesko, and John Sabol. Some of the other who would volunteer their effort to put an edition together were: Anna Bakalar, Rev. Chovan's wife's sister

(Aunt Em couldn't remember her first name. Later she married Rev. George Majoris.), Anna Plesko (she later married a Catholic - an aunt of John Kerestes), Anna Palya (married Mr. Bagey), Elizabeth Plesko, Louise Palya (married Rev John Bajus, Luther Bajus' father), and a Pauline.

- 114 Dolak, 152.
- 115 Dolak, 81.
- 116 Interview with Mary Hyduk on 12/19/88.
- 117 This information comes from the Dedication Booklet of April 4, 1954, page 13, "Brief History of Trinity"
- 118 Dolak, 161. Although this sounds impressive, Streator owed the honor mostly to a fluke of Pennsylvania State law which had required the original charter of the Slovak Synod to include the word "Pennsylvania" in the official title of the Slovak Synod (Cf. Dolak, page 50). In order to work around this problem they transferred to Illinois where the laws were a little more charitable. Nevertheless, that they did not headquarter in Chicago was at least a nod of recognition to the oldest congregation of the Lutheran Slovaks in the North America.
- 119 English version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity, 28.
- 120 Streator Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.
- 121 Dolak, 92-93.
- 122 Interview with Charlie and Rose Hamann (12/21/88).
- 123 Interview with Anna and Mary Jacobs (12/20/88).
- 124 Mary Hyduk said, "Mrs. Chovan was helped in the delivery of the boys by Mrs. Antolick who served as midwife." (12/19/88)
- 125 Interview with Emma Hritz (12/21/88).
- 126 Interview with Anna and Mary Jacobs (12/20/88).
- 127 Interview with Mary Hyduk (12/19/88).
- 128 Interview with Margaret Brassfield (12/21/89)
- 129 Interview with Ann Jacob (12/20/88). Naturally, since most of the people spoke Slovak, instruction was held in Slovak. However, this shows that already by around 1921, English was needed in the church.

- 130 Interview with Mary Hyduk (12/19/88) The 75th Anniversary Booklet (published in 1959) indicates that Summer Vacation Bible School was down to 5 weeks in the summer by 1959. 75th Anniversary Booklet, 17.
- 131 Interview with Anna and Mary Jacobs (12/20/88).
- 132 Interview with Mary Hyduk (12/19/88).
- 133 Interview with Andy Estvanik (1/14/89).
- 134 75th Anniversary Booklet, 19.
- 135 The English version of the 50th anniversary booklet of Holy Trinity, 28. told me that he accepted the call to St. John's, South Bethlehem, PA. (Also Dolak, 24, footnote 5). However, I was still curious if this church was still extant or not. The current pastor, Rev. Raymond A. Malec, informed me that the original name of the church was in full "St. John the Baptist" Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church. Its name was changed to Concordia Lutheran Church in the 1970's after the SELC had joined the LC-MS. (From a letter of Pastor Raymond A. Malec, 3/20/89).
- 136 The 40th Anniversary booklet of St. John's, Bethlehem, PA (written in 1951) states:

The first full time pastor was the Rev. Andrew Chovan from Streator, Illinois. He arrived January 22, 1922 and was installed February 5, by pastor Paul Rafaj and Paul Rajcok.

The congregation voted to become a member of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Synod in June 1922, from which it had received some financial support, and later was aided in its building program. The first parsonage, owned by the church at 1249 East Fourth Street, was bought for \$5000 after the arrival of pastor Chovan. It served as such until 1937, when it was sold for \$5250. The Ladies' Aid Society was organized June 4, 1922. Officers were: Margaret Chovan, Anna Prokop, Barbara Vida and Elizabeth Kopas.

The first organ was bought from Wilkes-Barre congregation for \$250 and dedicated by pastors Andrew Chovan and Paul Rajcok. The ministry of Pastor Chovan was terminated by his resignation in August 1923.

Pastor Malec also included the following information about Andrew Chovan's ministry at South Bethlehem: "Pastor Chovan's ministry here was a short one.... Personal inquiries with some older members indicated that Pastor Chovan "left under a cloud" but as children that was all that they knew of the situation." (From letter of March 20, 1989 in reply to query sent to Rev. Malec about the identity of St. John's and the history of Andrew Chovan's pastorate).

- 137 From an interview with George Plesko, 12/22/88.

- 138 This description of olden time Slovak funerals was given to me by Andy Estvanik (1/14/89). He told me that once he witnessed a person fall in with the coffin in a profession of grief!
- 139 Marilyn June Sherod, 12/20/88. After reading my paper my mother had this comment to make, "Rev. Daniel blew his cigar smoke upward, nevertheless it got in our faces as we stood in front of his desk (a table which sometimes he propped his feet up on) as we recited our catechism. This was in the basement of the Illinois St. church and his "desk" was on the platform at the west end of the building and took place Fridays after school and for 6 weeks (9 AM to noon) in the summer. We would all be seated facing the platform (stage) in the basement chattering away and as soon as Rev. Daniel came in through the door you could hear a pin drop! He was a little hard of hearing so it must have been extremely quiet for him when he came in!" (Letter, 04/24/89)
- 140 Not many people seem to have remembered about Pastor Daniel's smoking habits regarding the pipe (that he didn't inhale) as given by his son (Rev. Robert J. Daniel) in a letter written Mar. 20, 1989:
- "He was an incessant smoker - about 8 cigars a day with a pipe in his mouth the rest of the time. Always prince-Albert. However, he never inhaled."
- 141 Letter from Robert J. Daniel, son of John Daniel (March 20, 1989).
- 142 Streator Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.
- 143 Streator Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950.
- 144 50th Anniversary Booklet (English), 28.
- 145 Streator Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950. One of their sons, Robert J. Daniel graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and was ordained at Holy Trinity on June 19, 1949 (75th Booklet, 21). Robert J. Daniel served at Trinity, Shamrock, TX (1949-1956) St. John, Hooker, OK (1956-1962); Immanuel Chapel, St. Louis, MO (1963-1974); and currently serves Hanover Lutheran Church, Girardeau, MO (1974 - present, 1989).
- 146 Letter from Robert J. Daniel, son of John Daniel (March 20, 1989). Robert J. Daniel had this to say of the subsequent history of Rev. John Daniel's children:

There were four of us in the family - my brother Jack the youngest and my two sisters in-between. My two sisters went to High School at Streator High and then both graduated from River Forest. In their third year of teaching they both ended up in Ft. Wayne. Dorothy married a Ft. Wayne businessman and Elaine a teacher from Bethlehem Lutheran. Her husband, a River Forest



graduate, has been in the ministry the past 15 years or so and is now pastor at Ft. Wayne, Bethlehem. Dorothy has 8 children - most living in the Ft. Wayne area. Elaine has 7 (two still in college) and spread around the Mid-west."

And as for Rev. Robert J. Daniel:

I attended Ft. Wayne 1938-44; St. Louis 44-49 after vicaring in St. Louis and Whiting, IN. Married in February of 1950. Audrey and I have 9 children. My first call was to Shamrock, Texas from 1949-56. I started a mission in town and also served another church. Then added one in Elk City for 5 years. Serving three places each Sunday was quite an adventure. Then, as you have it in your letter, I served 7 years at Hooker, OK; 11.5 years in North County of St. Louis and am going on 15 in Cape Girardeau. I am closing in on 65/40/15 -- 65 in April; 40 year ministry in June; 15 years at Cape in July, and planning to switch-gears for retirement at the end of this June [1989].

- 147 Zapisnica: Z 31. Shromazdenia. Slovenskejevanjelickej luteranskeje cirkvi. p. 6. Andrew Daniel was president of the SELC in 1945.
- 148 Letter from Robert J. Daniel, son of John Daniel (March 20, 1989).
- 149 Letter from Robert J. Daniel, son of John Daniel (March 20, 1989).
- 150 Telephone interview with Ann and Edna Bazik on 12/19/88.
- 151 Interview with Charlie and Rose Hamann on 12/20/88.
- 152 Interview with Tom Yednock on 12/19/88
- 153 Interview with Sue Gotch on 12/20/88.
- 154 Interview with Mrs. Sue Yuhas 12/22/88.
- 155 Interview with Pastor David P. Hudak on 12/22/88.
- 156 50th Anniversary Booklet (English), 29-30.
- 157 In an interview with Tom Vagasky (12/23/88) he made the statement that once a man innocently sent a letter to Pastor Daniel on Elk stationary. Pastor Daniel called the man in and explained to him that the Lodges were anti-Scriptural and "if you want to go to the lodges then they can bury you too." I don't know what the final resolution of the incident, but it shows that the problem did exist.

- 158 Under the pastorate of Wilton Hille Andrew Novotney "came out" into the open with his membership, mistakenly thinking that lodge members were going to be accepted at Holy Trinity from that time on. (Interview with Marilyn Sherod, 12/23/88)
- 159 Although quoted later on in this work, the statement of Rev. Philip H. Lochhaas of the LC-MS Commission on Organizations is directly to the point when he said concerning "social memberships" in the lodges:
- Since the lodges themselves officially do not permit such memberships, it would be less than honest for us to deal with them on a different basis.
- 160 Dedication Booklet, 1954, 13.
- 161 Interview with Sue Gotch on 12/20/88.
- 162 75th Anniversary Booklet, English Edition, 9.
- 163 75th Anniversary Booklet, English Edition, 9.
- 164 50th Anniversary Booklet (English), 29.
- 165 Interview with Tom Vagasky, 12/23/88.
- 166 Letter from Robert J. Daniel, son of John Daniel (March 20, 1989).
- 167 I had the rare privilege of watching a film of the last Slovak service which Rev. Cizmar conducted. Tom Vagasky has this on 8mm. The attendance at this service was about 50 people or so and was exceptionally high due to the fact that all knew this would be the last Slovak service at Holy Trinity.
- 168 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 19.
- 169 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 19.
- 170 75th Anniversary Booklet, Slovak edition, 14-15. Translated by Margaret Brassfield. ("In Jan., 1932, new electricity was installed in both church and school.")
- 171 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 9-11.
- 172 Streater Daily Times-Press, Thursday, May 18, 1950. This in spite of the fact that quite a few of Holy Trinity's young men went away to the military. 107 served during the World War II, and in the years 1947-59 an additional 48 men served in the armed forces. (75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 9.)
- 173 Dedication Booklet, 1954, 13.
- 174 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 11.

- 175 Dedication Booklet, 1954, 13.
- 176 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 11. It is interesting that W.S. Bills got the contract since Everette Brassfield (my grandfather) worked for William Bills. Everette and William Bills had a pretty good working relationship over many long years. I think this was a case where William Bills helped out our church with a low bid for the sake of my grandfather.
- 177 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 11.
- 178 The dedication service of Sunday, April 4, 1954 was the first in a series of services that week which celebrated the completion of the new facilities. On April 4 at the 9:00 AM service there was a "Solemn Service of Dedication" in English and Slovak. This was followed by a 3:00 PM "Dedication and Consecration Worship Service in the English Language." Then at 8:00 PM that evening there was a "Dedication of Organ and Carillon Bells" which was a "Worship and Concert." On Monday, April 5, at 7:30 PM a "Dedication and Seventieth Anniversary Worship Service in the Slovak Language" was held. Then on Tuesday, April 6, a special worship service entitled "Ladies Night" was conducted at 8:00 PM. And finally on Wednesday, April 7, another special worship service entitled "Youth Night" was held at 7:30 PM. (This information is from the general invitation to the festivities accompanying "The Solemn Services of Dedication of Holy Trinity Slovak Ev. Lutheran Church." At the dedication service of April 4, 1954, Mr. Richard Kochis and Mr. John Kerestes lit the candles. This was picked up on at the 35th Anniversary of the building of the church on Main St. (4/9/1989) where Pastor Hudak put into the bulletin:
- Mr Richard Kochis and Mr. John Kerestes will light the candles this morning as they did 35 years ago at the dedication service on April 4, 1954. We understand that Mr. Andrew Kerestes lit the candles for the first Slovak worship service in the new church.
- 179 Dedication Booklet, 1954, 13.
- 180 Interview with Margaret Brassfield, 12/22/88. Everette Brassfield had a lot to do with the building of the new church. He was on the Executive Building Committee and as a worker for W.S. Bills coordinated many of the details of construction for the church. He, along with many capable men of the congregation, donated much time and labor to see the project through.
- 181 From an article entitled "Touring Our New Church" which was in "Trinity Tidings" (the church newsletter) sent out sometime between September 1952 - April 1954.
- 182 The above was a combination of the 75th Anniversary, English version, p. 17 and the Order of Service for 80th Anniversary of the Founding of Trinity (August 16, 1964).

- 183 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 19.
- 184 The Ninth Anniversary of Church Dedication and Burning of the Mortgage worship folder, April 21, 1963.
- 185 Ann and Mary Jacobs (12/20/89) told me that a lot of large families left Holy Trinity during the depression because they could not "pay their dues." Some of the families which were to some degree effected in this manner were: Bakalars, Antolicks, Drabiks, Mihaloks, and Dovins.
- 186 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 9.
- 187 Tom Vagasky (12/23/88)
- 188 75th Anniversary Booklet, English edition, 9.
- 189 Interview with Tom Vagasky, 12/23/88.
- 190 From letter of Pastor Hudak (4/11/1989).
- 191 Pastor Daniel died about 6 months after Cizmar came. Certainly before the 80th anniversary celebration.
- 192 These words are off of a photograph I took of the "plaque" in the marker stone.
- 193 From the order of service bulletin of the 80th Anniversary of the founding of Trinity, page 4.
- 194 Interview with Margaret Brassfield, 12/21/88.
- 195 Interview with: Mary Hyduk (12/19/88), Tom Yednock (12/19/88).
- 196 Interview with Mary Hyduk, 12/19/88. I was in the last confirmation class of Pastor Cizmar. He was always kind to us and perhaps was even a little too easy on us. He did make a sort of emotional comment in the closing session of our class regarding this being his last confirmation class. I think he truly did like working with youth, but was too afflicted to do much in his last years. There were 10 in my confirmation class, of which about 3 are still going to church that I know of. My confirmation verse was Jn 14:6.
- 197 Interview with Sue Gotch, 12/20/88.
- 198 This information from a letter of Pastor Wilton E. Hille (4/5/89) who currently serves a parish in Spokane, WA.
- 199 Pastor Hille said of the time when he helped pastor Cizmar before he retired:

Cizmar and I worked together about six months before he officially retired. He was quite ill all of that time,

however. He was tired and had every right to be. He had given his life to his people and was sick and tired.... He had given it his all and was used up by ministry and the people he served. That happens in ministries.

- 200 Interview with Marilyn (Brassfield) Sherod, 12/23/88.
- 201 Interview with Ralph (Bill) Sherod, 12/23/88.
- 202 Interview with Sue Gotch, 12/20/88.
- 203 Interview with Marilyn (Brassfield) Sherod, 12/23/88. Marilyn also added, "His wife was considered by many to be like a second pastor."
- 204 Many of the older folk that I interviewed still weren't sure what hit Holy Trinity during Hille's term of office. Talking about speaking in tongues... raising hands up in the air... guitar music folk services... a new openness toward St. Paul's Lutheran (ALC) and other community churches... all seem to have blurred together in their minds in a whirlwind of impressions. Mostly they did not object on orthodox grounds as much as it was "too much too fast."
- 205 This story was related to me by my mother, Marilyn Sherod (12/23/88). She used to attend Mrs. Hille's Bible class but eventually stopped attending.
- 206 Sue Gotch (12/20/88) related that once while Hille was here it snowed so much on New Year's day that no one but Pastor's family was able to get to church. Since they had been scheduled to go on the radio that morning, Pastor Hille and his wife and children gathered around the microphone and had their own modified service on the radio with guitars (they both played well on the guitar). Guitar had never been used before in church but during Hille's time was frequently used.
- 207 Evanga-what? Trinity hardly knew what evangelism was before Hille came. Not all of the changes that Hille tried to implement were bad. Under Pastor Hille Holy Trinity made "welcome wagon" visits to people who had recently moved into the community. The lists had been available from synod but had not been used by Holy Trinity before.
- 208 Interview with Ann and Mary Jacobs, 12/20/88. They told me there had never been a Bible Class for adults before Pastor Hille's time!
- 209 There were actually three DCE's that served at Holy Trinity. First there was a married couple, Dean and Carol Ulrich, who graduated from Concordia College, River Forest (75) and served together. Then there was a single person, Wendy Powell, who graduated from Concordia College, Seward (77). As might be expected, the DCE's worked with the youth groups (Jr. & Sr. Young People's Society, YPS) at Holy Trinity. The Ulrich's theology was

not totally in line with God's Word, for I remember once, from a Bible Study they taught the Junior YPS, when the statement was made, "You can begin to live more and more for Jesus. You can go on without sinning for longer periods of time." When I questioned them further on this, it became clear that they were talking about perfectly keeping God's law. I objected to them, "But we can't even go a minute without sinning, even if we don't realize we are sinning." But they assured me that we could work up to days at a time. Though I didn't realize it at the time, such theology was probably caught from the charismatic virus which was trying to infiltrate LC-MS at the time. Pastor Hille was merely representative of a larger movement.

Dean and Carol Ulrich were in Streator from 1976-79. Subsequent to serving Holy Trinity, Dean and Carol Ulrich served at Trinity Lutheran Church, Tyler, TX from 1979-88 and have recently continued their ministry at St. Paul, Rockford, IL. Wendy Powell worked as a DCE at Holy Trinity from 1979-1981 and then accepted a call to Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, Houston, TX., serving there from 1982-1985. About six years ago, she was involved in a severe car accident which caused severe damage to her motor skills, for a time confining her to a wheel chair. However, in a telephone interview on 4/18/89, Pastor Robert L. Grothe informed me that she had just visited his church last Sunday and she has made "remarkable progress." Wendy now resides in Austin and works for Concordia College.

<sup>210</sup> When Hille first got to Trinity he told Marilyn Sherod, "I have to move slowly here." It seems that at first he related to her better than most of the parishioners because she had been fairly widely traveled and had a broader vision than most of the "lifetime residents" of Streator. She told me in an interview, "What he meant, I later found out, was to institute his own brand of Lutheranism."

<sup>211</sup> Interview with Mary Hyduk, 12/19/88.

<sup>212</sup> Interview with Ralph (Bill) Sherod, 12/23/88. This remark was made in the days following the walkout by the "Seminox" people. Although Hille's sympathies were probably not in line with the Seminox people who later split from LC-MS and formed the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC), he was definitely anti-Synodical in his thinking. The "third party" may have been George Plesko who in his interview (12/22/88) said, "Hille's aim was eventually to pull out of Synod and stay independent."

<sup>213</sup> This is the draft of the actual letter Mrs. Sherod wrote to Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann sometime at the beginning of March, 1977. She also made the following comment in a letter of 4/24/89:

How naive I was when I wrote this letter to Dr. Hoffmann!  
He was middle-of-the-road too!

- 214 This is the verbatim text of the letter Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann wrote to Mrs. Sherod on March 14, 1977.
- 215 This is the draft of the actual letter Mrs. Sherod wrote to Philip Lochhaas on March 23, 1977.
- 216 This is the verbatim text of the letter Philip Lochhaas wrote to Mrs. Sherod on March 25, 1977.
- 217 A "prayer-chain" is a group of people who pledge to call each other when intercession is requested. The idea is that you can get a lot of people praying to God for something in a very short while, even if you need the spiritual support or request during the middle of the week when there are no church services. The prayer-chain that my mother was a part of had been started by Mrs. Hille. Everyone in the chain would call then next person, the request working its way, person by person, through the entire group.
- 218 Sunday Bulletin of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, May 24, 1977.
- 219 From the carbon copy of the original letter sent by Mrs. Sherod to Dr. Oswald J. C. Hoffmann on May 2, 1977.
- 220 This is the verbatim text of the letter Dr. Oswald J. C. Hoffmann wrote to Mrs. Sherod on May 16, 1977.
- 221 This is the verbatim text of the letter Philip Lochhaas wrote to Mrs. Sherod on May 29, 1977.
- 222 From some notes that Marilyn Sherod had jotted down after Hille left the house in a blustering "red-faced" rage.

After reading through my manuscript Mrs. Sherod added this description of what happened that day:

Hille came to the house to talk to me. I was on the phone at the time talking to Eunice [her sister]. I advised Eunice he was at the door, hung the phone up and let Hille in. (Then Points 1-9). Point 10 would be that Hille threatened me with excommunication if I continued to make phone calls. Then he thrust the May 4th letter into my hand and as I was close to tears at that point I asked him to leave the house.

- 223 This is the original letter Pastor Hille gave to Marilyn Sherod on May 4, 1977.
- 224 This is from the draft of the letter Mrs. Sherod actually sent sometime in the middle of 1978 to: SELC District President Albert M. Marcis, Circuit Counselor Emil M. Velebir, and SELC Vice-President Luther J. Bajus.

- 225 George Plesko (12/22/88) related, "at one joint meeting of the pastors and elders of Holy Trinity and St. Paul's the subject of church discipline was brought up and Pastor Flessner said, 'What is this about church discipline?' That's when the difference between the practices of Holy Trinity and St. Paul's Church really started to come out into the open."
- 226 LC-MS was in fellowship with ALC from 1969-1981. From 1977-81 the LC-MS was in a state of "protesting fellowship."
- 227 George Plesko (12/22/88) and Marilyn Sherod (12/23/88) both noticed it. Actually, probably most of the people in Streator noticed it since Streator is so small. However, it is interesting that George Plesko remembered it also.
- 228 Streator Times-Press, Wednesday, January 18, 1978.
- 229 In a letter (4/24/89) regarding this incident my mother said:  
I remember Jim Arrington shaking his head and laughingly saying, "I don't know what they said to him, but it must have shook him up good."
- 230 Dale Hille wanted nothing to do with the situation and refused all responsibility regarding the child. He now farms 3300 acres of wheat in Quincy, WA (about 2 1/2 hours from Spokane, WA where his father, Rev. Wilton E. Hille, is a pastor at St. John, Spokane, WA). Dale is happily married, has two children (a boy and a girl) and is active in the church and battalion chief of the local fire department (from Wilton E. Hille's letter of 4/5/89).
- 231 Wilton Hille was installed at St. John's, Spokane, WA on 11/11/1979. He has not been back to Holy Trinity since, not even to come back for the centennial services held in 1984.
- 232 The Lutheran Annual, 1988.
- 233 Interview with Margaret Brassfield (12/21/89)
- 234 Interview with Pastor Hudak (12/22/88)
- 235 In July, 1983 I joined the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.
- 236 Interview with Tom Yednock (12/19/88). The two pre-school teachers are Gloria Sass, Hope Majernik. There are also three Child Care Assistants: Bernardine Eckelkamp, Linda Hoekstra, Deborah Kling.
- 237 Interview with Pastor Hudak (12/22/88)
- 238 Times-Press, Friday, June 29, 1984.
- 239 Letter from Pastor Hudak (4/11/89).



240 Interview with Margaret Brassfield (12/23/89)

241 George Plesko commented to me in his interview (12/22/88), "Pastor Hudak put his foot down and stopped joint worship at St. Anthony's."

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#### LETTERS

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Letter from Ivon P. Harris to Mrs. Harold Osborn on 5/30/74.  
Letter from Pastor Wilton E. Hille to Marilyn Sherod on 5/4/77.  
Letter from Pastor Wilton E. Hille to Jim Sherod on 4/5/89.  
Letter from Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann to Marilyn Sherod on 3/14/77.  
Letter from Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann to Marilyn Sherod on 5/16/77.  
Letter from Pastor David Hudak to Jim Sherod on 4/11/89.  
Letter from Pastor Philip Lochhaas to Marilyn Sherod on 3/25/77.  
Letter from Pastor Philip Lochhaas to Marilyn Sherod on 5/29/77.  
Letter from Pastor Malec to Jim Sherod on 3/20/89.  
Letter from Marilyn Sherod to Dr. Oswald J. C. Hoffmann on 5/2/77.  
Letter from Marilyn Sherod to Philip Lochhaas on 3/23/77.  
Letter from Marilyn Sherod to SELC District President Albert M. Marcis, Circuit Counselor Emil M. Velebir, and SELC Vice-President Luther J. Bajus in mid 1978.  
Letter from Marilyn Sherod to Jim Sherod on 4/24/89.

#### INTERVIEWS

Interview with Margaret Brassfield (12/21/88).  
Interview with Andy Estvanik (01/14/89).  
Interview with Sue Gotch (12/20/88).  
Interview with Charlie and Rose Hamann (12/21/88).  
Interview with Emma Hritz (12/21/88).  
Interview with Pastor Hudak (12/20/88).  
Interview with Mary Hyduk (12/19/88).  
Interview with Anna and Mary Jacobs (12/20/88).  
Interview with George Plesko (12/22/88).  
Interview with Marilyn June Sherod (12/20/88).