

The History of
St. Paul's First Lutheran Church (N. Hollywood, CA - LCMS)
1924 - 1939

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Cast your bread upon the waters,

for after many days you will find it again.

Ecclesiastes 11:1

Every Wednesday during the school year, the lower grade children file in through the chapel for their weekly service. For a brief moment the past speaks to the future as keen eyes gaze upon the symbols the chapel holds of St. Paul's past. A white stucco, Spanish style church adorns the stained glass on one of the doors. In front of the chapel stands the wooden altar, now painted white, which once dominated the sanctuary of the first church built on this site. Above the altar, just as in the old church, a round, stained glass window pictures Jesus at prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. These are the silent witnesses to the early years of St. Paul's First Lutheran Church.

North Hollywood did not technically exist in 1924 when Pastor Henry Tietjen of nearby Van Nuys set up a preaching station at the request of some members. The town whose business district was two blocks long was known as Lankersheim. Its main thoroughfare, which happened to be paved, was also known as Lankersheim. The rest of the roads in the area were gravel. For the most part, however, Lankersheim was undeveloped. A half-mile north and east of the business district, along Burbank and Cahuenga, there was nothing but tumbleweeds and orchards. South and west of this line were smaller farms and ranches. While it was a fairly easy trip into Hollywood over the Santa Monica mountains by cable car, a number of stores dotted Lankersheim Avenue. Already in 1918 the Rathbun department store served the local needs; it would grow through the years along with the town. Also in the downtown area was the Lankersheim Feed Store on Magnolia, just off of Lankersheim, and the Mc Namara Mortuary. Both buildings would house the small group that gathered under Pastor

Tietjen in the first four years.

As early as 1925 the Chamber of Commerce lamented the fact that much of their business was flowing off to Hollywood. This was in spite of the growth that Lankersheim started to experience in 1924 and which would not stop through the next forty years. One recourse to keep the townspeople shopping at home was the attraction of a spacious park two blocks west of the business district on Tujunga. It also boasted a library that was quite large by the standards of the day. This park would provide a gracious setting and quick identification for the white church that would go up on the other side of the street. The Chamber of Commerce in 1928 accomplished a name change for the town of Lankersheim--it was now officially North Hollywood. At the time north was about the only connection this sleepy community had with the glitter of her fast-paced sister across the mountains.

From the start it must be said that the future of the North Hollywood congregation had much going for it. The town was growing--there were Lutherans moving into the area who would want a church home. Yet this in itself does not ensure success. Many missions flounder or fold despite rapid growth of a community. To be sure, every Christian will see the Lord graciously molding the history of St. Paul's and will recognize Him as the ultimate cause of the congregation's growth. This history acknowledges the providence of God at work in every aspect of St. Paul's congregational life and praises God for it. Yet in this life we are limited to observing only the human beings who are the tools in the Master's hands.

There are several human factors which aided the early growth of St. Paul's. The congregation was blessed with the services of two thoroughly Gospel-minded ministers who not only worked long and hard at evangelism, but also exerted themselves to the utmost in giving the congregation the Gospel message in worship services and Bible classes. Of all the organi-

zations in the church, the Sunday School especially comes to mind as an exceptionally effective mission arm of the congregation. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod must take some of the praise for the growth of St. Paul's. Despite budget stringencies the District Mission Board was responsive to the financial needs of the congregation. Synodical programs, most notably the "Lutheran Hour," helped to reenforce the Lutheran awareness the pastors were trying to establish. Various congregational and district activities in the area made the members in North Hollywood feel they were not alone. Finally, the undocumented efforts of the members themselves helped to ensure the success of the congregation. Theirs were the prayers for growth, theirs was the time, talents and money given for the Lord's work. They multiplied the pastor's efforts in getting the message of salvation to the community. They, in the fullest sense of the word, were the church. This is their story.

Pastor Henry Tietjen served the small congregation of First Lutheran in Van Nuys, some ten miles west of North Hollywood, as well as the mission in San Fernando, fifteen miles to the north. Yet at the insistence of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hauser of North Hollywood, who were members at Van Nuys, he consented to test the waters in North Hollywood. After an initial canvass of the area, he established a preaching station December 10, 1924. Every Sunday evening Pastor Tietjen would preach at the Mc Namara Mortuary. According to Adelaide (Hauser) Crawshaw, the congregation consisted of little more than the Hauser family. Despite the efforts of the Hausers and a pastor already serving two congregations, the mission seemed to go nowhere. While it was tempting to sow the Word elsewhere, the trio resolved to pray and work all the harder. After six months of services in the mortuary the group acquired the use of a second story room above the Lankersheim Feed Store. This would be their regular worship home from mid-1925 through 1928. Later accounts would call this room Duncan Hall.

Here, on November 19, 1928, the congregation was formally established with six charter members. While the names of these first members were not recorded, the voters meeting of December 30, 1928 records six present, all of whom held office. Ellis Sernstrom was President, Fred Hauser the Treasurer. Charles Bostleman served as the Financial Secretary and Kurt Luedtke the Secretary. Bostleman and Hauser doubled as Elders with William Hoffman added to their ranks, while Sernstrom and K. Luedtke also filled in as Trustees. The third Trustee, Dellmar Luedtke, was the sixth of the charter members of The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Hollywood, California. They modelled their constitution after the typical Missouri Synod constitution of the day, pledging to uphold the truths of the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions. The congregation numbered fourteen souls, eleven communicants and six voting members.

Shortly after the congregation's formal establishment, they moved to the North Hollywood Women's Club located on Vineland Avenue and Burbank, about three-quarters of a mile north-east of Duncan Hall. It seems that services were now regularly held on Sunday mornings, preceeded by Sunday School. That this was at all possible is the result of a Pastor O. Burkhardt coming in to conduct services until the end of June, 1929, since Pastor Tietjen was spoken for by Van Nuys and San Fernando on Sunday mornings. The Women's Club proved to be a great boon to the small congregation. For one thing, they had a readily recognizable meeting spot where they could worship during "prime time," Sunday mornings. The Women's Club had a piano as well as a large meeting room that could be divided into two smaller rooms, which was especially suited to the congregation's Sunday School needs. All in all, the Women's Club provided a pleasant and cheerful worship home which residents of the fast growing community might be in-



Confirmation Day May 15, 1932 at the Women's Club

clined to visit. By the end of 1929 the congregation numbered sixty-six souls. Twenty-two children were baptized as well as twenty-one adults in that year. If Pastor Schmitt's announcement of December 8, 1929 is correct, all twenty-two children were baptized on that one day. Eighty-eight had attended the service. By this time the momentum was starting to build.

Pastor Tietjen had sown the seeds for this early and rapid growth. Josephine (Luedtke) Potts remembers him as a "beautiful person--you couldn't touch him." Despite the small size of the congregation, Tietjen incorporated the handful of youngsters from North Hollywood into his Van Nuys Walther League. Meeting in the pastor's large dining room, the teenagers often listened to him play the piano after the business was taken care of. There were frequent outings to the mountains or beaches, all preceeded by a half-hour of worship. It is not surprising to find Pastor H. Tietjen

noted in the February 1932 Southern California Lutheran as delivering a conference paper on "The Problem of Religion for the Confirmed Youth." In this paper he promoted the Junior and Senior Walther Leagues as the best way to combat the influences of "agnostic teachers, writers, books and companions." Because of Tietjen's efforts, Schmitt would have a nucleus of solidly Lutheran youth to tap for work in the church.

The impetus for a change of pastors came from outside the congregation. Already in June of 1929 the District Mission Board was in financial difficulties. At a special congregational meeting in North Hollywood, on June 9, Pastor Schlossau set forth a plan to serve the North Hollywood congregation from nearby Burbank. This would free the Mission Board from providing an assistant to Pastor Tietjen while at the same time it would allow him to serve Van Nuys and San Fernando more effectively. Thereupon Pastor Tietjen resigned his call to North Hollywood; Fred Hauser and Kurt Luedtke accepted his resignation on behalf of the congregation. They, in turn, extended a call to Pastor Henry W. Schmitt of First Lutheran, Burbank, who happened to be there at the meeting. He accepted the call on the spot and after a brief session with the Burbank delegates who also attended the meeting, it was decided that Pastor Schmitt would hold services at 9:45 in Burbank and 11:00 at North Hollywood. His installation at North Hollywood would be June 23.

To finish the story of Pastor Tietjen, he soon turned over the San Fernando field to Schmitt in 1930 and focused his attention solely on First Lutheran, Van Nuys until 1932. In early March of that year he accepted a call to Riverside where he evidently completed his ministry. He occasionally attended special services at North Hollywood. On one such instance, March 6, 1932, Pastor Schmitt's announcement acknowledged Tietjen as the "founder

of our congregation," and wished him "Godspeed on his new field of endeavor."

In Pastor Schmitt the congregation had another veteran missionary. Ordained and installed in 1912 at Christ Lutheran Church, Eagle River, Wisconsin, he later became the Missionary at large for the Southern California District. He served St. Paul's, Norwalk, Faith, Pasadena, Peace, Riverside, Immanuel, West Covina, St. Mark's, Garden Grove and First Lutheran, Burbank starting in 1926. He also served Grace, Lancaster 1926-1927. After accepting the call to North Hollywood he resigned at Burbank in 1930. Later that year he added First Lutheran, San Fernando to his duties until 1932. By then the District Mission Board assigned him as the full-time resident pastor for North Hollywood. At the time he accepted the call to North Hollywood there were but eleven communicant members. By the time the church building rose in 1933 there would be seventy-six. He would serve St. Paul's until 1948.

As a preacher Schmitt is remembered as being just as strict as Tietjen had been. In the easy going environment of Southern California, he would be classified as narrow-minded. In other words, he and his congregation were not impressed by the seasonal appeals for joint worship services or social programs from the community or other churches. Such letters regularly were filed in the wastebasket after a quick mention to the church council. Nor were they caught up in the churchly trends of the day. As a sign of his whole-hearted approval Kurt Luedtke saved a newsclipping of Jan. 16, 1930 for the records. It noted that Rev. Walter A. Maier in an address in Milwaukee listed the seven fatal follies of the present day church, namely, "political, sensational (jazz services or beauties as ushers), financial, epileptic (marathon services), social, inactive and modernistic."

Undoubtedly First Lutheran of North Hollywood was much closer to such phenomena than most of Maier's listeners. A Lutheran awareness was developing within the congregation.

In a growing community that already had a Catholic Church (St. Charles on Moorpark), Methodist and Four-Square Gospel Church (on the same block as the parsonage), Schmitt carved out a niche for a thoroughly Lutheran congregation. He stressed a Sunday School program, canvassed extensively and offered many extra services and classes for members and interested non-members alike. His wise and energetic programs for church growth more than made up for whatever he may have lacked in the way of an outgoing personality.

Pastor Schmitt's installation of June 23, 1929 at 3 P. M. was the first installation the congregation had experienced. The text was Matt. 6:9-10, while the readings were Rom. 10:14-17 and Matt. 9:9-13. The congregation sang hymns 247, 49, 492, 63 vv. 1-2 and 103 from the regular black Missouri Synod hymnbooks. The congregation of fifteen had been encouraged by Rev. Burkhardt the previous Sunday to invite former Lutherans and unchurched to the service. Twenty-t^wo appeared to hear Pastor Schmitt's first sermon on June 30. The new pastor had a long way to go.

One of Schmitt's goals was to change the name of the church. Quite naturally the name taken upon incorporation was First Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Hollywood, for such it was. The problem came when one considered that there was a First Lutheran ten miles to the west in Van Nuys, north in San Fernando and east in Burbank. This situation did not please Pastor Schmitt, who was something of a tinkerer with names anyhow. For example, he tried calling his Sunday morning Adult Bible Class the Berea Bible Class. The 1936 Vacation Bible School received the name Joy

Bible Class. While none of these ~~names~~ stuck, his penchant for names may explain why even today the gymnasium is Faith Hall, or the Music Room is Zimmerman Hall. But back to the name of the congregation. Since the members liked the name First Lutheran, Schmitt had an uphill fight. In some news clippings the name appears as First English Lutheran or English Lutheran Church. This at least set it apart from the rest, but Schmitt's pet name was St. Paul's Lutheran Church and he lobbied long and hard for it. Finally on January 1, 1935 the war of attrition was over. The name was legally changed to St. Paul's First Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Hollywood, California. As a result of this compromise the church that today happens to have two altars also has two names.

Pastor Schmitt wasted little time in setting up the constitutional machinery for the expansion of St. Paul's. The quarterly voters' meeting of October 20, 1929 added the following by-law to the constitution:

The pastor shall have the right to accept a member any Sunday at the services with the approval of an elder whenever such members are eligible. And such members are to be received legally into the congregation at the next regular meeting.

The statistics show his efforts were not just words, but deeds as well. The congregation was blessed by the arrival of some strong families who would be workhorses for the congregation over the years. In the last quarter of 1929 Sam Erickson and his family joined--he was immediately elected president. In the same meeting Arthur Brinkmeyer and his family entered as members and he as trustee. Brinkmeyer would remain for the rest of his life, with one of his daughters still a member today; Erickson would receive a transfer in 1933. Both at the time added a whiff of success to the efforts in North Hollywood. By the end of January Pastor Schmitt had to cancel the Thursday Bible Class and replace it with an adult membership class. On the

following Palm Sunday, April 13, he confirmed nine adults in the service. In part this is responsible for the surge in membership in 1930 to one hundred and five souls, thirty-five communicants.

One reason for this initial success in Pastor Schmitt's tenure was the extensive canvassing he carried out. Gloria (Vosburg) Love, whose family moved into North Hollywood in 1931, remembers Pastor Schmitt as a continuous canvasser, always seeking to meet people. Many of the members were also enlisted in this endeavor. Certainly his announcements often reminded the members of canvassing projects.

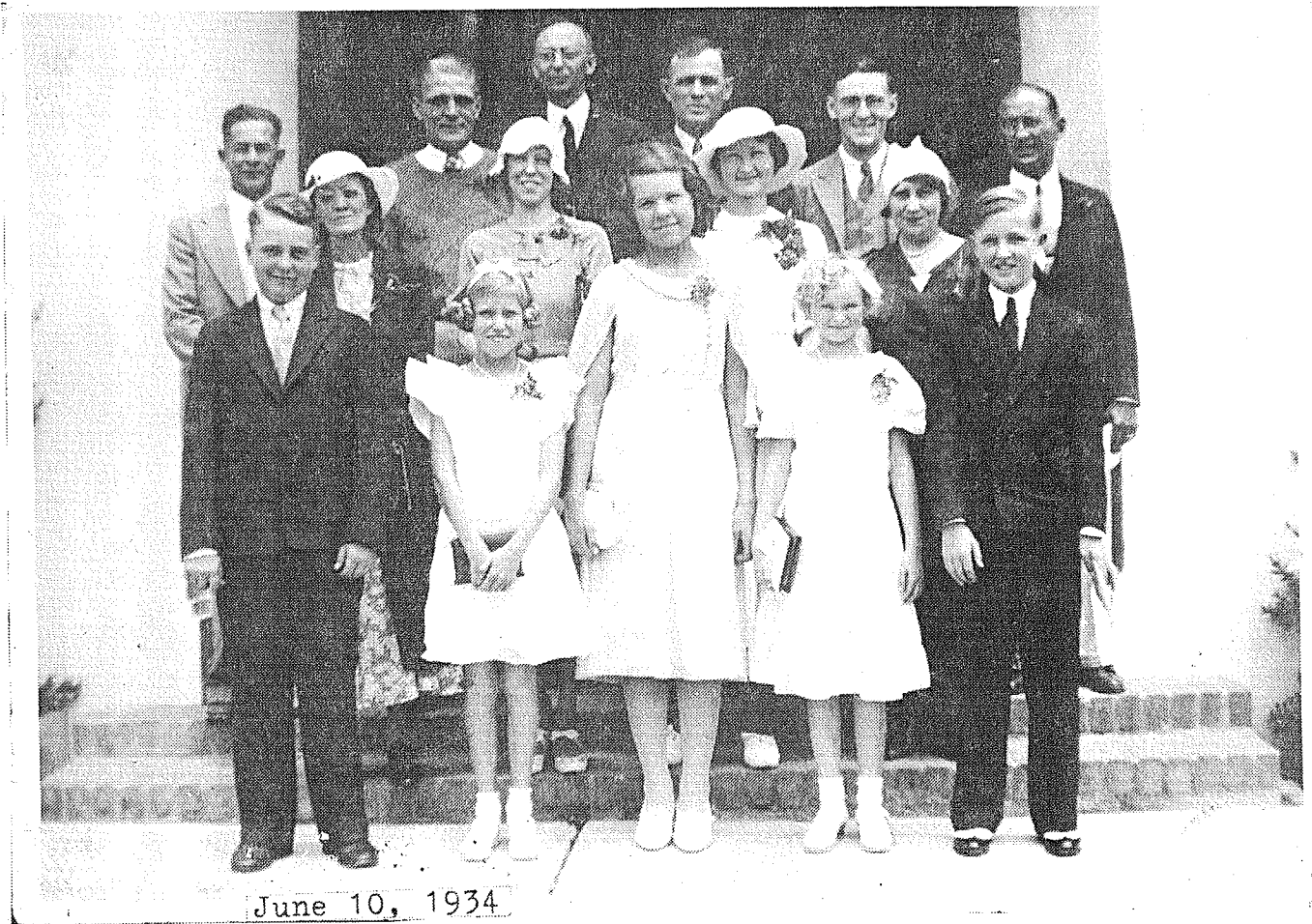
One story may indicate the unexpected finds the vigilant canvasser could uncover. A family moved into the pastor's neighborhood. Pastor Schmitt walked up to the fence, started talking to

the woman who was hanging up wash and mentioned he was a Lutheran pastor. The woman was surprised. "You're Lutheran--we're Lutheran, too!" The Fred Hahn family promptly joined the congregation, received into membership June 10, 1934, which was also Confirmation. A daughter, Mary Helen Haar,



Confirmation Day June 16, 1935
(Left to right) Gloria Vosburg, Gladys Moinicker,
Gerald Hefty

teaches today in St. Paul's Christian day school.



Confirmation June 10, 1934. (Back row, left to right) Adam Berneisse, Fred Hahn, Pastor Schmitt, Archie Redwood, James Middleton, Robert Freel (?). (Second row) Elvera Brackt (?), Marjorie Hahn, Louisa Redwood, Lucille Middleton. (Front row) Donald Hill (?), Oramay Lange (?), Evely Ehring (?), Gertrude Gentry (?), Jerome Carney (?).

Behind the growth were the fervent prayers of the pastor and congregation. "Pray, pray, pray for a bigger church, Sunday School, Young People's Society and Women's Missionary Society," his announcement book reads for January 11, 1931. The Lord was already responding--average church attendance was sixty-one, Sunday School seventy-five.

Statistically the small congregation at North Hollywood was doing quite

well in comparison to other Southern California District congregations. Although St. Paul's was thirty-second out of forty-six congregations in 1931 in size with thirty-five communicants (St. John's, Orange led the list with 775, Grace, Banning had but seven), only seven more congregations experienced greater numerical gain than St. Paul's (21). In 1932 only four gained more numerically. Something was going right in North Hollywood.

Looking at the first few hundred names in the church register an approximate evaluation of the church growth can be made. While the record book is not as precise as one may wish, it is the only tool available for anything approaching an analysis of growth for St. Paul's. Out of this sampling, fifty-eight members transferred into St. Paul's from other Missouri Synod congregations. Another fifty-two were accepted by a profession of faith. This is almost one-third of the total number of names initially given. Forty-seven were received by baptism into membership. One hundred twenty-nine were received by confirmation. While the first two figures show that manytimes it was relatively easy to encourage like-minded Lutherans to join the congregation as well as rely on the inner growth by baptism, the congregation took its mission mandate seriously. They went out and evangelized the community, bringing people into the church who were not Lutheran by inclination or upbringing, or, for that matter, had ever had much of a church home. Certainly a newsclipping in the local paper is not mere flattery when it notes the "phenomenal growth under Rev. Schmitt's leadership. A staff of efficient teachers instruct Sunday School students of all ages and all departments of the church are functioning most successfully."

Lest an unrealistic picture be drawn of those early years, that same register of names ^s shows two hundred and one withdrawals from membership

because of families moving out, three-quarters of them moving elsewhere in California. Of course there were other reasons for withdrawal. Three were removed for membership in the Masonic Lodge, five for divorce and four were simply dismissed. Of the latter, Kurt Luedtke is a sad example. One of the original six members, one who extended the call to Pastor Schmitt, he had a falling out with Schmitt over the building plans for the new church. Being overruled by the rest of the voters, Luedtke simply stopped coming to meetings as well as services. After several meetings with the Pastor and Fred Hauser, Luedtke applied for a dismissal, was granted it in July of 1933 and disappeared from the records.

One particularly bad year seemed to be 1933. Despite the twenty-five adults baptized (twenty confirmed) and twenty-six children baptized (six confirmed), membership went up by only twenty. According to an announcement on New Year's Eve, thirty-three were lost by removal or dismissal. Perhaps one contributing factor in all this was the matter of congregational boundaries. In the 1933 Official Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of the Southern California District, rule seven of the "Outline of Rules Regulating Newly Established Missions" reads: "Pastors and congregations are requested not to discourage the transfer of distant members to the respective mission in the territory in which they may reside, especially where the life or future of the mission is at stake." In 1932 Schmitt had given up his charge at Burbank. That same year the Burbank membership dropped from sixty-five to forty-seven under Pastor Saager. Of the forty-eight entries in an early directory, five families of St. Paul's resided in Burbank, or in the case of one prominent member, William D^oyle, even further afield in Glendale. If the rule had any force it would appear that North Hollywood was cut off from what may have been a promising area

for it in Burbank. This might also be the reason for the sudden, if only temporary, halt to its normal growth, when in 1934 St. Paul's membership increased by a scant two.

If there was one activity that St. Paul's put its heart into during those early years, it was its Sunday School program. The Sunday School flourished once the congregation acquired the Women's Club. The Pastor's report for 1929 shows an enrollment of forty-five with twenty-eight of them non-members. There could not be a better mission arm than this. Mr. Habecker, an elder at the time, was also the Sunday School superintendent. Four teachers held classes in the corners of the Women's Club. There was a staff of eight teachers in all. Josephine (Luedtke) Potts and Adelaide (Hauser) Crawshaw were some of the first. Mesdames Erickson, Brinkmeyer, Doyle and Faacks are listed for the 1931 staff. By the end of that year Mrs. Schmitt also became very active in the program. Gloria (Vosburg) Love remembers the Sunday School as being the greatest. The teenagers were given assignments as teachers' assistants. Gloria recalled her position after confirmation as being that of Sunday School Treasurer. Perhaps she was the one who reported to the superintendent that the offerings for 1938 were \$177.84, expenditures \$187.45 with a balance left over of some sixty dollars. It would appear that the Sunday School was self-supporting.

Naturally the Sunday School children sang for church services such as September 20, 1931, "Little Children, Come to Jesus." Ada Mounts' choir also contributed a number, "My Church, My Church, My Dear Old Church," for this Sunday School Rally Day when Pastor Schmitt preached to one hundred and fifteen people on the theme, "To Whom Shall We Bring Our Children?" This Rally Day became a popular feature of the church year.

Christmas programs were high points in the school year. These services did not fail to capture attention. In the January 1932 Southern California Lutheran, R. Kuehnert's "Reporter's Column" mentioned the North Hollywood congregation. "There were 300 in attendance at the children's program on the Sunday evening before Christmas. This is cause for rejoicing, for the church is little more than two years old." He went on to note that the average church attendance was sixty, while Sunday School attendance was seventy. Sometimes the program contained a pageant or play such as 1930's "The Angels' Answer," or "The Light of Christmas" in 1939.

A successful Sunday School was the result of a lot of hard work. Pastor Schmitt met with the teachers twice a month and kept a close eye on the program. In October of 1932 he himself took over the position of superintendant to maintain better order among the children before and after school. Near Christmas the Sunday School teachers helped in decorating the church and tree. They also set up the school picnics ^{ich} ~~where~~ were held twice a year at various parks in the valley until it was merged with the annual church picnic. The children seemed to work hard, too. The 1936 church newsletter gave honorable mentions to eighteen students for perfect attendance.

During the summer months a three week Vacation Bible School supplemented the Sunday School. It met 9:30-11:30 in the church cottage and was for children nine and up. It concluded with a picnic. As with the Sunday School, VBS served as a mission arm of the congregation. In the summer of 1935 the synod sent a seminarian, Rheinhold Krausse, to help with the VBS teaching, canvassing and preaching at the request and expense of the pastor.

As in any Lutheran church, Christian education for the youth included confirmation class. As early as September 21, 1929 there was a class for

children twelve and up on Saturday mornings in the Erickson home. Eight months later, June 29, 1930, Donald Erickson, Margaret Knutson and Marie and Geraldine Seiger made up the congregation's first confirmation class. While Saturdays seemed to be the usual, Pastor Schmitt could speed things up, holding confirmation classes on Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday in April 1934 to get them ready for a planned June 10 celebration. The dreaded examination service was the Wednesday evening before Confirmation Sunday. Confirmation dates were usually on Pentecost or Trinity Sundays.

The June 10, 1934 confirmation calls for attention largely because of the reunion service joined with it. Five children and nine adults were either confirmed or received into membership before a congregation of one hundred forty-five. That evening, however, there was a reunion service for all those ever confirmed by Pastors Schmitt or Tietjen in North Hollywood. The choir and a male chorus sang for this service which was attended by ninety-seven, forty of the^m/~~se~~ confirmands and several from out of town. Pastor Schmitt preached on the theme "Our Choice." By this time fifty-nine adults and twenty-nine children had been confirmed. It was a day of rejoicing for the congregation, yet, in a way, it pointed to a need. Many families had moved out in the past two years. Those who were left were trying, if but for a day, to hold on to those who had played a large part in starting the congregation.

As in any congregation, the ladies made their presence known by their zeal for mission work and their desire to help out wherever they could in the congregation. Organized February 17, 1930, the Women's Mission Society started with fifteen members. Mrs. Skinner was the first president. According to a flyer celebrating their fifth anniversary as a group, their

duties were to visit the sick, care for the poor and needy and help bring souls to Christ. When guest speaker Pastor Tietjen (then of Riverside) addressed them at their 1935 anniversary celebration, they had given ample demonstration of how useful they could be in the life of the church. They donated five dollars a month to the Building Fund and paid for the installation of the furnaces in the church. They even withheld payment of twelve dollars from a Mr. Johnson--who never did install the furnaces--and paid it to a Mr. Flemming, who did. They also took a great deal of responsibility for the appearance of the church cottage. By 1938 their membership stood at thirty; they took in \$149.65 and spent \$97.26 that year.

A Sewing Circle met regularly in the church cottage for fellowship and needlework. Evidently this group was the Women's Missionary Society under another name, for in 1934 they sent seventeen baby slips to the East Fork Apache orphanage where Pastor Schmitt's brother-in-law, Rev. P. Behn, was director. Perhaps this group also produced the goods for the Women's Missionary Christmas Sale, first mentioned in 1937, repeated 1938 and presumably thereafter.

As was noted earlier, Pastor Tietjen was a strong advocate of the Walther League in his mission congregations. Josephine (Luedtke) Potts recalls that the Van Nuys and North Hollywood youth were very close under Pastor Tietjen, for they had joint meetings at his parsonage. Under Pastor Schmitt there were the usual rallies in various congregations, such as the one in Glendale, October 5, 1930, which would further interest in the League, as well as booster meetings within the North Hollywood-Van Nuys circle. By now the North Hollywood group was also meeting on their own, usually at the Luedtke's. That the National Walther League Convention was held in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium and enjoyed wide media

coverage, July 24, 1932, would also fire the interests of the North Hollywood youth.

Certainly the Walther League had an eye for publicity. A North Hollywood newsclipping proudly trumpets a nation-wide series of simultaneous banquets and candlelight services to express unity among the 2000 chapters. The president of the International League, Walter Helmke, sent a telegram to each of the chapters. St. Paul's received their telegram, since they became a chapter a week earlier, May 23, 1933. It took a year longer for them to join the National Walther League, July 5, 1934.

By 1935 the program flourished to such an extent that a Junior Walther League was active. It numbered ten, the Senior Walther League^u twelve. To raise funds they sold Christmas cards. To serve the congregation they bought signs for church advertising. They met regularly in the church cottage.

Two groups never got off the ground as organizations for Christian fellowship at St. Paul's. A Men's Club was suggested in an announcement July 17, 1932, but a start-up meeting failed to generate much support. The men had their hands full with running the church. The voters' meeting was their club. In October of 1938 Pastor Schmitt announced his intention of starting a Married People's League. An organizational meeting was to be held in the church cottage the following Friday evening. Nothing more was heard of it.

In any Lutheran church that seeks to enrich its worship service, a choir is a necessity. From the fourteen member 1929 choir, St. Paul's has never lacked a choir. Ada Mounts, the congregation's organist, was also the choir director. Thursday evenings she rehearsed such numbers as "Tarry With Me, Only Savior," "The Name of Jesus," or an ambitious

selection from Handel's Messiah. Sometimes her choices were not as straight-laced as one might expect in Missouri Synod circles. "Mother, Oh My Mother" seemed to be a natural for Mother's Day services. For the service commemorating Mr. and Mrs. Behn's fiftieth^hwedding anniversary, the choir sang "The Wedding March" from Lohengrin. Thanks to the Walther League's sollicitation of funds, the choir looked like a choir, obtaining robes just in time for Easter 1934.

Both choir and congregation appreciated Ada Mounts' work. In 1937 the choir gave her a surprise birthday party in the church cottage. Despite the ^epression, the congregation gave her a check for five dollars to show their appreciation. While the local newspaper's praise of her work, making the "choir one of the outstanding groups of the valley," may have been stretching the truth, it made good print for a new congregation trying to catch the public eye.

Musical accompaniment for hymns was a matter of great concern from the early stages of St. Paul's. The voters place^d a collection box near the entrance of the Women's Club in February, 1931, to raise money for a piano of their own. Sam Erickson, Dellmar Luedtke and Arthur Brinkmeyer, with assistance from Ada Mounts, were to purchase a piano with money from the Building Fund, since the Piano Box yielded only \$10. Three months later they bought a used piano, repaired and moved it for \$67.50. At the time ~~there~~^{there was} \$125.38 in the Building Fund they could draw on. Throughout the next year Pastor Schmitt's announcements would not let the congregation forget about the Piano Box. By 1934 the piano needed repairs and a good tuning, which a Mr. Brock performed to the tune of \$54.56.

By October, 1938, Pastor Schmitt was thinking about an organ. The voters authorized him to set up a special concert audition with an organ

company for the next Pentecost. On Palm Sunday, however, a Hammond pipe organ was in place for a trial listening. The congregation did not buy it. Pastor slated the Mission Festival, November 19, 1939, for another demonstration, this time for an electric organ from the Birkel Richardson Music Company of Los Angeles. Again the congregation was unimpressed. After a lapse of a year the congregation signed a contract September 22, 1940 with the Reuter Organ Company of Lawrence, Kansas. Built by Crome Brothers, second generation organ builders, the four-stop organ was dedicated in the morning service, December 22, 1940. Patience and perseverance had carried the day--St. Paul's could boast of a fine organ.

Social get-togethers were as much a part of the congregational life in North Hollywood as they were anywhere else, with the exception that the planners never had to worry about rain. One interesting parish meeting during the early years took place at the Women's Club one Sunday evening. The members heard the church reports of the last year, enjoyed the Auxillary Glee Club, some thirty voices strong, under the direction of a Lillia Snelling Farquhar and listened to Mr. H. V. Adams, a speaker from the Security First National Bank on the topic of subscriptions to raise money for building a church. Ted Rathbun, the owner of the local department store, closed the evening by leading the community singing.

As to be expected, there were the usual joint Sunday School-Congregation picnics. Sometimes, as in 1931, more people attended the picnic (120) than the morning service (84). In addition to picnics, there was the Annual Church Night, started in 1935, which was held in the Recreation Hall, a building in the park to the north of the library. Families, too, hosted social gatherings for the church, such as the Friday evening Ice Cream Social on the Hauser and Batemann lawn in September 1936. By 1938

the inevitable happened--the church picnic found a permanent home across the street in familiar North Hollywood Park. As a result of this, the North Hollywood council added their own innovation. After the 1938 picnic it informed the congregation that no exchange of money was allowed in the park. The solution was to have the members of the Picnic Committee sell five cent tickets for ice cream and soda in front of the church after the service.

Not all of the congregational get-togethers were mere fluff. They must have been memorable nights when Missionary Wyneken addressed the congregation concerning his work in India, or when Pastor Wismar spoke to a war-jittery group in January 1940 on "What I Saw and Heard in Europe."

Just as one can gather from fellowship activities what the congregational life was like, so from Pastor Schmitt's announcements can one sense what the congregational life of St. Paul's was. For one thing, he took very little for granted. In a mission congregation where many came from either no church background or from a non-Lutheran heritage, he tried to fashion one for them. He encouraged them to pray when they took their seat and to be friendly to visitors after the service. Once he asked them, "Who carried out the sermon of last Sunday?" He put these New Year's resolutions before the congregation in 1930. "1. Attend church regularly. 2. Read the Bible daily. 3. Pray for others. 4. Walk a life in full accord with the Word and faith." On the eve of 1940 he hosted a Watch Hour at the parsonage after the New Year's Eve service.

While some of his efforts may seem out of date to the modern reader, Pastor Schmitt was hardly out of touch with events. In early 1930 he preached a sermon on "The Tide of Bolshevism." Themes during the Depression centered on national guilt and the money madness that afflicted

America as symptomatic of its sinfulness. When Hitler started to overrun Europe, St. Paul's responded with prayers for peace on August 27, 1939.

He was quick to capitalize on anything that would boost attendance. The Mother's Day service usually drew double the average attendance. "Her Children Rise Up and Call Her Blessed" was one of his Mother's Day sermons. Weddings also seemed to be occasions where he was not so strict. In 1938 Margaret Knutsen married a celebrity of sorts, Charles Barrett, a minor league pitcher in the Pacific Coast League, on the evening of Palm Sunday. The soloist sang "I Love You Truly" and "At Dawning."

As for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, Pastor Tietjen celebrated it on Christmas Day, Epiphany, the first Sunday in Lent, Maundy Thursday, Pentecost, the first Sunday of July and September and Reformation Sunday. There was a confessional service before the regular service. Pastor Schmitt regularized it somewhat by celebrating the Lord's Supper the first of the month as well as additional festival dates. Individual cups were in use from the start. By 1938 Pastor Schmitt started aggressively promoting the fifteen minute confessional service before celebrating the Lord's Supper. He insisted that "all must attend this service who wish to go up to the Lord's Table."

Pastor Schmitt kept an impressive schedule as he served St. Paul's with the Word of God. The Sunday morning service started at 11:00, with Sunday School and an Adult Bible Class preceding it at 9:30 despite early attempts to push it back a half hour. On Sunday evenings the congregation assembled again, this time for an informal service which was more of a lecture Bible class. This meant Schmitt had to prepare three different presentations each Sunday. The Sunday School teachers met with the pastor for Bible study every other Monday evening at the parsonage.

Others were welcome to attend. Tuesday evenings were for Adult Information Class held at some prospective member's home or the parsonage. One feature of the early years of St. Paul's was the midweek Bible study. Pastor Schmitt would lecture on heaven or take up a series on the book of Matthew or Revelation. In the announcements this class is also referred to as a prayer service, so a form of liturgical worship must also have been included, making it a step between the Sunday service and the Sunday Bible Class. Naturally during the Lenten season this class would be superseded by services. The first Lenten services held solely by St. Paul's was in February of 1932. Preaching on "Scripture Fulfilled in Christ's Capture" in the Mc Namara Chapel Mortuary, Pastor Schmitt drew a gathering of twelve out of a possible 126 souls in the congregation. Sticking with the "Scripture Fulfilled" format, he preached to twenty-two the next week and twenty-seven the week after that. Services started late in the evening by our standards, at 7:45. There were Good Friday services in the evening and later in the decade at 10:00 A. M. for the children. St. Paul's celebrated Easter with a sunrise (6:30) service and a 9:30 service. The last special service in the spring was the 7:45 P. M. Ascension Day service. Thursdays were for choir and various board meetings, Fridays for congregational fellowships and bimonthly Walther League meetings. To fill out the calendar year there were no Advent services, the Sunday School Christmas program was the Sunday before Christmas Day, Christmas services were at 6:30 and 9:00 A. M., with New Year's Eve services at 8:00 P. M. A special Sunday was that closest to July 16, on which the congregation annually celebrated the church dedication with a guest preacher at a special service.

It was a busy schedule by which Pastor Schmitt richly fed his steadily

growing flock. What a man sows, so shall he reap--perhaps the preaching and teaching schedule he maintained is the real key to the healthy growth of the church under his care.

Despite the demands a growing congregation placed upon his shoulders, Pastor Schmitt took his wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Behn, into the parsonage in their last years. The couple celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary with a special Sunday service February 22, 1936. The sermon text for this occasion was "Give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever (Ps. 136:1). A reception attended by 150 followed at the Women's Club with Pastor Schmitt as the Master of Ceremonies.

There is only one instance where Pastor Schmitt's health failed him. In late July, 1930, he was stricken with a bout of kidney stones and admitted to a Hollywood hospital. For two weeks Ben Hoffmann and William Doyle read his sermons Sunday morning. By the end of August he had fully recovered and, upon reflection of his illness, preached what must have been a vivid ^Sermon on Mark 7:31-37, "Why Does God Often Afflict Men With Sickness?"

Vacations were not unknown to the pastor of this era. Schmitt regularly took a two or three week vacation. In 1929 he took it with only one month on the job in North Hollywood. It was exceptional when he was gone for seven weeks (June 27-August 8, 1937), during which he vacationed in Michigan and Wisconsin. He returned with a brand new car from the Flint factory.

For a number of years Pastor Schmitt lived in a rental home, but the congregation at its July 13, 1936 voters' meeting moved to purchase the property at 11509 Burbank for no more than \$2600. By October 8 they

acquired the house for \$2760. Evidently the pastor helped out with a loan of \$714.90 to meet the cost, for the October 5 voters' meeting decided to increase his salary by fifteen dollars a month until the aforementioned amount, including three per cent interest, was reached. Members were also reminded that their Building Fund envelopes could be used for the parsonage.

The third piece of property the congregation acquired was a small house in back of the church on Mc Cormick Street. A newsclipping of April 1, 1934 records the transaction. The congregation planned to take out the inner partition to create one large room for Sunday School and social gatherings. It was soon in use for Young People's, Ladies' Sewing Circle, as well as voters' meetings. Adult Information Classes were still held in private homes or the parsonage. Known as the Church Cottage, it remained in use until the building of the present church. At the January 7, 1938 voters' meeting the men decided to assist the ladies in taking out the wall in the church cottage if possible. By their April 11th meeting it was completed. The ladies, however, were not content with the cottage yet. That fall they installed wall board and bought paint so Mr. Bateman could paint the exterior.

In the Lord's wisdom, He saw fit that St. Paul's go through its critical years during the Great Depression. The first church was built during those years. The congregation experienced phenomenal growth during those years. It was a time when a ^Sdesert of Jello made a meal memorable and a donated case of Coca-Cola an unexpected windfall for a Walther League party. But more importantly, the Depression opened the eyes of believers to see the gift of Christian fellowship and the needs of those beyond the local congregation. While the old-timers may not remember much

about synodical activity, the records bear witness to a growing Lutheran conviction.

One of those synodical ventures that fostered a Lutheran awareness was Walter Maier's "Lutheran Hour." First airing Thursday, October 2 at 7 P.M. on the CBS radio network, Pastor Schmitt's flock could tune in to KHJ Sunday afternoons at 1:30 and listen to it. Members of St. Paul's took collections especially for the "Lutheran Hour." They received pamphlets in their newsletter concerning it and heard of the synodical plight whenever someone such as Mr. Buettner, the treasurer of the "Lutheran Hour," or President Behnken took the microphone. Dr. Maier molded the opinions of many when he spoke on "The Church in the Present Crisis," or Communism and the Church." When he appeared in person at the Hollywood Bowl the evening of June 25, 1939, it was an occasion where Pastor Schmitt urged everyone to fill their cars and go. More and more the members of St. Paul's could see evidence of Maier's contention that the men who wanted to rule the world without God were making a ghastly mess of it.

Another element of congregational life that fostered a Lutheran awareness was their celebration of Lutheran festivals. Just because the North Hollywood congregation did not have much of a history of their own, as of yet, it did not mean they could not commemorate the historical landmarks of their Lutheran Church. Reformation was a natural time to celebrate with joint services. Those who went down to the Bible Institute at Sixth and Hope on October 27, 1929 could hear Rev. J. Behnken, then of Houston, preach on their "400 Year Old Catechism." The next year's celebration was joined with an Augsburg Confession Jubilee. In 1933 the 450th birthday of Luther was celebrated. This is not to say that the historical mindset came out only on October 31. On November 24, 1935 St. Paul's celebrated

the 400th anniversary of Tyndale's English Bible. William Davis read "The Friar of Wittenberg" at Bethany, Hollywood Wednesday evening, January 22, 1936--Pastor Schmitt invited his members. Although all members of St. Paul's did not attend these gatherings, the continued awareness that they were heirs to such a tradition gave the fledgling congregation the conviction that they were not another transitory church springing upon the American scene.

Another reminder that St. Paul's belonged to a fellowship much larger than the local congregation were the noon Lenten services in downtown Los Angeles during Holy Week. Eminent Missouriians/such as Dr. Dau or Hemmeter conducted these services as well as the joint Easter Sunrise Service in the metropolitan area.

Dealings with the Southern California District affected everyone in the congregation. After all, the District Mission Board supplied the pastor and congregational subsidy. That the members would know what the district was up to, sixteen copies of the 1930 Proceedings of the district convention were handed out. The congregation also paid for twenty-seven subscriptions of the Southern California Lutheran at forty cents a subscription per year. The district had its own Lutheran Chorus for concerts and special services. St. Paul's contributed eleven dollars to the 1934 pledge campaign to raise \$600 for the District Mission Board's work. Although it was always difficult to meet the higher subscription the district asked, 1933 was an especially hard year. The congregation informed the district treasurer, Mr. Dittman, that they couldn't increase their subscription by \$220 to the \$280 requested. It was one of the few times St. Paul's did not live up to the district's expectations.

The same willingness to cooperate with the Missouri Synod as a whole

is also evident during these years. Such willingness was sorely needed, for the Thirties was a period of one synodical stewardship drive after another. There was the Call of the Hour (1931), an emergency collection (1932), a Special Open Bible Thankoffering (1934), Call of the Cross (1938-1940) and a Centennial Offering (1939). To be sure there was a real need in view of the fields to be worked and the Depression.

The Call of the Hour was apparently precipitated by a large number (280) of seminary candidates in 1931. The goal was six dollars per adult to continue the synod's expansion through the decade. In Southern California alone twenty-six churches had been established 1920-1930. Sizable deficits had already arisen in synodical and district treasuries. St. Paul's responded well, in so far as they were among the twenty-eight congregations in the district (out of forty-two) to pledge, and one of twelve to pay in full as of June 15, 1931. Their contribution, however, was \$22.67 for fifty-three communicants, far short of the goal. This was the general trend throughout synod, for by 1934 the Missouri Synod was \$900,000 in debt.

In North Hollywood the Piano Box fell victim to the more pressing need of the synod's debt. The emergency collection of October 1932 also addressed the same need. The entire month, in fact, was devoted to "humiliation, repentance and prayer." A house-to-house canvass during that month occurred in St. Paul's.

By 1939 the Call of the Cross drive merged with the Centennial Offering. The debt had now been reduced to \$600,000. Synod touted a century of confessional faithfulness by sending pamphlets and pictorial booklets to its members through congregational Centennial Committees. Rev. Koehler of Oakland showed a motion picture to the congregation concerning synod's

achievements over the past hundred years. The free-will offering went to synod. President Behnken used the last "Lutheran Hour" broadcast of April 1939 to deliver his Centennial Address. June 28 Dr. Maier spoke at the Centennial Mass Service at the Occidental College Bowl. This was to be the climax of the drive in Southern California. St. Paul's had gathered \$62.81 as their offering. The church now numbered one hundred and six communicant members. But the drive failed to achieve its goals. February 25, 1940 Pastor Schmitt announced a Call of the Cross conference in Los Angeles to try to arouse interest in the uncompleted drive. The members of St. Paul's and the other 4000 congregations in the Missouri Synod, it seems, could only do so much.

The name Missouri Synod, however, was not synonymous with pleas for money. Members of St. Paul's heard of work among the blacks and Spanish in the country. They listened to speakers fresh from the Chinese and Indian foreign mission fields. Rev. Paul Behn, a brother-in-law of Pastor Schmitt, told of the work among the Apaches at Whitewater, Arizona.

The synod also published daily meditations (five cents a copy), the Lutheran Annual (fifteen cents), the Lutheran Witness (sixty cents a year) and other books, such as What Our Synod is Doing. The hymnal could be had for a mere fifteen cents. Every year Pastor Schmitt plugged these publications, striving to get copies into every home. In 1934 he went so far as to enlist an elder, Mr. Hanson, to visit members and encourage subscriptions to the Lutheran Witness.

One final measure of congregational life is its mission festivals. The first was on November 3, 1929. Pastor L. W. Faulstrick of nearby Eagle Rock preached. The offering amounted to forty dollars. The next November the festival had expanded into two services, Pastor H. Kringel of

Glendale in the morning, District Pastor G. Smukal in the evening. This time seventy-five dollars was in the plate. In 1931 the September 13th mission festival drew eighty-four in the morning and ~~one~~^{one} hundred fifteen in the evening to hear Pastor Mc David speak on his work among the blacks. While the amount taken in was not recorded, a precedent was set in that the offerings now went directly into the congregational treasury to help meet its synodical budget subscription. This, as well as the Boy's Quartet singing "Give, Willingly Give" was probably intended as stimulus for a large offering.

From 1933 on the effects of a prolonged economic depression were in evidence. That year only forty-eight dollars was received and in 1934 only fifty three dollars, despite the innovation of mission boxes handed out to the members two months before the October 20th date. The pastor's encouragement, "Let's show that we have a heart~~for~~ for missions and give a liberal offering," did not always translate into dollars. The people just did not have the money. The fact that eighty-one adults were confirmed between 1932 and 1928 did show that the people of St. Paul's were doing mission in a different way--through the giving of their testimony of faith to those around them.

Although there were very large congregations by this time already in Southern California, such as Trinity, Orange, St. Paul's found itself in the company of many congregations just starting out, too. While there was not much contact with many of these growing congregations save for guest preachers or delegate conferences, the knowledge that other congregations existed strengthened the members of St. Paul's that they, too, would make a go of it. They were not hopelessly out of step with the times.

Under Pastor Tietjen ties were understandably close with First Lutheran, Van Nuys. He merged the youth programs in North Hollywood and Van Nuys. Van Nuys hosted Lenten, Advent and other joint services not only for St. Paul's, but for the other congregations in the San Fernando Valley as well. Yet for all of this, the Van Nuys congregation was only thirteen years old when St. Paul's built their first church in 1933.

Under Pastor Schmitt the focus shifted to the Burbank congregation, which he also served. Not until 1932 did St. Paul's have its own Lenten services in North Hollywood. By that time Pastor Schmitt served them exclusively. Looking at his announcements, one can gather the home mission work in the area was bearing fruit. Santa Monica started a school in 1930; Burbank moved to a new church building at Sixth and Elmwood and dedicated it in June, 1934, while further to the east, St. Paul's First Lutheran Church of Pasadena laid their cornerstone in February, 1937. St. Paul's, North Hollywood was part and parcel of the growth during the Thirties--it was not an exception to the rule.

No matter how many details are known of life in the Depression, the depth of human anguish will never be plumbed. If Southern California was the dream of the Okies and others who had watched their farmlands or factory jobs vanish, it was only because even a bad dream looked appealing to those suffering through a nightmare. The grapes of wrath tasted no sweeter in the California sun.

Faced with widespread need, the small group of believers in North Hollywood did what they could to alleviate suffering. The started out early. Already on November 10, 1929 a clothing drive was under way. It would continue for ten years. Three families of the congregation which numbered only thirty-five communicants were out of work by May of 1930.

At Thanksgiving of the same year the congregation instituted a collection of canned goods for the poor.

The quarterly voters' meeting of July 11, 1932 went a step beyond the collection of goods by authorizing a Poor Box to be placed in the rear of the Women's Club, where they were then meeting. To their credit, the Poor Box, unlike the Piano Box, never fell victim to more pressing needs. That Thanksgiving the congregation participated in a "Sacrifice of Thanks for the Poor," a collection not only of food and clothing, but also money to aid those down and out. During Christmas 1934 the custom started of giving Christmas gifts to brighten the season for the needy.

One final note of interest here is the congregation's reaction to an especially bad flood in the spring of 1938. The congregation set aside the first three Sundays of March as Sundays of "thankfulness to the Lord for His protection during the flood." A special thankoffering was taken during these weeks, as well as a clothing drive for those who had been particularly hard-hit.

Although there are no names to whom credit belongs in this phase of St. Paul's congregational life, although it is impossible to know how much money went to this effort, as if the cost of a can of food to the hungry or a pair of pants or a skirt for one who has lost everything can be assigned a monetary value, it is enough to know that a group of Christians, despite the needs of their own families, congregation and synod, carried on this work of mercy at all.

In order to mobilize the congregation to meet the obstacles it faced, Pastor Schmitt came out with a church newsletter, the Messenger. The Messenger made its appearance on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1934. While it was called a bulletin, it was not, strictly speaking, a bulletin. It

contained announcements of special services, baptisms, confirmations, choir rehearsals, member information such as who was going on trips or had recovered from an illness, monthly financial statements and anecdotes of a religious nature. This one made the April 28, 1940 edition:

A shrewd agnostic and a Christian clergyman sat at the same table in a Pullman dining car. They were waiting for their first course at dinner, which would be Hudson River fish. Eyeing his companion for a moment, the agnostic remarked, "I judge you are a clergyman, sir?"

"Yes, sir; I am in my Master's service."

"You look *ti*. Preach out of the Bible, don't you?"

"Of course."

"Fine many things in the old book that you don't understand, don't you?"

"Some things."

"Well, what do you do then?"

"Why, I simply do just as we do while eating this delicious fish. If I come to a bone I quietly lay it to one side and go on enjoying the fish and let some fool insist on choking himself with bones."

The agnostic was silenced.

The Messenger's motto was "A Changeless Christ for a Changing World."

MESSENGER
OF
St. Paul's
First Lutheran Church
5244 Tujunga Avenue
One block south of Magnolia Blvd.
Opposite Park near Library
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

H. W. SCHMITT, Pastor
11509 Burbank Blvd.
Telephone
Sweat 3-2418

OUR MOTTO
"A Changeless Christ for a Changing World"

OUR INVITATION
To all who are weary and need rest
To all who mourn and need comfort
To all who are friendless and wish friendship
To all who doubt and are seeking light
To all who sin and need a Savior
This church in Jesus' name says...

WELCOME

April 28, 1940

At the April quarterly meeting for 1929 the following report was given.

Offerings	56.50
Lord's Work	18.00
Building Fund	34.25
Loose Collection	20.83
Communion	2.20
Special Collection	8.75
	<u>\$ 140.53</u>

An audit of the books for 1929 reveals an operating budget balance of \$59.83 after receipts of \$511.82 and disbursements of \$451.99.

The congregation could do very well on such amounts as long as others carried the pastor's salary and expenses. On the other hand, there were only fourteen communicant members at this time. The money went primarily for rent, \$324.00 for the Women's Club in 1929. Special funding sent \$88.70 to synod and \$72.30 remained in the Building Fund.

In 1930 the District Mission Board sent \$1440 to North Hollywood in direct subsidy after assurances from the congregation that it intended to meet its synod mission budget of \$160. This inquiry was perhaps a response to the previous year's letter of protest to the District Mission Board for the quota of \$132.48 they had assigned to the congregation. The men of the congregation were learning to accept their responsibility to the church that stretched beyond their community. They learned well; they over-subscribed to the synod's Mission Board and applied the balance to their 1931 subscription.

As was noted above, the Sunday School played a large role in the mission outreach of the congregation. Yet it was not a part of the budget, since it more than supported itself. In 1930 the offerings amounted to \$188.40 with \$153.35 spent for the Sunday School. This was almost one-third as much as the entire general treasury of 1929.

By October 1933 St. Paul's was fully operational as a church. Its October bills looked like this.

Pastor	25.00	Debt Retirement	65.38
Auto	5.00	Fire Insurance	1225
Telephone	2.25	Synod Budget	25.00
Electricity	1.00	Publicity	2.50
Gas	1.50	Miscellaneous	2.50
Water	1.50		\$ 133.88
Repairs	1.00		

During that year, the church received \$1440 in district subsidy, spending \$1610 for home purposes and \$321 for synod and missions. With a new church to pay off, their budget had come of age. From 1933 on the subsidy decreased; \$1380 in 1934, \$1320 in 1935, \$1200 in 1936, \$672 in 1937 until it was phased out in 1941. Except for an initial drop in the Synod Mission Budget in 1934 which mirrored the cut in subsidy, St. Paul's continued to increase its giving to synod through its early years. In large measure the synodical subsidy went toward the pastor's salary, which the congregation gradually assumed. Despite some quarterly deficits such as the \$63.70 of the second quarter of 1934, which translated into a year-end deficit of \$42.20 out of a total budget of \$2399.49, the congregation maintained its fiscal soundness through the Depression years.

In 1933, once the excitement of the new church wore off, the congregation learned what it meant to have their own church building. Before the close of that year a loan from the synod's Church Extension Board brought the congregation \$1500 at one percent interest, which replaced half of the district's loan at three and one-half percent interest. The value of the property at this time stood at \$6500. Total indebtedness was \$5666. The congregation had to find ways to raise money.

The Building Fund had been an early feature in the congregation, yet due to monies withdrawn for such purchases as the piano, it stood at \$250.33

in April 1931. To encourage interest in Building Fund contributions, the members received coin boxes for a "Penney a Day" contribution plan. This was supplanted by the use of dime folders in January, 1933. They were to be turned in on the first Sunday of the month. To encourage larger gifts Pastor Schmitt was careful to publicize special donations, such as the fifty dollars given by the Israel's of Long Beach, March 27, 1933, or William Hoffman's ten dollars, April 10 of the same year. That same month special Dedication Containers, perhaps the surplus penney coin boxes, were handed out for additional contributions to the Building Fund. The voters also resolved to have members of the Finance Board make an every member visitation to increase contributions.

Unfortunately, the district's "Outline of Rules Regulating Newly Established Missions" dictated an every member canvass with a pledge from each member to do their utmost in supporting the mission program financially. Once again that year the congregation received canvass teams who talked to them about their financial commitments.

After a year of use the dime folders gave way to monthly Building Fund envelopes, 1934. Pastor Schmitt encouraged all to give regularly. "If all help we can easily meet expenses. Lay in store as God has prospered you." The needs of the church had jumped from \$80 to \$140 a month. By July the Finance Board of Hauser, Brinkmeyer and Vosburg, together with the pastor, visited members to encourage the regular turning in of envelopes. They also handed out special thankoffering envelopes for the first anniversary of the church. The dime folders, however, were not forgotten. Dusted off, christened Dime Containers or Mission Boxes, they were handed out in August in anticipation of the mission festival.

Outside of the use of postcards to remind members to turn in their envelopes more regularly in 1935, thus doing away with the need for another

visit, the only other innovation was the distribution of Easter Banks in 1936, perhaps in response to the moderate success of the mission boxes. The history of stewardship techniques at St. Paul's rapidly came full circle in October, 1937, when the voters decided to hand out "Penney a Meal" boxes. Before each meal a penny was to be deposited in the box. All monies would go into the Building Fund. It goes without saying that they used the old penny boxes from 1931. As the decade closed the techniques were echoes of 1931-1933. What the Finance Boards lacked in originality they made up for in tenacity. By 1939 the congregational indebtedness dropped to \$3300, slightly more than one-fourth of the total value of church property.

Church upkeep is one of the necessary, but thankless, tasks in the church. It was no different at St. Paul's. To improve the property with a sprinkler system or curb and gutter was no problem--people donated the labor and materials. Similarly, it was an easy matter to enhance the church interior with larger bulletin boards or pew repairs. But to clean the church was something else. Problems in this area arose as early as August, 1934. By the next year the voters resolved to have members volunteer for the work, or, if necessary, hire someone for \$1.50. Among the officers installed January 5, 1936, was Fred Hauser, the Superintendent of Janitorial Work. He tried volunteers, he tried sending out postcards to remind members when it was their turn to clean, and he tried to turn the job over to Pastor Schmitt in November. The voters decided to distribute envelopes in January, 1937 for janitorial services which the pastor would secure for five dollars a month. Then the pastor did some arm twisting on Fred Hauser who volunteered to do it for the first five months of 1937. Mrs. Skinner took over the clean-up duties in 1938, with the women of the church getting together for seasonal cleaning sessions.

Vandalism in 1936 was no different than today's variety. In the spring, according to the Messenger, "the cornerstone was removed by some rowdies." Mr. Sunden volunteered to replace it and a swift justice system sent one of the vandals to prison.

The path to building a church took the congregation a scant three years. In April 27, 1930 Kurt Leudtke, Fred Hauser and Charles Bostleman~~x~~ were appointed to find a lot. Upon their report the congregation approved the purchase of a lot 50 x 125 at 5244 Tujunga. Luedtke, Bostleman~~x~~ and William Doyle applied to the District Extension Board for a \$3500 loan. The lot, which was to be "free and clear of all encumbrances" was not to exceed \$3500. The district granted the loan at three and one-half percent interest and the lot was purchased by March 6, 1932 for \$3250. Some clearing was necessary under the supervision of Bostleman~~x~~, the "landlord over the church lot." A sign promptly went up announcing the lot as the future site of the church.

On the way toward the purchase of the lot the voters tightened up some procedural matters. They filed an Article of Incorporation with the state of California on October 27, 1931. The trustees secured a safe deposit box and converted the Building Fund monies into gold and silver, January 12, 1932. They also secured Hans Walner of North Hollywood as the architect. Nels Hjorth, John Wisusik Duncan Armstrong and Fred Richter constituted the Building Committee.

Initial meetings for the construction of the church took place in October 1932, when Mr. Wyneken from the Church Extension Board addressed the congregation and voters. In an October 31 special voters' meeting they notified the CEB for their plans to build a complete chapel with a Sunday School room similar to Walner's plans. After a few changes in the design, they applied for a \$2500 loan on the condition that the congregation

not be held to raising an amount equal to the loan. By December 20 the voters increased the amount requested to \$3000. The district CEB granted the loan and bids were let. When they read the bids on April 7, 1933, all four bids were above the limit, so they tentatively accepted a bid by the company of Flemming and Berrien for \$3260 in the hopes of cutting it down to \$3000. That they were unsuccessful can be seen from the final cost of the building, \$3900.

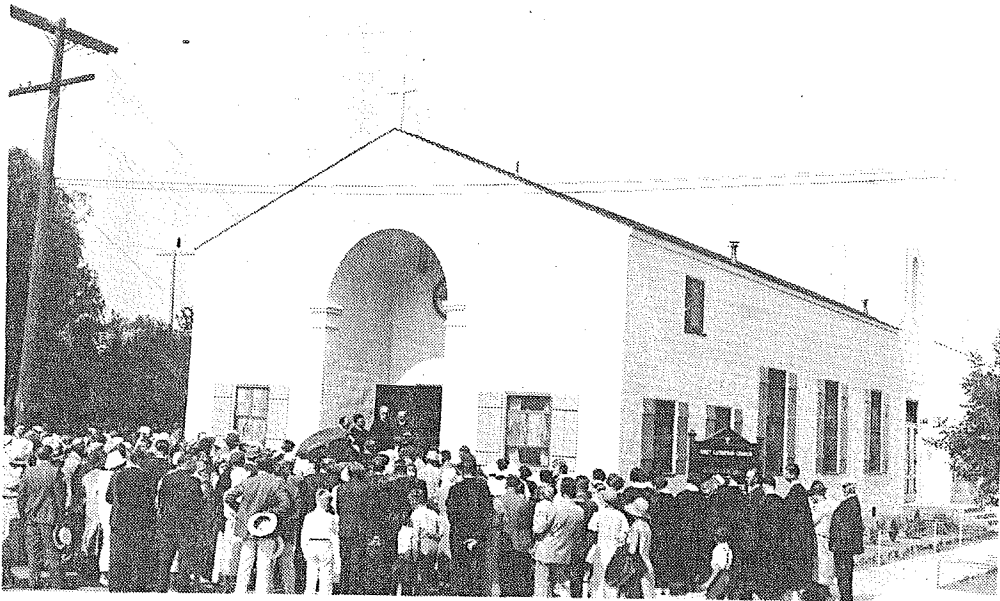
As the work got under way, Nels Hjorth volunteered to rough in the plumbing while Sam Erickson and Duncan Armstrong jointly hired a carpenter for finishing the balcony. The Ladies' Aid purchased a heating system and helped in the selection of colors for the church. The pastor was to secure speakers for the cornerstone laying as well as the dedication services. He also put together a program bulletin for the dedication and solicited funds for church furnishings.

May 21, 1933 dawned cold and cloudy. The rain had stopped by the time the service for laying the cornerstone began. Two hundred and fifty had gathered to hear Rev. Mueller preach and see Schmitt lay the cornerstone. The Male Quartet of First Lutheran, Van Nuys was on hand to sing two selections.

The Dedication program of July 16, 1933 listed the following organizations within First Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Hollywood; Sunday School, Womens' Missionary Society, Senior Walther League and Junior Walther League. Sam Erickson was the president of the congregation, H. Marzolf vice-president, John Wisusik secretary-treasurer, and I. Stearman financial secretary. The Board of Elders consisted of Charles Bostleman, Fred Hauser and H. Marzolf; Arthur Brinkmeyer, J. Berneisse and J. Warner the Board of Finance. The architect was Hans Walner, contractor J. H. Flemming, Mr. Saathop was the carpenter and Mr. Zimmermann provided the

cornerstone. Credited with special donations were:

Mr. and Mrs. Vosburg	Carpets
Mr. and Mrs. Rathbun	Curtain and Drapes, Chancel Chairs
Mrs. E. and Josephine Luedtke	Altar Bible
Don, Joyce and Yvonne Hanson and Betty Tyson	Lectern Bible
Nettie Long	Bulletin Board
Mr. and Mrs Stearman	Candelabras
Mr. and Mrs. G. Israel	Windows
Junior Walther League	Altar Coverings
Sunday School	Folding Chairs



Church Dedication July 16, 1933

At the 3 P. M. Dedication Service 410 gathered at the main entrance of the church. This was the program.

Prelude	Mrs. William Doyle
Processional -- "Holy, Holy, Holy"	Choir and Congregation
"I Love Thy Zion, Lord"	Congregation
Vesper Response	
Dedicatory Prayer	G. H. Smukal, District President
Reader	H. Kringel

Anthem -- "The Builder"	Choir, Ada Mounts, Director
Announcements	
"Here in Thy Name, Eternal God"	Congregation
Solo--"How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings"	Roland Wisusik
Sermon--"The True House of God"	G. Witte, Bethany, Hollywood
Offeratory and Offering	
Anthem --"Gloria" (Mozart)	
Lord's Prayer	
Benediction	
Doxology	
Postlude	

A light supper was ^Served in the Recreation Hall in the park just to the north of the church. There was a free-will offering. Following supper a second service of dedication took place at 7 P. M., which was attended by two hundred. The program was as follows:

Prelude -- "Praise to the Lord the Almighty"	Congregation
Responses and Altar Service	
Prayer	Rev. H. Gehring
Scripture Lesson	
Solo -- "Open the Gates of the Temple"	Ralph Beech
Announcements	
Hymn -- "Oh For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"	Congregation
Sermon -- "The Attraction of God's House"	G. Theiss, St. Paul's, Pasadena
Offeratory and Offerings	
Anthem -- "Sanctus"	
Prayer	
Benediction	
Doxology	
Silent Prayer	

The festivities came to an end on the Wednesday evening service when R. Kuehnert of Los Angeles preached on "Building Churches." The white, stucco church with its Spanish architecture blended beautifully with the natural landscape of the district. The city could boast a gleaming new landmark, one more sign of the community's stubbornly rising hopes. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Hollywood had moved into its new home.

SOURCES

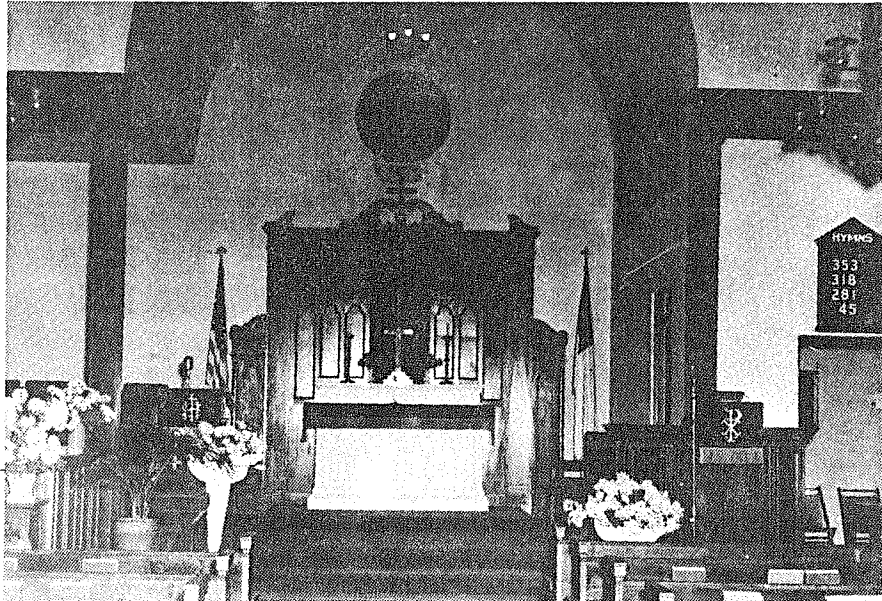
Personal Interviews:

Adelaide (Hauser) Crawshaw	August 1982
Josephine (Luedtke) Potts	August 1982
Gloria (Vosburg) Love	April 1983

St. Paul's First Lutheran Archives:

Announcement Book of Pastors Tietjen and Schmitt (1928-1940)
Voters' Meeting Minutes (1931-1940)
Historical File
Historical Photo Book

Official Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of the Southern California District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, July 10-14, 1933, held at Orange, California.



Sanctuary of St. Paul's First Lutheran Church
1933

Pictures:

p. 5 Confirmation Day May 15, 1932 at the Women's Club

(Listed on records) Helen Dayle, Nellie Nielson, Annie Bernneise, Mabel Carpenter, Helen Forster, Thurnilda Schapel, George Knutsen, Dorothea Young, Earl Carpenter, Frank Doyle, Layton Arneson, Gerald Erickson, Victor Hjorth, Ethel Arnson, Christina Nielson, Duncan Armstrong.

p. 10 Confirmation Day June 16, 1935

(l. to r.) Gloria Vosburg, Gladys Moinicker, Gerald Hefty.

p. 11 Confirmation June 10, 1934

(Listed on records, names followed by * positively identified)
(Back row, l. to r.) Adam Berneisse*, Fred Hahn, Pastor Schmitt*, Archie Redwood, James Middleton, Robert Freel. (Middle row) Elvera Brackt, Marjorie Hahn, Louisa Redwood, Lucille Middleton. (Front row) Donald Hill, Cramay Lange, Evely Ehring, Gertrude Gentry, Jerome Carney. Not shown: (?) Mrs. Saathop.

p. 33 The Messenger, April 28, 1940 edition.

p. 40 Church Dedication, 3 P. M. Service, July 16, 1933

p. 42 Church Sanctuary, circa 1933.