



# CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

**June 20-21, 1987**

**ZION LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**

**Towner, North Dakota**

**1887 — 1987**



*Dedication of Church - 1909*

*Old  
Zion  
Lutheran  
Church  
&  
Church  
Interior  
1952*





*Present church dedicated, March 7, 1971.*



*New church interior*



First Pastor  
Ole Hermundsen Aaberg  
1881-1885



Second Pastor  
Rev. T.S. Reishus  
1885-1889



Third Pastor  
Martin (Shirley) Shirley  
1890-1891



Fourth Pastor  
Olaf Johansen Rossing  
1900-1906



Fifth Pastor  
Carl Gunnerius Eidness  
1916-1917



Rev. Richard T. Wanberg  
1919-1960



Rev. Roger I. Stensaas  
1960-1966



*Rev. Eugene Hanson*  
1966-1971



*Rev. Ronald Korfmacher*  
1971-1973



*Rev. James Peterson*  
1974-1977



*Dr. Michael O. Smith*  
1977-1986



*Joel Scherer  
Ordained  
June 30, 1974*

*Only Pastor Ordained At Zion Lutheran*



*New Parsonage - built in 1960*



*Old Parsonage - bought in 1923*



## Early Day Sunday School Class



*Left to Right-Back Row: Verna Larson, Verla Knutson, Margery Curfman, Mrs. R.T. Wanberg.*

*6th Row: Esther Jorgenson, Lillian Hermanson, Bernice Larson, Leah Ellingson, Fern Miller, Mrs. Wm. Leach (teacher).*

*5th Row: Alden Curfman, Ernest Iverson, Leonard Jorgenson, Orrin Iverson, Otis Curfman, Larry Anderson.*

*4th Row: Verden Ness, Clarence Berndt, Burton Pettit, Loren Rasmussen.*

*3rd Row: Hazel Hermanson, Helen Schiele, Ruth Ekstron, Ilene Larson, Mildred Anderson, Alice Anderson, Laura Berndt.*

*2nd Row: Gordon Iverson, Yvonne Thorson, Nordis Wanberg, Winnifred Anderson, Helen Strand, Alan Rasmussen.*

*1st Row: Lloyd Hermanson, Alyce Thorson, Jean Larson, Viola Anderson, Esther Anderson, Richard Wanberg, Verner Erickson, Charlotte Ness, and Bernard Berndt.*

# Zion Lutheran Church History

**Compiled by Clarissa Fiebelkorn & Vi Rasmussen**

On a beautiful September day in the year 1881, the Reverend O. H. Aaberg of Valle, Grand Forks County, Dakota Territory; the Reverend B. Harstad of Mayville, Trail County, Dakota Territory; J. Lomen of Decorah, Iowa; Ole E. Heg, Bloomfield, Dakota Territory; and H. E. Heg of Lodi, Wisconsin, made up a missionary party, and started out for the far distant Mouse River Valley, over two hundred miles away. Their equipment was a wagon, well loaded with provisions, equipped with bows for canvas covering, and a lighter, smaller wagon with half springs. They were also equipped with a Winchester repeating rifle, both double-barreled and single-barreled shotguns, and a revolver. They were supplied with Bibles, religious tracts, catechisms, and hymn books. Their's was a missionary journey! They planned to search for Lutheran people whom, they had been informed, had settled in this beautiful wild, untamed country where the sod lay untouched from the hand of the Creator.

Rev. B. Harstad kept a diary of this missionary journey. It was printed the following year of 1882 in a Norwegian magazine. This valuable historical document shows that the missionary group came through the region of Fort Totten, following water courses, sandhills, and various directions given them by Indians along the route.

Throughout their entire trip, they found no white people, only half breeds and Indians; although there were a few white people who had settled near where Minot and Burlington are today. They did not go far enough to discover them on this first missionary journey. They reached the Wintering River.

In the years that followed, Rev. O. H. Aaberg became a very welcome visitor at the various sod huts and dugouts in the hills, and brought the Word of God to early settlers, baptized their children, and brought comfort to them in time of sorrow and despair.

When the railroad reached Devils Lake in the early 1880's, the Reverend Aaberg settled there, and opened a Norwegian religious school where he instructed Lutheran young people then living in Towner, and the surrounding area. They received their confirmation instruction in Devils Lake, and during this time they lived in the Aaberg home.

Reverend T. S. Reishus was the first regular Lutheran pastor to be called to this territory, coming here in 1885. He preached his first

sermon on July 4, 1886. His territory extended from Burlington to Towner, Round Lake (near Barton) and later Rugby Junction. The pastor lived on a homestead near Minot. July 11, 1886, Rev. T. S. Reishus was installed as the first resident pastor of Norway congregation. In the summer of 1886, Rev. Reishus hauled logs for his parsonage at Minot, and it was completed October 18th. The men of the congregation had the choice of either donating three logs apiece, two days work, or two dollars in cash toward the parsonage. The house was built of logs. The stable, also built of logs, had, in the meantime, served as home and parsonage. It was not long before the missionary spirit of this early pastor led him toward the settlers near Towner. Early records show Rev. T. S. Reishus was pastor at Towner from 1886 to 1889. On May 15, 1887, the organization of the Towner Lutheran Congregation was recorded, with six charter members, namely; Gustave Jacobson, Arne Anderson, Andrew Eidsness, Hans Strand, Henry Erickson and Ole Erickson. April 24, 1887, is the first mention of Rev. L.T. Reishus conducting a service at Towner. He was a son of T.S. Reishus.

Throughout the pioneer Lutheran history looms the interesting figure of homesteader Johannes Copperdahl, (sometimes spelled with a K) trudging on foot many a weary mile to band together pioneer families and arrange for services to be held in the scattered sod huts. Special tribute is indeed due this lonely, figure struggling with pathetic poverty and yet always in spite of great odds, zealous and sincere in the work of the Master. We still refer to Copperdahl Hill, which is about ten miles south of Towner on Highway No. 14.

Early Lutheran services were held in a building that was later the Hans Olson carpentry shop. At that time, the building stood near a grove of trees down towards the river, back of the Rosencrans flats. Later services were held in the Towner School building. When the Presbyterian church was built, Andrew Gilbertson made a very substantial gift to the building fund with the understanding that the church be used by both Presbyterians and Lutherans. This was the arrangement until 1908; when the Lutherans built the Zion Lutheran Church.

Record is made of a service held February 6, 1889 at the Hans Jorgenson place south of Towner, with the baptism of Julius Jorgenson. On June 23, 1889, there was a service at the Gustave Jacobson place with confirmation and baptism. This was the first confirmation service at Towner. The Gustave Jacobson place was the farm owned today by Mrs. Thelma Hutton. The little house was later moved to the Andrew Thorson farm. Members of the first confirmation class were: Oline Kopperdahl, Anton Jevnager, Hans Hanson, Willie and Cordelia Thompson and Ole Rue. Emma Larson,

third child of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Larson was baptized at this service.



*Ole Thorson farm home.*

Upon the resignation of Rev. Reishus, due to increased responsibilities in Minot, the Rev. Martin Shirley was installed as pastor on May 26, 1890. He proved up a claim near the Sigval Nelson place, but then left in 1891. The first Christmas Tree Festival recorded was December 1890, at the Ole Thorson farm near Wintering Creek. Rev. Martin Shirley was the pastor present at that time.

Rev. Theodore J. E. Tonnesson moved from Overly, N.D. to Towner to help the Towner congregation for one year, but he was never called as pastor.

In 1894, there was still no pastor secured for this field of work. Rev. T. S. Reishus of Minot, Rev. H.A. Blegan of Leeds and Rev. C. D. Eikenes of Overly, gave of their time and efforts to keep the congregation going.

September 8, 1895, Rev. Einar I. Strom was called as pastor. He labored in eight congregations until September 19, 1886.

Another year went by before a new pastor came. Rev. T. H. Tonnesson came from Portland, Oregon, December 14, 1897.

Rev. Olaf Rossing served the Towner Lutherans from 1900-1906, living in Towner. He preached only in Norwegian. Hagen Thompson (who owned a clothing store and bank) gave him a new suit occasionally and the rural people donated home-grown food. The people of Towner wanted an English speaking minister; this and the fact that he could not afford to live in town, caused him to purchase a farm near Bergen, N.D., where he was asked to serve a rural Norwegian speaking parish. He continued to serve the Mouse River (Free) Lutherans north and west of Towner, namely: the Hougoms,

Oiums, Dokkens, Sjongs, Jordes, Tagestads, Andersons and possibly a few more families. He preached in the two rural school houses north and northwest of Towner until the middle 1930's, when most of these people joined the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Towner, where an English speaking pastor presided. Now the (Free) Lutheran and Evangelical branches are merged into the American Lutheran Church.

Towner was again without a resident English speaking pastor. In 1907, Rev. Nicolai Larson from First Lutheran Church, Minot, N.D., together with his assistant S. C. Ylvisaker, preached twenty-two services at Towner.

May 31, 1908, Rev. Herman O. Sauer came to Towner as a resident pastor. The Towner call included Towner, Berwick, Newburg and Maxbass. The people were enthusiastic about his coming, and it was not long before they were planning to build a church. His was a very active ministry, and the church was completed and dedicated during his stay at Towner. The reed organ that served so many years in the Towner church, was his gift to the congregation. This same reed organ is still in this church, which is now the McHenry County Historical Society Museum. There was not much organization work before the pastorate of Rev. H. O. Sauer, 1908-1910, as before that time. the struggle was merely to gather the Lutheran people together into small groups here and there. This period seemed to be one of the highlights of Zion Lutheran church history. The people were interested, willing to help, very faithful in attending church services and there is a note of joy throughout their records. On November 12, 1908, the corner stone of the new church was laid; July 4, 1909 was the dedication service and a day of great rejoicing. Pastors came and pastors went. The service was intermittent. Seven years went by with but a few pastors now and then. The work so faithfully carried on for so many years had seemingly fallen to pieces. The following pastors helped out during this period; O. Hogoos, 1910-11, C. M. Hallanger, 1911-14; and temporary pastors, among which were Rev. Theo J. Lund of Minot, 1914-16, and C. G. Eidness, 1916-17. The church was mortgaged, and the congregation had scattered, some were attending the Presbyterian church and many no church at all. All hope of ever reviving the Lutheran work in this field had fled, and discouragement hung over all. It was at such a time that Dakota District President, I. D. Ylvisaker, on March 10, 1918, came here to rally the Lutherans once more and see if by any chance Lutheran work could again be taken up and the church saved for the future. A great deal of credit at this precarious time must be given Andrew Gibertson, who against all odds, had held the church mortgage and refused to sell the church. President I. D. Ylvisaker made arrangements with Andrew Gilbertson, who was

generous in helping with the mortgage by cancelling \$1000 of it.

A new pastor was called to the field, Rev. Richard T. Wanberg, who came to Towner directly from the Seminary, August 22, 1919. One of the favorite stories told by Rev. R. T. Wanberg is his "key" story, as follows:

## One "KEY" To The Kingdom

By Rev. R.T. Wanberg

It was time to put a new lock on the farm machine shed, and my father, instead of discarding the key, put the key on a keychain and gave it to me to carry in my pocket. Boys my age loved key chains!

Growing up in horse and buggy days in rural Minnesota, the youngest child of Norwegian emigrant parents, it was not unusual for young children to accept the isolation of distant neighbors. It forced young children to play alone. So one of my most common types of play was to stand on the wood pile and preach to the chickens. Their total lack of interest did not discourage those early sermons!

My parents had a dream to see their youngest child complete a college education. Being born in my mother's 50th year, neither parent lived to see this dream fulfilled. After completing Luther College and Luther Seminary, it was a strong inward feeling that it was God's will to accept a call of three churches, located in 3 small towns, on the North Dakota prairies. The District President had warned that the call would be difficult. Pastors had come and gone and people had become indifferent to the church.

Mrs. Wanberg and I were excited and thrilled to arrive in Towner by train. As we descended from the train, the anticipated reception committee was not there. In fact, there was no one from the church to assist us where to find lodging or to show us the church.

Mrs. Wanberg and I decided to find the church. Being a well trained musician and organist, she was eager to know if there was a piano or organ in the church. The little white church was found locked—with a huge, heart-shaped hasp lock securely holding all without. No one knew who had the key!

Our disappointment was overwhelming! Then I decided to examine the hasp lock again. Excitedly I said, "I think I have a key that will fit that lock!" I drew the key chain from my pocket and placed the key from the old machine shed, into the lock. IT TURNED THE LOCK OPEN! This key, which had been carried all through boyhood days, high school, college, and the Seminary, was to serve as "one key" to the Kingdom.

Pastor Wanberg has been a church member and resident of this community since 1919. He is 98 years old.

The Towner parish consisted of Zion of Towner, Bloomfield at Upham, and Trinity at Berwick. The work in this call was made possible through the Home Mission; so Rev. Wanberg received half of his salary through the congregation and half from Home Missions.

Rev. Wanberg's installation service was held on August 24, 1919. It is interesting to note that the special vocal music was provided by Mr. Sullivan, editor of the local newspaper, a Roman Catholic, and by Mr. Charles Allen, who also worked in the local newspaper office, a Presbyterian.

September 19, 1920, Rev. Wanberg conducted his first adult baptism and confirmation service. Those baptized were Mabel, Emma and Anna Jorgenson. Those confirmed were Mrs. Anna Hermanson, Mrs. Grace Hilmen, Don Juan Shepard, Robert Fylken, Nels Erickson, Olga Jorgenson, and Mabel and Emma, and Anna Jorgenson.

In 1923 a new furnace was purchased for the church, and also a beautiful white and gold altar railing, baptismal font and carpeting for the chancel. Also in 1923 a parsonage was bought by the Towner and Bloomfield parishes.

In 1926 a beautiful altar painting by Arne Berger, was presented to the congregation by Mrs. Sigrid Nertröst. In choosing a painting, she wished to have a picture that little children would love. Thus, a painting of Christ, the Good Shepherd, holding in His arms a little lamb, was chosen.

By the way, Lutefisk suppers have been recorded as far back as 1896, in this congregation.

The year 1928 was a joy to old and young alike, when Andrew Gilbertson presented a beautiful church bell to the congregation. It cost \$1300 and was given by Mr. Gilbertson in memory of his mother. This was his last substantial gift to his church. Strange to say, Mr. Gilbertson rang the bell for the first time that day, and one month later, its first tolling was for him. This same bell is still in use, contained in a bell tower constructed for it at the entrance to the new church. Two beautiful stained glass windows for the chancel, and given by the Young Ladies Society and the Willing Workers, were also dedicated the same day as the bell.

1930 is marked by the congregation having a Mortgage Burning Ceremony at the annual meeting, and being free of debt for the first time in its history.

The years before World War II were a time of struggle for the

church. It was an anxious time for the congregation, with many names of our boys on the service roll; but it is a wonderful blessing from the Lord on this congregation that the boys all came home again with not a single one missing.

Mother's Day, 1949, a pair of brass candelabra and a brass cross for the altar were given by the Rom family in memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Rom, early residents of the Towner community. At this dedication service they also gave eight floor aisle candelabra, and four chancel candelabra in white to be used for church weddings.

June 28, 1953, the Baldwin Organ Service of Dedication was held. Professor H. B. Welliver, organist, and wife, Margaret, soloist, presented the concert. The organ committee was composed of Mrs. Wanberg, Mrs. Ed (Bertha) Gilbertson, and Miss Lillian Gilbertson, all having served as organists through many years.

Rev. Wanberg served this parish until 1960. That year a new parsonage was built on property originally purchased by Rev. Wanberg and given to Zion. The parsonage in which the Wanberg family lived for so many years, was deeded to Rev. Wanberg by the Zion Lutheran church.

Pastor Roger I. Stensaas served the Zion-Bloomfield parishes from 1960 to 1966. Pastor Eugene Hanson served from 1966-1971. In 1971 the Melankton Lutheran Church at Upham became part of the parish.

The Zion Lutheran congregation proving too large for the little white wooden church; a new church building was proposed. A ground breaking ceremony was held on July 26, 1970. By January 1, 1971, the building was all completed and dedication of the new church occurred on Sunday, March 7, 1971. Bishop J. Elmo Agrimson gave the dedicatory sermon. Also taking part in the service were: Pastors R.T. Wanberg, Roger I. Stensaas, with Marvin Odland of Minot. At the service a new Baldwin piano, given by the Sunday School and ALCW, was dedicated in memory of Mrs. Wanberg.

Many beautiful memorials have been given to the church, but we hesitate to list these lest some might be omitted unintentionally. However, we would like to mention that the pews as well as all the chancel furnishings were given by Alvina Erickson in memory of her husband, Nels Erickson.

The Rev. Ronald Korfmacher came to Zion Lutheran Church in September, 1971; after serving as a chaplain in Viet Nam. He died July 5, 1973, at his parental Wisconsin home in his second year serving as our pastor. Pastor Korfmacher's funeral service was conducted by Pastor Roy Gilbertson, District president, who gave the sermon. Rev. Wade Davick and Rev. Stanley Rosengren, and our Intern, Joel Scherer, also took part in the service. Louise Korfmacher,



his widow, with her children Carl, John and Christina, chose to make Towner their home. Louise is teaching in the Towner School and also is part-time organist and choir director at our church.

Joel Scherer served this congregation until he had to return to the seminary in the fall. He is the only pastor to be ordained in Zion; and the ordination was held June 30, 1974.

The first intern, David E. Larsen, came to the parish in the fall of 1971 and served for one year. Following interns were: Joel Scherer, Armin Steege, Carl Bengtson, Fred Baltz, and John Kuziej.

Intern Armin Steege came from the seminary in the fall of 1973; and he served alone until Rev. James Peterson arrived as pastor in January, 1974. The Rev. Peterson left in June, 1977.

During Rev. Peterson's pastorate, in 1976 the mortgage of the new church was paid in full to the Minot Federal Savings and Loan and to the Pioneer State Bank of Towner. The Mortgage Burning Ceremony was held on October 17, 1976, with Rev. Stanley Knutson of Bismarck as guest speaker.

The summer of 1977 saw a realignment of the Towner Parish. The Bloomfield and Melankton churches of Upham became one call with their own pastor. Zion Lutheran of Towner became one call. The parsonage, which had been jointly owned, was then purchased in its entirety by Zion Lutheran.

Pastor Michael O. Smith and his wife Judith came to Zion the last day of June in 1978. Pastor Smith continued in the pulpit until November 30, 1986, when he left to take a pastorate in Rugby.

While pastor at Zion, Michael Smith, received his doctorate in Theology from Trinity Theological Seminary in 1981. Judy acted as organist and choir director for much of her time here.

On Christmas Eve of 1979, a new organ donated to Zion Lutheran by a young man of the congregation, was played for the first time. During the past ten years, new green hymnals came into use and the red hymnals containing more contemporary and folk music, have been added. Most of these hymn books have been donated.

Three members of the congregation, Monna May (Mrs. Ernest) Dokken, Marie (Mrs. James) Smith and June (Mrs. Harry) Anderson constructed a triptych of stained glass. They presented it to the church in honor of their families. June Anderson and Marie Smith have made all the stained glass windows throughout the church. These windows have been given in memory and in honor of various members of the congregation.

Members of Zion have always been generous with time, talent and gifts in kind and money. As the years have progressed, changes for the better have been constant. The pioneers, who began in the small homes available, would be astonished at our Zion Lutheran church as it stands now, and, we hope, pleased.

For many years the Lutherans and Presbyterians have held Lenten services together. Joint study sessions have also been held, so the cooperation between the two churches which started in Andrew Gilbertson's time, has begun again.

Since Dr. Michael Smith has gone, various pastors have filled the pulpit. As this goes to press, Pastor Waldemar Storm of Mandan, is the interim pastor.

## Zion Lutheran ALCW

Compiled by Yvonne Thorson

The story goes that Zion Lutheran Church could never have carried on through 100 years if it had not been for the faithful "Ladies Aid" workers.

The Ladies Aid was organized in 1888 in the Hans Strand home with Mrs. Henry Erickson as the first president. There were seven charter members as follows: Mrs. Henry Erickson, Mrs. J. J. Egge, Mrs. Arne Anderson, Mrs. L. N. Torson, Mrs. Hans Strand, Mrs. Gustave Jacobson, and Mrs. Andrew Eidsness. In these years a great deal of time was devoted to needlework and an annual sale of articles was held.

When the church was dedicated on July 4, 1909, a dinner was served to everyone present netting \$54.55.

After Rev. Herman Sauer left Towner in July, 1910, some time went by without a pastor. Mrs. Enoch Mower as president of the Aid, continued with prayer and praise and so they carried on--a flock without a shepherd.

Seven years went on with pastors coming now and then. The work seemed to be falling apart. The church was mortgaged and closed and the members scattered.

Rev. R. T. Wanberg was installed as pastor on August 24, 1919. Three days later the Aid was reorganized at the home of Mrs. A. C. Berg. There were only six or seven present because the feeling persisted that it would all be a failure anyway. More people met at a meeting a week later and by this time they seemed to be willing to take up the church work once more.

It was suggested by the new pastor that they meet in the church parlors and invite the public and try to awaken the interest that was sadly lacking.

On September 26, 1919, Mrs. A. P. Berget and Mrs. B. J. Faken



*Mrs. Henry Erickson  
First President of Zion  
Lutheran Aid - 1888*

served the first Aid in the church parlors. To their surprise, in response to their invitation, almost the entire town was present and their lunch receipts jumped from \$2.85 to \$41.50. That was all they needed to spur their efforts and they became very enthusiastic. A new era in Ladies Aid work was opened.

In 1920 we joined the Womens Missionary Federation of our church body.

The first annual Lutefisk supper was held on Sat., Dec. 20, 1924. A good crowd came out in spite of it being a cold and stormy evening. A flat rate of 25¢ and 50¢ was charged and \$61.00 was realized for their efforts.

During these early years The Lords Prayer was prayed in Norwegian at every other Aid meeting.

In 1926 the ladies pledged \$300 to the Concordia Endowment. This must have seemed like quite a large amount at that time.

In 1927 the Aid entertained the Luther College Concert Band and later the Concordia Band and Choir.

In June 1931 the president informed the ladies that a \$50 check had been given to Rev. Wanberg to help out with his salary as the church treasury was empty! That same year the ladies made "Aprons for Stouts" to sell at a fancy work sale, and in 1932 vanilla was sold at 65¢ per bottle to raise money for new outer doors.

1933 was a year of struggle--depression had struck and the church suffered. The Ladies' Aid helped with congregational expense and the pastor's salary. In 1939, realizing what the depression had meant to homes, they had a linen shower for the 25th Wedding Anniversary of Rev. and Mrs. Wanberg.

This was followed by World War II. The rationing of sugar, meat, coffee etc. made serving difficult so they decided to serve only to members and cut down on amounts of food. Each hostess at the time of serving paid \$5.00 in addition. This brought about a strange solution to the problem because the Aid income stayed normal in spite of the depression.

A new phase of work begun in the 1940's was serving for weddings and anniversaries.

The ladies were literally an "Aid" in many areas as the list of donations was endless.

In 1951 an extensive remodeling was done on the church dining room and kitchen.

For many years the Ladies' Aid was known as Women's Missionary Federation but with the merger of Lutheran Churches in 1960, they became American Lutheran Church Women (ALCW). The new constitution of the ALCW was formally adopted in 1961 and the total membership divided into circles meeting monthly and the en-

tire membership of the ALCW meeting four times a year.

In March of 1962, a World Day of Prayer was established and the first such day in Towner was held at Zion in combination with the women of the Presbyterian Church. In later years the Catholic women also joined in the World Day of Prayer observance.

In 1964 the ALCW decided to honor members of the congregation who were 70 years and older. The first to be honored was James Olson, grandfather of Yvonne Thorson on his 95th birthday. On September 15, 1968 Rev. R. T. Wanberg was honored with an open house on his 80th birthday.

1969 was a busy year. A Mother-Daughter tea was held prior to Mothers' Day and was an overwhelming success. The ALCW responded with food to the Minot flood victims. A Book Fair was held. Lillian Thomas was given special recognition for her many years of faithful work with Cradle Roll.

In 1970 the ALCW honored all past officers of the organization and a special 10th anniversary program commemorating the ten years of the ALCW was given by a circle.

In March, 1971 we moved across the street to the new church building. The ladies spent much time and money furnishing the sparkling new kitchen, the fellowship hall and fireside room.

At the request of the Lutheran World Relief, the ladies began quilt making sessions completing anywhere from 14 quilts in 1971 to 135 or more in later years. Occasionally some of these were given to someone in our community who was in need.

Gift packs were sent to members serving in the Armed Forces in Viet Nam.

In 1972 they published a 260 page cookbook. 737 books were printed and sold.

On June 30, 1974, the ALCW served for the only ordination to be held in our church, that of Joel Scherer, a former intern in our church.

In 1975, plates and trivets with pictures of the old and new churches on them were ordered and sold.

On Oct. 9, 1977, the 90th Anniversary of Zion Lutheran Church was observed with many former friends and pastors returning.

1980 was special in that we hosted the fall Conference Convention of ALCW. We also had a program in commemoration of 20 years in ALCW and honored the presidents who had served in those 20 years.

It is now 1987 and the list of things the ladies are involved in is endless. The Circles visit the Haaland Home and Long Term Care center in Rugby and provide a program and lunch for these people. Each year the ladies have a Soup and Bread Supper, Summer Salad

Luncheon, Fall Bazaar and Clothing Drive. Circles served at weddings, funerals, potluck dinners, meetings and special occasions. They assist financially in sending young people to Metigoshe Bible Camp. The ALCW has organized and helped serve Aid to Lutherans benefits for deserving people in our congregation.

In March, 1987 the ALCW invited all past presidents to a Centennial dinner and program. A large number of former presidents attended and they were asked to respond with something special that they remembered from their presidency. This was very interesting and reminiscent.

In March and April of this year, a group of our ALCW Ladies were very busy quilting and sewing our Centennial Quilt, which is hanging in the Narthex for our 100th celebration.

We have come a long way since those seven women met in 1888 and yet the work is much the same. Sixty-four women have raised the presidential gavel and hundreds have served in other capacities.

Whatever service we can render for our Church and her great world wide work, we must do it humbly, sincerely, earnestly and with a song in our hearts. Sing with the Psalmist: "The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad." Ps. 126:3.

In April 1987, approximately 200 people from a wide area were present at Zion for a fashion show and luncheon entitled "100 Years of Wedding Apparel". Dresses belonging to local people were modeled. It wasn't easy to find women to fit some of the dresses with the very tiny waistslines of years ago but it was beautifully done and enjoyed by all.

Also as a special activity for the Centennial year, a Mother-Daughter tea was held in May. Each ALCW member brought a Mother or Daughter and a salad and a program followed.

The ladies have been busy selling commemorative hand painted china plates and bells. These were painted by Souris Valley China Painters Guild of Velva, N.D. and have been on sale during the past year and will be sold throughout the Centennial Celebration. They are beautifully done with the North Dakota Prairie Rose.

## **Sunday School**

**Compiled by Hilma Jorgenson**

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 12:6

The Sunday School has been an important part of Zion down through the years. At one time it was the only Sunday School in the Minot Circuit that was standardized and received its certificate from the Christian Education Department of our church body.

Mrs. R. T. Wanberg was superintendent for many years. More

recently Minnie Schmidt has served faithfully as superintendent of the lower grades. Ed Olson, Victor Burchill, Loren Rasmussen, Martha Nelson, and Winston Pottenger are also among the past Sunday School superintendents.

## **Sunday School Memories**

**Compiled by Virginia Fairbrother**

"My memories of Sunday School are from the depression years between 1930 and 1938. Those years included some of the coldest temperatures ever recorded. Some mornings would be so cold that only ten or fifteen people would be in church. Because of the extremely high ceiling and the inefficient system of heating, which was a large floor register heated by a coal furnace in the basement, we were always cold. The nicest part of the morning was when we stood on the register by classes and when by sheer luck we got closer to the center than others.

"Good memories remain of Mrs. Ed Gilbertson and Mrs. R.T. Wanberg who taught classes for over 30 years each and who also took care of the opening and closing exercises. We learned many wonderful hymns completely because Mrs. Wanberg would teach us not only the background of the words and music but she also showed us the great European art associated with each selection, and Mrs. Gilbertson would play each verse patiently until we knew the complete hymn.

"Finally there was the Sunday School program some evening before Christmas. Each child had a part in the program and the climax occurred at the end of the program when some colored cardboard boxes were passed to all the children present even if they were not Lutheran. These boxes were lovingly filled by Ladies Aid members and each contained a variety of nuts, hard Christmas candies and, most wonderful of all, one or two very inexpensive chocolate creams which we called chocolate drops."

The list of dedicated teachers down through the years would be very long. Arleen Fisher recalls her first teacher, Mrs. Ed Gilbertson, as being "such a nice teacher." Her mother, Thelma Hutton, also taught a class. When the weather was cold, Thelma "would put a pan of hot ashes under the oil pan of the car in order to get it started" on a Sunday morning. At times there have been men teachers which really impresses the younger children. Minnie says that one youngster once said that he liked coming to Grandma's Sunday School because "my teacher is a man."

She also says: "One of my most pleasant memories is being able to move from the noisy basement of the old church to the comfort and quiet of the new fellowship hall. No more scratching and bang-

ing of chairs against the tile covered cement floor and lots of space for each class."

From Martha Nelson we have this comment: "Some of the most precious moments of my life have been those I spent working with the Sunday School Children. It was a challenge to get all those little ears intently listening to the message I had for them--and years later to have them thank me for the wonderful stories they have remembered over the years." One Christmas Martha gave each of her 18 7th grade students an apple pie! She stayed up very late Saturday night to bake them all.

Clayton Kitzman, who taught for ten years, says that his greatest concern in teaching the students came from Matthew 18: 5-6 where God said. "But who so shall offend one of these little ones who believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Through the Birthday Bank and the Christmas offering, the Sunday School gives money to Missions, World Hunger, or some community need. At the end of the year the children received perfect attendance certificates, and those completing the 2nd grade receive Bibles purchased either by the Sunday School, ALCW, or private individuals. Perhaps the highlight of the year is the annual Christmas program. Every summer excellent Vacation Bible School sessions have been held with local mothers and teen agers conducting the classes.

### **God's Special Gift**

**By Irene Sjong,  
2nd gr. teacher**

**Children are special  
As we already know.  
God planned it that way,  
The Bible tells us so.**

**Being a teacher  
Gives me much pleasure.  
God's plan for each one of them  
Makes them a treasure.**

## **Luther League**

Luther League meetings during the 20's and early 30's were quite different from those being held now. Out-of-school teen agers and even some in their early 20's attended and took active part. Many of the teachers also joined the League and helped with programs, etc.

The Leaguers would give complete programs for the public in the church sanctuary and then move down to the basement where the activity committee had many games lined up. Teachers and other adults always took part in the games too. The lunch committee took care of the refreshments.

The League sponsored pie socials and other events to raise

funds. Some of the money was used to purchase a piano which was used in the church basement for many years. Money was also raised to help pay expenses for those who had the privilege of attending District and National conventions.

The purpose of the League was to aid in the spiritual development of the young people, for it is in their hands that the future of our church rests.

The young people conducted Christmas Eve candle light services for several years. They still serve Easter breakfasts.

In later years the membership became quite small. Therefore a new organization was formed about 1982 together with the Presbyterian young people. This group is known as the Presbyterian-Lutheran Organization (The PLO). They enjoy activities such as trail rides, roller skating, sleigh riding, and camping. One money making project has been door-to-door sales of Christmas wreaths and sprays. The money earned is used for District Youth Conventions, retreats and camping, and they have recently helped the Mission church at Surrey to purchase needed audio visual equipment.

## **Willing Workers**

Two sewing societies were started in Zion in the early 20's by Mrs. R. T. Wanberg. One was the Young Ladies' Society for girls in their teens. The other was the Willing Workers for girls from six to confirmation age. Their leaders were Mrs. Wanberg, Mrs. Olaf Strand, Mrs. Andrew Gilbertson, and later, Mrs. V. E. Erickson.

They taught the girls to embroider and to make many beautiful pieces of needlework. At the end of the year these articles would be sold. After three years, in 1928, the proceeds were used to buy the beautiful stained glass chancel windows--one from the Willing Workers and one from the Young Ladies' Society. This group remained active for several years and completed other worthwhile projects for the benefit of Zion Lutheran.

## **Lutheran Daughters Of The Reformation**

The LDR was an organization for single women from the ages of 19 to 25. They reached out to others in different ways, such as raising money for Missions and remembering the men in the Service with gifts and letters. They also ministered to some of our members who were patients at San Haven with cards, letters, visits, and occasionally some gift.



## Lutheran Brotherhood

The Lutheran Brotherhood of Zion Lutheran church was organized in 1927, first as a Men's club; with the late Chris Jorgenson as its first president.

Until then the members of Zion Ladies' Aid had been carrying most of the load of paying the expenses. However, this wasn't enough as times became more and more trying. Therefore, it was necessary for the men of the congregation to help in order to keep the church doors open. Since their organization, they met regularly until 1952, never missing a meeting.

A Mrs. O. Torgerson of Berwick, N.D. made caps and aprons for the Brotherhood of Trinity church. Feeling that others could make use of them too, she turned over the entire set to the Towner parish. The Towner Lutheran Brotherhood presented a very fine, efficient appearance when their famous lutefisk suppers were served. The men of the church are still having annual lutefisk suppers. The club sponsored auctions where members brought in items to sell. These could include about everything from small tools to livestock. They also leased a quarter section of almost virgin prairie land and seeded flax. This was all done by custom work. They used to have charge of the Visual Education branch of the church work, and presented church films for the public, having bought a sound projector and screen. They stressed Father and Son nights. They were very active interested workers who attended the Circuit, District and National Brotherhood conventions.

An impressive dedication service for the Christian and American flags presented to the congregation by the Lutheran Brotherhood, with Mr. Rudolph Anderson in charge, was held in 1943.

At the present time, the Lutheran, Presbyterian and Catholic men and others in the community are having Men's Prayer Breakfasts and Bible Study weekly.



*Walters and cooks at lutefisk supper*



*Waldemar Storm  
Interim Pastor*



*Joyce Oium  
Church Secretary*



*Robert Schoenborn  
(Custodian)*



*Art Schoenborn  
(Head Usher)*



*Current Church Council: Linda Thomas, Alice Gunter, Molly Hutton, Jerry Block, Wallace Fretland, William Swearson, Larry Gegelman, (not pictured: Monna May Dokken & Eugene Keyes.)*



*Current ALCW Executive Board: Pam Kuk, Linda Thomas, Sharon St. Aubin, Marlene Wolf, Twila Larson (not pictured: Betty Fairbrother.)*



*General Centennial Committee: Virginia Fairbrother, Clarissa Fiebelkorn, Hilma Jorgenson, Yvonne Thorson, Vi Rasmussen (not pictured: Myrtle Livedalen.)*



*Centennial Quilt Quilters: Front Row: Vi Rasmussen, Jenny Anderson, Betty Fairbrother. Back Row: Harriet Evensvold, Sandra Berg, Katherine Martian & Marlene Wolf. (not pictured: Ruby Tagestad)*



*Centennial Quilt Block Makers: Front Row: Twila Larson, Marlene Wolf, Judy Smith, Pam Kuk. Back Row: Linda Thomas, Carolyn Hagel, Phyllis Berndt, Eveline Green, Esther Peterson, Harriet Evensvold. (not pictured: Vi Rasmussen, June Dokken, Sharon St. Aubin, Nell Britsch, Beverly Burns, Sharon Green Mayer, Sue Fretland, Sandra Berg, Carol Kramer, Katherine Martian, Glenna Johnson, Joanna Jones, Minnie Schmidt.)*



*ALCW Weekly Quilters: Sitting: Ruth Kuk, Ida Herman & Minnie Schmidt. Standing: Margaret Nelson, Geneva Ohren & Myrtle Livedalen.*



*Choir: Front Row: Judy Smith, Director; Clarissa Fiebelkorn, Corinne Keyes, Mariys Genre, Paula Rogers, Joan Jorgenson. Back Row: Louise Korfmacher, David Hendrickson, Eugene Keyes, Wallace Fretland, Don Genre, Winston Pottenger.*



*Organists: Judy Smith & Louise Korfmacher.*



*High School Sunday School Class: Front Row: Mindy Genetzky, Kolette Rosencrans, Marcy Swearson. Back Row: Travis Berg, Ann Kitzman, Dawn Swearson, Clarissa Fiebelkorn, teacher. (not pictured: Kelse Kuk, Jodi Block, Marci Green, Craig Johnson & Jennifer Johnson.)*



*Confirmation Class: Front Row: Reed Rosencrans, Brenda Livedalen, Lynnette Mahle, Tracey Follman, Jeffrey Kramer & Kipp Herman. Back Row: Chris Wahl, Scott Best, Brady Fretland, Corey Genetzky, Chris Hall, Curtis Skoog.*



*Sunday School: 3, 4 & 5 year olds: Front Row: Marie St. Aubin, Logan Rogers, Tyler Anderson, Heather Hjelmstad, Maria Witham, Joni Swearson. Second Row: Stephanie Wahl, David Jansky, Ryan Best, Joshua Rogers, David Witham, Amanda Berg, Bernard Berndt. 3rd Row: Matthew Smith, Sloane Jaeger, Eric Hagel, Todd Fairbrother, Joshua Kitzman, Sean Hagel, Andrew Gegelman, Brett Johnson, Sutton Best. 4th Row: Linda Fairbrother, teacher; Judy Jaeger, teacher; Sue Fretland, teacher; Pam Kuk, teacher; Karen Anderson, teacher.*



*Sunday School: 4th, 5th & 6th Grades: Front Row: Jason Block, Scott Jansky, Jennifer Berg, Breanne Kitzman, Billy Jo Swearson, Jamie Kitzman, Sarah Berg, Ryan Woodard, Brandy Jaeger. 2nd Row: Anthony Best, Alvin Skoog, Chris Hagel, Shane Livedalen, Erin Thorson, Leah Wahl, Randi Rosencrans. 3rd Row: Carol Wahl, teacher; Sandra Berg, teacher; Jeremy St. Aubin, Nick Raunch, Ryan Johnson, Joshua Baker, Pam Swearson, teacher; Pam Tonnessen, teacher.*



# 100th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEES ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH CENTENNIAL 1987

## **General & History:**

Virginia Fairbrother  
Co-Chairman  
Clarissa Fiebelkorn  
Co-Chairman  
Hilma Jorgenson  
Myrtle Livedalen  
Vi Rasmussen  
Yvonne Thorson

## **Program:**

### **Saturday Night**

Sharon St. Aubin  
Chairman

Bonnie Livedalen  
Minnie Schmidt

### **Sunday Afternoon**

Loren Rasmussen  
Martha Nelson  
Katherine Martian

## **Grounds & Landscaping:**

Ed Johnson  
Co-Chairman  
Marie Smith  
Co-Chairman  
Joan Jorgenson  
Marius Jorgenson

## **Dinner:**

Dorothy Livedalen  
Chairman  
Lois Degner  
Myrtice Bailey  
Florence Cook  
Arlene Fisher  
Bonnie Livedalen  
Irene Sjong

## **Reception & Registration:**

Betty Fairbrother  
Chairman  
Jackie Block  
Monna Mae Dokken  
Vi Rasmussen

## **Art & Banner:**

Linda Thomas  
Chairman  
Twila Larson  
June Dokken  
Joanne Jones  
Marlene Kramer

## **Salad Luncheon**

### **Wedding Style Show:**

Marie Smith  
Co-Chairman  
Carol Wahl  
Co-Chairman  
Jackie Block  
Julie Bachmeier  
Betty Fairbrother  
Vi Rasmussen  
Ruth Porter  
Virginia Fairbrother

## **Finance:**

William Fairbrother  
Chairman  
Ross Green  
Marvin Block  
Robert Brandon  
Raymond Thorson  
Pam Kuk  
Treasurer

**Chairs, Tables, Ushering:**

Robert Schoenborn  
Co-Chairman  
Oakley Evensvold  
Co-Chairman  
Hal Thorson

**Souvenir:**

Carol Wahl  
Chairman  
Lana Best  
Cyndi McIntee

**Housing Co-Ordinator:**

Esther Ebel  
Co-Chairman  
Ruth Porter  
Co-Chairman

**Photography:**

LeRoy Hagel  
Nancy Jacobson

**Music:**

Louise Korfmacher  
Chairman  
David Hendrickson  
Winston Pottenger

**Decoration & Display:**

Arlene Fisher  
Chairman  
Harriet Evensvold  
Carol Spilde  
Old Pictures  
Ida Herman  
Ruth Kuk  
Confirmation Pictures  
M.T. & Hilma Jorgenson

**Invitation, Research  
& Correspondence:**

Joyce Olum  
Chairman  
Shirley Merbach  
Corrine Kouba  
Aldis Jones

**Printing of Program:**

Joyce Olum

**Pie Social-PLO Group:**

Debby Kitzman  
Chairman  
Joan Gunter  
Anna Thorson  
Rev. Terry Sletto  
Advisor

All members of Zion Lutheran have been very helpful & cooperative to make this 100th Anniversary successful.



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