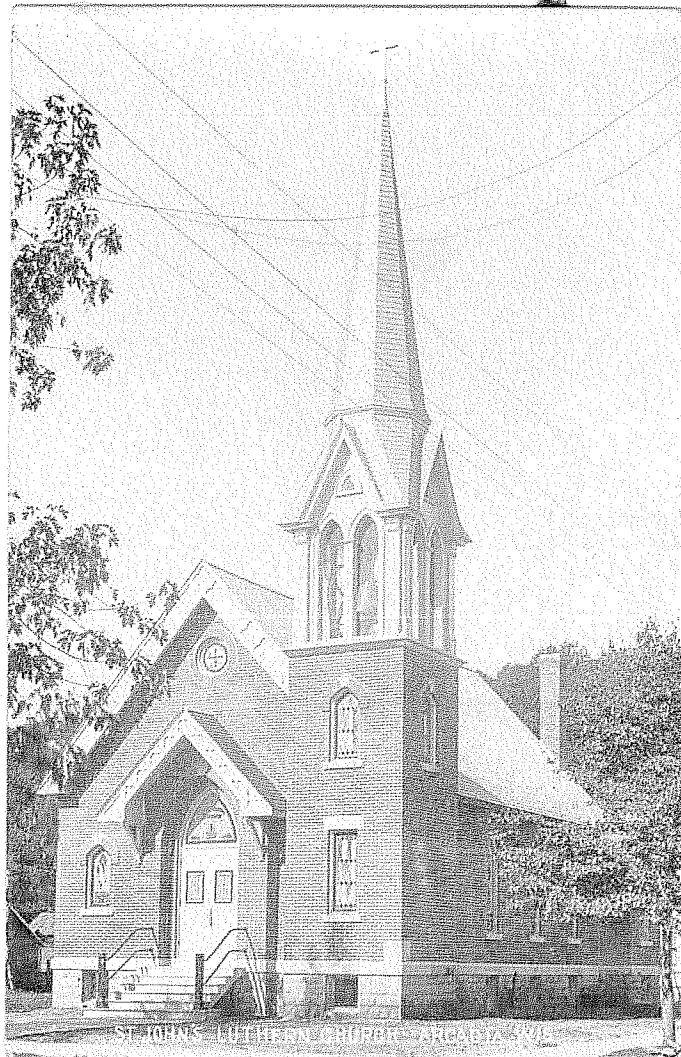


# The History of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Arcadia, Wisconsin—Pictorial

By Daniel S. Olson



St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Arcadia

\*Picture provided by anonymous source

\*Many of the images in this pictorial were taken by the writer of this paper. The sources of all other images are noted. The information provided in this pictorial was given to this writer informally through various sources while living in Arcadia.

## Present Day Buildings of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church



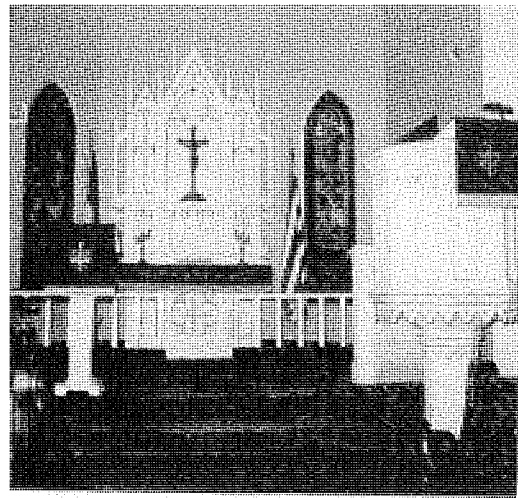
Left—St. John's church still stands. Sometime after the church closed the inside was remodeled. It presently serves as an apartment complex. In the summer of 2001, Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Galesville, a Wisconsin Synod congregation, brought in a team of college students to begin mission work in Arcadia. Their residence that summer was the old St. John's church.

Right—The old parsonage next door to St. John's still stands.



Left—The old small frame church which was built under the pastorate of Julius Badke (1884-1887), still stands. After the above church was built, this building was enlarged and served as a fellowship area for various activities until St. John's closed. Sometime after the church closed it was remodeled and now is a house.

## The final years of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Arcadia



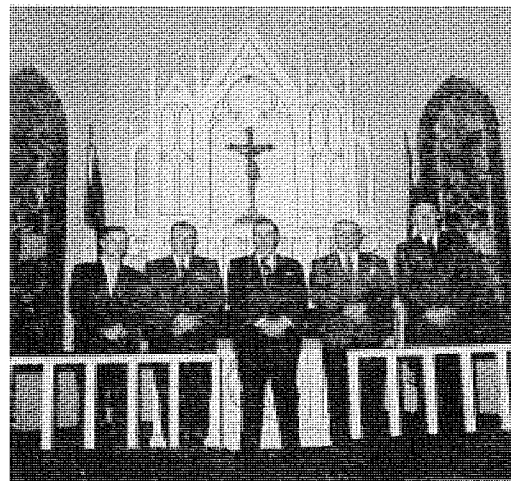
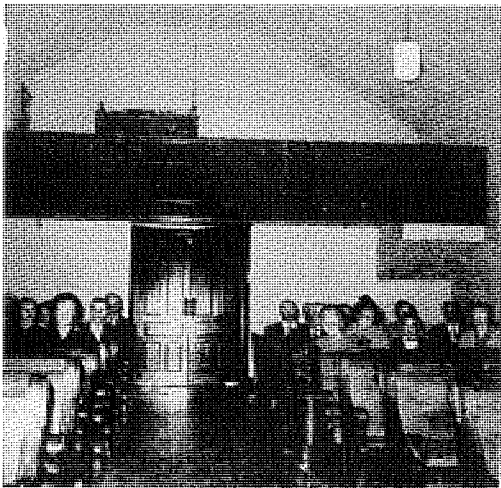
These pictures were taken when St. John's was independent (1959-1962).

Top left— Rev. Richard Buege.

Top right—The inside of St. John's

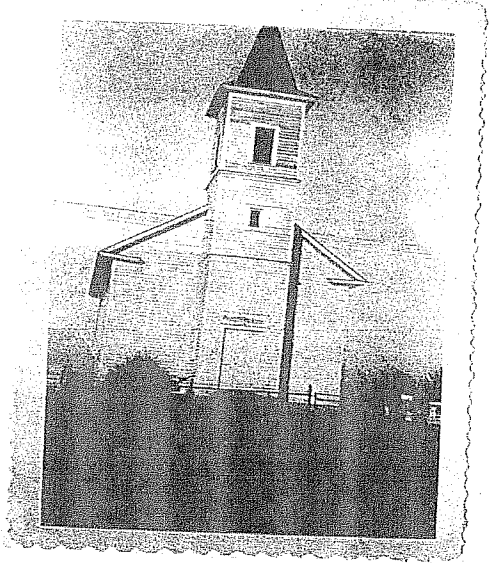
Bottom left—a picture of the members of St. John's

Bottom right—St. John's church council during the last few years of its existence



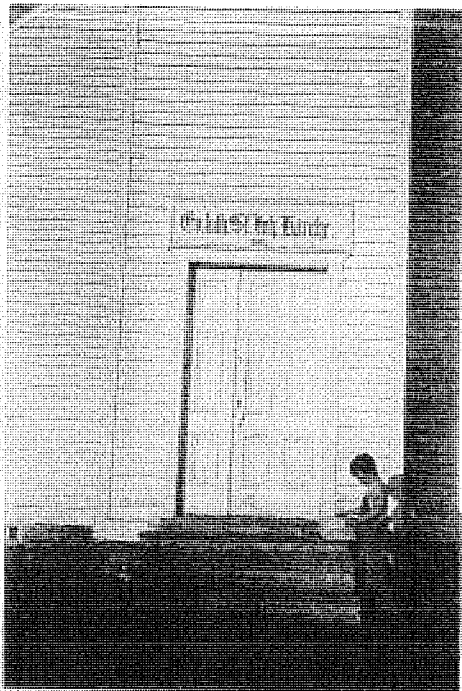
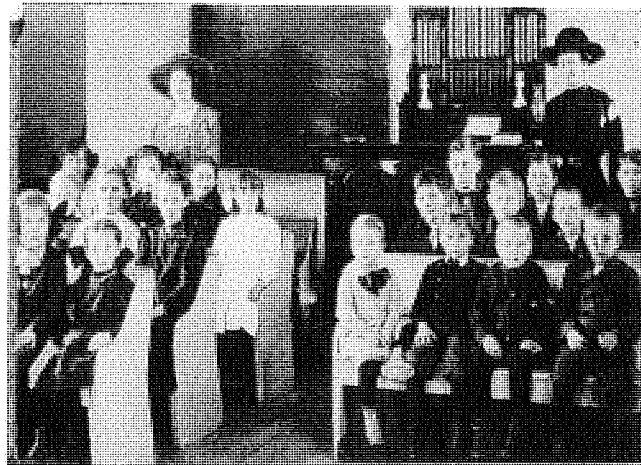
\*These pictures were taken from the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Building of the Church and Dedication of St. John's Independent Lutheran Church. Author unknown. 1960.

## St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Glencoe Township



St. John's Evangelical Church  
Glencoe Buffalo Co. WI

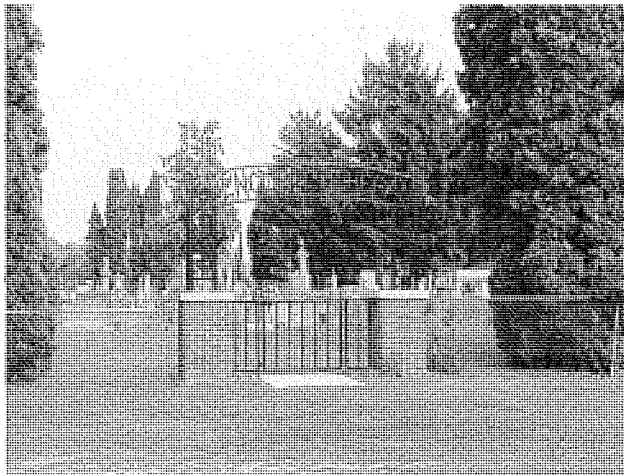
Right—The children of St. John's  
in Glencoe.



Left—a picture of the door of St. John's. The German sign above the door is a reminder of the German services held here by St. John's-Christ.

\*Pictures on this page were provided by an anonymous source

## St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Glencoe Township



Left and middle—Present day area where St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Glencoe stood. The church building no longer exists. Only a cemetery remains. In 1949, St. John's-Christ tore the building down and used the lumber from this church to enlarge their present day worship facility. The bell was also taken and is now located above the balcony in Christ Lutheran Church.



Left—It is rumored that Rev. G. F. Muedeking, a former pastor of St. John's-Christ, was buried where the old altar used to be.

## Christ Lutheran Church in Montana Township



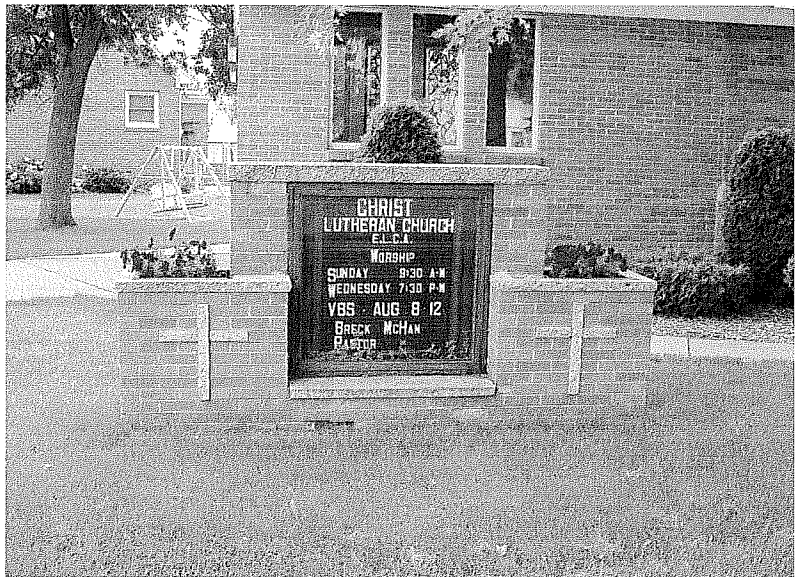
This small cemetery is all that remains of Christ Lutheran Church of Montana, which was built in 1885. It is located a few miles north of St. John's, Glencoe. It is no wonder these two churches worked together to build a city church in Arcadia. This area, which is located at the top of a ridge, would be a long, steep climb for a horse and buggy from Arcadia.



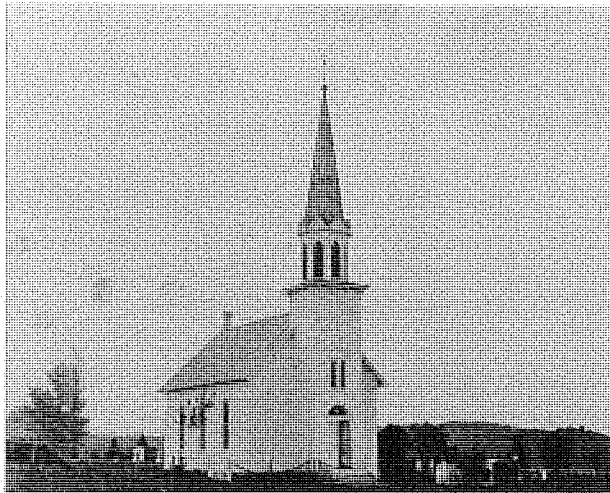
## Christ Lutheran Church in Arcadia (formerly known as St. John's-Christ Lutheran Church and American Lutheran Church)



The original edifice was built in 1910. In 1949, the members enlarged the building to accommodate a growing congregation. St. John's-Christ was always numerically larger than St. John's. As the years went on, St. John's-Christ became the "boiling pot" of Protestantism in Arcadia. They absorbed any of the non-catholic churches which disbanded. St. John's was one of them. They are now members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and their new name is Christ Lutheran Church.

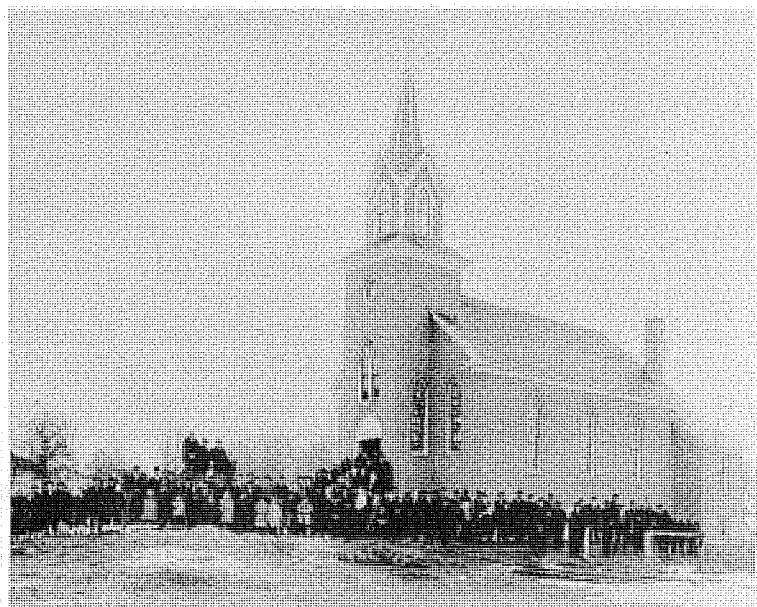


## St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Whitehall



Left—St. Paul's in Whitehall, located 2 mi. south of Pleasantville, began sharing pastors in 1885 with St. John's in Glencoe, Christ in Montana and the group in Arcadia. This structure was destroyed by a tornado in 1914.

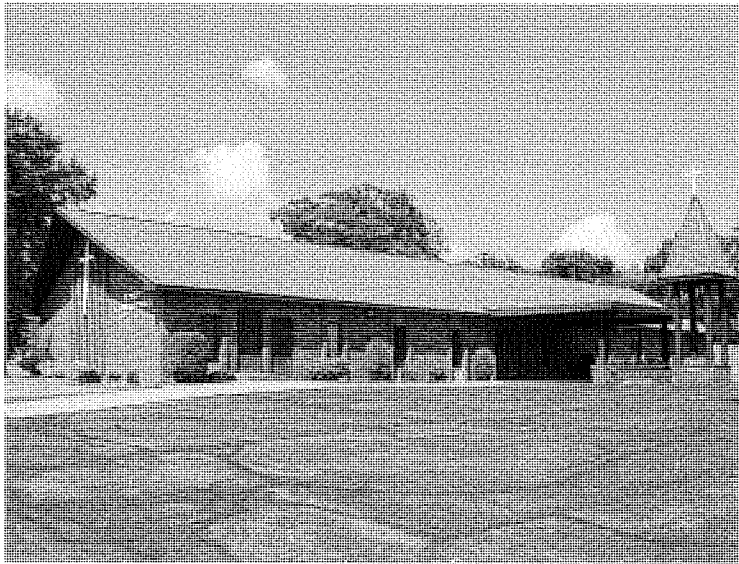
Right and bottom—After the tornado destroyed the above church, this building was constructed the next year in 1915. The church, however, was burned down in 1983. The picture below is the same church from a different angle and time.



\*Pictures on this page provided by Jean Schroeder.

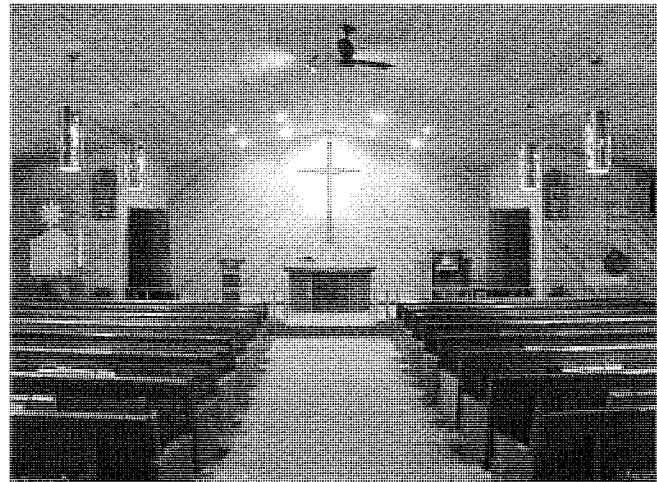


## St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Whitehall



Left—St. Paul's present day church was built in 1984. They are presently a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Right—The inside of the present day St. Paul's Church in Whitehall.



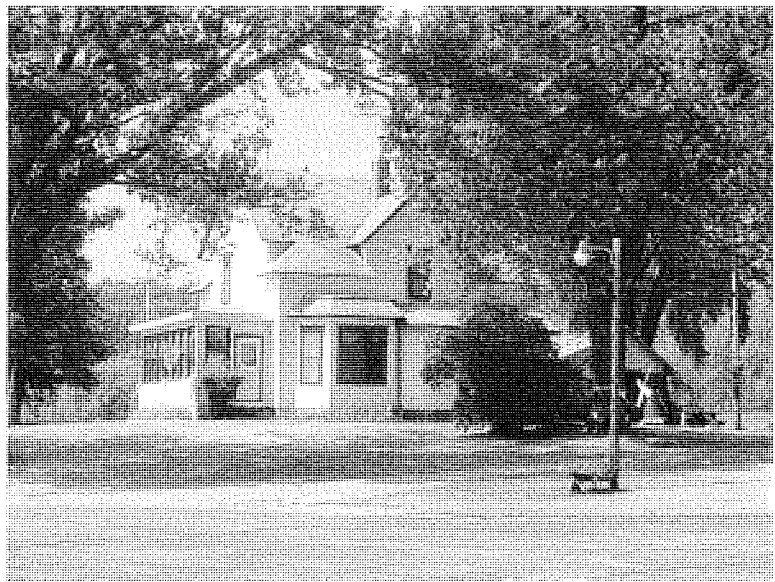
Left—Along with the bell, this stained glass window is one of the few remaining items left from the old Wisconsin Synod church which burned down in 1983.

## St. Paul's Parsonage

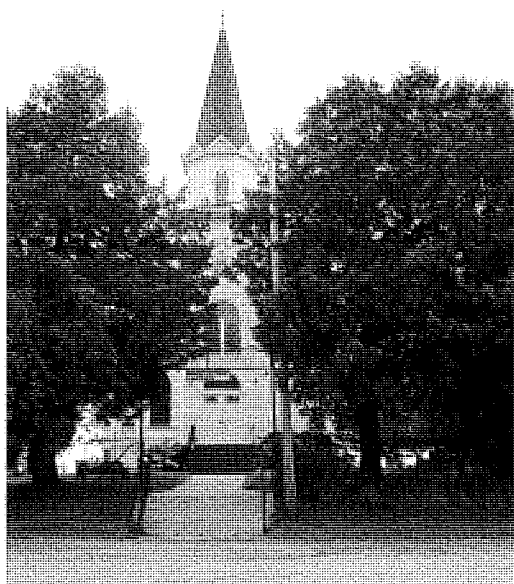


Left—The parsonage which stands next to St. Paul's was built in 1904 for Rev. Krug. It served as the parsonage for many years. It was built because St. John's and St. Paul's discontinued as a dual parish. Almost 40 years later it will become a dual parish again. At that time, this parsonage served as the residence, rather than the parsonage in Arcadia.

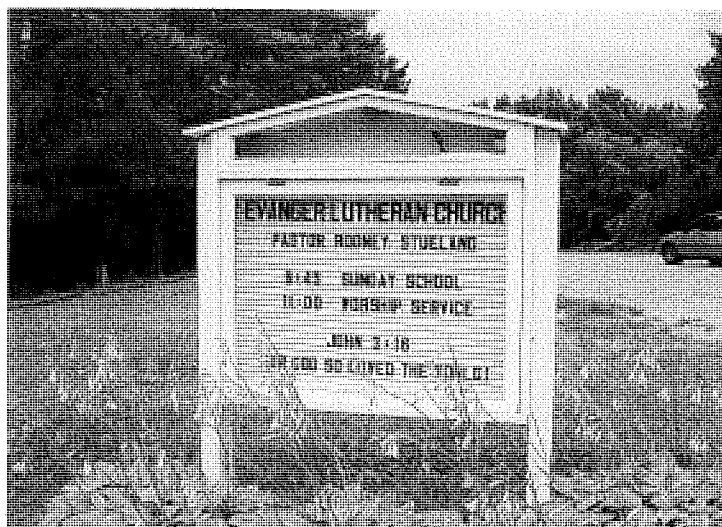
Right—This is a more recent picture of the old parsonage in Whitehall.



## Evanger Lutheran Church in rural Independence



Left—Evanger Lutheran Church, a rural congregation and independent of any denomination, began sharing a pastor (Rev. Buege) with St. John's and St. Paul's in 1959. This happened after St. John's had become independent. In 1962, after Rev. Buege took a call elsewhere, the churches never shared pastors again.



Left—Presently Evanger holds worship services at this building twice a month. They continue to be an independent Lutheran church.

## **Addenda – Newspaper Clippings**

\*The majority of these newspaper clippings were copied out of the WLS Archives, Buege Case File. The others were found by this writer.

St. John's Independent Lutheran Church located in Arcadia will be dedicated Sunday, Jan. 31 at 2:00 p. m. This also will be the 50th anniversary of the building of the church, which was formerly affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod.

Two organ recitals will be given on the new Hammond organ, from 1 to 2 p. m., and from 3 to 4 p. m. The Ladies Aid Society will serve coffee and cake in the Aid Hall located across the street from the church following the dedication service at 2 p. m. There will be open house at the newly redecorated church throughout the afternoon. Business concerns of Arcadia have contributed generously so that a dedication book could be published on the occasion. These dedication books will be available on the day of dedication, Jan. 31. The public is invited to attend.

St. John's is an entirely new organization and has no connection with the Wisconsin or any other synod. St. Paul's Independent Lutheran church of Route 2, Whitehall, and Evanger Lutheran Church, rural Independence, are associated with St. John's. In a few weeks the three congregations will formally join together to form the first Independent Lutheran Parish in Trempealeau county. The three congregations are served by the Rev. Richard Buege, and the expense of maintaining the parsonage located near St. Paul's is shared by all three congregations.

#### History of Congregation

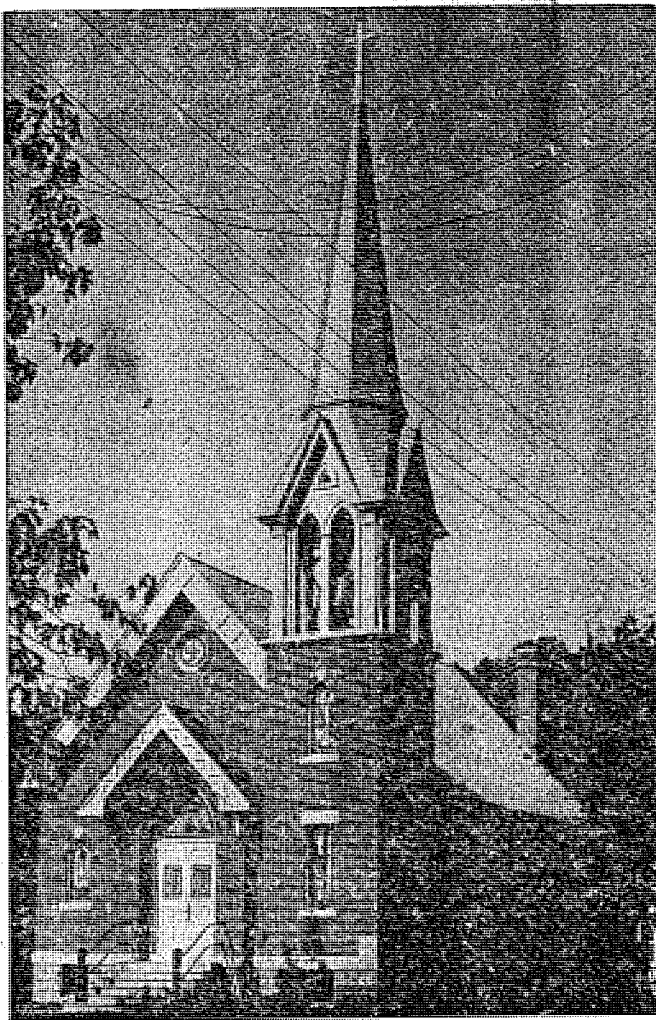
St. John's became a member of the Wisconsin Synod on July 26, 1896, ten years after the first meeting of the congregation which was organized in 1886. St. John's had its beginning in 1863 when Lutheran services were first held in the Arcadia area. For a number of years the congregation continued to grow, then dissatisfaction with the synod, internal strife, and other factors caused the weakening of the church. In 1957 more trouble developed with the synod and St. John's members voted to leave it. On the night of June 21, 1959 St. John's Independent Lutheran Church was organized, and it now has a membership of 40 people, with six children now receiving religious instruction. The Rev. Buege plans to resign from the Wisconsin Synod in order to accept the position as pastor of the three independent congregations.

St. John's does Mission work by providing religious services at the Trempealeau County Hospital and the Golden Age Home at Whitehall, and members also help to support various charities.

New members will be accepted on Sunday, Jan. 31. It is sincerely hoped by the pastor and members that many persons who formerly belonged to St. John's will return to it now that it is an independent Lutheran church.

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### St. John's Dedication Sunday



# St. John's-Christ Church History Dates From 1863

In the year 1863, the Rev. Ernst Stube, a Lutheran pastor serving a congregation at Fountain City, Wis., realized that in the township of Glencoe, near the village of Arcadia, a number of families were living who had no Lutheran church of their own and were, therefore, without the Means of Grace. At once the Rev. Stube made it a point to contact these families and arrange to meet with them in their homes to preach the Word of God to them, baptize their children and instruct them in the fundamental teachings of Holy Scripture. He served these people as best he could in this manner for twelve years.

In 1875 when these people realized fully the difficulty in being served from Fountain City, they determined to call a pastor of their own. Rev. Ernest Giesel, a member of the congregation, was called as their first pastor. Upon his arrival, a congregation was formally organized, a constitution adopted and the name St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Glencoe was chosen. The same year, 1875, a church was constructed and dedicated. The Rev. Giesel, living meanwhile in the village of Arcadia in the house which continues to the present

time as the parsonage of the congregation, began preaching services in the homes of the Lutherans he found in the township of Montana the following year. The preaching services in Montana township resulted in the formation of a congregation in 1887, under the pastorate of the Rev. Julius Bardke, at that time pastor of the St. John's Church of Glencoe.

While records are lacking, verbal assurance from the oldest living members fifty years later, date the construction of the Christ Church of Montana in the year 1885. Fourteen members signed the original constitution, ten of whom still have living descendants as members of the congregation today. This group is still served on alternate Sundays by the St. John's-Christ pastor.

St. John's Church and Christ Church were continuously served as one parish during their history until they were merged in 1929. They joined to construct a church building in the village of Arcadia to serve retired members of either congregation, but no congregation any new member living in the village was constrained to take membership in either one of the township churches. This church building was dedicated under the pastorate of Rev. Henry Zumhingst on the 18th of November, 1910. Because the preaching services held in an upstairs room of the  
See—CHURCH HISTORY— p. 4

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## Church History

(Continued from page 1)

parsonage were deemed sufficient by the majority of the congregation's members, only 18 families were persuaded to give financial assistance toward the construction of the Arcadia edifice. The vision and sacrifice of these 18 families were the foundation for the present church.

In 1929 St. John's Church and Christ Church dissolved themselves, deeded their property and reorganized and incorporated as the St. John's-Christ Lutheran Congregation of Arcadia, Wis.

On Feb. 3, 1913, when the present pastor, George F. Muedeking, was ordained and installed, the combined parish consisted of 51 families. The present membership is 242 families, or 526 communicant members and 175 baptized children.

The following pastors have served this congregation: Rev. Ernst Stube 1863-1875, Rev. Ernest Giesel 1875-1877, Rev. Christian Probst 1877-1879, Rev. John Burckhard 1879-1881, Rev. John Weirach 1881-1883, Rev. Carl Ziebell 1883-1884, Rev. Julius Radke 1884-1887, Rev. Albert Froehlke 1887-1890, Rev. Carl Rutzen 1890-1896, Rev. Herman Gerhard 1896-1897, Rev. Adolph Werr 1897-1904, Rev. G. F. Hanselmann 1904-1907, Rev. H. Zumhingst 1907-1913, and the Rev. G. F. Muedeking from 1913 to the present date.

Arcadia News-Leader  
Nov. 24th, 1949

BECOMES INDEPENDENT

# St. Paul's Church Votes New Constitution, Rules

WHITEHALL, Wis. — Members of St. Paul's Independent Lutheran church, who voted 50 to 21 in June to withdraw from the Wisconsin Synod and operate independently, met in special session at the church north of Whitehall Monday evening and adopted a new constitution.

The congregation withdrew from the Wisconsin Synod in protest to the suspension of Pastor Richard L. Buege from the synod on grounds of allowing women to vote and engaging in communion fellowship with pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Aldor Myren, new president of the congregation following the recent death of Leonard Gruentzel, presided at the meeting.

The new constitution gives equal rights to both male and female members of the congregation. It provides that all members of the church are eligible to vote after they have been confirmed.

Although the former constitution, in effect when St. Paul's belonged to the Wisconsin Synod, had provided that women could vote since 1934, the synod objected.

The new constitution also provides that any member of the congregation is permitted to hold office in same after attaining the age of 21.

All matters of the congregation will be handled by a majority vote, and the church council was given authority to make expenditures to \$150 without congregational vote.

A provision in the constitution states that membership shall not

be denied to people who belong to lodges. The church lost membership when it denied membership to lodge members back in 1944.

The constitution states that no one shall bring before the congregation a complaint against any member or against the pastor, who previously has not attempted to admonish such member in a brotherly manner, in accordance with Matthew 18.

In the event a division shall occur in the congregation, the church property shall remain in the jurisdiction of the members who remain faithful to the constitution of the congregation.

The new constitution makes it clear that the church believes and confesses that all books of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired words of God.

The congregation states that it accepts Luther's Small Catechism as a correct exposition of the teachings of the Word of God. All preaching and teaching in St. Paul's church must be based on God's Word, according to the constitution.

There is further provision that only such a person can and shall be entitled to be pastor of St. Paul's who believes and teaches that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God.

Members of the congregation also gave permission to the church council to make arrangements to join another synod at such time that it feels necessary.

At the present time St. Paul's has fellowship with all churches.

There were no objections from the members in the adopting of the constitution.

At the present time St. Paul's has 125 confirmed members, compared to about 150 prior to withdrawal from the Wisconsin Synod.

The Rev. Mr. Buege is currently serving both St. Paul's here and St. John's at Arcadia.

He has been invited to serve the Evanger church, an Evangelical Lutheran congregation near Lookout in Buffalo County beginning in October, succeeding the Rev. O. C. Aime, of Osseo, who resigned.

The Rev. Mr. Buege expects to serve this additional congregation, having received the approval of his two churches in this area.

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## Whitehall Church Will Quit Synod

WHITEHALL, Wis., June 13 (Special) — The congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church near here is going independent in support of its pastor who has been suspended by the Wisconsin Synod's Western District.

The congregation voted 50-21 Friday night to leave the synod and operate independently until such time as it may wish to join another synod.

The action had been recommended by the pastor, the Rev. Richard L. Buege, and the church council.

**PREFERRED TO SUIT**

Pastor Buege explained it was felt that saving the congregation and using it for the purpose for which it was intended was more important than fighting the synod or bringing suit against district officials.

St. John's Lutheran Church

at nearby Arcadia, which Pastor Buege also serves, has not taken a vote on possible secession from the synod.

Pastor Buege, 30, was suspended last Feb. 28 by the synod's Western District presiding for permitting women to vote in church affairs and for practicing fellowship with clerics of the less conservative Evangelical Lutheran Church.

**UNACCEPTED**

However, neither of his congregations would issue a call for a new pastor. Pastor Buege likewise refused to accept the suspension.

He has contended women's suffrage was practiced under previous pastors at St. Paul's and that there is no basic Biblical doctrinal difference between Lutheran Synods.

Women participated in Friday night's secession vote.

# Church Asks Synod To End Suspension

WHITEHALL, Wis. — The church council of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Whitehall, now considers the suspension of its pastor, the Rev. Richard L. Buege as illegal and without foundation and that the matter should be dropped.

The council failed to receive a reply by Saturday to their letter to the Rev. Richard W. Mueller of Jefferson, president of the Western District of the Wisconsin Synod asking for a meeting between the Western District and the church council concerning the suspension which had been ordered by the synod.

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Official notice of suspension appeared in the April 12 issue of "The Northwestern Lutheran," signed by the Rev. Mr. Mueller.

The Rev. Mr. Buege had written to the publication asking for an "immediate apology" for publishing the notice and demanded a correction stating that he was still a member of the Wisconsin Synod.

Werner H. Fanzmann, managing editor, replied to the Rev. Mr. Buege's letter stating that, "It is not our province to investigate or judge the correctness or validity of such a notice submitted for publication by a district president. It is out of the question for us to entertain your request."

The Rev. Mr. Buege said Saturday that although the Western District officials have attempted to suspend him from membership in the Wisconsin Synod, they have no choice but to recognize him as a minister, because nothing can take away his credentials as such what were registered upon his ordination in 1955.

Also, he is registered as a minister with the Trempealeau County clerk, as required by law, and none of his offices as such can be removed from him.

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The St. Paul's Church Council Saturday issued a statement saying that "because the district officials have failed to agree to a meeting or at least give some answer to our letter, we are fully convinced that the district officials are unable to offer any proof

that our pastor has done anything wrong.

"If they had any evidence against him, certainly the Rev. Mr. Mueller would have agreed to a meeting and a date for it during the past three weeks, the time in which we have been trying to get a meeting with district officials.

"Therefore, because we must conclude that the district officials are unable to show and prove that Pastor Buege is wrong, we conclude he is right and we expect the district officials to withdraw all charges they have brought against him.

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"We also expect the district officials to drop all suspension action against our pastor."

The council now considers the matter settled and plans no further action unless the district officials persist in making "false statements" about Pastor Buege. They do not accept the suspension of Pastor Buege from the synod because of the official's failure to meet with them.

The church also has received no further word in regard to the return of their 1958 mission festival offering and the \$765 has not returned. The council feels that perhaps the money will not be returned if the suspension action is dropped.

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The Rev. Mr. Buege said Saturday that since the district officials have failed to offer any proof that he is wrong in the charges against him — allowing women to vote in the church, and having fellowship with ministers of other Lutheran synods—it will not be necessary for him to appeal the attempted suspension.

## PASTOR, SYNOD OFFICERS MAY CONFER ON OUSTER

WHITEHALL, Wis.—The Rev. Richard L. Buege, suspended from membership in the Wisconsin Synod and removed from its list of pastors, said Thursday that he thinks there is a good chance that district officials will meet with him and the council of St. Paul's Lutheran Church north of Whitehall.

In answer to an invitation for such a meeting, the council and the Rev. Mr. Buege received a reply Wednesday from the Rev. Richard W. Mueller of Jefferson, president of the Western District, stating that their invitation to meet with the council "relative to the differences that separate your pastor from us has been received and is being prayerfully weighed."

The Rev. Mr. Buege added, "The church council and I are quite confident that the entire controversy can be settled at a meeting if the Bible is the only source and authority on which the church bases her doctrine and practice."

The pastor maintains there are no doctrinal differences among the Lutheran synods and that therefore the officials' criticism of his having Communion fellowship with other synod pastors and allowing women to vote in the churches is not valid.

The pastor maintains there are no doctrinal differences among the Lutheran synods and that therefore the officials' criticism of his having Communion fellowship with other synod pastors and allowing women to vote in the churches is not valid.

"Prior commitments, however, prevent our appearing in Whitehall or at any other place on the date you have set (April 13). As soon as our calendar has been cleared we shall notify you of our intentions with regard to your invitation."

The Rev. Mr. Buege said he hoped that the district officials will set a date for the meeting soon.

"Nothing can be gained by delaying the settlement of the controversy," the pastor said. He, with the backing of his con-

# Ousted Pastor's Appeal Delayed

WHITEHALL, Wis., May 8 (Special) It appeared unlikely Friday that the Rev. Richard L. Buege, Whitehall, will be allowed to appeal his suspension from membership in the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod to the synodical convention Aug. 5-12 in Saginaw, Mich.

Pastor Buege, 30, was suspended last Feb. 28 by the synod's Western District for permitting women to vote in church affairs and for practicing fellowship with clerics of the less conservative Evangelical Lutheran Church.

But members of his two congregations—St. Paul's in Whitehall and St. John's at Arcadia—have given him support in the dispute by refusing to issue a call to a new pastor.

### APPEAL RULES GIVEN

Pastor Buege, who contends his suspension was invalid, received a letter this week from the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann, St. Paul, Minn., in which the synod president outlined the method by which Pastor Buege must appeal under the synodical constitution.

President Naumann said an appeal could not be brought before the synod convention in August until it has been

acted upon first by the Western District convention.

There is no district convention until the summer of 1960. This means that, unless a special district parley is called before the Saginaw convention in August, Pastor Buege's appeal could not come before the synod convention until the summer of 1961 at the earliest.

### 'MUST REPORT'

President Naumann wrote that, according to the constitution, the Rev. Richard W. Mueller, Jefferson, district president, "shall render account for his action to the district at its next convention."

Pastor Mueller and two other district officials issued the order of suspension.

"Only when the district has acted and supported its officials in their action is an appeal to the joint synod in order," President Naumann wrote.

Pastor Buege said Friday that he would ask district officials to arrange a special meeting so the appeal can be settled at Saginaw. But on three previous occasions since the suspension, district officials have refused to meet with Pastor Buege.

P. 4

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# Backs Order of Suspension

## Rev. Naumann's View

Journal Special Correspondence

St. Paul, Minn. — Suspension of the Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church near Whitehall, Wis., by district officials of the Wisconsin Lutheran synod has been supported by the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann, St. Paul, president of the Wisconsin synod.

Pastor Buege, also pastor of St. John's church of Arcadia, Wis., was suspended recently by three officers of the western Wisconsin district for taking communion with Evangelical Lutheran church ministers and for allowing women to vote in church matters. He has refused to resign his pulpit.

### Women's Vote Opposed

The Wisconsin synod opposes close association with other church bodies, even Lutherans, with which it is not in doctrinal agreement. It believes, officially, that men only should be permitted to vote in church matters, although the rule reportedly is not applied strictly in all congregations.

Pastor Naumann said the officers acted in harmony with their church constitution and in "an evangelical and brotherly manner."

Pastor Buege has said he would appeal to the synod president and to the Wisconsin synod at its biennial convention which will be held Aug. 5 to 12 at Saginaw, Mich.

### Liberty Is Reaffirmed

Pastor Naumann said that no appeal had been filed. He rejected a claim that he had refused to intervene in Pastor Buege's behalf, saying that the synod's constitution prohibited him from taking a hand in the matter while it was on a district level.

The synod president affirmed his belief in the "priceless boon of religious liberty." He said Pastor Buege and every other American was entitled to his personal convictions. But he added:

"Pastor Buege may even be continuing to serve his congregations in defiance of his suspension, but certainly not as a pastor of the Wisconsin synod whose doctrinal position and convictions he openly and publicly defied."

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# MILWAUKEE SENTINEL

PAGE 1, PART B • SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 1959

## Neglected Studies, Rev. Buege Chided

WHITEHALL, Wis., April 4 (Special) The embattled Rev. Richard Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church here, was told Saturday in a letter from Wisconsin Synod President Oscar J. Naumann of St. Paul that he must have neglected his seminary studies.

Pastor Buege, a graduate of Thiensville Theological Seminary, was suspended by the Western District of the synod but retained by the councils of St. Paul's and St. John's Lutheran Church at Arcadia, where he also is pastor.

He recently asked Pastor Naumann to tell him why "fellowship" with Lutheran ministers of other synods is considered wrong by the Wisconsin Synod.

Pastor Naumann replied by letter. "This question certainly shows that you neglected something during your years at the seminary."

### MEETING SUGGESTED

Rev. Naumann suggested that Pastor Buege meet with district officials to get an answer to the question, and pleaded, "Don't shut the door in their faces."

Pastor Buege, after reading the letter, accused Pastor Naumann of "sidestepping" an answer to his question. "I still don't know what is wrong with fellowship with pastors of other synods," Buege said.

Pastor Naumann asked whether district officials had had an opportunity in 1934 to study the constitution of St. Paul's Church which permitted "woman suffrage" the rock on which Pastor Buege's leadership founded in the eyes of district officials.

Pastor Buege retorted that he was not responsible for what had happened in 1934—he came to the church in 1953—and said he feels district officials were remiss in waiting 25 years before objecting to women voting in St. Paul's Church affairs.

Pastor Naumann assured Pastor Buege that the synod attorney would look into the church's request that \$765 in funds, raised at a mission fes-

tival and dinner at St. Paul's to which the general public was invited, be returned to the congregation.

The church council had asked return of the funds, basing its request on a remark by the Rev. Richard Mueller, Jefferson, district president, to Pastor Buege that the fund-raising dinner was an improper way to raise money for Lutheran activities.

The Rev. Mr. Naumann's letter concluded: "I plead with you in your own interests and in the interests of your congregations and in the interests of the Gospel of Our Savior—please keep this matter out of the public press."

### LETS OTHERS SCOFF

"This serves no good purpose, it only gives the enemy and the unbeliever occasion to scoff and to blaspheme."

Pastor Buege remarked that synod officials, "with more experience and presumably wiser" than he, could have stopped the publicity but instead informed the press of his suspension.

He said he feels that "when the truth is told, no one should be afraid of it. We stand only on the Bible and because of that we have no fear of our position. Publicity in the newspapers is the only way of keeping the people informed of what is happening."

"The only ones who fear publicity are those who cannot defend what they say or are not certain of their stand."

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'I MUST DECLARE...'

# Pastor States He Will Not Accept Suspension

WHITEHALL, Wis.—The rural Whitehall Lutheran pastor who recently was suspended from Wisconsin Synod membership has written to the three top officials of the synod protesting his suspension and, at the end of the letter, refusing to accept their action.

He is the Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran of the Whitehall area and of St. John's at Arcadia. Both congregations are affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod.

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It was the action primarily of three officials of the church that suspended the Rev. Mr. Buege. They are the Revs. Richard Mueller of Jefferson, president, Walter Wegner of Columbus and Norbert Paustian of Oconomowoc, the latter two vice presidents of the synod. It was to these three men that the Rev. Mr. Buege addressed his letter.

Excerpts from the Rev. Mr. Buege's letter follow:

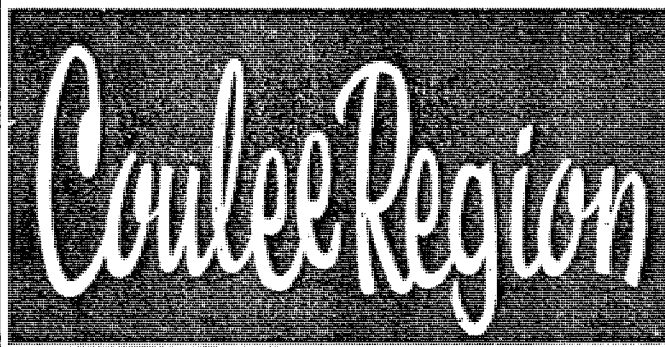
"I have received your letter which informs me that you are attempting to suspend me from membership in the Wisconsin Synod. It is impossible for me to believe that you are trying to do something that only the people who make up the synod can do.

"To the three of you, you might consider me as being suspended, but this does not mean that all the people of the synod feel the same way. Three persons can never speak for over 200,000..."

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The pastor then goes on to discuss one of the matters which the church officials alleged was sufficient to suspend him. This was the question of "fellowship" between the Wisconsin and Missouri synods. The pastor writes:

"For many years now the Wisconsin and Missouri synods have been having difficulties over various matters. Yet in all of these years, fellowship between the two synods has not been suspended. And now one who is a



SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 1959

member of the Wisconsin Synod is suspended in just a matter of a few weeks.

"This hardly makes sense. Surely if you tolerate the so-called errors of the Missouri Synod, then you should not take such sudden action with one of your own members.

"You had been informed that I intended to uphold and abide by the Scripture-based principles and practices of the Wisconsin Synod. You had received the answer that you wanted. Yet in spite of this promise... you try to suspend me. It is impossible to understand the reasoning behind your actions."

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After discussing briefly what the two churches in his charge have contributed to the synod, the Rev. Mr. Buege charges that the three men to whom his letter is

addressed took "final action a few weeks ago" at a meeting that was held without informing him or the church councils. "Certainly," he writes, "anything done at a meeting of this type cannot be accepted as official.

"And let us set the record straight—I have never at any time whatsoever received any type of brotherly admonition. Our troubles have only existed because district officials have made a local affair (of the congregation) the business of the district officials..."

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"It is my belief that I had done the things you asked me to do: my wife joined the church; the women of the church have not voted since the vote was taken on whether or not to keep me as the pastor; as far as the matter of fellowship is concerned, you have

not yet proven why it is wrong on the basis of the Bible. All you can offer in the way of proof is man-made rules and regulations.

"It is impossible for me at this time to accept your action as being valid. I must declare it as being void. Unless this is the sincere wish and desire of the members of the Wisconsin Synod, your action cannot be accepted as official. To the three of you I suppose you will consider me as being suspended, this, of course, is up to you. But I am not convinced that your kind of thinking is the thinking of all the people who belong to the Wisconsin Synod!"

The Rev. Mr. Buege ends the letter with a statement that if his suspension becomes valid it will be necessary for him to appeal.

The church council is to meet Monday evening to discuss the question.

# Pastor Fights Synod Order Rejects Suspension

Journal Special Correspondence  
Whitehall, Wis.—Pastor Richard L. Buege last week notified his Wisconsin synod superiors that he has rejected their order suspending him from the synod.

Pastor Buege, who has charge of St. Paul's Lutheran church near here and St. John's at Arcadia, was ordered suspended and removed from the roster of synod pastors late last month.

That action was taken by Pastor Richard Mueller, Jefferson, president of the synod's western Wisconsin district; Walter Wegner, Columbus, district first vice-president, and Norbert Paustian, Oconomowoc, district second vice-president.

### Two Charges Made

They said Pastor Buege was guilty of taking communion with Evangelical Lutheran ministers and allowing women to vote in church matters.

Pastor Buege immediately branded their action an act of jealousy. He said women no longer voted in his churches and that there was no Scriptural basis for barring fraternization with other ministers.

"It is impossible for me at this time to accept your action as being valid," he said in his letter last week. "Unless this is the sincere wish and desire of the members of the Wisconsin synod, your action cannot be accepted as official."

He said that if the action "should become valid" he would appeal.

### Mueller Gives Views

At Jefferson, Pastor Mueller said he had not received Pastor Buege's letter.

Because the individual congregations, not the synod, own the church buildings, there can be no action to oust Pastor Buege. That action, if taken at all, must be by the congregation.

Pastor Mueller said Saturday that no action was contemplated against the two congregations. He said he had not had an opportunity to speak with leaders of the congregations. He admitted that if they refused to confer, that would be grounds for suspending them, too.

If that were done, the congregations and their pastor would have the option of operating independently or affiliating with one other Lutheran church.

# Peaceful Settlement Eyed in Church Tiff

COLUMBUS, Wis., March 10 (Special) An official of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod's Western District said Tuesday he hopes the bitter dispute between the district and the Rev. Richard L. Buege of Whitehall can be settled amicably—"without the fanfare of publicity that is detrimental to the church as a whole."

The Rev. Walter Wegner, Columbus, first vice president of the district, expressed unhappiness because Pastor Buege and the council of his church, St. Paul's in Whitehall, have been making available to the press contents of their letters to district officials before the latter received them.

### COUNCIL'S VIEW

A letter drafted Monday night informs the district that the church council supports Pastor Buege's rejection of an order suspending him from the synod and that St. Paul's is withdrawing financial support from the synod and demands return of \$765 in mission offerings raised at a festival last September.

Pastor Wegner said he and the other district officials—the Rev. Richard Mueller, Jefferson, president, and the Rev.

Norbert Paustian, Oconomowoc, second vice president—could not comment on the council's letter because they haven't received it.

"The press seems to know more about what is going on in this dispute than we do," Pastor Wegner declared.

Read a copy of the letter by a reporter, Pastor Wegner said he knows of no instance within the Wisconsin Synod where such a request for a refund of offerings has been made. He said district officials would probably hold a meeting to discuss the next step in the controversy.

### LEADERSHIP HIT

The council's letter, strongly worded, termed the district's leadership "a real disgrace to the synod" because none of the district's actions against Pastor Buege "are based on the Bible."

Pastor Buege, 30, who in addition to St. Paul's has charge of St. John's Church at Arcadia, was suspended Feb. 28 from the synod because he permitted women to vote in church affairs and practiced fellowship with clergymen of the less conservative Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Pastor Buege and the church

council claim his suspension is invalid because he and the council were not present at the district presidium meeting to defend themselves. They say they would not accept such a suspension order as valid unless members of the entire synod took such a stand.

Pastor Wegner said Pastor Buege can appeal the suspension order to the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod president, the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann, St. Paul, Minn. But Pastor Buege contends there is nothing to appeal, the suspension being invalid.

### EJECTION POSSIBILITY

Since the congregations of both St. Paul's and St. John's have voted to retain Pastor Buege, Pastor Wegner was asked whether the dispute could ultimately result in ejection of both congregations from membership in the synod.

He said district officials are considering meeting with Pastor Buege and his congregations to "discuss the case amicably."

Should the congregations then refuse to issue a call to a new pastor, he said, they and Pastor Buege probably would be expelled from synod membership.

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# Synod Unit Suspend Rev. Buege

The Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of churches at Whitehall and Arcadia, was suspended Saturday by the Western District of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod,



but Pastor Buege said he would appeal the suspension to the entire synod.

Pastor Buege, 30, has been a controversial figure in the synod since December because of his attitudes toward

women voting in church matters and fellowship with Lutheran ministers of less conservative synods.

## PASTOR NOTIFIED

The Rev. Richard Mueller, Jefferson, president of the synod, announced the action Saturday, after ascertaining that Pastor Buege had received notice of the suspension. In a prepared statement, Pastor Mueller said:

"The Presidium of the Western District has officially suspended Pastor Buege from his membership in the district and in the synod.

"His name has been removed from the synod's official roster of Lutheran pastors. He has furthermore been declared ineligible for a call to the pastorate of any Lutheran congregation within the fellowship of the Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America.

"This action was announced to Pastor Buege in an official notice of suspension."

## SHOULD CLARIFY STAND

Pastor Mueller said the Presidium felt it should "clarify its stand in certain matters in which it was misrepresented in recent press releases."

He continued: "Several news releases quoted Pastor Buege as saying that district officials stated they secretly tolerated woman suffrage in certain congregations. No statement was made by our district officials and no such double standard is in effect in our district or synod."

Asking affiliated congregations "to restrict the right to vote in church matters to the adult male membership of the church," the statement continued:

"Together with other Lutherans throughout the Synodical Conference, we base our practice on this matter on the Word of God in I Tim. 2, 12.

"This passage states that the woman is not to 'usurp (exercise) authority over the man.'

## REPORT CRITICIZED

"Press releases also carried the unfactual report that Pastor Buege was taken to task by district officers for participating in 4-H Club activities. There is no basis in fact for this allegation since our district officers never raised this issue in our discussions with Pastor Buege.

"We regret, too, that newspaper publicity elevated the (Please Turn to Page 2, Col. 4)

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## BUEGE

# Pastor Reports He Got Approval

(Continued From Page 1)

matter of Mrs. Buege's church membership to a major issue in the Buege case." (Mrs. Buege was a member of an Evangelical Lutheran congregation.)

"While this matter was discussed in conversation with Pastor Buege, and he was advised by us to take the customary steps in receiving his wife into membership, we did not make an issue of this nor did we even refer to it in any of our conversation with him.

"We have no way of knowing who is responsible for the news reports which published these misrepresentations of fact, nor are we intent on fixing such responsibility. We desire merely to set the record straight."

## REV. BUEGE REPLIES

Pastor Buege replied, "this is the first time that a minister of the Wisconsin Synod was suspended because he did not agree with the personal feelings of the officials of the synod."

Specifically, he denied he ever had been told "that it is wrong to have association with Lutheran ministers of other synods," that he ever had introduced woman suffrage or that synod officials ever had said women could not vote.

"They gave their permission and then turned around and tried to suspend me for it," he reported.

He said he had not received help in meeting his problems from synodical, district or conference officials, from fellow pastors or other Lutheran ministers of the area.

He contended "jealousy" was behind the dispute, claiming that when he came to the two churches—St. Paul's at Whitehall and St. John's at Arcadia—in December, 1954, both churches were in difficulty.

"The reason why both churches have been successful

is simply because they forgo all about fighting other Lutherans and did the real work of the church," he added.

He said he would not accept the suspension and would continue to act as pastor. A meeting of the church council to inform members of the congregation about the suspension will probably be held after worship services Sunday, he said.

## PROTESTS MEETING

Pastor Buege protested the Presidium meeting without him being present and contended "Certainly anything done at a meeting of this type cannot be accepted as official."

"We have tried to do everything that the synod asked of us," Pastor Buege contended. He said Mrs. Buege had become a member of the church Jan. 11 and that women have not voted at the two churches since the dispute began.

Pastor Mueller said the suspension does not affect the congregations of the two churches. He said the Presidium had no opportunity to meet with the members and would not act until it had met with them.

The synodical conference includes the Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod, the Slovak Synod and several Scandinavian Lutheran groups.

# Synod Opposes Vote for Women in Church

## Suffrage Is Contrary to the Word of God, Is Opinion Restated by Missouri Unit

By DAVID A. RUNGE  
Of The Journal Staff

San Francisco, Calif. — The Lutheran church—Missouri synod Friday repeated its historic view that granting women the right to vote in the congregation would be contrary to the word of God.

A resolution introduced in the synod's 44th triennial convention here urged that congregations continue to give strict heed to the admonition of St. Paul that "women should keep silence in the churches." It urged those few congregations that do allow woman's suffrage to reconsider their practice.

### Change of Custom Noted

Most Protestant denominations have extended women the right to vote. They believe that the restrictions for women were based on the customs of Paul's day and were not abiding prohibitions of God.

There also has been an increasing demand for the right in the Lutheran church—Missouri synod. A request made here by members of Grace Lutheran church, Hayward, Calif., contended that "woman has no desire to usurp authority. . . . (She) only asks that the opportunity be provided for her to express her opinions."

The group agreed that suffrage should not include the right for women to hold office. It asked, however, that the synod allow each congregation to adopt its own policy.

### Committee Disagrees

A study committee headed by the Rev. Walter W. Stuenkel, president of Concordia college, Milwaukee, disagreed. The committee, named three years ago to re-examine the synod's attitude in the light of scripture, said the Bible taught two principles which must not be violated. They are that:

Women must not engage in preaching or in publicly teaching men in the church.

Whatever participation of women in congregational affairs is granted, the principle must be upheld that women

### Other Endeavor Urged

Women, the committee said, "should not pre-empt areas of activities in which the principles stated above are violated." Instead, they "should be directed into, and led to find opportunity for, service in the church where their potential of talent is fully utilized in harmony with scriptural principles."

The committee directed a special word of warning to men not to relinquish to women their rights and obligations in the work of the church "because of their own lack of stewardship consciousness."

The resolution offered some appeasement to the women. It suggested that congregations be

encouraged to set up systems in which women could make their views known, along with those of all groups and individuals not represented in the voters' assembly, before action on such matters by the voters' assembly.

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## *Saturday Water Town Times* Church Votes Leaving Synod

### Issue Over Its Pastor, Rev. Buege, Bring New Action

WHITEHALL, Wis. (UPI) —The congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church voted 50-21 Friday night to leave the Wisconsin Synod rather than continue the fight over the suspension of their pastor, The Rev. Richard Buege.

Rev. Buege told church members that "saving the church is more important than fighting the synod."

Buege was suspended last Feb. 27 by synod officers for taking communion with other Lutheran denominations and for allowing women to vote in church affairs.

The vote by the Whitehall congregation climaxed a long battle with synod officials over whether the suspension was legal.

Rev. Buege's other congregation, St. John's Lutheran Church at Arcadia, voted Thursday to allocate \$600 to hire a lawyer to sue the synod, contingent on a matching \$600 to be put up by the Whitehall church.

Rev. Buege said Friday night's action probably would be followed

## Church Votes to Quit Synod

### Members of Arcadia Lutheran Unit Back Pastor Buege

From Press Dispatches

Arcadia, Wis. — The second congregation served by the Rev. Richard L. Buege voted Sunday to withdraw from the Wisconsin Lutheran synod.

Pastor Buege was suspended Feb. 28 by the synod's western district presidium for permitting women to vote in church affairs and for his fellowship with pastors of the less conservative Evangelical Lutheran church.

The St. John's Lutheran church congregation here, with only 36 members, voted 11 to 1 to leave the synod and operate independently as Pastor Buege recommended.

### Other Church Near Whitehall

Pastor Buege's other pastorate, St. Paul's Lutheran church near Whitehall, voted 50 to 21 on June 21 to leave the synod and become independent rather than fight the presidium's action.

Mr. Buege said he would formally submit his resignation from the synod to its president, the Rev. Oscar Naumann, St. Paul, Minn., this week.

The congregations dated their withdrawals back to Oct. 2 and 3, 1958, just prior to the date—Oct. 6, 1958 — when the Rev. Buege's troubles began.

### Entertained Pastors

On that date, the pastor entertained members of the Evangelical Lutheran church at St. John's and served them communion.

A week later synod officials called the pastor on the carpet and criticized him. He was also criticized for serving communion to his wife, who was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran church.

The suspension followed in February.

# Pastor, Officials Meet, But Reach No Decision

WHITEHALL, Wis.—No settlement was made between the Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Whitehall who was suspended in February from the Wisconsin Synod, and officials of the Western district of the synod at a meeting held at Mauston Tuesday.

The Rev. Richard L. Mueller of Jefferson, president of the district, and the Rev. Walter Wegner of Columbus and the Rev. Norbert Paustian of Oconomowoc met with the pastor, in a six-hour session.

The Rev. Mr. Buege said that he told the officials he would abide by their rules if they would let the suspension and make an apology to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Buege of Algoma, for inducing an investigation of his character recently.

When the officials made no concrete promises to either request, the Rev. Mr. Buege said, the meeting broke up without a settlement.

The Councils of both St. Paul's and St. John's of Arcadia, which the Rev. Mr. Buege also serves, met Tuesday evening to stand by their pastor in his decision.

They also voted to engage the services of an attorney to bring action against the synod officials for alleged false and misleading statements about him, defamation of character and alienation of affection between himself and his parents.

He said the Rev. Mr. Wegner admitted conducting an investigation in Algoma recently, holding a meeting with the Rev. Karl Oepel and the Rev. Alvin Schaefer, associate pastors of St. Paul's Church at Algoma, and with the Rev. Mr. Buege's parents.

The Rev. Mr. Buege said he offered to terminate his fellowship with Evangelical Lutheran pastors and take voting power away from the women again if the suspension were lifted and the apology made. These were the two points on which he was suspended. He was blamed, he said, for the constitutional provision allowing women to vote, even though it was made in 1934.

The Rev. Mr. Buege said he offered to terminate his fellowship with Evangelical Lutheran pastors and take voting power away from the women again if the suspension were lifted and the apology made. These were the two points on which he was suspended. He was blamed, he said, for the constitutional provision allowing women to vote, even though it was made in 1934.

# Pastor Buege, Presidium Will Confer

WHITEHALL, Wis., May 31 (Special) The Rev. Richard L. Buege, who has refused to accept a suspension by the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod's Western District, said Sunday he will confer Tuesday with district officials.

Pastor Buege, of St. Paul's Church in Whitehall and St. John's at Arcadia, said the Rev. Richard W. Mueller, Jefferson, district president, had invited him to a meeting at 1 p.m. Tuesday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mauston.

The Revs. Walter Wegner, Columbus, and Norbert Paustian, Oconomowoc, who with Pastor Mueller make up the district presidium, would attend the conference, Pastor Buege said.

He was suspended Feb. 28 for permitting women to vote in church meetings and for "fellowship" with clergymen of other Lutheran sects.

Doctrinal differences between the Wisconsin Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the St. Paul's constitution of July 1, 1934—which Pastor Buege contends permits women to vote in congregation matters—will be on the agenda at the meeting, he said.

# Rev. Buege to Meet Tuesday With Board

## Lutheran Synod Presidium Sets Private Session

WHITEHALL, Wis. (UPI) — The three-member western district presidium of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod will meet Tuesday with the Rev. Richard Buege to discuss his suspension from the church.

Rev. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Whitehall and St. John's Lutheran Church at Arcadia, announced Sunday he had been invited to the presidium meeting by one of the group's members, the Rev. Richard Mueller of Jefferson, who played a part in Buege's suspension.

The presidium meeting will be at St. Paul's Lutheran Church at Mauston and it will be private. Rev. Buege is expected to report on the meeting Tuesday to a joint meeting of his congregations at Whitehall.

Rev. Buege was suspended from the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod in February on grounds that he gave women in his St. Paul's congregation the right to vote on church matters and also because he had communion with ministers outside the synod.

The Rev. Buege has appealed his suspension and both his congregations have kept him as pastor.

# Pastor Suspension Case Slated to Be Aired Again Today

WHITEHALL — (UPI) — The three-member western district presidium of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod was to meet today with the Rev. Richard Buege to discuss his suspension from the church.

Mr. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church at Whitehall and St. John's Lutheran church at Arcadia, announced Sunday he had been invited to the presidium meeting by one of the group's members, the Rev. Richard Mueller of Jefferson, who played a part in Buege's suspension.

The private presidium meeting was to be at St. Paul's Lutheran church at Mauston. Mr. Buege is expected to report on the meeting tonight to a joint meeting of his congregations at Whitehall.

Mr. Buege was suspended from the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod in February on grounds that he gave women in his St. Paul's congregation the right to vote on church matters and also because he had communion with ministers outside the synod.

Mr. Buege has appealed his suspension and both his congregations have kept him as pastor.

# No Agreement In Pastor Tiff

WHITEHALL, Wis., June 3 (Special) The Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of two Lutheran churches near here who was suspended by the Wisconsin Synod's Western District last Feb. 28, said Wednesday that no agreement was reached in a meeting between himself and three synod officials Tuesday at Mauston.

Pastor Buege, of St. Paul's Church near Whitehall and St. John's at Arcadia, said he met six hours with the Revs. Richard W. Mueller, Jefferson, district president; Walter Wegner, Columbus, first vice president, and Norbert Paustian, Oconomowoc, second vice president, but they were unable to settle their differences.

Pastor Buege was suspended for permitting women to vote in church meetings and for "fellowship" with clergymen of other Lutheran sects. He has refused to accept the suspension and has continued to serve his two churches.

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St. Paul's  
Union  
Tues.

### Rev. Buege Appeal Could Be Delayed

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — It seems unlikely that the Rev. Richard L. Buege of St. Paul's Lutheran Church here will be allowed to appeal to the Wisconsin Synod about his suspension from synod membership at the church group's convention at Saginaw, Mich., in August.

According to a letter received by Pastor Buege Thursday from the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann, St. Paul, synod president, he must first make an appeal to district officials.

If the district officials will not call a special meeting, the Rev. Buege will not have an opportunity to make his appeal until the summer of 1960 since there will be no regular district meeting before the synod convention.

Since the entire synod will not have another meeting until the summer of 1961, the suspension controversy may not be settled for two years.

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### Whitehall Pastor To Be on Program

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — The Rev. Richard L. Buege, Whitehall pastor suspended from the Wisconsin Synod because he allowed women to vote and had Communion fellowship with pastors of other Lutheran synods, will be a guest on Open Mike radio program over a Twin Cities radio station Tuesday from 10:30 p.m. to midnight.

The program is an interview interrupted by telephone calls from the audience with questions that will be answered during the broadcast.

Pastor Buege will give his views on voting rights for all members of a congregation, fellowship among Lutherans and the need for Lutherans to work together.

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### Meeting With Synod Official Denied Buege

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — The Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church of Whitehall who has not accepted suspension from the Wisconsin Synod, has been denied a meeting with Western Wisconsin District officials.

In answer to several letters in which the Rev. Buege and his church council suggested three dates for a meeting and also suggested that the officials set a date, replies were received by Leonard Gruentzel, president of the council, and the Rev. Buege.

The letter to Mr. Gruentzel, read by Rev. Buege to his congregation following services Sunday, said in part: "You have not changed in your attitude nor in the spirit from your former letters . . . any meeting with you or pastor Buege will be of no avail. The only course open for you is to prepare and present your appeal of Pastor Buege's suspension to our Wisconsin Synod for its meeting (in Saginaw, Mich.) in August. We shall have no meeting with you nor shall we answer your correspondence."

### Pastor Prevented From Radio Talk

May 18

WHITEHALL, Wis.—The Rev. Richard L. Buege of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, recently suspended from membership in the Wisconsin Synod, said that interference by the synod's president, the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann of St. Paul, and a misunderstanding on the part of the radio station prevented him from appearing on the WCCO "Open Mike" program Tuesday evening.

He was promised a later appearance, however.

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### Church Council To Meet Sunday

May 18

WHITEHALL, Wis.—The council of St. Paul's Lutheran Church will meet Sunday following 10:30 a.m. services to consider sending a formal request to the president of the Western District of the Wisconsin Synod to hold a special meeting of all members of the district sometime in June or as soon as possible with regard to the Rev. Richard Buege's suspension from the synod.

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ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN (Wisconsin Synod) "Church of the Lutheran Hour" Rev. Richard Buege, Pastor Sunday, May 10— Divine Worship at 8:30 a. m. Sunday School following the sermon.

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# Pastor Allows Women's Voting; May Lose Pulpit

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special)—The men members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Wisconsin Synod, a rural congregation of near Whitehall, will vote Jan. 11 on whether to dismiss their pastor, the Rev. Richard Buege.

Officials of the Wisconsin Synod have notified the Rev. Mr. Buege that he has violated the rules of the synod by permitting women to cast votes on church matters.

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It is also charged that the Rev. Mr. Buege has been attending pastoral conferences of the Mondovi Circuit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and taking Communion with them.

In a third complaint, the officers of the synod have informed the Rev. Mr. Buege that his wife, whom he married last June, is not to receive Communion in St. Paul's Church until she becomes a member of the congregation.

Mrs. Buege was formerly a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Pigeon Falls.

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If Mrs. Buege does not leave the ELC, the Rev. Mr. Buege was informed, it will constitute grounds for his dismissal.

The Rev. Mr. Buege said his wife had not formally joined St. Paul's as they believed that as his wife she automatically became a member of St. Paul's.

The rural pastor said, "We still firmly believe and are confident that there are no doctrinal differences between the various (Lutheran) synods. The various differences that exist are only in the practices of the churches, which certainly do not constitute a reason for discontinuing fellowship."

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St. John's Wisconsin Synod Church of Arcadia, also served by the Rev. Mr. Buege, has already voted to allow women to vote on church questions and to allow fellowship with Lutherans of all branches of the church.

The dispute was brought to light in a conference Monday with officials of St. Paul's Church and the Rev. Richard Mueller, Jefferson, president of the western district of the synod, and the Rev. Norbert Paustian of Oconomowoc, vice president.

The six members of the council of St. Paul's are split in their opinion—three favor their pastor, three against.

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# Women's Rights to Figure in Church Vote

Mpls. Trib. 1-7-59

WHITEHALL, Wis.—(UPI)—A dispute over equal rights for women church members and co-operation with other Lutheran churches will probably be climaxed Sunday when St. Paul's Lutheran church congregation will vote whether to retain its pastor.

The minister, the Rev. Richard Buege, of Whitehall and Arcadia, Wis., met with officials of the Wisconsin Lutheran synod's western district and six members of his congregation's council Monday night. The pending balloting was decided upon at the conference.

Mr. Buege has been involved in a battle with the synod over his religious associations with ministers of other Lutheran sects. The synod officials contend his wife is a member of a rival Lutheran sect and have ordered him to deny her communion in St. Paul's Church until she resigns from the general Lutheran church.

If the Whitehall minister disobeys, he has been threatened with dismissal.

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# 12 Take Walk As Ouster Of Pastor Fails

P.12

Pioneer Press News Service  
WHITEHALL, WIS.—Members of St. Paul's Lutheran church at nearby German Valley voted 70-19 Sunday to retain their pastor, Rev. Richard L. Buege, 30. Eleven members abstained from voting.

A dozen of those who opposed Rev. Mr. Buege walked out of the church and joined two Western Wisconsin Lutheran district officials who had been denied entrance to the church.

Rev. Walter Wegner of Columbus, district vice president, and Rev. Harold Buckner of Winona, visitor for the conference, had been invited to attend the church meeting by a group opposed to Rev. Mr. Buege. The congregation voted to admit only church members, however.

The synod officials left and gave no hint as to what action may be taken in the situation.

Rev. Mr. Buege has been under criticism from the synod for his liberal interpretation of church doctrine. This also led to the dispute within St. Paul's church and St. John's church at Arcadia which comprises Rev. Mr. Buege's parish.

The trouble started last August in Arcadia when a new constitution for St. John's church was drafted which gave women members the right to vote on church matters. This is against the rules of the Wisconsin Lutheran synod.

In the meantime, Rev. Mr. Buege had been associating with ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran church in this area. He attended ELC pastoral conferences and took communion there.

There was also objection because Rev. Mr. Buege's wife, a member of an ELC church when they were married, has never formally joined St. Paul's church although she has taken communion there.

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# Lutheran Pastor Ignores His Suspension; Holds Services

## Rev. R. L. Buege Hit in Ruling By Synod Group

The Rev. Richard L. Buege, 30, pastor of two Lutheran churches in the Whitehall, Wis. area has been ordered suspended as the latest step in the controversy that has been the subject of considerable state newspaper publicity in recent weeks, but he is ignoring the suspension and conducted services as usual on Sunday.

Notice of the suspension was revealed late Saturday after three officers of the Western District of the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod had studied recent issues raised by the young minister in a letter he sent to them.

Notice of his suspension, which was sent to him in a registered letter, was signed by the Rev. Richard W. Mueller, president of the western Wisconsin district of the synod, the Rev. Walter Wegner, Columbus, district first vice-president and the Rev. Norbert Paus-tian, Oconomowoc, second vice-

president. The three district leaders met at Jefferson to discuss a letter by the Rev. Mr. Buege and the church council in which they outlined their views. The Rev. Buege has been under fire by the synod since late last year.

### Conducts Services

A United Press International dispatch to the Daily Times (today) from Pleasantville, Wis., stated that the Rev. Mr. Buege held regular services Sunday at his two churches near Whitehall despite his suspension order.

The Rev. Mr. Buege said he was suspended because of his refusal to accept the synod's decision on the issue of women's suffrage in church elections.

At Arcadia, Buege said, the congregation was especially shocked by the action of the western district's three-member presidium. The head of the presidium, the Rev. Richard Mueller, Jefferson, was a former pastor at Arcadia.

Several people came to me and said that the Rev. Mueller left Arcadia because he was unable to get along with certain members of the congregation. They suggested that possibly he may have acted to get back at them, but I don't accept that idea. Buege said, according to the UPI dispatch.

### Issues Raised

The Pleasantville minister was suspended for violations of church law. He was accused of allowing women to vote in church elections and of cooperating with Lutheran pastors of rival sects.

The Rev. Buege also claimed his suspension partially was based on his work in the 4-H Club movement and because his wife was a member of the rival Evangelical Lutheran Church until January, although this was denied by the Rev. Mr. Mueller.

The pastor said he will ask that the suspension be lifted or that the three-member presidium also be suspended because they failed to give him an opportunity to present his case at the Feb. 15 church trial.

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## Arcadia Church To Sell Parsonage

ARCADIA Wis. (Special) — The congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church voted on Sunday to sell the parsonage for funds to continue operating.

Sealed bids will be received by Dec. 24 by the Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor. They will be opened Oct. 19, 31.

Pastor Buege, who also serves St. Paul's Wisconsin Synod Church at Kierman Valley, north of Whitehall, had resided in the parsonage adjacent to this church, was appointed chairman of the meeting. For the first time in the history of the congregation, women and confirmed children of the church were allowed to vote, as well as men, at this year's general conference.

**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN**  
(Independent)  
Rev. Richard Buege, Pastor  
Sunday, Dec. 31—  
No Worship Service.  
Sunday, January 7—  
Divine Worship Service at 8:15 p.m.  
Weekly Offering Envelopes for Dec. 31 and Jan. 7 will be received from the members.  
All members are asked to give at least \$1.00 in their Initial Offering Envelope to help pay for the cost of the Weekly Offering Envelopes.  
The Church Financial Committee will meet and count the offering following the worship service.  
Weekly Offering Envelopes for 1962 are available at the Church. Guests and visitors are invited to worship with with us!

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**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN**  
Church of the Lutheran Heart  
Rev. Richard Buege, Pastor

Worship Services at 8:15 p.m. and 10:30 a.m. on Sundays and Holy Days. The church is open for prayer and counseling at all times.

Members are invited to give to the church through the offering envelope. The offering envelope is available at the church.

For more information, contact the church office at 1000 W. Main St., Arcadia, Wis. 53001.

# New Counterattack Made By Suspended State Pastor

WHITEHALL, Wis., April 19 (Special) The Rev. Richard L. Buege of Whitehall Saturday launched another verbal counterattack in the battle over his suspension from membership in the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod.

Target this time was the Rev. Richard W. Mueller, Jefferson, president of the synod's Western District, to whom a letter was sent by registered mail.

Reason for Pastor Buege's latest letter was insertion in the "Northwestern Lutheran," official publication of the synod, of the district's office order of suspension.

The Rev. Buege, being supported in the controversy by members of the churches he serves, St. Paul's here and St. John's at Arcadia, said he received the April 12 edition of the publication Saturday and "was shocked" to find therein the notice of his suspension.

The notice, signed by Pastor

Mueller, "regretfully announces" it has become necessary to suspend Pastor Buege "because of his persistent refusal, despite brotherly admonitions, to bring his pastoral practice into conformity with the accepted Scripture-based practice of the synod."

Pastor Buege then composed his latest letter to Rev. Mueller, making a copy available to the press. He called publication of a suspension notice in the "Northwestern Lutheran" a "most unnecessary and unjust attack against me."

## DENIES 'ADMONITIONS'

Pastor Buege denies that any synodical official ever offered any "brotherly admonitions" to him and that he ever "persistently refused" to follow Scripture-based doctrine.

The Western District suspended Pastor Buege Feb. 28 for permitting women of St. Paul's to vote in church affairs and for practicing fellowship with clergymen of

the less conservative Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Rev. Buege, who was not present at the presidium meeting at which his suspension was voted, stated in his letter to Pastor Mueller, "I have never tried to make things difficult for you, so why can't you leave me alone?"

Since he took over four years ago at St. Paul's, Pastor Buege claimed, contributions have increased from \$2,000 to \$8,000 annually because "we forgot all about fighting other Lutherans and just preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ—the real work of the church."

## SUFFRAGE VIEW

Pastor Buege asked why he should be suspended on the issue of woman's suffrage since the constitution of St. Paul's Church has permitted women to vote there since 1934—and such was the practice under previous pastors.

He also contended there is no basic Biblical doctrinal difference between Lutheran synods, so how can fellowship be wrong?

Pastor Buege, who plans to appeal his suspension to the synod's biennial convention Aug. 5-12 at Saginaw, Mich., said the only reason it became necessary to suspend him was that, if Rev. Mueller and his supporters didn't do so, "it would weaken your position and your way of religion."

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MILWAUKEE SENTINEL

# Rev. Buege Backers Want Synod Leaders' Suspension

WHITEHALL, Wis., April 19 (Special) The St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council, backing its pastor, now is demanding that the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod suspend the members of the Western District Presidium and the local parish visitor.

St. Paul's pastor, the Rev. Richard Buege, was suspended Feb. 28 as a Wisconsin Synod minister and member by the Presidium, which also extended his excommunication to churches of the Missouri, Slovak and Finnish Synods.

In a letter to the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann of St. Paul, president of the synod, the council demanded the suspension of Revs. Richard Mueller, district president; Werner, Columbus, vice president; Norbert Oconomowoc, second president, and Harold Winona, Minn., local

The four, the letter contended, "should all be suspended from membership in the Wisconsin Synod, and they also should be removed from the ministry."

"Just because women voted at a meeting of the congregation," the council added, "and because our minister associated with ministers of other synods, they have been trying to suspend him."

The district officials have not been able to prove that our minister is wrong. They have given us no Biblical proof whatsoever.

"Our constitution," the letter said, "gave the women the right to vote in 1934. If it is so wrong, why haven't they done something before this? We didn't you try to suspend some of our other ministers."

The church had five pastors between 1934 and Pastor Buege's call in 1953.

for Buege, suspended for permitting women to vote in church elections and associating with ministers of less conservative Lutheran groups.

The council also wrote to Pastor Mueller, demanding refund of \$765 raised at a mission festival and forwarded to the district treasury.

"Three weeks have passed," the council said, "and our mission festival money has not been returned to us. Why the delay? It took you only a few weeks to try to suspend our pastor."

"Now use the same kind of speed and return our money. We expect the money back no later than April 6, the day of our quarterly meeting, or else tell us the reason you are not returning it."

The council also asked Pastor Naumann to investigate the mission festival money refund demand.

# End of Dispute, Rev. Buege's Aim

WHITEHALL, Wis., April 5 (Special) The Rev. Richard Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church here, said Sunday that he and his Church Council are working on a plan which they hope will settle the congregation's controversy with its parent Wisconsin Synod over Pastor Buege's right to hold the pastorate.

Pastor Buege, excommunicated Feb. 28 by the Western District Presidium of the Wisconsin Synod, declined to detail his solution to the controversy but said he expected it to be ready by Tuesday or Wednesday.

St. Paul's Congregation met after the worship service Sunday to discuss the situation. Pastor Buege said many members of the congregation believe the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann, St. Paul, synod president, had failed them in not detailing his objection to "fellowship" with clergymen of other Lutheran synods.

## SUSPENDED FEB. 18

Pastor Buege was suspended Feb. 18 by the Presidium for consorting with other Lu-

theran clergymen and permitting women members of the congregation to vote in church elections.

The St. Paul's constitution was read during the meeting Sunday and the members voted to decline to consider woman suffrage an issue in the controversy as the church has permitted women to vote since 1934.

Pastor Buege gave the congregation a financial report for the past three months which showed that total attendance at the 12 weekly worship services during the period had been 1,565, an increase over the attendance of the same period last year.

Contributions during the period totaled \$1,600, about twice what was contributed in the same period last year.

## REFUND ASKED

Meeting after the congregational session, the Church Council wrote to the Rev. Harold Eckert, Milwaukee, chairman of the district Board of Trustees, demanding return of \$765 St. Paul's raised at a mission dinner last year and

forwarded to the district for mission purposes.

The Rev. Walter Wegner, Columbus, vice president of the district, told Pastor Buege shortly after the meeting that he felt a public dinner to which non-members of the congregation were invited, was an improper method of raising funds for the missions.

Pastor Buege and the Church Council contend that, if the money was raised improperly, it should be returned.

Pastor Buege said that the members of the congregation, queried at the meeting, expressed approval of his views toward publicity on the controversy, feeling wide publicity

is necessary to give an "honest and true outlook" on the controversy.

Synod officials had criticized Pastor Buege for commenting on the dispute to newsmen.

## Defy Lutheran Synod

# Own Church Backs Suspended Pastor

WHITEHALL, Wis. (UPI)—The church council of St. Paul's Lutheran Church voted unanimously Monday night to support their pastor, the Rev. Richard Buege, in the rejection of his suspension from the western Wisconsin Lutheran Synod.

Leonard Gruentzel, chairman of the council, said a letter was drafted by the six man group at the meeting, stating that "Rev. Buege's suspension for unorthodox practices was invalid."

The council also asked for the return of \$765 which the church had paid to the synod for the present fiscal year.

"Buege was suspended for taking communion with Evangelical Lutheran ministers and for allowing women to vote in church matters. But Buege rejected the suspension by the synod, saying woman no longer vote in his churches here and at Arcadia and that there is no Scriptural basis for barring fraternization with other ministers.

The letter from the council said that "we doubt that three... the right to suspend

The letter said only if the members of the entire Wisconsin synod thought Buege should be suspended would such action be valid, and then the council would appeal the suspension. Rev. Buege said he asked the synod last Thursday how to go about appealing the suspension, but had received no reply yet.

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# Evangelical Lutheran Views Successful Year; Hold Elections

The members of Evanger Lutheran Church gave their pastor, Rev. R. L. Buege, a standing vote of thanks at the annual meeting on Sunday, November 12.

The members have just completed the most successful year in the 90-year history of the congregation. Attendance at the worship services has nearly doubled; weekly offerings have increased from an average of 30c to \$1.00 per member during the past two years; Holy Communion has been received an average of four times more by each member than in 1959.

At the annual meeting the members voted in favor of giving \$400.00 more in financial support to the budget of The American Lutheran Church. This is in addition to the almost \$1,000 which the members have already given to the budget of The American Lutheran Church and other synod related organizations and institutions. Evanger helps to support the Hauge Federation, Lutheran Home for the Aged, Luther Park Bible Camp, Boy Scouts, and the Northern Wisconsin District of The American Lutheran Church. Evanger is a Congregation of the Mondovi Conference.

Mr. Iner Bjorgo was elected president of the congregation and Mrs. Terrance Nelson was elected as financial secretary. Other Church Council members are: Clarence Johnson, vice president; Mrs. Allard Norby, secretary; Mrs. George Norby, treasurer; and Marvin Finreite, trustee. Twenty-eight members were appointed to the various committees for 1962.

A budget of \$6,000 is planned for 1962. The church has a baptized membership of 150 persons. There are about 100 confirmed members.

The newly elected church council members will be installed at the Holy Communion Worship Service on Sunday, November 26 at 2:00 p.m. Registration for Holy Communion will be before the Service.

The members voted in favor of a full schedule of Christian Education. The Sunday School and the Bible classes will meet in connection with each Worship Service. Members on the Christian Education Committee are: Mr. and Mrs. Norman Klopp, Mr. and Mrs. Laverne Nelson, and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Kilness. All Sunday School teachers are a part of this committee.

Other committees are: Stewardship, Mr. and Mrs. Lyman Peterson; Mr. and Mrs. Ardell Nelson, and Thomas Bjorgo; spiritual life, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Peterson, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Weber, and Tom Bjorgo; church improvements, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Finreite, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Linberg; constitution, Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Rudy, Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Klopp, and Mr. and Mrs. Orrin Olson. The Church Council is a part of every committee. All committee members will be installed at a special worship service on Sunday, December 10 at

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## German Valley Changes Voted

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special)— At a meeting of St. Paul's Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Church, German Valley, Sunday, members voted 51 to 27 to use weekly offering envelopes next year. They also approved a pension plan for the minister, for which the congregation will pay.

For the first time in the church's history, women and confirmed children were given the right to vote, the practice to continue at all future meetings.

The congregation agreed it will continue to recognize all Lutherans as equals regardless of their nationalities. This fellowship with all Lutherans has done much to help the church in its work, commented the Rev. Richard Buege, pastor.

The congregation's quarterly meeting will be Oct. 12 after Communion.

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WHITEHALL, Wis. — "Lutheran Youth Witness for Christ" will be the theme for a youth rally Nov. 23 at St. Paul's Wisconsin Synod Church in German Valley. Opening Registration will be at 1:30 p.m. and worship at 2 p.m., the Rev. Richard L. Buege, church pastor, speaking. The church's newly organized choir will sing. Workshops and discussion groups will meet from 3 to 4 p.m. with area pastors and laymen leading them. Group chairmen will report to the entire assembly at 4 p.m. The Young People's Society, sponsoring the rally, will serve supper at 5 p.m. Anyone is welcome to attend but advance registrations are encouraged.

## GERMAN VALLEY SERVICE

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — The Rev. Robert Arneson, Independence, will speak at St. Paul's Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Church, German Valley, for "family at the church night" Sunday at 8:15 p.m. David Lee will conduct devotions. David Herman will play the accordion, Ted von Uhl will play the piano and a high school quartet will sing. A film "Why Do We Live?" will be shown and lunch served.

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## St. Paul's to Vote On Using Envelopes

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — Members of St. Paul's Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Church of German Valley will meet Sunday after 10:30 a.m. worship to vote on several issues.

The 130 people will consider women's church suffrage, weekly envelope donations, service times, pensions for the minister, fellowship and the question of each member giving a dollar every Sunday.

Cont'd A ↓

Included in the plans of the congregation for 1962 are: a new well, remodeling of the church chancel, a church library, expanded seating capacity in the church basement and other repairs and improvements.

## ST. PAUL'S CHURCH 11/7

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — St. Paul's Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Church will observe Stewardship Sunday at 1 a.m. Communion services Sunday. Communicants were asked to register before the service. Offering envelopes from January through November and CEF offerings should be brought to the service.

The Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor, will speak on the KWNO Lutheran Chapel of the Air at 1 p.m. as part of the Stewardship Sunday observance.

# Pastor Is Suspended by Wisconsin Synod

## Rev. Buege Calls It Act of Jealousy and Says That He Will Appeal

Journal Special Correspondence

Whitehall, Wis. — The Rev. Richard L. Buege, 30, controversial pastor of two Lutheran churches near here, was suspended Saturday by the Wisconsin synod.

Pastor Buege termed the move by three synod officers an act of jealousy and said he and the church councils would appeal.

He added that it appeared that a nonsynod pastor now was in charge of two Wisconsin synod churches, because the suspension notice did not include his congregations.

### Charges Reviewed

The suspension was for taking communion with Evangelical Lutheran church ministers and for allowing women to vote in church matters.

Pastor Buege said that he did not violate the Scriptures by taking communion with ministers who were not synod members and that women had not voted in his congregations since Jan. 11. He added that he had not instigated the practice of woman suffrage in his churches.

Pastor Buege, who has charge of St. Paul's Lutheran church five miles north of here and St. John's Lutheran church at Arcadia, works in the center of an area dominated by Evangelical Lutherans. The closest other Wisconsin synod church is 40 miles west of here.

### Came in Mails

His notice of suspension came by registered mail. It was dated Monday and postmarked at Jefferson. The signers were the Rev. Richard W. Mueller, president of the western Wisconsin district of the synod; the Rev. Walter Wegner, Columbus, district first vice-president and the Rev. Norbert Paustian, Oconomowoc, second vice-president.

The three district leaders met last Sunday at Jefferson to discuss a letter by Pastor Buege and the church council in which they outlined their views. Pastors Buege has been under fire by

an affair into an affair of the synod.

He said the church councils also would ask that all financial support given to the synod in recent months be returned to the congregations.

The church at Arcadia, which has 36 members, donated more than \$360 to synod mission work last year. The contribution for that from St. Paul's church, which has more than 170 members, was more than \$1,400.

"It is the first time that a minister of the Wisconsin synod was suspended just because he did not agree with the personal feeling of the officials," he said. "It has never been proven that I have done anything against the Bible."

### "Have Never Been Told"

"I have never been told why it was wrong to have association with Lutheran ministers of other synods. I have never at any time introduced woman suffrage. Furthermore, the officials never did say that women could not vote."

He explained that one woman, who left the church after Pastor Buege was given a vote of confidence Jan. 11, "was responsible for women voting."

"All actions of the officials were based on manmade rules."

"Jealousy has played a most obvious role in the entire action," he asserted.

He said that both St. Paul's and St. John's churches were "having a difficult time" when he arrived in December, 1954. He said that since then both had become successful because they forgot all about fighting other Lutherans and did the real work of the church.

Pastor Buege claimed that success aroused the jealousy of the synod officials.

"Most ministers who served either St. Paul's or St. John's stayed only about four years and then moved on," he said. "Most of them engaged in a program of hate of other Lutherans. When I arrived about four years ago, both churches were suffering badly from this type of ministry."

He said that an article titled "The Authority of Scripture," published Feb. 15 in the North western Lutheran, an official synod publication, supported his stand. He quoted it in part:

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## Assign Rev. Buege to Lutheran Church in Detroit, Mich.

The Rev. Richard L. Buege, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, rural Whitehall, St. John's Lutheran Church, Arcadia, and Evanger Lutheran Church, rural Independence, has been assigned by The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, to continue his ministry at Peace Lutheran Church, Detroit, Michigan. He and his wife, the former DeLores Larson of Pigeon Falls, will move to their new assignment the middle of November.

Pastor Buege began to serve St. Paul's and St. John's in December of 1954. He was ordained into the Lutheran ministry and installed as pastor of the two congregations on June 19, 1955. Evanger became the third congregation of the parish in November of 1959.

Following graduation from the Algoma, Wis. high school in 1946, the Rev. Buege attended River Falls State College. He received his education for the ministry at Concordia Seminary in Springfield, Ill. and was graduated from the Lutheran seminary at Thiensville, Wis.

St. Paul's will also become a member of The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. The future plans of St. Paul's and Evanger are not certain at the present time. A new pastor has not been called to serve these congregations at this time.

NOV 15, 1962

Cont'd from A ↘

Pastor Buege was quite vocal Saturday after he announced the receipt of the suspension notice.

He said that he and the church councils would seek to have Pastors Mueller, Wegner and Paustian removed from office and the ministry.

### Backer Accused

He said he and the council also would ask that the Rev. Harold Backer, Winona, Minn., whose title is local visitor, be removed from the synod. He charged that Pastor Backer was responsible for making a local

decisively or is silent, differences of opinion may be held without violating Scripture or breaking the bonds of fellowship."

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### Will Dedicate New Church Sunday.

The dedication of the new Ev. Luth. St. John's Church will take place on Sunday Sept. 25. A short service will be held at the old church at 9:45 A. M. at which Rev. C. A. Otto will give a short address. The congregation will then go to the new church where the service of dedication will be followed by a sermon by Rev. Adolph Werr of Brownsville, Wis. At the afternoon service at 2:30 Rev. A. Sauer of Winona will deliver the sermon. At the evening service at 7:30 the Rev. Prof. Gimmestad of Galesville will preach. Dinner and supper will be served free of charge by the ladies of the congregation.

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The Leader  
Aug. 30, 1935

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The Leader  
Sept. 23, 1910

VOL. 64 NO. 2

### 25th Church Anniversary and Mission Festival of St. John's Lutheran Church

Twenty-five years ago, on September 25th, 1910, the cornerstone of the St. John's Lutheran Church was laid on the corner of West Main and Second St., amid impressive dedicatory services. The local pastor at that time, Rev. C. A. Otto, was assisted by Rev. Adolph Werr of Brownsville, Wis.; Rev. A. Sauer of Winona, Rev. Prof. Gimmestad of Galesville and Rev. A. Vollbrecht of Fountain City. The building committee consisted of Geo. Hacker, August Zastrow, F. W. Zastrow and ex-officio, Rev. C. A. Otto. The trustees for 1910 were August Zastrow, F. W. Zastrow and Gust Kube. The officers: Rev. C. A. Otto, Sec'y.; Albert Wieland, Treasurer. The present church board consists of the following trustees: Rud. Kube, Robt. Forsyth, Louis Kreid. Officers: A. C. H. Theurer, president; Albert Wieland, Secretary and Rud. Pahl, treasurer.

The 25th anniversary of the cornerstone laying will be celebrated with three festival services on September 1, at which the four pastors who served St. John's during the past twenty-five years, will speak. At the morning service (9:30 a. m.) Rev. C. A. Otto will preach in German and Rev. R. Lederer in English. In the afternoon (2:30 p. m.) Rev. Rud. Korn will preach in English and at the evening service (8 p. m.) Rev. Rich. W. Mueller will speak also in English. The choir will provide special music at each service. The public is cordially invited to all of these festival services.

Dinner and supper will be served by the ladies of the congregation in the old church building at a moderate price. Other refreshments will also be available.

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### St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church Redecorated

The re-decoration of St. John's Ev. Lutheran church has just been completed by Mr. C. A. Christensen, a professional church decorator from Milwaukee. The work is very artistic and highly satisfactory. The wainscoting is done in stone effect, likewise the windows. Fitting emblems are used in the proper spaces. The sanctuary is set off from the auditorium by a triumphal arch. The sanctuary has an entirely new design with a hand painting of Calvary in the center. The altar, pulpit and baptismal font were cleaned and refinished in white and gold. The woodwork was either cleaned and polished or revarnished. The contract was let by the Ladies Aid. The Choir will furnish new lights for the church, six large modern-type lamps, to be hung on chain fixtures, three on each side, directly over the pews for better lighting results. The decoration of the church was undertaken at this time in preparation for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the church, to be held on the first Sunday in September, at which the four pastors, who served the congregation since 1910, will be the festival speakers: Rev. C. A. Otto, Rev. R. Lederer, Rev. Rud. P. Korn, Rev. R. W. Mueller. The church records go back to 1875 making this year also the 60th birthday of the congregation.

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The Leader  
June 28, 1935

## **Addenda : History Papers**

“A Short History of St. John’s Wis. Synod Luth. Church”

“St. John’s-Christ Lutheran Church”

\*These two papers are added because this writer knows that these two papers are not published anywhere and the author is unknown. Therefore, it would be very difficult to find other copies of them. “St. John’s-Christ Lutheran Church” is three pages out of the middle of a paper. The whereabouts of the other pages of the paper are unknown.

A Short History of St. John's Wis. Synod Luth. Church - *Arcadia, W.*

Even though St. John's was organized in 1836 during the pastorate of Rev. Julius Badke, Lutheran services had been held here for a number of years previously in the homes of Lutherans in town. In this way a small group of Lutherans was gathered together to form the nucleus of a future cong. In a few years, when the homes became too small, the Methodist Church up on the hill was rented for services. It was not until 1836, when Rev. Badke came to Arcadia, that the first Lutheran church and parsonage were built. *edit this later* This was indeed a day of great rejoicing for the members of St. John's, to know that they finally had a church-home of their own in which to worship. The old frame church building, enlarged and improved, is now being used by the Ladies Aid, for Confirmation class work, for the meetings of the Young People's Society and for social gatherings of all kinds. The record does not tell us who the charter members were but from the minutes of the first meeting we learn that the following were the first trustees elected: Mr. August Peterson, Mr. Wm. Vogt, Mr. Ernst Masepohl, all of whom have entered the church triumphant.

Soon after the Cong. was organized a flourishing Sunday School was started with about thirty children, and the instruction was intrusted to laymen chosen for that purpose.

After the church had been built, it became evident that many things were lacking to make the interior of the church complete. The need for altar trimmings, carpets and other furnishings was perhaps the main reason for starting, several years later, a Ladies Aid, which down to the present, has been



a big help to the cong. in many ways. The first Ladies Aid was organized while the Rev. Carl Rutzen was pastor. At the present time the Ladies Aid society is the most active group within the Church.

As Arcadia grew, so also St. John's grew. In 1910, after the old frame church was too small, the cornerstone of the present brick edifice was laid, during the pastorate of the Rev. C. A. Otto. In 1935, we were privileged to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the new church with the former pastors, the Rev. C. A. Otto, Rev. R. Lederer, Rev. Rud. Korn and Rev. Richard W. Mueller present as festival speakers. The Church was newly decorated for this occasion by the Ladies Aid, the work being done by Mr. G. A. Christianson, a professional church-decorator from Milwaukee. At the same time the members of the choir purchased a new set of lighting fixtures.

The Church records show that 361 persons(children and adults) have been baptized in our midst since the first baptism on Feb. 22, 1875. 273 284 persons(children and adults) have been confirmed. The first class was confirmed on Palm Sunday, 1897. 87 marriages have been performed by St. John's pastors, the first being solemnized in 1896.

List of Pastors who served St. John's from 1863 - 1957

- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ernst Strube     | 14. Adolph Werr        |
| 2. Ernst Giesel     | 15. E. Viestenz        |
| 3. Christian Probst | 16. C. A. Otto         |
| 4. Johann Burkhard  | 17. Chris. J. A. Sauer |
| 5. Johann Weirauch  | 18. C. A. Otto         |
| 6. P. Zibell        | 19. R. Lederer         |
| 7. Julius Backe     | 20. Rud. Korn          |
| 8. Albert Froehlke  | 21. Richard W. Mueller |
| 9. Albert Rutzen    | 22. F. H. Senger       |
| 10. Herman Gerhard  | 23. H. Neubauer        |
| 11. Th. Brenner     | 24. E. Larson          |
| 12. D. Metzger      | 25. H. Henke           |
| 13. L. Frug         | 26. Richard L. Buege   |

About twenty years ago St. John's joined with St. Paul's Luth. Church of German Valley, Route 2, Whitehall, Wis. At the present the two Cong. are served by the Rev. Richard L. Buege. St. John's rents the parsonage that they own and the pastor lives in the home provided by St. Paul's.

As is quite common with many a church, all does not always go too smooth. For during the years that are now past there have been many bitter trials and disappointments, times when the outlook for the future was dark and uncertain and many hearts were sad. But just like the members of a family are drawn closer together because of the joys and sorrows they have shared, so also have the members of St. John's been drawn ever closer in the bonds of true Christian fellowship because of the various experiences they have shared in the past as a cong. They face the future with a stronger faith in the divine wisdom and love of God our Savior than ever before in the firm, unshakable assurance that "all things ~~must~~ work together for good, to them that love God, to them ~~who~~ who are called according to his purpose," as St. Paul teaches in Romans 8:28.

At the present time Mr. Raymond Zastrow is the president of the Cong.. He is assisted on the Church Council by Herman Kube, Lewis Kreid, Fred Berg, Emil Theurer, Walter Fueller.

The Ladies Aid Society is headed by Mrs. Anna Glanzer. She is doing a wonderful job in her position by helping the Church in its program of rebuilding. She is assisted by Mrs. Lewis Kreid, Mrs. Walter Mueller, ~~and~~ Mrs. Omer Fugina, and Mrs. John Hohman.

4

Just a short time ago St. John's reached a time in its history when it looked as if the Church might cease to exist. But the members were filled with courage and determination. A Rally was held and each person who belonged to the Church answered the call for more and better attendance at the services. Each member promised better and <sup>more</sup> active financial support of the work of the Church. And today at the present time it likes very much like St. John's will continue for a long time to come.

The future success of the Church will depend on how well the members will support their Church with their prayers and gifts. If each member is faithful in his obligations to his Church, it will continue to grow and prosper as a Christian Cong. should do. But all the members must work together as a Christian group and not as individuals working alone. "This Christian group has all the marks of a well working Cong. and should continue to prosper in the years which lie ahead," says the Rev. Buege.

1853), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States (1854), and the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States (1818). Certain former doctrinal differences were cleared and the merger was based on real unity of faith, doctrine, and practice.

The American Lutheran Conference of which the former is a member, was organized Oct. 29-31, at Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, "for the purpose of giving testimony to the unity in the faith of the participating church bodies." This organization is not a merger into a general church body, but is a federation of synods which seek to "co-operate in matters of common interest and responsibility." The constituent synods, all retaining individual identities, include the Augustana Synod, the Norwegian-Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, the American Lutheran Church, and the United Danish Lutheran Church.

According to the 1933 report of the National Lutheran Council, this large conference has a membership of 1,501,205 persons, 31.6% of the Lutherans in America.

Perhaps now the synodical controversy in the St. John's Christ Church is a bit more explainable.

The first missionary efforts near Arcadia were conducted by Rev. Ernest Strube, a Wisconsin Synod medical missionary, at Fountain City, Wisconsin. For twelve years this man served the scattered families there once a month. Not until 1875 was a resident pastor called, Rev. Ernst Giesel of the Iowa Synod. Through this man's efforts the first organization work began. The St. John's Church was erected in Glencoe township that same year. Then followed in order, Rev. Christian Probst, Rev. John Burkhard, and Rev. John Weirauch, each remaining there but two years. Rev. Weirauch was the second Wiscon-

... next was F. Ziesell, Iowa Synod theological student, who stayed there only six months.

At the same time as this development of the Glencoe church, home mission work was started by the Rev. Strube in the Montana township. In the year 1875 these Christians organized as a congregation under the direction of Rev. Giesel and built their church which they called Christ's Church. In rather quick succession followed Rev. Badke, Rev. Froelke and Rev. Rutzen. When Rev. Herman Gerhard came to the pastorate of the church in 1896, he completed a list of four successive ministers who were drawn from the Wisconsin Synod. During his time of office, congregational disunity forced his withdrawal, so that he completed only ten months of service.

At this time there arose a synodical dispute. The members living around Christ Church and St. John's Church, together with a few people in Arcadia, tendered a call to an Iowa Synod pastor, Rev. Adolph Werr. The minority of the Arcadia members asked Rev. Metzker, a Wisconsin Synod man, to serve them. The remainder of the Arcadia members, constituting a majority group still favorable to Rev. Werr, worshipped upstairs in the parsonage.

Quite suddenly, and for unknown reasons, Rev. Werr shifted his synodical affiliation to the Wisconsin Synod. Part of the congregation followed, and he served them in the church building in Arcadia.

Unsatisfied with this change, the majority of the congregation called Rev. G. F. Hanselmann, of the Iowa Synod, who was installed in April 1904. He resigned in 1907. Since that time there have been two congregations.

The pastor who followed Rev. Hanselmann was Herbert Zunningst, who was called from the Ohio Synod. Under his guidance, at a joint meeting of the Christ Church of Montana and the St. John's Church of

...e, a new church building was proposed to be located in Arcadia.

At the cornerstone laying on Sept. 10, 1910 the first English service was conducted by Prof. H.K.G. Doermann of Luther Seminary.

At an ordination and installation service on Feb. 2, 1913, Rev. G. F. Mudeking began both his ministry and service in Arcadia to a congregation of 61 families.

One of the most important steps in the history of the congregation occurred on Feb. 17, 1929. On that date the constitution of the St. John's Christ Lutheran Congregation was adopted. This nullified the previous co-partnership in the maintenance of the Arcadia church by the St. John's Church of Glencoe, and the Christ Church of Montana township. Both of these congregations lost their individual identity, and merged to form a single unit.

Its constitution states:

"We, the members of St. John's Christ Congregation believe and confess that the Bible, that is, the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments, is the revealed Word of God inspired by the Holy Ghost, and the only infallible authority, source, rule, and guide, in all matters of faith and practice. To this Word we humbly submit ourselves in all things.

"We also accept the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, viz:: The Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Small and Large Catechisms and the Formula of Concord, as the true interpretation of the faith set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

"There shall, therefore, no doctrine or practice which is in conflict with this our doctrinal and confessional position, be tolerated