

Wilhelm Streissguth
by
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DEDICATION

To Mrs. Meta Hass,
my friend
and
Wilhelm Streissguth's granddaughter

FOREWARD

This is only a partial biography. It is started in the hopes that someone, more capable in our German heritage and language, will carry on.

The first time I heard the name Wilhelm Streissguth, I had to ask who and then "How do you spell his name?" Except for the most knowledgable in our circles, the name Streissguth does not mean much, yet this man could easily be considered one of the founding fathers in our synod. Wilhelm Streissguth was a man who was loved and respected by such synod leaders as Bading, Muehlhaeuser and Hoenecke for his simple Christian faith, his love for and dedication to Synod and its growing concern for confessionalism and his desire to establish Synod as an independent body, free from German unionistic influence. So, at this point, we begin a brief biography of Herr Pastor Wilhelm Streissguth and try to answer the question: "Who is he?"

THE FORMATIVE YEARS: 1827-1855

Wilhelm Streissguth was born on April 10, 1827. He was born in the city of Lahr, Granduchy of Baden, Germany. His parents were Karl Streisguth and Karolina nee Geiger.

During the early years in the life of Streissguth, rationalism was running rampant throughout the State Church. In his own autobiography, he contribut@s his early knowledge of Jesus Christ to his family and relatives: "It was through them and other pious relatives that he received a religious upbringing through which in his early youth he learned to

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know God's Word and through it his Savior Jesus Christ; though in the entire established Church, with few exceptions, the crassest rationalism prevailed." It was for that reason that his maternal grandfather Johann Heinrich Geiger, the founder and forty year editor of Lahrer Henkender Bote, was prompted to print Luther's Small Catechism to be used in the family rather than the rationalistic state catechism.. Speaking in the third person he says: "It was thus that the young Wilhelm Streissguth became familiar with the Lutheran teaching."

Because of the rationalism in the State Church, Wilhelm's parents sought after, what he termed "pious"-pators. He relates to us that they would walk two or more hours a Sunday to where "pious" pastors preached pure Gospel. The pious pastors that Streissguth talks about here could very well be pietists, since by that time pietism had begun to creep throughout that area. It may have been that the whole Streissguth and Geiger family were pietisits since their souls had been starved for pure Gospel by the rationalistic preachers.

In his twelfth year an important event occured. It seems as if religion did not play that important a part in his life, at least he had not made plans to become a minister. He and his family attended the first Mission Festival in Baden, held at Lahr. There in 1839, he met the "well known and highly gifted" missionary Christian C. Barth and his

companion Felizan Zarumba, a Russian count and former missionary. Of this meeting he says: "through them, by the grace of God, he was awakened to the true faith and determined to become a missionary." We can fairly well assume that in his early years, Streissguth was caught up in the spirit of pietism and had the burning desire to share the Gospel with all people.

Streissguth finished his early education at the Padagogium at Lahr, then attended the gymnasium at Ludwigsburg, Wuerttemberg. In 1846, he passed his final examination in Karlsruhe with a report that he was ready to enter the university. From Karlsruhe, Wilhelm went to the University at Basel. It was through the influence of the church historian, his uncle Professor Hagenbach that he was admitted in 1846. His life at Basel was not easy. In 1848, he asked for a leave of absence to accompany a group of his relatives to Indiana, but found a deaf ear. He was easily taken ill. The first mention of his illness is in his own autobiographical sketch. Throughout his life he was plagued by headaches. Koehler attributes these headaches to sinus, but in a recent conversation with Streissguth's grand-daughter, Mrs. Meta Hass, she relates that early in his youth, Wilhelm had been struck in the temple with a stone, resulting in a life of frequent headaches. In pictures, he appears as a frail man, a man who had suffered much pain and illness in his life.

During vacations and sick leave at Basel, he was sent by the Mission Society as a travelling mission-preacher into Alsace where he preached and "gave many hours of religious instructions in cities, villages, in schools and private homes." This would be similar to a vicar's experience. It was during this time that he met his future wife Maria Eva Brumder in Breuschwichersheim in 1850. It was in that same year that Streissguth graduated from Basel.

Through the Protestant Relief Society, Streissguth received his first call from the Reformed Church authorities of Canton, Glarus, Switzerland. His commission, as he states was: "To be pastor of poor colonies of New Glarus and New Bilten in Green County, Wisconsin." Because the colony was only five years old and because there was a lack of qualified leadership, he was given full authority to administer the colonies. His medical training at Basel helped because he served also as doctor of the colonies. From the colonies, he would receive no pay, but from the Canton of Glarus he received about \$250.00 a year.

Why would a Lutheran allow himself to be called by a reformed Church? We must remember the prevailing attitude of the 1850's. There was that lack of confessionalism on the part of every major denomination. The lines of distinction between the Lutheran Church and the Reformed Church had eroded to the point of names and not doctrine. There was the pietistic influence, which emphasised deeds and not creeds also.

All these things worked on the young man's mind and apparently, at the time, eager to get his feet wet, he did not feel conscious bound to distinguish between Lutheran and Reformed. He probably felt as many others did in that day; no matter how or in what church, you are still serving the Lord. So Wilhelm Streissguth was ordained on March 10, 1850 in the country church of Baden by the dean at Loerach in Baden. By April 6th, he was on his way to America.

New Glarus was a tough and lonely settlement. Emmigration began in 1846 because of over population, little work and lack of available farmland in the Canton of Glarus. Hoping to find greener pastures in America, families gathered together, sent over an expedition to America, seeking a place similar to Glarus and sent word back home that they had found an ideal settlement about 35 miles north of Monroe, Wisconsin. By the end of 1846 some 180 people had settled in New Glarus. Life was hard--homes and fields had to be carved out of forest land.

During the first four years, no regular religious services were held. At the bedside of the sick, and at the graves of the dead, would be read the impressive services of the Church. The hymns and psalms were kept in memory by frequent practice on Sundays. At irregular intervals, itinerant preachers of the Methodist Church made their appearance. Hungry and thirsty, they did not stop to question what church these wandering preachers belonged.¹

Because of such obvious neglect of the soul-life of their colonists, the homeland Canton Glarus, in the fall of 1849 called for a missionary from the Basel Missionhouse.

Streissguth was called. He arrived June 23, 1850 and was warmly greeted by the colonists. Soon after his arrival he wrote:

The greeting could not have been heartier, or more joyous. I thanked the Giver of all good gifts, by Whom I felt that the care of this portion of his people had been entrusted to me. My fears and my prejudice vanished as I met and conversed with them. I found that the religious feeling and sentiment had from disuse become only dormant and not, as I and others had feared extinct. Only regular and faithful work is required, to cause the nobler qualities again to assume control. Of course, five years of utter neglect in the matter of schools and religious training can hardly be made² good by five years of even double zeal and effort.

Here was a man who was all by himself. The only strength he had was in the Word of God, to support him in his work. Here was a young man of 23, inexperienced in even the rudiments of pastoral work, in the middle of the deepest, darkest parts of America. Some would say that work in Africa or India would be more of a missionary effort. But what about Wilhelm Streissguth? In New Glarus and New Bilten there was no pastoral conference, no synod, no visiting elder. He was a true pioneer pastor, sharing the same privations and suffering as his parishoners.

In 1852, he travelled to New York City to meet his bride to be Maria Eva Brumder, the fourth of sixteen children. They were married on September 17, 1852. At the colony of New Glarus, they had two sons: Otto (1853) and Theodore (1855).

Streissguth was a stranger among friends. Outwardly he taught Reformed, but inside, he was still Lutheran. He records

for us:

Soon after his arrival in Wisconsin he tried to make connection with the Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin through Pastor Muehlhaeuser in Milwaukee.

The final decision for his departure from New Glarus was the many official duties in New Glarus, together with troublesome circumstances arising from the situation. His desire to be a part of the Wisconsin Synod was apparent already in 1854 since we find Streissguth present at the Synod convention of that year.

So, in these first 28 years, we see in Wilhelm Streissguth a man who had been under the influence of pietism and unionism, who willingly served a reformed congregation. Yet his Lutheran identity began to surface, partially due to his early Lutheran training and because at New Glarus he saw the false theology of the Reformed and was led to define his Lutheranism.

EARLY YEARS IN THE SYNOD: 1855-1864.

At the 1855 Synod convention, Streissguth was found to be in doctrinal agreement with the Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin. He was then assigned to the congregations at Newton (Newtonburg) and Liberty in Manitowoc county. He arrived there in August of 1855. His stay there was for about one year. He says:

"in the following year various illnesses compelled him to accept a call to the remnant of the divided St. John's Church

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in Milwaukee." So in 1856 he moved to Milwaukee.

The problem of St. John's was the first in a series of boundary clashes between the Missouri and Wisconsin synods in the state of Wisconsin. Koehler relates this story:

St. John's in 1853, had wanted to follow its Pastor Dulitz in joining the Missouri Synod. That could not be effected because of the parochial boundaries effected by the Missouri synod in all larger cities. A proposed merger with Missouri's Dreieinigkeitsgemeinde, whose church was situated on the corner of Prarie and Ninth streets didn't materialize, caused discension instead, brought forth Dulitz's resignation in 1856 and finally a split in the congregation. The majority, in possession of church and school called Streissguth from Newton and in 1857 joined the Wisconsin Synod.³

From then on Streissguth gave Missouri people a sour taste in their mouth simply because he tried to pick up the pieces at St. John's. The Trinity congregation felt as if the sacred office of the former ^{pastor} had been defiled, but the matter was not brought to an immediate conclusion, remaining in suspense as the first of many future cases of "invasion of parish rights" between the two synods."⁴

It was during these years that Streissguth's ministry began to blossom. His congregation grew from 28 to 350 communicants. He became well known in the Southern Conference, which he helped to organize.

He found a quick friend in Pastor Muehlhaeuser and remained good friends for the rest of their lives. The two shared much in common. Both were members of the fledgling Wisconsin Synod. Both had to fight against the attacks of the Missouri Synod,

especially the attacks of Fuerbringer and both shared in their growing confessionalism as a result of the Definite Platform proposals of 1853. Both were graduates from the Basel Missionhouse. Both were pure evangelists, as evidenced in this excerpt from the Milwaukee Sentinel of March 17, 1860:

A German Lutheran Church has been organized in the southern part of this city, by the Reverend Messrs. Muehlhaeuser and Streissguth, the pastors of two other German churches in connection with the Wisconsin synod. 34 families already belong to the congregation.

Even in this joint venture Streissguth and Muehlhaeuser drew closer in their relation to the Wisconsin Synod. Still smarting from the St. John's affair of 1856, the Missouri Synod publication "The Lutheraner" on March 5, 1861, contained an article in which these two men were charged with receiving subsidies from Germany and Pennsylvania for the support of this south side mission project. They said: "These gentlemen are bound to have their comfortable living assured in order to missionize where the Gspel is already being preached." Even though we today can't approve of the pair's policy of fund-accepting, yet it did further the Kingdom of God in South Milwaukee.

Streissguth's personal life was not without sadness. In 1857, Maria Eva Streissguth's sister; Anna Maria Brumder, still living in Germany, through correspondence became engaged to the Rev. Gottlieb Reim. That same year Anna Maria and brother George Brumder migrated to America. On August 17, 1857, Streissguth joined Anna Maria and Gottlieb Reim in marriage. The Reims

stayed at the Streissguth parsonage until February of 1858. This happiness was short lived because Maria Eva, Streissguth's wife, died on August 25, 1857 in child birth. The child later died in infancy.

In 1858, after carrying on correspondence with his late wife's sister, Streissguth returned to German, leaving his 3 children with the Reims and married Magdalena Brumder on August 23, 1858, in Frankfurt, Germany.⁵ He returned with two young men for enlistment in Synod's work, one Friedrich Waldt from Pilger Mission House and Karl Wagner, Waldt's brother-in-law.⁶

Almost from the time he became involved in Synod, Streissguth began to serve the synod in more than the capacity of pastor. His qualities of hard work, dedication and love of the Gospel served him in good stead. Already in 1856, Streissguth was appointed as treasurer of the Preacher's Widow committee, then known as "Witwenkasse der Ev. Lutheran Synode von Wisconsin." By 1858, he served in the capacity of secretary of the synod. In 1859, the real move toward confessionalism began and both Streissguth and Muehlhaeuser were representatives to the Northern Illinois Synod meeting to see if it were possible to unite the two bodies and use joint synod schooling. "At the next synod, Fond du Lac 1860, the resolution was passed that 'in view of the confessional sentiments in the two Illinois synods and at said university, further negotiations be abandoned

and the present university committee be dismissed.¹¹⁷

The 1860 convention meant the changing of the guard.. Papa Muehlhaeuser had decided to step down from the presidency of the synod. His function in synod from then on was the specially created post of senior, to honor him and keep him in a leading position in synod. It was resolved at the 1860 Fond du Lac convention that he was to carry on "synodical correspondence with the various agencies that helped the body."⁸ Appointed with him was his friend Wilhelm Streissguth.

The changing of the guard at this same convention meant Bading was elected as the new praeses of the Synod. Mention is made in our various Wisconsin Synod histories that this began the Bading Era in our circles. They have called it a time in which a new brand of Lutheranism developed in our synod—a trend towards a clearer confessional stand and an attitude of non-unionism amongst the ranks. Praise and glory have been heaped upon Bading for his doctrinal confessions, his famed journey to Germany where he told the unionistic Mission Schools that the Wisconsin Synod could no longer accept aid because this meant unionism. Certainly the Bading era was a time in which our synod got its feet on the ground, doctrinally and financially. But due credit must be given to what we may call the interim presidents, brother-in-laws Gottlieb Reim and Wilhelm Streissguth.

THE PRESIDENT YEARS 1865-1867

In July of 1863, Praeseß Bading began his historic trip to Germany. He had wanted to stay for only a short time, but early in 1864, he decided to stay longer. The 1864 Synod acted to elect acting vice-president Gottlieb Reim as praeses of the synod. His brother-in-law, Wilhelm Streißguth was elected vice-president. But shortly before the 1865 synod convention, Reim resigned from his position, officially citing problems at his Helenville church as the reason for resignation. Vice President Streißguth became the new acting Praeseß. He was the right man at the right time. He was a man, matured in the Gospel, solidly confessional, to take the place and guide the synod during some of its most crucial years. At the age of 38, he was one of the oldest synod members in terms of length of membership. He accepted this office, although somewhat reluctantly. Although he was very capable in administrative work, his first love was mission work. This was a partial reason that led to his insistence in not being a candidate in 1867.

The Synod meetings 1865-66-67 established definite progress inwardly and outwardly. The process set in motion by the Seminary project, the negotiations, incidents thereto, with the German societies and their reaction on Synod, the dealings with Minnesota, Ohio, Iowa and the General Synod, the encounters with Missouri, all tended, unbeknown to the participants, to bring matters to a head.

Already in his opening address of the 1865 Synod, Streissguth dwelt on the Lord's sayings, thus indicating the tack in which Synod would be going:

'I am the truth....thy word is truth', all doctrine and forms of life, especially too those of worship, should be designed to confess Christ as the truth, no so much that which constitutes church tradition or not. A protest against controversialism, to be sure, but a necessary truth for all parties concerned. The accusation that we are not sincere in our profession is rendered void by the fact¹⁰ that unity in the confession is being achieved.

Since 1863, rumblings had been made concerning a Synod seminary, to train home-grown candidates, rather than importing them. When the decision was being made as to where it location would be, Streissguth was in favor of locating it in Milwaukee, but in the following year the Seminary was established in Watertown. Its beginnings were somewhat shaky. Aid had been cut off and it seems as if the eleven students had an extra long winter break, because of Moldehnke's "enforced absence of nearly a month, in the middle of the school year, to drum up the wherewithal to keep the school going."¹¹ In spite of such dark beginnings, acting Praeses Streissguth laid quite a bit of emphasis upon the vital importance of the seminary to the Synod.

If the increase in the number of its workers previously was confined to outside help, it now should henceforth grow from within....the frequent charge against us that we are not sincere as to the confession of the church was not justified, even though we gladly admit our shortcomings. A permanent cure for many a one of these shortcomings will be found in this that most our new recruits will be trained in our own seminary, whereby the harmony and unity in Synod will be greatly advanced, a benefit that alone comes with the establishment of a separate seminary.

Perception, foresight and some good common sense are commingled here. Times were tough. The Wisconsin Synod, mainly made up of rural, community people often poor or lacking in cash, could have closed the doors of the seminary. There was poor congregational support for the project. Yet in spite of the gloomy picture, Streissguth said: "The times may be hard, but if there ever was the will, there would be found a way to lend support to the Seminary."¹³

During the Bading years, the church service underwent changes. Organs were more frequently seen and more emphasis was laid upon congregational singing. There was a growing concern of unity in worship throughout synod. Already in 1863, drafts had been made by the three conferences concerning a new agenda. But, because of the "prohibitive costs," a term we still hear today when Synod wants to publish any major work, the project was shelved. One suggestion, at the 1865 Synod was to pick one of the old reliable agendas, but Muehlhaeuser said that they would not be suitable, since they have not been Americanized. Streissguth's opinion on the matter was "opposed to forcing any of these on the people; simply make recommendations."¹⁴ As to the agenda question, by 1874, Synod resolved to adopt the Missouri agenda.

Another issue at the '65 convention was that of the hymnal. What kind of hymnal should be adopted? Should the hymnal be a joint or inter-synodical venture? Who was to

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finance the project? In his opening address, Streissguth expressed this sentiment:

All preaching, worship, sacraments, forms of service and whatever may be named and practiced, receives its life and transfuses life only by virtue of communion with Christ, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and truth and knowledge.¹⁵

He wanted to make sure that the Synod realized that whatever form would be adopted, or whatever hymnal would be produced, should reveal all the treasures of Jesus Christ.

Later, Streissguth appointed a committee to carry out various recommendations of putting a hymnal together. Synod was to get together with Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio for a revision of the Pennsylvania hymnal that

would allow for a continued use of the old book, the committee was to confer with the separate conferences, and in case the overtures to the other synods didn't lead anywhere, Synod itself was to take the matter in hand. The cost was at once appraised, to be reported to the congregations and another committee appointed to revise the work of the editorial committee.¹⁶

For various reason, a joint synod venture did not pan out, so by the 1866 convention the two Synod committees were ready to report. Eleven recommendations were made and a few more were added by Streissguth. Six were adopted. The result of this work was ultimately our modern hymnal.

Koehler comes down hard upon these resolutions, stating that it was a "mechanical patchwork" with no knowledge of history or art. But think of the context in which Streissguth and his cohorts were working. These men had little or no knowledge

much less appreciation for old hymns and liturgies. These men were pioneers, who were not interested with the aesthetic appeal, but were merely interested in choosing hymns and liturgies that spoke of the Gospel message plainly and clearly.

Because of the failure of the General Council, which had raised hopes of a unified Lutheran body and Synod, by 1869, Synod was determined to print its own hymnal. George Brumder, brother-in-law of Streissguth and Reim received the contract to print the new hymnal.

At the 1866 convention (June 7-13), Streissguth reaffirmed the need for doctrinal confession and unity. At this convention Synod moved one step closer towards stricter confessionalism. Praeses Streissguth pointed out "the latest happenings within the Lutheran General Synod (acceptance of Frankonis Synod) warrant the expectation that they will shortly result in the secession from that body of several synods on a better basis of Lutheran confession and practice and our Venerable Synod is urged....that is, in case an attempt is made to found a larger association of Lutheran Synods in a more solid confessional basis, a delegation of our Synod be sent to the meeting."¹⁷

The way had been opened to the General Council by the acceptance of the Frankonian Synod into the General Synod. On December 12-14, 1866, the Reading Meeting took place. Praeses Streissguth was the representative of the Wisconsin Synod. He was on the special committee

that was named to prepare the text of a proposed constitution.

The 1867 convention brought high hopes from Streissguth concerning a larger body in which we could have fellowship. He reported: "The meeting justifies the hope that there the foundation was laid for the successful building up of the Lutheran Church of our country as one that is united both inwardly and outwardly." ¹⁸ At the behest of Streissguth, we became charter members of the General Council, but soon withdrew, because of the four points. From this we became even more solid in our Scriptural confessions.

The last convention that Streissguth presided over was the 1867 convention. At his own insistence he relieved himself of his duties. His reason for departure were the many pressing duties other than synod and his very health:

The experiences of both my years in office and my health, which has declined more and more, place upon me the duty of requesting in a most friendly but also most determined manner the honorable Synod to relieve me of my office, since I could not carry it out without the greatest disadvantage to my health, my family, my congregation and the Synod itself. The honorable Synod is asked to grant this request without delay, for I have determined under all circumstances to carry out what I deem to be my irrefutable obligation. ¹⁹

It seems strange that a man of Streissguth's calibre, in the prime of life and doing a fine job in the envious position of president of Synod, should after two years decline to seek re-election to that post. The Synod had begun its Seminary and College under his guidance, work on a hymnal and agenda had been started. Gradually, he had helped

to lead the Synod to a confessional position, turning it from unionistic German practices, away from the General Council. Why didn't he continue? From the way things looked in '67, he could have been another Muehlhaeuser in the Synod.

Another writer has said that the task of the presidency was too difficult for any other man besides Bading. He says:

It is generally forgotten that the two men who tried to fill in during Bading's overseas absence and the following years did not even succeed in finishing their terms.²¹

and

With all its stress on health, the Streissguth statement clearly underscores the difficulty of serving as Wisconsin president during its most turbulent decade.²²

This is an unfair judgment of a good, capable administrator. As evidenced by his insistence that he be not considered again for the presidency, he must have been well liked and recognized as being capable for the job. But administration was not his first love. Streissguth was a simple man, more content in doing the work of the Lord by serving as a missionary. We could easily say that his call in life and his first love was to be a missionary to small struggling congregations.

Other reasons could be cited as to why he declined re-election besides his illness. For quite a while, Streissguth felt that the position of the praeses of the Synod was a mere figure head. He was more of a Muehlhaeuser in the way things were to be run. He felt that if Synod was to carry out

its business in an effective and God-pleasing manner, the president should be informed, one way or another as to what was going on. In 1866, he complained about the duties of the executive office. He said that church building and dedication went on without his knowing about it. He himself was an advocate of a greater centralization of power in the presidency, with due limitations.²³

His concept of the presidency was:

The synodicals were to seek the praeses counsel in all kinds of private and congregational matters and also report on them to him....and would liked to have seen the office of the praeses independent of a local pastorate and its cares.²⁴

Another reason for Streissguth's decision for leaving is what he saw in Bading. Bading was a man who had greater administrative gifts, as witnessed by his being chosen to be successor to Muehlhaeuser. I think Streissguth stepped aside to allow the better qualified become praeses.

The final reason that could be offered for Streissguth's resignation was because of what was in the wind. The trend in the late sixties was to unify the conservative, confessional Lutheran bodies. He probably felt that there would soon be confessional agreement with Missouri. The Missourians, still groused that he had "stolen" their St. John's congregation. Every now and then in their "Lutheraner" publication, they would bring his name out and find a new way of attacking Streissguth's ministry. Realizing that a merger would

be most beneficial to our synod, and that his presence would possibly be offensive to the Missourians, he felt it better to relinquish his office.

THE LAST YEARS 1868-1915

The years following his presidency, we find Wilhelm Streissguth pursuing his first love, that of mission work. Surprisingly enough, he was a young man, only 41 when he declined to be re-elected to the praeses. Not much is recorded in our contemporary history books concerning his last 47 years here in this life. We must depend almost solely upon his own autobiography.

Early in 1868, he, along with his brother-in-law, the now prosperous printer George Brumder, published a small German devotional periodical called "der Familien Freund". Later that same year he received a call to St. Peter's Church in Fond du Lac. His St. John's congregation in Milwaukee had grown from 28 to 350. He says: "When in 1868 the work in his congregation became too difficult for him, he accepted a call to the presently disorganized and troubled St. Peter's Church in Fond du Lac, where with the help of God, he was able to assist in the rebuilding and consolidation of the congregation."

In the year 1872, he took a call to the newly founded congregation in St. Paul, Minnesota. This is the St. John's

on the bluff. There "he endeavored to quell and correct the many disturbances and quarrels within the church caused by the lodges, through all of which he incurred a dangerous illness and a life-long weakened physical condition. While in Minnesota he served as Vice-president of the Synod (Minnesota) and in many fields of mission-work."

He became sick in 1880 and took a year out for convalescing. He then took a call to the mission congregation of Friedens in Kenosha, Wisconsin. There "he served this church and the affiliated one at Paris, Wisconsin, and opened a mission-station at Bristol."

This was a stay of only 5 years because "in 1886 his life-long headaches became so severe that he felt conscience bound to step out of the active preaching field and to withdraw to Milwaukee." Even in retirement, he was not completely out of the ministry. He became the assistant or grandfather pastor at St. John's in Wauwatosa from 1886 to November 18, 1903, when he retired because of old age. During these retirement years, he says: "1000 times he served his colleagues and many congregations within and without the city, until after 1912 even this Mission work, always so dear to him, had, because of much illness, become impossible for him to do."

During these last years, he was not absent from Synod work. In May of '68, he was the representative of Wisconsin at the Minnesota convention. In May of 1870, he wrote

a much publicised letter to his friend Bading, concerning the concept of a joint synod school, which in practice ^{would} absorb the Wisconsin Synod into the Missouri Synod, making our Seminary unnecessary. He said: "This Lutheranism that you have helped to establish will never become my own, though I be made out a worse heretic than I long since have been...."²⁵ He contributed two articles to the Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, one entitled: "Das Evangelium tuts und tuts allein"²⁶ a short work on the necessity of Gospel in preaching.

Wilhelm Streissguth died at home, 315 18th Street, Milwaukee at 5:45 P.M., on May 20, 1915. Surviving were his widow and four sons, Otto, Herman, Edward and Theodore, two daughters, Mrs. C. Ross and Mrs. Alex Maerker, three sisters, one the widow of Rev. Dammann. Services were held at St. John's German Lutheran Church, J. Brenner officiating with interment at Union Cemetery.

What can we say of Wilhelm Streissguth? He was a man whom God led to a more confessional stand on Scripture and who, by God's will led Synod through some difficult times in the mid 1860's. Who is he? He is a man who loved his Lord and served him in every way possible.

FOOTNOTES

¹Luschsinger, John. The Planting of the Swiss Colony at New Glarus. Wisconsin Historical Collections Vol XII: State Historical Society of Wisconsin: Madison, 1892. p370.

²Ibid. p370.

³Koehler, John. The History of the Wisconsin Synod. Sentinel Publishing Co.: St. Cloud, Mn., 1970. p49.

⁴Ibid. p49.

⁵Brumder, Herbert P. The Life Story of George and Henriette Brumder. North American Press: Milwaukee, 1960. p8.

⁶Koehler. op. cit., p62.

⁷Koehler. op. cit., p64.

⁸Koehler. op. cit., p75.

⁹Koehler. op. cit. p. 108.

¹⁰Koehler. op. cit. p. 109

¹¹Koehler. op. cit. p. 120.

¹²Koehler. op. cit. p. 120.

¹³Koehler. op. cit. p. 120.

¹⁴Koehler. op. cit. p. 163.

¹⁵Koehler. op. cit. p. 164.

¹⁶Koehler. op. cit. p.164.

¹⁷Koehler. op. cit. p. 109.

¹⁸----- Continuing in His Word. Northwestern Publishing House: Milwaukee, 1951. p.71.

¹⁹Wisconsin Synod Proceedings. 1867. p.10.

²⁰Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly Vol. 72 #2, p. 116,
"Bading and the Formative Presidency of the Wisconsin
Synod." E. C. Friedrich.

²¹Ibid. p. 116.

²²Koehler. op. cit. p. 165.

²³Koehler. op. cit. p. 165.

²⁴Koehler. op. cit. p. 193.

²⁵Koehler. op. cit. p. 152.

²⁶Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly. Vol 6. p.233.

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