

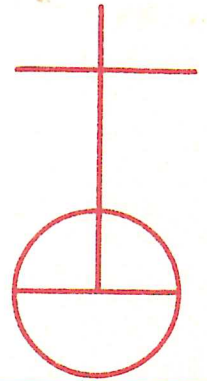
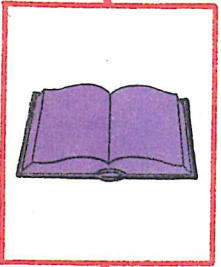
ON THE WAY REJOICING

SEVENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

1885 YEAR 1960

ST. JOHN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

JAMESTOWN, NORTH DAKOTA



JUBILEE YEAR

THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

PENTECOST 1960

PENTECOST 1961



IN DEDICATION

In The Name Of The Father and of The Son and of The Holy Ghost .

To The Glory of God

and

The Memory of those

Pioneer Men and Women

Who Founded St. John's Lutheran Congregation

and

Thankfully Shared The Word and The Sacraments To The Glory of Christ and  
The Furtherance of His Kingdom

We Dedicate This Book

and

Our Continuing Discipleship To the Gospel of Jesus Christ

"Bless The Lord O My Soul, And all that is Within Me, Bless His Holy Name."/



**imiable are thy tabernacles O Lord of hosts. Psalms 84:**

## Greetings and Congratulations

The American Lutheran Church extends its greetings and felicitations to St. John's Lutheran Church on November 6th as it celebrates its 75th anniversary. This should be a very happy time in the life of this church because of the fine record of service that this church has had in the community, the leadership it has afforded the Dakota District, and because of the long line of continuous blessings from Almighty God in its pastorate and in its growth in membership.



I am sure that as the congregation celebrates this day that it will be done in thankfulness to Almighty God for the great blessings which have been received. The prayer of the American Lutheran Church and this president is that God's continued blessing may rest with the pastors and the congregation and that this congregation may go on its outstanding service in the Kingdom.

With kindest greetings to you.

Sincerely yours,

*Henry F. Schuh*

Henry F. Schuh  
President

American Lutheran Church

The pastors and congregations of the Dakota District of the American Lutheran Church rejoice with you on your 75th Anniversary of your congregation.



This is, indeed, a day for rejoicing. How could it be otherwise? Seventy-five years of precious Gospel teaching and preaching, seventy-five years of activity as a Christian congregation, and seventy-five years of abundant blessings from God certainly call for a celebration of thanks and praise unto the Lord.

Only the grace of God has made this day of rejoicing possible, so all credit for this day belongs to Him.

However, since thanksgiving is also thanksgiving, may your celebration today arouse an ever keener interest in the hearts of all of you in the local program of your church and also in the work of the Church at large.

May the heavenly Father bless your joyous celebration within every heart, and may all of you say from the depths of your souls with the psalmist: "Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore Him!"

Sincerely in Christ,

*George Unruh*

George Unruh, President  
Dakota District,

American Lutheran Church

## Chronology

BAPTISMS - 2663  
CONFIRMATIONS - 1993

MARRIAGES - 826  
FUNERALS - 688

### Times To Remember

- 1884 - - Ladies Aid organized by eleven ladies.
- 1885-85 - - Rev. Maerz served.
- 1885-88 - - Rev. Haase sent by Ohio Synod.
- 1886 - - First Confirmation Class -- Emilie and Augusta Ell and Hedwig Clemens.
- 1887-90 - - Rev. Kuehn of Valley City preached every third Sunday.
- 1891 - - Rev. Paul Alamsha called.
- 1893 - - Rev. Herrman stayed two years.
- 1898 - - Rev. E.C. Hess called.
- 1899 - - First Mission Festival -- Dr. Ernst, St. Paul -- Speaker.
- 1900 - - Corner stone laid in October.
- 1906 - - First English Services held.
- 1907 - - Parsonage built.
- 1919 - - Joined Ohio Synod.
- 1920 - - Rev. E.C. Hess dies.
- 1921 - - Rev. W.W.A. Keller called.
- 1921 - - Envelopes introduced for 3rd time.
- 1925 - - Celebrated 40th year anniversary and 25th year church building.
- 1928 - - First unit of present church built.
- 1929 - - Christ Fluetsch served as President, continued to serve 25 years.
- 1930 - - American Lutheran Church organized.
- 1940 - - Second unit of church built. Dedication April 21, 1940
- 1945 - - Mortgage on Church burned.
- 1950 - - Eldridge Immanuel Lutheran Church joined St. John's.
- 1951 - - Purchased Pipe Organ.
- 1953 - - Rev. James Keller called.
- 1955 - - 25th Anniversary ALC and ground breaking for Parish Ed. Bldg.
- 1957 - - Parish Building dedicated.
- 1959 - - Remodeled parsonage.
- 1960 - - Rev. W.W.A. Keller retires from St. John's.
- 1960 - - Rev. Harris G. Sonnenberg called as Assistant Pastor.
- 1960 - - Convening Convention of the American Lutheran Church.
- 1961 - - Merger of ALC, ELC, and UELC into THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH.

#### PEOPLE TO REMEMBER - CHARTER MEMBERS

H. Hieseler	F.F. Clemens
Geo. Lutz	Ed. Clemens
R.E. Giese	Fred Hohenhaus, Sr.
Wm. Ell	Aug. Koehn
Peter Haas	Otto Langkabel
Charles Frey	Geo. Lippert
Wm. Zander	Gottlieb Schultz
Albert Bergman	Aug. Clemens



THE EPISTLE LESSON

THE ALLELUIA

THE JUNIOR CHOIR ANTHEM "Built On A Rock The Church Doth Stand"

THE GOSPEL LESSON

Romans 12: 1-13

R/ Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Matthew 16: 13-20

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,  
And of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made: Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

THE GERMAN HYMN "So Nimm Denn Meine Haende" # 292

GREETINGS TO THE CONGREGATION

THE PULPIT HYMN "The Church's One Foundation" # 149

THE SERMON "Always Rejoicing" The Rev. W.W.A. Keller

THE SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM "O God Our Help In Ages Past"

THE OFFERTORY HYMN "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" # 150

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

O God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth;  
O God the Son, Redeemer of the world;  
O God the Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful;  
O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, one God;

R/ Have mercy upon us.

By thy promise to build thy Church; by the inspiration of thy Word and the institution of the holy Sacraments; by the love shown in thy crucifixion; by the power of thy resurrection; and by the indwelling of thy Holy Spirit,

R/ Help us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to strengthen and enlarge thy Holy Church in every land, and unite all those who profess and call themselves Christians, in faith and hope and love,

R/ We beseech thee, good Lord.

That thou wilt grant to all rulers of the Church and ministers of thy Word and Sacraments the spirit of wisdom, power, and love, and call many more to the work of the ministry,

R/ We beseech thee, good Lord.

That thou wilt remove from us all littleness, prejudice, and narrowness of thought that we may receive and rejoice in all that thou dost reveal,

R/ We beseech thee, good Lord.

That thou wilt give to thy Church a new vision of her glory, new wisdom and fresh understanding, the revival of her brightness and the renewal of her unity, that the eternal message of thy Son may be hailed as the good news of the new age,

R/ We beseech thee, good Lord.

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

DOXOLOGY

RECESSIONAL HYMN "I Love Thy Kingdom Lord" # 158

POSTLUDE

SOLI - DEO - GLORIA



# 75th Anniversary of St. John's Lutheran Church

1885

BETWEEN THE YEARS

1960

Probably a true history of St. John's Lutheran Church dates back to the 1870's with the founding of the community of Jamestown; for, while there was no outward evidence of a congregation, the Temple of the Lord was in the hearts of the pioneers who worshipped God in their homes and ever longed for public worship. Traveling missionaries, called Evangelists, would preach a few times a year; but it was a special blessing to have a Lutheran pastor, Rev. Richter, from Fargo, occasionally lead them in worship.

According to official records, St. John's Lutheran Church began with a Lutheran Ladies Aid Society organized on July 8, 1884, including 11 charter members with Mrs. H. Gieseler, president; and Mrs. J. Eller, secretary. The Aid purchased two city blocks near the present location of Trinity Hospital, and services continued to be held in the school house or court house with the Evangelists conducting services.

The first Lutheran pastor to minister to the group, during 1884-85, was Rev. Maerz. In 1885 the Ohio Synod sent Rev. E. Haase who remained as resident pastor until the spring of 1889. In payment of his services he received \$150.00 yearly with the congregation contributing toward his living expenses.

In his first confirmation class on Palm Sunday 1886 were Emilie and Augusta Ell (Mrs. F.J. Koehn) and Hedwig Clemens (Mrs. Charles Scholz). He also organized what was probably the first choir, an organization that has continued to serve the church to the present. There is now a Junior and Senior Choir of about 100 members. During his ministry the membership increased from 21 to 47 contributing members.

When Rev. Haase accepted another call in 1889, Rev. A. Kuehn of Valley City served as an interrum pastor, coming each third Sunday of the month at a salary of \$125.00 a year; but, when he returned to Pennsylvania, the congregation was once more without a pastor.

At a meeting July 6, 1890 with the first lay-president, Charles Frey, presiding, a constitution was adopted and the name St. John's was chosen. The following year Rev. Julius Alamsha was called. Two rooms in the Winslow Block (presently the Knauf Block) were rented for his residence at \$5.00 per month. Services continued to be held in the court house with a rental of \$1.00 each meeting. For their services the Ladies Aid purchased the first church organ for \$70.78. Miss Elsie Gieseler was the first organist.

Following Rev. Alamsha's resignation, Rev. E. Herrman was called in June, 1893, at a salary of \$300.00 and \$60.00 rental. However, because the 46 contributing (but only 27 active) members were unable to pay the salary, St. John's was again without a pastor for three years.

The year 1898 was a turning point for this congregation which was and wished to remain German. In March plans were made to build a church--not on the originally purchased lots--but at the present location. Rev. E.C. Hess, a young German pastor who could also preach English, was sent by the Synod. To him this area presented a real challenge, and when he pointed out the importance of Missions, plans were made to celebrate the first Mission Festival on July 2, 1899 in Nickeus Park with Dr. H. Ernst from St. Paul Luther Seminary invited as festival speaker.

Eventually overcoming many obstacles, the cornerstone for the church edifice was laid in October, 1900; and it was with rejoicing that on the day of dedication the congregation met at the court house for a short service and then marched in a body to the church where at the

door the choir sang, "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty". Dr. Ernst, Rev. J.F.L. Bohnhoff and Rev. O. Just were invited to conduct the first service before the beautifully carved altar and pulpit that had been made by Fred Hohenhaus, Sr., a charter member.

To meet the deficit of a building program the envelope system was introduced in January, 1905, although it was discontinued twice before it finally came into continued use in 1921.

In 1906 the first English services were held on Sunday evenings, and by 1913 every other Sunday was designated for English services. The first parsonage was built in 1907 where Rev. Hess lived alone until in 1913 when he took as his bride Miss Eda Frey. Although he received five calls to serve other congregations, Rev. Hess continued in Jamestown until his death in 1920. Just a year previously the congregation had voted to become a member of the Ohio Synod and F.J. Koehn was elected first delegate to attend the conference.

On April 20, 1921 Rev. W.W.A. Keller was installed as pastor by Rev. Bohnhoff and continued preaching in both the German and English languages to a congregation now numbering 150 families.

November, 1925, was marked by a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the building of the church and the 40th anniversary of the congregation. In 1928 the old church building was sold to Trinity Lutheran Church, and the basement of the present church was sufficiently complete to celebrate the Christmas Festival. There came, following Spring, the death of F.J. Koehn, the first member to be buried from the new church building, who as president of the congregation for ten years had labored and dreamed of the new church, though not permitted to see the fulfillment. Mr. Chris Fluetsch then served as president for 25 years. He also taught Sunday School for 50 years.

Came the drouth years! And for eleven years services were held in this basement church. In 1937 a Hammond electric organ was purchased, and that year plans were begun for completion of the church. In spite of difficulties, a courageous beginning was made, an advantageous loan was negotiated from Jamestown College, and the new church was dedicated on April 21, 1940. God so prospered the congregation that the mortgage on the loan was burned five years later. In 1951 the pipe organ was purchased.

Rev. Keller served not only the large Jamestown congregation but also the two smaller churches at Millarton and Eldridge. In the fall of 1950 the Eldridge congregation joined with St. John's. Continued growth in membership and enlargement of pastoral duties to meet the needs of modern times made it necessary that an assistant be called. In 1953 Rev. James Keller came to assist his father.

Because of the need for greater educational facilities, a Parish Education Building was added to the church and dedicated September 29, 1957. It houses a chapel, lounge and kitchenette, classrooms, office and pastors' studies.

In 1959, preparatory to remodeling, the parsonage was moved to the additional lot to the north, vacated by the second parsonage which now serves as the home for the retired pastor emeritus. The church, its educational unit, and the modernized parsonage are evidence of an active and still-growing membership.

In the fall of 1960, after 40 years of service in this one parish, Rev. W.W.A. Keller tendered his resignation. On September 11 a farewell and appreciation day was celebrated in grateful recognition of him and his work here. Two weeks later Rev. James Keller was installed as pastor and Rev. Harris G. Sonnenberg as assistant.

Now, after 75 years, our present membership, numbering about 650 families, are continually challenged by God's love to be loyal to the church their forefathers built for them and their children, and to be deeply appreciative of the sincere work of their pastors, both past and present, who have served under God and done so much to carry on the work of God's Kingdom in this congregation.

SOLI - DEO - GLORIA

## **Luther League**

"Der Lutherische Jugend Verein" now known as the Luther League was organized on December 6, 1902. In June 1919 the first delegates were sent to the Luther League Federation meeting held in Arthur, North Dakota, and at that time became affiliated with the National Luther League of the church. The Luther League has sought to keep in fellowship with Christ the young people of the Church. During the years a good many young people have received spiritually help through the Luther League Programs, International Luther League Conventions, Leadership Training School, Bible Camp, and the district and local conventions. During our anniversary year our Luther League participated in the Convening Convention of the new Luther League of The American Lutheran Church at the First Lutheran Church in Fargo, on October 21-22, 1960.

## **Women's Missionary Society**

The Ladies Aid was the only women's organization in St. John's from 1884-1925. In 1925 a German Ladies Aid was formed and is still active in the congregation. As the congregation grew, smaller groups of ladies were organized into circles; and although not affiliated with the W.M.F. of the American Lutheran Church were carrying on the work of the various projects. Mrs. E.E. Rammer was sent, in 1946, as the first delegate to the National W.M.F. Convention in Minneapolis. The Ladies Aids and the Circles officially joined the W.M.F. of the synod in 1949. During the years fifteen circles have been organized into the W.M.S. of St. John's. As of January 1, 1961 they will belong to the Women of the Church of the new The American Lutheran Church.

## **Brotherhood**

The Men's Organization is the youngest in St. John's and The American Lutheran Church. St. John's became a member of the American Lutheran Church Brotherhood when it adopted its Constitution and By-laws on December 16, 1946. The Brotherhood has for many years been responsible for the Annual Congregational Picnic and providing rides to church for the Handicapped and Aged.

The most recent project of the men has been the Boy Scout Troop. However, the main business of the Brotherhood in the study of those things which are from God. Every month at their regular meetings they discuss their faith and its meaning for their daily lives.

The men of St. John's became a part of the new Brotherhood of The American Lutheran Church at the convening convention in Valley City, October 22, 1960.

## **Sunday School**

The Sunday School of St. John's has truly been one of the centers of Christian growth. Thousands of children have been given opportunity to learn the way of salvation through the efforts of many faithful, voluntary, teachers. The biggest step forward in our Sunday School took place in the year 1957 when the congregation dedicated the Parish Education Building. Since the beginning of the Church Sunday School enrollment has grown to over five hundred students, and the Vacation Bible School enrollment has numbered well over four hundred. Who can measure the value of the hours and the prayers of all the teachers who have taught the children of St. John's?

## OUR PASTORS



James W.L. Keller, 1953



Harris G. Sonnenberg, 1960



W.W.A. Keller, 1921-1960



E.C. Hess, 1898-1920

## Sons of St. John's



Left to Right - W.W.A. Keller, Paul Keller, John Keller, James Keller, Robert Lynne, Fred Sommars, Leonard Rudolph, Henry Schnutt, Virgil Wood.



# Here Have We Worshipped



The laying of the first Cornerstone  
June 3, 1900



FIRST CHANCEL



OLD CHURCH  
1900-1930



1930-1940



1940-1957



1957

**"And ye shall be my witnesses**

**In Jerusalem**

**In Judea**

**In Samaria**

**and to the**

**utter most parts of the earth"**