

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Huron, South Dakota
1902 – 2002 Celebrating 100 years of
“Proclaiming Christ’s Love from Generation to Generation”

Article 9 “BITS OF CHURCH HISTORY 1972-1976”

(This information has been compiled from various minutes, scrapbooks, and other records in our church archives)

In 1972 pulpit supply and confirmation were undertaken for Immanuel Lutheran Church in Belle Prairie, about 20 miles from Huron.

In step with the majority of Lutheran churches, preparation for receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion was moved from Confirmation time to the latter part of the fifth grade.

Our congregation developed a church staff to serve the congregations growing needs for leadership, special skills, and large number of groups, programs, and services. The staff grew to include two pastors, an intern, a full-time and a part-time secretary, part-time music director, and a custodian.

Throughout the many years of growth we had a succession of interns including: Genevive Broby 1950, Sherman Korshavn 1951 – he was ordained in American Lutheran on June 29, 1952 – John Gilmore 1952, Cyril Jandrey 1953, Duane Thompson 1957, Paul Peterson 1958, James Stenslie 1959, Ron Sample 1969, Steven Sheie 1970, and Michael Dicks 1971.

Assistant pastors during this time included: 1971-73 Ron Sample, 1972-1974 Tim Schueler, and 1974-1979 Dean Baer.

Rev. Erling Erickson who served as Senior Pastor from 1956-1973 was gifted in personal counseling and sought by many from within the congregation and the community for help. A group-counseling program for married couples was developed and relationships to other groups and agencies were formed. Pastor Erickson and others in the congregation participated in the establishment of the Violet Tschetter Memorial Nursing Home, Our Home, Inc. and the Central SD Mental Health Center. In 1973, after more than a decade and a half at ALC Pastor Erickson accepted a call to Canton Lutheran Church in Canton, SD.

In November 1973, Dr. C. Richard Evenson was installed as our seventh pastor. . In Rev. Evenson’s first sermon at ALC he sounded the message Jesus left with the angels on his resurrection morning: “He goes before You!” – in the daily chores of home - to every door you have to open - to a place that he will show.

A renewed Shepherding Program with 60 zone shepherds was organized with over 50 visitors calling on shut-ins, 45 visitors to hospital patients, and 3 visits to every newly married couple in their first year. Visits were made to the parents of each new baby, there were sponsors for newly joining members, and special contacts were made with retiring and bereaved persons.

In 1975 the United Mission Appeal received \$43,000 in pledges – more than 2½ times the goal suggested. Our congregation sponsored a Vietnamese family in 1975 and a Laotian family in 1976 and our Sunday School sponsored a child served by Lutheran Social Services.

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Huron, South Dakota
1902 – 2002 Celebrating 100 years of
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Article 10

“BITS OF CHURCH HISTORY 1977”
Celebrating 75th Anniversary

(This information has been compiled from various minutes, scrapbooks, and other records in our church archives)

And Still “HE GOES BEFORE YOU”

Rev. C. Richard Evenson continued to serve as ALC’s Senior Pastor and Rev. Dean Baer was the Assistant.

The way of the Lord is always to work in and through people – also through us who read about our History. The congregation was encouraged in 1977 to heed the Spirit’s prompting and take up our next tasks with faith and expectation, with confidence and hope.

In January of 1977 when the churches of Huron set out to call at every door to say, “We have one Lord,” American Lutheran had 52 visitor units and carried a fourth of the entire activity. We held an Affirmation of our Baptismal Covenant as part of the congregation’s worship one Sunday each month. New members were received, lapsed members reinstated, teenagers confirmed, newly elected officers installed, teachers commissioned, musicians dedicated, and individuals committed to their Lord anew, by affirming their Baptismal Covenant. Each month, one age group from the education program, stood before the Baptismal Font to tell what learning and Christian growth was theirs in the months just past. At least two and sometimes four adult education opportunities were offered every week. Young couples and young singles groups were being developed anew. The synodical budget was paid and local needs met. A new sound system was installed in 1977 and the first set of Handbells was purchased.

On October 19, 1977 – the three great bells were lifted into the bell tower. They are 58”, 48”, and 40” in diameter and weigh more than four ton. They sound low C, E, and G. Today the peal of the bells continues the joyous call to worship the Lord and to tell of His name. The bells were a gift from the Osberg family in honor of our 75th anniversary.

American Lutheran celebrated its 75th anniversary during September, October, and November 1977. History Highlights were given during three sessions in September. In October, four family night potluck suppers were held and four eras were visited and discussions held: The era of 1902-1922 was led by Mrs. Chester (Charlotte) Williams, 1922-1956 was led by S. A. Moxness, and the era of 1956-1977 was led by Mrs. V. M. (Millie) Niebuhr. Mrs. Marvin (Arlene) Kappel and Mrs. Larry (Fern Marie) Mattke led the projection for the future of American Lutheran Church.

On November 5, 1977 from 7 – 9 pm a reunion open house was held at the church. On November 6, 1977 two Communion services were held at the church with Rev. Erling Erickson giving the sermon. At 3:30 pm that same day, a Festival Worship was held at the Huron High School Auditorium with Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz, President-Emeritus of the American Lutheran Church and Lutheran World Federation preaching. The Choral Director was Sheldon Disrud, son of Rev. Samuel Disrud. Liturgists were Rev. C. Richard Evenson and Rev. Dean E. Baer. The Lectors were Rev. Arland Jacobson and Rev. Erling Erickson.

Together with our sister congregation, Our Savior’s, American Lutheran continues to seek to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to ALL its members a well as to the community and the world.

Joyce and Brenda continue today in that same capacity. We have 67 students registered for the 2002-2003 school year (about all we are able to handle with the space we have). Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 -11am and 12:30 - 2:30 pm for the 3's, Classes are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9-11:15 am and 12:30 - 2:45 pm for the 4's. Over 15 volunteers, including many who are members of ALC assist with the preschool. Many of the students attending our preschool come from other religious faiths. The curriculum being used is "God Loves Me" by Gospel Light with a special prayer and Bible verse featured each month.

The church continues to furnish space, utilities, insurance, bus and telephone (the CLC does make an annual contribution toward the telephone and bus and pays their share of liability insurance) for the preschool. All other expenses are paid through the tuition of students, fundraisers and donations. A board of directors continues to guide the CLC and consists of both members and non-members of ALC. Current tuition is \$45 for 3's and \$55 for 4's with a \$25 registration fee. A Thanksgiving "Care & Share" program is given by the 4's in November and a Christmas program is presented by the 3's in December. A graduation program is held for the 4's in May and an open house registration takes place in April. A Scholarship/Disaster Relief Fund was established in 1992 to assist families with special needs to allow their child/children attend our preschool. The preschool assists in the maintenance of our facilities by periodically helping with painting, furnishings, etc. Our preschool is not registered by the State of South Dakota and our teachers are not certified teachers. The board prepares an annual budget (their fiscal year is July 1 through June 30 to allow for accurate accounting for a complete school year). The CLC Board Treasurer maintains the financial records. As with all boards, a copy of their official minutes is submitted to the church office following each meeting along with a monthly financial report.

The purpose of the Christian Learning Center as printed in the handbook given to parents each year is:

Preschool is a time of growing in awareness of self, of others, and of the environment. It is a time to explore, investigate, discover, and experience through various activities -- an enrichment time in the third, fourth, or fifth year of life.

- 1. To provide a safe, positive, and stimulating Christian environment that encourages growth in all areas of development - spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual.*
- 2. To provide an educational environment for children that puts God at the center of their world, teaching that this is God's world and they are a part of it.*
- 3. To create an attitude of loving acceptance in which all children will learn to like themselves and recognize their uniqueness as children of God.*
- 4. To complement and support the family unit and to provide every opportunity for meaningful involvement of the parents in the education of their children. To provide encouragement for parents that they might "discover" the joys of early childhood and develop appreciation and understanding of this special stage of their child's life.*

The American Lutheran Christian Learning Center celebrates its **20th anniversary** this school year and continues to be a tremendous "Community Outreach" of our church. We continue to **proclaim Christ's love from generation to generation** through the care and love given to the area preschool children.

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER

Huron, South Dakota

1982 -- 2002 Celebrating 20 years of

"Proclaiming Christ's Love from Generation to Generation"

Article 11

"BITS OF CHURCH HISTORY"

Our present preschool was a dream of the Board of Parish Education back in 1977 under the leadership of Pastor C. Richard Evenson and Pastor Dean Baer. During this time we had "brainstorming" sessions writing down all the various things we felt could be done at American Lutheran Church to bring people to Christ. One of the dreams was to establish a preschool. In 1977, the Preschool Commission, under the Board of Education, began the groundwork for this project. Members of the Commission were Betty Derksen, Jean Mattke, Judy Eisenmenger, and Wanda Sage. Fern Marie Mattke was chairman of the Board of Parish Education.

Work continued on this project for a couple of years with many people showing interest. Finally, under the leadership of Luana Scheele (who was a member of the board of Parish Education), the preschool was officially opened in February 1982. Two members of ALC who were a great help to her were Charmaine Maass and Kathy Larsen.

The first teacher was Kathy Larsen (who previously operated a Day Care and provided preschool activities to the children she cared for). She provided many of the materials for the first year. The pastors were Merlyn O. Huke and James Knudson. The preschool was to be guided by a preschool board under the umbrella of the ALC Board of Education. A constitution was developed for the preschool with the understanding that it would not conflict with the main constitution of the church. The church furnished the classrooms, telephone, bus use, and all utilities, and insurance. Tuition of the students was to pay for all other expenses involved with the preschool. In 1982, the preschool ran February, March, April, and May. We had 5 volunteers who helped Kathy (1 for each day). The enrollment consisted of 17 children in the 4-year-old class and 13 in the 3-year-old class. Classes met only in the morning. It was the beginning of a wonderful community outreach program of ALC. The first board members of the CLC were Luana Scheele, Debbie Knudson, Betty Derksen, Cheri Schumacher, and Peggy Larsen.

For the 1982-83 school year, a second teacher, Carrie Heckert, was hired to assist the head teacher, Kathy Larsen. During the 1984-85 school year, Charmaine Maass was added to the teaching staff. Kathy Larsen did a super job of setting up and leading our preschool while teaching our young ones until she moved from Huron in 1985. A total of 32 children were enrolled during 1984-85. An excerpt from the 1984 Annual Report of ALC reads:

"God has fulfilled our hopes and then some. One of the things we are most amazed about is how God has brought so many Christians together--of different faiths--to accomplish His good works."

Cheri Schumacher & Diane Bombeck were hired as teachers for the 1985-86 year and had 12 three year-olds, 32 four year-olds and 5 volunteers. There were morning and afternoon classes for the four and five-year-olds with 16 in each class. In 1988-89, Diane Bombeck became the director/teacher with Marsha Coil as her assistant, 52 students were registered. This year the program expanded to include an afternoon class for 3-year-olds. In 1989-90, Diane Bombeck continued as director/teacher and Joyce Borah became the assistant teacher. When Diane moved in 1991, Joyce Borah was hired as the director/teacher with Brenda Friedrichsen as her assistant.

In 1987 our Associate Pastor, Rev. Anne Maldoon, was presented with a national appreciation award for "devotion to the development and encouragement of student leaders." Fourteen of our church youth were selected into the Society of Distinguished American High School Students. During this year, we also had a choir from Sandnes, Norway present a concert in our church.

Rev. Bruce R. Iverson was installed as Associate Pastor in 1989. He was especially interested in youth work and Bible Camp ministry. Many of you will remember when Bruce and Pam's daughter, Caitlin Christine, was born in the lobby of Huron Regional Medical Center. What an exciting day that was!

During the years of Pastors Huke and Iverson we began to hold three worship services: 8:30 and 11:00 traditional services and a 9:45 Sunday morning contemporary worship. The radio broadcast was at 11:00 over KIJV. Today we have contemporary worship on Saturday evenings at 6:00 pm and Sunday morning at 11:00 and traditional worship at 8:30 on Sunday morning. The 8:30 worship is taped and rebroadcast on KIJV at 10:00 am.

In 1992 the groundbreaking was held for our new addition that includes an elevator, music room, chapel and handicap accessible restrooms. A time capsule was placed behind the cornerstone and included a Lutheran Book of worship, church documents, a history of ALC, photographs showing the progress of the project and a copy of the December 6 edition of the Plainsman newspaper. On April 25, 1993 an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony was held.

Reverend Steven Brandsrud was installed in August 1995 and currently serves as our Senior Pastor. Reverend Rhonda Wellsandt-Zell was installed as Associate Pastor in 1998.

In 1999 the decision was made to sell our dining hall located at the South Dakota State Fairgrounds. It was sold to Leif Andol. This had been a major fundraising event for our congregation for many years as well as a time of good fellowship and reaching out. Today in place of the dining hall, our ALC Women sponsor a Spring Salad Luncheon and a Fall Holiday Bake and Craft Sale and Noon Luncheon.

Many in our church continue to make quilts and put together health kits, school kits, sewing kits, and layettes to be given to Lutheran World Relief. For several years our church youth and adults have spent a week each summer at Pine Ridge doing mission work among the Native Americans. In 2001 we began serving an annual meal to the homeless at the Banquet in Sioux Falls, SD. In 1995 we began cooking and serving a Thanksgiving Dinner free of charge to people in the Huron area. In 2001 close to 300 meals were served with about 50 being delivered to those who were home-bound.

Our present staff includes: Steven Brandsrud Senior Pastor, Rhonda Wellsandt-Zell Associate Pastor, Dennis Paulson Director Program Ministries, Fern Marie Mattke Administrative Assistant, Kenneth Solomon, Custodian, Donna Thompson Office Assistant, Joyce Borah CLC Director/Teacher, and Brenda Friedrichsen Teacher Assistant.

As we begin a new century of ministry at American Lutheran Church, we welcome you to come through the "Door" (the door is an opening to a new beginning, the door is an opening into a greater love, the door is an opening to great opportunity and service) and join us at American Lutheran in "*proclaiming Christ's love from generation to generation!*"

THANKS BE TO GOD FOR 100 YEARS OF MINISTRY!

In Jesus Name we close this era and begin again.

GO IN PEACE! SERVE THE LORD!

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Article 12

“BITS OF CHURCH HISTORY 1978-2002”

In 1978 Reverend Merlyn O. Huke became our Senior Pastor. Did you know that he assisted with the cooking of over 800 lefsa in 1987? Our church was and still is noted for its lefsa along with the delicious homemade pies. Lutefisk dinners were an annual event for several years.

In 1978, the position of full-time Director of Music was established and Jim Klein was hired to fill this position, his wife, Eileen Klein became our church organist. Under Jim’s direction many choirs were formed and our music program expanded to include even the 3 year olds through Kindergarten “Alleluia” classes. During his tenure at ALC, the Angelus Bell Choir (made up of senior citizens) was formed along with the Jubilate Ringers (adults), Hosanna Bell Choir (Junior and Senior High Students) and the Joy/Celebration Bell Choir (youth in grades 4-6). There were also several vocal choirs including youth ages 3 years through the adults. The Junior and Senior High youth in the bell choirs made several trips, performing their music and even played at Mount Rushmore. Jim and Eileen moved to Prescott, Arizona in 1990 where he continues to direct music in the church and the community of Prescott and Eileen serves as an organist and works at the local college.

Reverend James Knudson was installed in 1980 and served to 1983. On September 21, 1980 our congregation joined in rejoicing with Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Huron (our sister congregation) in the dedication of their new sanctuary. We helped establish their congregation in 1962.

In 1982, Alert Endahl, who is still a member of ALC today, was instrumental in the process of making our altar a free-standing altar. He made a new base for the altar and the back of the altar, where we place the altar flowers and the statue of Christ sits, had to be moved back closer against the wall.

In 1982 we reached out to the community as a congregation by starting a class that was held each Sunday for adults who were developmentally disabled. This class began under the direction of Mrs. Alice Gryte with the assistance of Donna Hulst, Cheryl Moody and Jessie McMains led the class for about four years. Following their tenure Jane DeLong and Mary Meyers continued the class for several additional years.

During these years, our church was very active in the Ecumenical Choral Services when many congregations came together to praise our Lord through music. These services were held in various churches and continue to be held each year in our community.

In 1987, Rev. Joseph Somagoa from New Guinea came to spend some time with our congregation. He delivered the sermons during our Lenten worship services that year. It was very interesting to hear him share the love of Christ, which brings peace.

In going through our history, there are many, many people we could recognize who have touched our lives and helped each of us grow in our faith. We are not able to mention all of them, however one person who stands out in the minds of many is Lisa Hammer, who came from Norway. She said, *Always remember you are never alone, the Lord is always with you. If you have a challenge, opportunity, job or mission to do in life, do the best you can – you are never alone.”*