

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church:
1894-1973

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CH 331
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5/16/98

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church no longer exists. The church building which once served as the place of worship still stands on the corner of 29th Street and Hadley Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. But the congregation called Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church is no more than a memory. Why did a congregation which had existed for over seventy years finally disband? Was there any reason for its existence in the first place? This paper will attempt to address these questions as it traces the history of Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Beginnings

On Ash Wednesday, February 7, 1894, Pastor A.C. Bendler of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Congregation (which was located at that time on 10th and Garfield) conducted a service with some members at the home of Mr. John Mischke located at 2481 W. Monroe Street. In a meeting after the service the members adopted a resolution to found a new congregation near the then northwestern limits of the city of Milwaukee. This group proceeded to organize by electing the following officers: Herman Hackbarth, president; Herman Lamott, secretary; Carl Rahn, treasurer. These three officers were to be the trustees. They were entrusted to take the necessary steps to ensure the incorporation of the congregation and the purchase of three lots on the northeast corner of 29th and Hadley for a church building site.¹

The group also decided to conduct regular services on Sunday afternoon. At this time, however, they did not call their own pastor. They wished to remain under the pastoral care of St. Matthew, so they asked Pastor Bendler to serve continue to them.

¹ "Golden Jubilee 1894-1944: Saron Ev. Lutheran Church"-there are no page numbers in this little 5-page pamphlet

When Pastor Bendler was unable to continue to serve them due to an illness, a Pastor Opitz was asked to serve the congregation until the first local pastor was installed.

This was not the only congregation that was started from St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church. Pastor Bendler was the Superintendent of Missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin at this time. A few years before Saron was established, two other daughter churches were started by St. Matthew's in order to reach more people in the expanding city of Milwaukee. Those two were Jerusalem, located on the corner of Chambers and Holton, and Bethesda, located on 11th and Chambers. St. Matthew's also assisted other congregations to become established in the Milwaukee area. St. Matthew's supplied members, money, and/or manpower to the congregations of Bethel, Salem, Siloah, and St. Marcus. Although the departure of these members caused a strain on St. Matthew's, St. Matthew's willingly and in good grace made these sacrifices for the sake of Christ in order to spread His name to all people.²

The three newly elected officers proceeded to carry out their task of building a structure that would serve as both a church and as a school. Their efforts were blessed by the Lord so that on October 28, 1894 a two-story structure was dedicated to the service of the Lord. The next month, on November 25, 1894, the following people applied for a release from St. Matthew's: Herman Hackbarth, Herman Lamott, Carl Rahn, John Mischke, William Kroggel, William Fenske, Emil Maske, and William Schulz. Otto Barz and Mrs. B. Schneider soon joined them. There were granted a release the following Sunday on December 2, 1894. Thus Saron became an independent congregation.³

² "75th Jubilee Memorial Book of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church: 1865-1940" p. 15

³ "Golden Jubilee 1894-1944: Saron Ev. Lutheran Church

The Name

The name of the new congregation on 29th and Hadley may sound unusual to 20th century English-hearing ears. “Saron” is the German translation/transliteration of the Hebrew word, שָׂרֹן, the name for the fertile coastal plain in Israel. In English this word is translated as “Sharon.” The Bible tells us that King David used this region as a pasture for his flocks (1 Chronicles 27:29). Because the coastal plain of Sharon was a lush and vibrant region, the prophet Isaiah uses it to illustrate the lavish blessings God gives to His people (Isaiah 35:2; 65:10). Since the founding members were German, and since they were aware and thankful for all the lavish blessings God had shown to them, it is not so unusual that they would call their new congregation “Saron.” It seemed to be the practice of the day to name a church after a location in the Holy Land. There are many WELS churches in Milwaukee with Holy Land names: Bethel, Bethesda, Siloah, Salem, Nain and Jerusalem just to name a few.

The Pastors

There were only two full-time pastors who served Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church. Before the dedication of the church building, the initial group had considered calling its own pastor to serve their church and their school. At a meeting in September of 1894 they decided to call Pastor G. E. Bergamann from Bay City, MI. Because of ill health, which soon afterward compelled him to temporarily resign his pastorate, Pastor Bergamann returned this call.

Pastor H. H Ebert, who was serving St. Paul's Lutheran Church in the Town of Franklin, WI, was the second man called to serve Saron. He returned the call. Saron's congregation, however, decided to send Pastor Ebert another call. This time they asked St. Paul's congregation to let Pastor Bendler present to them the conditions and needs of this new and small congregation. St. Paul's did comply with this request. In the end they reluctantly granted Pastor Ebert a release from his call. They did ask him to remain until he completed the instruction of the catechism class that year and confirmed them. Pastor Ebert came to Saron at the end of February. He was installed by Pastor Bendler on February 24, 1895. He lived in a rented home on Center Street near 27th Street until the parsonage was completed on the corner lot of 29th and Hadley. Pastor Ebert served the people of Saron faithfully from 1894 until he retired in 1937.⁴

In 1937 Saron called Pastor Arthur C. Lengling to serve them. At that time he was pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Slinger, WI. He had served there since 1924. Before that he had served a multiple parish in the Doylestown-Fall River area after his ordination on August 28, 1921 at his home church, Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. He accepted the call to serve Saron and was installed in October of 1937. He served Saron faithfully for the rest of his ministry. Under his leadership the congregation made the difficult decision to disband and merge with St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1973. He served that congregation briefly in 1973 until he retired due to ill health.⁵ The people of Saron dearly loved Pastor

⁴ "Golden Jubilee..."

⁵ *Northwestern Lutheran*, September 9, 1973 p. 287

Lengling. They rejoiced with him in the 25th, 40th, and 50th anniversaries of his ordination.⁶

In addition to these two faithful pastors, Saron was also served by Professor G. Thiele for a number of years while he taught at the Seminary. Saron also had a number of vicars and student assistants.

The Day School

It is evident from the plans for the first church building that room for a school was also provided for the congregation. The first members of Saron could not imagine a Lutheran church without a Christian day school. On Tuesday after Easter, April 16, 1895, the school was opened with thirty-two students. Pastor Ebert was the only teacher to begin with. When the number of students increased rapidly, Miss Ella Ernst was asked to assist Pastor Ebert for several months during the winter of 1896-1897. At a meeting in August of 1897, the congregation decided to call a full-time teacher. After a number of returned calls, Mr. Henry (Heinrich) F. Meyer accepted the call to Saron. He had previously served in Appleton and was teaching in Franklin.

The school was divided into two classes. Pastor Ebert taught one class, and Mr. Meyer taught the other. In January of 1904 Mr. Meyer accepted a call to Stillwater, Minnesota. Pastor Ebert took over the whole school until Mr. John Beck accepted Saron's call after several months. In order to relieve the pastor his schoolroom duties, the congregation called Miss Olga Sippel to instruct the lower grades. Mr. Beck served Saron's for less than a year. In 1905 Mr. John Bartz was assigned as a candidate from New Ulm. After serving the congregation faithfully for one year, he accepted a call to

⁶ See Appendix D pp. 1&2: Newspaper Articles about Pastor Lengling

Norfolk, Nebraska.⁷ Mr. Meyer was called again in August of 1906 and accepted. He served Saron's school until his physical condition led him to retire in 1941. Mr. Meyer served Saron faithfully for 42 years. His longevity in teaching matched that of his brother, Professor John P. Meyer, who taught for many years at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.⁸

Miss Sippel served until January of 1907. Miss Anna Tiegs took her place then as teacher for lower grades. During the second decade of the twentieth century, school enrollment and church attendance decreased and the financial difficulties of the congregation increased. It was decided to temporarily combine the two classes in one room under one teacher. By 1919 the number of students had increased along with church attendance. Miss Henrietta Kock was called to take over the lower grades. She served until her resignation in 1922.⁹

A third class was added in 1920. Mr. A. G. Kurth was called as teacher of the upper grades. He served until 1922 when he accepted a call to teach in Two Rivers, WI. The congregation then called Miss Johanna Brockmann and Miss Alma Nommensen in 1922. They taught for one year. When they both resigned, Mr. Adelbert H. Backer was assigned from New Ulm to replace them.¹⁰

When Mr. Meyer retired in 1941, Miss Cecelia Priesz of Bangor, WI was called as teacher of the lower grades. She accepted and began teaching in September of that same year. When Mr. Backer and Miss Priesz received and accepted calls in 1945, the congregation decided to close their school. Saron's had provided Christian day school

⁷"Golden Jubilee..."

⁸ *Northwestern Lutheran* February 11, 1962 p. 44

⁹ "Golden Jubilee..."

¹⁰ "Golden Jubilee..."

for the education of its children for fifty years. Instruction was given in English and in German. Gradually English became predominant. The congregation did not totally give up its responsibility to provide a Christian education for its children. It sent its children to St. Matthew's or to other Christian day schools. In May of 1945, Saron's took on a sizable loan to help St. Matthew's build and operate a new building for their day school.¹¹

Other Organizations

There were a number of other organizations that the members of Saron had formed. In 1895 the Saron Choir was organized. It was directed by the day school teachers when there still was a day school. After the day school closed, Mr. Edward Fenske was its director. The Sunday School started meeting in April of 1895 and continued until the congregation merged.¹² The Ladies' Aid Society was organized in October of 1896. Saron also had various groups for its youth. For many years the congregation put out a monthly parish newsletter "The Saron Messenger." Articles were written in German and in English and edited by the pastor. Many of these newsletters can still be found in the WELS Archives.

The Church Building

As was mentioned previously, the first building was completed in the Fall of 1894. This two-story building served as a meeting place for both the church and the school. After the congregation called its first full-time teacher, Mr. Meyer, it no longer received financial assistance from the Synod. It became self-supporting. Like many

¹¹ See Appendix G: Bulletin from 75th Anniversary Service

churches today, they ran into money problems. In 1899 the congregation had a debt liquidation fund. It was not able to accomplish much because there was also a shortage in the general fund.

In 1901 gas was made available to the building and also to the newly built parsonage. In 1904 Milwaukee extended its sewer system so that the congregation could make use of its benefits. This required a major building effort. A basement was built under the entire church building and under part of the parsonage in order to make use of the sewer system. In 1905 and 1908 two additional lots were purchased with the generous assistance of the Ladies' Aid.¹³

By 1912 debt liquidation was again under discussion. Instead it was decided to move the parsonage from one lot to another and provide it with brick basement. It was understood that a new church building would eventually be erected on the empty corner lots. Before that could happen the old debts must be paid and other preparations must have been made.

In 1916 the question of debt liquidation came up again for discussion. A committee consisting mostly of volunteers visited members monthly to gather contributions. The Ladies' Aid and the choir did their part to help meet this goal. This time the debt liquidation was successful. When the congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary on November 30, 1919, its old debt was completely wiped out.¹⁴

After this celebration the congregation immediately began to lay plans for the future. The committee that had been gathering funds for the liquidation of the old debt

¹² From an interview with Mr. Charles Schenker who was the Sunday School superintendent for many years

¹³ "Golden Jubilee..."

¹⁴ "Golden Jubilee..."

was asked to continue serving. They were now to solicit contributions or subscriptions toward a new church building. The plans for the new building had to be put off for a few years. The old building needed some remodeling. In 1921 a stairway was added to it in order to provide a fire escape, which was especially needed for the school.

Preparations for the erection of a new church building continued and in August of 1924 the cornerstone was laid. The building was completed the following year. On May 3, 1924 the congregation celebrated its dedication.¹⁵ It had a capacity to hold about five hundred people.¹⁶ Later in that same year it was decided to extend the basement of the old building for the installation of bowling alleys. The alleys opened up on February 21, 1926.¹⁷

The congregation weathered the Depression of the 1920's and 1930's with God's help. In 1940, the 15th anniversary of its dedication, the church building was newly redecorated and beautified. When the congregation merged with St. Paul 1972, they sold the church building to Rehoboth Miracle Temple Church of God in Christ, a black congregation. It is still being used as their worship facility today (1998). The parsonage is being used to give shelter to people who have lost their home for one reason or another.¹⁸

The Membership

By the end of its first year of existence, Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church numbered twenty-five souls. They were mostly of German descent. Naturally all services

¹⁵ See Appendix A: Picture of the Church Building

¹⁶ From an Interview with Clara Schroeder, a daughter of Pastor Lengling

¹⁷ "Golden Jubilee..."

¹⁸ See Appendix C: Newspaper Articles about the Church Building

were conducted in German. Gradually, the number of members grew. As the numbers grew (205 communicant members by 1918) so did the number of predominantly English-speaking members.¹⁹ It was decided, therefore, to conduct regular English services beginning on January of 1919. This was a wise decision. As the children of German immigrants grew up speaking English in their new home, the task of bringing them the gospel required the use of the language they most familiar with. The congregation grew in the 1920's to number about 800 communicants. The numbers stayed around 800 until the end of the 1930's. In the 1940's the number of communicant members dropped from 693 in 1942 to 432 in 1950. The closing of the school in 1942 undoubtedly had something to do with the decline in members. In the 1950's and 1960's the membership gradually decreased from 400 in 1952 to 300 in 1968.

The decline in membership in the last twenty years of Saron's existence can be attributed to the changing neighborhood where the church building was located. In 1895 29th and Hadley was on the outskirts of the city of Milwaukee. In 1972 it was considered part of the inner city of Milwaukee. Many members of Saron no longer lived close to their church. They had to drive many blocks past other WELS churches to get to Saron. They also had to drive into a neighborhood that was not as friendly as it used to be. Members were threatened and a fire was started between the church and the parsonage. Racial tensions were high all across America. The city of Milwaukee was not immune to that tension.

¹⁹ All the numbers in this section are taken from the Statistical Reports of the Synod from 1918-1970

The Merger

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church felt this tensions. When members came to worship, they were “cussed out” by some of the new residents of the neighborhood. The members were afraid for their own safety. The tensions against Saron increased when the Reverend Virdell Wallace (pastor of Rehoboth Miracle Temple Church of God in Christ) approached the congregation and expressed his desire to buy the church. Saron refused. A little while later a fire was started between the church and the school. Members were physically attacked and intimidated. Reverend Wallace more than likely did instigate or condone the intimidation. But with the racial tensions the way they were, everything was a “Black vs. White” issue.²⁰ Finally the congregation sold the church building and its properties in 1972 to Reverend Wallace’s congregation for \$145,000.²¹

Saron was now without a place to worship. Reverend Wallace gave the congregation permission to continue to use the facilities until the end of the year. Instead of moving to a different location, Saron approached St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church on 73rd and Burleigh with a proposal to merge. Many of Saron’s members lived close to St. Paul. St. Paul had the facilities to accommodate the influx of members that Saron would bring. In addition, there was a good relationship between Pastor Lengling of Saron and Pastor James deGalley of St. Paul.

In the October 1972 Voters’ meeting, the Voters of St. Paul passed a motion to form a merger committee. On November 7 a special Church Council meeting was called to choose men to participate on this merger committee. Eighteen men and Pastor

²⁰ The Fenske’s, Schroeder’s, and Schenker’s all have their own individual stories of personal experiences with the racial tensions of that time

²¹ Recorded in Mr. David Fenske’s notes concerning the merger. He was the Secretary of the congregation during this time.

deGalley were chosen to serve on this committee. The purpose of this committee was to “carry on detailed and meaningful negotiations with Saron’s Church toward a possible merger of the two congregations and to report developments back to the voters for final decision.”²² That Council meeting also draw up the following proposals that the Merger Committee was to propose to Saron’s Church:

1. Our Pastor deGalley, to be Pastor of the merged Parish. We also suggest you supply us with a definite date of the retirement of Pastor Lengling who, because the size of the Congregation would not justify having two full time Pastors, could serve as assistant Pastor until that date.
2. As long as Pastor Lengling remains active and serves as assistant Pastor his duties would include:
 - Preach German
 - Help distribute Communion
 - Call on sick when necessary
 - Preach English when necessary
3. Saron Church must produce a list of signatures and address of people who would definitely come to this Church as members. As we do not intend to alter our name for a figure of less than 150 people.
4. In accordance with rules set down by our Constitution, St. Paul’s elected Council for 1973 will be the ruling body of this Church.
5. We would be interested in knowing the intentions of your Choir director and Organist.
6. Also what are the intentions of your Janitor.
7. Since the altar carving would not at all fit in with our alter we would try to find a prominent place for it somewhere else.
8. What physical assets, in the form of kitchen equipment, tables, chairs etc. would you be bringing along.

These proposals were amended by the Merger Committee²³ on November 13, 1972:

Point 3; was changed from “We do not intend to alter our name for a figure of less than 150 people” to read “We do not intend to rename our

²² From the minutes of said meeting, Mr. Kenneth Artlip, secretary.

²³ From the minutes of said meeting, Mr. Kenneth Artlip, secretary.

church on any condition.” Motion by R. Bushell and seconded by K. Artlip carried unanimously.

Point 5; concerning our intentions of Saron’s choir director; motion by D. Roeming, seconded by K Artlip reads, “If Saron’s choir director comes as a member he comes as a regular layman, nothing more, as we are in no position to hire a choir director at this time” was carried.

Point 6; along the same thoughts a motion by H. Rindt and seconded by D. Roeming reads “Our negotiations should not include the discussion of paying anyone janitor, choir director, etc. except Pastor Lengling” was carried.

Point 7; We accepted point 7 concerning the altar hanging belonging to Saron emphasizing the wording “Try to find a place” as being most important.

These proposals were discussed at the joint meeting with Saron Church later on that evening of November 13, 1972. These proposals indicate the four major concerns that needed to be worked out before a merger could take place: Pastor Lengling, the name, the number and role of people, and the physical assets. These were issues that both congregations had strong feelings about.

At that joint meeting an impasse was reached concerning the name of what this merged church would be. Saron’s representatives gave the figure of 130 communicants and 25 children as the number of souls that would be coming to St. Paul. They had not yet set up a retirement fund for Pastor Lengling, but they were willing to set aside a sum a \$10,000 from their treasury for that purpose. They were not directed at that time to speak about the plans for Pastor Lengling as far as his working in the new merged church. Not all of the issues were worked out at this meeting. St. Paul expressed their Christian fellowship to Saron and since the impasse over the name change hampered any further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.²⁴

²⁴ From the minutes of said meeting, Mr. Kenneth Artlip, secretary

The Merger Committee met again on November 16, 1972. Pastor deGalley presented the Committee with more specific points that concerned the proposed merger between Saron and St. Paul: 1. The name change 2. Monies involved 3. Pastors involved 4. Group problems and rivalries. Point number 1 took up most of the discussion that evening. The Committee was deadlocked over the proposal to change the name of St. Paul's to St. Paul's-Sarons. A motion, made by W. Spaeth and seconded by R. Bushell was carried. This motion read, "Since the Merger Committee can not resolve on the question of changing the name of St. Paul's to St. Paul's-Saron Ev. Lutheran Church we would like you, the Voters to express your desires on the question: 'Would St. Paul's Congregation be willing to accept changing its name to St. Paul-Saron Congregation in order to further merger negotiations.' We present this for your consideration without a recommendation."²⁵ This was presented to the St. Paul's Voters' meeting on December 11, 1972.

The Voters decided not to allow the name change. In an very carefully worded letter²⁶ to Saron Ev. Lutheran Church, the Voters of St. Paul wrote, "we sincerely believe that it would serve the Lord's purposes in the contemplated merger, not to have two names, but one; not two congregational groups, but one Christian congregation." This letter was in turn brought to the Voters of Saron on December 17.²⁷ They decided to merge with St. Paul even though the name, Saron, would be lost. St. Paul's approved of the merger at a Special Voters Meeting on December 31, 1972. The following Sunday, January 7, 1973, the members of Saron were welcomed at St. Paul's service and they

²⁵ From the minutes of said meeting, Mr. Kenneth Artlip, secretary

²⁶ See Appendix H: Letter sent to Saron after the 12/12/72 St. Paul's Voters' meeting.

²⁷ See Appendix F: Letter from Saron's and Pastor Lengling to St. Paul's

joined together to celebrate Holy Communion. They were extended full Christian fellowship.

However, the members of Saron were not immediately accepted into membership at St. Paul. The final joint meeting of the Merger Committees took place in February.

The following ten points were agreed upon by both sides:

1. Saron's will make available a final list of persons actually to be received as members of St. Paul. Also a list all unconfirmed children, Sunday School and Cradle roll, young people of high school age and young adults, single or married 18-25 years old. Each communicant in this group will fill out a membership questionnaire (Birth, Baptism, etc.), a time and talent sheet, and make an appointment to see Pastor deGalley prior to being received into membership. Reason for this being that Pastor deGalley would like to personally know all new members and certain facts concerning them and their particular areas of interest in serving the Lord.
2. The date for receiving Saron's into membership should be the regular voters meeting of April 9, 1973.
3. Saron's Pastor and/or Elders will assume responsibility for making arrangements for any members who may not be joining St. Paul's through release, transfer or etc.
4. Since St. Paul's is planning to suspend requirements pertaining to election of officers, Saron's will supply a list of names of Elders, Trustees, and other officers, also youth committee, leaders of young people and any secretarial help available. St. Paul's especially asks for the above names because of a newly planned Stewardship program in which such dedicated men will be needed to serve.
5. Saron's agreed that its people, once members of St. Paul's will accept such St. Paul's customs as manner of registering for communion and others which might strengthen the unity of the Congregation.
6. Saron's will be bringing along such property as dishes²⁸, tables, chairs, small table and chairs for the primary Sunday School, cabinets, slide projectors, movie projector, floor fans, a "Nesco" roaster and an addressograph. Most importantly a woodcut alter piece 8ft.x3ft. worth

²⁸ There is still somewhat of a joke going around at St. Paul that the main reason why Saron chose to merge with St. Paul was because they both had the same pattern for their dishes. Where would we be in this Synod without our Ladies' Aid!

thousands of dollars for which a prominent place in the Church will be found.

7. Saron's will store its records, historical and etc. at St. Paul's²⁹
8. Saron's will continue to use its own envelopes for the current year, however once membership is finalized its separate Treasurer and Treasury will cease to exist. All of Saron's 1972 commitments will be wiped out before membership becomes final. All monies from Saron's, other than specific organizational monies, will be placed in St. Paul's Debt Retirement fund for the payment on the mortgage making St. Paul's as debt free as possible. Saron's organizational monies (Ladies Guild, Youth Groups, Sunday School etc. will go to the like organizations at St. Paul's.
9. Pastor Lengling and Pastor deGalley will each confirm his class of children in May at the same service.
10. Pastor Lengling will retire as soon as the two congregations become one, probably sometime in April. He will continue to help out when needed at St. Paul's and be compensated in the usual manner.

These points were mutually agreed upon with satisfaction and happiness. On April 9, 1973 136 communicant members and 19 children from Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church were received into membership at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church. A small number of members returned to Saron's mother church, St. Matthew's which was now located on 84th and Melvina.³⁰ Still others became members of churches closer to their homes. Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church was no more.

²⁹ After looking for any records of Saron for over the past five years, Pastor Keith Amborn, the current pastor of St. Paul has yet to find any. I did my own search of all the closets, corners, and crannies at St. Paul and was unable to find any records either. If those records are ever found in the future, perhaps a more complete and descriptive history of Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church will be available.

³⁰ See Appendix D p.2

The Legacy

Although Saron no longer exists as a congregation it will always be remembered. It has left a lasting legacy. St. Paul Lutheran Church benefited greatly from Saron. The influx of members brought many spiritual gifts to the congregation. While many other merged congregation still have distinct groups, St. Paul shares a loving bond of unity. The former members of Saron recognized the Christian love which St. Paul's members showed to them during the merger. With Christian maturity and love, they have given up something that they so dearly loved. They have moved on to serve their Lord in their new congregation.³¹

The physical assets Saron brought to St. Paul Church continue to have a lasting impact as well. The remaining balance from the sale of their church at the time of the merger was \$85,000. The majority of that money was used to help pay off St. Paul's mortgage. Because of that the congregation remains debt free to this day.

Other physical assets that Saron brought to St. Paul were the eternal flame and the wood carving of the Last Supper. The eternal flame was given to Saron in memory of Walter Haeselick, the brother of Mrs. Isabell Zietlow. For the past four years it has hung in the chancel of St. Paul as a reminder that "where two or three gather together" in Jesus' name, He will always be with them. The wood carving now hangs in the entryway of St. Paul. It is probably in the most "prominent" place as possible. The members of St. Paul are planning to find a better place when they remodel. This piece of artwork is very rare. Only three of these were ever made. In 1980 it was valued at over \$10,000. It is a beautiful piece of artwork that was the focal point of Saron's altar since 1925.³²

³¹ See Appendix E: Newspaper Article about former Saron's members

³² See Appendix B: Wood Carving

Saron has also left its mark on Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. In 1929 Saron hosted the Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States. That same year saw the dedication of the new Seminary building for the Synod. In the Multipurpose Room (Room 6) there is a frame containing three panoramic photographs. There is a photograph of the people assembled at the Seminary for its dedication. There is a photograph of the newly completed Seminary buildings. There is also a photograph of all the members of the Synod Convention assembled in front of the host church. The church sign is just visible. That church is clearly identified as Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The most important legacy the Saron has left is the faithful preaching and teaching of God's Word. Only the Holy Spirit knows how many have been saved and came to the knowledge of the truth through the preaching and teaching of God's Word at Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church. Through that gospel preaching, the Holy Spirit showered rich blessings on those who heard and believed.

Conclusion

A paragraph from the letter written to Saron's members from St. Paul's members summarizes it best:

Saron's Church has served the role in history that God assigned to it as an independent congregation; it has fulfilled the Lord's purpose by serving souls in His name...because of circumstances, its service to the Lord as an independent congregation is terminated.

To God alone be the glory!



Appendix A: Photo of Saron's church - Date unknown

TRAVIS AUCTION GALLERIES, INC.

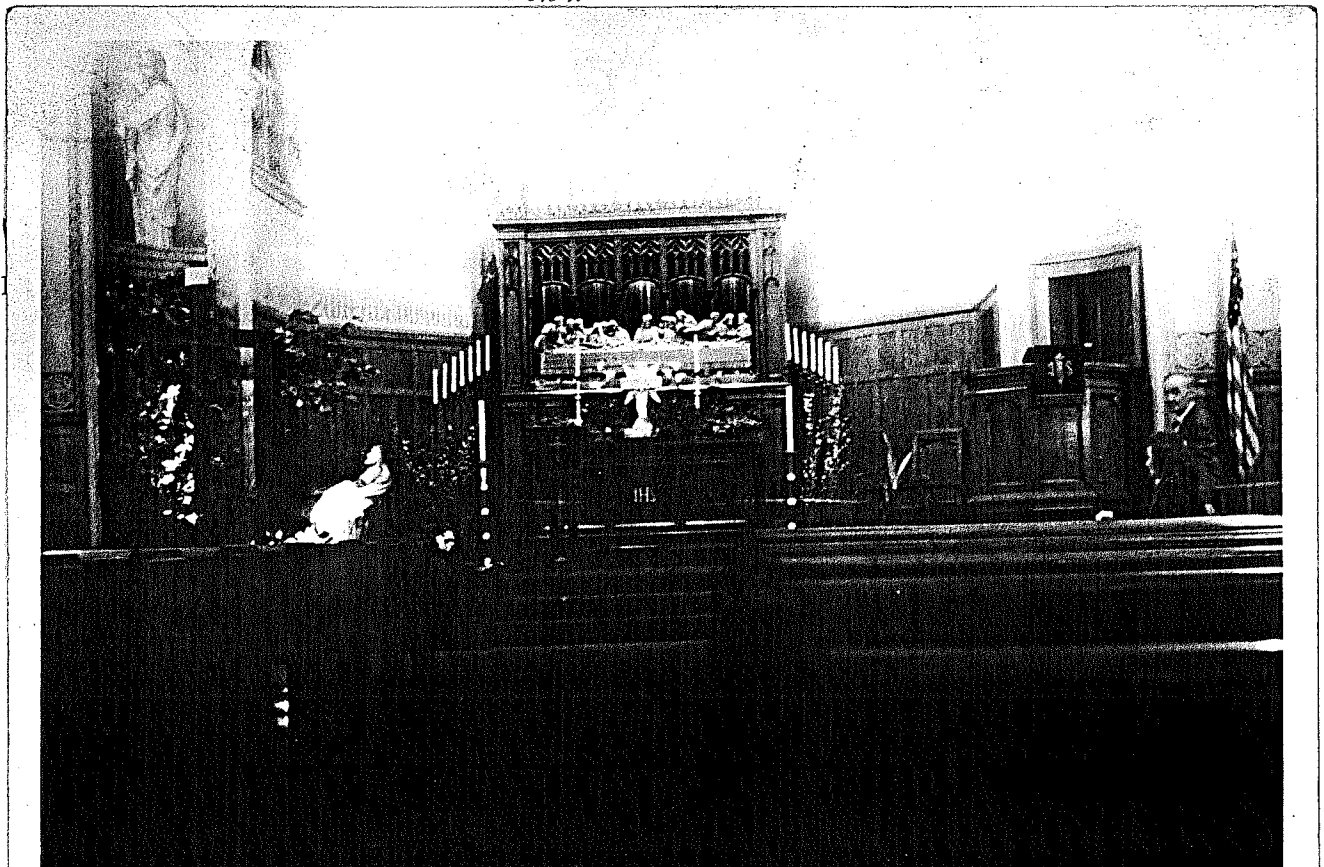
1442 Underwood Avenue
Village of Wauwatosa
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53213
(414) 453-0342

September 30, 1980

Appraisal of Wood Carving for St. Paul Evangelical
Lutheran Church, 3059 N. 73 Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 53210
Appraisal Reflects Replacement Value as of September 30, 1980

An exceptional wood carving depicting Jesus and the Twelve Disciples - after Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper". This unique piece of artistry was executed in 1925 in Oberomergau Germany by John Long. There are 3 such carvings known to exist. The carving was originally acquired by Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church, at 29th and Hadley in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1925. The other 2 carvings are housed in New York and Chicago. The approximate measurements of the carving are 30" High x 8" Deep x 89" Long. Carving signed by the artist "John Long".

Replacement Value of the above carving - \$12,000 to \$15,000.
+ below



IN THE INNER CITY

Appendix C: Newspaper articles about the church

REDEDICATE CHURCH EDIFICE *MAY 26, 1940.*

Saron Evangelical Lutheran church, N. Twenty-ninth and W. Hadley sts., the Rev. A. C. Lening, pastor, will rededicate its newly decorated edifice at special services tomorrow.

Prof. L. C. Rinker will speak at English services at 9 a. m. A German service at 10:30 a. m. will be conducted by the Rev. F. A. Kamholz. The Rev. P. J. Burkholz will deliver an English sermon at 7:45 p. m.

A choral program will be presented at 4 p. m. by the combined choirs of the congregation. The Ladies' Aid will serve a supper in the church auditorium at 5 p. m.

An all day hobby show will be conducted by the Waither league as a feature of the rededication services.

Victor J. James Jr., who has four degrees including a Ph.D. in law, according to Jet Magazine, could be elected sheriff of Alameda County, California. The county, the state's second largest, has a \$17 million budget for the Sheriff's Department. James, a black, faces a runoff election in November.

The members of Rehoboth y. Miracle Temple Church of God in Christ, 2804 N. 29th St., have undertaken a project, which as far as could be learned is the first of its kind in the Inner City.

The church owns a large house next door, a house that

has been vacant for some time, said the Rev. Virdeil Wallace, the pastor.

"We're all working people and don't have a lot of money," Wallace said, "but the members are committed to serve the community."

They didn't want to sell the house, preferring to put it to some use for the community, he said.

"The members felt the house could best be used to temporarily house families who need emergency housing," Wallace said. "There are many families who have been burned out, evicted or, for a lot of reasons, need temporary housing. . . ."

He said that often these families were not eligible for public assistance or, if they were, these emergencies often happened when the agencies were closed.

The members have renovated the house. But now they need to furnish it and are asking for donations of usable household goods of all kinds. They need dishes, a large refrigerator, beds, chairs, tables and everything

Times to Inner City, page 5, col. 1

Inner City Big House May Serve Homeless

From page 1

else needed to furnish a house.

"We will help any family in need," Wallace said. "It's nonsectarian. We don't care who you are. If you need emergency housing, we'll try and help."

For more information call 445-1277 or 442-4422.

* * *

Church Reaches 75 Year Mark

The 75th anniversary of Saron Lutheran church, 29th and Hadley, will be observed Sunday.

The Rev. Martin O. Westershaus, a teacher at Wisconsin Lutheran high school, will preach in German at 8:45 a.m. The Rev. James A. De Galley, a former member of Saron and now pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church here, will preach in English at 10:15 a.m.

A musical program at 3:30 p.m. will feature congregational singing, a choir and a brass choir directed by Edward Fenske, the Lutheran Chorale directed by the Rev. Kurt Egger and organist Hildegard Fischer.

Noonday Lenten Services Start



NOONDAY Lenten services opened Monday at the Davidson theater. Conducting the first meeting were the Rev. Henry Tesch (left) and the Rev. Arthur Lengling. —Journal Staff Photo

Clergymen spoke yesterday in Lenten Holy week services at various churches and civic centers. The Rev. Arthur Lengling, pastor of Saron's Lutheran church, spoke at the Davidson theater.

stands on social problems have become an embarrassment to the Vatican.

Rev. Lengling to Be Honored

A special service honoring the Rev. Arthur C. Lengling, 75, who is retiring after 52 years in the ministry, will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 73rd and Burleigh.

Lengling, who was born in Milwaukee and ordained here Aug. 28, 1921, served several congregations in small Wisconsin communities, and he was pastor of Saron Lutheran Church, 29th and Hadley, for 36 years.

The Saron congregation merged with St. Paul's Church in April.

Church Fetes Pastor For 40 Years Work

Without tipping him off, members of Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church, N. 29th and W. Hadley Sts., dug into the background of their pastor, the Rev. Arthur C. Lengling.

Sunday night, the members surprised the Rev. Mr. Leng-

ling by recalling his life in a "This Is Your Life" program at the church.

The affair climaxed a day in which the congregation honored the Rev. Mr. Lengling for his 40 years in the ministry. A dinner for the pastor, his family, the church council and friends began the celebration at the Rustic Lodge, 6652 W. Fond du Lac Av. Later, at the church, gifts were given the pastor.

The Rev. Mr. Lengling, 62, was ordained Aug. 28, 1921, at Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, his home congregation.

He served at Wisconsin churches in Mercer, Winchester, Winegar (now Presque Isle), Doylestown, Fountain Prairie and Fall River, before going to St. Paul's Church, Slinger, in 1924. He served there until 1937 when he came to Saron.

Fund Training Sessions Slated

Two thousand chairmen of the United Fund's plant level employe solicitations will attend one of eight training sessions Monday through Thursday in the Gas Co.'s Hall of Flame.

C. W. Fitzgerald and T. A. Judge, Allis-Chalmers Mfg. Co. executives, will outline campaign techniques. Arthur P. Schmidt, Jos. Schlitz Brewing Co. community relations director, will discuss the hour a month plan. Frank I. Spangler, A. O. Smith Corp. engineer on loan to the United Fund, will speak on "Share Your Blessings," the campaign theme.

Sessions are scheduled for two hours each morning and afternoon.

Lengling, Rev. Arthur C. Thurs., Feb. 14, 1985, age 87. Beloved husband of Clara (Nee Pautz), dear father of Lillian (Edward) Fenske, Erwin (Caryll), Arthur (Marianne), Eugene (Diane) Lengling, Clara (Thomas) Schroeder. Brother of Irmgard Wischer and Norma Jackson. Also 13 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, other relatives and friends. Visitation at the funeral home Sun., Feb. 17, 4-9 p.m. and at ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH, 3059 N. 73rd St. Mon., 12:30-1:30 p.m. Funeral services 1:30 p.m. Interment Arlington Park. Rev. Lengling was pastor of Saron Lutheran Church for 37 yrs. Memorials to St. Paul Church appreciated. KRAUSE FUNERAL HOME 9000 W. CAPITOL DR.



The Rev. Arthur C. Lengling (seated), pastor of Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church, N. 29th and W. Hadley Sts., is the center of attraction Sunday at a dinner at the Rustic Lodge, 6652 W. Fond du Lac Av., given in honor of his 40th

year in the ministry. He is shown with his wife and the Rev. A. F. Halboth (left), 8444 W. Melvina St., pastor of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church, and Harold Braasch, 4149 N. 40th St., president of the Saron congregation.

Sentinel photo.

Slinger Minister Installed Pastor of Saron's Church at Milwaukee

The Rev. Arthur C. Lengling, who for a number of years was pastor of Paul's Lutheran church at Slinger, was installed as the new pastor of Saron's Lutheran church, N. 29th and W. Hadley sts., Milwaukee, during German-English service at 9 a. m. last Sunday. He succeeds the Rev. H. H. Ebert, pastor of the congregation for 42 years, who preached a farewell sermon and retired last week. Rev. Ebert officiated at the installation service on Sunday.

Rev. Lengling was graduated from Concordia college, Milwaukee, in 1917. Later he continued his theological study at the Lutheran seminary in Wauwatosa and at the University of Chicago. In the last sixteen years he has held pastorates at Mercer, Winchester, Winegar, Doylestown and Slinger. Rev. Lengling and family left for their new home in Milwaukee last Thursday.

in Pulpit



The Rev. A. C. Lengling, Slinger, Wis., newly appointed pastor of Saron's Ev. Lutheran church, N. Twenty-ninth and W. Hadley sts., will be formally installed at a combined service at 9 a. m. Sunday by the retiring pastor, the Rev. H. H. Ebert, assisted by the Rev. H. Knuth of Bethesda and the Rev. Arthur F. Halboth of St. Matthews church.

ST. MATTHEW Evangelical Lutheran Church Sunday, Sept. 8

Corner Stone Laying

for Church and School
84th and W. Melvina St.

Dedication of Parsonage— 2 P. M.

8419 W. Melvina St.

Guest Speaker:
Pastor Arthur Lengling

Morning Services,
9 and 10:15 A. M.
N. 10th and W. Garfield Ave.

Guest Speaker:
Pastor Arthur Tacke

Afternoon Services

Rev. A. C. Lengling and family will leave Slinger some time next week to make their future home in Milwaukee, where the former will be pastor of the Saron Lutheran church at 2818 North 29th st. He will also be superintendent of the parochial school there. He will be installed on Sunday morning, Oct. 17, at 9 o'clock by the Revs. Ebert, Knuth and Halboth. The Lengling family have been residents here for the past fourteen years, during which time the former was pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church. He was also pastor of the Cedar lake church for eleven years. He delivered his farewell sermon last Sunday forenoon at the local church and at the Cedar lake church in the afternoon. The Rev. Lengling is a man of pleasing personality and most capable of the fine position he will soon accept

Lutherans Plan to Honor Pastor

Members of Saron Lutheran Church will observe the 50th anniversary of the ordination of their pastor, the Rev. A. C. Lengling, at a service at 3:30 p.m. Sunday in the church, 2804 N. 29th St.

The Rev. Adolph C. Buenger, president of the Southeast Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, will preach.

Lengling, 72, has been pastor of Saron Church for 34 years. He was ordained Aug. 28, 1921.

From Metro Page

Paul's, 3059 N. 73rd St. Both churches are part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Fenske's son, Ed, was the choir director at Saron when it was sold and the congregation dispersed. Almost all of the choir followed Ed Fenske to St. Paul's, where he became the choir director.

Ed Fenske's wife, Lillian, is a member of the choir, and so are their son and daughter, Daniel Fenske and Debra Morin.

Schwister said she recently considered quitting the choir, but other members of the congregation talked her out of it.

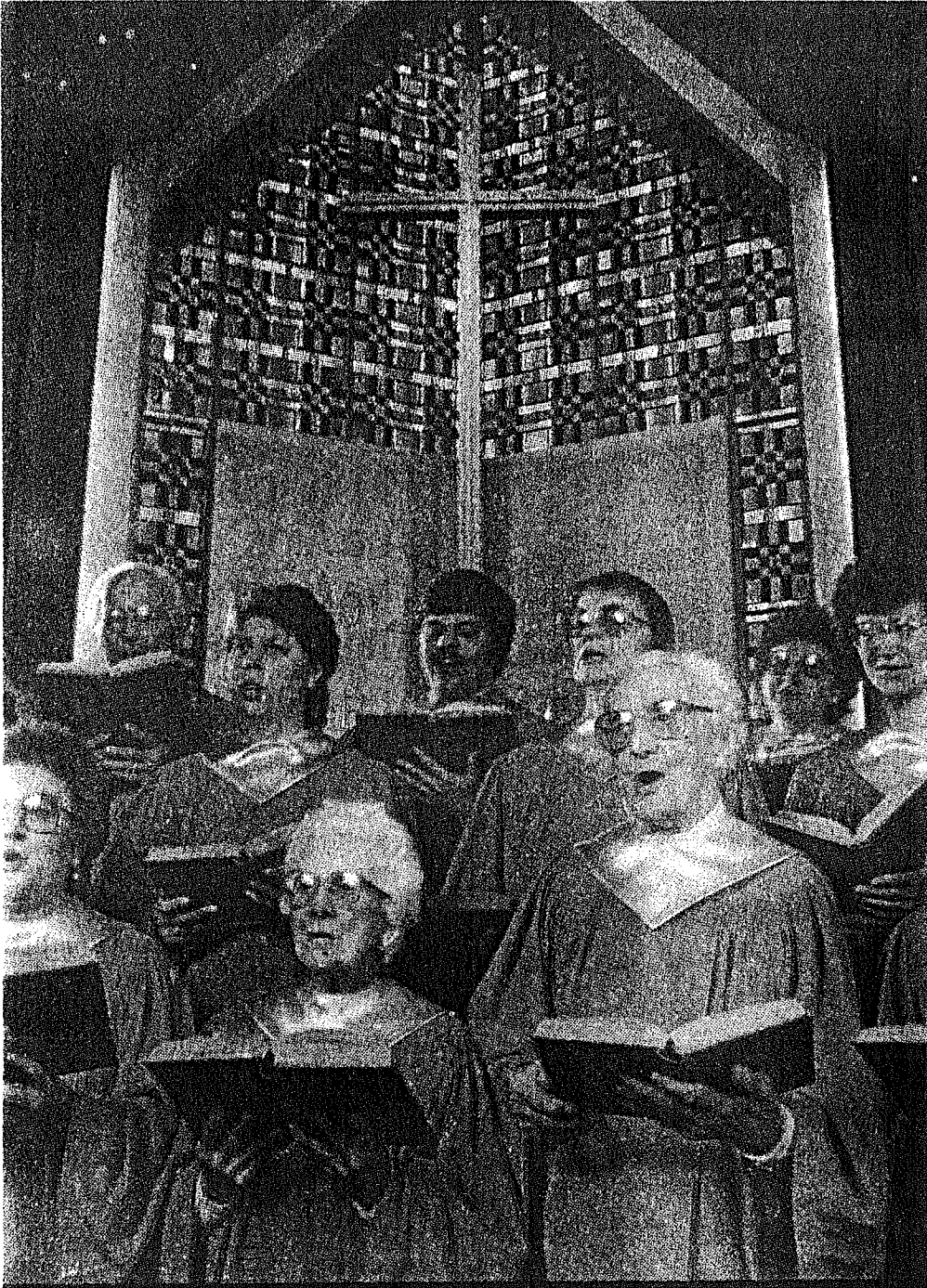
"I thought maybe they really didn't want such an old person in the

choir," Schwister said. "I thought maybe it was keeping some of the younger people away. But I really don't know what I'd do without it."

The elder Fenske and Schwister were honored in November by the congregation of St. Paul's for their years of service to the choir. There was a surprise dinner and a plaque was given to each.

"They never miss a Sunday," said the Rev. Howard Kaiser, the pastor at St. Paul's. "They've even been coming all winter long except one or two times when it was really icy."

Appendix E: Newspaper article about former Saron's members



Journal photo by Karen A. Sherlock

LIFETIMES OF SONG — Frieda Schwister, 89, (front center) and her brother, William Fenske, 93, (right) sang a hymn with the rest of the choir at St. Paul Evangelical Lu-

theran Church Sunday. The pair have been singing in churches for 73 and 75 years, respectively, and are still going strong. [Story on Metro Page, Part 2.]

Brother, sister recall 70 years of song

By MARIE ROHDE
Journal religion reporter

Two members of the Fenske family joined the choir Sunday morning at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in singing the traditional "In the Cross of Christ I Glory" for what must have been the zillionth time.

William Fenske is 93 and his sister, Frieda Schwister, is 89. He's been a church choir member for 75 years. She has two years less seniority.

"We used to sing a lot at home," Schwister said. "That's all we used to do on Sundays. Then television came along and nobody had time to do it anymore."

The Fenske clan was a large one, with four boys and five girls, and six of the children are still living.

"My father was quite a musician," Schwister said. "He taught himself to play the bass, the tuba and the violin. He and some of his brothers used to play at anniversaries and other parties.

"My mother always sang in the choir. We five girls used to sing harmony when we were doing the dishes or something."

Together, brother and sister have even outlasted their first church, Saron Evangelical Lutheran, which was located at 29th and Hadley Sts. The church building closed in 1972, and the choir — including Fenske and Schwister — moved over to St.

Please see **Singers**, Page 2

Appendix F: Letter from Saron's & Rev. Lengling to St. Paul's

March 11th, 1973
The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. - I John 3, 8.
THE COMMUNION ORDER: Page 15; THE PROPS: Page 62.
THE HYMNS: #28 - #516 - #371 - #324
THE CHOIR: "If Thou But Suffer God To Guide Thee"
THE SERMON: "JESUS CONQUERS THE TEMPTER" Matt. 4, 1-11.

For Your Meditation Before Service: Psalm 31, p. 130.
A chancel plant has been given in memory of Betty Sel-dal on her birthday by her sister, Mrs. June Velten.
Those who have registered for Communion will come forward at the direction of the ushers. Guests who would like to commune are asked to see the Pastor before the service.

The Banners in the chancel were made by some of our young people for the Lenten Season. We appreciate this fine effort.

The Second midweek Lenten Service - Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. continuing our theme:

"LENT - ANOTHER CHANCE"
Many of us were not present on Ash Wednesday, and so we will look for you in the remaining Lenten services. Let us all remember that this season is a time of preparation of our heart for the joyful celebration of our Lord's Resurrection on Easter. It is a season of serious and humble self-examination in the light of Christ's Passion. Without such a Spirit-led and prayerful self-examination what will Easter mean?

Members of Saron's - We appreciate the cooperation of many of you in response to our letter, and we ask you who have not done so to fill out the forms you received and to call Pastor de Galley for an appointment. We are planning to receive you into membership on April 9th. in the Voter's Meeting. Only a few weeks remain, and it is obvious that we cannot see you all in the last week or so. Please take care of this matter at once.

St. Paul Lv. Lutheran Congregation--
Dear Brethren, Christian Friends:

Let us, your brethren in Saron Ev. Lutheran Congregation, think of you, at this time especially, as our Christian friends. It is said, "a friend in need is a friend indeed."

As our Christian friends you stepped forward, extending your invitation to come to you, to join you in St. Paul, there to continue our regular worship and services to our dear Lord, Jesus Christ, after having been forced under changing environment and conditions to dispose of our church, school, and other properties. As our Christian friends you came and said: "Come with us."

Surely, there must have been in your loving hearts an understanding of the sorrow in our hearts under the depressing burden of this situation, such, that it urged you to come to us with an open hand!

We thank you, and pray the Lord may bless your every kindness!

In a specially called meeting of Saron Congregation on December 17, 1972, your kind letter of invitation was prayerfully discussed, and the decision made: to join in worship in St. Paul, and to set a time for further negotiations and working out of details.

As Brethren In Christ we are

Yours,
Saron Ev. Lutheran Congregation
Arthur C. Lengling, Pastor
**

St. Paul's Church Voters: A special meeting of our Voters has been called for December 31, following the service specifically to discuss this letter, and to act on suggestions of our Merger Committee.

**75th ANNIVERSARY
of SARON EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
1894-1969**

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1969

3:30 P.M.

ORDER OF SERVICE

CHORAL PRELUDE: Saron Choir. . . Lord Jesus Christ Be Present Now
A Welsh Melody

ORGAN PRELUDE: Sinfonia from the Cantata Wir Danken
Dir Gott. J. S. Bach

THE LUTHERAN CHORALE:
Come, Sing, Ye Choirs Exultant
R. J. Powell

X: O Lord, open Thou my lips.
R: And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

X: Make haste, O God, to deliver me.
R: Make haste to help me, O Lord.

R: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
R: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world
R: without end. Amen. Hallelujah!

PRAYER
Amen.

HYMN: All Praise To God, Who Reigns Above
Bunjies

INTRODUCTION: Organ and Trumpet

Congr. 1. All praise to God, who reigns above,
The God of all creation,
The God of wonders, pow'r and love,
The God of our salvation!
With healing balm my soul He fills,
The God who ev'ry sorrow stills
To God all praise and glory!

2. Choir Only
3. I cried to Him in time of need:
Lord God, oh, hear my calling!
For death He gave me life in deed
And kept my feet from falling.
For this my thanks shall endless be;
Oh, thank Him, thank our God with me
To God all praise and glory!

**HIGHLIGHTS IN THE LIFE OF SARON
MEMORABLE DATA**

Feb. 7, 1894	Name adopted: SARON EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Oct. 28, 1894	Dedication of two story building to serve as church and school
23rd Sunday after Trinity, 1894	Saron born an independent congregation: full disassociation from St. Matthew's
Feb. 24, 1894	Rev. Herman H. Ebert installed, first pastor Rev. A. Bendler and Rev. Opitz had served
Apr. 16, 1895	Christian Day School Opening, Sunday School held Sunday mornings
June, 1895	Saron Choir Organized
Oct. 1896	Saron Ladies Aid Society Organized
Sept. 22, 1897	Henry Meyer installed, full time Teacher, later also Adelbert Backer. Third full time Teacher, Miss Cecilia Priescz.
May 3, 1925	New Church Dedicated
Apr. 8, 1935	First service held in the English language.
Oct. 1937	Rev. Ebert retired, 1895 - 1937
Oct. 1937	Rev. Arthur C. Lengling, installed, second pastor.
May 1941	A service of Thanksgiving: Burning of Mortgage
1941	Teacher Meyer retired; Miss Cecilia Priescz installed
1945	Teacher Backer and Miss Priescz receive and accept calls
1945	Saron closes Day School; sends children to St. Matthew's and others
May 1945	50th Anniversary Celebration. Saron takes up a sizeable loan to help St. Matthew's build and operate new Day School
Nov. 1969	Celebration: Saron's 75th Anniversary What of the future? That lies planned in the heart of the Lord. May He grant us the faith and joy to carry on!
Particulars:	Founders of Saron: Herman Hackbarth, Haerman Lamott, Carl Rahn, John Mischke, William Kroggel, William Fenske, Sr., Emil Maske, Gistav Goll, William Schultz, Otto Barz. Founders sons still members of Saron: Fred Kroggel, the oldest; William Fenske, Jr., Otto Barz. Alfred Barz. - Daughters, the Fenske': Clara Oppermann, Frieda Schwister, and Helen Seeger.

Saron Ev. Lutheran Congregation,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Appendix H: Letter from St. Paul
to Saron after Dec. 12
Voter's Meeting

Dear Brethren:

Your brethren in St. Paul Congregation, in their Voters Assembly on December 11, 1972, have resolved that the following thoughts be addressed to you in answer to your merger overture.

We understand and appreciate your desire to preserve the name Saron. It is under that name that the Lord for many years has graciously poured out His blessing upon your flock through His Word and Sacrament.

In all brotherly love, we ask you to consider that Saron's Church has now served the role in history that God assigned to it as an independent congregation; that it has fulfilled the Lord's purpose by serving souls in His name; and that, because of circumstances, its service to the Lord as an independent congregation will now terminate.

We are mindful that the name, tradition, customs, and history of a church are deservedly cherished by every congregation. We also recognize— as you do—that Scripture calls us to unity, and warns us against divisiveness in a church, as (I Cor. 1, 11-12) "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas..."

We sincerely believe that it would serve the Lord's purposes in the contemplated merger, not to have two names, but one; not two congregational groups, but one Christian congregation.

We appreciate the contributions to the general welfare that you members of Saron's would bring to such a merger. We recognize your talents and dedication, your zeal and love.

We therefore ask you and invite you in our Savior's name, and in all brotherly love

- To unite with us in one fellowship and as one congregation;
- To work and serve the Lord with us as one body and one people of God;
- To be a part of the membership and life of St. Paul Congregation.

We believe that there are great blessings for you and for us in such an arrangement and that the more we are one in our goals, the more we will together fulfill the intent of God in any congregation.

Our doors and our hearts are open to you. We pray that God may bless us all in this, and that God-willing, you will respond to this invitation with a positive action.

As evidence of our good will and sincere interest we invite you, as soon as you are ready:

- To join us in worship here;
- To set a time for further negotiations and working out of details.

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