

A Look Back with Grateful Hearts

"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst in their days, in times of old." (Ps 44)

"Unser Anfang geschehe im Namen Gottes des Vaters, Gottes des Sohnes, Gottes des Heiligen Geistes." (Our Beginning Be in the Name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.)

With these simple, but prayerful and blessings-beseeking words, spoken on April 22, 1849, our fathers founded and organized St John Lutheran Church, Chester, Illinois.

Already in the fall of 1848 a few Lutherans occasionally were gathered, under the leadership of a Lutheran book-agent, for prayer meetings. (At the time, about 30 Lutheran men, women and children were reported living in Chester and community.) In these prayer meetings the Lord's Prayer was explained to the small group. Shortly after this a Methodist missionary by the name of Boeshenz, who was very active in mission work in Southern Illinois, (and whose mission activities in this part of the state were reported in *Der Lutheraner* of January 12, 1849) came to Chester from time to time and preached to the group. The content of his sermons, as reported by a then well-known citizen, in many respects "did not seem quite right," but since no one knew much of the Lutheran Doctrine nor of the Reformation, and they were acquainted only with the name of the Reformer, Dr. Martin Luther, they could not defend themselves against false doctrines, neither could they point with any definiteness to any false teachings because of their meager knowledge of the Truth. But his sermons did awaken a hunger for the true Word of God.

1. Pastor C. H. Siegmund Buttermann, 1849.

In the fall of the year 1848, a young resident of Chester, Mr. Frederick Allmeyer (Grandfather of Mrs. Nellie Crisler of our congregation), reported to have been but 19 years of age and a fruit dealer, made a business trip to St. Louis, and on this occasion heard Dr C. F. W. Walther, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis, preach. Greatly inspired and filled with a holy zeal, he returned to Chester and told his associates and Lutheran friends that he had met that great theologian of the Lutheran Church, Dr. C. F. W. Walther, and had heard him preach. He had heard altogether different things and teachings than they had heard thus far from their Methodist missionary. This report inspired and enthused his fellow Christians. They immediately resolved to send a committee of two to St. Louis to make an appeal to Dr. Walther to aid the Lutherans in Chester in securing a pastor.

In the spring of the year 1849, Dr. Walther was happy to send them the candidate, C. H. Siegmund Buttermann, who had completed his colloquy. He had previously been educated for the ministry in Germany and had come to America. Candidate Buttermann was a young man of 29 whom Dr. Walther had learned to love and respect while in St. Louis as a student of theology.

Pastor Buttermann immediately proceeded to organize the congregation. The first minutes, dated April 22, 1849, record the organization as follows: "The following constitution was this date accepted and St. John Congregation of Chester, Ill., organized herewith." This constitution was essentially that of Trinity Congregation, St. Louis, accepted in 1843, and with but a few minor changes, served St. John Congregation for over a century.

Immediately under this constitution the following 16 signatures of the charter members appear: Jobst H. Allmeyer (brother of Frederick), Fredrich Gericke, H. Goehrs, Louis Dettmer, Heinrich Runge, Friedrich William Allmeyer, Fredrich Brinkman, Jurgen Dettmer, H. Bode, Heinrich Schrader, Chr. F. Wegner, C. H. Allmeyer, Christoph Wiebusch, Heinrich

Roeder, Heinrich Kipp and Jacob Pick. Soon after this meeting, according to a recorded note, the following names were added: Chr. Hirte, H. Kaufmann and Zacharias Jostmann.

The organizational meeting was held in the home of Henry Goehrs, which was on High Street just west of the present 'Scout House' (the old parsonage and near the future site of the first church). Worship services and meetings were held there for some time. The pastor also lived there and taught school in his study. On May 13, 1849, Pastor Buttermann was duly inducted into office as pastor of the congregation, upon order of the president of Synod by Pastor Loeber, assisted by Pastor Gruber.

One must wonder whether these men ever expected their efforts to culminate in the large congregation that has remained faithful to their ideals and serves God in many ways to this day.

Pastor Buttermann was very active and diligent in his service of the Lord and his congregation in Chester, and the joy of his flock was great. Although his teachings were bitterly attacked by the aforementioned Circuit Rider Missionary, this did not discourage him, but caused him to be all the more faithful and sincere. He defended his teachings clearly and definitely from God's Word, as is to be seen in the printed editorials he wrote for *Der Lutheraner* of May and June 1849.

However the great joy of this little flock was soon turned to bitter sorrow when their beloved pastor became the victim of cholera, then raging in our land. After a very short illness of only seven hours, he fell asleep in Jesus, his beloved Savior, whom he was permitted to serve but two months in the Chester congregation. He was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery, near the Lt. Governor Bond monument. On the simple tombstone is found the inscription: "Here rests in Jesus, Siegmund Buttermann, first Evangelical Lutheran pastor in Chester; born September 13, 1819, in Werferlinger, Prussia, died July 12, 1849. Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Ps 90,1"

2. Pastor Michael Eirich, 1849 - 1866

After a vacancy of not quite two months, the congregation again turned to Dr. Walther in St. Louis for advice and aid. He recommended to them another candidate of theology, Michael Eirich, who had just graduated from the practical theological seminary at Fort Wayne, Indiana. Pastor Eirich was ordained and installed in Chester, September 10, 1849, by Pastor Lehmann, assisted by Pastor Strasen.

For a while Rev. Eirich occupied the same quarters in the Goehrs home that his predecessor had used. The building of a new frame church, 36 feet long, 24 feet wide, and 13 feet high, which had been decided on already on Trinity Sunday June 3, 1849 (in the last meeting Pastor Buttermann attended) was not completed until late in the fall (on the site of our old parsonage, the current Scout House). Mr. Goehrs and Mr. Wiebusch were appointed trustees and building committee, and on June 18th, actual building was to be begun. Mr. Kipp had offered to furnish all the lumber for the building. No record is available of the date of dedication of this first church.

Rev. Eirich taught school in the basement of this modest structure, while in the upper room church services were held. Eight years later, in 1857, a 20 foot addition was added to the church.

Besides preaching in Chester Rev. Eirich also served a flock at Bremen and another at Wine Hill. His school at Chester had a reputation of being the best in town, and it attracted pupils not only from Lutheran families, but from other homes as well.

Although money was scarce in those days, the congregation was self-supporting from the beginning. The members could not promise their pastor a fixed salary but only agreed to give him what they could collect. He agreed to this and

never suffered want. In 1854 the first parsonage was built. It was frequently enlarged after that. After 1920 it also served as a meeting place for the Ladies Aid for a while. In 1858 Pastor Eirich's salary was increased to \$300 per year.

Rev. Eirich was relieved of his work in the school in 1856 when Mr. F. Schachemeyer of St. Louis was called to take charge of the school which he did until 1863. That year he was called to Logansport, Indiana. Under his able management the enrollment rose to 110 pupils. Mr. Schachemeyer's successor was Mr. H. W. Hoppe, who was installed in September 1863. On June 2, 1865, the congregation resolved to call a second teacher, Mr. Dietrich Meibohm. Because of the increased enrollment on July 2, 1865 it was unanimously decided to build a brick school next to the church in order to relieve the overcrowded condition. It was to be a 36 x 24 x 12 building, at a cost of \$1,150. It was completed in November of the same year.

On June 24, 1863, not long before President Lincoln made his Gettysburg Address, a group of St. John's Lutheran women met in the home of Mrs. Henry C. Eggers to organize "St. Johannes Frauen Verein," the forerunner of our Ladies' Aid.

In January, 1866, Rev. Eirich accepted a call in 1866 to New Minden, Illinois, after 16 ½ years of faithful service in Chester, during which time, by the grace of God, the congregation became ever more firmly grounded in the Word of God and was privileged to experience a large external growth as well. Having served the congregation in New Minden for more than 37 years, Rev. Eirich retired. He died in August 1910 and was buried in New Minden, having attained the age of 84 years, 2 months, and 28 days.

3. Pastor Martin Stephan, 1866 - 1875

In February 1866, Rev. Martin Stephan, of Wolcottsville, New York, was called to Chester and began his ministry here in the beginning of May of the same year. The Rev. Doermann, of Bremen, inducted him into office early in May. Rev. Stephan was born in 1823 in Dresden, Germany, where his father was a minister. In 1838 he came to America to attend the first Lutheran College in Perry County, Missouri, as a theological student, but after three years, in 1841, he returned to Germany to study architecture in Dresden. He returned again to America and continued his theological training in St. Louis, graduating in April 1853. He served several congregations in Wisconsin, he accepted a call as assistant pastor to Dr. Sihler in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he also taught English and drawing at our college in Fort Wayne. He was called to Wolcottsville, New York, then to Chester.

In 1866, Teacher Hoppe was released to a call to teach in Milwaukee. Thus our school was left in charge of but one teacher, Mr. Meibohm, who left in August, 1867, for St. Charles, Missouri. In January 1868, Teacher Fehlhaber was called, but was dismissed from office in June of the same year. After repeated unsuccessful attempts to secure an experienced teacher, the congregation finally decided to call a graduate from our teachers' seminary at Addison, near Chicago. Mr. J. W. Hild was assigned to Chester in May 1869. It does not appear from the minutes how the school was temporarily supplied with a teacher before Teacher Hild took charge. He was given an assistant in April 1871, when Teacher Bewie, who had resigned because of ill health and was living in Chester, agreed to teach the lower grades three hours every morning. This he did until the end of September 1871, when he had to be relieved due to increased physical weakness. In April 1873, the congregation resolved to call a second permanent teacher, Mr. C. Waschilewsky, a graduate of our Normal School who had received the greater part of his education in Germany.

On Ascension Day, 1875, Rev. Stephan preached his farewell sermon, having accepted a call to a congregation in Bremer Township, Warren County, Iowa, where he died on June 16, 1884, at the age of 60 years, 5 months, and 23 days. He had faithfully served that congregation for nearly nine years.

Rev. Stephan was a diligent, self-denying pastor, true to his sacred trust. He was appreciated most by those who knew him best. Originally trained as an architect, he often served congregations by designing their churches for them, and he was engaged in such a labor of love when he died.

While the congregation in Chester was busy trying to secure a successor to Rev. Stephan, Teacher Hild received a call to Aurora, Illinois, and in a meeting on July 4, 1875 he was released "with the best recommendations" and a vote of thanks for his faithful six-year service. During the vacancy Teacher Waschilewsky also received a call, which he returned.

4. Pastor J. A. F. W. Mueller, 1875 - 1900

Finally, after several calls had been returned, on September 19, 1875, the Rev. J. A. F. W. Mueller of Johnsburg, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, was called and accepted. He was inducted into office on the second Sunday in Advent, 1875, by Rev. J. F. Koesterling, of Altenburg, Missouri, assisted by Pastor Pennekamp, of Bremen, and Pastor Liebe, of Wine Hill. The congregation requested that Pastor Koesterling's sermon on Matthew 13:47-49, delivered at this installation, be printed. A copy is preserved in our archives.

The 25 years of Rev. Mueller's ministry were a time of peaceful spiritual upbuilding and of external expansion. When Teacher Waschilewsky's school had reached an enrollment of 80 pupils, a second teacher, Mr. Lohmeier, of Bremen, was called and he served the congregation for a little over six years.

On New Year's Day, 1878, it was unanimously resolved to build a new church on the same side of the street as the school. In order to avoid a burdensome debt, the building was erected by installments, proceeding about as far as the funds on hand permitted. In October 1878, the cornerstone was laid. The Rev. W. Achenbach and the Rev. C. G. Kleppisch preached the sermons. In 1879 the structure was roofed, and on November 2, 1880, the building was dedicated. Pastors Leppisch, Demetrio, and Frank were the preachers in the dedicatory services. The building site opposite the old church had a cost of \$600, the church itself \$11,586.80. There was a cash balance of \$49.05 in the church treasury besides some unpaid pledges. The church was built of brick, 44 X 76 feet including the chancel, and seated about 550 persons. The steeple had a height of 120 feet.

While the building of the church was progressing, Teacher Waschilewsky was given a peaceful dismissal on July 14, 1878. The next month Teacher George Allmeyer, of Buffalo, New York, a son of F. Allmeyer, was called. He served the congregation until early in 1883 when ill health compelled him to resign. He died May 9, 1883, and was buried two days later, mourned and lamented not only by his loved ones, but by the entire congregation and by his fellow citizens who respected him for his many sterling qualities.

Teacher Allmeyer's successor in office was Mr. J. F. Herman Zastrow, a graduate from our Teachers' Seminary at Addison, who was installed in the summer of 1883. He was active in the service of the congregation although he had received many calls to other fields. With the exception of one year's vacation on account of illness, Teacher Zastrow served this congregation faithfully and efficiently from August 1883 to 1925 (a remarkable 41 years of teaching!). His silver jubilee was celebrated in the summer of 1908.

In the beginning of August 1883, Teacher Lohmeier was dismissed with thanks "for his faithful service." But it soon became apparent that the school needed two teachers, and consequently, Mr. Herman Lanemann, a member of the congregation with public school teaching experience, was employed as assistant. He served until July 1890. He was succeeded in that year by Mr. Paul Arndt, a graduate from our Teachers' Seminary.

A new pipe organ, built by the Jackson Organ Co. of Chester, was installed about July of 1887. On September 3, 1893, it was resolved to build a 15 foot addition to the brick school at a cost of \$721.38.

In June 1891, the congregation felt the need of having their own burial ground. A committee of F. Allmeyer, C. Wegener, and L. H. Gilster was appointed to study the matter. Acting on the recommendation of this committee, a three acre plot was purchased from Charles Eberhardt for \$300. This property is located just north of the present site of the Chester Greenhouse. On September 6, 1891, F. Bueckman, C. Weinrich and H. Buenger were added to this cemetery committee. On September 20, 1891, the City of Chester informed this committee of a regulation passed in 1887, limiting the location of cemetery land to one mile from the city limits. The old committee was replaced by a newly elected committee on December 6, 1891. This new committee consisted of Henry Herschbach, Sr., Sig. Brinkman, H. Bode, William Brinkman, and C. Weinrich. The congregation granted this committee permission to purchase the present cemetery plot from Mrs. Mary Stumpe for \$433. On January 29, 1892, the Eberhardt property was sold at public auction to H. Kipp for \$330. On July 22, 1892, the congregation set aside a lot for the free burial of pastors and teachers.

Recently an old brown sheet of paper was found in a closet listing some sentences from the first constitution of our choir. The constitution was dated January 11, 1894. The sentences stated as follows:

The name of this choir is Concordia. The threefold purpose of the choir is: 1. To beautify the worship service 2. To appreciate good music 3. To promote fellowship. Only members of St. John church are eligible for membership. The choir may enroll honorary members who are interested in the well-being of the choir. A monthly fee of 5 cents is to be paid by the members. This does not entitle them to own the music. If a member quits he is required to return all music to the director.

The following officers are to be elected annually: 1. President 2. Vice President 3. Secretary 4. Treasurer 5. Director 6. Librarian.

Every member is required to give an excuse for missing practice.

Sickness by the member or the members of his family are good excuses.

If a member misses practice for one month, he terminates his membership.

Any member of the choir found in dance halls or the theater automatically terminates his membership.

During practice, especially when practicing with one voice, all members should remain quiet so as not to disturb the practice.

Smoking will only be permitted during the free period.

The first president of the choir was William Herbst; the first director was Mr Zastrow; the first instructor was Mr. Arndt; the first treasurer was Rudolph Welge.

Preserved in our archives is a sermon, in German, based on 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 and delivered by Pastor Mueller at the 14th convention of the Illinois District, 1894.

On the third Sunday after Easter, 1897, the Golden Jubilee of the congregation was celebrated. Prof. George Mezger, of St. Louis, and Pastors Dorn and Stephan preached the anniversary sermons. In November of the same year the Golden Jubilee of Pastor Mueller's ordination was celebrated by the congregation. His friend, Prof. George Stoeckhardt of St. Louis, preached the sermon. Congratulations from many quarters were received, including the mayor and city council of Chester.

Three years after this celebration, December 26, 1900, at 11 p.m., Rev. Mueller died suddenly of heart failure, at the age of 75 years, 1 month, and 27 days. He was buried on the Sunday after Christmas, December 30, in the congregation's own cemetery which he had been instrumental in founding in 1892. The Rev. F. Brust, of Horse Prairie, Illinois, preached the funeral sermon from Luke 2:29-32 ("Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace . . .").

Rev. Mueller was born in the town of Planena in Saxony, Germany, which country he left with his parents when he was a boy. The family had joined the immigrant company of Lutherans who settled in Perry County, Missouri, and at St. Louis, in 1839. Rev. Mueller attended our first College and Seminary at Perry County, and left it as its first graduate in theology in the fall of 1847, the year of the founding of our Synod. From Manchester, St. Louis County, his first charge, he went to Chicago, then to Pittsburgh, and from there to Johnsbury, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, where he was called to Chester. Rev. Mueller was a man of sound learning, firm convictions, commanding eloquence, and amiable character. His popularity was not due to false leniency, but because his people respected him for his God-given qualities of mind and heart and for his faithful labors among them. He was, indeed, their spiritual father. God's blessings continued to rest upon the congregation in a special manner during his ministry. Besides his work in Chester and at Ste. Genenvieve, and Jonesboro, Illinois, he served Synod in a literary capacity and as Vice-President of the Illinois District.

5. Pastor C. Strasen, 1901 - 1908

The successor of Rev. Mueller was Rev. Charles Strasen, of Wine Hill, Illinois, who was Rev. Mueller's nephew, his sister's son. He was unanimously called and was installed by Rev. George Link, his father-in-law, on the fifth Sunday in Lent, 1901.

Shortly after his installation the congregation decided to improve the interior of its church by having the walls and ceiling decorated. This was done at an expense of \$835. Two years later Mother Allmeyer (Anna, Nellie Crisler's grandmother) presented the congregation with two new large bells for the tower. Hitherto it had contained but one small bell. Nellie's father told her "When you hear the bells you'll know your Grandma's calling you to church."

Owing to the missionary activities of Rev. Strasen, it became necessary to introduce English services in 1901. Rev. Strasen also began a mission at the Southern Illinois Penitentiary at Menard, near Chester, where he soon gained the confidence and esteem, not only of the inmates, but of the prison authorities as well. His work is still remembered there, and the mission begun by him has been continued since.

For more than seven years God continued to bless this ministry, after which time He caused Rev. Strasen to accept a call as superintendent of the Lutheran Home-Finding Society of Michigan.

In April 1902, owing to the growth of the school, Miss Dora Zastrow, daughter of Teacher Zastrow, was employed to teach the beginners' class. She continued in that capacity for nearly six years.

In September 1903, Teacher Arndt accepted a call to Steeleville, and was succeeded in October 1903, by Teacher Lehmann who had to be released in September 1904, due to a pulmonary infection. Rev. Strasen taught during the interim while various unsuccessful attempts were being made to secure another teacher. Finally, January 8, 1905, Teacher Otto Schroeter, of Farrar, Perry County, Missouri, was called. In him the congregation secured a faithful and skillful teacher and a fine musician who soon had the respect and love of pupils and parents. On March 22, 1908, Teacher K. Hoffmann of Seward, Nebraska, was called, but in January 24, 1909, he was released to accept another call, much to the regret of his pupils and of the congregation. Miss Zastrow was again employed to teach the beginners' class.

6. Pastor W. H. Behrens, 1909 - 1924

After a number of unsuccessful calls had been sent, Pastor W. H. Behrens of Portland, Oregon was called in January 1909. He was installed April 25, 1909 by Rev. J. Nickel of Wine Hill, assisted by Pastors Erdmann, Hartenberger, Wilk and Haertling. Pastor Behrens was born December 6, 1870 in St. Louis Missouri. He graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1893. After a period of pastoral and missionary work in Salt Lake City, Utah, he was called to

Tacomah, doing missionary work from that location in practically the entire state of Washington. Pastor Behrens then served a congregation in Portland for a number of years and was elected president of the Oregon and Washington District. He set aside that office to answer the call to Chester.

On September 2, 1910, Mr. Martin H. Grefe, a candidate from our Teachers' Seminary at Addison, was installed as teacher of the first two grades, succeeding Miss Dora Zastrow. Teacher Grefe stayed with us 55 years, until his retirement in 1965, though he too, received repeated calls from other fields. He at all times gave the congregation faithful and diligent service.

On November 19, 1912, the congregation felt obliged to give Teacher Schroeter a peaceful dismissal to the congregation at Staunton, after many previous calls from other quarters had been returned by him. He left with the good will and best wishes of the entire congregation. Teacher Grefe became his successor and Miss Dora Zastrow again took charge of the lowest grades until a teacher was once more called to succeed her.

Candidate Arthur Buescher from our Teachers' Seminary at Addison entered upon his duties at the beginning of the school year 1913 -14. He served the congregation faithfully and well for three years in the two lowest grades.

Owing to the fact that the old frame school of the congregation was greatly in need of repairs, the basement being no longer suitable for school purposes, and also because there was no confirmation classroom nor a hall for assembly purposes, the congregation resolved to build a new school. A plan was finally adopted, and building operations were begun April 15, 1913. The cornerstone was laid July 6, 1913. Rev. F. Wenger, of Frohna, Missouri, preached a German sermon and Rev. J. Nickel, of Wine Hill, an English sermon. The building was completed in May, 1914, and dedicated on the 10th of that month. Prof. F. Streckfuss, of Springfield, preached a German sermon in the morning, Rev. F. Melzer, of Steeleville, preached another German sermon in the afternoon, and Prof. Theo. Graebner, of St. Louis, preached an English sermon in the evening. The school was a substantial brick structure with three classrooms on the lower floor and a confirmation classroom and a hall, seating 300, on the upper floor. The building site, diagonally across from the old school, was 140 X 240 feet and cost \$11,800. The building itself was erected at a cost of \$14,486.95 on the location of our present school.

Because of the violent prejudice against the German language after our country's entry into the World War I (1914), German was entirely eliminated from the school and eventually from church services. To have failed to do this at that critical time might have led to a serious and dangerous situation. After the close of the war the congregation decided to reinstate German in the school only as an optional language study and to confine it to the teaching of reading and writing at the end of the school day in grades 3 - 8. This change and the consequent confirmation of catechumens only in English obliged the congregation to introduce more English services, so that the number of them equaled that of the German services, one service in each language being conducted every Sunday. Gradually in the course of years, only one German service per month was conducted, and finally entirely eliminated.

In July 1916 Teacher Buescher accepted a call to Trinity Lutheran Congregation at Portland, Oregon and was released. After repeated failures to secure a successor the congregation employed Miss Esther Gilster for three successive years and was well pleased with her services. Then Miss Ernestine Richter, another girl from the congregation, taught the first and second grades faithfully for two years.

During the school year 1921 - 22 when Teacher Zastrow was given a year's leave of absence on account of ill health, a student from Seward, Nebraska, Mr. William Ahlemeyer, taught grades 3 - 5, while Teacher Grefe took Mr. Zastrow's class and Miss Lydia Wiebusch had charge of Grades 1 and 2. When Mr. Zastrow returned, he was given the middle grades at his own request, and Teacher Grefe was retained in charge of the three highest grades, while Mr. Ahlemeyer taught the two lowest grades. In the school year of 1923 - 24, Miss Wiebusch was again teaching the lowest grades and

doing good work there, while Teachers Grefe and Zastrow continued their work in Grades 6 - 8 and 3 - 5, respectively. Miss Wiebusch would continue teaching until 1947, 25 years. The total enrollment at the close of 1923 was 140, about the figure which had prevailed for the past few years.

On Sunday, August 11, 1918, the congregation observed Pastor Behrens' 25th anniversary of ordination. The Rev. E. Koch of Wine Hill and Rev. J. H. Hartenberger of Red Bud were the guest speakers. After a banquet in the school basement, prepared by the Ladies' Aid, the rest of the day was spent in fellowship.

After the close of World War I, peace having been declared, the congregation entered into a building program from the summer of 1919 to 1924. The parsonage, a frame building, was erected on the site of the former schools in 1919 and 1920 at a cost of \$8,500. In March 1923, the congregation again began to discuss the renovation of its church building, which had been decided once before, but had not been carried out for want of funds. The subscriptions at the time did not prove quite sufficient for the building of the parsonage alone. Now, however, considerable enthusiasm was aroused, and the final plans included much that had not been previously thought of. In fact, a pretty radical change of the chancel end of the church building was effected. A new addition, to form a cross was added. A new roof was placed over old and new sections. The exterior was covered with stucco; the interior newly decorated; and hot air furnaces with blower system were installed; new pews, new windows, new lighting fixtures, a rebuilt organ, an altar with carved figures of Christ in the center and the four evangelists, two on each side and a pulpit from old Immanuel Church, St. Louis were installed; and the balconies were rebuilt. Also installed were acousticons for those with defective hearing. About \$28,000 was expended. The result was pleasing to the congregation, and great was the joy of the congregation when the people could reoccupy their remodeled and beautiful house of worship.

The dedication of the renovated church took place on the fourth Sunday in Lent, 1924. A brief valedictory service in German was held in the temporary place of worship, in the school hall. Rev. John Deye, of Bremen, made a short address on Ephesians 2:22. The church was then formally opened in accordance with the new English agenda of our Synod. In the first service on the church Rev. Carl Strasen, of Plymouth, Michigan, former pastor of the congregation, preached in English from Psalm 84:1,2,10-12. In the afternoon Rev. J. H. Hartenberger, formerly one of our members, preached in German on Exodus 20:24, and in the evening Prof. Walter A. Maier, of St. Louis, preached an English sermon on I Chronicles 29:5. Mr. Walter Wismar, of Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, gave organ recitals after the German service in the afternoon and preceding the English service in the evening. The church was filled to overflowing at each service; many were turned away for lack of room. The ladies' society, with the aid of the young ladies of the church, worked strenuously and successfully to serve meals to the large gathering.

Of interest is the fact that Marie Allmeyer (Nellie Crisler's mother) died shortly after spending much time at helping with cleaning up the church after the completion of the 1924 remodeling. Also, Christian Stallman (Paul C. Stallman's grandfather) hauled the large iron cross that is on the steeple of St. John up from near the river, where it had been brought either by train or by barge. It was brought up to the church on a flat-bedded farm wagon pulled by a team of horses. The large sandstone rocks that were used for the steps of the church came from the Stallman farm bottom-land near Gravel Creek.

The Ladies' Aid and the young people's society were also active in raising funds for the building treasury and in providing some of the church furnishings. In short, there was a willingness all around to take a hand in carrying the whole project to a successful completion.

Mention should be made here of the building committee. Mr. John Herschbach was chairman, Mr. Fred Eilermann was recording secretary, and Mr. Herman Gilster was financial secretary. The trustees were Henry Diefenbach, Oscar Fey, Edward Mueller, Sr., Adolph Eggers, and Rudolph Welge. They were rewarded for their arduous labors by a result far

exceeding the expectations of the congregation. Mr. Wm. Bartels, a member of our church, was superintendent of construction, and he also worked hard for the success of the undertaking.

A month following the dedication of the renovated and remodeled church, the congregation observed its 75th (Diamond) Anniversary. Three services were held on the day of dedication, April 27, 1924. Preaching for the first German service in the morning was Pastor Gustav Mueller of McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, a son of the former Pastor Mueller of St. John; for the second German service in the afternoon was Pastor J. G. F. Kleinhans of Staunton, Illinois, President of the Southern Illinois District; and for the third service, conducted in English, was Pastor Richard Eirich of Baltimore, Maryland, a son of the former Pastor Eirich of St. John.

Pastor Behrens continued to work producing great blessings within the congregation. It was with sincere regrets that in July of 1924, he was granted a peaceful release to accept the call to be professor of Practical Theology and teach Biblical Hebrew at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois. Pastor Behrens was called to his eternal reward on March 29, 1943.

7. Pastor H. C. Schreck, 1924 - 1948

Rev. H. C. Schreck came to St. John from Pinckneyville in 1924. After having been called twice by the congregation, September 25th and October 9th he accepted and was installed on the first Sunday in November by Pastor J. Deye of Bremen, Illinois, assisted by Rev. Duenow of Steeleville, Rev. Hartenberger of Red Bud, Rev. Glahn of Evansville, and Rev. Wessel of Sparta. He served St. John congregation until his death in 1948.

In 1925 the joy of the congregation was again overshadowed by a cloud of sorrow when it pleased Almighty God suddenly to call His faithful servant, Teacher H. Zastrow, out of the Church Militant into the Church Triumphant. Teacher Zastrow was stricken with a heart attack and called out of this life while he was serving as organist for a worship service. (At this time the organ console was located in the front left balcony and his being stricken during a service caused a lot of upset for the worshippers. Some years later the organ console was moved to the right rear balcony.) Mr. Zastrow's vacancy in the school was temporarily filled by a student teacher.

On June 26, 1926, the congregation called Teacher W. E. Beinke of Cleveland, Ohio, to teach grades 5 and 6. He was installed August 29, 1926. In September 1928, the Rev. Gustav Roesener was called as a teacher at our school. He served in this capacity teaching grades 3 and 4 for several terms, then the 2nd grade, and later several terms of grades 5 and 6 until 1948, a total of 20 years, when he retired from teaching. During this time he also assisted with ministerial services with Pastor Schreck and served as a part time chaplain at the Menard penitentiary. When in 1933 the school enrollment had grown, the need for an additional teacher was evident and a call was sent to River Forest for a graduate. Mr. Adolph Leitz was assigned to Chester where he taught grades 3 and 4. Mr. Leitz would teach at St. John for 11 years.

Tying in with preparations for the 100th anniversary of the Missouri Synod, the congregation began preparing for the 90th anniversary of the congregation (1939). The interior of the church was redecorated, two additional stops were added to the organ, and a new steam furnace and city water and lavatories were added to the church. This was also the time that the city paved West Holmes Street. Observance of the 90th anniversary began on Monday evening, April 17, 1939, continuing with a series of services each evening through the week, and climaxed with a special Jubilee service on Sunday, April 23, 1939. All societies aided in sponsoring this program which gave individual emphasis to each phase of work of the church. The Lord continued to bless St. John congregation and school.

In 1942 an addition to the school was completed at a cost of \$42,000. Again, devoted congregational participation helped. Gib Crisler (husband of Nellie Crisler) trucked the brick from the brickyard in Pinckneyville that was used for the 1942 school addition.

In 1944 the congregation observed Pastor Schreck's 25th anniversary of ordination and in the spring of the same year, Mr. Lietz accepted a call to Royal Oak, Michigan.

In June of 1945 St. John began a departmentalized Sunday School for children of all ages that met at 9:15 on Sunday mornings. They also observed special programs such as an annual 'Rally Day', Christmas and Easter programs, pupils' birthdays, and the like. A special endeavor of the pupils was to support the orphan homes of the church. According to the notes of the Centennial report, there were an average of 20 classes meeting each week. Mr. Clarence Nordmeyer and Mr. Elmer Schaardt served as the original superintendents. Teachers and officers at that time included: Verdell (Beck) Brelje, Lydell Downen, Fern Hartenberger, Dorothy Heinks, Nora Moeller, Ruby (Mueller) Minks, Velma Lee Powley, Mildred Sasse, Elvera (Brelig) Rathert, Florence (Erdman) Heinks, Mildred (Heineman) Amschler, John Kober, Velma (Moeller) Adams, Carl Powley, Nora Powley, Marie Welten, Mary Alice Crisler, Faye (Hartenberger) Magers, Mrs. George Herschbach, Mrs. Edna Lemmerman, Alice Mueller, Edward Powley, Lela Reuscher and Joretta Rodewald. Although this was the organization of the formal Sunday School, there had been a Sunday School in existence for several years prior to 1916. This school was conducted on Sunday afternoons for about two hours by the Pastor or one of the teachers. It had been discontinued during World War I and apparently had not been resumed officially until this time.

In 1946 Mr. C. Berndt was called from Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, as principal. He would serve for 10 years, until 1956. Mr. John Kober of Bridgman, Michigan, and Mr. Aaron Kopf, a graduate of Concordia Seward, Nebraska, were called in 1948 to augment the teaching staff.

In spring of 1948 Pastor Schreck and the congregation began to prepare for the Centennial Observance. It was resolved to reface the exterior of the church building with Permastone and to redecorate the interior. New chancel furniture was installed and the floors were covered with tile. The front of the church was remodeled by adding two new entrances, all new doors and concrete steps across the entire front. The organ was again remodeled and large fans were installed in the bell towers for the circulation of air through the church.

Before all the plans could be carried out Pastor Schreck was taken ill. His last Sunday sermon was delivered on Mothers' Day of 1948 (preserved in our archives) after which he served in a limited capacity. The Lord called him to rest on July 8, 1948. He had served his Lord, and the congregation and community in Chester faithfully for 24 years, and the esteem in which he was held was evidenced when he was laid to rest in the Lutheran Cemetery, July 11, 1948.

8. Pastor O. B. Hussmann, 1949 – 1956

After a six month vacancy God heard the prayers of His people and again gave them a faithful and consecrated shepherd, Pastor O. B. Hussman, called from Topeka, Kansas. Pastor Hussman was installed on January 9, 1949 by Rev. J. Mueller of Steeleville, assisted by Pastors L. Behnken of Steeleville, R. Barlag of Sparta, H. C. Welp, President of the Southern Illinois District, O. Jagels of Campbell Hill, and M. Clausen of Red Bud.

Pastor Hussmann graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1929. His first charge was a mission congregation in Eldorado, Kansas, also organizing a congregation in Augusta, Kansas. He became the pastor of Trinity, McFarland, Kansas in 1937. In August 1944 he entered the United States Army Chaplaincy and served with the 92nd Field Hospital Unit first in the Phillipines and later in Japan. He served fifteen months overseas and was discharged in April 1946. He was pastor of St. Paul, Topeka, Kansas from there being called to Chester.

The distress of the war years drew the people into closer relationship with their God, with their Pastor, and with themselves; and this, by God's blessing worked to bring the congregation's 100 years of existence to a worthy celebration of grace in the Centennial Observance. On April 22, 1949 the congregation began its Centennial – jubilant and thankful – with the rededication of its renovated and remodeled church. Special historical services were held the second Sunday of each month for a year, finishing in April 1950. The congregation made prominent use of Psalm 100 in setting the theme:

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing. – enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.”

In 1949 the congregation numbered 1,400 souls, 1,080 communicants and nearly 200 voting members.

On May 1, 1949, arrangements were completed and the beginning of radio broadcasting of worship services from St. John was begun over Radio Station KSGM. At the beginning services were broadcast from the vestry by means of a temporary installation. During the week of July 3, however, the radio committee, with permission of the trustees built a special radio control booth in the upper room of the narthex and installed a permanent broadcasting system. Mr. Walter Beinke (St John School's 5th and 6th grade teacher) served as the first radio announcer for our broadcast services. Later this year Mr. Leonard Weber volunteered to serve as radio technician. He served in this task until 1994 (45 years) when he and his wife Fern left Chester for Arizona due to health reasons. In 1951, Charles Heinks joined in providing technical assistance. He served with Mr. Weber for about 40 years. Charles was a dedicated and reliable partner in this service and occasionally served as an announcer when needed. Other announcers were Mr. Wib Adams, Paul Preusse, Wib Alms and Ted Search along with Steve Egge, Warren Buescher, Mardell Granger and Chris Urquhart. Mrs. Lynn Rickenberg has joined as one of our radio technicians along with Brian Snider and Dr. Robert Platt. Over the years St. John has received cards, letters and phone calls from about a 100 mile radius around Chester expressing appreciation for the broadcasts, requesting prayers and providing gifts to the broadcast fund in support of this wonderful ministry.

Several teachers were added to the school faculty during these years. Carolyn Mahon arrived in 1951 and taught here until 1961. Mr. George Bargman joined us in 1953 and taught here until 1966. And Mrs. Mildred Dial arrived in 1956 and taught here until 1966.

9. Pastor Henry F. Gerecke, 1950 - 1961

On July 9, 1950, the Rev. Henry F. Gerecke, came to Chester as Assistant Pastor of our congregation and Lutheran Chaplain at the two Illinois state institutions. Pastor Gerecke was installed by Rev. Harry Welp, president of the Southern Illinois District, Rev. Hussmann of St. John leading the worship and Rev. Henry Rehwald of East St. Louis delivering the sermon.

Pastor Gerecke came to Chester from seven years' service with the United States Army Chaplaincy. Prior to his army career he served the Church as teacher at Emmaus Church, pastor of Christ Church, and Executive Secretary of the Lutheran City Mission Association in St. Louis.

Rev. Gerecke had served as a military chaplain during World War II and was one of the chaplains to the Nazi war criminals, including several of the notorious heads of the Nazi government, while they went through their trials for war crimes. From 1943 to 1950 he served as Chaplain with the 98th General Hospital in England, France, and Germany, with the United States Constabulary at the Nuernberg trials, and with the Army Disciplinary Barracks in Milwaukee. He distinguished himself particularly in his service to the high Nazis on trial at Nuernberg, remaining with the defendants with the counsel and consolation of God's Word, and rejoicing to see repentance worked in the hearts of a number of the

men by the Gospel. He attended them with Word, Sacrament, and prayer to their very end, walking the last mile with the condemned men. Accounts of Pastor Gerecke's service in Nuremberg are in St. John archives and copies are available.

In 1946 Chaplain Gerecke returned to the States and was assigned Prison Chaplain at the Milwaukee Disciplinary Barracks. Of his assignments and experiences Pastor Gerecke has said:

"I was in Milwaukee 33 months dealing with men, mostly young men, whom the world wanted to forget. I feel that some good was accomplished in these seven years in the Army Chaplaincy. To be sure, I acknowledge this by the grace of God. With all my blundering, the Holy Spirit used the Word to save some among the Armed Forces and among the enemy. It is my sincere hope that with all this background of experience I shall be more humble as an ambassador of the Lord and a little better qualified to tell the sweetest story ever told."

Years after his time in Nuremberg Pastor Gerecke talked about his experiences, but never divulged their confessions. He told of praying before meeting the men as he walked the long corridor, of becoming physically sick listening to anti-Semitic ravings of one, and of long talks to determine whether those who claimed to be repentant were genuinely so. Four months before the executions, when Pastor Gerecke was scheduled to return to the states, 21 of them wrote and signed a letter to his wife Alma pleading for Pastor Gerecke to stay on, which he did.

Pastor Gerecke was a very well loved man. The large white cross with the neon lights on the school roof was a gift memorial from the many men ministered to by him at the prison and Security Hospital. Orville Hodge, who was once Illinois State Auditor and candidate for Governor, served over five years in the Menard Correctional institution. During this time he was assigned as a clerk for Rev. Gerecke and wrote an article for *This Day*, a magazine of the Lutheran Church, giving an account of Rev. Gerecke's ministry and schedule. He wrote highly of Pastor Gerecke as a "patient, humble, tolerant and dedicated man of God."

There was a special "Lutheran Day Communion" offered each last Tuesday of the month, and regular Lutheran services on the first and third Sundays in the afternoon. *This is the Life* films were often shared after worship services concluded. Editions of *This Day*, *The Lutheran Witness*, *Good News* and *Portals of Prayer* were distributed to every Lutheran communicant in his cell.

Pastor Gerecke died of a heart attack on Oct 11, 1961, and the entire community, as well as inmates of the institutions he served, mourned his passing.

10. Pastor Eric Cash, 1957 - 1967

Rev. Eric Cash began his pastorate at St. John on July 28, 1957, when some 800 people attended his installation. He was installed by Rev. Henry Welp, president of the Southern Illinois District, Rev. Gerecke of Chester delivering the sermon and Rev. Ralph Fessler of Steeleville leading the worship. Pastor Cash was born October 27, 1920, in Gorton, Manchester, England. He graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1947; serving in Maplewood, Missouri; St. Johns, Michigan; and Ionia, Michigan before coming to Chester.

1957 was a year of change as Roland C. Rehmer became principal of the school and Robert Holste joined the faculty. Principal Rehmer would serve until 1970, 13 years. Mr. Holste would teach here until 1967, his wife Betty joining the faculty from 1964 to 1966. After their time in Chester the Holstes would teach in Evansville, Indiana, until retirement and then serve as volunteer missionaries in Thailand, where they currently are.

Telephone Meditations were begun and the student vicarage program began with Arlan Busse of St. Cloud, Florida, installed on Oct 1, 1961. Other vicars trained by Rev. Cash included Harvey Kath, David Shoemaker, Ted Dallman,

Daniel Clausen and Jerry Klug. In June 1963, the St. John Ladies' Aid members celebrated their 100th year of service to our Lord at St. John and to the needs of those around us. To put this in perspective, in June 1863 it was just a few months after President Abraham Lincoln had delivered his famous Gettysburg Address and the Civil War was in the midst of some of its most severe fighting. It was at this time that several Lutheran women of St. John met to organize the "St. Johannes Frauen Verein," the forerunner of the Ladies' Aid. It was speculated by the historian of the Centennial record, that the ladies probably served their Lord and fellowman by making bandages for wounded soldiers. This has been the oldest society within our congregation and has a long history of service through their sacrifice of time, treasure and talents.

Some of their activities were quilting, serving meals for the local Rotary Club, and rummage and bake sales. Through these they provided funds for their treasury which were then distributed to Lutheran institutions such as the Bethesda Home, local and national charitable organizations, and Christmas and Easter seasonal gifts.

At the time of the Lutheran Ladies' Aid Centennial there were 75 members. Officers were Mrs. Gertrude Welge, President; Mrs. Frieda Koopman, Vice President; Mrs. Esther Braun, Secretary; Mrs. Rudelle Welge, Treasurer. (Mrs. Rudelle Welge served in this capacity for 38 years; truly a devotion to the Lord and the organization that is noteworthy.) The ladies were also affiliated with the International Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), sharing regularly through Mite Box donations in the outreach of the International LWML. One of the major mission activities they were involved in during 1967 was the support of building the Lutheran Student Center at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Mrs. Rudelle Welge represented our District LWML by turning the first shovel full of dirt at the ground breaking.

In 1964 a \$40,000 renovation program was undertaken at our church and a new organ was installed.

In 1967 Pastor Cash accepted the full-time position as Protestant Chaplain at the prison and five years later he left Menard to serve a congregation in South San Francisco, California.

11. Pastor W. A. Ranta, 1967 - 1981

On August 27, 1967 Rev. W. Arnold Ranta from Chesterland, Ohio, assumed the pastorate of our congregation. He was installed by Rev. Herman Neunaber, president of the Southern Illinois District, Rev. Reuben Baerwald, first vice-president of the Southern Illinois District delivering the sermon and Vicar Jerry Klug leading the worship. Pastor Ranta was born in Poplar, Wisconsin July 13, 1928 and graduated in 1951 from Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield. He began his ministry by serving a parish of five congregations: Bethany, Wakefield and St. Mark, Bessemer, Michigan; and Iron Belt, North York, and Marengo, Wisconsin. From there he was called to Fort William, Intoca and Lappe, Ontario, serving preaching stations in Murrillo, Mokomon, Sunshine and Kamanistiqua, Ontario as well. Pastor Ranta was then called to serve as Mission Developer in Chesterland, Ohio, from where he was called to come to Chester.

The first ten years of his ministry Pastor Ranta served in bi-lingual churches, in the English and Finnish languages. On one occasion in Chester Pastor Ranta began his sermon with several paragraphs in Finnish. Prior to the merger of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church with the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in 1963 he served 8 years as secretary of the Synodical Extension Board; in Canada was president of the Thunder Bay District for 4 years; and in Ohio as president of the Lower Lakes District of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Pastor Ranta's emphasis was on ministering to youth and the aged. Under his guidance our school was continually upgraded. An Altar Guild was formed. A Ladies' Bible Class was organized. The Acolyte program was begun. And the importance of Holy Communion was stressed. Under his guidance in 1968 St. John made the change from having a special service of Communion held after the regular service, to including Communion as a part of the regular service.

He also continued the Vicarage training program. Former vicars of St. John included Alan Bachert, Harold Austerman, Robert Muller, Les Weiser, John Elke, John Sellmeyer Russell Zimmerman, and Fred Campbell, all trained under Pastor Ranta. Pastor Ranta provided regular services for the Menard Psychiatric Center and occasional services at the General Division of the Menard institution.

The years 1970 – 1974 saw the arrival of seven members of our school faculty who would serve for many years. In 1970 Mr. Chris Urquhart joined us, having graduated from Concordia, River Forest. He would become Principal in 1991, and has to this time served 32 years at St. John.

In 1971 four teachers arrived. Mrs. Pam Sheely is a graduate of Concordia, River Forest and has taught at St. John for 28 years. Mr. Charles Winterstein, a graduate of Concordia, River Forest taught here until 1985. Mr. Ralph Granger, a graduate of Concordia, River Forest, had taught in Hamblin, New York and Grand Rapids, Michigan. He served as teacher and Principal until 1991. Miss Lydia Homan, a graduate of Concordia, Seward, had taught in Saginaw Michigan and Murphysboro, Illinois. She would teach at St. John until 1992, when she had to retire for health reasons. After her retirement Lydia did a great deal of volunteer service, teaching public school confirmation for several years, tutoring many children, and teaching the 6:00 a.m. Bible Study for many years. That Bible Study decided to study their way through the entire Bible, beginning in Genesis. Lydia was able to lead them as far as the Book of Psalms before having to quit. In 2001 her Lord called her to her eternal reward.

In 1973, Mr. Richard Janssen joined the faculty of St. John. He was a 1967 graduate of Concordia, Seward and had served in Palmer Kansas before coming to Chester. Mr. Janssen served as teacher, organist, and Music Director until 1998; as Music Director from 1999 – 2000; and continues to serve as organist and teach.

In 1974 Mrs. Connie Mattingly joined our faculty. Her training was at Concordia, River Forest and SIU – Carbondale. In addition to teaching 1st grade Mrs. Mattingly also leads our Primary Choir (grades 1-3), and together with her husband Charlie served the Youth Group for many years.

In May of 1977, the Davis Art Glass Company of St. Louis did some repair work to our stained glass windows, painted the sash and installed Lexan plastic window covers to protect the stained glass and help with heat loss from the church. Also in May, a metal equipment storage building was erected on the parsonage lot for storing the church mowers, snow blowers and other equipment too large to bring into the school.

In July of 1977, the property adjacent to the parsonage became available and was purchased by the congregation for additional parking space. It was agreed that Gilster - Mary Lee corporation would be able to use the space for parking during the week and they assisted by providing the layout, grading, and crushed rock for paving the lot.

July 2, 1980, a heavy rainstorm in conjunction with tornadoes around the area did damage to the church roof and steeple. The large steeple cross was twisted and had to be straightened. Shingles and flashing on the roof had to be repaired and several slate shingles on the steeple needed to be replaced. The chimney cap and many shingles on the parsonage roof also needed to be repaired.

In June 1981, the Cemetery Committee prepared the layout of the north half of the cemetery property for expansion. A road was laid out around the new area and rocked to give easy driving access to all cemetery lots.

Pastor Ranta also worked with William McLaughlin, who served as chairman of St. John Board of Trustees, in order to prepare and submit plans for the building of a Parish Hall. In September 1981, the congregation authorized a parish hall study group.

In November 1981, Pastor Ranta accepted a call from the Southern Illinois District Mission Board to serve as Chaplain at the Chester Mental Health Center and to provide services at the Psychiatric Center at Menard; which he did until the time of his retirement.

12. Pastor C. F. Campbell, 1975 - 1994

After serving his vicarage year at St. John, Pastor Charles Frederick Campbell was called as the congregation's 12th minister. He was installed on June 1, 1975 by Rev. Herman Neunaber, president of the Southern Illinois District, Rev. Norman Smith of Bordentown New Jersey delivering the sermon and Rev. Arnold Ranta leading the worship. Pastor Campbell had served over 20 years in the United States Air Force. He taught electronics as an enlisted man for about two years. He attended Aviation Cadet training and then was commissioned and spent 18 years as a fighter pilot, a bomber pilot, and as a Strategic War Planning Officer. After his retirement from military service he attended Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield and received a Master of Divinity degree in Biblical Exegetical Studies.

On January 22, 1982, the Parish Hall Study Group presented plans to the church at all services. A ballot vote was taken and 80% were in favor of building a \$450,000 to \$500,000 facility. By March 1982, \$85,881 cash and \$169,145 in pledges had been brought in for the project. On June 12, 1982, the congregation had a large auction of donated items from many congregation and community members for the planned parish hall, which realized \$13,000 in income.

Bids received for the planned building, designed by William McLaughlin of St. John and his associates, totaled \$591,000. A special meeting was held to make changes to reduce the cost. The changes brought the cost down to \$583,500. Kiefner Brothers was the general contractor, and ground was first broken at a special service on August 1, 1982 with \$130,642 in the bank for the project. On May 1, 1983 a dedicatory service and potluck dinner was held in the new St. John Lutheran Veterans Memorial Parish Hall with 525 people in attendance.

Many activities have been held in the Parish Hall such as athletic events, meetings, congregational dinners, musical programs, occasional use for worship services when the main sanctuary was not available due to remodeling, community activities and private events. It also served as an emergency shelter during the flood of 1993. It has been a blessing to church and community.

Evangelism received special emphasis for several years. Pastor Campbell also restarted the vicarage program in August 1984. The Vicars trained by Pastor Campbell included Stan Harding, Michael Parris, Brad Stoltenow, Jon Anderson, James Burns, Mark Lavrenz, Tim Vaughan, Wayne Woolery and Joe Murphy.

During the Vicarage of Stan Harding (1984 - 1985) the congregation began a monthly "shut-in" service at the church. Some of the Elders and senior helpers brought to church several of our members who normally were unable to participate in regular services for a special service at the church. About a dozen came the first few months. This activity soon grew to as many as 40 participants. Later on, this service and Communion were expanded to include a short fellowship and social time and included sharing of cookies and punch and coffee. It has been a very successful and much appreciated ministry for years. Our AAL group also began providing a special program and a noon meal serving 60 to 70 people several times a year in connection with the worship and Communion Service. The "shut-in service" eventually became the "Golden Agers" monthly gathering as our folks continued to reach out with the love of Jesus.

In January of 1986, the voters approved the replacement of the 62 year old pews in the church. May 9, 1986, new pews were installed downstairs in the church at a cost of \$16,453. Some of the old pews were moved to the upper rear balcony, some were sold to another church. In April 1986 a wheelchair ramp was completed on the south side of the church. This has been a great help to many of our 'Seniors' and shut-in members.

August through December of 1987 saw acquisition of title to the remaining properties along High Street from the church toward German Street. (The Jackson and the Johnson properties behind the church for \$16,000; and the Steffens property for \$10,000; the Grah property at the end of the block for \$14,000, and in December, the Schrieber property and house for \$28,000.) This secured the entire block around the church as church property. The old parsonage was made available to the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts as a rental property and the Schrieber property was improved with new plumbing, electrical wiring, paint and new carpeting for vicarage housing.

In January 1988, the church received a gift of a complete set of handbells from the Willard Rathert family to add to the music of the church and thus began the formation of our handbell choir.

After many years of operation the old bell tower clock striker failed. A new computerized 'Bell Strike' tape system from I. T. Verdin Co. was installed and dedicated November 29, 1989. The school children saved aluminum cans as a project to help pay for the \$8300 system which also plays hymns as well as the 'Westminster' strike on each quarter hour. This aluminum can recycling project has been continued through the years and has provided a great amount of income for special maintenance projects and for providing special items for our school.

In 1990 the congregation began to use both The Lutheran Hymnal and the newer Lutheran Worship orders of service alternately. It was begun with the introduction of the Lutheran Worship at occasional services, then on alternate weekends. Also in July of this year, the church received and dedicated a complete set of liquid wax candles for the altar as a memorial gift of Paul Mueller for his wife Charlesa.

In February of 1991, the ground behind the church was prepared and paved as a parking lot and Mr. Nelson Rathert installed lighting for the parking lot and the north sidewalk of the church.

In 1992 Mrs. Meg Knop joined our school faculty. She is a 1979 graduate of Concordia Seward, and had served in Grand Island, Nebraska, Staplehurst, Nebraska, Beatrice, Nebraska, and Red Bud, Illinois before coming to Chester.

In 1992 the church narthex floor was repaired and new floor covering replaced the worn out carpeting. The radio booth was enlarged to better accommodate some new sound equipment. Air conditioning was installed in the church in May of 1992 and much of the electrical wiring was updated.

July 20, 1992, the mortgage on the parish hall building was paid off completely 10 years from the beginning of the building plan. A special mortgage burning service of praise and thanks to the Lord for His blessings on us throughout the years was offered.

In 1992 a group consisting of Vicar Wayne Woolery, Roger Kattenbraker, and Rick Casten, made a missionary trip to Central America. There they helped build pews and remodel a church in Guatemala and upon returning home they helped prepare a fine mission fair for the community that told and showed through pictures some of the mission work being done. Following their return a Mission Fair was held in the Parish Hall and in May of 1992 St. John's Mission Committee was formed. In 1994, Kyle Castens accompanied a mission group that returned to Guatemala.

In May 1993, we had another special mission activity with Revenel Benoit for his vicarage and ministry to Gonaives, Haiti. After his graduation from the seminary, he was placed as missionary at large in Gonaives, Haiti.

Also in May of 1993 and on through the summer we were contending with a major flood situation throughout all the Mississippi River area. We made our Parish Hall available as an emergency shelter and housed four lady National

Guard medics, two four-man crews of National Guard helicopter rescue crews, and several volunteer disaster relief workers. We stored food and supplies for workers and for flood victims.

13. Pastor Dennis Tegtmeier, 1993 - 1996

With the advent of Rev. Campbell's planned retirement in June 1994, St. John organized a Call Committee and extended a call to the Rev. Dennis Tegtmeier of Irvine, California, who assumed the position of Senior Pastor at St. John on August 15, 1993. Pastor Tegtmeier had served congregations in Nebraska, Hawaii and California and also served as Campus Pastor at the University of California, Irvine.

As the flood of 1993 continued the families of Alvernon and Amanda Kriete, Larry Roth, and Peggy and Lorine Kriete from our congregation lost their homes and crops in the disaster that wiped out most of Kaskaskia Island as well as several small communities up and down the Mississippi River. Paul and Carol Kueker lost all the crops from their farmland on the Island. The Gilster-Mary Lee plant at McBride, Missouri, was likewise destroyed and required major repair and rebuilding after the flood had subsided enough to get back into the area. There was major devastation up and down the whole Mississippi Valley. After the flood it generally took over a year and, in some cases, two years to rebuild and normalize.

Our radio broadcasting was interrupted by the destruction of the transmitter site which was on the flood plain. The FM station, KBDZ - FM 93.1, picked up our broadcasting until some arrangement could be made to resume AM broadcasting on what was KSGM AM 980 radio. This didn't get completely repaired and in action again until the early spring of 1997. Mr. Brian Snider, one of our members and a radio broadcast technician and announcer, was instrumental in assisting with the restoration of our broadcasts.

In January of 1994, the church offices were moved from the north side room of the church into the former vicarage building (Schrieber home) across from the Parish Hall. This afforded much needed office space, storage and better accessibility for church business. It also reduced the need for heating the entire church all the time during the cold months. The office capabilities were upgraded with more computer equipment, and an accessible walkway was added from the parking lot to the office porch in May.

Plans were made to redo the church directory during the summer of 1994, inasmuch as the present book was almost five years old and very outdated. This was accomplished and the new directory was well appreciated.

November 15, 1995, new clocks for the bell towers were procured and installed; as the old clocks had suffered much damage over the years, especially by lightning strikes to the church. The new clocks are now on a separate shielded surge protected power supply that helps a great deal with re-setting and preventing stoppages.

In August 1996, Rev. Tegtmeier departed to serve as a teacher at Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin. There he would be teaching religion and teaching about the use of media in teaching.

14. Pastor Mark Willig, 1994 – 2012

(For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 1 Corinthians 2:2)

The congregation had proceeded with the call process in order to fill the Assistant Pastor position. In April, 1994, a Divine Call was sent to the Rev. Mark Willig, University Lutheran Church, Whitewater, Wisconsin, to become our Assistant Pastor. Pastor Willig was installed August 7, 1994 by Rev. Herbert Mueller, Southern Illinois District President, who also delivered the sermon, with Pastor Tegtmeier leading the worship. His tenure has been characterized by an emphasis on missions.

In September of 1995 members of the deaf community in southern Illinois and southeast Missouri approached Pastor Willig and his wife Paula and asked for their help in providing interpreted worship services and signed worship and Bible Study. This was done, working with Russell and Betty Healey of Olive Branch, Illinois, first once a month at a congregation in Jackson, Missouri, then in conjunction with a Bible Study meeting in members' homes and in nursing homes, then through interpreted worship services at St. John. Interpreted worship services continue to be offered and several members of the deaf community have become members of St. John.

When Pastor Tegtmeier accepted the call to Wisconsin, Pastor Willig was called to become our Senior Pastor and was installed November 16, again by Pastor Herbert Mueller, with Pastor Campbell leading the worship.

In 1996, Mrs. Cathy Eggers was hired as computer and art teacher, and in 1998 the Computer Lab was installed behind the old stage on the second floor of the school.

The Trustees, under direction of Mr. David Bargman and Mr. Bob Decker, built a new storage building behind the church office building through the spring and summer of 1997 to be used for aluminum can recycling, and storage of church equipment. This was accomplished with the use of volunteer labor and skills, plus the reuse of salvaged lumber that men of our congregation had obtained by volunteering to dismantle the Bode house, an old home scheduled for destruction.

In July and August of 1997 the school basement was modified to expand rooms for our preschool classes. (We have had to keep many on waiting lists.) Also, an additional development of an 'After-Care' school was provided so families with pre-schoolers could have a safe and supervised care area for children after school hours.

In the summer of 1998 Rev. Bert Schirmer (a son of the congregation who was retired and living in Chester) and his wife Betty undertook a mission endeavor to Kyrgystan, one of the former Soviet Bloc countries, to help coordinate the establishment of Christian and medical services to the area of Bishkek, the capitol of that country.

With the approach of our 150th year under God's grace, the congregation resolved to do some major remodeling, renovation and upgrading of the church facility. The first part of our efforts was the replacement of the roof, which had begun to leak. In September 1997 a renovation budget of \$457,500 was approved and fund raising began. In June of 1998, the remodeling work was begun and the church services were temporarily relocated to the parish hall. (We had to suspend Saturday evening services due to a number of scheduled uses of the Parish Hall.)

Some of the modifications to the church included creation of a 'Family Chapel' for caring for small children during services, major reworking of the radio booth for improving facilities for sound control, the extension of the rear balcony and choir loft including new pews upstairs and major maintenance and improvement of our pipe organ. New pews were installed and aisles adjusted to meet standards necessary for the handicapped and wheelchair space. New carpeting was installed, painting was done, and the chancel area was moved forward to provide for a free standing altar arrangement. The Trinity Insignia above the altar was carefully designed, and was painted by Ted Mueller, the color scheme being drawn from Revelation, chapter 4. The Trinity Insignia is surrounded by the shields of the 12 apostles (Revelation 4:10) to remind us that the teaching of the Trinity is not simply a doctrine but also a call to worship. On the walls gold leaf and camel color reminds us of the coming of the wise men, and the wood trim beneath the windows on the outside walls forms the shape of a cross. Within the cross God comes to us in mercy and we find life.

Additional repair was done and additional ductwork was provided to improve air conditioning and noise reduction throughout the church. A dividing wall was erected to increase narthex space, provide for greater fellowship space inside the church and still allow overflow seating if necessary.

Special projects were included, as members volunteered funds for the improvement of the Organ, the preservation and protection of the windows, and the replacement of the pillars in the balconies bringing the total amount spent to \$706,994. Dedication of the newly remodeled sanctuary was held on November 8, 1998. A recital was presented on our refurbished pipe organ between Sunday services by Mr. Ron Yeater of the Wicks Organ Company featuring music from Bach and other music for the church seasons. Since the rededication visitors have continued to come to Chester to tour the building. Those who served on the Renovating Committee, devoting many hours of service to St. John, are: Barb Fricke, Mary Jane Gross, Mike Hecht, Roger Kattenbraker, Robert Platt, Marlene Seymour and Mary Alice Welge.

As part of the 150th Anniversary St. John held an open house in December 1999 and welcomed the Chester community to tour the sanctuary. A booklet of devotions drawn from various parts of the Church building was printed and distributed. A copy is preserved in the archives.

In the summer of 1999 Air Conditioning was installed in the School, and the electrical system was upgraded, at the cost of \$70,000. In June of 1999 a bell striker found in our bell tower was donated to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis to be used to sound the bell from the old Jefferson Avenue campus now located in the seminary's President's Plaza. Also in 1999 our congregation's web site was developed (stjohnchester.com) through many hours of loving labor by Paula Willig and Tony Young.

The celebration of the 150th Anniversary began on the fourth Sunday of Easter, April 24-25, 1999 with Rev. Dale A. Meyer, Lutheran Hour Speaker, and continued throughout the next year, celebrating the theme "Our God, the Rock of Ages – Foundation of the Past, Strength of the Present, Vision for the Future." Special Sunday themes included: Radio Ministry; World Missions; Christian Heritage (with part of the service in German); American Heritage; Christian Education; Vicar Reunion; LWML & KFUE; Baptismal Heritage; Marriage; Lutheran Schools; and Looking to the Future. The Youth Group put together a Baptismal Chain extending from one side of the altar around the entire Church to the other side of the altar.

One of the highlights of the 150th anniversary celebration year was the visit of our beloved Synod President Al Barry, who shared God's Word with us on January 9, 2000. One year later, in April 2001, the congregation mourned his passing in a very personal way.

In February 2000 the Southern Illinois District entered into a mission partnership with the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. St. John became the first congregation to pledge and fulfill our pledge toward the new mission partnership, as our convention representatives, pastors, teachers and retired pastors gave an offering of love during the convention. Bishop David Tswaedi, president of the LCSA, came to St. John and shared the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with us; and Pastor Willig served on the District Task Force to help develop the mission partnership. Pastor Willig is now serving as Chair of the South Africa Mission Partnership Task Force and served as our Circuit Counselor (2003-2009).

15. Pastor Martin Springer, 2000 - 2002

(For in the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous shall live by faith." Romans 1:17)

With the departure of Rev. Tegtmeier, the Call Committee was activated again. In October 1998 District President Herb Mueller introduced St. John to Martin Springer, who was completing his classes at St. Louis and was seeking a site for his vicarage, close enough to continue caring for his wife's mother. He would serve his year as vicar at St. John, beginning in January 1999, and then could continue as pastor here.

In February 1999, Vicar Springer, together with Alice Decker, Ted Mueller and Mildred Young made a mission trip of several weeks to Gonaives, Haiti, visiting the orphanage and Mission served by Rev. Revenelle Benoit, and assisting with a number of the needs of the mission there.

On January 22, 2000 Rev. Martin Springer became the 15th Pastor of St. John, being ordained by Pastor Herbert Mueller, Southern Illinois District President, and installed by Pastor Willig. Pastor Fred Campbell delivered the sermon, "Fulfill Your Ministry" based on 2 Timothy 4:2-5. Pastor Springer had served in the United States Air Force from 1982 to 1986, serving in the Office of Presidential Protocol at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C., during the Regan administration. After leaving active duty Pastor Springer served in a Civil Service position, as a Manpower and Personnel Officer at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, resigning that position in 1997 to enter the seminary in St. Louis.

In the summer of 2001, in an effort coordinated by Pastor Springer, the congregation began to convert the second floor of the Church Office into a Youth Center. The work continued until the Youth Center was placed in service on February 3, 2002.

In November, 2002 Pastor Springer left to serve as pastor in Imperial, Missouri.

16. Pastor Peter III, 2010 - 2014

In March, 2010 the congregation voted to call a candidate from the seminaries. Peter III from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was assigned to us.

Pastor III is from Millington, Michigan, and comes to us with a love of music and evangelism. He begins his service at St. John with his ordination and installation on August 1, 2010.

Beautiful music has always been an important part of our worship services through congregational singing and through our choirs. Our organists are Richard Janssen, Mrs. Irene Dierks, and Mrs. Jane Stallman our Music Director. Mr. Janssen and Mrs. Dierks have served as organists for 38 years and 40 years respectively to this particular time. At the present time there are four choirs: the Primary Choir directed by Connie Mattingly; the Children's Choir and the Adult Choir directed by Mrs. Jane Stallman; and the handbell Choir also under Mrs. Stallman's direction.

Each year the adult choir presents a Christmas Cantata and the Children's Choir and school classes put on special musical Christmas programs. These are divided into three age groups: Preschool and Kindergarten; Grades 1-4; and Grades 5-8. The Christmas programs have usually played to a full church. In the spring all the singing groups and Handbell Choir participate in a Spring Music Festival that has been performed at the Parish Hall followed by a time of fellowship, cookies and punch.

In addition to our Weekend Services St. John provides worship services for our Golden Agers monthly at Church. Our Pastors also hold monthly services for the residents of Three Springs Lodge; St. Ann Care Center; Craig Manor, Perryville Nursing Home; and the Hi-Rise Apartments on Opdyke.

It is with thankful hearts that our congregation looks back on the many and great blessings that God has showered upon us and the wonderfully faithful workers He has provided for doing His services. Truly, He is our Good Shepherd. All glory and praise to Him through Christ, our Lord and Savior.

PASTORS EMERITI LIVING IN CHESTER

Rev. Charles F. Campbell
Rev. Kenneth Young

PASTOR "SONS" OF THE CONGREGATION

Walter Lemmermann	(Springfield, 1955)	Delbert Gremmels	(St. Louis, 1955)
Donald Nordmeyer	(St. Louis, 1959)	Ralph Mueller	(St. Louis, 1959)
William F. Moeller	(St. Louis, 1960)	Elmer A. Reuscher	(St. Louis, 1963)
Bertram I. Schirmer	(Springfield, 1971)	Larry M. Vogel	(St. Louis, 1981)
Kyle Castens	(St. Louis, 2000)		

PRINCIPALS OF ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Mr. Adolph Leitz	Until 1944
Mr. Walter Lobitz	1944 - 1946
Mr. Clarence Berndt	1946 - 1956
Mr. Martin Grefe	Until 1965
Mr. Roland Rehmer	1965 - 1970
Mr. Bill Sturm	1970 - 1971
Mr. Ralph Granger	1971 - 1987
Mr. Chris Urquhart	1987 -
Mrs. Brenda Owen	

SYNODICAL TEACHERS FROM ST. JOHN

Zina (Decker) Bachert
Connie (Brelje) Bunke
Eric Cash
Paul G. Crisler
Linda (Cash) Egge
Beth Engelage
Leroy Erdman
Mary (Cash) Hilgendorf
Randy Hornberger
Tim Lochhead
Jill (Searles) Lund
Jack Middendorf
Carol (Erdmann) Moritz
Sandra (Vogel) Pederson
Doris (Vogel) Quade
Robert C. Rehmer
Jeanne (Mueller) Rempfer
Cindy (Decker) Schumacher
Jeanne (Mueller) Seager
Phylis (Schaardt) Sievers

Roger Sprengel
 Lynn (Weber) Stibrick
 Alecia (Wittenbrink) Winterstein
 Tim Winterstein

CHAPLAINS AT MENARD AND CHESTER MENTAL HEALTH

Rev. Charles Strassen	Until 1908
Rev A. G. Dunow	1920 - 1922
Rev. Paul Glahn	1938
Rev. Gustav Roesener	1928 - 1950
Rev. Henry Gerecke	1950 - 1961
Rev. Eric Cash	1967 - 1972; temporary 1961 - 1967
Rev. Bob Brown	1977 - 1980; May - August, 1993
Rev. Arnold Ranta	1981 - 1993; half time 1993 - 1995
Rev. Bert Schirmer	1994 - 1998
Rev. David Kollmeyer	From 1998 at Chester Mental Health; from 1999 at Menard

TEACHERS OF ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Rev. Sig. Buttermann	1849	Miss Dora Richter	1950 – 51	Miss Donna Decker	1970 – 73
Rev M. Eirich	1849 – 56	Miss Esther Cliff	1950 – 53	Mr. Cecil Roth	1970 – 71
Mr. F. Schachemeyer	1856 – 57	Miss Glenice Krieger	1951 – 53	Miss Loween Aadland	1971
Mr. H. W. Hoppe	1856 – 66	Mrs. Carolyn Mahon	1951 – 61	Mrs. Kathy Werning	1971 – 72
Mr. D. Meibohm	1865 – 67	Mrs. George Bargman	1953 – 66	Mrs. Pam Sheely	1971 -- 10
Mr. H. W. J. Fehlhaber	1867 – 68	Mrs. Irma Suechting	1949 – 50	Mr. Charles Winterstein	1971 – 85
Rev. M. Stephan	1868 – 69	Mr. Robert Meyer	1953 – 55	Mr. Steve Egge	1971 – 73
Mr. J. W. Hild	1869 – 75	Mrs. Robert Meyer	1953 – 55	Mr. Ralph Granger	1971 – 91
Mr. Carl Bewie	1871	Mrs. Frieda Mueller	1953 – 54	Miss Lydia Homan	1971 – 92
Mr. C. Waschilewsky	1873 – 78	Mrs. Lillian Torrence	1953 – 54	Miss Sue Hiteschew	1972 – 74
Mr. L. Lohmeier	1875 – 83	Miss Marlene Suhr	1954 – 55	Mr. Richard Janssen	1973 – 00
Mr. G. Allmeyer	1878 – 83	Mr. Arthur Boeshans	1955 – 56	Miss Valerie Baumgart	1973 – 74
Mr. H. Zastrow	1883 – 25	Mrs. Robert Koenig	1955 – 56	Mrs. Connie Mattingly	1974 – 2014
Mr. H. Lanneman	1883 – 90	Miss Marlene Bathke	1955 – 57	Miss Shirley Mueller	1974 – 75
Mr. Paul Arndt	1897 – 03	Mrs. Carl Bewie	1955 – 58	Mrs. Warren Buescher	1974 – 76
Miss Dora Zastrow	1902 – 10	Miss Irene Merkle	1955 – 58	Mr. John Schnack	1975 – 84
Mr. H. Lehmann	1903 – 04	Mrs. Mildred Dial	1956 – 66	Mrs. Marlene Mueller	1975 – 77
Mr. O. E. Schroeter	1905 – 12	Mr. Lloyd Wippich	1956 – 57	Mrs. Debbie Schnack	1976 – 84
Mr. K. Hoffman	1908 – 09	Mr. Allen Freudenburg	1956 – 57	Miss Julie Koenemann	1984 – 85
Mr. Martin Grefe	1910 – 65	Miss Clara Gade	1957 – 63	Mr. Bradley Wold	1984 – 85
Mr. Arthur Buescher	1913 – 16	Mr. R. C. Rehmer	1957 – 70	Miss Karen Bevirt	1984 – 86
Miss Esther Gilster	1916 – 19	Miss Carol Erdmann	1957	Miss Brenda Kryzske	1985 – 88
Miss Ernestine Richter	1919 – 21	Mr. Robert Holste	1957 – 67	Miss Jeanie Dreessen	1985 – 86
Mr. William Allmeyer	1921 – 23	Miss Irma Gade	1958 – 63	Miss Susan Schwartz	1986 – 95
Miss Lydia Wiebusch	1921 – 47	Miss Darlene Beck	1958 – 59	Mr. Kenneth Stravers	1986 – 89
Mr. R. Buuch	1925 – 56	Miss Glenn Miller	1958 – 59	Miss Nancy Johnson	1988 – 90
Mr. Walter Beinke	1926	Mrs. Carl Bewie	1960 – 64	Mrs. Janell Cox	1989 – 96
Miss Anna Brauer	1926 – 27	Mrs. Kenneth Gross	1961 – 62	Mrs. Terri Franklin	1990 – 91
Miss Gertrude Persson	1927 – 28	Mrs. Harvey Kath	1961 – 63	Mrs. Lisa Mirty	1991 – 93
Rev. Gustav Roesener	1928 – 48	Miss Doer	1962 – 63	Mrs. Melissa Gross	1991 – 92

Miss Ruth Fritz	1931 – 32	Mr. Myron Schumacher	1963 – 64	Mr. Dan Junkin	1992 – 93
Mr. Kenneth Ahl	1932 – 33	Mrs. Pat Schoemaker	1963 – 64	Miss Kim Fries	1992 – 94
Mr. Adolph Leitz	1933 – 44	Mr. Merlin Holstein	1964 – 71	Mrs. Meg Knop	1992 –
Mr. Walter Lobitz	1944 – 46	Miss Mary Jane Carletta	1964 – 66	Mrs. Lari Mulholland	1992 –
Mr. Ted Meyer	1944 – 45	Mrs. Sam Johnson	1964 – 70	Mrs. Mary Stallman	1993 – 99
Mrs. George Herschbach	1944 – 45	Mrs. Betty Holste	1964 – 66	Mrs. Gina Hamm	1993 – 95
Miss Mildred Fuss	1945 – 47	Mr. David Seager	1965 – 70	Mrs. Amy Law	1993 – 99
Miss Edna Weiss	1945 – 46	Miss Rosie Heinks	1966 – 67	Mrs. Wendy Lochhead	1994 –
Mr. Clarence Berndt	1946 – 56	Miss Lois Hefker	1967 – 70	Miss Beth Engelage	1995 – 96
Miss Ruth Hannebut	1946	Mrs. Carl Bewie	1967	Mrs. Judy Ebers	1996 -- 03
Mrs. Eugene Dykstra	1947 – 48	Mr. Oscar Rehmer	1967 – 68	Miss Alesia Yallaly	1996 – 98
Mr. A. Maurer	1948	Mrs. Margaret August	1967 – 68	Mrs. Kathy Belcher	1998 –
Miss Yvonne Cole	1947 – 48	Mr. Bill Rojhaas	1967 – 68	Mr. Tom Schultze	1998 -- 02
Mrs. Leo Meyerhoff	1946 – 47	Mrs. Collette Powley	1968 – 71	Mrs. April Schwarting	1999 –
Mrs. L. S. Torrence	1947 – 50	Miss Shirley Kindelberger	1968 – 71	Miss Malinee Parrish	2000 – 01
Mr. John Kober	1948 – 54	Mr. William Barney	1968 – 69	Mrs. Janet Baldwin	2001 –
Mr. Aaron Kopf	1948 – 56	Miss Mary Boretta	1968 – 69	Miss Renee Krack	2002 – 04
Miss Dolores Drees	1948 – 50	Mr. Bill Sturm	1968 – 76	Mrs. Jeannie Wagner	2003 –
Miss Irma Suechting	1949 – 50	Mrs. Francis Barnes	1969 – 71	Mrs. Sabrina Jeremiah	2004 –2014
Miss Irma Schueler	1950 – 53	Mr. Chris Urquhart	1970 –	Mrs. Brenda Owen	
				Miss Kaela Powley	
				Mr. Luke Lochhead	
				Mrs. Rebecca Nobbe	
				Mrs. Andrea Luthy	
				Mrs. Melissa Gross	
				Miss Mesha Reiman	
				Miss Lindsey Breithaupt	2014-
				Mrs. Meghan Blechle	2014-
				Mrs. Sarah Koester	

THE VICARS OF ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

1961	Arlen Busse	Springfield, 1963	Altamont Springs, Florida *
1962	Harvey Kath	St. Louis, 1964	Nevis, Minnesota (Retired)
1963	Dave Shoemaker	Springfield, 1965	Sonora California (Retired)
1964	Ted Dallmann	St. Louis, 1966	Fredonia, New York (Retired)
1965	Don Clausen		Prior Lake, Minnisota *
1966	Jerry Klug	St. Louis, 1968	Paris, Illinois (Retired)
1967	Alan Bachert	Springfield, 1969	Chesterfield, Missouri (Retired)
1968	Harold Austermann	St. Louis, 1970	Neshkoro, Wisconsin*
1969	Bob Muller	St. Louis, 1971	Garrett, Indiana (Retired)
1970	Les Weiser	Springfield, 1972	Memphis, Tennessee *
1971	John Ehlke	St. Louis, 1973	Atonement, Spring Valley, California
1972	John Sellmeyer	Springfield, 1974	Craig, Missouri*
1973	Russ Zimmermann	Springfield, 1975	Bay City, Michigan (Retired)
1974	C. F. Campbell	Springfield, 1974	Chester, Illinois (Retired)
1984	Stan Harding	St. Louis, 1986	Immanuel, Elmhurst, Illinois
1985	Mike Parris	Ft. Wayne, 1987	St. Peter, Riceville, Iowa

1986	Brad Stoltenow	Ft. Wayne, 1988	Shepherd of the Hills, Centennial, Colorado
1987	Jon Anderson	Ft. Wayne, 1990	Concordia Lutheran High School, Fort Wayne, Indiana
1988	Jim Burns	St. Louis, 1990	First, Benton, Arkansas
1989	Mark Laverenz	Ft. Wayne, 1991	Bethlehem, Mason City, Iowa
1990	Tim Vaughn	Ft. Wayne, 1992	Trinity, St. Francis, Minnesota
1991	Wayne Woolery	Ft. Wayne, 1992	St. John, Homestead, Iowa
1992	Joe Murphy	Ft. Wayne, 1994	Grace, Parker, Colorado
1999	Martin Springer	St. Louis, 2000	Trinity, Edwardsville, Illinois
2004	David Kern	Ft. Wayne, 2005	St. Paul, West Frankfort, Illinois
2005	Matt Buse	Ft. Wayne, 2007	Australia
2006	Michael Standfest	Ft. Wayne, 2008	St. Paul, Boone, Iowa
2007	Adam Filipek	St. Louis, 2009	Trinity, Hicksville, New York
2008	David Hoehler	St. Louis, 2010	St. Paul, Shobonier, Illinois
2009	Gail Heimgartner	Ft. Wayne, 2010	Trinity, Anna, Illinois

* Last known location