A history of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

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A HISTORY OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

A THESIS
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Bruce A. Odenbach
January, 1970
Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

Graduate Committee

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F. M. Anderson
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been my great privilege this past year to meet many of the people who have lived this history of First Lutheran Church. The story that I have attempted to record accurately in the following pages belongs to the thousands who have given themselves freely, not to create only a congregation or to construct a building, but to show glory to the true Head of the Church.

Appreciation and acknowledgement is expressed to the many persons who have aided with the preparation of this work, especially to those who graciously consented to giving oral interviews, as listed in the Bibliography. A special word of thanks to Mr. James O. Berdahl, who has made available to the author a great abundance of material concerning every phase of First Lutheran history, and has also guided the research where recorded facts were incomplete or unclear. Special appreciation is also expressed to Mr. Reuben Bragstad, Mrs. Edith Davis, Mrs. H.J. Glenn, Mr. Bill Wyatt, Dr. H.M. Blegen, Dr. L.M. Stavig, Dr. Gary D. Olson, and the Reverend Marcus Gravdal. The guidance of my thesis advisor, Dr. Frederick W. Adrian, is gratefully acknowledged. To my wife Marcia, and daughter Melissa Ann, go the highest order of gratitude and love for going without husband and daddy for many long days and nights of researching and writing.
Chapter I

THE EARLY ROOTS

The first white inhabitants of the Valley of the Sioux River came from opposite directions, but in search of the same reward: good homesites in the new Eden of the Dakota Country. After reading of the beautiful falls of the river called "Te-han-kas-an-data" by the Indians, Dr. George M. Staples of Dubuque, Iowa, organized the Western Town Company in 1856. The possibilities of future land exploitation in the area attracted further support of this undertaking, and two frontiersmen were hired to gain possession of the area under the laws of the United States, which allowed up to three hundred twenty acres of land to settlers.¹ In November of 1856, Ezra Millard of Sioux City, and an accomplice, reached the Falls of the Big Sioux River, built a log dwelling above the Falls, and returned to Sioux City for the winter.²

Also interested in future sites for settlement in the Dakota Country was the Dakota Land Company of St. Paul,

¹D. R. Bailey, History of Minnehaha County (Sioux Falls, Brown and Saenger Printers, 1899), p. 10. Staples had read the first recorded history of the Dakota Territory, written by the French explorer Nicollet, following his explorations for the government of Quebec in 1639.

²Ibid., p. 11.
which had been chartered by the Minnesota Territorial Legislature in the 1856-57 session. This company sent representatives to the area in the spring of 1857. Heading due west, this group came upon the Big Sioux about sixty miles north of the present site of Sioux Falls, and on their trek southward, established the towns of Medary and Flandrau. When they arrived at their goal of the Falls area, they found the Western Town Company already encamped. Not to be dismayed by their tardy arrival, the late-comers took up three hundred twenty acres of land south of the Falls in the name of the Dakota Land Company, and called their holdings Sioux Falls City. These two, in a sense, rival groups joined together in good spirit and companionship, knitted closer by their common purpose and also by their common enemy, the Sioux.

The population of the area of the Falls grew slowly in these first years, but after Minnesota became a state in 1858, a number of newcomers staked their claim in the frontier of Dakota. In the spring of 1858, the first white

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3 Charles A. Smith, A Comprehensive History of Minnehaha County, South Dakota (Mitchell, South Dakota: Educator Supply Company, 1949), p. 8. One of the early promoters of this company, Minnesota Territorial Governor Medary, was instrumental in creating the present dividing line between Minnesota and South Dakota. Formerly marked by the Sioux River, this line was moved eastward about 30 miles in 1858, when Minnesota won admittance to the Union, thus leaving much area in an unorganized condition.

4 Bailey, p. 11.
woman came to the area to settle, and was soon joined by
others of the "weaker" sex. 5

The ever-increasing number of homesteaders who entered
the Valley of the Sioux found little time for any leisure
activities, leading a hard and demanding life. A great
many were of Scandinavian background, and brought with
them, in addition to the hope for a new life on the prairie,
their religious beliefs. The few books that found a place
in the crowded prairie schooners were religious in nature,
those from which they had received their religious educa­
tion, and from which they would pass along these beliefs
to their children. One of the first community activities,
after crude sod or log dwellings had been constructed, was
the organization of congregations and preparation of places
for religious services. The first sermon preached in the
Sioux Falls area, is believed to have been that by Governor
Henry Masters sometime in late 1858 or early 1859. 6 It
was in support of the Swedenborgian faith.

The first Dakota Territorial Legislature met in Yankton
in the spring of 1862. On April 5, this body approved "An

5Ibid., p. 14. For an excellent description of life
on the new frontier in this area, see: O. E. Rølvaag,

6Bailey, pp. 20-22, see also Smith, p. 16. Masters
was elected "Squatter Governor" of the unorganized area
between the Sioux River and the new Minnesota state line
of 1858. Dakota Territory was not organized, as such,
until March 2, 1861.
Act to Establish the Counties of Lincoln, Minnehaha, Brookings and Deuel."7 In contrast to the bright future anticipated for the newly organized area of Minnehaha County, the year 1862 proved to be one of the blackest in its history. On August 25, evidence of the hostile attitude of the Sioux Indians was discovered when Judge Amidon and his son were found slain in Sioux Falls, the result of an Indian attack in the Judge's hayfield. By October, 1862, most settlers had reacted fearfully and left the area, either to return from whence they had come, or to the safer confines of the military posts at Yankton or Sioux City.8 The Land of the Sioux Valley reverted back to the Redman for a short time until the spring of 1865, when a military post was established at Sioux Falls. Gradually, people returned to the area, but it was not until 1869 that the population equalled that of the spring of 1862.9

A renewed faith in the area was shown by the birth of the first church organization in Minnehaha County, the Nidaros Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church. This group united on August 12, 1868, to guard the future of the faith of their fathers. To the Reverend O. O. Sando went the honor of being the first resident Lutheran clergyman in

7 Bailey, p. 9.
8 Ibid., pp. 25-26.
9 Ibid., p. 28, see also, Smith, pp. 26-27.
the county, having been duly called, and installed on
October 23, 1873. 10

The last two years of the 1860's and the early
1870's was a period of growth and promise for the infant
Sioux Falls settlement. 11 It was also during these years
of growth that the early Lutherans in Sioux Falls conducted
their first recorded worship service. A marginal note in
the minutes of the meeting at which the first Lutheran
congregation was organized, is as follows: "The first
Lutheran church service in the city of Sioux Falls was held
on the 21st day of November, 1873." 12 Although not record­
ed, the Reverend O. O. Sando no doubt conducted this ser­
vice, as he had recently been installed as minister at Ni­
daros Congregation, and was the only resident pastor in
the county.

10 Bailey, pp. 920-921. The Reverend E. Christensen
served as the first pastor of Nidaros congregation, although
not living in Minnehaha County. He ministered to this flock
quite infrequently the first few years of its existence.

11 Following a memorial to Congress in 1869, Fort Dakota,
at Sioux Falls, was vacated. The people obviously felt that
the threat from the Sioux no longer existed. In 1870, the
military reservation was opened to settlers. By the fall
of 1873, according to Bailey, "Sioux Falls had eight lawyers,
three physicians, two resident ministers, twenty carpenters,
five masons, two hotels, two restaurants, two lumber yards,
two blacksmith shops, two hardware stores, two meat markets,
two wheelwright shops, two bakeries . . . and six general

12 Norsk-Evangelisk-Lutherske Menighed Minutes 1873-1892,
p. 1. This quote is inscribed in the Norwegian language
along the left-hand border of the organizational meeting
minutes. Cited hereafter as: Norsk-Lutherske Minutes.
Lutherans of the growing village of Sioux Falls met to organize the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation on January 10, 1877. Although no record lists those present on this historic date, twenty-two names were signed to the constitution. The Reverend O. O. Sando was called to serve this congregation, which, before the turn of the century came to be called the St. Olaf Congregation. This infant flock worshipped in the homes of the members, in a rented hall, and in the basement of the Methodist Church. In 1882 two lots were acquired on the corner of 12th Street and Dakota Avenue for the purpose of constructing a house of worship. This structure, with some additions, served the growing congregation for over forty years, standing

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14 The first recorded use of this name appeared in the March 29, 1898 minutes. Ibid., p. 115. The Reverend Sando was employed to conduct six services per year for the sum of thirty dollars.

15 Under the ministry of the Reverend A. J. Lee, who succeeded Sando in 1881, many services were held in the basement of the Methodist church building. See Norsk-Lutherske Minutes, pp. 234-235, which list the Reverend Lee's ministerial acts for the 1881 period. For transactions concerning the lots purchased from J. L. Phillips of Sioux Falls, see: Ibid., pp. 12-13.
until the present First Lutheran building was erected on the same location in the mid-1920's.  

Another of the early vestiges of the present First Congregation began in 1878, when the St. Paul Lutheran Congregation was formed. This ministry of the Reverend H. O. Opsal, the first resident Lutheran pastor in Sioux Falls, extended for many miles around the community. A brief existence was enjoyed by an additional group, the Norwegian Lutheran Missions Congregation from 1888 to 1890. The Reverend O. T. Nelson ministered to this flock briefly. 

In 1890 the United Norwegian Lutheran Church was formed, a union of the Augustana Synod (Konferensen) and the Anti-Missouri Brotherhood. At this point the St. Paul Congregation severed its connection with their former parish, and joined the Missions Congregation to form the Evangeliske Lutheriske Trefoldigheds Menighed (the

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16 Bailey, p. 349, see also, Smith, p. 269.

17 Norway and Willow Creek, two rural congregations, were also a part of the Reverend Opsal's call. Fortieth Anniversary Booklet of the Foundation of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D., p. 7. (Printed program.)

18 Ibid., p. 7. See also Norske Lutherske Missions Menighed 1889-1894, which contains the majority of the sparse information of this congregation.
Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Congregation). This new union called Pastor O. T. Nelson for the year 1891 at a salary of $100.00 and free parsonage.

St. Olaf and Trinity Lutheran Congregations served as the two main places of worship for those of this faith well into the twentieth century. The Reverend Nelson continued in his ministry to the latter congregation into the spring of 1892, when the Reverend Helmer Lund succeeded him. It was during the service of the Reverend Lund that the small congregation purchased a lot at the corner of 14th Street and Duluth Avenue and constructed a frame building to replace their small church on 12th Street. The new church structure cost $4,000.00 to complete, and the lot was valued at $1,200.00.21

Next to serve the Trinity Congregation was the Reverend H. M. Solem, who came to Sioux Falls in 1896. Active in community affairs, this leader was also on the Board of

19 Minutes Trefoldigheds Menighed 1890-1913, p. 1. This meeting, August 1, 1890, was the culmination of previous meetings concerning union of the two congregations, and a Constitution was read and adopted. This Trinity congregation was incorporated under the laws of the State of South Dakota in 1891. Ibid., p. 267.

20 Ibid., pp. 3-4.

21 Fortieth Anniversary Booklet of the Foundation of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D., p. 7. See also, Minutes Trefoldigheds Menighed 1890-1913.
Directors of the early Sioux Falls Hospital Association, and gave much time to Augustana College in Canton, South Dakota.22

In 1904, the Reverend C. S. Salveson came to Trinity Congregation from Waldorf College in Forest City, Iowa. After six years of ministry at Trinity, Pastor Salveson was succeeded by the Reverend H. O. Bjorlie in the summer of 1920. Active in the ministry to the deaf and hard of hearing, Pastor Bjorlie served Trinity until 1918, when the Reverend H. J. Glenn was called.23

Located just a few blocks from Trinity, the St. Olaf Congregation was served by the Reverend A. J. Lee until 1885. His successor, the Reverend Olaf Stub, served only a few months and passed away on Christmas day in 1885.24

Also active in the Sioux Falls Hospital Association was the Reverend H. B. Thorgrimson, who was at St. Olaf from 1886-1891.25 Called to St. Olaf in 1892, the Reverend N. N. Boe began a ministry in the Sioux Falls area that was to last for more than three decades. Pastor Boe was on the original Board of Directors of the Sioux Falls

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22Smith, p. 286.

23Fortieth Anniversary Booklet of the Foundation of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D., p. 7.

24Ibid., See also, The First Lutheran, congregational paper, October 1, 1952.

25Smith, p. 286.
Hospital Association, and rose to the position of South Dakota District President of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America. The Reverends H. E. Solum (1904-1912), and S. M. Orwoll (1912-1920), complete those of the cloth who ministered to the members at St. Olaf Church.

The period of almost fifty years since the pioneer service in 1873, was one of growth and development for the Lutherans of Sioux Falls. The small groups which gathered separately in the city were now divided into two distinct congregations, each still growing in membership and physical assets. The members of St. Olaf and Trinity Lutheran Congregations both had a rich heritage, and these were soon to be united into one strong and influential church.

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26 Ibid. The Reverend Boe conducted the cornerstone laying services for the new First Lutheran Church on May 3, 1925.

27 Fortieth Anniversary Booklet of the Foundation of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D., p. 11. The Reverend Solum also served as president of the South Dakota District.
Chapter II

THE MERGER YEARS

The initial impetus toward union of these two Lutheran congregations came from outside the city, when in 1917, the three principal organs of Norwegian Lutheranism in America merged to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (NLCA). St. Olaf had been part of the Norwegian Synod, while Trinity functioned under the auspices of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church. Now joined nationally, it seemed to many that the time was appropriate to consider union on the local level.

The Board of Trustees of St. Olaf, assembled on July 24, 1917, passed the following resolution:

Resolved, that it is the sense of the Board of Trustees of the St. Olaf Lutheran Church that the two Norwegian Lutheran congregations in Sioux Falls, S. D., consolidate into one congregation, ... and that Norwegian and English be used as the pastors (and congregations) find most convenient and best suited to the conditions and requirements of the congregations. . . .

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1 Olaf Morgan Norlie, History of the Norwegian People in America (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1925), pp. 364-365. Norlie stated: "This being the Quadracentennial year of the Reformation (1517-1917), men thought a good deal about a united Lutherdom and longed for the union of the Norwegian church bodies. At the time of the union the Hauge Synod had 120 pastors serving congregations; the Norwegian Synod had 355; the United Church had 556; a total of 1,031. . . . Hauge had a membership of 39,737; the Norwegian Synod had 150,455; the United Church had 280,668; a total of 470,860." Ibid., p. 365.

This action was approved by the congregation in a business meeting on August 14, 1917. Trinity Congregation had taken action concerning union at their business meeting of July 30. Approval was given to a motion that "... a committee of seven be elected to confer with a like committee from St. Olaf Church, regarding the future work and possible union of the two congregations." To meet with this committee, St. Olaf elected a like number from their membership, "... to consider the future plan of work of the two congregations."5

Another development that seemed to favor the union of the two congregations came early in 1918, when at the annual business meeting of Trinity Congregation, the Reverend Bjorlie's resignation was formally accepted.

3Ibid., August 14, 1917, p. 126.

4United Evangelical Trinity Lutheran Minutes 1914-1919, p. 47. Cited hereafter as: Trinity Minutes. Lewis Larson, A. O. Richardson, A. J. Berdahl, O. T. Hanson, Mads Johnson, K. O. Huseboe, and A. S. Bragstad were selected to serve on this committee.

5St. Olaf Minutes, August 14, 1917, p. 127. C. C. Bratrud, chairman, N. O. Monserud, P. F. Thompson, Knut Holden, S. A. Jordahl, Martin Arnston, and C. M. Christiansen were approved to serve on this committee. See also, letter from S. A. Jordahl, secretary of St. Olaf Congregation, to A. S. Bragstad, secretary of Trinity Congregation, August 17, 1917. While no action on the part of this new Union Committee was recorded for the remainder of 1917, the two congregations did cooperate in the celebration of the Reformation on the last two days in October. St. Olaf Minutes, October 12, 1917, p. 129. See also, Trinity Minutes, December 3, 1917, p. 49: "After a general discussion of the proposed union between our congregation and St. Olaf Congregation the meeting adjourned."
Following a report from Lewis Larson concerning the work of the Union Committee, approval was voted for this committee to act on the matter of having more services together with St. Olaf Congregation.  

In March an issue that was to result in the ultimate failure of negotiations during this period came into the open. Immediately after the regular Norwegian service on Sunday, March 24, the congregation met to discuss the question of "How far are the members of St. Olaf Congregation willing to go in yielding Sunday mornings to English services in order that St. Olaf and Trinity Congregations may be united into one congregation with one central church for the West Side?" The congregation approved, by a decisive vote of seventy to zero, a motion that "... we are in favor of continuing ... in connection with the use of the English and Norwegian languages at the forenoon worship services approximately as we have done before, with the understanding that the use of the English language be increased according as the circumstances require it."

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6 Trinity Minutes, January 8, 1918, p. 51. The Reverend Bjorlie had served Trinity Congregation from 1910-1918, and resigned to devote full-time service in the Ministry to the Deaf.

7 St. Olaf Minutes, p. 139.

8 Ibid.
The finality of this vote to continue with virtually a full Norwegian program, presaged the negotiations of the subsequent months. In April, Trinity Congregation expressed its attitude regarding the language question by giving unanimous approval to a motion that would "... require as a basis for Union ... that there be either one congregation with separate departments, one English and one Norwegian or two separate congregations one English and one Norwegian." 9

The two congregations did work together favorably in the spring of 1918 to induce the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America to locate Augustana College in Sioux Falls, and to consolidate this institution with the Lutheran Normal School. 10 It soon became evident, however, that the language question had placed an insurmountable barrier to union at that time. 11

The feelings of Trinity Congregation became more and more solidified behind the idea of all English work during the summer and fall of 1918. On August 26,

9Trinity Minutes, April 8, 1918, p. 52.
10St. Olaf Minutes, March 26, 1918, pp. 140-142. Augustana College was located at Canton, S. D., from 1888-1918.
11On May 3, 1918, St. Olaf voted to ask Trinity to unite with them, and to leave the language question to be decided after union. See: St. Olaf Minutes, May 3, 1918.
Dr. Charles Solberg, President of the English Association of the NLCA, addressed a special meeting of this congregation. The Minneapolis leader stressed the need for an English church in Sioux Falls. Approval was also given a motion that "... the 'language question' should be definitely settled before union is effected." The Union Committee representatives were therefore thanked for their service and dismissed, with the conclusion that union was impossible at that time.

President Solberg made another call on Trinity Congregation on September 10, 1918. Also present was the South Dakota District President of the NLCA, the Reverend N. N. Boe. Both men addressed the meeting briefly, no doubt in reference to English work in Sioux Falls. A committee of three was approved that would draft an appropriate response to correspondence received from St. Olaf

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12 Trinity Minutes, August 26, 1918, p. 53.
13 Ibid., p. 54. The appearance of Dr. Solberg before the Trinity meeting caused considerable irritation on the part of some members of St. Olaf Congregation. At a meeting early in September, many expressed themselves dissatisfied and irritated that Solberg had met only with Trinity and urged them to go all English. Although a motion was approved to draft a letter of complaint to the Church Council, no evidence exists that this letter ever materialized. See: St. Olaf Minutes, September 3, 1918, pp. 146-148.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid., September 10, 1918, p. 56.
Congregation in regard to union. By way of reply it was "... propose[d] to St. Olaf Congregation that a permanent committee from each congregation be formed, to consider all matters whereby the two congregations ... might co-operate as much as possible."¹⁶

To forsake the language of their fathers was most difficult for many who came to this new land on the Plains. A large number had received their religious education in it, and well into the twentieth century, Norwegian was used in many homes in the Sioux Falls area and could be heard in conversations on the street and in business places.¹⁷ Even before the turn of the century, however, the use of the

¹⁶Ibid. Names on this committee were Lewis Larson, Mons Johnson, and Odean Hareid. Their reply to St. Olaf, concerning the relationship between the two congregations, stated that Trinity felt a definite need existed in Sioux Falls for an all English Lutheran Congregation, that as no agreement could be reached on the language question, Trinity felt it best to organize such English group, with a new name and constitution. They also proposed a permanent committee, composed of two from each congregation, to act as regular liaisons and representatives between the congregations, and to continue harmony and goodwill. See: Letter from Lewis Larson, Mons Johnson, and Odean Hareid, to Prof. S. A. Jordahl, Secretary of St. Olaf Congregation, September 16, 1918, pp. 1-2.

¹⁷It was not an uncommon practice to employ at least one clerk in the business establishments who was conversant in the Norwegian language, so that better service could be given to those who spoke this language. Interview with Arthur P. Johnson, June 26, 1969. Mr. Johnson related that his father, Mons Johnson, used his knowledge of Norwegian to excellent advantage in the shoe store of which he eventually acquired ownership.
English language had become more widespread. By 1914 Trinity Congregation authorized the secretary to record the minutes of all meetings of the congregation in the English language. It was often the practice in many Scandinavian churches in the area to alternate Norwegian and English services every other Sunday.

Devotion to the language of the old country in the post World War I period advocated by a number of those who used the Norwegian language regularly, did not seem to meet with the anti-foreign hostility exhibited toward some national groups. Even though many of the Schwartzes and Schmelings of the Midwest were victims of feelings of intense nationalism during this period, the Scandinavian people, as a whole, were not subjected to adverse prejudice or antagonisms.

Trinity Congregation seemed to be more aware of the changing times, and the increased use of English in the Sioux Falls community. They were also influenced by the influx of the younger generation following the merger of Augustana College and Lutheran Normal School in the city in 1918. The appearance of Dr. C. O. Solberg at three

18 Trinity Minutes, January 6, 1914, p. 27.
20 Letter from Lewis Larson, Mons Johnson, and Odean Hareid, to S. A. Jordahl, secretary of St. Olaf Congregation, September 6, 1918.
separate meetings of Trinity Congregation further displayed the receptive attitude of the congregation toward an entirely English program.

The first recorded evidence of action toward an English program came on August 26, 1918, when Trinity Congregation approved the following motion: "That it is the sense of this meeting that this congregation take up purely English work, and that a committee of 5 members be elected to canvas the field and ascertain what support can be obtained." About three weeks later, a meeting was held at the Trinity Church to give substance to the above movement. The announced purpose was "... organizing a purely English Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls." In addition to adopting the name of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, this group moved to use the model constitution of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (with few minor changes), named a committee to secure charter members, and elected three acting Trustees to prepare articles of incorporation. The matter of a minister was also discussed, and the

21 Trinity Minutes, August 26, 1918, p. 54.

22 Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Minutes, September 17, 1918, p. 16. Cited hereafter as: Grace Minutes.
Trustees were authorized to "... make investigations as to possible candidates for pastor."²³

At the next congregational meeting, this small group of Lutheran laymen took a step which was to prove of primary significance to the work of the Lutheran Church in the Sioux Falls area for nearly fifty years. Lewis Larson, acting on authority as Trustee, had written the Reverend Hans Jacob Glenn of Duluth, Minnesota, to elicit his opinion as to the language question. In a letter of September 26, 1918, the Reverend Glenn expressed his ideas regarding language and service to the Church as follows:

As to the language question, were I to consider a change at all, it would be in favor of exclusively English work. I feel strongly that the church must be planted on American soil in the language of the day and country and more in harmony with the spirit and ideals of America, rightly understood. I have talked this a long time; the present crisis is flooding the opportunity upon us. I am ready to help meet it whenever our authorities deem the time ripe, and a suitable place is opened for me. I am altogether at the service of the Church. ... What I ask is, that the opportunity given me and the work assigned be the biggest I can possibly do.²⁴

²³Ibid., pp. 16-17. See also, Articles of Incorporation of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, signed by Lewis Larson, A. O. Richardson, and Arthur P. Johnson, September 17, 1918. This was not a break with the old Trinity Congregation, and all former Trinity members joined the new all English Grace Congregation.

²⁴Letter from H. J. Glenn, Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Duluth, Minnesota to Attorney Lewis Larson, September 26, 1918.
This letter indicated the writer had little information concerning Sioux Falls, especially in relation to a possible call to Trinity.\textsuperscript{25} Obviously pleased with this response, Grace Congregation cast a unanimous ballot in favor of a call to the Reverend Glenn.\textsuperscript{26} The congregation requested Dr. C. O. Solberg to make arrangements with the Reverend Glenn to journey to Sioux Falls to preach for a worship service.\textsuperscript{27}

The Reverend Glenn had been at Zion Lutheran Church in Duluth for only three years when he received the above call from Grace Congregation late in October, 1918.\textsuperscript{28} Mrs. H. J. Glenn related that, at first the Reverend Glenn, "Just didn't think he could even consider the call . . ." mainly because they had been at Duluth such a short period of time,

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid. When read this letter, numerous interviewees who had been personally acquainted with the Reverend Glenn remarked: "That is exactly what I would expect Reverend Glenn to say!"

\textsuperscript{26}Grace Minutes, October 7, 1918, p. 17. Terms of the call were: salary of $1,500.00 per annum — the Trustees having authority to increase this to $1,800.00 if necessary — together with the three Holiday offerings and free parsonage.

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid. A committee was also appointed to make nominations for congregational officers, to draw up by-laws, and a motion was approved to not close the charter membership before the next meeting. This was not closed until July 1, 1919.

\textsuperscript{28}Interview with Mrs. H. J. Glenn, June 26, 1969.
and they knew very little about the Sioux Falls area. Subsequently, the Reverend Glenn returned the call to Grace, and wrote that he did not desire to keep the congregation waiting any longer for his decision. Late in December, the call committee of Grace reported to the congregation that they had returned the call to the Reverend Glenn, with an offer of $1,800.00, the figure authorized at the last meeting.

The second offer of the position as leader of a new, all English congregation, was more seriously considered in Duluth than was the initial call. The church authorities in Minneapolis, headquarters of the NLCA, were interested in this infant development in Sioux Falls. Special interest came, naturally, from the president of the English Association of the Synod, Dr. C. O. Solberg, who drove to Duluth to induce the Reverend Glenn to reconsider the call to Grace. Obviously motivated by the concern of the church as a whole, the Reverend Glenn journied to Sioux Falls

29 Ibid.
30 Grace Minutes, December 26, 1918, p. 18.
31 Ibid.
32 Glenn interview, June 26, 1969. The Reverend Glenn was the first pastor in Duluth to start English services in the evening, and also began the use of English in the confirmation classes. Grace Congregation, along with Central Lutheran in Minneapolis, were among the very first in the entire Church body to begin a program of all English services. Ibid.
in the middle of January and remained for about a week. Upon his return to Northern Minnesota, he told his family that he had decided to accept the call, and that "... he could see such possibilities here [in Sioux Falls]."

Plans for the installation service were agreed upon at the Quarterly Meeting of Grace Congregation on April 7, 1919. Following correspondence with the newly appointed pastor and his congregation in Duluth, this much anticipated date was set for May 25, 1919.

The official dissolution of Trinity Congregation came on January 7, 1919, when unanimous assent was given to a motion that this congregation . . . has decided to discontinue its operation and work as a religious corporation . . . /and that a large majority of the members of said congregation have joined in forming and incorporating a new church organization to use the English language exclusively, which organization is known as Grace Evangelical Lutheran Congregation.

The Trustees were therefore instructed to convey to Grace

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33 Ibid. The Reverend Glenn was present at the first annual meeting of Grace Congregation on January 14, 1919, and addressed the assemblage briefly. Grace Minutes, January 14, 1919, pp. 19-20.

34 Mrs. Glenn related that she was not excited about the move to Sioux Falls. She felt that they were well situated in Duluth. Glenn interview, June 26, 1969.

35 Grace Minutes, April 7, 1919, p. 21.

36 Trinity Minutes, January 7, 1919, p. 57.
Congregation, by warranty deed, all real property owned by Trinity, and also to transfer all personal property, including furniture and fixtures, organ, books.\(^{37}\) With this action approved by a quorum of the congregation, Evangelical Norwegian Lutheran Trinity Congregation ceased to exist.\(^{38}\)

The basic foundations of the new organization continued to be laid at the first annual meeting of Grace Congregation, January 14, 1919. Trustees, Deacons, and other necessary permanent officers were elected, along with authorization for the Trustees to secure the services of an organist and a janitor for the coming year. All obligations of the former Trinity Congregation to the NLCA were assumed by Grace.\(^{39}\) At the next congregational meeting, the secretary was instructed to make the necessary applications for membership in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. The gathering also elected delegates to the


\(^{38}\)Trinity Minutes, January 7, 1919, p. 58.

\(^{39}\)Grace Minutes, January 14, 1919, p. 20. This amounted to the "Apportionment for Samfundskassen" (Synodical Treasury) for 1918-1919 -- a sum of $113.75.
convention of the South Dakota District of this church body to be held in Sioux Falls May 29-June 23, 1919. 40

The infant Grace Congregation soon gave evidence of the wisdom of its founders in establishing an English Lutheran church in Sioux Falls. A statement prepared for the bulletin of the installation service for the Reverend Glenn, was as follows: "We have already a congregation of over two hundred souls. A Ladies Aid, Luther League and Sunday School are in successful operation. The church in which we worship today is ours without incumbrance. We are ready to begin a definite work for the Master and for our Lutheran people." 41

The ministry of the Reverend Glenn blossomed bountifully in the summer and fall months of 1919. 42 The construction of a gallery was authorized at the meeting on August 26 to increase the seating capacity of the sanctuary.

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40 Ibid., April 7, 1919, p. 21.

41 Installation Service, May 25, 1919, (Printed bulletin.)

42 Glenn interview, June 26, 1969. With two young children, the Glenn's moved into the Grace parsonage, located directly South of the church building. Mrs. Glenn related that "It was a dismal place . . . overrun with mice and ants." The rear of the house had formerly been used to store potatoes, some of which had rotted. Consequently, this part had to be washed thoroughly.
At this meeting, a Church Site Committee of three was elected ". . . to investigate and report with respect to possible site for a new church building."\(^{43}\) A letter dated November, 1919, soliciting funds for the coming year stated that "104 souls have been added during the summer. The Ladies Aid has received new members at every single meeting and numbers now about 80. The Sunday School has tripped in six months and is still growing rapidly. We are crowding our quarters in every department."\(^{44}\)

Again, the resignation of a pastor of one of the congregations served to give the union movement a boost. The Reverend S. M. Orwoll, who had served St. Olaf Congregation since 1912, received a call to Maddock, North Dakota, early in 1920. The pulse of St. Olaf concerning union was exhibited at a business meeting on March 9, 1920, when the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

\(^{43}\)Grace Minutes, August 26, 1919, p. 25. Elected on this committee were Arthur S. Bragstad, chairman, James O. Berdahl and Theodore R. Richardson.

\(^{44}\)Undated letter from the Commissioned Canvassers to members of Grace Lutheran Church. Seventy new members were received at the November 7, 1919, meeting of the congregation; twenty-two at the January 13 meeting; fifty-five at the April 2 meeting. Grace Minutes, pp. 28, 31, and 40.
Believing that consolidation of the Grace Lutheran and the St. Olaf Lutheran congregations into one large, influential church would in many ways greatly promote the welfare of the Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, and particularly of the Augustana College and Normal School, . . . and that the resignation of pastor S. M. Orwoll at this time would tend to facilitate consolidation, St. Olaf Congregation cannot now urge him to return the call recently extended to him.45

Two weeks later the resignation of the Reverend Orwoll was accepted by St. Olaf Congregation. He urged "... that the utmost be done for uniting the two congregations. To facilitate union had been his main motive in resigning."46 A three member committee was hence appointed by the pastor to approach Grace Congregation to ascertain their feelings pertaining to union.47

Upon query by this committee, Grace Congregation expressed themselves as being "very glad" to consider union with St. Olaf, and that they would elect a committee to negotiate such action after St. Olaf had done so.48 Grace Congregation also felt that a three-way merger might be

45 St. Olaf Minutes, March 9, 1920, pp. 163-164.
47 Ibid., p. 165. S. B. Halverson, N. O. Menserud, and Ola A. Solheim were appointed.
48 Grace Minutes, April 13, 1920, p. 41.
considered, to include, besides themselves and St. Olaf, the Swedish congregation in Sioux Falls called Augustana Congregation. Accordingly, a three man committee was appointed to approach the Augustana Congregation on the matter.\textsuperscript{49}

The greater share of the work that preceded the merger of Grace and St. Olaf fell to ten men, five from each congregation, selected by their fellow members to form the Joint Committee for Union. Elected from St. Olaf were Ola A. Solheim (chosen chairman at the first meeting), George Larson, H. P. Moen, L. B. Halverson, and Carl Mannerud. Delegates from Grace included James O. Berdahl (elected secretary), G. K. Groth, Odean Hareid, L. M. Hostetler, and Arthur P. Johnson.\textsuperscript{50} The numerous meetings of this dedicated group of laymen took place between May 31 and September 21, 1920. At the initial assembly, after a general discussion of the problems of union, a motion was made to get an "expression of the views" of the delegates concerning the language problem. A motion was adopted unanimously "that it be the sense of the Joint Committee that the

\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Ibid.} See also, letter from John G. Berdahl, secretary of Grace Lutheran Congregation to O. A. Solheim, April 14, 1920. The Augustana Congregation was obviously not interested in such a union, as no further reference was made to the matter.

\textsuperscript{50}\textit{Minutes of the Joint Committee, May 31, 1920, p. 1.}
work of the United Congregation (if one be formed) be in the English Language; but that services in Norwegian be given in one church as often as may be found desirable, by an assistant pastor.\textsuperscript{51} A subcommittee consisting of G. K. Groth and George Larson to consider possible names for a United Congregation was appointed by the chairman, in addition to a resolutions subcommittee composed of four members. This latter group, including Berdahl, Hareid, Moen, and Halverson, was given the task of drafting suitable plans for a union of the two congregations.\textsuperscript{52}

At the June 25 meeting, the Joint Committee for Union proceeded to act upon the resolutions covering plans for union. Again, the primary concern was that of language. The subcommittee report recommended that English be used at the regular morning and evening Sunday services, these to be held at the St. Olaf building until outgrown. The official language of the United Congregation, then, would be "the language of our land." It was also recommended, however, that these members wishing Norwegian services should worship in the old Grace Church on Sunday forenoons.\textsuperscript{53} To carry out

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., pp. 1-2. These would also include proposals for a constitution and by-laws.

\textsuperscript{53} Minutes of the Joint Committee, June 25, 1920, p. 2.
the program of the United Congregation, the Reverend H. J. Glenn was to be called. Administration of the Norwegian portion of this ministry would be under the charge of an assistant pastor, well versed in the language. Before this report was given approval, Chairman Solheim proposed an amendment to the paragraph on "Pastors". He called for the designation of a First Pastor, who would be in charge of the English portion of the ministry, and also a Second Pastor, who would have personal charge of the Norwegian services and pastoral work. Upon vote of the Joint Committee, the original subcommittee report won approval (called the majority report), all in favor except Mr. Solheim. The Chairman announced that he could not sign the resolution report as approved, and his amendment was attached to the final report for consideration by the two separate congregations.

54 Ibid. Until a permanent Norwegian pastor could be secured to assist the regular pastor, the Board of Deacons would have authority to secure temporary assistance in this portion of the ministry.

55 Ibid., p. 3.

56 Ibid., Minority report attached, p. 4. Also considered by the Joint Committee at this time were the names of Bethany, Trinity, Zion, Bethlehem, Christ and Hope as possible titles for the United Congregation. A vote indicated that the names Christ and Hope were favored, with Christ winning on the last ballot. Ibid., p. 4.
As specified by the Joint Committee, the two congregations met simultaneously on July 2 to hear the resolutions for union. The Joint Committee met briefly before these meetings, at which time all members except Solheim signed the majority report; the chairman's minority report was attached, signed by him.

After consideration of all parts of the Articles of Agreement, including the minority report, Grace Congregation gave unanimous approval to the majority report. Continuing their, on the whole, conservative attitude, especially in relation to language, St. Olaf Congregation moved to consider the Articles of Agreement. Still desirous of securing a solid position for the Norwegian language, an amendment to the paragraphs on "Language" was adopted that would continue the practice of Norwegian services in the St. Olaf Church building. Those desirous of such services would have the right to be served at such time

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58 Joint Committee Minutes, July 2, 1920, p. 1.
59 Grace Minutes, pp. 46-47. Some questions were raised concerning the paragraphs on "Language", but after explanation by the Committee members, this portion was adopted. See also, letter from John G. Berdahl, secretary of Grace Congregation, to O. Solheim, chairman of the Joint Committee, July 3, 1920.
as they would choose, as long as this service did not interfere with the regular Sunday morning and evening services. The preceding action was obviously debated at some length, as the meeting adjourned at 11:00 P.M., to reconvene on July 6 at 7:30 PM. After this four day interim period, St. Olaf continued the consideration of the Articles of Agreement. They stood behind their delegate by adopting the minority report of Solheim's in regards to the article on "Pastors". After reaching agreement that the compensation for such pastors be reserved until the actual calls would be made, adjournment was allowed at 10:30 P.M., with the stipulation that the meeting be continued on July 9 at 7:30 P.M.

The final meeting recorded in the minutes of the St. Olaf Congregation was on July 9, 1920. Slight changes in the wording of various Articles were approved, mainly to agree with the major changes of the "Language" and "Pastors" Articles. It was agreed that the selection of a name would be deferred until union was perfected. Approval was voted for the constitution and by-laws, with the provision that

60 St. Olaf Minutes, July 2, 1920, pp. 168-169.
61 Ibid.
62 Articles of Agreement, minority report attached.
"... any part of them to which any one might take exception, could later be taken up for consideration."

Owing to the acceptance by St. Olaf of the minority report, along with some other changes in the Articles of Agreement, and the acceptance of the original Articles by Grace Congregation, the Joint Committee for Union met on July 12 for a discussion of these differences. They were, of course, in hopes that variances could be settled amicably. Following a general discussion of the minority report on "Pastors", a motion was made and seconded that the Church Council be required to make arrangements for Norwegian services to be preached by pastors of the area, thereby avoiding the necessity of employing an associate pastor for at least one year. On vote, the five representatives from St. Olaf Congregation defeated this question, outnumbering the three delegates from Grace. After further debate on the "Pastors" and "Language" Articles, it was agreed that further action be deferred until the president of the South Dakota District, the Reverend N. N. Boe, could appear before

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63 St. Olaf Minutes, July 9, 1920, pp. 170-171. Final vote on the Articles of Agreement, as amended, was fourteen in favor, five against, with two not voting, an indication of the sparse attendance at the St. Olaf Meeting.

64 Joint Committee Minutes, July 12, 1920, p. 1.

65 Ibid. Hostetler and Johnson were absent from the Grace delegation at the time of this vote.
the Committee, for the purpose of advising the group on a possible solution of the controversy. 66

Pursuant to an invitation from the Joint Committee, the Reverend N. N. Boe met with this group on August 9, 1920. Further discussion of the question brought forth the suggestion by President Boe that the United Congregation apply to the Mission Board of the South Dakota District to secure a city missionary for Sioux Falls, who would also have the duty of Norwegian work among those who favored this ministry. 67

Final reconciliation of the differences in the Joint Committee was not reached until the August 29 meeting at Grace Church. The council of the District President had fallen on receptive ears, and approval was given a motion that provided for a city missionary in the place of an associate, or second pastor. This man would "... supply pastoral service for the Norwegian work of the united Congregation." 68 Services were to be provided every Sunday,

66 Ibid. It was also agreed that representatives from the synod be invited to address a general meeting of the two congregations in regard to the "... need for united work in the field of Lutheranism." Ibid.

67 Joint Committee Minutes, August 9, 1920, p. 1. The subcommittee appointed to secure synodical leaders as speakers reported that nothing had been done, and it was agreed that delay would be best in this matter.

68 Joint Committee Minutes, August 29, 1920, p. 1. Time and place were to be decided by worshippers at such services, but not to interfere with the times for regular services and Sunday School.
as far as practicable, in the Norwegian language. Compensation from the United Congregation would amount to $800.00 or a sum decided upon by the Home Mission Board and a committee from the congregation. The United Congregation would, at the organizational meeting, issue a call to the Reverend H. J. Glenn to serve as pastor.\(^{69}\)

With harmony accorded in the Joint Committee, the Revised Articles of Agreement were signed by all members of this committee, and returned to the two congregations for action.\(^{70}\) Grace Congregation assembled on September 6, and adopted, with one minor addition,\(^{71}\) the revised work of the Joint Committee.\(^{72}\)

The final important meeting of the Joint Committee for Union was called to order on September 10, 1920. It was reported that both congregations had adopted the Articles of Agreement as submitted to them, and thus had agreed to unite into one congregation. The initial meeting of this United Congregation was to be held on September 21, 1920 at 7:30 P.M. at the St. Olaf Church. In accordance with the article on

\(^{69}\) Ibid., p. 2. All references to an associate pastor would be replaced by the words "city missionary".

\(^{70}\) Revised Articles of Agreement, p. 1.

\(^{71}\) Grace wanted further explanation and clarification of the duties of the Norwegian city missionary.

\(^{72}\) Grace Minutes, September 6, 1920, p. 48.
"Nominations", a committee was selected to report nominations at this first congregational meeting.\textsuperscript{73}

The great majority of Sioux Falls Lutherans were now united into one synod and one congregation. This new, all-English group was prepared to take a larger role in the Sioux Falls community in the active and challenging decade of the 1920's.

\textsuperscript{73}Joint Committee Minutes, September 10, 1920, p. 1. To serve on this committee: N. 0. Monserud, C. C. Bratrud, John G. Berdahl, and Mons Johnson. At a brief meeting of this Joint Committee, Johnson, who was absent from the city, was replaced by A. O. Richardson to serve on the nominating committee. Joint Committee Minutes, September 21, 1920, p. 1.
Chapter III

THE 1920's: PRIMARY YEARS OF GROWTH

The negotiations completed, the Articles of Agreement duly adopted and signed, the union completed, the members of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Congregation and those of the St. Olaf Lutheran Congregation joined together to physically unite the two bodies into one United Congregation. On September 21, 1920, Professor O. A. Solheim, as chairman of the Joint Committee on Union, called the first meeting to order. On motion, District President N. N. Boe was elected chairman, and James O. Berdahl secretary for this historic occasion. The celebrants joined in singing a hymn of thanksgiving, "The Church's One Foundation", and listened to the reading of the Fourth Chapter of Ephesians. Business proceeded thereafter, the first item being the vocal adoption of the constitution and by-laws. Five names were brought forth as a possible designation for the United Congregation. These included Our Savior's, Hope, First, Central, and

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1Minutes of First Lutheran Congregation, September 21, 1920. Cited hereafter as: First Minutes.

2The constitution and by-laws were part of the Articles of Agreement, but were also recorded and acted upon in this initial meeting. See: First Minutes, September 21, 1920. For original Articles of Incorporation see: Articles of Incorporation, October 1, 1920. Registered on October 30, 1920, Minnehaha County, South Dakota.
St. Paul Lutheran Congregation. Upon balloting, First received thirty-seven, followed by Hope and Central with twelve votes each. Upon motion, unanimous acclaim was given the name "The First Lutheran Congregation of Sioux Falls, South Dakota."\(^3\)

The report of the Nominating Committee was the next order of business, followed by the selection of the congregational officers.\(^4\) A unanimous vote was voiced to issue a call to the Reverend H. J. Glenn to serve as pastor, with compensation fixed at $2,500.00 per year, together with parsonage, Christmas offering and incidentals.\(^5\)

The congregation next approved the action of a committee which had met with the Mission Board of the South Dakota District of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (NLCA) concerning the services of a city missionary.

\(^3\)First Minutes, September 21, 1920.

\(^4\)Elected as first officers in this congregation were vice-president — James O. Berdahl, secretary — L. B. Halvorson, financial secretary — L. N. Hostetler, treasurer — A. Talman Hanson, Board of Trustees — H. P. Moen, G. K. Groth, P. H. Scott, George E. Larson, James Huseboe, and Lars Johnson, Board of Deacons — Dr. A. J. Moe, Professor Ola Solheim, P. J. Morstad, O. F. Lindgren, Reuben E. Bragstad, and L. Hanson, Sunday School superintendent — Judge Lewis Larson, assistant superintendent — Professor Ola Solheim, Sunday School secretary-treasurer — Roy Dybvig. First Minutes, September 21, 1920.

\(^5\)Ibid. See also, Letter of Call to the Reverend H. J. Glenn from Board of Deacons, September 23, 1920.
As set forth in the Articles of Agreement, the United Congregation undertook the obligation to contribute toward a city missionary, who was to minister to the needs of those desiring the Norwegian language and conduct as far as practicable Norwegian services every Sunday.

After delegating arrangements for installation services to the Church Council, along with responsibility for selection of the Confirmation textbooks, the assembly called upon the Reverend Glenn for a few brief remarks. The leader commented on the work before the new congregation and pronounced the benediction.

The next evening, September 22, the Board of Trustees gathered at the old Grace Church for the purpose of organization. G. K. Groth was elected chairman, and H. P. Moen, secretary. The first act was to inform the Reverend Glenn that he could, at his leisure, move his family into the former St. Olaf Parsonage.

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6 *First Minutes*, September 21, 1920. Time and place for these services was left to the Church Council.

7 Ibid.

8 Minutes — Board of Trustees First Lutheran Church 1920-1923, September 22, 1920. Cited hereafter as: Trustee Minutes.

9 Mrs. Glenn characterized this parsonage as "A big ten room house, cold as a barn. The children were sick all the time /because/ the house was so cold." Glenn interview, June 26, 1969.
Officers of the First Lutheran Congregation gathered for the third consecutive night on September 23, 1920. The Board of Deacons elected as its officers, Dr. A. J. Moe, chairman, and P. J. Morstad, secretary. The council agreed to plan for installation services on the first Sunday in October in the former St. Olaf Church. The Deacons were instructed to take responsibility for arrangement of Norwegian services, and the Trustees were to consider possibilities for expansion of seating in the former St. Olaf Church. A gallery was thought to be most appropriate, giving evidence to the already crowded conditions of the infant congregation.

Financial dealings were closely regulated by the young congregation. Before the turn of the year, the members voted

10 *First Minutes, September 23, 1920.*

11 *Ibid.* The St. Olaf building was chosen as the regular structure for the new congregation because, as James O. Berdahl said, "... it roomed a little larger number of people than what Grace did at that time." Berdahl interview, April 26, 1969. Installation services for the Reverend H. J. Glenn were duly held on October 3, 1920. See: *Installation Service, First Lutheran Church, October 3, 1920.* (Printed program.)

12 At a special Congregational Meeting on October 12, 1920, only four members rose to indicate their desire for Norwegian services. *First Minutes, October 12, 1920.*

13 *Ibid., September 23, 1920.* The Trustees also discussed this seating problem and the building of a gallery at their meeting of September 26, 1920.
to attempt to sell the old Grace Church and Parsonage. An October meeting voted by a majority of thirty-five to one to dispose of this property for the figure of $20,000.00. As was the case with most offers in the first few years of the 1920's, this deal was to amount to nothing and not be completed.\textsuperscript{14} While no official record of approval by the congregation remains, the Trustees approved a budget for the year 1921 in the amount of $12,337.00 for the first full year of the congregation.\textsuperscript{15}

The first Annual Meeting of the United Congregation was called to order by the Reverend Glenn on January 12, 1921. The initial order of business was the admittance of forty-nine new members, who were also allowed to participate in the proceedings of the evening.\textsuperscript{16} The report of Lewis Larson, superintendent of the Sunday School, presaged a common request in the months to come, the need for more space.

\textsuperscript{14}First Minutes, October 12, 1920.

\textsuperscript{15}Trustees Minutes, November 12, 1920. On January 12, 1921, the Financial Secretary, L. N. Hostetler, reported 375 pledges made for 1921 in the total amount of $11,531.80. See: First Minutes, January 21, 1921.

\textsuperscript{16}First Minutes, January 12, 1921. Dr. C. O. Solberg, who had figured so largely in past actions of Sioux Falls Lutheranism, was among the new members. He served as president of Augustana College and Normal School from 1920-1928. Eight new members were added on January 25, thirty-four on May 13, and fifty-five on December 16, 1921. \textit{Ibid.}
With 303 children enrolled in Sunday School classes, including those attending a newly organized branch in the southern part of the city, and a staff of twenty-three officers and teachers, it was evident that this part of service to the Kingdom was meeting with success.  

Because of the great amount of business to be conducted, the annual meeting was adjourned until the evening of January 25. On that date, James O. Berdahl reported that the necessary legal papers pertaining to the merger of the two parishes had been signed and delivered to the First Lutheran Congregation. The crowded conditions in the sanctuary elicited much discussion, resulting in an authorization for the Trustees to award contracts for a gallery to expand seating capacity.

The Trustees held numerous meetings to conduct the regular business of the growing congregation. On April 16, 1921, they voted to prepare the old Grace parsonage for occupancy by the Reverend Davick and his family. The Reverend Davick had been called from the East to conduct the Norwegian

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17 Ibid. Sunday School treasurer, Roy Dybvig, reported receipts of $318.00 and disbursements of $253.22, the start of a successful financial program for the Sunday School.

18 Ibid., January 25, 1921. See also, Trustees Minutes, January 28, 1921. Contracts were let on the 29th, totaling $676.50. The Congregation approved a figure of "less than $700.00" on April 5, 1921. See: First Minutes, April 5, 1921.
part of the ministry of the parish. In the fall of 1921, the Trustees hired Professor Carl Youngdahl from Augustana College and Normal School as permanent organist and choir director at a salary of $37.50 per month. Professor Youngdahl began his service to First Lutheran on September 7, 1921.

The program of First Lutheran continued to grow throughout the year. In October, the congregation approved a budget of $11,422.00 for 1922. The record shows fifty-five new members received in December, along with a vote of gratitude to the Fidelis Club for the new bulletin board donated to the congregation.

Concluding their first year as a congregation, First Lutheran members gathered on January 11, 1922, to review their brief past, and lay plans for the future. The report of the Reverend Glenn encompassed the period since the birth of the United Congregation, a span of some fifteen months. In attendance at the 105 services held at the First sanctuary,

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19 Trustees Minutes, April 16, 1921. The 1921 budget included $1,600.00 for Missionary and parsonage. See: Ibid., November 12, 1920.

20 Ibid., October 5, 1921. Professor Youngdahl and family were accepted into membership on December 16, 1921. See: First Minutes, December 16, 1921.

21 First Minutes, October 11, 1921.

22 Ibid., December 16, 1921.
and the forty-nine services conducted at the Grace Chapel in the Norwegian language, were approximately 870 individuals who were counted on the membership roles. The pastor also reported that the following organizations were active: Sunday School, Ladies Aid, Men's Brotherhood, Luther League, Girls Fidelis Club, Ladies Missionary Circle, Little Missionary Helpers, and the Prayer Circle. The treasurer reported total receipts for the year 1921 amounted to $18,087.39, with disbursements totaling $17,263.66. Among the items in the last category was $973.35 as salary for "Mission and Rev. Davick." Following the report of the Trustees, Mrs. Odean Harreid, president of the Ladies Aid, reported on the activities of this group. Their financial records showed a total sum of $8,428.58 in receipts for 1921, which was a net profit of over $5,365.00 since their first organizational

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23 Ibid., January 11, 1921. Of this number, 408 were contributors of money in this period. Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid. Treasurer O. A. Skyberg paid the Reverend C. A. Davick, the Norwegian language pastor, a salary of $83.33 for January, 1922, this being the last record of payment to Davick, who must have left about this time. See: Treasurer's Report Book 1922-1935. Also recorded was payment of $75.00 per month for the next several months to the Reverend Svanoe. Trustees Minutes, January 11, 1922, indicates the Reverend Davick was given plenty of time to vacate the Grace parsonage. Svanoe obviously replaced Davick in February, 1922.
meeting. Other reports for the 1921 year, included that from the president of the Luther League, which counted a membership of about one hundred young people, and from the president of the Girl's Fidelis Club, numbering about fifty. The Sunday School report, from superintendent Lewis Larson, showed a mushrooming of activities by this organization. Enrollment had exploded to a figure of 660 students, with thirty-eight teachers and officers, including the students in attendance at the south branch held at Augustana College and Norman School. A concluding item of business at this meeting placed the subject of Norwegian services in the hands of the Church Council, which was to consider the problem and report back to the congregation at a special meeting for that purpose.

Professor O. A. Solheim, representing those of First Lutheran served in the Norwegian language, met with the Church Council on February 14, to consider further action on this matter. He conveyed to the Council the wish that it consult with the Mission Board of the South Dakota District

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27 Ibid.

28 Ibid. The Sunday School numbered 303 on January 1, 1921, at which time they asked for more room for classes.

29 Ibid. The congregation proceeded very cautiously and conservatively on the matter of the Norwegian services, and this subject was discussed time after time during the next several years.
of the NLCA concerning the amount of financial aid this board could give in support of an assistant pastor to conduct Norwegian services at the Grace Chapel. After much discussion, the council voted to recommend to the Deacons that they attempt to secure the services of the Reverend Svande for a month or longer, to handle the Norwegian services until a final decision could be reached. At two different council meetings in March, this matter was discussed. The council was still not ready to make any permanent decision, and postponed any action until further study could be made.

The first recorded action towards the building of a new place of worship for First Lutheran Congregation was on March 13, 1922. At a meeting of the Church Council, a committee

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31 Ibid. See also, Council Report: 1922. The Reverend Svande of Mission Hill, South Dakota, had formerly approached the council inquiring about the possibility of employment in this capacity. The council, upon investigation, found that the Reverend Svande had been a pastor of the former Norwegian Synod, and had recently served in Norway; therefore it felt justified in recommending him to the Deacons. Compensation was fixed at $75.00 per month for this temporary service.

32 First Minutes, March 7, 1922, and March 13, 1922.

33 A very small number of people were actually vocal in advocating continuation of a full time Norwegian ministry. At the March 13, 1922, meeting, only five members addressed themselves to the matter. Ibid., March 13, 1922.
was elected to outline a program to start a Church Building Fund. A resolution was passed that "... the problem of a new church building should be seriously considered." James O. Berdahl reported for the three member committee to the council on April 17. He stated that "the need for a New Church Edifice ... was imperative", and therefore the committee recommended three committees be chosen to commence activities immediately -- one for finance, another for plans and site, and a third for materials. The council accepted this report, and moved that it be presented to the congregation as a whole. At this same meeting, agreement was reached on a report concerning Norwegian services. This stated that the council had met with those concerned, but very little interest had been shown, and from this concluded that little demand existed for continuing such ministry. The council

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\[34\] First Minutes, March 13, 1922. Elected on this committee were the Reverend Glenn, J. Berdahl, and L. B. Halvorson.

\[35\] Ibid. See also, Trustees Minutes, April 5, 1922. Chairman Groth announced a donation of $500.00 by Mrs. Rene Thompson towards the building fund of First Lutheran.

\[36\] First Minutes, April 17, 1922. These minutes are obviously misdated, as this recommendation was heard by the congregation on April 2, 1922.
also desired more time, in order that a definite plan
could be submitted to the congregation at the July Quar-
terly Meeting. \(^{37}\)

At the April 2 Quarterly Meeting, the resolution
concerning the Building Fund was presented. After some
discussion, it was agreed to choose two committees, one
on finance and one on plans, material, and site, to pro-
ceed with plans for a new building. \(^{38}\)

In accordance with instructions from the congrega-
tion, the Church Council met on May 18, 1922, to elect
members to the proposed committees. Chosen to serve on
the Finance Committee were George Larson, N. O. Monserud,
C. J. Soderholm, C. A. Groth, and James O. Berdahl, with
Mesdames O. C. Christopherson and G. K. Groth to serve as
advisory lady members. \(^{39}\) Those elected to the Committee of
Plans, Material, and Site included G. H. Gilbertson, Lewis
Larson, Halvor Sandness, A. N. Graff, and A. P. Johnson, with

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\(^{37}\)Ibid. See also, April 2, 1922. The council asked for more time on this subject.

\(^{38}\)First Minutes, April 2, 1922. The Finance Committee was to have five voting members, with two lady advisors; the plans, materials, and site group was to include five voting and three lady advisor members.

\(^{39}\)Ibid., May 18, 1922. Monserud informed the council that he could not serve, and was replaced with L. B. Halvorson on May 26. Henry Morstad replaced Soderholm on December 11, 1922.
Mesdames A. J. Moe, Odean Harried, and K. Thompson to serve as the female representatives.

By the latter part of June, the Church Council was ready to present to the congregation recommendations concerning the Norwegian services. At their June 29 meeting, the council gave approval to a resolution to discontinue such services on a regular basis, and have the Deacons secure Norwegian pastors from the area for services once or twice a month. The recommendation of the council, however, was not read at the congregational meeting the next evening, June 30. Professor O. A. Solheim appeared before the assembly as a representative of the members of First Lutheran who were served in the Norwegian language. After meeting together, these members had elected a committee of five to meet with the Church Council to discuss "... the best manner of improving and promoting our Lutheran Church work in the City, especially amongst those whose heart language is the Norwegian language." The congregation thereupon moved that the Church Council meet with such committee as represented by Solheim, to confer on this subject.

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40 Ibid.
41 First Minutes, June 29, 1922.
42 Ibid., June 30, 1922.
43 Ibid.
Professors Solheim, C. M. Christianson, and T. M. Erickson, as a committee, met with the Church Council on the evening of September 21, 1922. Solheim surprised the council by reading from a letter by N. O. Monserud addressed to the council members, which called for the creation of a new congregation in the south part of Sioux Falls, which would serve the community in both English and Norwegian, and which would be housed in the old Grace Church building. The members of the committee stated that they were in basic agreement with this letter, and that "... a plan of arrangement along these lines would result in more people being served in Churchwork according to true Lutheran doctrine." The council discussed the proposal at length in executive session, and finally decided to receive the above letter as a basis for further deliberation.

At the Quarterly Meeting, held on October 18, 1922, James O. Berdahl, for the Church Council, reported concerning the Norwegian program. He stated that due to the small number who had been attending and had supported such services,

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44 First Minutes, September 21, 1922.

45 Ibid. On September 26, the council met to discuss this problem, the secretary stated that he had not received Monserud's letter; the council thereupon appointed a three-man committee to confer with the Norwegian delegation on this matter and report at a later time.
the council recommended that such services be discontinued on a regular basis after November 1, 1922. The council recognized, however, the need for such services to some members, and recommended that the Deacons secure part-time aid from area pastors to conduct Norwegian services on alternate Sundays. Such recommendation was adopted by the vote of the congregation. Adoption of a 1923 budget totaling $10,960.64, and brief reports from the two committees involved in the new church program, concluded the meeting.

At the Annual Meeting on January 10, 1923, a number of reports showed the progress of the congregation. The pastors report listed a membership of approximately 900 souls, of which 650 were confirmed, and 230 qualified as full voting members. The Trustees reported that the congregation held properties valued "conservatively" at $61,000.00, with an

46 First Minutes, October 18, 1922. See also, Council Report: 1922, which defended the action of the council stating "... that all that has been done by the Council in regard to this one matter was done only after seeking in every way possible counsel and advice from those most interested and after serious deliberations."

47 First Minutes, October 18, 1922. This budget included $900.00 for a City Missionary. See also, Trustees Minutes, October 9, 1922, concerning budget for 1923.

48 A church in St. Paul, Minnesota, caught the eye of the Site, Plans, and Materials Committee and they reported that a local architectural firm was preparing plans along the line of this church for their perusal.

49 First Minutes, January 10, 1923. In addition to the 900 on the roles, there were "... a great many who are more or less affiliated with the church, ... but who are not carried as members."
indebtedness of $18,850.00. The Ladies Aid again proved to be faithful workers and good businesswomen. They reported profits in excess of $5,000.00 for 1922, and a balance of over $12,000.00 invested in interest bearing obligations. The reports of the various other organizations, gave further evidence of continued growth, both in service and in numbers.

The members of First Lutheran served in the Norwegian language were heard from again at a special congregational meeting held on January 19, 1923. A formal petition was presented, signed by N. O. Monserud, O. A. Solheim, and T. M. Erickson, which stated the actions of "some twenty persons interested in the organization of a new Lutheran congregation in Sioux Falls." This petition called attention to the great growth of First Lutheran congregation, the large field for Lutheranism in the city, and the difficulty for one pastor to serve all the needs of this increasing number of people. Proposed also in this document was the establishment of a new congregation in the south part of Sioux Falls, such congregation to take possession of the

50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
The meeting was opened for discussion, in which many members participated. It was finally decided to appoint a committee of five to meet with the petitioners.

After a lengthy meeting, this delegated group reported back to the congregation on February 19, 1923. Little progress of a substantive nature could be reported, and the congregation adopted resolutions to the effect that the Kingdom of God could be best served in Sioux Falls with a united front, and that another congregation was not necessary. The Board of Deacons was again instructed to continue to provide periodic Norwegian services.

At an April 6, 1922 meeting, the congregation received the report of the Site, Plans, and Materials Committee relative to a recommended location for the new church building. A. N. Graff, chairman, stated that the majority of this committee favored the corner of 12th Street and Dakota Avenue, the present location of the old St. Olaf Church. A vote was taken and this location received fifty-five tallies.

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53 First Minutes, January 10, 1923. See also, Undated petition signed by N. O. Monserud, O. A. Solheim and T. M. Erickson.

54 First Minutes, January 19, 1923.

55 First Minutes, February 19, 1923.
while the 12th Street and Duluth Avenue corner garnered only twenty-one. On motion, the corner of 12th Street and Dakota Avenue was made unanimous. 56 At the conclusion of this meeting, a proposed amendment to the constitution was offered. This would change paragraph five of Article Five to read as follows: "The Voting Members of this congregation shall be members twenty-one years old or over."

This matter was held over for the June Quarterly Meeting.

The history of the Vacation Bible School which is now enjoyed by hundreds of children of the congregation, was started on May 29, 1923. At a congregational meeting, discussion revolved around the need for more instruction in the doctrines and tenets of the Lutheran faith. Lengthy discussions at the Men's Brotherhood meetings 58 finally found fruition in the recommendation of the Board of Deacons for a Vacation Bible School to be sponsored by First Lutheran. Superintendent Lewis Larson of the Sunday School formally asked for such an undertaking, and outlined his plans for such

56Ibid., April 6, 1923.

57Ibid. In the original constitution of the congregation, only men of this age could vote. This amendment was in the spirit of the national suffrage movement for women at that time.

58See especially meeting of May 22, 1923, which called for a congregational meeting to enact a Vacation Bible School. Brotherhood Minutes, May 22, 1923.
a movement. Three separate locations were advised, one in the Model School at Augustana College and Normal School, another at Grace Church, and a third at the First Church Building, each to run for a period of three weeks during the month of June. The superintendent also asked for a sum of up to $150.00 to be appropriated for expenses of such studies. By unanimous vote, the congregation gave approval to this endeavor.  

The summer and fall months of 1923 were ones of activity concerning the building program of First Lutheran. Upon the recommendation of the Site, Plans, and Materials Committee, a St. Paul architect, N. Edward Mohn, was employed. The Finance Committee held many meetings during this period, and on October 17, moved to start plans for an immediate campaign for funds.

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59 First Minutes, May 29, 1923. See also, Treasurers Book, July 6, 1923, which records that five people were paid $30.00 each for Vacation Bible School.

60 First Minutes, June 28, 1923. See also, Agreement Form, dated November 3, 1923. Terms of two and one-half per cent of the total cost of the building were agreed upon, aggregate commission not to exceed $3,750.00.

61 Finance Committee Minutes, October 17, 1923. Also November 7 and 13, 1923, meetings of this committee.
In mid-November, the congregation met to adopt the budget for 1924, which totaled $13,633.98.\textsuperscript{62} A lengthy seven-point proposal was read by James O. Berdahl, secretary of the Finance Committee. This called for an immediate fund raising campaign, adoption of a general outline plan for the church structure, expansion of the Finance Committee from seven to twelve members, and a budget of $400.00 for the expenses of a pledge campaign. Also included were general recommendations as to the duties of various groups, and the advisability of building at least the basement of the church and the parsonage as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{63} While this report elicited much discussion, little action was taken. Approval was given, however, for expansion of the Finance Committee to twelve members, and it was also agreed that the congregation should aim for a completed church structure.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{62}First Minutes, November 16, 1923. This figure included salary of $1,200.00 for Miss Marie Skepstad, recently employed as full time Parish Worker.

\textsuperscript{63}Ibid. See also, Finance Committee Minutes, November 13, 1923.

\textsuperscript{64}First Minutes, November 16, 1923.
was instructed to proceed along the lines presented in its report.

At the Annual Meeting on January 9, 1924, final approval was given the constitutional change that allowed all members over the age of twenty-one to exercise full voting membership privileges. The esteem in which the congregation held the Reverend Glenn was shown in a concrete fashion when unanimous approval was given a motion to increase his salary by $500.00 per year.

General approval of the Building Committee plans was secured on January 21, 1924, following the viewing of floor plans and exterior pictures through the stereoptican machine of Dr. A. J. Moe. It was also decided that a parsonage be built separate from the church building. Approval of the Finance Committee recommendations was given at a March 6, 1924, meeting of the congregation. It was agreed

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65 Finance Committee Minutes, November 23, 1923. William Hoese, Martin Engebretson, Dr. C. O. Solberg, John H. Johnson, C. C. Bratrud, O. M. Richardson, and A. N. Graff were selected to increase the committee to twelve members. Before the year was over, this group had organized two subcommittees to handle publicity and subscription methods for the Building Fund. Ibid., December 17, 1923.

66 The advisory lady members of the various committees were thereafter given full membership.

67 First Minutes, January 9, 1924.

68 Ibid., January 21, 1924. This committee was a renaming of the former Site, Plans, and Materials Committee.
also that a treasurer for the Building Fund should be selected. 69

In late April, the Finance Committee recommended that the formal campaign for pledges to the Building Fund commence on May 11, 1924. 70 Funds were already coming in for the program. The First Lutheran Ladies Aid took a vigorous lead in promoting this cause, and were one of the first organizations to pledge financial support. A donation of $16,000.00 was acknowledged by the Church Council at their December 20 meeting, 71 the first of many substantial gifts from the Ladies Aid. "I don't think that First Lutheran would exist if it hadn't been for the Aid," Mrs. Glenn exclaimed as she reflected on the many accomplishments of this group. 72

Financial conditions of the area were at a low ebb in the spring of 1924 as First Lutheran leaders planned their construction program. The morning of May 11, 1924, when the fund drive was launched, Dakota State Bank closed its

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69 Ibid. March 6, 1924.
70 First Minutes, April 8, 1924. The congregation accepted these recommendations and also charged the Finance Committee with the responsibility of arrangements for a parsonage during the building program.
71 Ibid., December 20, 1923.
72 Glenn interview, June 26, 1969.
doors. This institution was the holder of the savings of many First Lutheran members. Four other banks in the city closed their doors soon afterwards. 73

Following serious consideration of the needs of the congregation, and "prayerful thought" on the task that was ahead, the decision was reached to proceed with the building program. "Dedication and hard work for the church was everywhere," Mrs. Glenn later related. 74

The head of the Building Fund drive, A. N. Graff, reported to the congregation in late June that pledges in the amount of about $45,000.00 had thus far been offered. The business men of the city were to be solicited in the fall, and this effort was expected to bring in another $12,000.00 to $15,000.00. Following discussion of the drive, the congregation authorized the Building Committee to solicit bids for the construction of the church building, and report back to the congregation. 75

A report of the bids was made to the congregation by A. N. Graff at a September 10 meeting. The Building Committee recommended acceptance of the low bids, $118,700.00

73Ibid.
74Ibid.
75First Minutes, June 27, 1924. Graff estimated that about $12,000.00 to $15,000.00 would be paid on the pledges by the end of 1924.
for a completed basement and superstructure. The basement was to be finished, complete with wiring and plumbing, while the superstructure was to be little more than an enclosed shell. Low bid for the complete building was $152,000.00, and for the completed basement alone, $55,600.00. The congregation favored the recommendation of the Building Committee and the low bid for the construction of a completed basement and superstructure was accepted. It was decided to issue $75,000.00 worth of bonds to help finance the building program, and the Finance Committee was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.  

The possession of the old Grace property, including the church building and the parsonage immediately to the south, was to many members of First Lutheran an unfavorable holding, now that the congregation had little use for it. For some years it had been used only as a place for periodic Norwegian services, and for Vacation Bible School sessions. Consequently, an offer of purchase in October, 1921, was received with relish. Reuben E. Bragstad reported on the possibility of the sale to the Mt. Zion Jewish Congregation. The Trustees agreed that the time was

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76 First Minutes, September 10, 1924.
77 Ibid.
appropriate for dispersing of the property, and a sale was consumated in November; the price was $5,000.00, with the condition that First Congregation would not relinquish possession until November 1, 1925. 78

The drive for funds for the new church structure progressed, and teams were organized by the Finance Committee to secure pledges from members of the congregation. The Building Fund Treasurer's Report showed $13,587.00 received to December 29, 1924. 79 On January 26, 1925, the Finance Committee guided the congregation in their approval of the bond issue for the financing of the greater portion of the church cost. The Trustees were authorized to sell bonds in an amount up to $75,000.00, with an interest rate of six per cent per annum offered. The bonds were to be divided in three lots of $25,000.00 each, Series A, B, and C.

78 Ibid. The first negotiations took place October 29, 1924, and the sale was concluded November 12, 1924, with the signing of formal agreement and lease.

79 Building Fund Treasurer's Report, December 29, 1924.
A mortgage on the real estate of the congregation would secure the offer.

At the Quarterly Meeting on June 22, a loan in the amount of $50,000.00 from the Fire Association of Philadelphia was approved by the congregation. The members of First Lutheran obligated themselves to repay this figure, including six per cent per annum interest, in amounts of $2,500.00 per year commencing June 3, 1929, with the unpaid balance due in full on June 3, 1935. The assembly also favored the use of Grace Church during the months of July and August for the regular English morning service. The room at the Y.M.C.A. was exposed to the hot summer sun, and the heat proved too intense for the worshippers. Thus, the Grace sanctuary proved useful to the entire

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80 First Minutes, January 26, 1925. Series A could be redeemed in full on any interest due date on or after five years from date of purchase; Series B likewise redeemable in ten year period; Series C after fifteen years. The real estate of the congregation consisted of Lots Four, Five, and Six in Block One in Gales Addition to the City of Sioux Falls, Minnehaha County, South Dakota. The Finance Committee corresponded with the John C. Kuck and Company of Madison, Wisconsin, relating to the purchase of Series B and C, but this came to nought. See: letter to John C. Kuck & Co. from James O. Berdahl, secretary of Finance Committee, February 7, 1925.

81 First Minutes, June 22, 1925. On two separate occasions preceding this loan, the Finance Committee had secured money from the Ladies Aid to meet pressing obligations during the first months of construction. See: Finance Committee Minutes, February 26 and April 10, 1925.
congregation after the demise of the old St. Olaf build-
ing.82

Bonds in the amount of $25,000.00 had been issued locally as of August 1, 1925, by the Finance Committee, which also organized a city-wide fund drive to commence September 14. This drive was to be directed mainly toward the business establishments, and by September 26 pledges of $7,280.00 had been solicited, $3,048.00 in cash paid at the time of the pledge.83

The last religious services to be held in the old St. Olaf Church were on September 21, 1925. Certainly a time for remembering and reminiscing, this occasion was cause for an article in the local Norwegian newspaper, entitled "For the Last Time." Following a very brief history of the building, the account listed a summary of various ministerial acts administered in the old sanctuary,

82 Ibid. The St. Olaf building could not be moved because it was too tall, due to the spiring steeple, to conform to city codes. Thus, the main portion of the sanctuary was torn down, but the annex addition to the north was sold and moved to a location on South Second Avenue and was made into an apartment house. Mrs. Glenn related that "It really hurt some of the old-timers when they started to tear down the St. Olaf Church." Glenn interview, June 26, 1969.

83 Finance Committee Minutes, September 2, 1925. See also, First Minutes, September 11, 1925.
which included 1,890 baptisms, 895 confirmations, 1,217 weddings, and 480 funerals.

Now the congregation was without a sanctuary in which to conduct services. On September 25, the First Lutheran Trustees met to consider this problem. While the congregation still owned the old Grace property, this was much too small to consider for regular English services, even though it was adequate for the Norwegian services. An offer from the Congregational Church was considered, but because these facilities were not available on Sunday mornings, a committee was selected to secure appropriate room at the recently constructed Y.M.C.A. Building.

A. N. Graff, chairman of the Building Committee, asked the approval of the congregation on October 19 for four proposals. These included authorization for the construction of temporary plank steps and walks in front of the church, installation of the old sanctuary fixtures including altar, pulpit, and etc.

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84 Clipping from the Norwegian newspaper, Fremad, published in Sioux Falls. In H. M. Blegen Collection, Augustana College Archives.

85 Trustees Minutes, September 25, 1924. At the October 14 meeting, satisfactory negotiations with the Y.M.C.A. were concluded, the charge of $25.00 per month being approved by the Trustees.

86 First Minutes, October 19, 1925. The budget approved at this meeting for 1926 amounted to $19,870.00, the largest amount adopted for any year of the 1920 decade, further illustrating the support of the members of their church. Ibid.
Representatives of the Sioux Falls community joined the members of First Lutheran Congregation on May 3, 1925, for the cornerstone laying festivities at the new church location. Dakota Avenue was closed to all traffic, and chairs were placed in the street. Seated in their proper places on the temporary scaffolding, guests and members heard the Reverend Glenn relate a brief history of the congregation. After tracing the early backgrounds of the groups that preceded the organization of First in 1920, he continued:

After little more than four and a half years together, we are met here today for the laying of this cornerstone; the church being built around it speaks eloquently of the spirit of cooperation, untiring zeal and effort on the part of all those who comprise the congregation and its various organizations. For this we are thankful; for its continuance in the future we most earnestly pray.

The congregation today consists of over 1,000 souls, and it serves at least 500 people more who are not members, but who look to it for service. The pastor has had as many as 84 weddings in one year, 71 baptisms, 36 funerals, 650 attending Communion, and the Confirmation class of this year numbers 60.87

The Reverend Glenn was justly proud and happy with the flock under his charge.

87 H. J. Glenn, "A Brief History of First Lutheran Congregation, Sioux Falls, S. D. for the Cornerstone Laying May 3, 1925." (Typewritten.)
Placed in the cornerstone, among other items, was a copy of the May 2, 1925, edition of the *Sioux Falls Argus-Leader*, as well as a copy of this same paper dated July 11, 1894, secured from the cornerstone of the old Trinity Church. Other items of historical significance to the congregation were also entombed in the copper box constructed for this purpose.  

The first meeting to be held in the new church, and this was in the basement, was recorded in the minutes of the Men's Brotherhood on November 3, 1925. The secretary, E. R. Evenson, wrote that "it was very appropriate that this should be the first meeting of any kind held in the new Church because of the fact that we were observing the Anniversary of the Reformation." The first regularly scheduled congregational meeting in the new edifice was called to order on December 18, 1925. It was fitting that the main order of business was the admission of eighty new members, illustrating the continued growth of the First Lutheran Congregation.

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88 See Appendix A for complete list of contents of the cornerstone.

89 *Brotherhood Minutes 1920-1927*, November 3, 1925. The program included a talk by Dr. Carl Youngdahl on the music and songs of the Reformation period.

90 *First Minutes*, December 18, 1925. This meeting was also held in the basement.
The program of First Lutheran continued to grow, despite the handicap of church construction. Temporary plank walks, platforms, and seating arrangements became the standard rather than the exception for many gatherings of the congregation. The installation of the new South Dakota District president, the Reverend A. J. Bergsaker, was hosted by First Lutheran on September 26, 1926, and observance of the Reformation was celebrated with special services together with the other Lutheran churches of the city.

At the Annual Meeting on January 12, 1927, the Building and Finance Committees reported pledges of about $28,000.00 toward the Building Fund. Recommendations followed that this figure be used only for the payment of bonds and debts directly related to the construction of the church, and that the program for the completion of the interior of the building be henceforth administered on a "Pay as you Go" policy. The congregation expressed gratitude to the

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91 First Minutes, July 2, 1926.
92 Ibid., October 11, 1926. The budget approved for 1927, totalling $19,679.00, indicated that the members were not reducing their regular contributions for the ministry of the church in spite of the recent Building Fund appeal. Ibid., November 8, 1926.
93 First Minutes, January 12, 1927. Although the minutes do not record acceptance or rejection of these recommendations, this was the general program followed regarding the interior completion of the church.
Finance Committee, which was discharged; similar thanks were accorded the Building Committee, but this group was retained for future use.\textsuperscript{94}

As agreed in the original building contract, a completed basement and a superstructure was to be constructed at the corner of 12th Street and Dakota Avenue. The main sanctuary, then, was basically only bare flooring, walls, and roof. The members of the congregation laboriously fashioned much of the interior, following installation of the old altar, pulpit, and organ from the St. Olaf Church.\textsuperscript{95}
The donation by the Fidelis Club of the material for finishing the first story of the Sunday School wing in 1928, was one example of the spirit of First Lutheran to work together to complete their beloved church.\textsuperscript{96} The men of the church constructed bare plank pews for the entire

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{94}Ibid. The question of Norwegian services was discussed again at this meeting, and the matter was left in the hands of the Church Council.
\item \textsuperscript{95}Interview with Reuben E. Bragstad, July 14, 1969. Mr. Bragstad also related that when the old organ pipes were installed, he had a tinner make false pipes to resemble the original, so that the large expanse across the inner chancel could be filled with the organ pipes.
\item \textsuperscript{96}First Minutes, April 9, 1928. Carpenters did the work for one-half the regular wage and donated the balance to the building fund.
\end{itemize}
sanctuary, which, according to the original plans, would seat over 600 in the nave alone. 97

In November, the congregation approved a budget for 1929 in the amount of $17,917.00, and the secretary was instructed to inform Dr. Iverson, who had been conducting the Norwegian services, that the remuneration for this ministry would be $20.00 per month in 1929. 98 At this meeting, the subject of printing a church bulletin was first aired. Ralph Hillgren suggested the advisability of such an undertaking, and was appointed, along with the secretary and the chairman of the Trustees, to further consider this matter and report at a later date. Approval was subsequently

97 Interview with James O. Berdahl, June 17, 1969. Mr. Berdahl mentioned the many nights that members would spend at the church, nailing and painting to make the interior more usable and commodious. The Ladies Aid were great workers also.

98 First Minutes, November 23, 1928. The reduction of salary for the Norwegian services was the subject of two letters from Dr. Iverson to the secretary and the treasurer of the congregation. Dr. Iverson objected to this arbitrary cut in terms of the call, and denounced the practice of the Trustees. The subject was obviously settled more amicably, however, as Dr. Iverson continued to preach these services, and the remuneration was soon reset at $270.00 per year. See: letter to Alfred Hendrickson, secretary of First Lutheran Congregation, from Iver Iverson, January 9, 1929, and letter to O. H. Oleson, treasurer of First Lutheran Congregation, from Iver Iverson, February 8, 1929.
given early the next year, this being the first such production for the First Lutheran Congregation. 99

Following the sale and removal of the old parsonage to make room for the educational wing of the new church, the Reverend Glenn and his family found accommodations in a rented house at 518 South Dakota Avenue. The matter of securing permanent housing for the pastor was the topic of a May meeting of the congregation. A large turnout of voting members heard the motion of the Board of Trustees to purchase a house and lot, known as the McKinnon property, located at 516 West 12th Street. 100

Later in May, it was revealed to the congregation that a large house and lot at the corner of 12th Street and Spring Avenue, known as the Smith property, was also available. The Trustees reported that they had learned of the possibility of the use of two other holdings of the congregation as partial payment on the purchase price of this Smith property. The congregation therefore agreed to purchase this latter

99 First Minutes, January 9, 1929. The Church Council accepted an offer from KS00, a local radio station, to broadcast the worship service on every third Sunday of the month. The congregation assumed the charge for telephone and wire connection only. Ibid., December 14, 1928.

100 Ibid., May 9, 1927. It was left to the Trustees to dispose of the Grace parsonage, and to use their best judgment as to monetary agreements in the entire transaction.
property if the Trustees could negotiate such a transac-
tion. The large house at 333 South Spring Avenue thereby became the permanent parsonage for the Reverend Glenn and his family throughout his long ministry at First Lutheran Church.

The outstanding qualities of the Reverend Glenn were abundantly evident not only to his congregation, the Augustana College, and the Sioux Falls community, but to an ever-expanding area in the Midwest and the Church at large. The story of the relatively brief history of the First Lutheran Congregation, with its great growth both in numbers and in material expansion, was most outstanding in the NLCA. It was therefore not surprising that the Reverend Glenn, still a relatively young and very active and dynamic pastor, should receive other offers for service within the church body. On the twentieth of October, 1927, the First Lutheran Church Council gathered to consider action in connection with a call to their beloved pastor extended by St. John's Lutheran Church in Northfield, Minnesota.

101 First Minutes, May 27, 1927. Formal approval and adoption was given on July 15, 1927.

102 Mrs. Glenn related that they lived on South Dakota Avenue for about three years, and moved to the Spring Avenue parsonage in June of 1927, this being their permanent dwelling until retirement in the fall of 1951. Glenn interview, June 26, 1969.
This congregation enjoyed its proximity to St. Olaf College, the largest institution of higher learning within the NLCA, and was known as the unofficial congregation for the student body and faculty of that institution. The Reverend Glenn related to the Church Council in Sioux Falls that if he were to leave the community, he knew of no place that he would rather go than to Northfield. He still expressed his desire to go where he could do the most good for the Church as a whole, and laid the matter before the council for their consideration and recommendation. Upon review of the local situation, the council voted unanimously that the work of the Church at large would be best served if the Reverend Glenn would stay in Sioux Falls. A decision by the pastor was rendered almost immediately, although not recorded at this meeting. The following day, he declared his refusal of the call to Northfield, and stated that "... I have a present duty here, and a present duty is a real duty."

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103 First Minutes, October 20, 1927.
104 Ibid.
105 Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader, October 21, 1927.

Interestingly, this position at St. John's was subsequently filled by the Reverend L. M. Stavig. After a period of fifteen years at Northfield, followed by twenty-two years as president of Augustana College, Dr. Stavig became Administrator at First Lutheran Church in 1965.
In the fall of 1928, another offer of service elsewhere came to the Reverend Glenn. This was a local cause, however, and would not take him out of the city. Dr. C. O. Solberg, president of Augustana College since 1920, had recently resigned to become dean of the Lutheran Bible School in Chicago. The directors of the Augustana College Association subsequently issued a call to the Reverend Glenn to assume the presidency of that institution for the 1928-1929 school term.  

At the meeting on September 1, of the Church Council, it was agreed that if the Reverend Glenn so desired, he should be permitted to accept such position, but still serve as pastor of the congregation. On the following Friday, the congregation, after considerable discussion, agreed with the resolution of their council and voted to permit the Reverend Glenn to temporarily assume this offered position. If the pastor accepted this call, the congregation agreed to issue a call to the Reverend Myron Medin to act in the capacity of assistant pastor for the period of

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106 Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader, September 2, 1928.
107 First Minutes, September 1, 1928. The resolution stated that "necessary arrangements be made for assistance."
108 Ibid., September 7, 1928. The congregation was to assume no added cost for pastoral services during this period, and the Church Council was to set the terms of call to the Reverend Medin.
the Glenn presidency. At a meeting of the Church Council immediately following, the leader was informed that the "... sentiment of the congregation for his acceptance of the Augustana position was overwhelming." The Reverend Glenn therefore decided to answer in the affirmative.

The 1928 annual report of the pastor, which, in the absence of the Reverend Glenn was read by the Reverend Medin, was one of "considerable sadness of heart." The importance that the Reverend Glenn attached to the necessity of meeting all financial obligations promptly was readily evident in this report:

109 Ibid. The compensation for the services of the Reverend Medin were fixed at $150.00 per month, and Chairman James O. Berdahl and the Reverend Glenn were to inform the new assistant pastor of his call. Glenn was to receive $100.00 per month from First Lutheran, in addition to Christmas offering and all incidentals for pastoral services. Ibid., November 5, 1928.
I regret that our finances are not in better shape. We have found it rather hard to meet all local bills and running expenses; and our showing with the Synodical treasury this year is the poorest it has ever been in the ten years that I have worked in the city. To blame anyone but oneself is unworthy, and I do not mean to do that. I am only calling attention to a sad condition in order that we might remedy it if we possibly can. I think that you all realize that these things weigh heavily upon me. Sometimes one gets rather discouraged and wonders what would be the best thing to do. I sincerely hope that the congregation feels that it has free hands to do whatever it might feel best, for in every respect the interests of the congregation must come first.

The report continued in a happier vein, however, denouncing rumors of spiritual deadness in the congregation, and listing in rebuttal to this accusation, the growing number of ministerial acts completed, including 896 attending communion. The report of the Church Council indicated satisfaction with the services of the Reverend Medin, and that he had "... labored very faithfully since he came to be one of us." The Sunday School continued to grow, and the report of the superintendent, Lewis Larson, listed 885 involved in such instruction and learning, including fifty-eight teachers and

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110 Pastors Annual Report — 1928. Mrs. Glenn remarked that her husband walked the floor many nights over the concern that he had for financial affairs, and that the complete payment of the church building prior to his retirement was one of the things that he took the most pride in accomplishing.

111 Ibid.

The First Lutheran Congregation continued its strong support of the Reverend Glenn, and a resolution of faith and praise to their regular pastor was voiced at this annual meeting, pledging their "... continued loyalty and individual support in the future."

It was the desire of most of the congregation that, prior to the dedication of the new church, the interior should be completed as much as possible, that is, finished pews, altar, woodworking, and etc. In an early September, 1929, meeting, discussion centered around the possibility of such an undertaking. A unanimous vote was given to the motion that ". . . the Congregation proceed with plans for the raising of funds with which to complete the Church and to reduce indebtedness. The total cost of finishing the interior of the church, "... including pews, chancel completion, finishing and trimming; floor, decorating, and organ," totaled $33,500.00, to which was added an additional $6,500.00 for art glass, lighting fixtures, and to reduce indebtedness, brought the total figure to.

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114 First Minutes, January 9, 1929. See also, letter from Dr. A. J. Moe, secretary of First Lutheran Congregation, to the Reverend H. J. Glenn, January 11, 1929.
115 Ibid., September 6, 1929.
The congregation expressed faith in itself, and voted to launch a campaign for this purpose as soon as possible. The campaign proceeded rapidly, and the Reverend Glenn expressed his feelings as to the results with "It was all far beyond my personal expectations. . . . the willingness and good spirit shown by our people was outstanding.

First Lutheran Congregation was officially ten years old when the long-awaited Dedication Sunday finally arrived. The members could now reflect with some measure of pride and accomplishment at their first decade of service to God and to man. These were indeed years of growth and maturity, of planning and praying, of reflection and anticipation. Hopes and aspirations now took form in brick and concrete. Interior completion of the main sanctuary was progressing well, and on August 14, 1930, the Church Council moved toward solidification of dedication planning with the appointment of a general Committee on Dedication. In addition to the Reverend Glenn, this group was to include the chairmen and secretaries of the Board of Trustees, Board of Deacons,

116 First Minutes, October 11, 1929.
117 Authorization to let contracts to complete this interior work was given on May 28, 1930. Ibid., May 28, 1930.
the Church Council, Ladies Aid, and Fidelis Club, together with the superintendent of the Sunday School. 119

After much deliberation and planning, the last Sunday in November, the thirtieth, was chosen as Dedication Sunday, and correspondence was carried on with the many speakers and visitors who were to be invited to this celebration. Unable to secure the president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, the Reverend A. J. Aasgaard, for the main address and act of dedication, the committee invited Dr. T. F. Gullixson, vice-president of the Synod and head of Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul to perform this act. 120 The observance also included a Children's Service in the early morning, followed by an 11:00 A.M. morning worship, at which President A. J. Bergsaker of the South Dakota District filled the pulpit. Participants in the main afternoon service on the thirtieth, in addition to Dr. Gullixson, included past pastors of the early congregations that formed


120 Letter from J. A. Aasgaard to the Reverend H. J. Glenn, October 20, 1930.
First Lutheran, and pastors from the surrounding area.\textsuperscript{121} The festive day was crowned with an evening of music, which included the Augustana College Choir and many artists from the congregation and the College.\textsuperscript{122} Monday and Tuesday, December first and second, were days of continued observation, stressing scholarly papers centering on the Bible and the Augsburg Confession.\textsuperscript{123} A Festival Banquet was served by the Ladies Aid on Tuesday evening, with the main address, entitled "Lutheran Solidarity", given by the president of St. Olaf College, Dr. L. W. Boe. The well-known organist, Lawrence Goldberg of Chicago, gave a second dedicatory concert on the new church organ on Wednesday evening, followed on Thursday by a Civic Night. The latter included greetings from city government, service and civic organizations, and the community in general.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{121}Dedication Program of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D., November 30, 1930. (Printed program.) The Reverends N. N. Boe, H. O. Bjorlie, H. M. Solem, and Henry Solum were former pastors who took part in this service.

\textsuperscript{122}Ibid. Dr. Carl Youngdahl had played the first concert on the new $16,000.00 Wurlitzer organ on November 28, 1930.

\textsuperscript{123}Ibid. Among those who prepared papers were Dr. G. O. Solberg, Dr. G. M. Bruce, the Reverend S. C. Eastvold, the Reverend Edward Hegland, and the Reverend N. Aistrup Larson.

\textsuperscript{124}Ibid.
The decade of the 1920's was one of challenge and accomplishment for the members of First Lutheran Congregation. These first ten years gave evidence of the ability of this congregation to work together for the common good and yet serve all elements in their church home. With an ever-increasing membership, a proven dynamic pastor, and a comprehensive physical plant, First Lutheran Church was ready to undertake wider areas of service to the community and the Church at large.
Chapter IV
FIRST LUTHERAN IN THE SIOUX FALLS COMMUNITY

A primary interest and concern of the early Norwegian settlers of the Midwest was Christian education. Accustomed to the practice in their native land that all education was to be taught in close association with religious doctrines, the secular public education of America did not receive the approval of these pioneers. Especially among members of the Norwegian synod, the more conservative element of early Norwegian-American Lutheranism, the practice of supporting education separate from religious teaching and doctrine was highly questioned. An exceptionally important place was given to the proper instruction in the orthodox doctrines of Lutheranism, untainted by the new American experiment.¹

In Sioux Falls, the Norwegian Synod was represented by the St. Olaf Lutheran Congregation. In 1887, the pastor of this group, the Reverend H. B. Thomgrimson, was a leader in gaining the approval of the general synod to locate a normal

¹Emil Erpestad, "Augustana College: A Venture in Christian Education" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1956), pp. 123-125. The reluctance on the part of many to accept the English language was evident into the 1920's, when many children in Norwegian communities were still receiving confirmation instruction in the language of their forefathers. One daughter of an early pioneer graphically spoke of this steadfastness toward the Norwegian tongue by stating that "Mama even thought the dog barked in Norwegian."
school in its city. Dedicated in 1889 as the Lutheran School, this institution was the first concrete example of the interest in higher Christian education among the Lutherans of the area.\(^2\)

The members of Trinity Lutheran Congregation also held high regard for religious instruction. As members of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, they shared in the support of Augustana College, which in 1884 moved to Canton, South Dakota, only twenty-five miles from Sioux Falls.\(^3\)

The consolidation of these two institutions of higher learning came as a result of the merger of the two supporting synods in 1917 to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (NLCA).\(^4\) Professor H. S. Hilleboe, from the old Lutheran Normal School, assumed the position of acting president of the merged effort, which was named Augustana College and Normal School. The two local congregations,

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\(^2\)Annual Report of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America, 1888, p. 72. Arrangements were also made for the construction of an appropriate building to house the school.

\(^3\)Annual Report of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, 1895, p. 77. The earliest roots of this college go back to 1860 at Chicago, Illinois; the institution was subsequently moved to Wisconsin, Iowa, and eventually to Canton, South Dakota.

\(^4\)The Hauge Synod was also a part of this merger. See above, p. 11.
St. Olaf and Trinity, were thus brought yet closer as a result of this common interest in Christian education.  

During the period of the final negotiations for the merger of St. Olaf and Grace Congregations in the summer of 1920, action was taken to secure a permanent, qualified leader for the school, then housed in a commodious structure on South Summit Avenue. In response to the recommendation of the Reverend H. J. Glenn, pastor of the Grace Congregation, a call was sent to the Reverend C. O. Solberg to assume the presidency in the fall of 1920. Dr. Solberg had been a strong factor in the decision of the Reverend Glenn to come to Sioux Falls in 1919. These two men were examples of the rising sentiment in Lutheranism for a changeover to the language of the land, and they both were vitally interested in promoting a total church program to meet the new and demanding needs of postwar America. The acceptance of this call to Augustana College and Normal School was an important occasion in the long years of close cooperation.

5For a detailed account of the difficulties and struggles of this institution, see: Erpestad, pp. 127-129.

6Trinity Congregation became Grace in 1919, with the change to an all English program and the arrival of the Reverend Glenn.

7Erpestad, p. 186.

8Dr. Solberg had been president of the English Association of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.
and relationship between the college and First Lutheran Church. The inauguration of Dr. Solberg, on November 16, 1920, was one of the first events to be hosted by the newly formed First Lutheran Congregation.  

Early in 1921 First Lutheran approved a Sunday School at Augustana College. The so-called "South Branch" unit grew rapidly, and was termed "very successful". Professor George Gilbertson, business manager of the college, was the first superintendent of the south branch, which grew by 1934 to over 800 members with twelve Bible classes. This weekly association of common Christian endeavor proved to be a constant source of contact between the college and the church, and eventually the south branch organization served as a nucleus for the establishment of a new congregation in that part of the city.

Members of First Lutheran Congregation continued to play an important role in the history of Augustana College

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9 Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader, November 16, 1920. In his inaugural address, Dr. Solberg promised to exert every effort to secure a new gymnasium and a men's dormitory in the coming years.

10 First Minutes, January 12, 1921. Approval was given at this meeting, although organization was not perfected until October.

11 Clipping from The Friend, January, 1934. In H. M. Blegen Collection, Augustana College Archives.
and Normal School when in 1925 the "school question" in South Dakota came to an apex. The future of Christian education in the state was a concern of the synodical board of education due to the competition between the remnants of Augustana College which remained at Canton and functioned as an Academy, and the merged institution in Sioux Falls. As the finances of the synod were taxed to support any educational program at all, the possibility of aid to two institutions was very remote. At the annual convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America in St. Paul, Minnesota, James Berdahl, Lewis Larson, and A. N. Graff, delegates from First Lutheran Church, worked for the acceptance of resolutions which they hoped would advance a solution to this dilemma. Upon reasonable assurances that it could succeed, the convention gave approval to a proposal which, in effect, turned over the Sioux Falls school to the South Dakota District of the NLCA.12

A special meeting of this district met in Madison, South Dakota in September, 1925. First Lutheran members led a movement which succeeded in organizing the

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Augustana College Association, incorporated in 1925 under the laws of the state. A. N. Graff of First Lutheran Church, was elected to head the board of directors of this administrative organization.

In the early 1920's, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools adopted as one of the requirements for accreditation the necessity for a private college to have an endowment fund of at least $500,000.00. As accreditation was very important for the growth and reputation of any educational institution, the board of education of the NLCA called for a drive to secure $350,000.00 in contributions as an endowment for Augustana College. Together with existing resources, this would meet the required minimum figure. The Augustana College Association, however, voted early in 1926 to make an appeal for the entire $500,000.00, in addition to the $150,000.00 already available for this endowment fund. Even though in the midst of the construction of their new church building, First Lutheran Congregation responded generously to this appeal. An April resolution that won the approval of the congregation stated

\[\text{13 Berdahl interview, July 22, 1969. See also, First Minutes, September 10, 1925, for discussion of this problem. A. N. Graff held this position until 1932, and served on the board until 1949. Bulletin of Augustana College and Normal School, 1925-1950.}\]

\[\text{14 Report of the NLCA, 1925, p. 246.}\]
that they "... wish to most heartily endorse the efforts...
and give assurance that they will do all in their power to make this goal possible." Contributions made by the beginning of the 1926 school term, as reported in the *Augustana Mirror*, showed the support of First Lutheran as well as of the Sioux Falls community as follows:

The total of the contributions from the city is now $70,000, of which the Augustana Faculty gave $20,000, the congregation of the First Lutheran Church $17,000, the East Side Lutheran Church $1,750, and the college student body approximately $6,000.

In the summer of 1928, Dr. C. O. Solberg left Augustana College to assume the position of dean of the Chicago Lutheran Bible School. Unable to secure a replacement on a permanent basis at this time, the Augustana College board of directors appealed to the Reverend H. J. Glenn to accept the presidency for the 1928-1929 school year. The local pastor responded positively to the call, following consultation with his congregation. Officially inaugurated at a small ceremony on September 22, 1928, the new president did not let the temporary nature of his appointment serve as a restrictive measure regarding the growth of Augustana College.

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15 *First Minutes*, April 16, 1926, and April 12, 1926.
16 *Augustana Mirror*, September 24, 1926. A. N. Graff served as chairman of this drive.
17 See above, pp. 70-73.
An active year followed, which called upon the full resources of this man who had formerly served as a college campus pastor and had grown to become a close confidant and counselor to many Augustana students.

With the realization that a college was only as good as its faculty, President Glenn was anxious to raise the standards of Augustana. One of the faculty members who was hired by the Reverend Glenn during this year said that "... he went out to get the degrees, he cleaned house. ... Augustana had the biggest change in teachers, percentage wise, that it's ever had." In addition to personally recruiting key men for the faculty, the president encouraged younger men on the staff to return to the classroom to attain higher academic degrees. As Mrs. Glenn stated many years later, "He was looking for the younger men, those a little more up to date. They came and stayed on for years. He always felt that he had been very successful in these choices."

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18 The Reverend Glenn had served as campus pastor at the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks, 1910-1912.

19 Interview with Dr. I. B. Hauge, September 16, 1969. Dr. Hauge was personally recruited by President Glenn, as was Dr. John Froemke. Both of these men stayed over thirty years at Augustana.

20 Glenn interview, September 24, 1969. Martin Cole returned to the University of Wisconsin for further study as a result of the urgings of the Reverend Glenn, and secured the Ph.D. degree.
The Reverend Glenn exhibited in his capacity at Augustana the same foresight and careful planning that had characterized his labors at First Lutheran. He was not afraid to stand firmly when necessary, and to take steps that promised to be, in his estimation, of long-range benefit to the college. This was indeed a year of great personal accomplishment and duty. Even though the Reverend Myron Medin was hired by First Lutheran to assist in the regular pastoral duties, the Reverend Glenn seemed to be still involved full-time with his congregation. The church office lights still burned late into the night, and not a few took this opportunity to stop by for some personal advice or just a moment of greeting and encouragement. 21

In a comprehensive report submitted to the Augustana College Association covering the 1928-1929 academic year, the president summarized the activities and reflected upon the accomplishments of the year. This report showed that enrollment had more than doubled in four years, from 102 in 1924-1925 to 251 in 1928-1929. A summary of honors and activities followed, which showed that Augustana College was establishing itself as"... one of the leaders among the colleges of South Dakota in all extra-curricular

21 Berdahl interview, July 22, 1969. Mrs. Glenn stated that ". . . it seemed that he was full time at the church also. Hardly a day went by that he wasn't at the hospital or making calls." Glenn interview, September 24, 1969.
activities, such as literary work and forensics; and even in athletics, which we have not at all stressed, we can well be considered on a par with the better average."22 Primary in the future needs for the college, according to President Glenn, was accreditation by the North Central Association of College and Secondary Schools. A convincing argument followed, which showed the necessity and the appropriateness for this approval.23 The report also recommended the hiring of a man with the Ph.D. degree at the head of the departments of history, English, mathematics, physics, modern languages and social sciences.24

The board of directors of the Augustana College Association had, during the fall of 1928, secured for the presidency of the college, Dr. O. J. H. Preus, who assumed his duties in August, 1929.25 The Reverend Glenn, following a short vacation, resumed full leadership of his parish. At the June meeting of the South Dakota District of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, the following resolution received a rising vote of approval:

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22Report to Board of Directors, MS, 1929.

23Ibid. Accreditation was finally gained in the fall of 1931. Dr. Hauge stated that "He laid the groundwork for North Central accreditation." Hauge interview, September 16, 1969.

24Ibid. This was one of the main points standing in the way of accreditation.

25Augustana Mirror, March 16, 1929.
Be it resolved—that the district wishes to express its appreciation to the Reverend H. J. Glenn for the valuable services he rendered during the time he acted as President of Augustana College.26

The Augustana College Association was so impressed with the accomplishments of this interim president, that it elected him to the board of directors in 1931, and the next year to the presidency of the board. The Reverend Glenn served as head of this administrative arm for a longer period than any other individual, from 1932-1949.27

A large number of lay members of First Lutheran were also to be found on this board of directors, serving for various years from 1925 into the 1960's. Among these were A. N. Graff, the initial president, who served until 1949; the Reverend A. J. Bergeaker, K. O. Lokken, Alvin Isakson, O. Clifford Halvorson, F. A. Strand, Charles Newcomb, Erling Haugo, Harold Amland, Arthur Myklebust, and Dr. Milton G. Mutch, Jr.28

Faculty members at Augustana College also served in positions of responsibility and service at First Lutheran. They held numerous offices on the Church Council and Board of Trustees, as well as teachers and guest preachers. The

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28 Ibid., 1925-1960. After 1960 this administrative group was called the Board of Regents of Augustana College.
board of directors of the college held their regular meetings at First Lutheran for many years, even after World War II.29

The location of this substantial structure near the downtown area made it an excellent location for extension classes taught through the college. The Church Council gave approval for the use of many rooms at the church, usually free of charge. During the depression years, however, the council was forced to levy a fee of $25.00 for this practice, but this was subtracted from the pledge of the congregation to the college.30

The use of the church building was allowed by the congregation for many other activities of the college, usually of a religious nature, but also for such activities as the coronation of the homecoming queen. Permission was given for the coronation activities on the condition that the altar be screened off in 1937.31

30 Church Council Minutes, September 21, 1936.
31 Ibid. An "Augustana College Sunday" was approved by the First Lutheran Church Council and observed on November 22, 1931. The day's offering was to be turned over to the college for use during this difficult financial period. Ibid., October 27, 1931. For an excellent summary of the report from the board of education for the synod upon the Twentieth Anniversary of the NLCA see, Report of the NLCA, 1937, pp. 84-86.
Commencing in the early 1930's and through the World War II period, it was commonplace to find an Augustana student rooming at the church, where he helped with custodial duties to pay for these accommodations. One such student was Elmo Agrimson, class of 1942, who went on to become the president of the Western North Dakota District of the new American Lutheran Church.\footnote{Stavig interview, September 27, 1969. Interview with Dr. H. M. Blegen, October 16, 1969.}

As time went by, the First Lutheran Church became in many ways almost an extension of Augustana College in the downtown area. In 1937, the Twentieth Anniversary of the birth of the NLCA, First Lutheran members assembled to celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the early vestiges of the congregation. The period of observance was October 8, 9, and 10, which also was the homecoming weekend at Augustana College. A cooperative program of lectures and festivities was planned, with a banquet and the crowning of the homecoming queen leading the events of the weekend.\footnote{Sixtieth Anniversary of the Founding of First Lutheran Congregation, October 8, 9, 10, 1937. (Printed program.)}

The war years were generally healthy ones for the economy of the area, and, in 1944, the Augustana College
Association launched a drive to raise money for new buildings on the campus. Directed mainly at the construction of a new library, the newly elected president of the college, the Reverend L. M. Stavig, was chosen to head the appeal. President Stavig had successfully administered a similar drive at St. Olaf College, and was thoroughly qualified for the task ahead. A goal of $250,000.00 was placed on the appeal, and it was hoped that the Sioux Falls area would account for $100,000.00 of this amount. As could be expected, the members of First Lutheran Church, which included most of the faculty at the college, joined in active support of this cause.34 By May of 1944, according to a letter from President Stavig to the pastors of the South Dakota District, "... First Lutheran, including the faculty, ... had pledged over $20,000.00." The Ladies Aid of the church was listed as having pledged $1,500.00 in a similar letter dated May 1, 1944.35 The appeal as a whole met with overwhelming success, and the entire amount

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34Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader, November 21, 1943. It was recognized that due to wartime conditions, construction would have to be postponed until after the conflict.

35Letter to Pastors of the South Dakota District from Dr. L. M. Stavig, May 4, 1944. In H. M. Blegen collection in Augustana College Archives.
of $250,000.00, plus an amount sufficient to pay the cost of the fund drive, was pledged.  

The sharp rise in prices after the war, especially in building costs, necessitated the postponement of construction. Further delay was caused by more urgent appeal within the church and also in the city of Sioux Falls. It was not until early in 1953 that the board of directors of the Augustana College Association felt that a new fund drive would meet with success. A figure of $200,000.00 was set up as the goal for the Sioux Falls community, and "... First Lutheran again took hold in a very wonderful way... and pledged $60,000.00 for the library. The main reading room on the north side of the library was named the H. J. Glenn Reading Room, and a great many members of the church participated." A total of $261,051.70 was collected from this fund drive, which made it possible to proceed with construction plans.

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36 Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader, May 4, 1944. The funds were subsequently invested in government bonds until needed for building purposes.

37 Stavig interview, September 27, 1969. The A. N. Graff family gave the main lobby as a memorial to this faithful layman, who had been a member of the board of directors of the Augustana College Association from 1925 until 1949.

38 Historical sketch by Dr. H. M. Blegen, read at cornerstone laying ceremonies. (Typewritten.) Augustana College Archives.
In the fall of 1920, at the same time that First Lutheran Church was being organized, the Reverend H. B. Kildahl, executive secretary of the board of charities of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, came to Sioux Falls. He described the plans of the Church to organize a society for the care of homeless children of the state, and to deal with the increasing number of welfare problems in the South Dakota District. He stated that the board of charities would like to have a local group organize such a society, which would be assumed by the synod upon successful opening of this effort.39

Believing that the welfare of the community and the state was a real Christian concern, Mr. Berdahl, the Reverend H. J. Glenn, and Lewis Larson were among the first to actively work for the realization of this goal. These First Lutheran members and their pastor, supported by the loans of local concerned citizens, proceeded to purchase property at 407 North Spring Avenue to house the proposed Lutheran Children's Home Finding Society.40 To complete the fundamental organization, Miss Bertha Bragstad was

39 Interview with Mr. James O. Berdahl, October 30, 1969.
called to assume the position of active administrator. Miss Bragstad, a native of the Sioux Falls area, was well qualified for such a position. After serving four years at the Beloit Children's Home at Beloit, Iowa, she had assumed the position as housemother at Trabert Hall for girls in Minneapolis. Miss Bragstad brought a concern for people and a complete dedication to the needs of others to her new position.

Following incorporation of the Society on October 7, 1920, interest in the movement gained momentum. The original board of directors included the Reverend N. N. Boe, Dr. C. Rebekka Strom, the Reverend H. J. Glenn, James O. Berdahl, N. O. Monsrud, the Reverend Christian Findahl, Mrs. Ida Zetlitz, A. S. Bragstad, Mrs. Rhoda Bennett, George E. Larson, C. C. Bratrud, Mrs. Maud N. Groth and the Reverend H. M. Solum. With the exception of the Reverends Findahl, Solum, and Boe, all were members of First Lutheran Congregation.

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41 Ibid. Also Berdahl interview, October 30, 1969.
42 Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader, August 1, 1948. Miss Julia Questad joined Miss Bragstad on the staff in 1922.
44 Berdahl interview, October 30, 1969.
The plans of the board of charities of the NLCA to assume the control and operation of the Society did not materialize. By the time the first patients were received in the spring of 1921 at the House of Mercy, as the institution was called, the depression had begun to take its toll. Support from the synod being impossible, the local directors decided to carry on with the infant program as best they could.

Financial support of the Society was largely assumed by the congregations of the South Dakota District. The Ladies Aid groups of the area were especially active in supporting this work. Miss Bragstad, often assisted by Mrs. Ida Zetlitz and others, spent a large portion of her time, especially when the Society was young, appearing before Ladies Aid meetings soliciting support for the Society.

As early as 1921, even before the first patients were received at the House of Mercy, the First Lutheran Ladies Aid showed an active concern for the Lutheran Children's

\[45\] The house functioned chiefly as a home for unwed mothers.

\[46\] Lutheran Welfare Society Report. Mr. Berdahl expressed the spirit of optimism that was present at the time by recalling his statement to "... keep on as long as we can and when we can't go any longer, then we'll close the doors". Berdahl interview, October 30, 1969.

\[47\] Berdahl interview, October 30, 1969.
Home Finding Society. On February 23, 1921, the Reverend Glenn and Mrs. Ida Zetlitz appeared before the group in support of the movement. Miss Bragstad soon presented a formal talk before the Aid, which thereupon decided to hold a linen shower for the House of Mercy, the first of countless examples of support for this endeavor.

Other organizations of the First Lutheran Congregation gave attention and support for the Society. The Men's Brotherhood organization, to which all of the local men of the original board of directors belonged, showed their support in many ways, including programs relating to the Society. The church meeting room was the regular location for the monthly gathering of the Society for many years. Truly, as was stated by a recent president of Augustana College, himself a director of the Society for many years, "Lutheran Social Services as the Society was later named grew entirely out of First Lutheran."

48 Minutes — First Lutheran Ladies Aid, February 23, 1921.

49 Ibid.

50 Berdahl interview, October 30, 1969. Also Brotherhood Minutes.

51 Stavig interview, September 27, 1969.

52 Ibid.
The members of First Lutheran, active supporters of the spiritual and social needs of the individual, were also interested in the physical care of the body. As early as 1894, when the population of Sioux Falls numbered only 7,000, the forefathers of many at First Lutheran were active in the movement for a community hospital. Among these were the Reverend H. B. Thomgrimson, pastor of St. Olaf Church, the Reverend N. Boe, Dr. A. Zetlitz and P. F. Thompson. The Reverend Boe, an early pastor of St. Olaf Church, served on the first board of directors of the original Sioux Falls Hospital Association, and Dr. Zetlitz was one of the initial physicians.

The present Sioux Valley Hospital Association was organized on July 15, 1925. Officers of this association were all members of First Lutheran Congregation: the Reverend H. J. Glenn, president; James O. Berdahl, vice-president; N. O. Monsrud, secretary; and A. N. Graff, treasurer. These men served on the board for many years, with Graff assuming the presidency in later years.

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53 Smith, p. 286.

54 Others who rendered service on this board, also members of First Lutheran after 1920, were N. O. Monsrud, T. M. Erickson and James O. Berdahl. Ibid.

55 Ibid., pp. 287-288. Through the efforts of Dr. C. O. Solberg, then president of Augustana College and Normal School, the Reverend Fonkalsrud came to Sioux Falls in 1925 to assume the role of superintendent of the Hospital Association. Superintendent Fonkalsrud headed the drive for the new hospital building completed in 1930. Berdahl interview, October 30, 1969.
An auxiliary organization was organized to support the Sioux Valley Hospital. Many items of furnishing and equipment were supplied to help complete the new hospital building which was finished in 1930. Many individual women from the First Lutheran Congregation served in this work, with the Ladies Aid also assuming an active role.

While the relationships to Augustana College, Lutheran Welfare Society, and Sioux Valley Hospital were primary, First Lutheran Church was involved in numerous other activities in the Sioux Falls community. The Ladies Aid was ever active in local projects and gave to many welfare and charitable agencies within the Church. The Welfare and Sunshine Committees called on numerous homes to actively practice Christian charity. Even the Little Missionary Helpers, composed of grade school girls, did their small part for others. Truly First Lutheran Church was large in both size and service.

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56Smith, p. 288.
Chapter V
FIRST LUTHERAN GROWS TOWARD MATURITY

The First Lutheran Congregation did not escape the nationwide depression of the 1930's. The annual budgets throughout the decade illustrated graphically the conditions of the times. From a figure of almost $20,000.00 in the latter 1920's, the budget total dropped below $17,000.00 in 1933, and reached a low of $13,770.00 for 1937.\(^1\)

Each annual report of the pastor for this decade summarized the past year and gave personal and congregational expectations and plans for the ensuing twelve month period. The report for the year 1930, given at the Congregational Annual Meeting on January 14, 1931, recorded the conditions of the past year and stated: "These have been years of financial depression, working no small degree of hardship on many of our people. There have been those who, blessed with considerable means, have nevertheless had to worry and experience real anxiety."\(^2\) The limited assets of the congregation was always a concern of the Reverend Glenn, and in the

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\(^1\)Minutes of First Lutheran Congregation. Cited hereafter as: First Minutes. The Reverend Glenn took a voluntary ten per cent cut in his salary during this difficult period, which was restored with the improved conditions of 1938.

The final four pages of this report he commented extensively on financial matters.

The pastoral report for 1931 illustrated the leader's economic concern, and a measure of pride in the financial handlings of the congregation. The Reverend Glenn stated that "Thus far no one has lost a single cent on us, nor will such be the case in the future; for as Christian men and women we have the will to pay." The early 1930's were the most difficult years, and the members were continually reminded by their pastor that they were the ultimate power in the church organization, and could do whatever they would to meet the circumstances of the age. The continuing spirit of appreciation and optimism, however, is well illustrated in the 1933 pastors report. Even though at this same meeting the Church Council was directed to investigate the possibility of restricting the use of the church and thus reducing expenditures, the spirit of hope and of group unity was ever present.

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4 Pastors Annual Report — 1934. The Reverend Glenn was awarded the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from St. Olaf College in 1934.

5 First Minutes, January 10, 1934. At the next Church Council meeting, the Reverend Glenn and Ralph Hillgren were appointed as a committee to coordinate activities so as to save on utilities by using the church fewer nights in the week. Minutes — First Lutheran Church Council, January 15, 1934. Cited hereafter as: First Council Minutes. Dr. Clemens M. Granskou, president of Augustana College 1932-1942, recalled many years later that the credit of First Lutheran Church was always excellent, and the local bankers treated Dr. Glenn as a privileged customer because of the reputation of the church to always pay its bills on time. Interview with Dr. Clemens M. Granskou, October 25, 1969.
By 1937 a brighter outlook was evidenced. Pastor Glenn stated, "... there can be no question but what conditions have improved, making it possible for our people to give more generously and more consistently to the cause of the Church." Indeed, by 1938, it was reported that the past year "... has been the best we have had in many years. ... we come to the end of the year with all salaries paid to date, all current bills paid ... and the treasurer's report will show a goodly sum in the treasury." The congregation continued to grow in membership and influence in the Midwest, even throughout the depression period. By 1939 expansion necessitated the employment of an additional pastor to handle the increased work load. The Reverend Glenn stated in his annual report for 1938 that "Flesh and blood cannot reach around it /the increased work load/ nor stand up under it." He proceeded to show the manner by which extra staff could be handled financially. The congregation responded favorably to this request and approved a call to the Reverend Andrew C. Anderson to serve as assistant pastor. This relieved the senior pastor from much of the

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6Pastors Annual Report — 1937. The tight financial conditions were also relieved through the legacies left by deceased members of the congregation during 1936.

7Pastors Annual Report — 1938. See also January 11, 1939 for continued financial improvement.

8Ibid., January 11, 1939.
calling and administrative duties of a larger congregation.\textsuperscript{9} Pastor Anderson, however, resigned in the spring of 19\textsuperscript{4}1, and the congregation accepted the first student intern from Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul to assist in pastoral duties. Mr. Sidney Rand worked closely with the Reverend Glenn during the 19\textsuperscript{4}1-19\textsuperscript{4}2 school term, and he performed satisfactorily as was evident when he was later called as assistant pastor.\textsuperscript{10}

At the annual meeting in 1937, the congregation instructed the Church Council to arrange for a proper celebration of the Sixtieth Anniversary of the earliest origins of First Lutheran Church. A committee of five was subsequently approved by the council for this task, and Reuben Bragstad, chairman, S. S. Lund, Ralph Hillgren, Bert Ulberg, and Oscar Ellefson were appointed.\textsuperscript{11} Following many months of planning and preparation, official celebration of this date in Sioux Falls Lutheranism was observed on October 8, 9, and 10, 1937. Beginning with a banquet on the evening of the eighth, well-known speakers in various fields of

\textsuperscript{9}This was the first assistant pastor other than the Reverend Myron Medin who filled the office of pastor while the Reverend Glenn served as temporary president at Augustana College in the school year 1928-1929.

\textsuperscript{10}First Minutes, April 20, 1941. The Reverend Sidney Rand was pastor in January, 1943, but refused the call in March.

\textsuperscript{11}First Council Minutes, March 8, 1937.
service within the Church spoke on their specialty as related to First Lutheran. Among these noted speakers were: Dr. C. M. Granskou, president of Augustana College; Dr. L. W. Boe, president of St. Olaf College; Dr. C. M. Weswig, professor at Luther Seminary; Dr. T. F. Gullixson, president of Luther Seminary; the Reverend L. A. Pierson, president-elect of the South Dakota District of the NLCA, and the Reverend A. S. Burgess, representing the missionary efforts of the NLCA. The observance was coordinated with the homecoming festivities of Augustana College, and the homecoming queen was crowned at First Lutheran on October 9.

As part of the training program for radio and communication men during the World War II years, the United States government established an Army Technical School in Sioux Falls in 1942. Soon the temporary residence of many thousands of soldiers, this facility had a definite impact on the Sioux Falls community throughout the war period. First Lutheran members were reminded of their responsibilities toward these men, spiritually and socially, at a special congregational meeting on May 10, 1942. The Reverend Glenn suggested

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12 The Reverend Pierson was subsequently installed as District President in services at First Lutheran on October 17, 1937.

13 Sixtieth Anniversary of the Founding of First Lutheran Congregation of Sioux Falls South Dakota, October 8, 9, 10, 1937. (Printed program.)
consideration of a program for the comfort and welfare of these young men. It was the consensus of the members present that the congregation should offer its facilities for a Lutheran Service Center for the servicemen. The former reception area located on the first level of the basement below the church offices was converted for this purpose, and throughout the period served as a place for social gatherings in a Christian atmosphere. First Lutheran organizations, especially the Fidelis Club of young ladies in the church, took an active interest in this undertaking.

In 1944, at the suggestion of one of the chaplains at the Technical School, First Lutheran offered its sanctuary for Sunday evening services for the many soldiers who were off duty on the weekends. These services were attended regularly by many of the men, and were under the control of Army chaplains.

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14 First Minutes, May 10, 1942. The area has been the Service Center since that time.

15 Interview with James O. Berdahl, June 17, 1969. Many men would spend Saturday night in the church and attend Sunday morning services and often accept an invitation to Sunday dinner with families of the congregation.

16 First Council Minutes, June 19, 1944; August 28, 1944. First Lutheran Church, the largest Protestant church in the city, was the scene of joint Protestant V-E Day services at the occasion of victory in the European theatre of war.
A number of First Lutheran members had been discussing plans for the installation of Art Glass windows in the sanctuary for many years. General economic conditions after the 1930 dedication of the church made further beautification of the plant an impossibility. In the spring of 1945, as conditions improved, the Church Council made plans to initiate a program to add further beauty to the sanctuary. At a congregational meeting on April 23, 1945, the members accepted the recommendation of their council and authorized a campaign to raise $30,000.00 for the installation of Art Glass, decorating the main body of the church, and completing the balconies. The drive was successful and most of the work was completed during the summer of 1949. Years later, Dr. Glenn indicated what this meant to him when he wrote: "Out of my heart have these windows been born and upon them I have tried to show forth the faith that both myself and the congregation have felt dear above all things else."

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17 First Minutes, April 23, 1945. The side and rear balconies had been left without pews, and some of the interior areas lacked the stained woodwork of the rest of the church sanctuary.

18 First Council Minutes, September 19, 1949. For progress reports see, Ibid., June 18 and September 17, 1945.

19 The Stained Glass Windows of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Printed booklet by Dr. H. J. Glenn.
The fall of 1949 marked the completion of three significant accomplishments in the First Lutheran Congregation — the final mortgage payment, the completion of thirty years of ministry in Sioux Falls by Dr. Glenn, and the finishing of the church interior. On Sunday, September 25, the president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, preached the morning sermon and performed the act of dedication for the new A. N. Graff memorial chimes, the memorial chancel paraments and baptismal font, and the completed stained glass windows. The church mortgage was also burned. Dr. C. M. Weswig, professor of church history at Luther Seminary, spoke at the evening banquet.

A special commemoration dinner was held on September 26, in honor of Dr. Glenn. Representatives from the

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20 The A. N. Graff family gave memorial gifts totaling $9,000.00 in memory of this church and civic leader. Memorial chimes in the church tower were provided with this gift, and named in memory of A. N. Graff. *First Minutes*, January 12, 1949.

21 Mrs. O. V. Opheim gave the altar and chancel appointments and baptismal font as a memorial to her husband, Dr. O. V. Opheim. *Ibid.*

22 A balance of $8,000.00 was prepaid on this mortgage. Letter to Dr. H. J. Glenn from Tom Costello, local realtor, April 12, 1949.

Evangelical Lutheran Church, Augustana College, and the South Dakota District, along with the Governor of the State of South Dakota and the mayor of Sioux Falls brought greetings to Dr. and Mrs. Glenn.

The decade of the 1940's also witnessed the expansion of the ministry of First Lutheran in the local and world communities. After the resignation of the Reverend Anderson in 1941, three student internes were called from Lutheran Theological Seminary to aid in the work of the church. In 1944 the congregation voted to call an assistant pastor, and in the fall of that year, the Reverend Clifford J. Swanson, a senior student at Luther Seminary assumed the position of associate pastor. Following his ordination, Pastor Swanson began his duties at First Lutheran early in 1945.

Foreign missions received attention at the annual 1946 meeting, and it was agreed to give support to the Reverend Rolf Borg-Breen, recently called to the China mission field.

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24 Commemoration Dinner Program, September 26, 1949. (Printed program.)

25 In addition to Mr. Sidney Rand (1941-1942); Mr. Rolf Borg-Breen (1942-1943), and Mr. Robert Fitzgerald (1943-1944), were at First Lutheran for their interne service. First Minutes.

26 First Minutes, May 7, 1944. See also, First Council Minutes, August 28, 1944, for decision to call an associate pastor; letter of call to Clifford J. Swanson from Church Council Call Committee, October 9, 1944.

27 First Minutes, January, 1946.
Pastor and Mrs. Borg-Breen were duly commissioned into mission service at First Lutheran Church on August 11, 1946.28 After two years of service in China, the unsettled conditions in that country forced them to return to the United States in 1949.29

The increasing program and ministry of First Lutheran Church indicated a need for an extra full-time lay person to aid in the tasks of the parish. In the fall of 1947, the position of Parish Worker was filled by Miss Alida Storaasli of Albert Lea, Minnesota. Engaged in a number of duties, Miss Storaasli became a dependable helper for the pastoral staff and the congregation as a whole.30 Soon after her arrival, the initial issue of a monthly parish paper, entitled The First Lutheran appeared, and was mailed to twelve hundred members.31

The long years of intense service and ministry at First Lutheran and in the Sioux Falls community began to take their toll on the health of Dr. Glenn, who reached the

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28 Commissioning Service for Missionary Candidates Rolf and Norma Borg-Breen, August 11, 1946. (Printed program.)

29 The Reverend Borg-Breen was called to assist in pastoral work early in 1949, but he and his family stayed at the Luther Seminary campus to attend classes and serve the Mission Board. First Council Minutes, January 10, 1949.

30 First Council Minutes, September 15, 1947.

31 Ibid., October 20, 1947.
age of sixty-five in 1947. Early in 1948, a statement from Dr. Glenn and similar correspondence from his physician indicated concern for his health, and the Deacons were instructed to secure extra pastoral assistance. Indeed, by December, in a letter to the Church Council, the senior pastor wrote: "Definitely I do have a heart condition. In fact, there is not a day nor hour of the day that I am not kept conscious of it. The doctor continues to tell me that I shall have to cut down on my work." With this knowledge, the congregation soon expressed concern for their beloved pastor and agreed that he "... be given such time off as he pleases and as he and his doctor think will be for his best interests."  

Unsuccessful in their attempt to secure temporary aid from the Reverend Borg-Breen in the spring of 1949, the Deacons recommended the calling of another assistant pastor. Following approval by the congregation in

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32 Ibid., February 16, 1948.
33 Letter to Church Council from H. J. Glenn, December 13, 1948.
34 First Minutes, January 12, 1949.
January, 1950, the Reverend Walter Johnson was called
to this position, which he accepted in March.35

The Reverend Clifford Swanson had served six years
at First Lutheran, and was widely revered in the congre­
gation. It was with sincere regret, the minutes record,
that his resignation was accepted effective September 1,
1953.36 Previous to the loss of this pastor, Miss Alida
Storaasli had been granted a leave of absence to study dur­
ing the 1950-1951 academic year.37

Dr. Stanley Olson was chosen to head a Pastor Recommen­
dation Committee along with Bert Ulberg, C. B. Newcomb, Fred
Hanson, and Edgar Hervig.38 After meeting with Dr. Glenn
and District President L. A. Pierson, this committee made
recommendations to the council as follows:

35 First Council Minutes, December 19, 1949. See also,
First Minutes, January 11, 1950. The Reverend Johnson was
installed on June 18, bringing the pastoral staff to three,
including Dr. Glenn. In preparation for this extra pastor,
another parsonage had been purchased at 1604 South 4th Ave­
nue. First Council Minutes, June 20, 1949.

36 First Council Minutes, June 20, 1949.

37 Ibid., May 27, 1950. At a June 19, 1950 council
meeting Miss Storaasli was given a $20.00 monthly stipend
for nine months.

38 Ibid., June 18, 1951.
That the congregation extend a call to Dr. Alvin Rogness to serve as Pastor. However, if he fails to accept, the call be extended to Dr. Morris Wee, it being understood that the committee does not rate either one above the other.

That should either of these men accept, Dr. Glenn will assume the role of Pastor Emeritus.39

Ten days later, the above recommendations were presented to the congregation. Concern was expressed as to whether Dr. Glenn agreed with these proposals, and assurances were given by Dr. Olson that the senior pastor was present when these measures were drawn up. Several expressed a hope that the Reverend Swanson would stay, but he assured the congregation that he was honor bound to accept the call to Illinois. After the qualifications of each man recommended by the council were given by Dr. Pierson, the congregation gave their assent to these measures, and approved an initial call to Dr. Alvin Rogness of Mason City, Iowa.40 Three nights after this meeting, the Church Council appointed Drs. L. A. Pierson, Stanley Olson, and L. M. Stavig, along with Edgar Hervig,

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39 Ibid., June 26, 1951. Dr. Olson commented that Dr. Glenn would agree with these recommendations if they would call Dr. Rogness. Interview with Dr. Stanley Olson, September 16, 1969.

40 First Minutes, July 6, 1951.
Bert Ulberg, and Arthur Myklebust to personally present the call of First Lutheran to the Iowa pastor.  

Alvin N. Rogness was a South Dakota product, born in Astoria in 1906. In 1923, he entered the academy division of Augustana College and Normal School to complete his senior year of high school. After enrolling at Augustana College in 1924, he spent most of his time working at the Moe Hospital, located three blocks from First Lutheran. About this time construction was started on the new church building, and this young student was impressed with the congregation and especially with its dynamic pastor, the Reverend H. J. Glenn. This relationship was recalled in later years by Rogness with the words, "From seventeen on, he Glenn was the dominant pastoral influence in my life, I regarded him as my pastor. ... I got involved more in the church than at the college."

After graduation from Augustana in 1927 and a year on the staff of his alma mater, Rogness entered Luther

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41 First Council Minutes, July 9, 1951. Dr. Rogness was impressed with this method of call, and grateful for; this personal representation of the First Lutheran Congregation. Interview with Dr. Alvin N. Rogness, October 25, 1969.

42 Interview with Dr. Alvin N. Rogness, October 25, 1969. Mrs. Glenn related how her husband would take the young Rogness along on calls and trips around the Sioux Falls area. Glenn interview, September 24, 1969.
Theological Seminary, largely due to the influence of the Reverend Glenn. After his ordination, the Reverend Rogness served parishes at Duluth, Minnesota, and at Ames and Mason City, Iowa. When the call to First Lutheran came in 1951, Dr. Rogness (honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Pacific Lutheran University) had recently led his congregation through a successful building program and felt that it was an appropriate juncture to seriously consider a move to another area.

Dr. Rogness and his family "had a warm feeling toward Sioux Falls, First Lutheran, Augustana College, and the many friends in the area."\(^4^3\) The call was gladly accepted, and installation services were held on December 2, 1951.\(^4^5\)

The move to Sioux Falls was more than a "homecoming" for the South Dakotan. "It is fair to say that I was Dr. Glenn's protege," he reflected when telling of this period some years later; "the situation in Sioux Falls was a little touchy, however, when I came in 1951."\(^4^6\) It was natural to expect reluctance on the part of Dr. Glenn to assume a

\(^4^3\)Rogness interview, October 25, 1969.
\(^4^4\)Ibid.
\(^4^5\)Service of Installation for The Reverend Alvin N. Rogness, D.D., December 2, 1951. (Printed bulletin.)
\(^4^6\)Rogness Interview, October 25, 1969.
lesser role in this congregation that had taken the great-
est portion of his life. It was a chilling thought to him
to have to be cut off from First Lutheran. "I said to him,"
Dr. Rogness recalled years later, "that I'm going to take
over because these people want you to live, and I want you
to live and that's part of the reasons why they called me."47

The abrupt break with activities feared by this elder
servant did not come, and Dr. Glenn was kept very busy with
personal counseling, calling, and performing most of the
baptism, marriage, and burial services. It was natural that
the thousands of people touched by the long ministry of Dr.
Glenn would call on him to perform these pastoral duties,
and this made the first few months of 1952 more palatable
to him. Dr. Rogness said that "By Easter he thought it
best not to take on much. Several months later he came to
me and said, 'Al, for the first time in months I don't have
a pain in my chest anymore.'"48

In the spring of 1952, Dr. Glenn went to Pierre, South
Dakota, to briefly serve as interim pastor at a mission con-
gregation that he had been instrumental in establishing.
Even though he still maintained an office at First Lutheran

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
for a number of years into retirement, the demands of the parish gradually grew lighter on the Pastor Emeritus. 49

Even in retirement, Dr. Glenn exhibited the same graciousness and thankful position in relation to his beloved congregation that had been his practice through the years. In 1953, in correspondence to the Annual Congregational Meeting, he wrote, "I am certain that in the whole history of our Synod no pastor has met with such generosity as you have showered upon us. . . . If our cup of service has been full, equally full and to running over has been your cup of watchful care."50 Such was the stature of the man.

The Rogness ministry saw other new faces in addition to the senior pastor. In September 1951, the Reverend Johnson resigned, and was replaced by the Reverend Carroll M. Bagaason, who began his service to First Lutheran in February 1952.51 A return call was also issued to former Parish Worker Alida Storaasli in January 1952, who had

49 Ibid. Dr. Glenn was awarded a pension of $300.00 per month and free parsonage at 807 South Minnesota Avenue. Minutes — First Lutheran Trustees, September 24, 1951.

50 Letter to First Lutheran Congregation from H. J. Glenn, January 14, 1953.

51 First Council Minutes, December 17, 1951.
completed further training. She assumed the position of Director of Parish Education early that year.  

The early 1950's were further witness to the growth of this large congregation in the Sioux Falls and world community. At the first Annual Congregational Meeting attended by Dr. Rogness, he learned that the congregation was supporting in full measure the missionary service of the Reverend C. Russell Johnson in Madagascar.  

At a September 1953 meeting of the Church Council, a preliminary report on the need for a Lutheran church in the so-called Hilltop Heights area in the Northeastern part of Sioux Falls was given by District President L. A. Pierson. The council encouraged a more thorough study of the possibility of a Home Mission church in this area, to be done in cooperation with East Side and Our Savior's Lutheran Congregations of Sioux Falls. Upon further research of this opportunity, First Lutheran allowed an extension of its credit in an amount not to exceed $60,000.00

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52 First Minutes, January 9, 1952. The full-time staff now included the Reverends Rogness, Bagaason, and Education Director Storaasli, in addition to Miss Anna Trilhus and Miss Olga Olstad who both gave many years of faithful service in the office of First Lutheran Church.

53 First Minutes, January, 1952. Approved in the Annual Congregational Meeting in 1951, this amount to $2,000.00 yearly.

54 First Council Minutes, September 28, 1953.
to guarantee the establishment of a new church in this part of the city.  

In May 1954, Mr. Charles B. Newcomb, an active member of the congregation, came to Dr. Rogness' office and laid a check for $1,000.00 on the desk. Dr. Rogness related that his visitor said, "'Al, I want you to go on television, and here's the money to get it started.'" After details had been agreed upon, the pastor explained to the Church Council that a fifteen-minute weekly appearance on Sunday afternoon was planned and asked their approval of this new dimension in the ministry of First Lutheran. Enthusiastic approval was given, which resulted in an outreach of the parish to thousands of homes each week through this devotional program.

As the ministry and staff of any organization increases, likewise the financial demands upon those who are members also ascend. This is true in a church as in a regular business venture. The annual budget of

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55 Ibid., January 10, 1955, and January 15, 1955, approval by the congregation on January 19, 1955. The Reverend Arvid Bidne was called as first pastor of this church.

56 Rogness interview, October 25, 1969.

57 First Council Minutes, January 17, 1954. Support of this video ministry was assumed by the congregation.
First Lutheran Church rose in direct proportion to the expanding church program and, by 1950, it had gone over the $14,000.00 mark.

Prior to the 1954 Loyalty Dinner, at which the congregation pledged for the coming year, the staff in cooperation with the Finance Board had prepared a daring proposal for their fellow members. To reach the level of a "mature church," which would be willing to share with others as it did amongst itself, First Lutheran Congregation worked to become a 50-50 congregation in 1954. This meant that an amount equal to the local budget would be given to benevolence causes. A total budget for 1954 of $99,241.00 was approved by the assembly, which would be divided equally in this manner to truly serve the world community as in the local ministry.

Further example of the continuing close relationship between Augustana College and First Lutheran Church was shown in 1951, when the congregation established the initial fund to aid its student members in higher education. First named the Student Aid Fund, this practice of grants-in-aid for the freshman year at Augustana College developed into a

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58 First Minutes. Budget figures of this period were 1947: $23,635; 1949: $31,495; 1951: $44,107; 1952: $49,957.

59 The Finger of God, stewardship booklet of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D. (Printed pamphlet.)
program of student scholarships to any of the colleges of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. By 1960, more than $22,000.00 had been given to approximately 120 Lutheran scholars attending the ELC colleges.

Financial aid from First Lutheran was not limited to member students. In 1953 a congregational pledge of $60,000.00 was given to the Augustana Library Fund. It was agreed that the main reading and reference area of the new learning center would be named the H. J. Glenn Memorial Reading Room to honor his service to the church and to higher education.

When Dr. Rogness came to First Lutheran in 1951, he expected to spend the remainder of his years in that position, but at the Biennial Meeting of the ELC which was held in Minneapolis June 9-16, 1954, the presidency of Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul was offered to him. The decision concerning this call was a difficult and trying one. Dr. Rogness later confessed that, "I never

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60 First Minutes, January 10, 1951; First Council Minutes, January 15, 1951. The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America changed its name to the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC) in 1946.

61 Student Aid Program, December, 1959. (Printed pamphlet.)

62 First Minutes, April 20, 1953. See above p. 94.

63 Rogness interview, October 25, 1969.
wanted to come here \Luther Seminary\textsuperscript{7}, but I thought that this call from the Church as a whole could not be turned down." The years of service to his "home congregation" were therefore relatively short, and Dr. Rogness tendered his resignation at First Lutheran in June, 1954.\textsuperscript{65}

A Pastor Recommendation Committee was chosen at the next Church Council meeting which included Arthur Myklebust, Nils Boe, George Pearson, Bert Ulberg, and Fred Hanson.\textsuperscript{66} A successor to Dr. Rogness was not named for many months, and three different calls to prospective leaders were issued. In August, the Reverend A. Reuben Gornitzka was called; owing to his return of the offer, the Reverend Arndt L. Halverson was called, but the congregation met with the same response from this pastor as from their first nominee.\textsuperscript{67} On December 12, 1954, Dr. L. M. Stavig outlined the qualifications of the Reverend Robert G. Borgwardt, then serving a large congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as assistant pastor.\textsuperscript{68} In response

\textsuperscript{64}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{65}First Council Minutes, June 16, 1954; First Minutes, June 27, 1954.
\textsuperscript{66}First Council Minutes, June 29, 1954.
\textsuperscript{67}First Minutes, August 1, and September 19, 1954.
\textsuperscript{68}Ibid., December 12, 1954.
to a duly authorized call to him, the Reverend Borgwardt accepted the position of senior pastor of the Sioux Falls congregation.

Robert G. Borgwardt was a Wisconsin native, reared in Milwaukee and educated at St. Olaf and Luther Seminary. Following his ordination in 1947, he served congregations in Madison, Wisconsin, and Minneapolis. His many appearances before college and youth groups exhibited a scholarly and dynamic speaking style.

To the Reverend Borgwardt, the biggest challenge of First Lutheran was the preaching to large crowds every Sunday. "I've never had such a theologically astute congregation", he related concerning the large number of ordained men in the First Lutheran congregation. "The fifteen clergymen were most sympathetic and encouraging." 71

This new leader saw a definite need for a strong music program in a downtown church, and it was during his years at First Lutheran that the hopes of many for a new organ reached fruition. One of the last recommendations which Dr. Glenn made was a proposal that would create an organ fund,

69 Ibid., January 10, 1955.
70 The Fortieth Anniversary of the Foundation of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D. (Printed booklet.)
71 Interview with the Reverend Robert G. Borgwardt, August 26, 1969.
and solicit memorial and other gifts in support of it. Duly established, this fund grew slowly for the next few years.

As one of his last actions at First Lutheran in December, 1954, Dr. Rogness distributed an explanatory sheet relative to the need of a fine pipe organ at First Lutheran. The council subsequently moved to introduce an appropriate recommendation to the congregation at the upcoming annual meeting.73

Upon later authorization from the congregation, the Church Council appointed an Organ Committee composed of Dr. Robert Van Demark, chairman, Dr. Wallace Arneson, Oscar Gudmunson, and Mesdames Allan Bresee and L. M. Stavig. This committee was to study the question and make recommendations as to cost, type of instrument, and method of financing such an undertaking.74

Formal authorization to purchase an organ was given at the 1956 Annual Congregational Meeting, and the need for a

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72 First Minutes, January 9, 1952. The balance of the Altar Fund and the Graff Memorial Chimes Fund, with the approval of the Graff family on the latter, were turned over to this organ fund.

73 First Council Minutes, December 28, 1954.

74 Ibid., February 21, 1955. See also, November 14, 1955 when the Organ Committee reported meeting with four organ companies.
full-time Director of Music was also recognized. Mr. Richard Hoffland accepted this new position in May, and worked diligently with the Organ Committee. In September the congregation accepted the recommendation of the Organ Committee and allowed the purchase of an Aeolian-Skinner Organ at a cost not to exceed $50,000.00.

The main question as the installation date of the new organ drew closer, was that of location. The chancel of the sanctuary, the site of the original organ, was, to many members, an area of distinct beauty and reverence. It was here, too, that the choir pews were built, located on either side of the chancel area. The other possible location for the organ was in the rear balcony. Arguments for both areas were carefully considered in order to select the best possible location for the instrument and secure the wholehearted support of a majority of the congregation. After the January 22, 1957, meeting could not agree on this problem, experts in the fields of liturgy, architecture, and art were called in for advice. A week later, the Organ Committee recommended the rear balcony location, and this proposal was supported

75 First Minutes, January 18, 1956.
76 First Council Minutes, May 18, 1956.
by a representative of the Aeolian-Skinner Company. A ballot was taken, and over seventy-five per cent of those in attendance favored the rear balcony. The vote was then made unanimous. 77

The Dreams of the many music enthusiasts and the labors of the congregation as a whole were realized with the dedication of the new organ on November 21, 1959. Mr. Virgil Fox, New York City’s Riverside Church organist, played the dedicatory recital. 78 This new organ installation also attracted Mr. David Urness, who accepted the call to the position of Director of Music after Richard Hoffland resigned in the fall of 1959. 79

The broad educational program of First Lutheran had reached a large proportion of its members over the years. Even after Our Savior’s Congregation, a new mission church situated in the Augustana College area, took over the long-established “South Branch” Sunday School of First Lutheran

77 First Minutes, January 22 and 29, 1957.
78 Dedication of Sanctuary Organ, November 21, 1959. (Printed program.)
79 Other staff changes of the Borgwardt years included an acceptance of a call to the Reverend Otto Nielsen in November, 1956, to replace the Reverend Bagason, who resigned to accept a call to Britton, South Dakota. First Minutes, September 4, 1955; First Council Minutes, November 23, 1955.
in 1946, every Sunday found children widely scattered throughout the First Lutheran area. Sunday School classes were held in hallways, storage rooms and, when adjoining dwellings were purchased for future church expansion, they were quickly filled with children from the Sunday School roles. By 1953, after continued expansion, the staff numbered over one hundred, with an average of 942 children in classes each Sabbath.

In September 1955, the congregation voted to launch a concentrated drive for capital improvements in the amount of $150,000.00. Subsequently called the First Lutheran Development Fund, this drive was to complete the purchase of appropriate land directly west of the existing church building and could be used for subsequent erection of a Parish Hall to meet the demands of a growing education and youth program.

80 First Minutes, September 23, 1946.
81 Ibid. September 28, 1953. Total enrollment in the Sunday School numbered 1,022 students and teachers.
82 Ibid., September 25, 1955. Pledges were to be made on a two year basis.
83 Thy Kingdom Come, Stewardship Brochure, November 1, 1955. (Printed program.)
Following acquisition of the necessary land, a Building Committee was named by the Church Council in April, 1956, led by Bert Ulberg. A concentrated study yielded concrete proposals for a Parish Hall building. This proposed unit would be built around the increased needs of music, youth, and education. In addition to Sunday School classrooms, youth lounge, and choir rehearsal areas, a library, reception area, staff offices, and a chapel were included in the plans.

After the Sunday School enrollment blossomed to over 1,400 by 1958, the need for this facility was clear to the members of First Lutheran Congregation. In November of that year, following a successful Building Fund Canvass, contracts totaling over $500,000.00 were awarded for the construction of a new Parish Hall. Upon completion of this facility, dedication ceremonies were held on Sunday, October 16, 1960, as part of the observance of the Fortieth Anniversary of the formation of First Lutheran Church.

84 First Council Minutes, April 16, 1956. Others on this committee were: Reuben Bragstad, O. O. Lokken, Ed Becker, E. J. Gustafson, R. L. Redman, Milt Simons, Mrs. Frank Boyce, Mrs. Erling Haugo, Herb Schoeneman, C. B. Newcomb, Frank Califano, Dr. Stanley Larson, Knute Hoyme, and Mrs. Mike Schirmer.


86 Ibid. By January 1959, memorials were already received for furnishings in the proposed Parish Hall.

87 Sioux Falls Argus-Leader, October 14, 1960.
The entire month of October was filled with other activities in observance of this forty year landmark in the history of First Lutheran. Named as Anniversary Month by the committee appointed with planning for this observance, the five Sundays of October were used to observe one aspect in the labors of this congregation.®® Christian Education Sunday, Higher Education Sunday, Mission Sunday, Fortieth Anniversary Sunday, and Reformation Sunday each in turn saw guest preachers and speakers speak at various functions and banquets.®°

As early as 1948, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church had approached four other Lutheran bodies in America with an invitation to consider the possibility of merger.®® Although no serious proposals of union were put forth for some time, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, of which First Lutheran was one of the three largest congregations, began to seriously talk of this union possibility in the early 1950's. Indeed, early in 1954, Dr. Rogness discussed this proposed merger before a First Lutheran congregational

®®Fortieth Anniversary of the Foundation of First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, S. D. (Printed program.)

®°Ibid. Dr. Fredrik Schiotz, newly elected president of The American Lutheran Church, preached the Anniversary Sunday sermon.

meeting. Following a period of negotiations that lasted throughout most of the 1950's, the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church were united in April, 1960, as The American Lutheran Church (TALC). First Lutheran Congregation subsequently renamed many of its service and subsidiary groups, along the general lines as agreed upon in the merger negotiations. First Lutheran was now one of nearly 5,000 congregations who together totaled over 2,250,000 members. With a baptized membership of over 5,300, this Sioux Falls congregation was one of the three largest in the TALC.

The traditional goals of preaching, teaching, and reaching received increased emphasis in the decade of the 1960's at First Lutheran Church. Even though the Reverend Borgwardt held the central position as senior pastor, a team or group ministry became a necessity. By 1963, this multiple ministry was shared by the Reverends Vernon Broughton (youth activities), Palmer B. Stensland (visitation), Allan Thoresen (life and growth), in addition to

91 First Minutes, March 17, 1954.
92 Wilfred Bockelman, "Why So Many Kinds of Lutherans?" The Lutheran Standard, I (February 14, 1961), p. 11. Headquarters for the new TALC were in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
93 The Ladies Aid and Men's Brotherhood, for example, became the First Lutheran Church Women and Church Men.
94 Bockelman, "Why So Many Kinds of Lutherans?" p. 11.
Pastor Borgwardt. The educational facet of this ministry was aided by the inauguration of the Bethel Series in early 1962. This concentrated study of the entire Bible, specifically structured for adults, was soon in use by over 400 congregations throughout the country.

By the fall of 1963, the Reverend Robert G. Borgwardt had served as senior pastor of First Lutheran Congregation for eight and one-half years. In August, "Pastor Bob" received a call to his native Wisconsin to serve as senior pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church in Madison. His resignation, which was accepted by the First Lutheran Church Council with regret, became effective on September 1, 1963. A Call Committee was subsequently appointed to find a suitable replacement.

Upon acceptance of the call to First Lutheran Church, the Reverend Marcus I. Gravdal was installed as senior pastor

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95 First Council Minutes, February 27; April 24; October 30, 1962, and March 26, 1963.
96 Ibid., October 31; November 28; December 22, 1961.
97 Borgwardt interview, August 26, 1969. See also, First Lutheran, September, 1963.
98 First Council Minutes, August 28, 1969.
99 Ibid.
on January 5, 1964. The son of a Lutheran pastor, born in Montana and reared in North Dakota, Marc Gravdal received his bachelor of arts degree from Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota in 1949. Following graduation from Luther Seminary and ordination, the Reverend Gravdal served pastorates at Harmony, Minnesota and Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The concept of a team ministry was actively promoted by the Reverend Gravdal. Among the programs of outreach to the members of the congregation and the community at large that were led by this active and concerned leader, the ministry of the so-called Silhouette Shack served to illustrate the social awareness that attracted many in the church during this decade.

Following the purchase of the Christian Reformed Church building, across the street from First Lutheran, by the congregation, the Reverend Broughton was sympathetic to the pleas of many of the young people in the congregation for a place to meet and relate with one another. Plans to raze this newly acquired older church building were changed, and with the cooperation of the Board of Youth Activities and

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100 First Lutheran, January, 1964. See also, First Council Minutes, October 29, and November 28, 1963, for terms of call.

101 Ibid.
many other concerned First Lutheran members, an experimental ministry to the youth of the community was launched. The name Silhouette Shack was attached to this structure, and the youth of the congregation were given the opportunity to work with the Youth Pastor and Board of Youth Activities in an attempt to relate to the senior high school age young people. Attendance at various social and educational functions proved to be quite high, and this program was continued and changed according to the needs of this age group.  

Planning for the Golden Anniversary celebration of the formation of First Lutheran Congregation began as early as 1962, when the Reverend Borgwardt proposed a Forward Advance Plan for consideration by the Church Council. Serious planning for this event, however, was not undertaken until the period of the Gravdal ministry. Early in 1967, after much planning and consideration, the Church Council proposed a Fiftieth Anniversary Thanksgiving Fund in the amount of $600,000.00 to be raised beginning in 1966 through 1970.  

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102 Interview with Dr. L. M. Stavig, November 5, 1969.  
103 First Council Minutes, October 30, 1962.  
104 First Minutes, March 28, 1967.
This proposal divided the Fund into five basic categories, representing both the local and community as well as the world outreach of this church. The area of benevolences received the largest figure of the five major divisions of this proposed fund. Pledges to a special synod-wide Lutheran Ingathering for Education (LIFE) would total $100,000.00 along with $50,000.00 for both American and World Missions. The remaining $400,000.00 would be divided between building alterations, the expansion of parking facilities, payment on existing pledges, and debt retirement.\textsuperscript{105} This bold undertaking was approved by the congregation in mid-1967, and an intense campaign for pledges resulted in a total figure of $612,747.13 to be given over a three year period to this Anniversary Thanksgiving Fund.\textsuperscript{106}

From a handful of Norwegian immigrants worshipping in humble dwellings in the Sioux Falls area during the 1870's, the teaching and tenets of Lutheranism have been preserved and applied by the pioneers and their descendants. The story of these hardy people in the Sioux Falls environ is a major chapter in the history of the American experiment. First Lutheran Church, as such, is a relatively young

\textsuperscript{105}Ibid. A previous pledge of $35,000.00 to Luther Manor, a Lutheran Home for the Elderly, would be paid off by this fund.

\textsuperscript{106}Stavig interview, November 5, 1969.
religious organization, only fifty years old in 1970. The story of this congregation, and its antecedents, is about what these people did in this place. It is distinctive in that little has prospered into much, that the efforts of many have effected even more, and that the story of the past presages the promise of the future.
APPENDIX:

Contents of Copper Box for Cornerstone of First Lutheran Church.
Laid May 3, 1925.

A Bible
A Lutheran Hymnary
A copy of Landstad's Kirkesalmebog, owned by J. J. Bragstad, a pioneer of the early Mission Congregation and of Trinity congregation, found in Trinity cornerstone
A copy of Synodens Psalmebog belonging to Mrs. Thina Solie, a charter member of St. Olaf congregation, who came to Sioux Falls November 7, 1871
An Explanation of Martin Luther's Smaller Catechism
A Constitution of former St. Olaf congregation
A Constitution of the former Trinity Congregation
A Constitution of the former Grace congregation
A Constitution of the present First Lutheran Church
A copy of the Articles of Agreement whereby a union was effected between St. Olaf and Grace congregations
A picture of the former St. Olaf Church
A picture of the former Grace Church
A copy of "The Challenge of First Lutheran Church and a Plea for Her Future", the same being a pamphlet designed and used for the Financial campaign
A copy of the Ladies' Aid calendar for 1925
A copy of the second edition of "Tested Recipes", a cookbook published by the Ladies Aid
A copy of the budget of the congregation for 1925
A copy of each of the official Church papers, "Lutheraneran" and "The Lutheran Church Herald"
A copy of the Sioux Falls Argus Leader of May 2, 1925, likewise a copy of the same paper of July 1874 taken from the cornerstone of former Trinity Church, inclosed there when built in 1894
A copy of the Sioux Falls Press of May 3, 1925 likewise of July 14, 1894, taken from Trinity cornerstone
A membership list of First Lutheran Church as of the present time
A history of First Lutheran congregation and its antecedents
A copy of the program of the cornerstone laying May 3, 1925

*Typewritten copy from files on Cornerstone Laying at First Lutheran Library, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
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