

"Sent forth By God's Blessing"

EMMAUS
150 YEARS

Dedication

This book is dedicated to all the faithful, throughout 150 years, who strived to share the love God through lives consectated to Jesus Christ.

A HISTORY OF
EMMAUS LUTHERAN CHURCH
in the
SESQUICENTENNIAL YEAR
1851 - 2001

"A church is a unique institution, different from any other organization on earth. So the history of a church is a story which cannot be told in terms of statistics and tangible accomplishments alone. When all the known facts have been recorded, the most important phenomenon — the soul experience of the church's members — remains to be told throughout eternity.

When the life of a congregation extends over one hundred years, this spiritual impact has tremendous implications, not only for the thousands who have participated as members, but also for the other countless thousands with whom they have come in contact across the years. Thus, the life of a church is an endless story. Only a small part of that story can be recorded on paper; the greater portion is written in the heart."

These paragraphs were written to introduce the history of Emmaus Lutheran Church at the celebration of the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the church. As the oldest congregation of Danish origin in North America, Emmaus has a colorful and dynamic history of dedicated Christians who struggled to maintain the preaching of the Word of God. Despite poverty and other obstacles to growth, this handful of people managed to form a congregation that has endured for 150 years

The small group of Norwegians and Danes gathered at the home of a carpenter named John Lawson on August 22, 1851 were mostly laborers and domestics. Their purpose was to organize a church where they could worship as they had in their homelands. Those who were present at that meeting had three things in common: their Scandinavian heritage, the Christian faith, and very little money. All three would be important factors in the history of these people and the growth and development of their church.

The results of the August 22 meeting were that a constitution was adopted, three trustees for the church were elected, and a building committee was formed. What appeared to be a well-organized beginning, soon became problematic. Within a short time, the constitution was considered unacceptable because it contained no articles of faith or doctrine and had to be rewritten two years later. Also, one of the three original trustees married an American-born woman and became a Methodist!

In 1852 a small, rectangular frame building was constructed as the house of worship for the original membership of fifty-two people—eight families and nineteen single persons. The church was called "The First Scandinavian Lutheran Church of Racine" and was located on the west side of Marquette Street between State and Liberty. It was later moved to face State Street where Dania Hall now stands. Only thirty-eight by twenty-four feet with an eighteen-foot ceiling, this first church would have easily fit inside the nave of the present church.

Even though the size of the building was small, the congregation could not withstand the debt, so the church property was sold to relieve the indebtedness. Meetings were held in the homes of members until the property was redeemed in 1863.

Pastoral leadership came from within the membership at first. Three young Norwegian men served as part-time lay preachers during the earliest days. The first pastor was Ole Andrewson. He helped to organize the church, and it is believed that he served the congregation as a lay preacher on a part-time basis. The second pastor was Hans Larsen. Records indicate that he served at the same time as Ole Andrewson, so the two men may have shared pastoral duties. In 1854 the first ordained man was called to serve the congregation. He was Pastor Andreas A. Scheie of Milwaukee and his call stipulated preaching at intervals of six weeks for an annual salary of sixty dollars. Under Pastor Scheie's leadership from 1854 to 1857, Sunday School was begun.

In 1864 the congregation was large enough to call a resident pastor for the first time. Having come direct from Norway, Pastor J. P. Gjertsen was completely ignorant of Scandinavian-American Church politics. He was the first pastor of the church to wear the ministerial robes at church services. Pastor Gjertsen was well respected for his organizational abilities as he kept very detailed church records and complete membership lists. He was a good teacher and preacher and wrote several hymns. He was even able to improve the church's financial position. However, even though the church was becoming more stable financially, there were personal differences between the Norwegian members of the congregation and the pastor. The problems became severe enough to lead to striking the names of two men from the membership list because their attitude toward the church and its pastor had become a matter of public offense. Another member accused Pastor Gjertsen of profanity and was also expelled from membership. Inevitably, these issues led to a division between the Norwegians and the Danes. Harmony was eventually restored between the two factions but Pastor Gjertsen's call was terminated.

The pastor called to succeed Gjertsen was Pastor J. Muller-Eggen, another Norwegian who was only 26 years old when he accepted the call on July 31, 1867. His salary was $250 per year for services on two Sundays of each month. Sunday School was to be held every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. Norwegian children would be taught from Norwegian text books and Danish children would be taught from Danish text books. In order to provide more seating capacity, it was decided by the committee on improvements to build a gallery. Each male member was assessed the sum of one dollar to defray the expense of the project. Pastor Muller-Eggen served the congregation until 1871 when he left to accept a full-time position as secretary of the newly formed synod, the Norwegian-Danish Conference.

To replace himself, Pastor Muller-Eggen recommended the congregation call a young pastor by the name of Adam Dan. Within a few weeks of his arrival in America, Pastor Dan married his fiancee and two weeks later, on July 6, 1871, was ordained. Pastor Dan's call to serve the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Church of Racine stipulated conducting three services weekly in the Danish language, twice on Sunday and once midweek. His salary was $600 annually.

This 23 year-old Danish pastor played a significant role in bringing the church into a new period of its history. Shortly after beginning his ministry, Pastor Dan was involved as chairman of a committee to revise the constitution. Once the constitution was drafted, it seemed to many that it did not embody the same doctrine which had been reflected in the old constitution. Pastor Dan's theology was that of N.F.S.Grundtvig, a Danish theologian who preferred feeling over doctrine, and personal judgment over unquestioning acceptance of authority. Pietism, as this new doctrine was called, was a revival movement within the church and also emphasized the importance of feeling and emotion in the Christian experience, advocated strong lay participation, missionary zeal, and the centrality of the sacraments in the life of the believer. Those in the congregation who opposed this "Grundtvigian" theology labeled the revision heresy and false teaching. The issue could not be resolved and eventually became a legal battle. A decision in the case found Pastor Adam Dan guilty of preaching false doctrine. However, because the majority of the congregation was with Pastor Dan, the court awarded them the property and the name of the congregation. The minority group, mostly Norwegians, withdrew late in 1874 and formed Bethesda Lutheran Church which later joined in the formation of the present Lutheran Church of the Resurrection.

In March 1876 the name Emaus (or, in English, Emmaus) was chosen as the name for the church. Although the name Emmaus was used since that time, it did not become the legal name of the congregation until 1932.

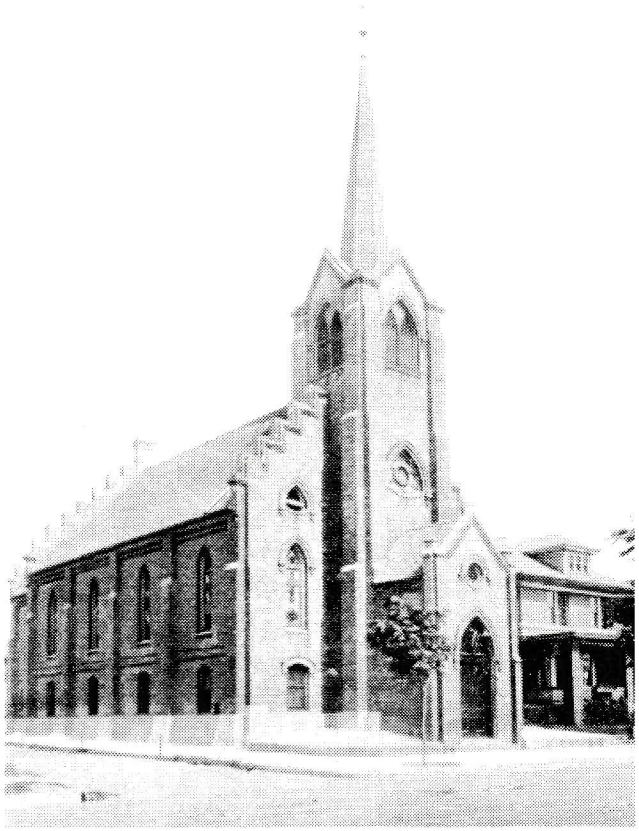
Under Pastor Dan's leadership, the congregation outgrew its original edifice and began to consider buying or building another church. An 85 x 100 foot lot on Chippecotton Street (Mound Avenue) was purchased for $850 in November 1875. The cornerstone of the new church building was laid on May 30, 1876 with Pastor Dan officiating. Work on the Gothic-style structure continued through 1876 and 1877. There were many expenses involved such as the heating plant, organ, bell, canopy, altar, gallery and pulpit. Some members loaned money to help the church get through this difficult period. Also, the old church building had been sold for $1,000 to Mr. Chr. Larsen who converted it into a blacksmith shop. At last, the new church was dedicated on January 27, 1878. This was truly a high point in the life of the congregation with festivities extending over three days. Several pastors were invited to participate as well as representatives from sister congregations. The people first assembled in the old church where Rev. Dan preached a farewell sermon recalling the sorrows and triumphs of the past years and mentioning the pastors who had preached the word of God before him. Then the congregation sang a favorite Danish hymn, "Delig er Jorden", after which they marched in procession to the new church. The Dania Society band and banner bearers led the procession followed by the deacons bearing the holy vessels, then the visiting pastors and other guests followed by the congregation. The dedicatory sermon entitled "The Journey to Emmaus" was delivered by Pastor Jacob Holm. After the service, refreshments were served in Dania Hall, followed by short speeches and singing.

The new building provided space for more activity and even included a parochial school which continued to operate for 35 years. On July 1, 1880 Pastor Dan left Emmaus after nine years of leadership that was significant in forming the identity of the church as it would be known to future generations.



A Danish-educated Norwegian pastor, Ole Larsen Kirkeberg, was the next pastor to serve Emmaus coming to Racine from Elk Horn, Iowa. During his short pastorate (1880 - 1882) membership in secret societies became an issue among Danish Lutherans. The Dania Society had been formed in 1867 by Danish men who were members and officers of the Emmaus Congregation and cordial relations existed between this organization and the church from the beginning. Pastor Kirkeberg was strongly opposed to church members participating in such societies and was instrumental in causing Emmaus' break in relations with the Dania Society. After a heated dispute, a man who was a member of the Dania Society and served as the treasurer of the church at the same time resigned his position as treasurer and withdraw his membership at Emmaus. During the same year, Pastor Kirkeberg resigned his position as pastor stating his decision was prompted by ill health. One hundred years later, in 1982, his great grandson, Pastor Lyle Rossing, would also serve Emmaus.

Pastor Martinus T.C. Lyngby became Emmaus' next pastor. Even though he came during a time of controversy and increasing debt for the church, Pastor Lyngby was prepared to deal with these issues. Under his leadership a church library was begun and he was also instrumental in establishing a sick benefit society. His most recognized contribution to Emmaus was a copy of Dorph's painting, "The Journey to Emmaus" which was commissioned to be placed above the altar upon completion. The work was completed by William Jensen of Chicago at a cost of $130. This painting is now located by the back door of the present church.



An unfortunate incident precipitated Pastor Lyngby's resignation from Emmaus. In

the fall of 1887 some visiting Danish officials were entertained at a banquet in Dania Hall. Pastor Lyngby and several members of Emmaus were invited. It was assumed that Pastor Lyngby would attend the banquet but not remain for the ball which followed. The fact that he did not leave shocked some of the people and several members presented the following question at the next congregational meeting: Does the congregation approve of the presence of the pastor and several members at the recent ball in Dania Hall? Once again the congregation was divided in their opinions resulting in a number of people severing their relations with the church. Shortly after, on May 30, 1888, Pastor Lyngby resigned and returned to Denmark, never to return to this country again.

More significant changes occurred during the pastorates of Pastor Herman J. Dahlstrom and Pastor N.V. Holm. Pastor Dahlstrom served Emmaus from 1888 until 1893. It was during this time, in 1889, that a number of members withdrew and formed the Immanuel Church. A new constitution for the Danish Church caused disagreement among pastors who withdrew to form the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America. During Pastor Holm's pastorate from 1893 until 1896 the congregation voted not to accept the new constitution and some members withdrew to form Bethania Lutheran Church in 1896. Another group withdrew that same year to form Our Savior's Lutheran Church. Pastor Holm did not feel he could remain as pastor of Emmaus as he did not want to favor one group or the other, so he tendered his resignation in May, 1896. He did, however, remain in Racine as pastor of Our Savior's, which was organized in large part by several of his friends. It is interesting to note that what seemed to be irreconcilable differences at the time proved to be a means of extending the church and made possible a ministry in Racine that would not have been possible for a single church. During the period between 1874 and 1896, the First Scandinavian Lutheran Church had become five separate congregations. As noted in an earlier historical account, "So God works in ways which may not always be apparent at the moment. Today the various churches of Danish origin in Racine work together in sincere cooperation and the troubles of the past have been forgotten."

Pastor Christian Hansen Jensen arrived from Lincoln, Nebraska to serve as the next pastor of Emmaus. He was to become the only pastor to have served Emmaus twice (1896 - 1904 and 1913 - 1921). Perhaps the most significant event of his pastorate was the affiliation of Emmaus with the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in 1897. This was an important milestone for the congregation as it led to Emmaus' eventual membership in the American Lutheran Church formed in 1960. It is also noted that during Pastor C.H. Jensen's first term the day school experienced considerable growth as did the young peoples' society. The retirement of the debt on the Mound Avenue church was another accomplishment. In 1904 Pastor Jensen resigned to assume the presidency of Luther College in Racine.

A male chorus had been formed during Pastor Jensen's pastorate with a membership of over 25 voices and under the direction of Nels Petersen. (Mr. Petersen's granddaughter, Janet Svendsen, is currently a member of Emmaus.) In 1901 this chorus was recognized as the official choir of the church and was often called upon to perform at church conventions. The group also sang in concerts and, thereby, was able to help with the pipe organ fund. In 1902 Louis Mickelsen be-

came the organist at Emmaus as well as the musical director of the church. Mr. Mickelsen was devoted to the ministry of music in the church until his death 40 years later.

Pastor Elias Hans Thor Provensen arrived from Council Bluffs, Iowa in the fall of 1904 to replace Pastor Jensen. It was during his pastorate that the congregation acquired a Moller Pipe Organ in 1905 giving Emmaus the distinction of being the first Danish Lutheran Church in America to have a pipe organ. Due to poor health, Pastor Provensen was forced to resign in 1909 after which he returned to his native Denmark.

After calling several pastors without success, finally Pastor S.C. Eriksen accepted a call and came to Emmaus in May 1909 leaving a position as professor of theology in the seminary at Blair, Nebraska. Many Danish families were building homes in the West Racine area and moving further away from the Mound Avenue location of the church. These members favored selling the Mound Avenue church building and relocating in West Racine. Pastor Eriksen favored this proposal, believing it would increase opportunities for mission work. Many of the older members, however, wanted to stay on Mound Avenue feeling they could never be at home elsewhere. Twice a vote was taken but both times there was not sufficient support for such a move and Emmaus stayed in the place where it had served since most of its members could remember. Mission work was begun in the West Racine area at this time and during 1913 several Emmaus members withdrew and formed Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

There were now five separate congregations which had been formed from Emmaus. They were Bethesda and Immanuel Lutheran Churches both of which later became the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Bethania Lutheran Church, Our Savior's Lutheran Church and Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Even though these congregations had pulled away from Emmaus due to disagreements, they came together every summer for church picnics and members were able to renew acquaintances with old friends. Although changes had occurred because of contentions, the true mission and outreach of Emmaus was more fully realized by extending the church into a greater area of Racine.

Also during 1913 the day school was finally terminated after 35 years as a part of Emmaus' ministry. Hundreds of Emmaus children had benefited from its Christian teachings but the cost of continuing the school was prohibitive and Danish families were now interested in participating in American life, including public education. Other developments of Pastor Eriksen's time were the installation of new colored windows in the church and the abandonment of the old method of collecting dues. Rather than deacons collecting dues in their districts, the new envelope system was introduced and has continued to the present. For several years there were "poor boxes" located on either side of the entrance which members supported with monetary contributions. The money collected was used for coal and other needs of parish families. One of these boxes can be seen hanging on the wall in the Sunset Room.

In 1913 Pastor Eriksen resigned and Pastor C.H. Jensen returned for his second term at Emmaus. Even though a group of 38 members had transferred their membership to form the Gethsemane congregation in West Racine, the ministry and mission of Emmaus remained strong. When the United States entered World War I in

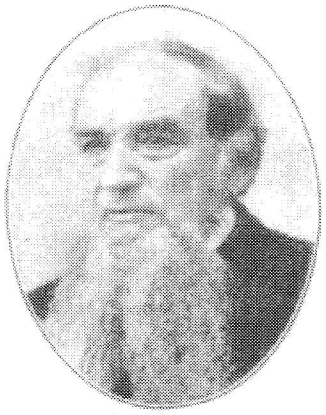
1917, it became the third war which had occurred during the existence of Emmaus church. Sixty-three Emmaus members had served in the armed forces by the time the armistice was signed in 1918. It was during the time of World War I that greater emphasis was brought upon the use of the English language and an English department was started in the Emmaus Sunday School. Pastor Jensen resigned his second pastorate at Emmaus early in 1921 having witnessed several changes and accomplishments, including the retirement of the church debt.

In April 1921 the congregation called a son of Emmaus, Pastor E.R. Andersen, to follow Pastor Jensen. Not only was Pastor Andersen the first son of the congregation to return to fill the pulpit, he was also the first American-born pastor of Emmaus. Although his call required only two English evening services per month, Pastor Andersen recognized the need for a full program in the English language as well as the responsibility to older members to whom Danish was still a vital part of their church life. In 1923 he proposed, therefore, to have two regular services every Sunday morning, thus providing both English and Danish. This arrangement was accepted by the congregation and continued throughout the remaining 20 years of Pastor Andersen's term. Under Pastor Andersen's leadership and with the assistance of his wife, a fuller ministry was offered and membership increased substantially. Younger people were attracted to the full program in the English language and new activities were introduced to meet the needs of all of the congregation's members.

The Danish Ladies' Aid, first organized in 1871, was a vital part of the Emmaus ministry with the objectives of giving financial aid to various church missions, children's homes and the Women's Mission Society as well as to participate in the financing of church improvements. Julia Durand, a lifelong member of Emmaus, remembers when she was a child in the early 1900's, accompanying her mother on visits to members of the Danish Ladies' Aid to collect dues of ten cents from each of them. The Danish Ladies' Aid continued in existence for several years but membership decreased steadily as older members passed away and younger women, many of whom did not speak Danish, chose to become associated with the English Ladies Aid which Mrs. Andersen was instrumental in organizing. She and Pastor Andersen were significant in organizing the Cradle Roll, the Mission Society and the Brotherhood.

It was the custom during the early 1900's to drape the church in black for funerals. The altar was draped in black cloth and there were black bows on the pews. When the funeral was over, Julia Durand remembers accompanying her mother to remove the bows and black cloths and pick up any flowers that had fallen.

It is told that Pastor Andersen could be very stern with the young people and commanded their respect. One Sunday he stopped the worship service and called all the children down from the balcony because one of them had hit him with a bean from a bean shooter. During the young peoples' meetings the boys and girls sat on separate sides of the church and were not allowed to interact with (or even look at) one another while the meeting was in progress. Julia Durand told of the examination of the confirmands which took place before their confimation on Palm Sunday. There were little seats on the ends of the pews for the confirmands. The families sat beside their child in the pews. The pastor would come down and ask each confirmand questions.



Pastor Ole Andrewson



Pastor O. J. Hattlestad



Pastor A. A. Scheie



Pastor J. P. Gjertsen



Pastor J. Muller-Eggen



Pastor Adam Dan



Pastor Ole Kirkeberg



Pastor T. C. Lyngby



Pastor J. Dahlstrom



Pastor N. V. Holm



Pastor C. H. Jensen



Pastor Elias Provensen



Mrs. Andersen is remembered as a kind and supportive person who contributed unselfishly to the life and activity of the congregation while also raising six sons. She would often make soup and bread for her husband to bring to the sick when he visited them. In 1943, following her death, Pastor Andersen resigned after 22 years of service to the Emmaus congregation. He left Racine to serve a congregation in Kansas City, Kansas but eventually returned to Racine as Lutheran Welfare chaplain.

Pastor O.V. Magnussen of Northfield, Minnesota accepted the call to serve as the next pastor of Emmaus and preached his first sermon on November 28, 1943. World War II was raging during Pastor Magnussen's term. One hundred fourteen young people entered the service and three young men from Emmaus gave their lives in the conflict.

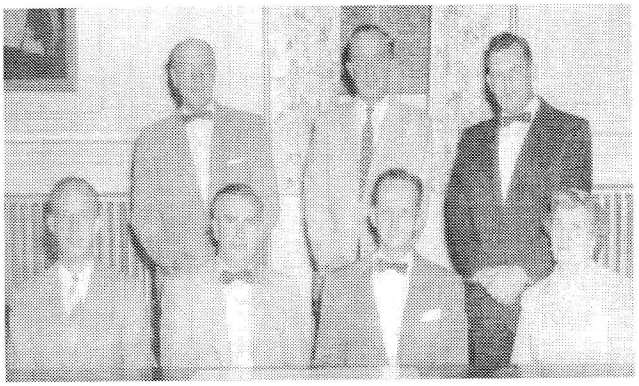
Pastor Magnussen was a talented musician and is especially remembered for his contributions to the music program at Emmaus. In 1946 the original pipe organ was replaced by a 12 rank Wicks organ which was dedicated on October 6, 1946. The organist at the time was Gordon Petersen. In November 1948, Pastor Magnussen resigned to accept a call in Easton, California and Emmaus was once again faced with the decision involved with calling a new pastor who would lead the congregation into its second century.

Pastor Sigurd Petersen accepted the call and came to Emmaus from Royal, Iowa in

June 1949. Two significant developments for which Pastor Petersen was responsible were the Family Service and the Women's Circles. The Family Service replaced Sunday School once a month and was designed to bring the entire family together in worship. The Women's Circles were organized to bring all women of the church into active participation in its functions and it was successful in encouraging more women to become active and interested. The Women's Circles have remained a strong component in the ministry of Emmaus to the present time, encouraging women in Bible Study, fellowship and outreach ministry as well as providing support to the pastors and congregational life.

In 1951 Emmaus celebrated its centennial anniversary. According to *Emmaus - the First Century*, the anniversary book published for that celebration, the congregation realized that the time had come to question the future of Emmaus. There had been discussion for some time regarding the location of the present church building. The Danish population had moved away from the Mound Avenue area and it was becoming more of an industrial rather than a residential area. There were, however, strong ties to the church building making it a difficult decision to leave Mound Avenue and build in another location. Another problem for several members was that most families were dependent on one wage earner with an annual income of around $4,000. Nevertheless, it became clear that if the mission of Emmaus was to continue to grow and serve families, it could best be served in a more residential area. On November 15, 1951, at a special meeting of the congregation, a motion was passed to purchase 13 lots at Yout Street and Summit Avenue for a price not to exceed $3,300. This area was not being served by a Lutheran church and was a growing residential area. That same evening Victor Andersen contributed the first $50.00 toward the cost of the land and, altogether 22 members pledged $1,675.00. This was truly a step forward in faith.

Purchasing the land was just the beginning of the task that lay ahead for the members of Emmaus. The 125th anniversary book, *A History of Emmaus Lutheran Church in the Quasquicentennial Year,* states that Hans Jepsen, president of the congregation and Pastor Sigurd Petersen on behalf of the planning committee wrote"...this project of relocation should be considered a real mission. It is work that God has called Emmaus to do and for which He has opened the way. The task of completing a new worship center on the new site may look formidable, but it can be done...It will require a lot of work and giving, which in the experience of churches has always meant spiritual enrichment."



A committee was appointed to raise funds for the new church, the church council established a building fund account and a planning committee was formed to proceed with the building. Mr. Harry Ollrogge was selected to be the architect for the new church which was to seat 350 people and the congregation chose a contemporary design.

The church building on Mound Avenue

along with the parsonage and the janitor's residence were purchased by Western Printing for $20,000 with an additional gift of $30,000 from Mr. W. R. Wadewitz. With the money from the sale of the church along with generous pledges from the congregation, by August 1953 almost $125,000 had been raised and the building project was well underway! On May 30, 1954 the ground breaking was held at the new building site. Work continued on the construction of the new church building with the corner stone being laid on October 15, 1954.

In June 1954 Pastor Sigurd Petersen accepted a call to serve as chaplain for Parsons State Training School in Parsons, Kansas and left Emmaus after five years of service. The next pastor would be Thorvald Hansen who was installed as the pastor of Emmaus on January 9, 1955. The congregation held a meeting later that month to decide when to build a new parsonage. The decision was made to build a new parsonage at a cost of $25,000 plus architect fees. Pastor and Mrs. Hansen and their five daughters would be the first occupants of the new parsonage which was constructed just south of the church building.

Easter of 1955 was celebrated in the partially completed church building. Folding chairs were set up to accommodate the worshipers. The young people constructed a cross of chicken wire stuffed with white and purple paper napkins and placed it on the wall in the chancel where the lighted cross is now. The Wicks organ had not yet been installed so organist Joyce Kaiser played the majestic Easter music on a small electronic organ. It was an exciting event and one that stands out in the memories of those who were present.

The final service in the Mound Avenue church took place on October 9, 1955 with dedication of the newly completed church the next week. The president of the synod, Dr. H.C. Jersild, presided at the ceremonies and several special guests attended the celebrations. Joyce Kaiser reminisced that the Wicks organ had now been installed and, at the opening of the service when she began to play, no sound came forth from the organ. Fortunately, after some adjustments were made the service continued with the organ accompaniment.

During the last 1950's another change occurred in the formation of two new synods. It was recognized that congregations were no longer made up of a predominant ethnic population but had become melting pots of nationalities. Danish, Norwegian and German-based synods combined forming The American Lutheran Church and The Lutheran Church in America. Emmaus was a member of The American Lutheran Church synod.



Located in its new neighborhood, Emmaus grew in membership and it was soon evident that there was more work than one pastor could manage. A part-time parish worker was hired and for several summers student pastors worked with Pastor Hansen. In July 1964 Pastor Philip N. Knutson was called as a full-time assistant pastor. The mortgage on the church was completely paid on May 3, 1966

and the people of Emmaus were enthusiastically meeting the challenge God had presented them. Now the church was able to help support the work of the Lincoln Lutheran Home and the Lutheran Inner City Mission. Pastor Knutson left Emmaus to accept a call to Grand Forks, North Dakota in the summer of 1966. After 14 years of ministry at Emmaus, Pastor Hansen accepted a call and moved to Audubon, Iowa in January 1969.

Pastor Luther Borgen was the next pastor called to serve Emmaus. During the four months between Pastor Hansen's leaving and Pastor Borgen's arrival in May, Rev. Lawrence Siersbeck served as interim pastor.

In 1971 the choir director resigned and Pastor Borgen began searching for a replacement. He called Gerhard Schroth, music coordinator for the Racine Unified School District, and asked if he could recommend someone for the position. Much to Pastor Borgen's delight, Mr. Schroth responded, "What about me?" So it came about that Emmaus was blessed with the talents of Mr. Schroth as choir director and organist. Also, his wife, Mildred, assisted him with the adult choir, directed the youth choir and worked as the parish secretary. Mr. Schroth introduced a service on Christmas Eve called Music For The Holy Night. He invited musicians to provide Christmas music for meditation and listening before the 11:00 p.m. service. On Christmas Eve 1973, at the completion of the worship service, Gerhard Schroth suffered a heart attack and died at the age of 58 years old. Mrs. Schroth continued to direct both the adult and youth choirs for another year. On the anniversary of Mr. Schroth's death, the choir participated in a memorial Christmas service





singing several hymns which he had written.

Unfortunately Pastor Borgen's health caused him to leave Racine for a parish in Dodgeville, Wisconsin in 1972. Pastor Siersbeck once again stepped in until Pastor Kenneth Carlson, his wife, Naomi, and their three small children, Amy, Julie and Jon, arrived in July 1972 from Beloit, Wisconsin.

Pastor Carlson brought with him fresh concepts in worship and ministry to Emmaus. With the assistance of Joyce Kaiser as pianist as well as other musicians playing guitar and flute, Pastor Carlson introduced The Chicago Folk Service, a

contemporary worship service. This was something the Emmaus congregation had never before experienced but it was received with enthusiasm. At a later time, Cathy Meyer used the Chicago Folk Service as well as several contemporary hymns and incorporated them into the Emmaus Book of Worship which is currently celebrated on the third Sunday each month.

Another worship experience introduced by Pastor Carlson was a dramatic Good Friday evening service ending in darkness after which the congregation left the church in silence, returning at 6:00 a.m. Easter Sunday to the same dark sanctuary. A re-enactment of the women visiting the tomb and shouting the good news of Christ's resurrection brought the excitement of the music and lights with flowers being placed everywhere. The entire Easter experience was one that filled the church and was continued for several years.

Naomi Carlson combined her creative talents with those of Carolyn Janecky and other Emmaus women to design and sew exquisite banners for each season of the church year. This endeavor was truly a labor of love requiring hundreds of hours. They can be seen hanging in the sanctuary.

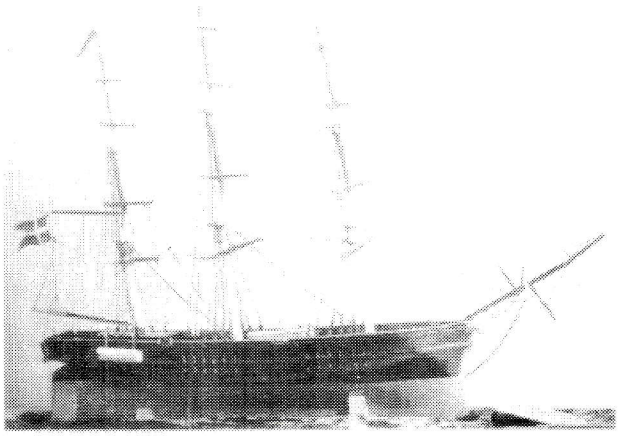
Membership continued to increase as did the pastoral duties. In June 1974 Pastor Alan Goertermiller was welcomed as associate pastor and became the first Emmaus pastor of non-Scandinavian heritage. An Emmaus member remembers Pastor Goertermiller having such enthusiasm one Easter morning that he could barely keep from jumping up and down. He was a young man and worked well with the youth of Emmaus. In 1976 he took a group of 17 senior high school youth to New Orleans for a national youth gathering, an empowering spiritual experience and a memorable adventure for all who participated.

In 1975 a Senior Center was established at Emmaus under the auspices of Lincoln Lutheran Home. Glenn Olson, a recently retired school teacher, assumed the role as director of the center. The weekly Tuesday meetings quickly became a popular social activity for a significant number of senior citizens, some of whom were members of Emmaus. Others, who lived nearby,



found it to be a convenient location. The day started with coffee and fellowship, after which an interesting program was presented. A lunch was prepared and served by faithful volunteers and some type of craft activity or card games were offered in the afternoon. Mr. Olson continued to coordinate and direct the center for 20 years. It was difficult to replace his leadership and organizational skills when he retired in 1995.

The Emmaus congregation celebrated 125 years in 1976. Former pastors returned throughout the year to participate in the celebration, a supper of Danish sandwiches was enjoyed by the congregation, and a banquet at Dania Hall was the culmination of the anniversary celebration.



The Emmaus ship which is displayed in the Fireside Room was built in 1868 by an old Danish sailor. It was typical of the old Scandinavian Lutheran churches to have a sailing ship hanging in the front of the nave. The ship represents the heritage of ancestors who were seafaring people. It was the means by which they came to their new home in America. The church is the "ship of life" and Jesus Christ is the captain. As a ship sails on its journey over the seas, it can often encounter a rough and sometimes dangerous journey and yet always it has its goal in sight and expects to reach this goal under the guidance of God's divine leadership. So it is with God's people as we journey through the wild seas of life where we can encounter privation and prosperity, moments of despair and often the unknown — but, we too have our goal in sight and live our lives in God's presence and in God's hand and it is certain, then, that we will also reach our home in heaven in the knowledge that as truly as we have been baptized after God's Word and in God's Name, we belong to the family of God.

The Emmaus ship hung in the former sanctuary but a decision was made not to hang it in the present church because it did not blend well with the architectural design. It was loaned to the Racine County Historical Museum for a time. It was returned to Emmaus and rededicated on January 11, 1976 "to all the faithful of Emmaus Lutheran Church from August 22, 1851, to all who serve this day, and to all who shall serve in the future." To this day the ship holds a distinct significance in the hearts of folks whose ancestors were Danish immigrants and members of the early Lutheran congregations.

During the 1970's, following the war in Vietnam, Vietnamese refugees were brought to the United States. Emmaus responded to the need for sponsorship of the refugees by sponsoring the Huang family. Members of the congregation assisted them in finding and furnishing a home as well as providing food and clothing, locating job opportunities and helping the family acclimate to the community.

In 1978 Pastor Goertermiller accepted a call to Providence Lutheran Church in Holland, Michigan. His final Sunday at Emmaus was May 14. In August of that same year a new associate pastor arrived but changed his mind and left after staying in the parsonage for only two days.

In 1979 Rev. Kenneth Halstead accepted the call as associate pastor. Pastor Halstead stayed for less than a year and then left to accept a call to First Lutheran Church in Topeka Kansas. In 1980 Emmaus called Pastor Jeff Wild. He accepted the call and arrived with his wife, Nancy, in June 1980. Pastor Wild was also young and enthusiastic and well-liked by the youth of the church. The Wild's first child, Andrew, was born during their stay at Emmaus and the congregation surrounded the new family with love and support.

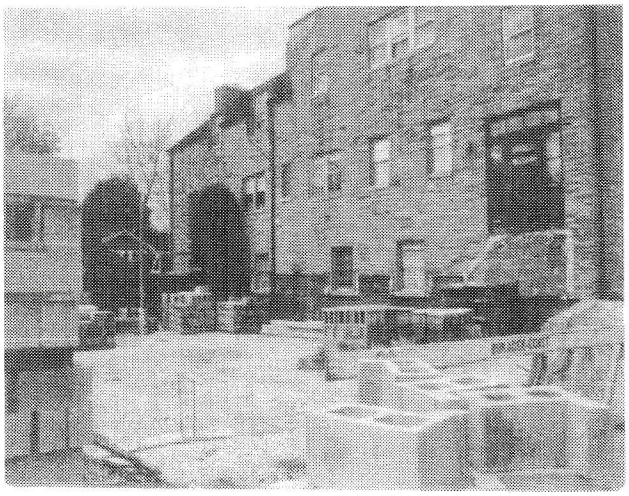
In February 1980, after an inspection of the Wicks organ indicated it was not feasible to repair, a recommendation was made to purchase a new Hammes Fox Tracker organ. Professor William Roth concurred and was retained as a consultant in the purchase and building of the new organ. The Wicks organ was sold to the Church of the Annunciation, an Episcopal church in Waukegan, Illinois, for $3500. The chimes were retained for use on the new organ. The total cost of the new organ was $73,000. An organ fund was established and choir members held fund-raising events. The new tracker was first used on Sunday, September 26, 1982. According to Joyce Kaiser, the builders worked into the early morning on Sunday to finish it and Joyce arrived at the church at about 4:00 a.m. to get acquainted with the new instrument before playing for the worship service. The organ was dedicated on October 24, 1982 with William Roth as organist.

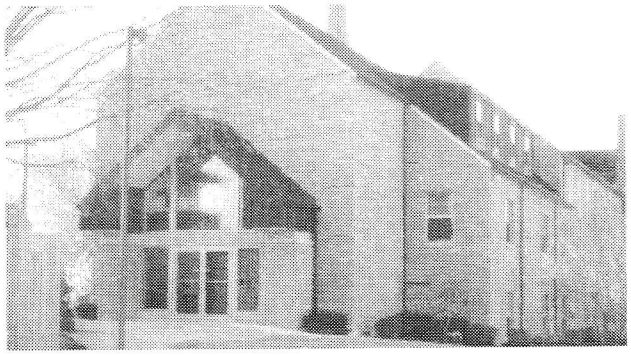


In 1982 Pastor Carlson accepted a call to Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. His final Sunday at Emmaus was April 25, 1982. Pastor Lyle Rossing accepted the call to serve as senior pastor and was installed on December 15, 1982. Pastor Rossing was accompanied by his wife, Betty, and their two sons, Christopher and Theodore.

Some members were beginning to feel the need to expand the facilities for education and other activities in the church. Twice during Pastor Carlson's last years at Emmaus a building plan was proposed to the congregation and rejected. In November 1983 the congregation finally voted to build an addition on the south side of the church building. The addition would include new offices, an elevator, main floor washrooms and more Sunday School rooms. The cost of the project was $500,000 and several members were reluctant to take the financial risk due to the uncertain economy. The proposal was approved, however, and the project was completed in October, 1985. In 1984 the ELCW (Emmaus Lutheran Church Women) led a bond investment program whereby members loaned money to be used toward the building project for up to

five years. The money was paid back with interest when the term of the loans expired. Other fund-raising projects have been implemented as well and even though the mortgage is still not paid, the





expansion has provided Emmaus with greater opportunities for ministry.

Pastor Wild accepted a call to St. John's Lutheran Church in Janesville and left Emmaus in December 1983. In January 1984 Rev. Richard Pearson accepted the call to serve as associate pastor and was installed on March 9. His family included his wife, Faye, and two sons, Chris and Nathaniel. A third son, Geoffrey, was born while they were at Emmaus. One of Faye Pearson's creative gifts is an aptitude for weaving. The congregation commissioned her to design and weave new paraments for each season of the church. These beautiful creations are in use at the present time.



In 1987 the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America and the American Evangelical Lutheran Church merged to form one synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The ELCA was formed through the merger of three synods made up of largely European backgrounds. Emmaus made the necessary changes in constitution to conform to the national constitution. The women's organization which had been known as ELCW (Emmaus Lutheran Church Women) now became WELCA (Women of the ELCA). The Emmaus Lutheran Church Women have provided support for the congregation at all times helping to raise money for a number of causes. Also, they have regularly held an abelskiver breakfast which has become a tradition enjoyed by Emmaus members as well as friends in the community.

An opportunity for Emmaus to use the new facility to expand its ministry was

presented when the YWCA requested the use of the large Sunday School area in the lower level of the building to house their Teen Parenting Program. The program provides day care for the children of teenage mothers allowing the mothers to stay in school and attend parenting classes. With a high school only a few blocks away, Emmaus is an ideal site for this program and it continues at the present, now also including regular community day care as part of its program.

In 1990 Pastor Pearson's resignation was demanded by Bishop Rogness and the synod after inappropriate behavior was discovered. The impact of this distressing situation was felt throughout the congregation for quite some time.

In 1991 Emmaus called its first woman pastor, Rev. Mary L. Janz, as associate pastor. Pastor Janz began serving the congregation July 1 and was installed July 28. 1991 was also the year Emmaus celebrated its 140th anniversary with a number of events throughout the year.

In June 1993, after serving Emmaus for more than ten years, Pastor Rossing left to accept a call to Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Hibbing, Minnesota. Interim pastors, Sandra Chrostowski and Dale Larson, served with Pastor Janz until December when Pastor Paul Nuechterlein was called to serve as a co-pastor. Pastor Nuechterlein, his wife, Ellen, and their children, Joel, Matthew and Joshua, arrived in Racine from Grace Lutheran Church in Howell, Michigan. He and Pastor Janz began their co-pastorate in January 1994. Both pastors were compatible in this rather unique relationship of sharing responsibilities equally. Through the ministry of Pastor Janz and Pastor Nuechterlein the Emmaus family was able to begin the process of healing and trusting once again.

In October 1993 Emmaus opened its doors to another opportunity for ministry as part of the Racine Emergency Shelter Taskforce (REST) homeless shelter program. Every Friday night Emmaus provides shelter and meals for the homeless through the efforts of volunteers who prepare and serve food as well as providing supervision throughout the night.

In an effort to provide an opportunity to worship for people who could not attend services on Sunday morning, a Saturday evening worship service was begun during the summer of 1994. A group of 20 - 30 worshipers attended regularly so the Music and Worship Committee recommended that the Saturday evening service be continued throughout the year. A single Sunday morning worship service at 9:15 was often the practice during the summer months. Overall attendance at Sunday morning services had been steadily declining over a period of several years, so in December 1998 the 8:00 and 10:30 worship services were combined into a single 9:15 a.m. service year round.

Emmaus adopted an open first communion program in 1997 allowing children who desired to receive holy communion to be welcomed to the Lord's table. The children and parents meet with the pastor for instruction and to ensure understanding of the gift of grace.

In 1998 Emmaus welcomed Carol Eschmann to serve as a Parish Nurse. The Parish Nurse provides valuable support in the areas of health and wellness for the congregation. Carol also assumed the duties of director of the Senior Center and



looked after the needs of that group until her recent retirement from that position.

When the congregation voted to build an addition to the church in 1983, it was with the intention of allowing us to expand our ministry within our building and we have, indeed, been able to provide space for community ministries. However, the membership of the congregation as well as participation in worship has declined during the last 20 years and it has been increasingly difficult to continue to meet the mortgage payments, support two pastors and pay the other expenses incurred while providing our ministry. After nearly 50 years, the neighborhood surrounding the church had also experienced changes with a number of low-income families moving into the area.. The population of African Americans and Hispanics has also dramatically increased. In light of these changes, it was becoming clear that Emmaus needed to seek God's guidance in what the future might hold for this congregation. Emmaus became a part of the Racine ELCA Strategy For Mission group at its inception and began to seriously assess purpose and mission.

The year 2000 was the beginning of some significant changes at Emmaus. A Mission Exploration Team (MET) consisting of members of the congregation, the pastors, and Sue Ruehle, Assistant to the Bishop, began meeting in March 2000 with the mandate to discern what the church's gifts and call for mission might be. It became obvious to the MET as well as to the congregation that Emmaus now had a limited presence in the neighborhood and did not have an established a relationship with the neighbors. The mission statement formalized by the MET read "The purpose of the MET is to develop a process whereby we can discern and serve the needs of our community, and our mission as a church." With that impetus, Emmaus became involved in the Kids Hope USA program and began a mentoring relationship with at-risk first graders at Wadewitz School, a few blocks from the church building. At least 15 mentors from Emmaus meet weekly with first grade children and at least 15 prayer partners pray for God's loving presence in the relationship between mentor and child.

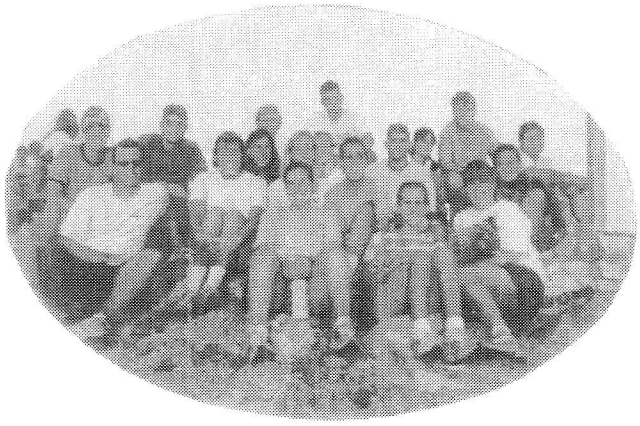
Pastor Mary and an Outreach Committee addressed issues of outreach to the neighborhood, decreasing Sunday School attendance, recruiting Sunday School teachers, and changing space into fun, appealing imaginative Sunday School rooms. An artist, David Holmes, was commissioned to paint the new Sunday School area on the upper level of the church with imaginative Bible characters. Over 70 volunteers helped renovate and furnish the Sunday





School rooms. With the completion of the work, a new Hands-On Sunday School workshop rotation program was begun.

Both the Senior High School and Middle School Youth Groups participated in mission trips during the summer 2000. The senior high school group traveled to Juarez, Mexico where they were involved in working to improve living conditions in impoverished areas as well as becoming



involved with the people living there. The junior high school group traveled to the Black Hills, South Dakota and were involved with children through a Bible School. Both groups returned feeling greatly blessed and changed and look forward to repeating the experiences.

Due to continuing financial constraints, Pastor Paul began teaching at Carthage College in order to supplement the salary Emmaus was able to pay him. When an opportunity was presented for him to become interim pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Racine, he began serving Zion 2/3 time and Emmaus 1/3 time thus relieving Emmaus' budget of part of his salary. Pastor Nuechterlein resigned in May 2001 to pursue other opportunities in his ministry. His last Sunday at Emmaus was June 3. Pastor Mary moved into the parsonage once again, and Emmaus began seeking a neighborhood outreach minister. Funding for that position and other outreach endeavors would come from generous grants received from Aid Association For Lutherans and the Siebert Foundation.

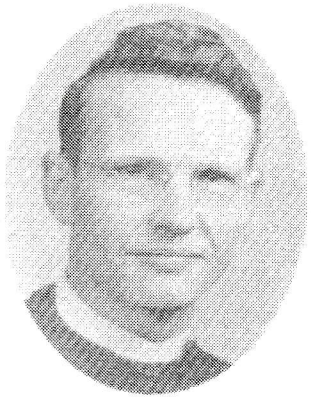
As Emmaus celebrates its 150th anniversary, our mission remains the same as that set forth by the small group of Danes and Norwegians who had the courage and faith to form this congregation. The journey has been difficult at times, but those challenges have strengthened the faith and empowered the Emmaus congregation to carry forward our strong heritage. We are called to affirm, interpret and proclaim the Christian Gospel through worship, education, witness, service and fellowship by utilizing effectively, as members of God's family, the many different gifts God has given us. With God's guidance we will continue to move Forward In Faith.



Pastor S. C. Eriksen



Pastor E. R. Andersen



Pastor O. V. Magnussen



Pastor S. D. Petersen



Pastor Thorvald Hansen



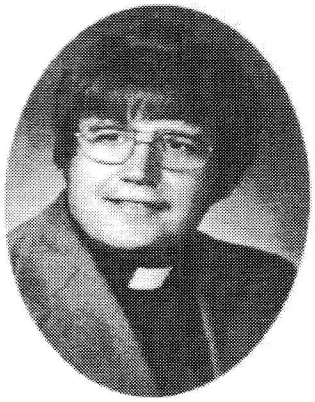
Pastor Philip Knutson



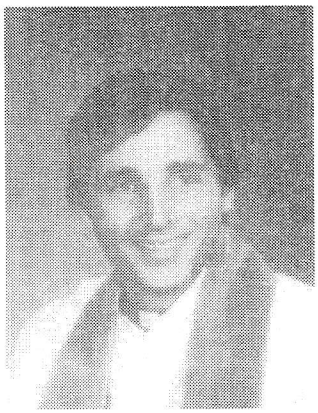
Pastor Luther Borgan



Pastor Kenneth Carlson



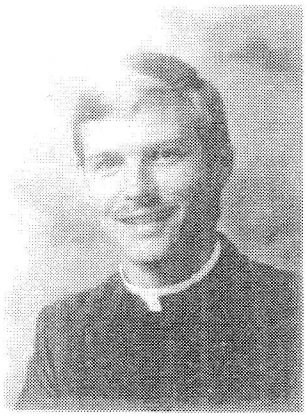
Pastor Alan Goertemiller



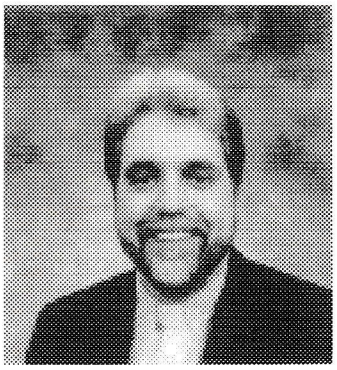
Pastor Jeffrey Wild



Pastor Lyle Rossing



Pastor Richard Pearson



Pastor Paul Nuechterlein



Pastor Mary Janz

Information for this historical account has been gathered from three previous histories written to celebrate the 75th, 100th and 125th Jubilees. Stories and memories have been shared by current members during gatherings and individual conversations.