

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

1858-1893

A Brief History

Burlington, WI.

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When thinking of the mid 1860's one most likely will focus his attention on the events leading up to and including the Civil War. This is only proper because the Civil War did have much to do with shaping the country that we live in today. As a Wisconsin Synod Lutheran and, more specifically, a Wisconsin Synod Lutheran who is also a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Burlington, Wisconsin, I realize that there was much shaping done that has influenced the congregation of which I am a member today. I, as well as every member of St. John's, am the beneficiary of a rich Lutheran heritage that I am privileged to enjoy today. It is for this reason that I take you back and look at the history of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Burlington, Wisconsin. This paper will have two parts to it. The first will be an overview of the people who have served; the second will review the facilities with which God has blessed us.

I. The People

In 1950 the village of Burlington, Wisconsin, had nearly 1,000 inhabitants not to mention the town of Burlington which claimed nearly 2,000 residents. It was here that, as the Wisconsin Synod was founded, German immigrants met together to encourage each other in the Word. The beginnings were nothing special, just a few Christians coming together in log cabin homes or local school houses. In the early 1850's these people were served by a Pastor Memminger who was working with a number of confessional Lutherans in the Slades Corners area. After he took a call to Burr Oak, Wisconsin, the people would simply have reading services with George Rosenhauer.

George Rosenhauer began conducting these reading services about 10 miles away from Burlington in Slades Corners. As these services were held, there was a constant pressure and temptation to affiliate with other Reformed groups in the area so that they could pool their resources and get any Christian pastor to serve them. Mr. Rosenhauer would not let this happen. Rather, in 1856, he made contact with President Muehlhaeuser of the Wisconsin Synod to request pastoral assistance. At first, help was sent from congregations in Racine and Kenosha. As this was happening in Slades Corners, a request was also granted that these traveling pastors

would stop in Burlington. The seeds of a Lutheran congregation were planted.

This seed started its growth into a plant when the groups in Burlington and Slades Corners called Pastor Carl F. Goldammer of Manitowoc to serve them. On August 16, 1858, Pastor Goldammer met with 16 men including John Dahl, Christopher Grabow, Fredrick Schulz, John Vohs, John Rasch, Christian Runzler, Fredrick Schmidt, Lawrence Hess, Rudolph Wald, and Carl Hillman to establish St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The hand of the Holy Spirit was obvious as Goldammer worked faithfully in adherence to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in an evangelical manner. By setting a course for purity in doctrine and practice he ably led his flock through the temptations of unionism with the Reformed. It was a time of steady spiritual and numerical growth, but it was also a tough economic time. There was a depression in the area in 1857 that hit the people hard and forced Pastor Goldammer to accept his salary in farm produce which he would then sell for money.

Despite the hardships, the congregation continued to prosper. One help to this was the Christian dayschool which was founded along with the church in which the pastor was expected to teach. On June 2, 1859 St. John's accepted its first constitution. It purchased its first piece of property shortly after. Built on this property was the parsonage which also served as the church and school. A number of people seemed to have moved from Burlington to the Burr Oak region, but the church was still able to grow thanks to the immigration of Germans primarily from Pomerania, Brandenburg, and Mecklenburg. At the end of 1862 Pastor Goldammer took a call to Jefferson, WI. During the vacancy, George Rosenhauer revived his reading services to supplement the help received from the pastors from Racine and Kenosha.

The congregation was not vacant long. Later in 1862 a call was accepted by Pastor C. Titze to be the second pastor of St. John's. One of the most noteworthy things that happened during his tenure as pastor was the fact that St. John's became totally self-supporting. This highlight seems to have been overshadowed by the difficulties that came about because of tension between Reformed and Lutheran elements in the congregation. Pastor Titze took the role of mediator of the two groups rather than leader of the Lutheran group. As a result the church

suffered as did Titze's ministry. Pastor Titze ended up leaving St. John's as well as the Wisconsin Synod.

In 1868, after Titze had left, there were a number of changes at St. John's. First of all Pastor F. Schug came to serve the congregation. At this time a guaranteed yearly salary of \$350 was promised to the pastor as opposed to giving farm produce and whatever they could scrape up (as had been the case previously). In keeping with an evangelism-minded spirit, mission services were started about 6 miles away in Lyons, WI. The dual parish arrangement with Slades Corners was discontinued and arrangements were made with German Ev. Church in Wilmot, Wisconsin whereby they would share a pastor. Pastor Schug served as pastor until February of 1873.

For the next two years St. John's was served by Pastor G. Thiele. During this short tenure there was much activity in the congregation as it was becoming more and more organized. In 1873 they started biennial meetings and decided to go to quarterly meetings in 1874. At the quarterly meeting in 1874 the congregation decided to build a church. They purchased a lot for \$350 and started planning what type of church to build. After debate on what type of structure to build, a frame structure was chosen over that of stone and building began soon after. Before the building was completed, Pastor Theile took a call.

Pastor Eckelman accepted the next call from St. John's. He was the pastor when the church building was completed and dedicated on August 22, 1875. Pastor Eckelmann served until 1878.

The next pastor, St. John's sixth, was Pastor Liefeld who accepted the call and came from Ripon, Wisconsin. It was at this time that a full-time teacher was called. The first was Miss Emma Jurgens who served for three years, the next was a Mr. Rader who served for two. After Mr. Rader, the pastor taught the school again from 1883 until 1900.

At this time we broaden our scope a little and look from St. John's Lutheran Church to the entire Lutheran church in the United States. At this time a war was raging over the doctrine of election. In his book "The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans" Professor Fredrich sums the controversy up very well. He writes:

"The big and bitter election-conversion controversy began to

surface in the early 1870's, when controversial articles on the subject began to appear in religious articles. The election issue, stated as simply as possible, revolved and revolves around the question: Why does God elect those who finally get to heaven? The Bible supplies a twin answer: because of His mercy and because of Christ's merits. Many, however, including some of the outstanding Lutheran dogmaticians, wanted to inject a third element into the answer of the why question, either a cause or a condition. They spoke about an election *in view of faith.*"
(Fredrich p.59)

It was this controversy which not only ripped apart the Lutheran church in America, but also St. John's Lutheran Church in Burlington.

The biggest part of the problem revolved around Pastor Liefeld. He definitely was teaching the false doctrine of election in view of faith and wanted to lead the congregation down that wrong road. The congregation was being split apart, so a meeting was held on March 26, 1883 to resolve the dispute. The meeting was conducted by Pastor Bading, the President of the Wisconsin Synod, Professor Hoenecke of the seminary, and Pastor Adelberg of Milwaukee. They urged Pastor Liefeld to take a call elsewhere. He then tried to encourage the congregation to join the Ohio Synod which backed his views on election. The conflict was resolved when St. John's terminated Liefeld's call on May 3, 1883 and resolved to remain members of the Wisconsin Synod. Liefeld ended up staying in Burlington and starting an opposition Lutheran Church. Four families followed him. I am not sure how the history of that church progressed, but they are today a member of the ELCA. Also involved in this conflict was St. John's association with Wilmot. This congregation was also torn apart by the controversy and split into two churches. One part was served by Liefeld while the other called former pastor Titze, who was at this time not a member of the Wisconsin Synod, upon the condition that he would reconcile his differences with the Wisconsin Synod. He refused, so Wilmot ended up calling a former pastor, Carl Goldammer who accepted. He served in Wilmot until 1883 at which time the dual parish agreement with Burlington was renewed and continued until 1905.

After this time the doctrinal controversy seemed to subside. Pastor August Bendler was called and would serve as pastor for the next seven years. During his tenure as pastor, there were

a number of positive things that happened. In the fall of 1883 the Ladies Aid Association was founded. In 1884 St. John's purchased two bells for the tower of the church. One was purchased by the congregation and put in place in 1884, and the other by charter member Christopher Grabow which was put in place in 1886. The next years were quiet ones and Pastor Bendler took a call to St. Matthew's in Milwaukee in 1890.

The eighth pastor to serve St. John's was Pastor J. G. Oehlert. He came from Bay City, Michigan, and arrived on February 5, 1891. There were some problems for him to face. One was with the Modern Woodsmen lodge in 1896-97, but in general this time was a time of expansion. The first addition was that of a school building in 1895. It was dedicated on October 25, 1895, with Pastor August Pieper preaching for the service. A second addition came in 1875 when a chancel and sacristy addition were added to the church. The final addition was that of stained glass windows for the church which were donated by various organizations in the church. Pastor Oehlert accepted a call to Wauwega, Wisconsin, in 1900.

The ninth pastor of St. John's was Pastor M. Busack who came from Marinette, Wisconsin. Upon his arrival the congregation again decided to call a full-time teacher for a yearly salary of \$360. Mr. Victor Burk of Eggertville, New York accepted the call and started St. John's first full-time school. It appears that before this, the pastor was only teaching part-time. Not much is recorded about these years, but in 1904 Pastor Busack resigned and was granted a peaceful release.

Pastor A. Moussa, who was serving in Manistee, Michigan, would fill the vacancy in 1904 and become St. John's tenth pastor. In 1905 teacher Victor Burk accepted a call to Kenosha, Wisconsin. After having three calls returned, St. John's turned to DMLC for a graduate to fill the vacancy. In 1905 Mr. Max Hackbarth was assigned and began teaching in the summer of 1905. He started the Young Peoples Society in 1905 which was very well attended. The growth of this group caused serious discussion about a possible fellowship addition to the school building. Before any decision was made, Pastor Moussa died unexpectedly in 1907.

It is interesting that the vacancy caused by the death of Pastor A. Moussa was filled by his

son, Hans Moussa. He was called March 17, 1907. Although he only served for one year at St. John's before accepting a call to teach at Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin, the congregation did experience visible growth during Pastor Moussa's tenure. It was at this time that the congregation resolved to build an addition to the rear of the school as well as add a second story to the original school building which would serve as the meeting room. Pastor Hans Moussa served until 1908.

In the 50th anniversary year, Pastor F. Soll was installed on November 1, 1908 to be St. John's twelfth pastor. During this time teacher Max Hackbarth accepted a call to St. Martin's Lutheran School in Winona, Minnesota. Again St. John's had difficulty filling the vacancy. A contributing factor seemed to be the lack of adequate housing for the teacher. After having numerous calls returned they again turned to DMLC for a graduate. Mr. Muesing would be assigned to St. John's and was installed on August 14, 1910. In 1912 the church building also received a new addition. This addition was a manually operated twelve rank organ. (Oddly enough it was dedicated on April 15, 1912, the same day that the members of the congregation learned of the sinking of the the Titanic.) On May 26, 1912 Pastor Soll accepted a call to Grace Lutheran Church in Yakima, Washington, and in 1918 would become the first president of the newly formed Northwest District of the Wisconsin Synod. He would later author the Soll series, a pericope series that followed the church year.

On July 21, 1912, St. John's would install their thirteenth pastor, Pastor Christian Sieker from St. John's of Newton, Wisconsin (another church that had been founded by Pastor Goldammer). He would serve for nearly sixteen years which up until this time is the second longest tenure as a pastor. During his years of service a number of significant changes occurred at St. John's. First of all tuition was discontinued for those children who attended the Christian dayschool. On January 26, 1927, the English language replaced German for the business meetings of the church. Two new organizations were formed. The first was a mother-daughter group called the Dorcas society, the second was a men's group. Although very vibrant and well attended when these groups were formed, neither one of them exist today in their original form.

During this time of Pastor Sieker's ministry there were also a number of teacher changes. The records indicate that after the departure of Mr. Muesing, who resigned on April 6, 1913, there was a significant turnover in teachers. Miss Ida Seiker, Pastor Sieker's oldest daughter, served for two years until she resigned because, following her marriage, she would be moving to Yakima, Washington. Teacher H. Gurgel followed and served from 1915-1918 at which time he accepted a call to St. Paul's Luther School in Waukegan, Wisconsin. The following year Miss Ida Christiansen served as a teacher. The next year St. John's called George Windisch of St. Louis, Missouri, but he too only taught for one year at which time he took a call to a congregation in Milwaukee. Pastor Seiker would serve as teacher for the 1920-21 school year. Again St. John's turned to DMLC for a graduate. Mr. Godfrey Schulz was assigned and was installed on August 21, 1921. He remained until April 6, 1924 at which time he took a call to St. Luke's in Milwaukee. Mr. Walte-Heidtke served as teacher from 1924 to 1926 when Miss Clara Wehrs assumed teaching duties in the school. On May 11, 1928, Pastor Sieker was called home to be with his Savior and thus ended his sixteen years of service at St. John's.

Pastor Louis Baganz of Kewaunee would be called to serve at St. John's on October 28, 1928. In the spring of 1929 Miss Clara Wehrs left and was succeeded by Gertrude Pifer. Again, during this time there was a slow move away from the German language. On April 6, 1930 St. John's adopted their first English constitution. During this decade there was also a change in services which, by 1940, resulted in two English and only one German service per Sunday. These German services continued up until the 1950's when they were discontinued.

Again there was a quick turnover in the teaching ministry. Miss Pifer accepted a call to Kenosha, Wisconsin, in May of 1931 and the congregation called Mr. William Krueger, a graduate of Concordia Teachers College in River Forest, Illinois. Mr. Krueger was a real blessing to the school as he helped to give it stability by serving nearly fifteen years. Mr. Krueger also helped to get the church choir off the ground. One was attempted and then abandoned in 1901, but with some effort the Mixed Choir was organized on September 23, 1931 and continues to function up to this day.

In the early thirties the congregation continued to grow as did the Christian Day School. This necessitated the calling of a second teacher. Mr. Roland Schauer was called on September 13, 1932 and would serve for one year. His room and board was to be furnished by Pastor Baganz and a salary of \$25 a month was to be paid by Mr. Krueger. Miss Gertrude Boock was then called and served for the next six years. In 1939 Miss Boock was succeeded by Miss Naomi Sauer who would serve up until 1943. Just a little historical perspective of this time period, remember that it is the time of the depression and like everyone else, St. John's was hit very hard. Through the grace of God they were able to keep the pastor and his family fed as well as the Christian Day School operational. One scare came to the congregation in September of 1932 when the parsonage and school received damage from a bomb planted in a milk transfer station across the street from the church which was placed as a result of a milk price war caused by the depression. In July of 1933 an okay was given to the treasurer "to borrow money for the congregation not exceeding \$2,000, whenever funds in the treasury are too low to pay for current expenses."

In 1939 St. John's experienced another sad occasion when Pastor Baganz resigned as pastor. In the early months of 1939 he had lost his speaking voice and was given a six month leave of absence at which time it was hoped that he would recover. During this time Pastor Alfred Sauer served as interim pastor and would eventually be called as the permanent pastor.

Pastor Sauer was called and installed on January 28, 1940. In 1939, while he was serving as the interim pastor, he saw the need for a church newspaper and introduced a monthly church paper called "The Guide" which is the name that it has kept up until this time. On September 15, 1940, the congregation rededicated the church which had undergone extensive decoration. In 1943 Pastor Sauer took a call to St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Winona, Minnesota. At the same time Miss Naomi Sauer accepted a call to teach in Cudahay, Wisconsin.

On October 3, 1943 Pastor Ewald Blumenthal of Wausau became the sixteenth pastor to serve St. John's. At this same time Miss Leonarda Vogel succeeded Miss Sauer in the primary room of our school. During Pastor Blumenthal's short time in Burlington the interior of the parsonage

was redecorated, and the pipe organ was rebuilt and electrified. After one year, Pastor Blumenthal accepted a call to Salem Lutheran in Milwaukee.

Pastor George Barthels from Allenton would be called as St. John's next pastor and installed on October 15, 1944. In his second year, Barthels pushed for the starting of a Missions Society. As a result, on January 11, 1946, one was organized so that members could learn more about the mission activity of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In this same year Mr. William Krueger, having privately prepared himself for the preaching ministry, passed a colloquy and accepted a call to Grace Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Michigan. Upon his departure there was again trouble finding a teacher to fill the vacancy. Mrs. Ernest Drost, a member of the congregation, consented to teach the upper grades until the Easter of 1947. From Easter until the end of the school year the responsibilities for teaching were shared by Pastor Barthels and Pastor Lorenz of Slades Corners. In 1946 the congregation realized the need for adequate housing if they were to call a principal and therefore decided to build a teacherage. A call was then accepted by Mr. Waldemar Nolte of Cudahy, Wisconsin to be the school teacher as well as principal, organist and choir director. In the next year considerable attention was given to the increasing number of children in the dayschool and the need for more room. In 1950 a decision was made to add a room to the school. On March 22, 1950 Miss Vogel accepted a call and was succeeded by Miss Victoria Schuetze. Two months later Pastor Barthels took a call to St. John's Lutheran Church in Red Wing, Minnesota.

On June 15, 1950, Pastor Rueben Marti was called to be St. John's eighteenth pastor. He only served for a little over a year as his tenure was ended by his sudden death in November of 1951. Although his time at St. John's was brief, it was an eventful time at St. John's. It was in 1951 that a recent convert, Bruce Thompson, asked Pastor Marti why the Wisconsin Synod didn't have some alternative for the boys of the congregation if they would not allow them to be in scouting. Pastor Marti challenged Mr. Thompson by asking "Why don't you do something about it?" Mr Thompson did, and on July 26, 1951, Pastor Marti and Mr. Thompson presented the idea of a boy's club for the grade school children of St. John's. "A motion was carried to sanction the

Lutheran Pioneers and to commend and encourage Bruce Thompson to organize it as soon as possible." The program continues up until this day on a Synod-wide level. In the fall of 1951 Pastor Marti would also see the addition to the school building. With the new addition, St. John's also hired Mrs. Henry Teut, who was former teacher Miss Clara Wehrs, to teach half days at the school. In 1954 she would be called as the school's third full-time teacher.

Following the death of Pastor Marti, Pastor Adolph Fischer was called on December 3, 1951. On April 2, 1952 Mr. Waldemar Nolte would accept a call to Emmanuel Lutheran School in Mankato, Minnesota. Mr. Fred Biedenbender, a graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, succeeded Mr. Nolte. During Pastor Fischer's ministry, in 1954, the congregation added a third classroom to the school. Mrs. Herbert Rubach was hired to help teach with the increasing enrollment. It was at this time that the congregation looked into plans of relocating its facilities. On May 25, 1955, a committee was appointed to look for suitable property for such relocation.

There were also several vacancies in the teaching staff during Pastor Fischer's years at St. John's. During the 1955-56 school year, Mr. Biedenbender accepted a call to Frieden's Lutheran Church in Kenosha and Mr. Robert Schierenbeck was called as the next principal. In May of 1955, Miss Schuetze accepted a call and was succeeded by Mrs. Horace Scheunemann. Mrs. Scheunemann would serve for the 25 years until she retired in 1980. During these years of turnover in the teaching staff, there was also going to be a change in the facilities. On May 28, 1956, the decision was made to relocate the church and school. A committee was appointed to find a suitable piece of property for that purpose. Later in that same year, Pastor Fischer took a call away from St. John's.

For the next sixteen years St. John's would be blessed by the service of Pastor H. Wiedman and enjoy years of change and prosperity. On November 13, 1957 the congregation voted to purchase 7.3 acres of land on the West side of the city of Burlington. In 1959 the first step of moving the facilities was made as the congregation made the decision to hire an architect to draw up plans. In August of 1961 ground was broken^d and, in December of that same year, the cornerstone was set in place with Pastor Norman Barenz of St. John's Lutheran in Slades Corners

delivering the sermon. The school was dedicated to the glory of the Triune God on October 7, 1962. The president of the WELS, Pastor O.J. Naumann, was guest speaker. The 1961-62 school year was the last to be held in the old school in which classes had been held for 87 years. In that final year a fourth teacher, Mrs. Lawrence Rouse, was added to the staff. Mrs. Rouse was succeeded by Miss Joyce Billman who taught through the 1964 school year. As the 1965 school year approached, Mr. Schierenbeck accepted a call. In August, Mr. and Mrs. James Opitz accepted calls and the staff was once again complete. In the following year Mrs. Teut passed away, and Susan Voll interrupted her studies at Dr. Martin Luther College to fill the vacancy. In 1968 Miss Barbara Vogt from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, accepted a call to replace Miss Voll who returned to New Ulm to finish her education. Mrs. James Opitz resigned in 1968 and was succeeded by Lynn Gartman. Mr. Gartman resigned the next year, and in 1969 Mr Boyd Krueger was called from the graduating class of Dr. Martin Luther College. At this time the congregation thought it wise to try to get some help for the pastor and therefore started a week-end vicar program to assist Pastor Wiedman. Also in 1971, Miss Vogt resigned effective the end of the school year. She was succeeded by Mr. Vilski who would become the principal in 1973.

In December of 1971 Pastor Wiedman accepted a call to St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Helenville, Wisconsin, thus ending his sixteen years at St. John's. The congregation would have a vacancy until June 18, 1971, ^{1972?} when Pastor Robert Michel from St. John's in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, was installed as the next pastor. During the time of the vacancy, St. John's decided to add a fifth teacher to the staff. The increasing enrollment made it necessary to call Miss Linda Ewerdt as an emergency teacher from Dr. Martin Luther College. Also during the vacancy, Miss Masguerite Munz, who was marrying Mr. Vilski, was called to replace Miss Vogt. Even after Pastor Michel had arrived, there continued to be several teaching changes. Mr. James Opitz would resign in July of 1972, and Kathleen Dienes would interrupt her studies at Dr. Martin Luther College to fill this vacancy. In June of 1973 Miss Rebecca McCollough was called to replace Miss Dienes who returned to school to finish her studies. The following year both Miss McCollough and Mrs. Vilski would resign. Mrs. Lawrence Rouse, a former teacher at St.

John's , accepted a call to return and teach. Miss Rosanne Polifka, a graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, would also accept a call.

At this time the congregation decided to go ahead with phase two of their relocation program. They decided to sell the old parsonage and teacherage and use the monies to build a new parsonage near the school on the 7.3 acre lot. A motion was also made to build a teacherage, but would later be rescinded. Late in 1973 the old school and parsonage were sold and monies made available for the parsonage. Phase two of the relocation program was completed on June 16, 1974, when the new parsonage was dedicated.

Pastor Michel would accept a call to serve as the Director of Public Relations for the Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in early April of 1975. As he left, a number of changes were made at St. John's. First of all, the constitution which had served the congregation since 1930 was revised. The congregation also voted to add a kindergarten to their grade school. Last, but certainly not least, a committee was appointed to set into motion phase three of the relocation program, the building of a new church.

St. John's twenty-second pastor would be Pastor Richard L. Weeks who accepted their call having served at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Burnsville, Minnesota. He was installed on September 7, 1975. Pastor Weeks had his work cut out for him right away as he helped the building plans get under way. On December 7, 1975, an architect was hired to help design the new church. The work which would continue for the next four years was slow but steady. On October 1, 1978 more than 600 members joined for the groundbreaking services. On September 16, 1979, the cornerstone was set in place. Finally, on February 3, 1980, the church was dedicated with President Carl Mische preaching for the service.

During those years, there were many other changes at St. John's. In 1976, Mrs. Richard Weeks was called to be the first kindergarten teacher and thereby expand the teaching staff to six teachers. In 1977, Miss Polifka became Mrs. Bird as she married a member of the congregation. In 1978 Mrs. Jon Flanagan organized the Senior Hanbell Choir (the ding-a-lings) which was later followed by the Junior Handbell Choir (the ting-a-lings) in 1979 and the Prep Handbell Choir in

1982, both under the direction of Mrs. Harvey Schaal. Also in 1979 the congregation continued its strong commitment for education by joining the Shoreland Lutheran High School Federation.

During these years there were also a few teacher changes. In 1979, Mr. Boyd Krueger accepted a call to Christ Lutheran Church in Big Bend, Wisconsin and was succeeded by Mr. Bruce Pingel from Caledonia, Minnesota. Following the retirement of Mrs. Scheunemann at the end of the 1980 school year, Miss Cheryl Schultz, a Dr. Martin Luther College graduate was called to teach the first and second grades. Mrs. Bird would resign at the end of 1980 and Miss Monica Wiebusch, a December graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College would take her place. In 1982 Miss Laurel Hintz, also a graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, would succeed Miss Schultz who resigned at the end of the 1982 school year.

A decision was also made at this time to take part in the vicar program of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. From 1980 through 1991 the vicar program was set in place to give Pastor Weeks assistance, as well as expose the congregation to the young men in the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. A complete list of the vicars who served can be found on page sixteen of the paper.

In the next few years there would again be teaching changes at St. John's. In 1985 Miss Monica Wiebusch took a call to teach in Oregon, and was replaced by Miss Amy Torgerson, a graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College. Miss Torgerson would teach for two years at St. John's and then resign in 1987 when she would be married. In 1987 there were a number of teaching changes. Miss Torgerson was replaced by Mrs. Susan Musgrave, a member of the congregation. Mr. Pingel resigned for health reasons and was replaced by Mr. Joel Burmeister. Miss Laurel Hintz accepted a call and was replaced by Miss Brenda Hemmelman. Both Miss Hemmelman and Mr. Burmeister came as graduates of Dr. Martin Luther College.

Throughout the 60's, 70's and 80's St. John's saw a number of changes and evidences of physical growth. They had built and maintained a new school and gymnasium as well as a new church and office buildings. They realized the importance of having the facilities kept up and in good working order. In the 1980's the congregation decided it was time to look at the structure

of the congregation itself to see if any helpful changes could be made. In 1988 they restructured the different boards and committees of the congregation. In 1989 they appointed a Master Planning Committee to help give direction for the future of St. John's. In 1990 the congregation took an even bigger step as they extended a limited call to Pastor Wayne Mueller of the WELS Parish Services to come in and analyze their strengths and weaknesses. It was a painful process but Pastor Mueller helped the congregation see the great opportunity they had and have for spiritual growth.

In 1991 and 1992 there were again teaching changes at St. John's. In 1991 Mr. Vilski resigned after 20 years of service. A one year provisional call was extended to Mr. Eric Kind to teach the 7th and 8th grades. During this year Mr. Burmeister was the acting principal and would become the permanent principal the next year. In 1991 four new classrooms and lockerrooms for the gymnasium were added to the school. A decision was also made to call a new teacher as well as replace the vacancy caused by the ending of Mr. Kind's provisional call. Miss Lynn Buman was called as the new teacher to help in the lower grades and Mr. Paul Scriver was called from Morrison, Wisconsin, to teach in the 7th and 8th grades. At this time Mr. Burmeister and Mr. Scriver also made strides to make the upper grades more departmentalized so that each of them could teach the subjects that they consider their strongest.

In 1992 St. John's decided to call a second pastor. They called Pastor Kurt W. Loescher from Engelwood, Florida, in July of that year. To the shock of the congregation Pastor Weeks died suddenly of a heart attack before Pastor Loescher arrived. The congregation continued to call throughout 1992 and into the spring of 1993 when the call was finally accepted by Pastor Terry Laabs who is expected to come in the first part of May.

This concludes the brief history of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Burlington, Wisconsin. Looking back it is obvious that there were hard times and there were good times, but there was never a doubt that all these times were in God's hands.

Pastors who have served at St. John's

1858-1862	Pastor C. Goldammer
1862-1868	Pastor C. Titze
1868-1873	Pastor F. Schug
1873-1874	Pastor G. Thiele
1875-1878	Pastor P. Eckelmann
1878-1883	Pastor A. Liefeld
1883-1890	Pastor A. Bendler
1891-1900	Pastor J. G. Oehlert
1900-1904	Pastor M. Busack
1904-1907	Pastor A. Moussa
1907-1908	Pastor H. Moussa
1908-1912	Pastor F. Soll
1912-1928	Pastor C. H. Sieker
1928-1939	Pastor L. Baganz
1940-1943	Pastor A. Sauer
1943-1944	Pastor E. Blumenthal
1944-1950	Pastor G. A. Barthels
1950-1951	Pastor R. Marti
1952-1956	Pastor A. Fischer
1956-1972	Pastor H. Wiedmann
1972-1975	Pastor R. Michel
1975-1992	Pastor R. L. Weeks
1992- present	Pastor K. Loescher
1993-present	Pastor T. Laabs

Vicars who have served at St. John's

1980-1981	Vicar D. Bratz
1981-1982	Vicar T. Fricke
1982-1983	Vicar W. Marquardt
1983-1984	Vicar M. Kipfmiller
1984-1985	Vicar S. Carmichael
1985-1986	Vicar B. Ragner
1986-1987	Vicar K. Schultz
1987-1988	Vicar N. Cordes
1988-1989	Vicar J. Hoh
1989-1990	Vicar N. Landvatter
1990-1991	Vicar E. Zieker
1991-1992	Vicar J. Radsek

Teachers who have served at St. John's

One Room

1858-1862	Pastor C. Goldammer
1862-1868	Pastor C. Titze
1868-1873	Pastor R. Schug
1873-1874	Pastor P. Thiele
1975-1978	Pastor P. Eckelmann
1878-1881	Miss Emma Jurgens
1881-1883	Mr. Rader
1883-1890	Pastor A. Bendler
1891-1900	Pastor J. G. Oehlert
1900-1905	Mr. V. Burk
1905-1910	Mr. M. Hackbarth
1910-1913	Mr. W. Muesing
1913-1915	Miss Ida Sieker
1915-1918	Mr. H. Gurgel
1918-1919	Miss Ida Christiansen
1919-1921	Mr. G. Windisch
1921-1924	Mr. G. Schulz
1924-1926	Mr. W. Heidtke
1926-1929	Miss C. Wehrs
1929-1931	Miss G. Pifer

Two room

1931-1946	Mr. W. Krueger
1932-1933	Mr. R. Schauer
1933-1939	Miss G. Boock
1939-1943	Miss N. Sauer
1943-1950	Miss L. Vogel
1946-1947	Mrs. E. Drost, Pastors Lorenz and Vogel
1947-1952	Mr. W. Nolte
1950-1955	Miss V. Schuetze
1951-1967	Mrs. H. Teut(Former Clara Wehrs)

Three Room

1952-1956	Mr. F. Biedenbender
1954-1959	Mrs. H. Rubach
1956-1965	Mr. R. Schierenback
1955-1980	Mrs. H. Scheunemann

Four Room

1961-1962	Mrs. L. Rouce
1962-1964	Mrs. J. Billman
1965-1972	Mr. J. Opitz
1965-1968	Mrs. J. Opitz
1967-1968	Miss S. Voll
1968-1969	Mr. L. Gartman
1968-1971	Miss B. Vogt
1969-1979	Mr. B. Krueger
1971-1991	Mr. W. Vilski

Five Room

1972-1973
1972-1973
1973-1974
1974- present
1974-1980

Miss L. Ewert
Miss K. Dienes
Miss R. McCollough
Mrs. L. Rouce
Miss R. Polifka(Mrs. Bird)

Six Room

1976-present
1979-1987
1980-1985
1980-1982
1982-1987
1985-1987
1987- present
1987- present
1987- present
1991-1992

Mrs. R. Weeks
Mr. B. Pingel
Miss M. Wiebusch
Miss C. Schultz
Miss L. Hintz
Miss A. Torgerson
Miss B. Hemmelman
Mrs. Musgrave
Mr. J. Burmeister
Mr. E. Kind

Seven Room

1992- present
1992- present

Mr. P. Scriver
Miss L. Buman

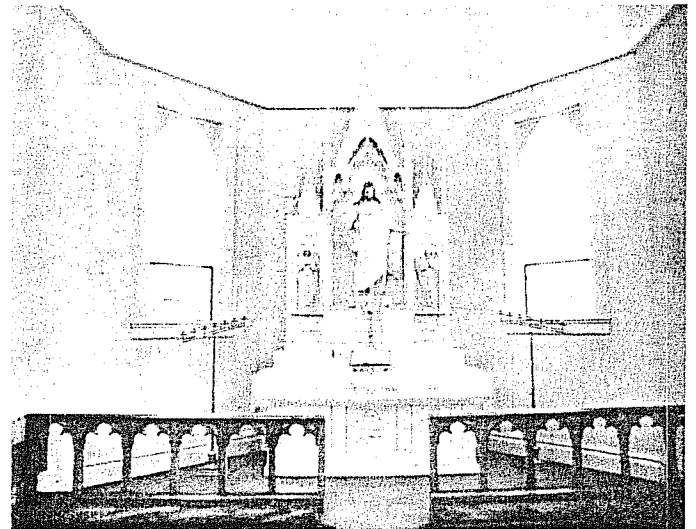
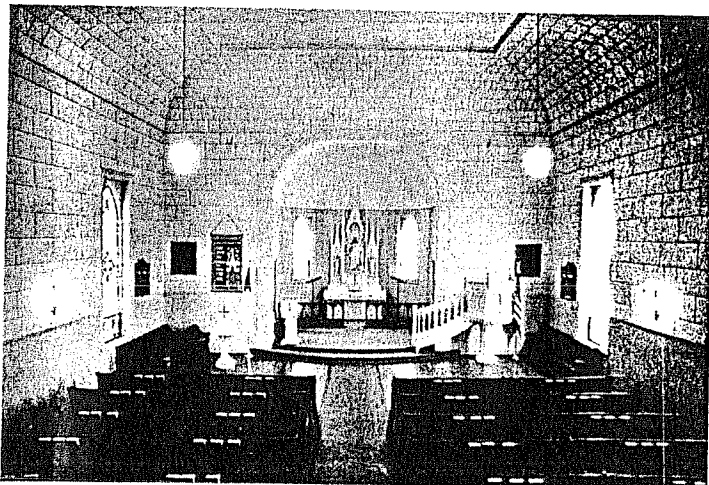
History of the Church and School Facilities

- 1858 Organization of St. John's
- 1858 Congregation bought lot and house on corner of Pine and Madison. House served as church, school, and parsonage.
- 1875 Original church building built.
- 1887 Seperate parsonage built.
- 1895 Schoolhouse built.
- 1899 Altar niche and sacristy added.
- 1907 Second floor added and first floor addition to the school.
- 1912 Pipe Organ dedicated.
- 1924 Parsonage remodeled and modernized.
- 1942 Heating plant put in church. New asbestos roof on church. Church completely redecorated.
- 1944 Pipe organ electrified.
- 1946 Teacherage purchased.
- 1951 Primary room added to the school
- 1957 Congregation purchases 7.2 acres of land west of the city.
- 1962 New school-fellowship unit completed on new Westridge location.
- 1974 New parsonage built on new Westridge location.
- 1980 New church built on Westridge location. Relocation process completed.
- 1992 New classroom and lockerroom addition to the school.

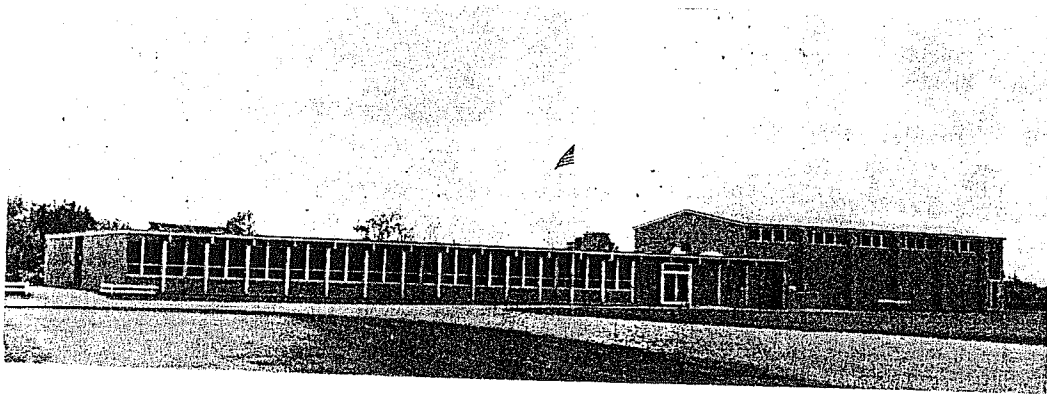
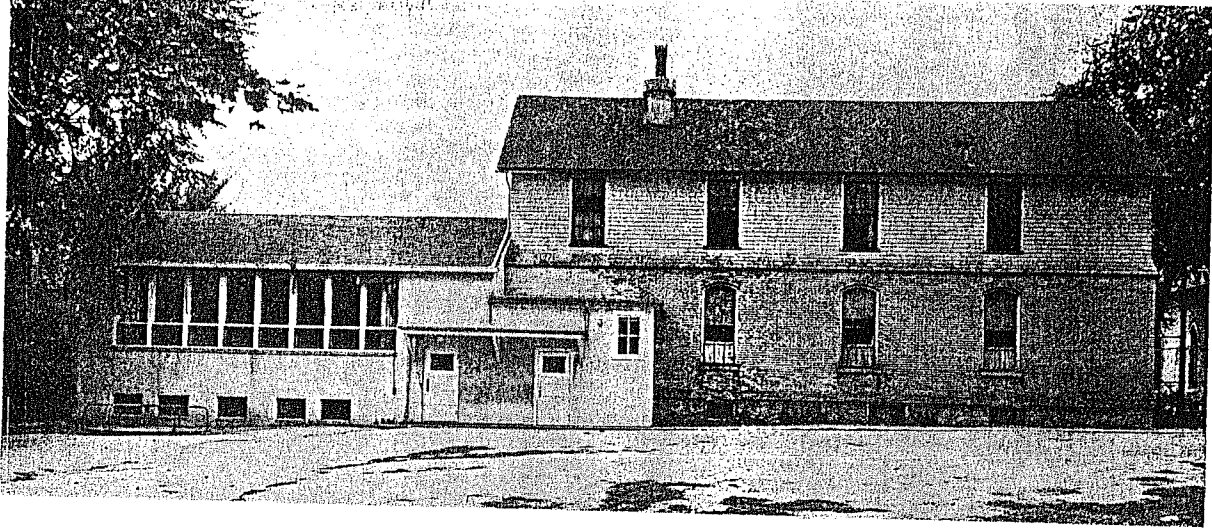
~~View~~ View of the original church building. The church faces the West. Parsonage was directly behind (to the East of) it. The school was on the same block to the South of the parsonage. The end of the school is visible in the right middle of the picture.



Inside view of the old church. (Left) Shows the view from the balcony. (Right) shows altar niche.



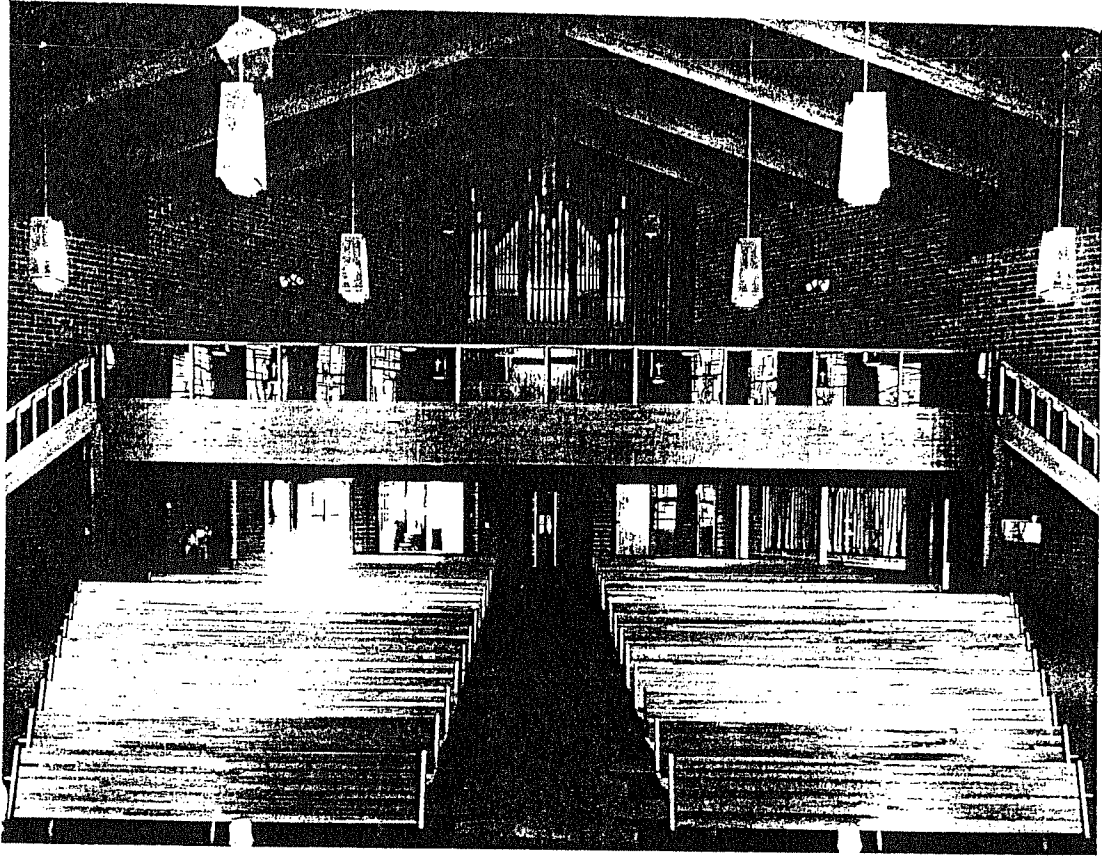
The old and new school buildings.



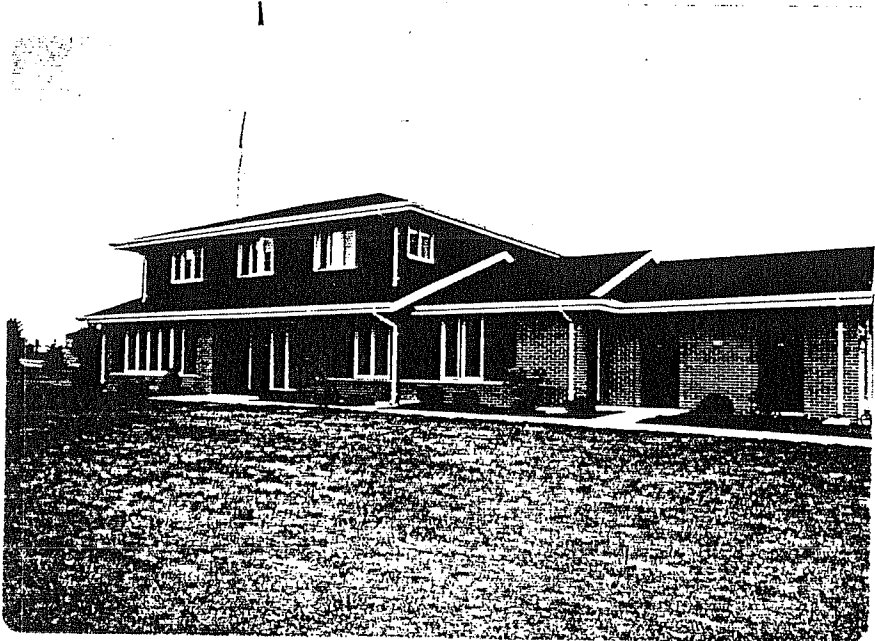
Much concern was raised over the fact that St. John's was moving from the city out into the country. This groundbreaking picture shows how far out in the country the new location was in 1961. Today the area is a residential area in the city of Burlington.



Inside view of new church.



Outside view of new church and new parsonage.



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