

# *The* PALIMPSEST

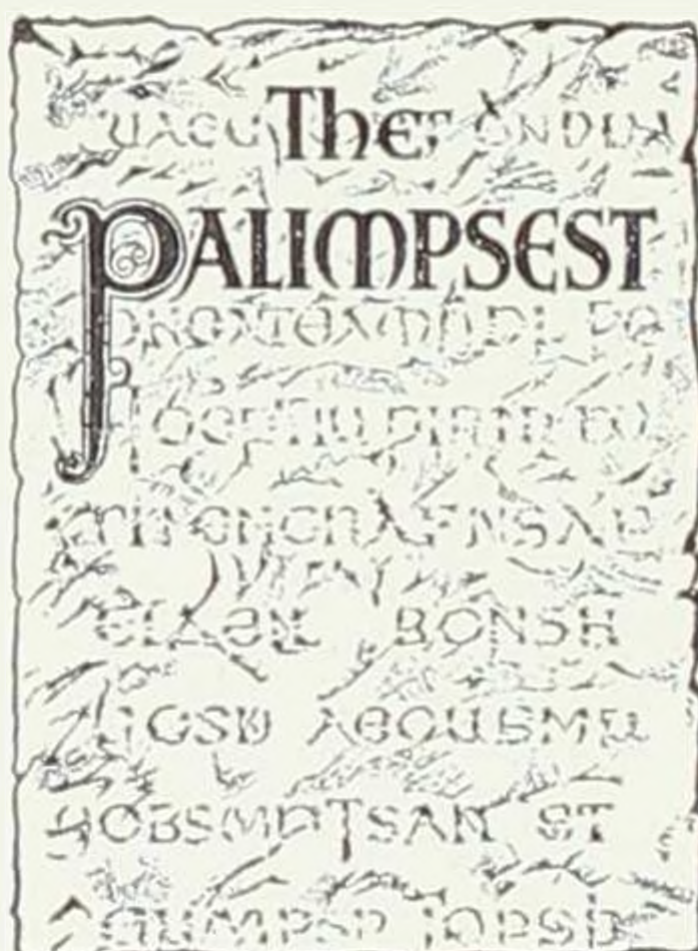


WARTBURG SEMINARY AT DUBUQUE

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## The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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## Cover

Inside Back Cover:

Top: (left) St. James, Mason City, (right) St. John, Le Mars

Bottom: (left) St. John, Cedar Falls, (right) Zion, Waterloo

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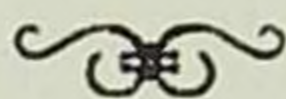
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## Founders of the Iowa Synod

Little did Martin Luther realize when he nailed the Ninety-five Theses on the church door at Wittenberg in 1517, that he would be regarded by history as the founder of the Lutheran Church, which would some day be the largest Protestant body in the world. The Augsburg Confession of 1530 gave the Lutheran Church distinctive being and name. It set forth boldly the following three great "Reform Principles" of the New Testament faith, rediscovered by Luther: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves"; the Bible is the only norm for faith and life, and contradictory human tradition is to be rejected; each person must come to God directly through faith in Christ, and needs no human mediators. All churchly usages which were out of harmony with this New Testament faith were rejected, as the Reformers sought to recapture for their own times the purity of the New Testament church.

The Lutheran Church today numbers about eighty million adherents. This represents about



one-half of the Protestants, and about one-eighth of the Christians of the world. The strength of Lutheranism lies in Germany, the Scandinavian lands, and the United States. In the United States and Canada there are about 8,500,000 Lutherans, making them fourth among Christian and third among Protestant groups in America.

Beginning in the late 1830's, a great wave of German immigration came to the United States and settled chiefly in the Middle West, between the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers. Many of these people were Lutheran. They needed pastors and teachers to shepherd them and to instruct their children in the faith.

In 1841 Rev. F. C. D. Wynecken, pastor at Fort Wayne, Indiana, went to Germany because of his health. While there he issued a stirring appeal in behalf of Lutheran settlers in the West.

Oh help us! Give us preachers to comfort us with the bread of life, to edify us by means of the Word of our Lord, to instruct our children in the saving knowledge of the truth in Jesus. . . . I pray you, for Christ's sake, begin the work; lend a hand; do it now! Do not lose time in needless deliberations. Hasten, hasten! It is a matter of saving immortal souls!

This stirring appeal reached Pastor William Loehe (1808-1872) of the little town of Neuen-dettelsau (near Nürnberg), Bavaria, and gripped his imagination. Although he never set foot on American soil, Pastor Loehe became the spiritual



father of the Iowa Synod. When he first visited the little village of Neuendettelsau as a student, Loehe remarked to a friend, "The town is so dead, I would not like to see my dog buried there!" After he had become pastor of this same parish, a great spiritual awakening took place, and before many years had passed the young churchman found himself working with a growing congregation, a missionary society, a missionary institute for the training of teachers and workers, and a deaconess motherhouse.

Having heard the call from America, Loehe felt obligated to help the scattered German colonists in the West. The first two "emergency helpers," Ernst and Burger, were sent out in 1842, trained to be parochial school teachers. Professor Winkler of the Theological Seminary of the Ohio Synod at Columbus met them in New York, persuaded them that preachers were more needed on the frontier than teachers, and took them with him to Columbus to finish their theological training. Thus began Loehe's Lutheran activity in America.

From this time a steady stream of teachers came over, men who finished their theological training in America, and became frontier preachers. About eighty of these men joined the Missouri Synod. Many more come to the Iowa Synod. Meanwhile a practical seminary had been opened at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Loehe's greatest project for America was the



founding of colonies for poor immigrants. Three colonies, located near Saginaw, Michigan, were called *Frankenmut* (Franconian Courage), *Frankentrost* (Franconian Comfort), and *Frankenlust* (Franconian Joy). In connection with these a teachers' seminary and a hospice for immigrants were established in 1852.

Having begun this American venture, Pastor Loehe fostered it in every way. He produced devotional literature, catechisms and prayer books for the immigrants. He revised and edited a church service book, Loehe's *Agende*, and had it beautifully printed. He kept sending teachers and money. He published a special paper, *Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nord Amerika* (Church News from North America) with over 8,000 subscribers.

Although many of the Loehe men had joined the Missouri Synod (founded 1847), Pastor John Deindoerfer and Principal George Grossmann of the school at Saginaw soon found themselves in controversy with the neighboring Missouri Synod pastors concerning the doctrine of the church and the ministry. After personal conferences failed to bring peace, these men, together with about two dozen colonists, came to Iowa in September, 1853.

The move to Iowa took place under the leadership of three men, Gottlob Amman, the philanthropic founder of Frankenhilf, who was now almost destitute because he had been unable to col-



lect his monies; Principal George Grossmann of the teachers' seminary; and Pastor John Deindorfer of the Frankenhilf congregation. Caretaker J. Weege had to come later since he could not dispose of all the property at once. Among the colonists were two students, Karl Beckel and Christian Kranzlein; the rest who had come under Loehe's auspices decided to remain in Saginaw.

Most of the little colony came by steamer to Detroit, by train to Freeport, Illinois, which was then the end of the line, and by "snail-gear" stage to Dubuque. The Grossmann and Deindorfer families came in their own wagon, however, with a fine team of horses. Only when they were already well on their way did the colonists discover their lack of funds. Apparently each of the three leaders had thought that the other two had money enough to keep the party on the journey. Some of the baggage had to be left at Freeport for lack of funds. Arriving in Dubuque penniless, the colonists were received by two inns because they looked honest and had a team of valuable horses. The situation was relieved when Mr. Jesup cashed a draft on Loehe's bank for them.

Grossmann reported Dubuque was "quite correctly" called the "Key" to the whole West.

One marvels at the multitudes of settlers that come, even late in October, to go west through Dubuque. This includes not only those who have recently come from Germany, but many more who have lived for some time in



other states. The ferry which crosses the Mississippi constantly and makes the trip in 7 minutes, returns on the average with 2 or 3 pioneer wagons, so that it is often difficult for the new arrivals to find space in the hotels.

Deindoerfer remarked that there were many Germans in Iowa (at Davenport, Garnavillo, and Guttenberg) and at least 2,000 in Dubuque, of whom about 100 had joined Reformed and Methodist churches. Wages, he said, were good: one dollar a day for unskilled labor, two and a half to three dollars a day for skilled work. But the Germans needed a school and a Lutheran church. Obviously, Dubuque was the place to start!

The mighty army of peaceful invasion continued. The population of Iowa soared from 192,214 to 674,913 between 1850 and 1860. While the lumber industries of Dubuque were expanding to meet the housing needs of the settlers, and the foundries made plow shares to break virgin prairie, the fathers of the Iowa Synod were busy looking after the spiritual needs of 38,555 Germans living in Iowa by 1860.

On Luther's birthday, November 10, 1853, Grossmann once more began to teach eight students, six of whom had just come from Neuendettelsau. Thus the school begun at Saginaw was transferred to Dubuque, to grow into Wartburg Theological Seminary and Wartburg College (now at Waverly, Iowa). Begun as a school for the training of teachers, it soon became a full-



fledged theological seminary (1854). Presently St. John's Lutheran was founded in Dubuque.

Amman, Deindoerfer, and the rest moved on to Clayton County where a suitable tract of land four miles northwest of Strawberry Point was available at \$1.25 per acre. They named their settlement St. Sebald by the Spring, in honor of the missionary who had converted their ancestors in Germany. Amman moved into the first log house at St. Sebald in December, 1853. Soon Pastor Deindoerfer shared it with him, for they built a partition through the middle of the single room, and so converted the cabin into a two-family apartment.

That first winter was hard. Among the new colonists that came in 1854 was Pastor Sigmund Fritschel, who was to start a Latin school at Dubuque. He later became the president of Wartburg Seminary. That same year (in the unfinished parsonage at St. Sebald) the Iowa Synod was organized by Pastors Grossmann, Deindoerfer, S. Fritschel, and Candidate Schüller, who was ordained at this meeting. Grossmann became president and Fritschel secretary. No treasurer was needed.

The Iowa Synod adopted no formal constitution, but said that it would adhere to Scripture and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church as historically understood, and that it would look for an ever larger development of Lutheran faith and life. This showed the heritage of Loehe: Scriptural, Lutheran, irenic, willing to fight for the



truth, but unwilling to argue about nonessentials. The Synod emphasized parish schools and a period of careful training for church membership.

Such was the beginning of the Iowa Synod: four pastors, all young and inexperienced; two congregations (Dubuque and St. Sebald), both very poor; a seminary, begun with a few students but without property. Its one great asset was its eagerness to serve the German immigrants.

Students and colonists kept coming from abroad; pastors were ardent home missionaries. Soon three new congregations were organized: St. John's at St. Donatus, Iowa (1854); St. John's at Madison Wisconsin (1855); and Emanuel's at Cottage Grove, Wisconsin (1855).

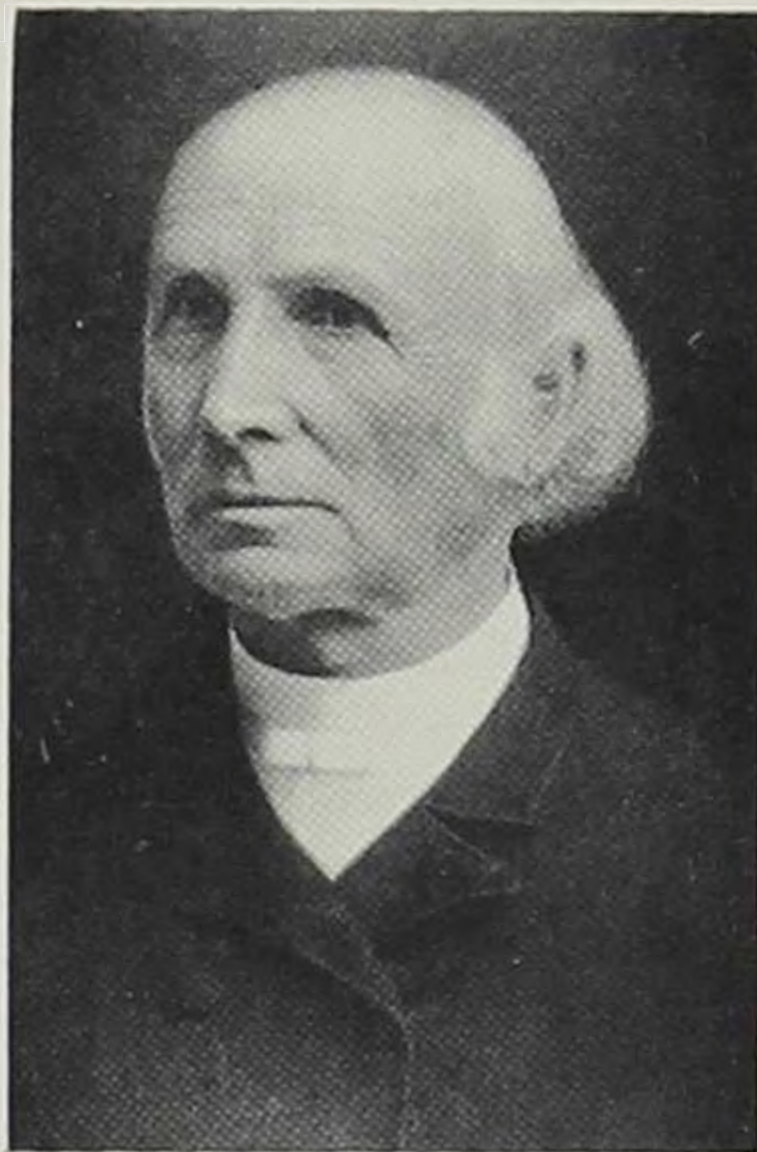
The seminary served as the center of the synod's growth: in 1859 there were 25 pastors, 28 congregations, and many preaching places; in 1864 there were 42 pastors, professors, and missionaries, and more than 50 congregations distributed over seven states. The seminary had already graduated 21 pastors. In Iowa alone there were 16 pastors and about 30 congregations and preaching places. Other states served were Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, and the Dakota Territory where an Indian mission had been started at Deer Creek in what is now Wyoming. Clearly the Iowa Synod was growing lustily.

ALBERT A. JAGNOW

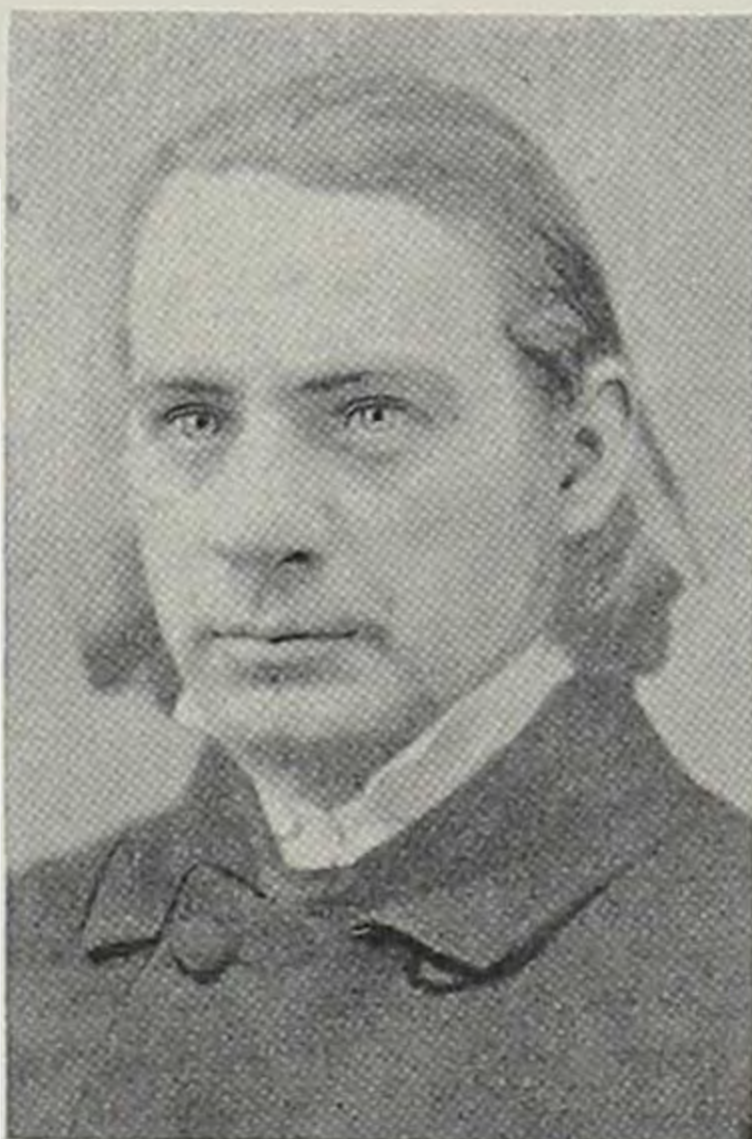




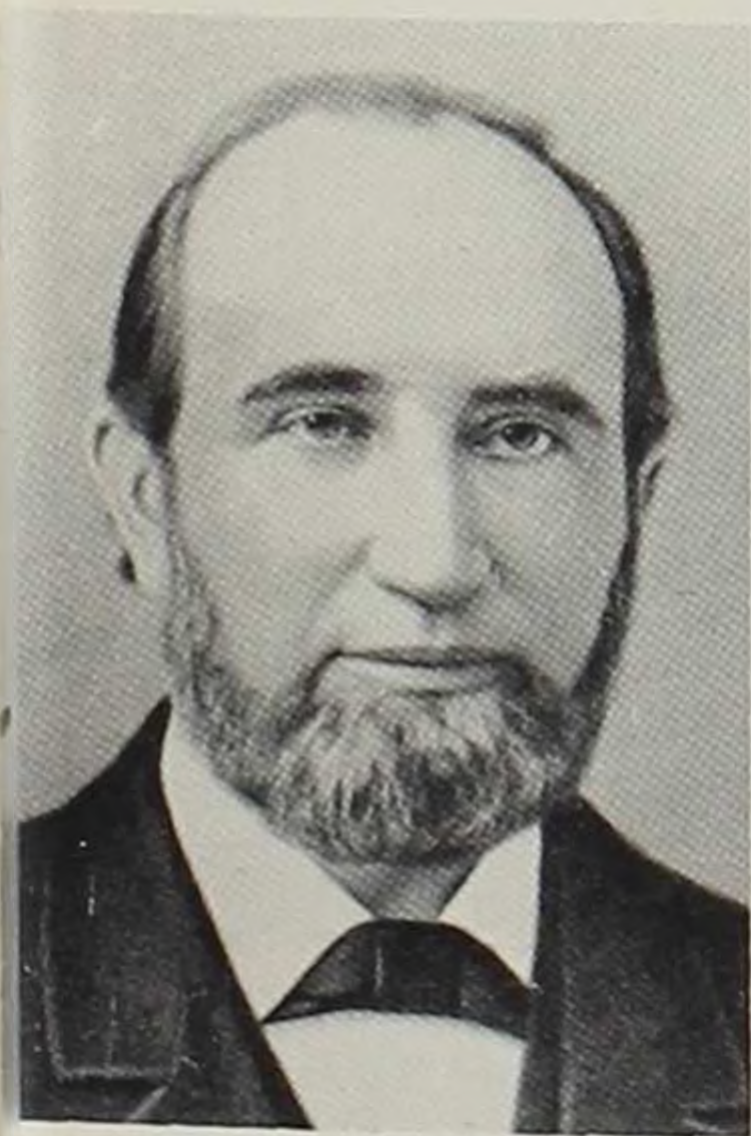
JOHN DEINDOERFER  
President of Synod



GEORGE GROSSMANN  
Director



PASTOR WILLIAM LOEHE  
European Sponsor



SIGMUND FRITSCHER, D.D.  
"Professor Senior"



GOTTFRIED FRITSCHER, D.D.  
"Professor Junior"



SOME PRESIDENTS OF OUR IOWA WARTBURGS



OTTO KRAUSHAAR



AUGUST ENGELBRECHT



OTTO PROEHL



E. J. BRAULICK



C. H. BECKER



MAX FRITSCHHEL



EMIL H. RAUSCH



M. REU



JULIUS BODENSIECK



B. J. HOLM



PRESIDENTS OF SYNOD AND LAY LEADERS



F. RICHTER



G. A. FANDREY



C. G. PROTTENGEIER



H. L. ADIX



H. W. SIEFKES



C. H. GRAENING

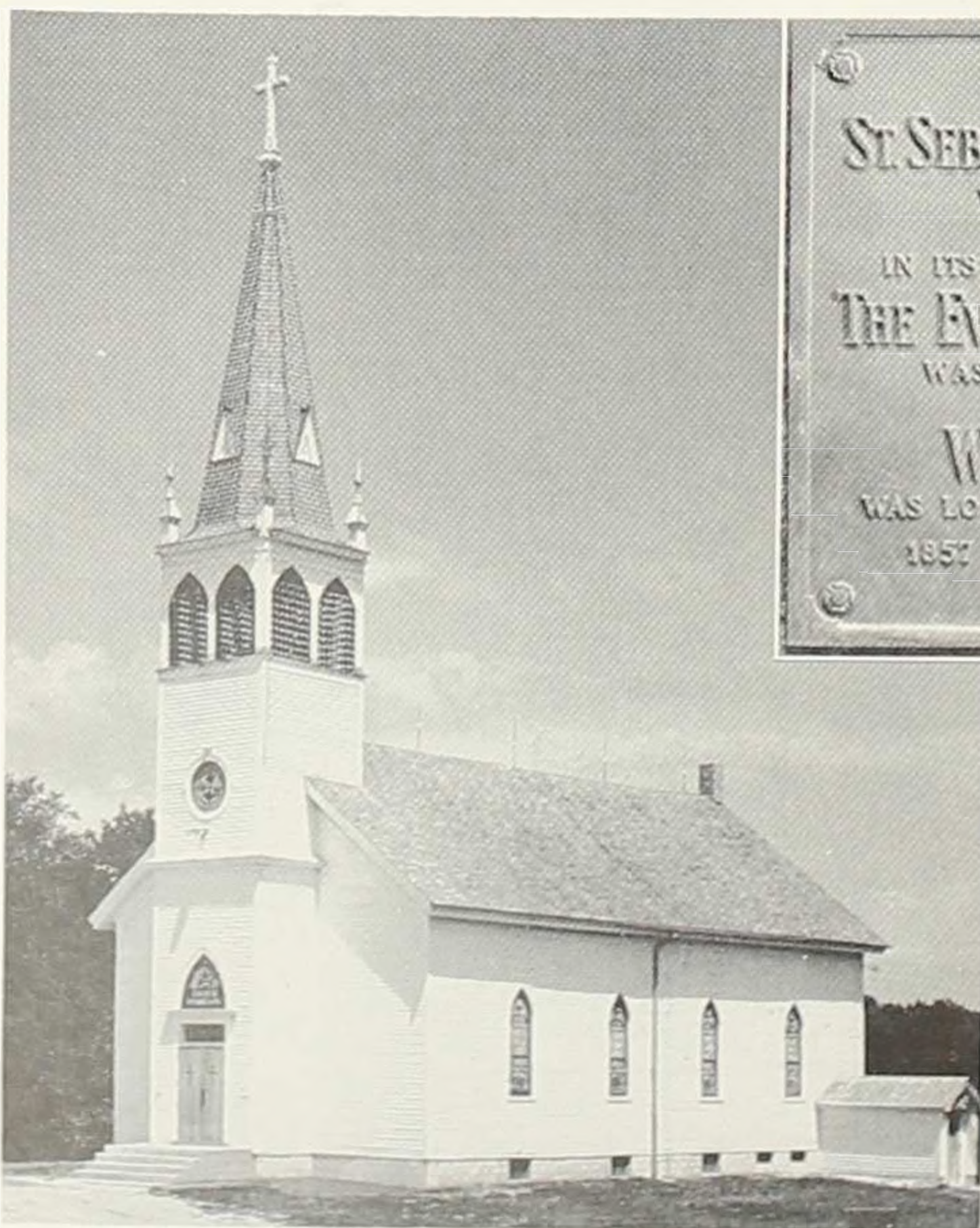


HENRY N. GRAVEN





Wartburg Seminary at St. Sebald



St. Sebald Lutheran Church



## Growing Pains

Much of the expansion of the first ten years of the Iowa Synod (1854-1864) was due to weekend preaching trips. Professors and advanced students took long journeys to serve scattered groups of Lutheran immigrants. The seminary became the focus for the formation of new congregations. From Dubuque impulses went out to St. Donatus, Sherrill's Mound, Galena and Rush Creek, Illinois, Platteville and Madison, Wisconsin. When the Seminary moved to St. Sebald in 1857, congregations were soon founded at Garnavillo, Clayton Center, Elkport, Guttenberg, McGregor, Prairie du Chien (Wisconsin), West Union, Eldorado, and Fort Atkinson. As a result of deputation work, a congregation was founded at Fort Des Moines in 1859. That same year Student Sack stumbled upon a Lutheran congregation without a pastor at Maxfield, Bremer County, and brought it into contact with the Iowa Synod. This congregation became the mother of about a dozen others in Bremer County!

Many of the pastors conducted parish school, and some taught in public school. Salaries ranged from nothing up to a maximum of \$200 per year. In short, the whole development required heroic



sacrifices. Giants among the fathers were the men at St. Sebald: President Grossmann, who was also pastor of the St. Sebald congregation; and the brothers Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel, popularly called Professor Senior and Professor Junior respectively. To these must be added the Rev. J. Deindoerfer, at this time serving a congregation at Madison Wisconsin. (A number of descendants of these four fathers are still in the ministry of the American Lutheran Church.) These and their many helpers proved equal to almost any occasion as they rose with the frontier. Preachers and missionaries, some of them became educators, theologians, and statesmen of the church. Their badge of greatness was their devotion to the church and to the German immigrants who needed pastoral care.

The attempt to win the Red Man for Christ was the most interesting adventure of the early years. An opening was found through Mr. Redfield, a government agent for the Crows (Upsarouqua), whose station was at the junction of the Big Horn and Yellowstone rivers in Montana. From 1858-1864 a number of expeditions were sent out, involving the following missionaries: Schmidt, Braeuninger, Doederlein, Seyler, Kessler, Krebs, Flachenecker, and Matter. On the first expedition Schmidt and Braeuninger contacted friendly Crows, lived in the tent of their chief for two months, and then returned to home



base at St. Sebald (a nine weeks' journey!) to report. Prospects looked bright, but the hope of founding a colony proved vain, for contact with the Crows was never again established. On the third expedition Moritz Braeuninger was killed, apparently by Ogalala Indians who resented the intrusion of the white man. Next a winter's work was done among the Cheyennes, and Christmas celebrated — tree and all — with the Indians at Deer Creek on the Powder River, a tributary to the Yellowstone. This has been written up as the story of the first Christmas tree in Wyoming. In 1862 and 1864 repeated Indian uprisings finally killed the work. All whites had to be evacuated. The missionaries, warned by Indians, also left.

As sole fruit of their labors, Missionary Krebs brought along three Indian boys who had been entrusted to them as converts and wards. Two of these died in 1865 and lie buried in the cemetery behind the church at St. Sebald. The third one found life difficult, left the seminary colony, and died within a few years, after a checkered career.

Colonies to convert the Indians! The scheme proved visionary and impractical. But it showed that longing for souls which was the secret of the synod's growth, and which caused her to be called "a missionary synod." The Indian work was never resumed. Its only monument today is the bronze plaque on the large boulder which marks the Indian graves at St. Sebald.



The Iowa Synod sought to be cooperative in her relationship to other Lutherans. Because she distinguished between fundamentals in doctrine and open questions in theology she often found herself in controversy with her neighbors. Until 1857 Iowa was in close contact with the Buffalo (New York) Synod. Then came the argument concerning chiliasm, and cooperation ceased. With the Missouri Synod (organized 1847) Iowa had one argument after another. Perhaps this was due in part to the bad feeling engendered by the break from the Missouri Synod in 1853. Perhaps it also represented normal growing pains, and the freedom of the frontier, which caused so many Germans, when they came to this land, to find it difficult to agree. Many of these arguments concerned details in theology which Iowa considered to be nonessential. Some of them, such as the controversy concerning predestination, were of serious importance. In this battle the Ohio Synod (founded 1818) joined forces with the Iowa Synod against the Missouri Synod, and there was much switching of congregations and pastors back and forth. Because of the many controversies, the period from 1860 to 1900 has sometimes been called "the study period for Lutherans in the Mississippi valley." Apparently each of the Lutheran Synods in the Middle West sought to persuade others of its orthodoxy! These controversies showed the Iowa Synod to be Scriptural, Luther-



an, but moderate and cooperative in her approach. This was the heritage of Wilhelm Loehe.

During the 70's, 80's, and 90's, the Iowa Synod's chief task was to gather thousands of German immigrants into congregations in the Middle West. Close contacts were maintained with Germany, and many workers came from abroad. Most of these were from the Mission Seminary at Neuendettelsau, Bavaria, Germany, and finished their training at Wartburg College and Wartburg Seminary. Missionary impulses went out in many directions: to Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, the Dakotas, Washington, Oregon, Texas, and Canada. When thousands of German Russians from the Volga basin came to settle in the Dakotas (about 1870), the Professors Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel made week-end trips by rail into this "bread basket of America." With the aid of friendly conductors they followed the groups of immigrants and founded one congregation after another. In 1896 the Texas Synod, which represented a sizeable German Lutheran development in Texas, joined the Iowa Synod. Everywhere these congregations fostered a dignified liturgical form of worship, careful education of the young, and true piety for young and old.

The leaders of the Iowa Synod desired to be true German-Americans, that is, German in cultural background and religious ties, but American by free choice in the political, economic, and (later)



social spheres. They felt strongly their obligation of loyal service to the land of their adoption. But the feeling also persisted that the religious life could best be fostered in German. Hence the insistence on the use of the German language in worship long after this had become a liability rather than an asset.

In the 90's the coming of the second generation into power in the church brought a gradual change. An English chair of theology was established at Wartburg Seminary in 1896. Private confession, which had formerly confined the synod's growth, was no longer practiced. The long period of instruction for church membership was reduced to reasonable dimensions, although the ideal of an informed and educated laity was kept.

Larger Lutheran relationships in America were not forgotten. When American Lutherans of different synods held free conferences in the late 70's, looking toward larger unity, Iowa was there. Though she did not officially join, Iowa cooperated with the General Council (founded 1867) and helped produce the Council's German service book and hymnal (*Das Kirchenbuch*, 1877). When the predominantly eastern bodies which are now the United Lutheran Church in America pooled their efforts to produce a Lutheran liturgy (*The Common Service*, 1888) and a Hymnal (1915), Iowa cooperated. After 1881 the Iowa Synod found herself drawn ever more closely to



the Ohio Synod, until she finally merged with the Ohio and Buffalo Synods to form the American Lutheran Church (1930).

The first two decades of this century marked the Iowa Synod's coming of age. She had a fine program for the local parish, a growing home mission work expanding through many states, a number of church papers for the education of her laity and for theological discussion, a growing number of social service agencies, and a growing awareness of the general Lutheran situation in this country. Among her church papers were the *Kirchenblatt*, founded in 1858 for lay education; the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, a journal in constructive theology for pastors, founded in 1876 and edited from 1904 to 1943 by Dr. M. Reu, who was professor at Wartburg Seminary, and the greatest educator of the Iowa Synod. During the first World War two English papers appeared, *The Lutheran Herald*, edited by Dr. Emil H. Rausch, who was then in charge of the large St. Paul's parish at Waverly, and who later became president of Wartburg Seminary; and *The Lutheran Missionary*, which presented the cause of the newly acquired foreign mission field in New Guinea. Iowa Synod had its own Wartburg Publishing House which printed these and many other materials. Opened at Waverly in 1886, it was moved to Chicago in 1922. It is today merged with the publishing house of the former Ohio Synod at Columbus, Ohio.



The coming of the first World War caused the Iowa Synod to use English much more than formerly, and so greatly increased the effectiveness and the scope of her ministry. It also threw into her lap a Lutheran foreign mission field in New Guinea, originally staffed from Neuendettelsau, in Germany, but orphaned by the war. To this field Iowa sent men and supplies. Since the cooperation of Australian Lutherans was needed to do this work effectively, President Friedrich Richter of the Iowa Synod went to Australia and succeeded in uniting many scattered Lutherans into the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, and in making arrangements to take over Lutheran Mission Finschhafen in New Guinea. Before 1930 Iowa had already sent twenty-six workers in this foreign mission venture.

In 1918 a movement began in the state of Ohio looking toward the eventual merger of the Ohio and Iowa Synods. In 1926 the Buffalo Synod asked to join. And in 1930 the American Lutheran Church was born, an organic merger of the former Ohio, Buffalo, and Iowa Synods. Because of the sudden death of President G. A. Fandrey, President C. G. Prottengeier was at the helm when the Iowa Synod entered the merger. The Iowa District of the new body embraced Ohio and Iowa congregations in Iowa, and became practically identical with the boundaries of Iowa.

ALBERT A. JAGNOW



## Education: The Wartburgs

In the ideology of the Iowa Synod, Christian education receives major emphasis. Every child should receive religious instruction from the age of six or seven up to confirmation at about fourteen. For this purpose every congregation should maintain a parochial school, which should also teach German, to preserve the German cultural heritage. It might also teach English and other secular subjects to provide a sound elementary education.

Ideally such a school should be taught by a trained parochial teacher. In addition the pastor would maintain a Sunday school, and the Christenlehre, preferably in a separate afternoon service, where religious instruction could be continued for the older youth and in which the entire congregation should take part, especially those among the long-unchurched older generation.

Teachers might be supplied by the normal school at Dubuque, where students from Germany were trained by Pastor G. Grossmann. But since the youthful synod lacked established congregations and had to concentrate on founding missions which would be unable to afford both pastors and teachers, it soon became evident that the greater need was for pastors who must likewise teach. In



1854, therefore the school in Dubuque was transformed into a theological seminary, and teacher education temporarily abandoned.

While students continued to come from Germany, the Iowa Synod enlisted students from American congregations. Since these would need preparatory training, a Latin school was opened in connection with the Dubuque seminary in 1854. It was in charge of Pastor Sigmund Fritschel, and was designed to provide a classical education.

Loehe undertook to support this institution by providing funds in 1854 for the purchase of a house on White Street, near Thirteenth, to which the school was removed from the original rented quarters on Garfield Avenue. The parsonage of St. John's Church now occupies this new site. Professor Grossmann took sole charge of the Latin school and seminary, at the same time serving as pastor of St. John's.

In 1857 the institution was removed to rural Clayton County near St. Sebald Church. A farm was purchased to provide material support, and a frame school building was erected to house personnel and provide all facilities. Grossmann served as pastor at St. Sebald and also as president of the synod, so his teaching duties had to be reduced. Before Sigmund Fritschel was recalled in 1858, his younger brother Gottfried, whom Loehe had sent over in 1857, was head instructor.

During the next decade the institution gradu-



ally developed the character which it was to preserve well into the twentieth century. The name Wartburg was chosen at St. Sebald in commemoration of Luther's refuge and suggested by the site, a hilltop overlooking broad plains. Facilities limited total enrollment to thirty at most; until 1865 there were rarely more than half that many students. The preparatory, or college, division offered a four-year and later a five-year course, stressing classical languages, German, and English. The seminary division added three years of theological work which gradually became standardized. The teaching load was carried by S. and G. Fritschel, assisted by Pastor Grossmann.

The removal to a rural area did not solve all financial problems. A heavy building debt, the Panic of 1857, and the Civil War inflation created a precarious situation. A portion of the debt was liquidated by Loehe's organization. Between 1860 and 1863 Professor Sigmund Fritschel collected money in Germany, and particularly in the Baltic provinces of Russia, where he enlisted friends who gave substantial support for years to come. Thence he also brought with him as housemother Miss Auguste von Schwarz, whose tireless devotion endeared her to a generation of clergymen.

After the Civil War the institution seemed secure. In 1868 it was decided to separate the two divisions so a former nunnery was purchased at Galena, Illinois. Since 1862 the college had ad-



mitted nontheological students; now plans called for extension of its course by one year and for admission of local students. Pastor J. Klindworth served as rector while Professors F. Lutz and A. Preller carried most of the teaching load. In 1874 the seminary was also removed to Mendota, Illinois, where a vacant campus had been purchased.

During the 1870's the synod found it difficult to maintain two institutions. In 1875 the college was recombined with the seminary at Mendota. The seminary grew and flourished, drawing students chiefly from Germany, but plans for expanding the college were abandoned.

Meanwhile, teaching in parochial schools had become a burdensome duty for pastors throughout the synod. Rigid teaching schedules interfered greatly with missionary activities. Many congregations by then were able to afford teachers, but trained Christian men who could handle German were scarce, so teacher education had to be resumed. Pastor Grossmann made a tentative beginning by enrolling a small class in an orphanage at Andrew, Iowa, in 1878. The next year the synod approved organization of a full-fledged normal school and accepted a Waverly offer to furnish funds for a building and campus. Old Main was erected and occupied in 1880. Even though local students as well as prospective teachers were admitted, the enrollment remained rather small. It was therefore decided in 1885 to move



the college from Mendota to Waverly, where in combination with the normal school it might better be able to expand.

The Mendota plant remaining inadequate, a large mansion and grounds were acquired in 1889 on Fremont Avenue in Dubuque for the growing seminary. The former was remodeled into a seminary building, and residences for the staff were built on the grounds. Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel had remained as teachers through the Mendota period, assisted by instructors. Gottfried Fritschel died just before the removal. Sigmund Fritschel, together with Pastor W. Proehl, guided the seminary until his death in 1900. Pastor M. Reu then began a career as eminent theologian and teacher until his death in 1943. Sons of the two founders, Pastors Max Fritschel and George Fritschel, joined the faculty about 1895 and 1904 respectively. Dr. Max Fritschel was elected president on the death of W. Proehl in 1905. An English professorship, created in 1896, was filled by W. A. Sadtler, then by G. Zeilinger.

There was little curricular change until recent years. English gradually became the language of instruction after World War I. The most notable event of President M. Fritschel's administration was the erection of the present seminary in 1916 in commemoration of the quadricentennial of the Lutheran Reformation. Gifts from the Luther Leagues of the synod made possible the erection



of a statue of Martin Luther a few years later. In 1951 a fourth dormitory unit was added.

Extensive curricular changes were made after the formation of the American Lutheran Church in 1930. The school was accredited with the Association of American Theological Schools, and the teaching staff was gradually enlarged to eight. Six of the present staff are graduates of the seminary. After the resignation of M. Fritschel there followed brief presidencies of E. Rausch and J. Bodensieck. B. Holm is now president.

The college did not change its character at Waverly, but a six-year course and a three-year normal course were offered. President Grossmann's faculty contained eminent teachers, such as Professors O. Kraushaar and J. Fritschel. A generous donor, Mr. F. Schack, provided for a larger campus and a commons, North Hall, but continued growth soon strained facilities and led to another division. A magnificent campus was acquired in Clinton and the college reopened in 1894 under President F. Richter.

The normal school at Waverly was left in charge of President Grossmann and Professor A. Engelbrecht, Sr. Illness soon forced Grossmann to retire, and brief presidencies of Pastors F. Lutz and G. Bergstraesser followed. A change in institutional character resulted when at the end of the century the parochial school gave way to the public school. Teacher education continued, but an



academy, a business department, and a school of music were organized, and coeducation was introduced. Remarkable growth ensued when Professor Engelbrecht became president in 1909. His faculty contained such eminent teachers and organizers as Professors J. Becker, H. Arnold, O. Hardwig. The curriculum was entirely revamped, the plant greatly extended, and a junior college was organized. At its peak the enrollment exceeded 250 students. In the twenties, however, the rise of the public high school began to injure such departments as the academy. The college and the junior college became competitors in teacher education and pre-theological training, and in the thirties both found it difficult to weather the impact of the depression. The college at Clinton continued to offer a six-year course modelled on the German *Gymnasium*, but found it increasingly difficult to attract students. When Professor O. Kraushaar became president in 1900 unsuccessful attempts were made to convert the school into a coeducational liberal arts college. Under President John Fritschel, the lower years were converted into an academy, but not until the twenties under President O. Proehl could the changes advocated by Kraushaar be fully accomplished. Professor M. Wiederaenders introduced teacher education as a primary function alongside of the traditional pre-theological curriculum.

In 1933 the American Lutheran Church merged

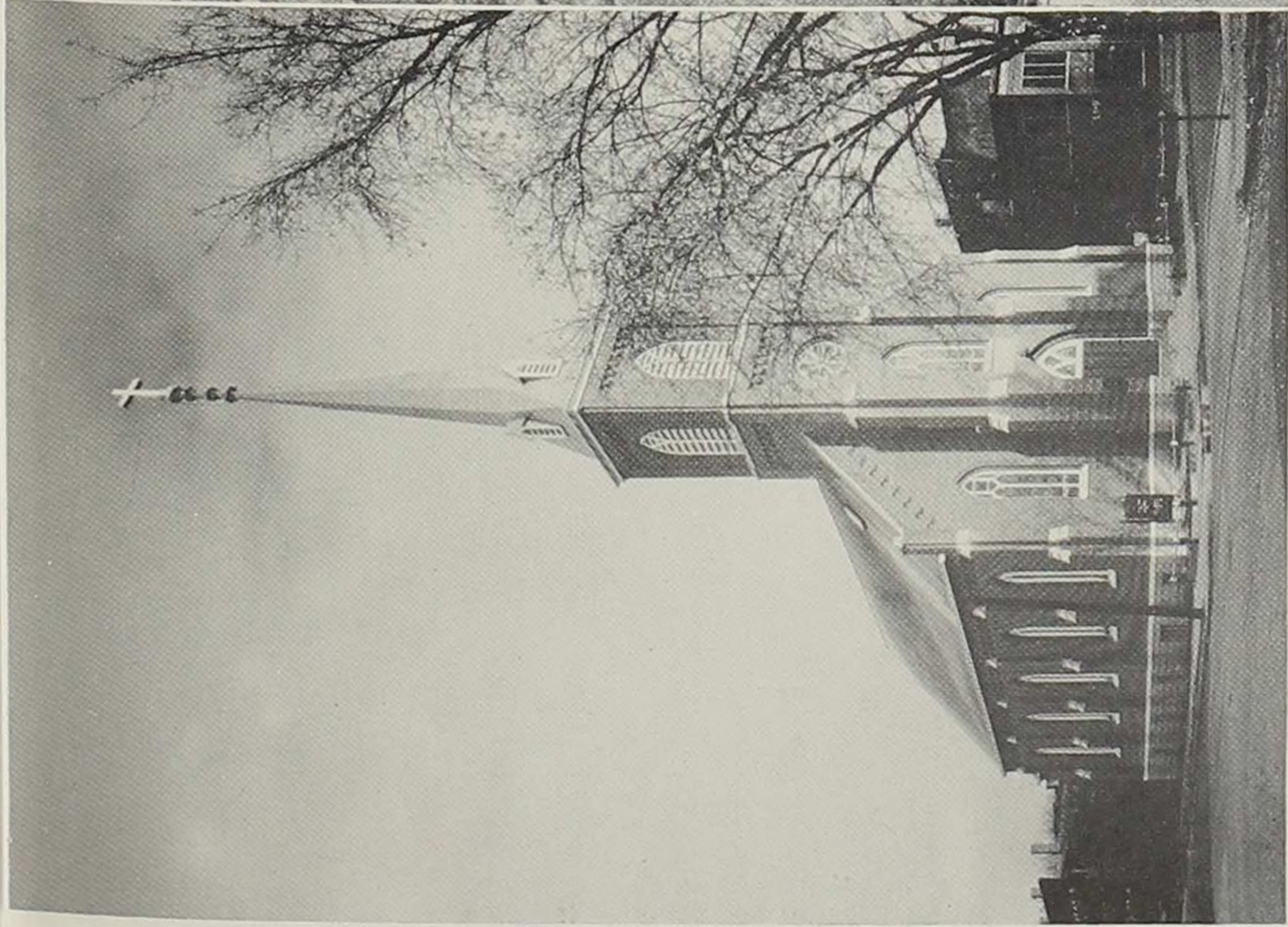


the college and the junior college at Clinton and in 1935 transferred them to Waverly. Under President E. Braulick it weathered the difficult depression years. President C. Becker, inaugurated in 1945, initiated a continuing program of expansion. The curriculum was revised and expanded, and the conversion program was completed by securing accreditation with regional and professional organizations. A building program began which is still in full progress. The enrollment, which had approximated 300 students before World War II, was more than doubled. Measures were taken to strengthen the faculty and to encourage research.

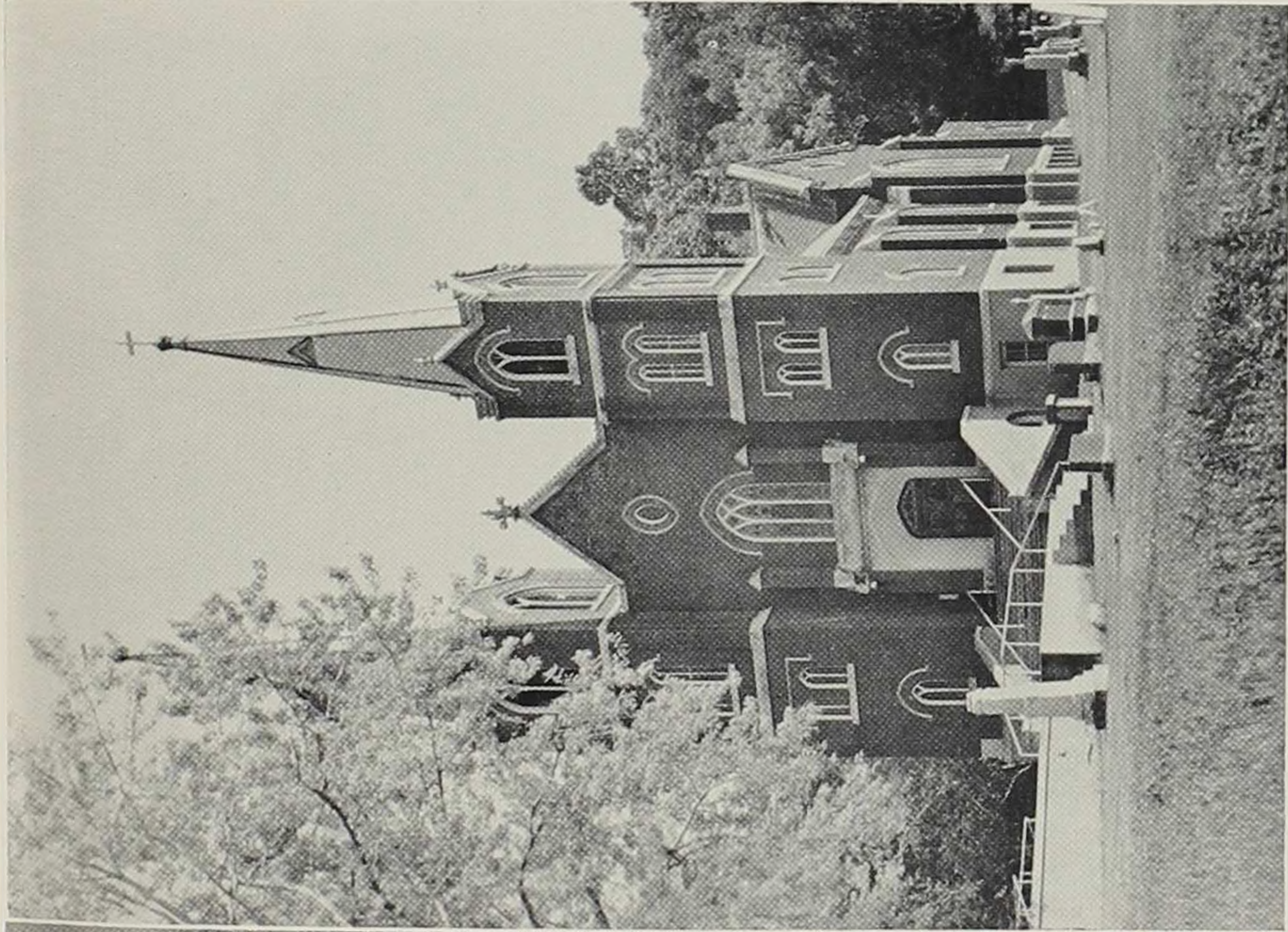
While the institutions of higher education thus were adapted to the American environment, the parochial school all but died out. Compulsory elementary education and the development of excellent public schools were major factors in bringing this about, but declining emphasis upon maintenance of the German heritage was a contributory factor. Other means of maintaining the emphasis on religious education were substituted for the parochial school. Sunday schools, which followed the American pattern, came into general use. In rural congregations children were often taken out of the public schools for a year during which the pastor gave them intensive religious instruction preparatory to confirmation. In urban congregations Saturday instruction was often provided.

GERHARD OTTERSBERG





St. John Lutheran, Dubuque



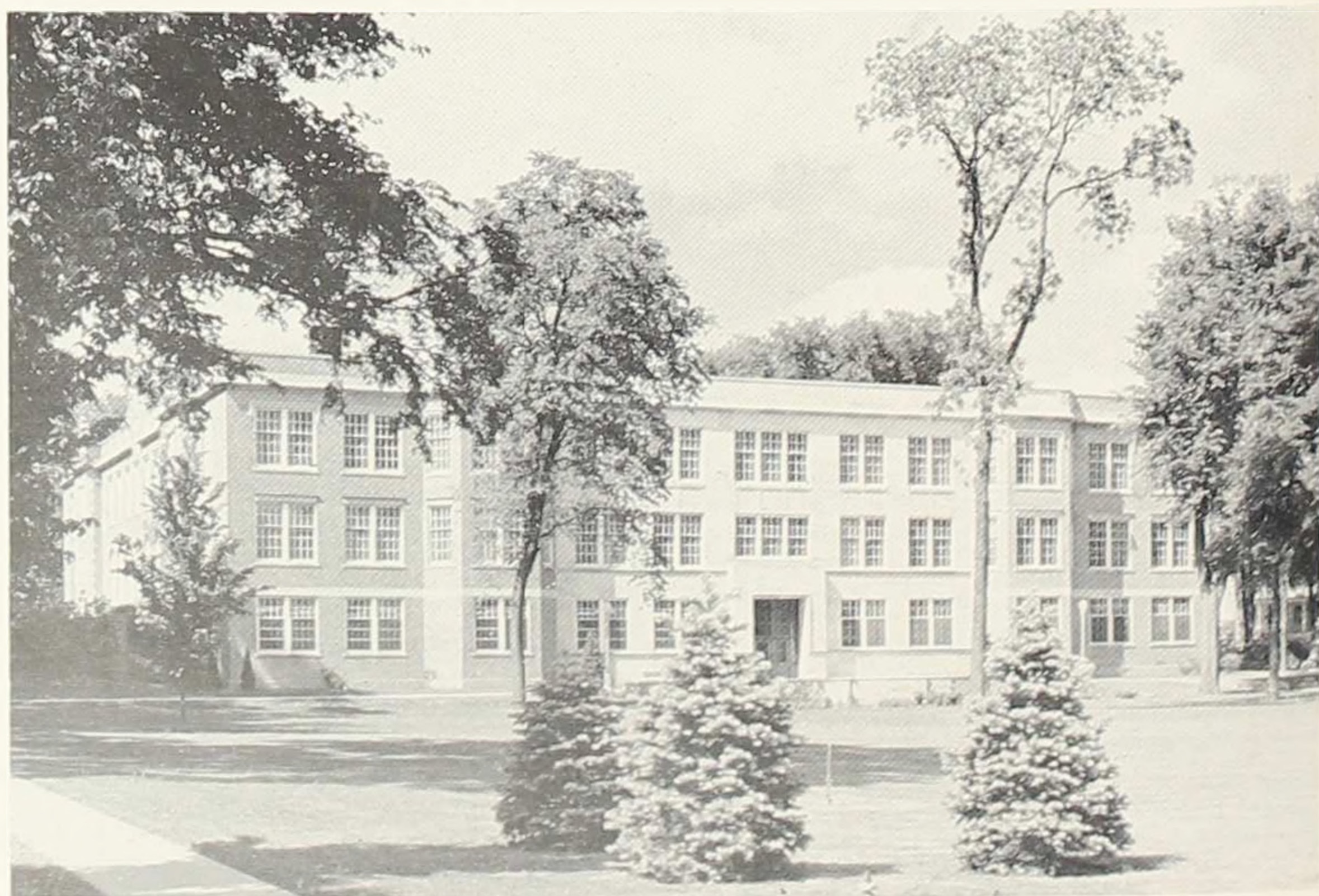
St. John Lutheran, St. Donatus



WARTBURG COLLEGE AT WAVERLY



Old Main



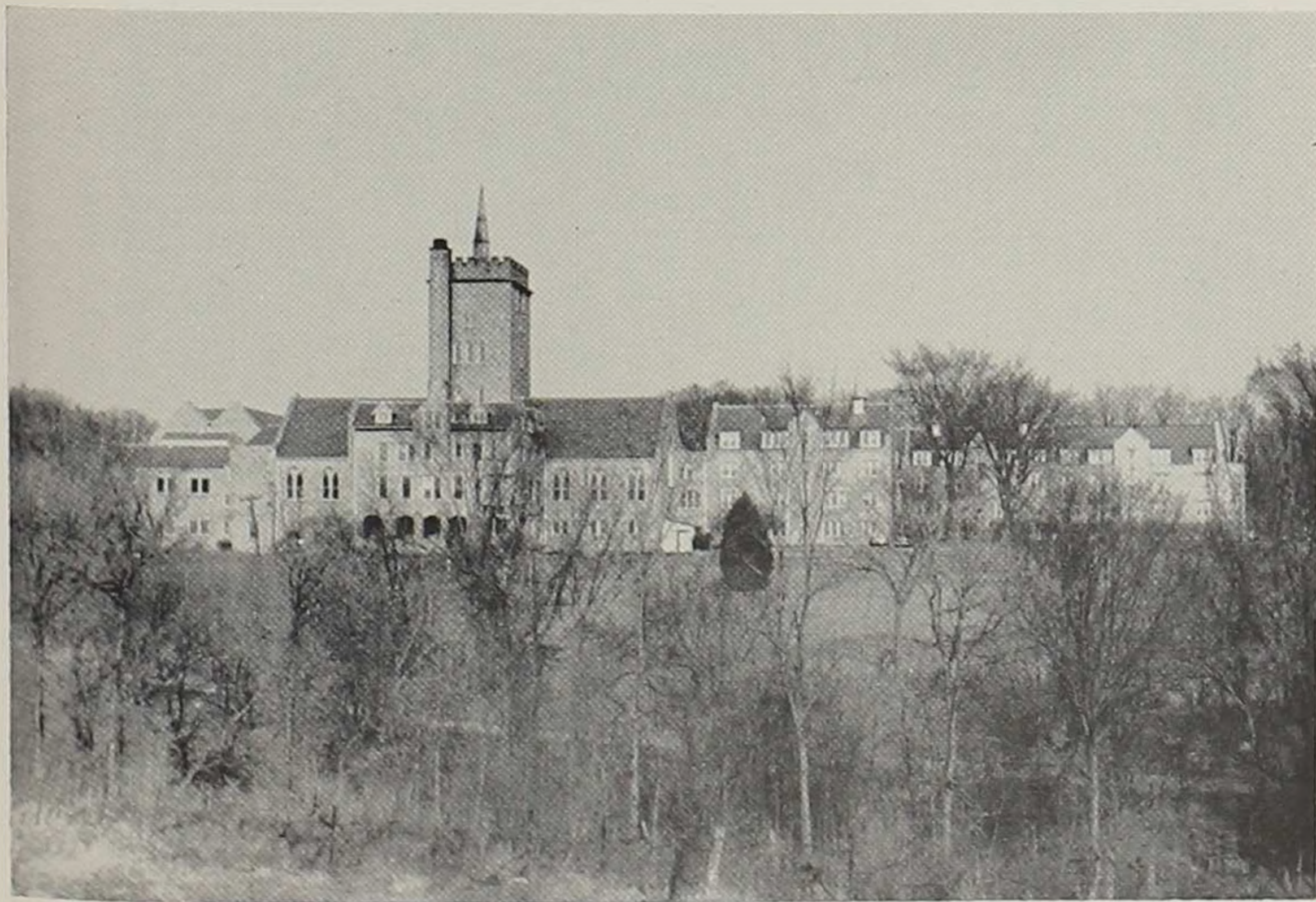
Luther Hall



WARTBURG SEMINARY AT DUBUQUE

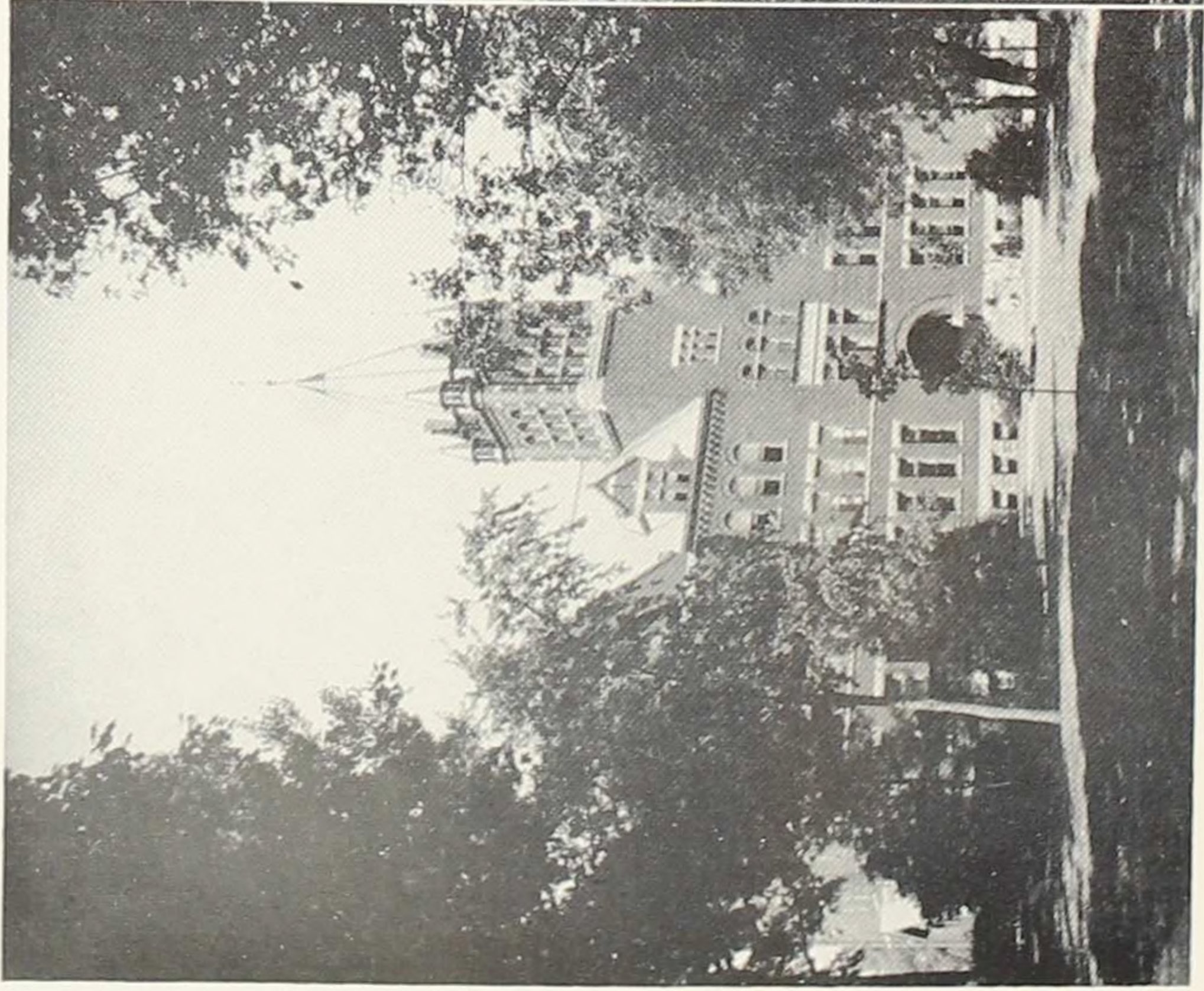


Old Wartburg at Dubuque

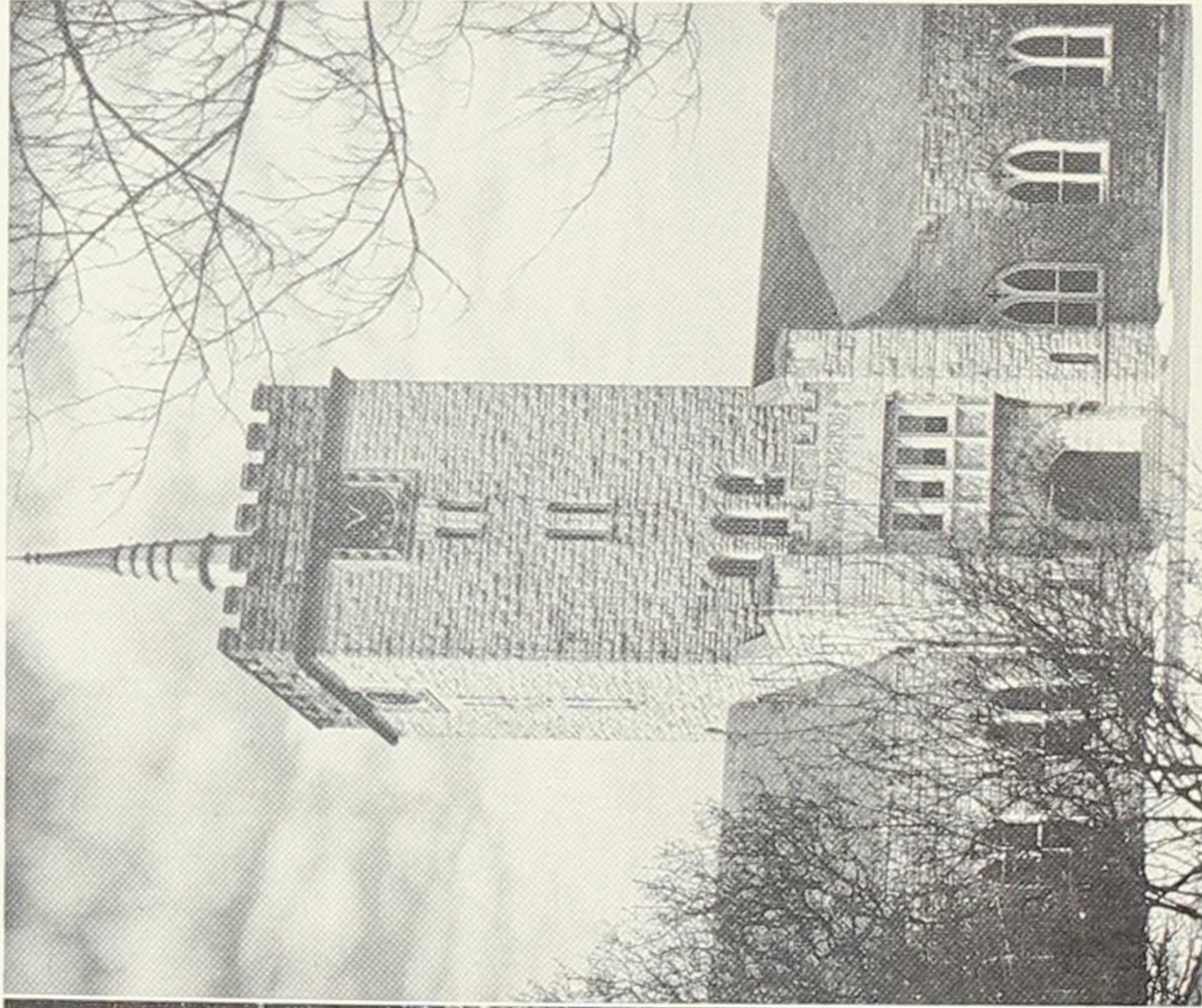


Wartburg Seminary Today





Wartburg College, Clinton



Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque



## Fruit of the Years

The year 1954 marks a double centennial: of the founding of Wartburg as a Theological Seminary (the Normal School was begun in 1852), and of the organization of the former Iowa Synod, now merged into the American Lutheran Church. What has been the fruit of the years, the religious and social impact of the former Iowa Synod and the present American Lutheran Church in Iowa?

When the American Lutheran Church (hereafter noted as A.L.C.) was born in 1930 in Toledo, Ohio, in a merger of the former Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo Synods, she brought together a total of 2,019 congregations, with 1,577 pastors, and a baptized membership of 510,153, in 33 states, the District of Columbia, and 5 Canadian provinces. The whole of the Iowa Synod in 1930 had 9 districts, 640 pastors, and about 960 congregations with 212,000 baptized members, scattered over 24 states and Canada. According to the 1926 religious census, the Ohio Synod had 24 congregations and 6,454 baptized members in the state of Iowa. These were chiefly in the northern counties of Iowa and had grown out of Ohio Synod expansion in the state of Minnesota. At the same time the Iowa Synod had 164 congregations and 42,714



baptized members in Iowa. Thus the merged Iowa District of the American Lutheran Church numbered 188 congregations and almost 50,000 members.

The first president of the American Lutheran Church was Dr. C. C. Hein, with headquarters at Columbus, Ohio. (The present president is Dr. Henry F. Schuh.) The first president of the Iowa District, A.L.C., was Dr. E. H. Rausch, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran congregation at Waverly, Iowa. In 1932 Pastor Rausch was called to the presidency of Wartburg Seminary, and Pastor H. L. Adix of Monticello, Iowa, became president of the Iowa District. Besides caring for his congregation, President Adix served the district for seven years. Pastor H. W. Siefkes of Monona, Iowa, became the third (and present) president of the district in 1939. As of January, 1943, Dr. Siefkes became the full-time district president, and in 1947 a district parsonage and office was established at 184 Graceline Boulevard, Waterloo, Iowa. Dr. Siefkes also serves as first vice-president of the American Lutheran Church, and councillor to National Lutheran Council with special interest in student service. He has been to Europe several times in the interest of Lutheran World Federation affairs.

There has been much consolidation of congregations in Iowa, coupled with a steady home mission advance. In 1952 the district numbered 178



congregations (including 16 missions), 75,130 baptized members (of whom 51,158 were confirmed), 193 pastors (including 13 professors, 7 administrative officers, 4 chaplains to the armed services, and 3 foreign missionaries), 174 Sunday Schools with 21,466 pupils; 154 Vacation Bible Schools, with 11,065 pupils. More than 2,000 young people are confirmed annually. The amount given for church work in 1952 was \$2,630,639.

During the past ten years (1943-1953) 47 new churches were built in the Iowa District, and 32 churches were extensively remodelled. This means that 44 per cent of the congregations are worshipping in completely new or remodelled structures. In this same time twelve new parish house units were erected, and at present six more are in process of construction. The many new parish houses, and the remodelling of former educational facilities, bespeaks a new interest in religious education for young and old, and illustrates the Lutheran emphasis on an educated and informed laity.

On the level of higher education, Wartburg College enrolls almost 700 students, while Wartburg Seminary numbers about 175 graduate students of theology. The total number of students trained at the college would be difficult to estimate. The seminary has sent out about 1,300 pastors and teachers to serve Lutheran churches in Iowa and elsewhere. Both Wartburg College and



Wartburg Seminary have been improving and enlarging their facilities. One of the items of special interest on the Seminary campus is the New Guinea Ethnological Museum, which illustrates the stone age culture of that land before the coming of the white man.

The Iowa District also seeks to follow its students who go to secular schools. It is especially interested in the program of Lutheran Student Service maintained by National Lutheran Council at five places: Ames, Cedar Falls, Dubuque, Des Moines, and Iowa City.

Oldest of the social service agencies in Iowa is the Lutheran Children's Home, at Waverly, Iowa, whose director today is Rev. Melvin A. Bucka. The home was founded in 1863 at Andrew, Iowa, to serve Civil War orphans and others needing its care. In 1899 it was moved to Waverly, where its facilities have been greatly expanded. It now provides institutional care, and care in foster homes, for about 175 children each year. It treats emotionally disturbed children, and offers out-patient service along this line. It is accredited by the Child Welfare League of America. A second large institution is the Lutheran Homes of Muscatine, Iowa, founded by Pastor Henry Reinemund in 1895, in a large country home presented by Mrs. Elizabeth Hershey. About 55 aged persons and about 120 children are cared for each year. Children receive care in the homes or in foster



homes. A new boys' cottage was erected last year. Pastor L. A. Stumme is the superintendent of the Muscatine Homes. The American Lutheran Church in Iowa also cooperates fully with Iowa Lutheran Welfare, a social service agency with headquarters in Des Moines and several branch offices.

A number of hospitals in Iowa are backed by Lutheran groups. The A.L.C. is especially interested in Allen Memorial Hospital at Waterloo, and in the Lutheran Hospital at Fort Dodge. The number of homes for the aged has been increasing. Largest of these is the magnificent Good Samaritan Home (and hospital) at Mason City, Pastor E. M. Mueller, superintendent. Other Lutheran homes for the aged are found at Dubuque, Strawberry Point, and West Union.

Among the lay leaders of the Iowa Synod and the A.L.C. in Iowa the following might be mentioned: Gottlob Amman, the philanthropic founder of Frankenhilf, who then moved to Iowa to help found St. Sebald; F. Schack, who gave much of the ground and collected considerable sums for the placement of the college at Waverly; Professor O. C. Hardwig, who edited the *Wartburg Hymnal*; William Graening, long-time treasurer of the Iowa District, both before and after the merger into the A.L.C.; Fred Hagemann, who served as official attorney for the American Lutheran Church; Dr. C. H. Graening, physician and sur-



geon of Waverly, member and chairman of the Board of Christian Higher Education, both in the Iowa Synod and later in the A.L.C.; Ed Engelbrecht, banker of Waverly, and member of the Board of Trustees of the A.L.C.; Herbert Engelbrecht, assistant to the president at Wartburg College, councillor to National Lutheran Council, and formerly one of the vice-presidents of the A.L.C.; the Hon. Judge Henry Graven of Greene, Iowa, United States District Judge, and chairman of the Board of Pensions of the A.L.C. Because of his long interest in giving security to the pastors upon their retirement, Judge Graven became the originator of the A.L.C. contributory pension plan. Walter Voecks is head of the Lutheran Mutual at Waverly. Founded in 1879 as a mutual aid society, this was reorganized in 1938 as an old line type life insurance company for all Lutherans.

As the first century of her existence becomes history, the American Lutheran Church in Iowa displays a healthy life. She has remained theologically conservative, definitely Lutheran, but irenic and approachable. She has enjoyed remarkable growth in numbers, equipment, and influence. Her horizons have been expanding tremendously in education and social service. She does her full part in helping to support the foreign mission work of the A.L.C., and is happy to have furnished no less than eight workers at present on the New Guinea field — three pastors, four lay workers,



and one doctor. She shares in the fine youth program of the A.L.C. and offers leadership training and Bible camp adventure to her young people.

In the matter of inter-church relationships, the American Lutheran Church is in fellowship with four other Midwestern Lutheran groups in the American Lutheran Conference. She shares in the common enterprise of two-thirds of the Lutherans of America in the National Lutheran Council, which has a number of service divisions operating in such fields as home missions, student service, Lutheran world relief, and service to those in the armed forces. She holds membership in the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Professor J. Bodensieck of Wartburg Seminary returned in 1954 from three terms (six years) of service in Europe. He went originally as Protestant liaison representative (United States Military Government of Germany) to the Protestant churches of Germany. On subsequent assignments he served Lutheran churches of Europe as Theological Commissioner of the United States National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation. Mrs. Bodensieck initiated the spiritual ministry among displaced persons in the British Zone of Germany in 1946-1947, and later served for two years each in Vienna and Berlin as representative of the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation in the administration of refugee and relief work.



Although the merger of the American Lutheran Church is less than twenty-five years old, as these lines are being written a new merger is in process of negotiation between four of the five members of the American Lutheran Conference. This merger involves the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Report of the Joint Union Committee to the conventions of the negotiating bodies has just been published. It seems likely that the merger will be consummated before 1960. If present plans materialize, the new Iowa District of the merged church will cover the state of Iowa, and will boast 392 congregations with some 147,000 members.

As the members of the American Lutheran Church in Iowa celebrate the centennial of the former Iowa Synod, and of the founding of Wartburg Theological Seminary in 1954, they will look back with gratitude to Almighty God for the contribution which their church was able to make toward the good life in the state of Iowa and elsewhere. But they will also look forward with confidence, assured that greater and nobler service lies ahead.

"Grow old along with me,  
The best is yet to be. . . ."

ALBERT A. JAGNOW



## United Lutheran Synod in Iowa

In 1848 a young Illinois minister tucked a Bible into his saddlebag and crossed the Mississippi to scour the country for Lutherans and gather them into congregations as a shepherd would gather his flocks. This man was the Rev. Jacob Scherer, who with others pioneered what is known today in its centennial year as the United Lutheran Synod in Iowa. This is the Iowa organization of the United Lutheran Church in America, the largest Lutheran body in the nation.

Lutheranism in America owes an incalculable debt to Heinrich Melchior Muhlenberg, a plucky German who came to the United States in 1742, at the age of thirty-one. Muhlenberg, who is usually called the "Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America," focused his activity in the Philadelphia area, where he became pastor of three churches. His spirited leadership soon won him wide recognition. He defied the barriers of poverty, bad roads, and unbridged rivers — so discouraging to the overtaxed clergy of that day. He learned to speak Swedish and Dutch, and he found time to help these nationalities as well as his own parishioners, most of whom were German.

Founder of one of the greatest of all American



colonial families, Muhlenberg by dint of great energy and gifted insight kept on making Lutherans aware of their religious heritage when they were insidiously tempted to compromise it. In 1748 he organized what is now the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the first Lutheran synod in point of time to be formed in America. Muhlenberg lived until 1787 and great was his reward for the forty-five strenuous years he devoted to the Lutheran and American causes. His motto was: "The Church must be planted."

In 1820 a national Lutheran body — the General Synod — was organized. Iowa churches became affiliated with the General Synod in 1869. In 1918 a further significant step was taken by the formation of the United Lutheran Church in America, with national headquarters at Philadelphia, when the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South were merged.

The structure of the U.L.C.A. may be compared with a democracy. It begins with the individual who joins with others to comprise a congregation, with a pastor "called" as leader. The congregations are banded together into synods, headed by officers elected by lay and pastoral representatives of all the congregations.

On the national level the United Lutheran Church in America with its thirty-four member synods can be compared, in some respects at least,



with our federal government, for it has both national and international programs of assistance, education, and welfare. The membership of 2,143,023 in the U.L.C.A. is set out in 4,304 congregations, located in 44 states, seven Canadian provinces, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Hawaii. There are 4,158 ministers, and church property is valued at \$349,132,793.

The 1954 budget of the United Lutheran Church in America is \$6,007,590. The largest single expenditure nationally is for new mission churches in the United States — churches which must be helped through difficult times or early years until they can be self supporting. The 1954 budget calls for an expenditure of \$2,206,500 for mission churches, 696 of them — an expenditure clearly regarded as an investment, and in which Iowa shares.

Foreign missionary work was begun about the time a small group of ministers effected an organization in Iowa. Today the U.L.C.A. has missions in Argentina, British Guiana, India, Japan, Liberia, Hong Kong, and — the newest field — Malaya. A key to the growth of Lutheran missions overseas is found in the fact that there are more than twice as many native ordained pastors as there are American pastors, serving the 260,251 members in the areas mentioned.

The United Lutheran Church in America also is strong in education and social work, with twelve



colleges in this country, one in Canada, and one in India; and thirty-one child care institutions and agencies. The United Lutheran Synod of Iowa helps support one of these — the Lutheran Welfare Society of Iowa, with offices in Des Moines. The U.L.C.A. also assumes responsibility for the care of the aged and for the training of youth. It has thirty-six homes for the aged, and conducts fifty-three summer camps and schools for youth, including the Luther League of Iowa Camp at Lake Okoboji.

This, then, is the United Lutheran Church in America, which traces its history to a group of thirty led by Heinrich Melchior Muhlenberg in 1748. Among those thirty was Balthasar Beil, an ancestor of Dr. Alfred J. Beil of Des Moines, now president of the United Lutheran Synod in Iowa.

It was in 1848, just 100 years after Muhlenberg's historic Philadelphia meeting, that Rev. Jacob Scherer was commissioned to plant the Lutheran Church in Iowa. A minister and teacher in Illinois, Scherer learned that the Lutheran Synod of Illinois wanted a man to band Iowa Lutherans together into churches. He volunteered to visit these widely scattered settlers, many of whom were lonely German immigrants who could not speak English.

It was to these homes that Jacob Scherer came, through storm and flood, through bitter cold and blistering heat. He consoled. He advised. He



planted the church. During his first year of exploration he organized the first English Lutheran Church in Iowa, at Douds in Lick Creek Township, Van Buren County. Organization began in 1848, and the constitution was adopted on October 20, 1849, with twenty-nine persons signing the charter roll. The church, active today with a congregation of fifty-nine members, was named Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church.

A record of the day's events, after adoption of the constitution, shows that the collection totaled \$4.60, of which 30 cents was spent for a "church book," probably the one in which the constitution was written; the remainder was given to Scherer. On January 25, 1851, the congregation voted to buy one acre of land on which to build a log cabin church. The "12 to 15 members there" voted that the house, among other things, "shall be 11 feet high," and that it "shall have but one door and that a double door." Scherer lived to see this first church completed, but his health was broken by the rigors of the missionary life; he died of typhoid fever in October, 1851, at the age of thirty-five. The log cabin later burned, and the present church building was completed in 1875.

The second U.L.C.A. church in Iowa was Salem Lutheran, a rural church near Princeton, in 1852. The congregation was dissolved in 1902, after most of the Salem members began attending Zion Lutheran in Princeton.



On February 10, 1854, Pastors G. W. Schaeffer, F. R. Sherer, J. D. Schaeffer, and D. Tulles met with Judge Joseph Brobst at Knoxville to organize the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Iowa. This meeting was the culmination of six years of exploration by the missionaries, under hardships that cost the first of these men — Jacob Scherer — his life. Brobst served as chairman of the meeting, Pastor Schaeffer as synod president in 1855, Pastor Sherer as treasurer, and Pastor Schaeffer as secretary.

The formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa helped in the organization of new churches. Thus, the First Lutheran at Iowa City and Trinity Lutheran at Tipton were founded in 1855; both First Lutheran at Fairfield and St. John's Lutheran at Ely were established in 1856.

Many early Lutheran services in Iowa City were conducted on the steps of Old Capitol. The congregation was organized on April 22, 1855, with thirty-four members. A lot was purchased and a "neat house of worship" erected in 1858-1859 on the corner of Market and Dubuque streets. This frame building later was remodeled into apartments and moved to another location. A new church was built in 1894.

The founder of the Iowa City church was the Rev. H. F. Ealy, the first man to be ordained by the Iowa Synod. Ealy's name appears frequently in the records of early Iowa churches. From Iowa



City, Missionary Ealy went to Ely in 1855, where Lutherans had been meeting in the Banner Valley schoolhouse, east of the community.

In February, 1856, Ealy organized the congregation as St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ely. The first St. John's church was erected on the corner of the Christopher Fuhrmeister farm in Johnson County. In 1886 the congregation bought a nearby Methodist Church for \$250. This housed the congregation until a new church was completed in 1950, and the old church and pews were sold — for \$250.

During the 1850's many young men were leaving the seminaries before graduation to become missionaries. Part of their task was to gather statistics on the number and the location of Lutherans, a service valuable to the national organization. They frequently helped organize new churches. To aid those who had not completed their educations, the Iowa Synod encouraged self-education by assigning the pastors topics — such as "The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century" to read and discuss at the next convention.

Among these early Iowa Synod pastors was Andrew Axline, a college graduate, who came to Fairfield from Ohio in the summer of 1856 to teach school. Axline was reared as a Lutheran and licensed to preach before leaving Ohio.

That same summer Franklin Huntzinger, a miller, came to Fairfield with his family from



Pennsylvania. Huntzinger was deeply concerned because there was no Lutheran Church in the community. Soon schoolteacher Axline called on the Huntzinger family. During this visit the Huntzingers learned Axline was licensed to preach. Under Axline's leadership, a Lutheran congregation was organized in the Huntzinger home in the fall of 1856. As the congregation grew, services were conducted first in a store and later in the courthouse. Axline's ordination followed, and he was installed as the Fairfield pastor in 1857. Huntzinger deeded the ground where his first mill stood for a church. A year later a church was completed on the site, and Fairfield's main streets replaced the foot paths which led to the mill door.

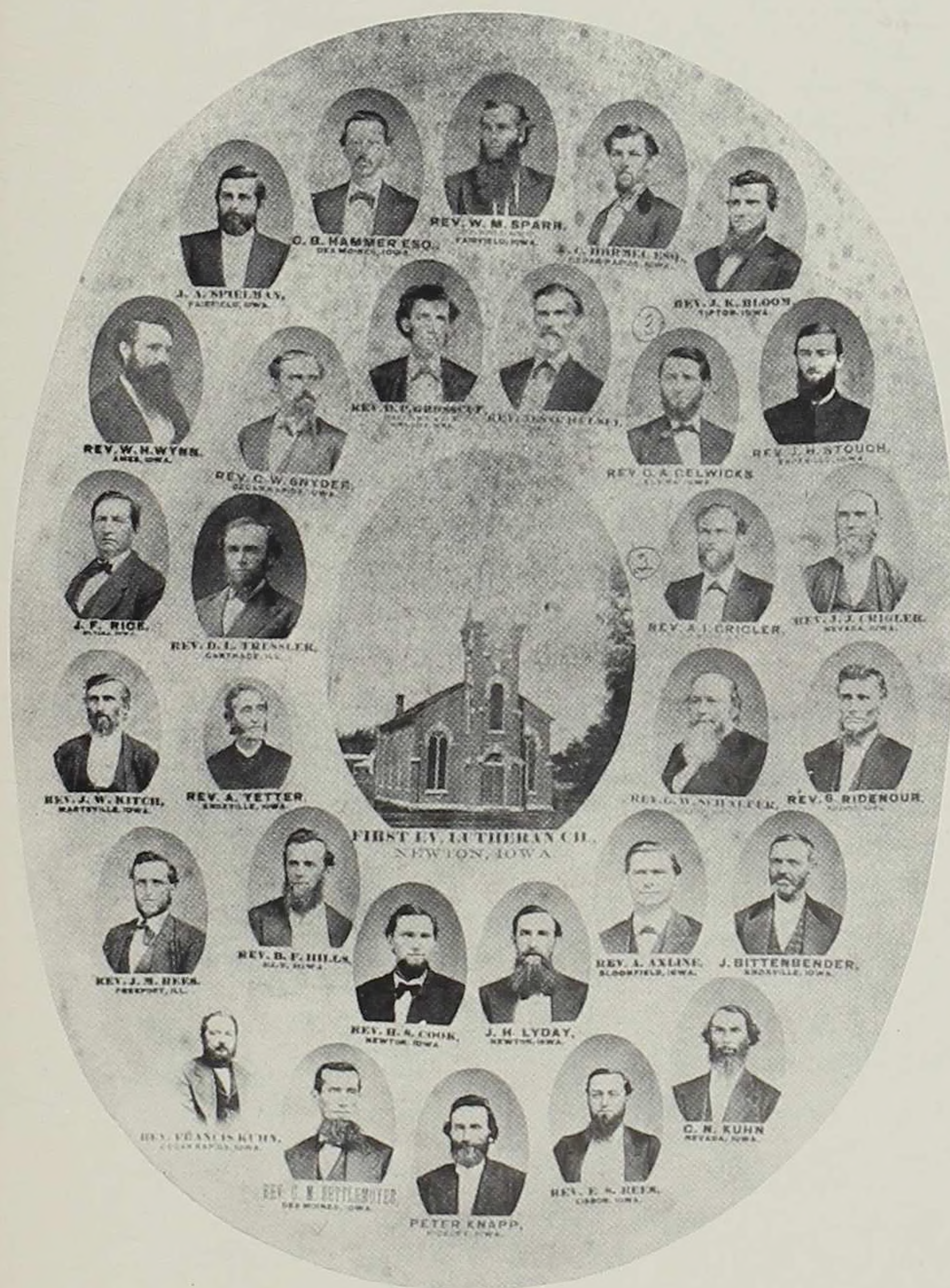
In addition to serving as a pastor, Axline founded Axline Academy and managed Fairfield University, a private school until 1863, when it was reorganized as Fairfield College. In 1861 Axline left Fairfield to serve as Chaplain of the Second Iowa Regiment during the Civil War. He later returned to his school and church duties, remaining in Fairfield until 1874. Pastor Axline was president of the Iowa Synod in 1861, 1862, and 1866, though serving in the Union army part of the time.

*Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society*

Trinity Lutheran Church at Tipton was organized on August 12, 1855, by a missionary named



MEMBERS OF EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD  
OF IOWA



20th Convention Convened at Newton, August 25-31, 1874



EVANGELISM — CHURCH GROWTH



Synodical Committee at St. Mark's, Dubuque



Palm Sunday Accessions at St. John's, Des Moines



MISSIONS — CHURCH GROWTH



Established Congregations Transfer Members



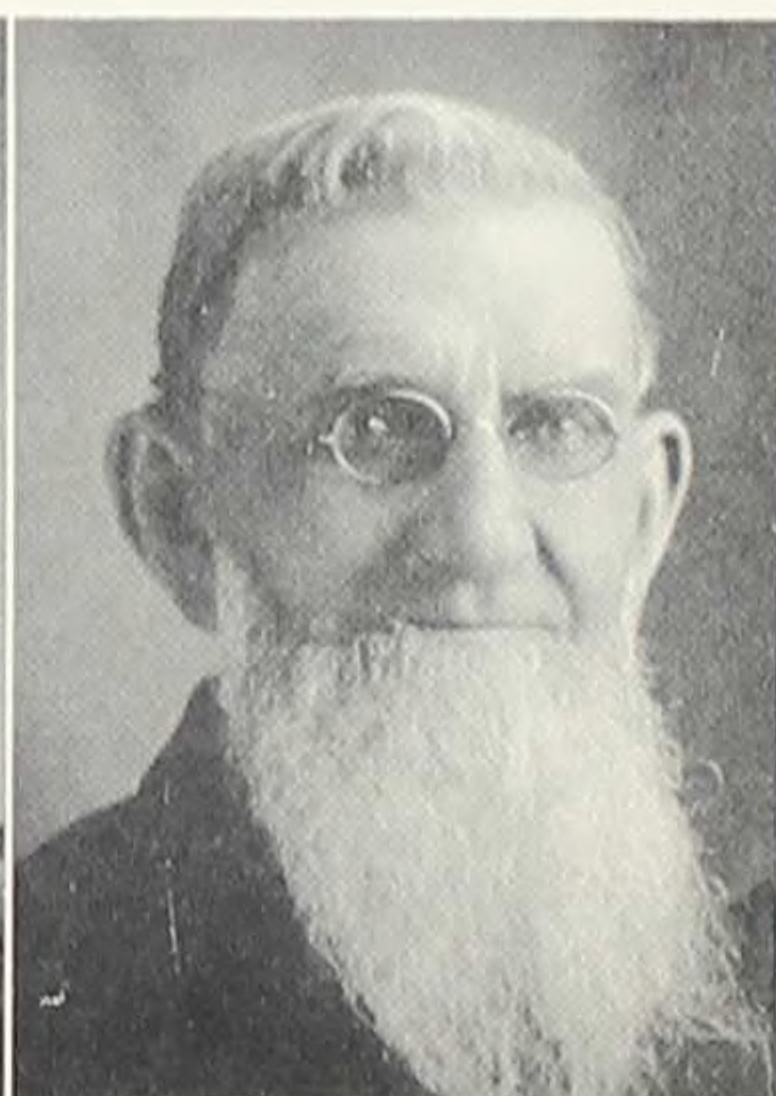
New Mission Miracle at Eldridge



# HISTORIC CHURCH LEADERS



MRS. ELIZA STOVER



REV. J. K. BLOOM



SISTER SOPHIA JEPSON

## OFFICERS OF UNITED LUTHERAN SYNOD IN IOWA



REV. ALFRED J. BEIL  
President  
Des Moines

REV. RALPH ECKARD  
Secretary  
Newton

JOHN BERGER  
Treasurer  
Cedar Rapids

REV. MARVIN SUHR  
Vice-President  
Webster City



Solomon Ritz. The first auxiliary of the Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society was established in Trinity's white frame parsonage in 1875 by the Rev. J. K. Bloom. This Lutheran pastor had been impressed by a Methodist Women's Missionary convention and he urged the women of his congregation to create a similar society. By the close of 1875, the Iowa Synod had four auxiliaries, with seventy members, who contributed about \$58 that year.

Mrs. Laura Snyder of Cedar Rapids, first state president of the auxiliary, was sent by the Iowa Synod to the General Synod meeting at Carthage, Illinois, in 1877, to ask national recognition and acceptance of the organization.

Impressed by the enthusiasm of the Iowa group, the General Synod appointed a minister to organize the national society, and called a convention to meet in June, 1879, in Canton, Ohio. A new era opened when 116 persons — mostly ministers — approved the organization of the General Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of the General Synod, with an auxiliary in every congregation. In 1880, the Society sent out its first foreign missionary — to India.

Today the Woman's Missionary Society is one of the most active and important units in the entire United Lutheran Church. During 1953 its 111,488 active members raised \$105,189 nationally for such causes as missions, ministers' pension fund,



deaconess' work, and education. The Society has 3,425 active Iowa members who raised \$18,000 in 1953.

### *Luther League*

Another vital organization of the United Lutheran Church is the Luther League, or youth group. The Iowa Synod was caught up in a fever that swept most American denominations in the late nineteenth century to organize their youths into Christian Endeavor societies.

By the 1890's the average individual Lutheran church was tending to consolidate all its youth societies into a Luther League. These leagues were organized into state or district leagues, and these in turn were affiliated with the National Luther League. In states so organized the work crossed all synodical lines, combining Danish, Swedish, German, and English Lutheran youth into one state or district League. Efforts to initiate a state Luther League were begun by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa in 1893.

Such a group was first organized in 1897, and again in 1904, but it failed initially as a cooperative state-wide venture. Among the leaders in this adventure was Dr. William H. Blancke, of Davenport, educator and pastor for fifty years. Before his retirement from the ministry in 1937, Dr. Blancke wrote a history of the League movement. Of the 1904 convention in Fort Dodge, he said:



"At this convention there were representatives from Swedish, Danish, German, Norwegian and English-speaking Lutheran Churches present and participating." Dr. Blancke blamed the failure of the joint League plan on "suspicion and misunderstanding" among the church groups. Nationally, the Luther League of the United Lutheran Church in America had 30,610 members ranging in age from 12 to 20 and above. Membership in Iowa in 1953 was 682.

One of the most popular Luther League projects in Iowa is the week-long summer camp at Lake Okoboji. The Iowa Synod rents the camp for a program combining campfires, cruises, and Christianity. It gives young people a chance to meet national and state church leaders, and to do some leading themselves. According to one leader: "Summer church camps do more to draw young people into full-time church careers than any other single factor."

### *The Brotherhood*

The third major organization of the U.L.C.A. is the Men's Brotherhood, founded in Iowa in 1912, and organized nationally in 1918. Although smallest in membership of the three auxiliary organizations, the Brotherhood takes the leadership in several important church functions, as follows: it helps to conduct the Every-Member Canvass for financial pledges in most churches, sponsors



Boy Scout troops and athletic teams, provides the men for performing duties ranging from ushering to repair work, and sponsors regular dinner meetings and programs. The Brotherhood is open to all men of the congregation. Its national membership is 31,864. In Iowa it numbers 486.

### *The Iowa Synod and Education*

One of the first concerns of the Iowa Synod was the establishment of a college in Iowa. In a synod meeting held at Knoxville on May 24, 1855, the delegates approved a resolution to establish "an institution for the education of youth" to be called "Central College of Iowa." The resolution expressed concern for the fact that "God in His providence is now throwing a very large number of Lutherans from the Eastern states into Iowa," and suggested that the college be located at Fort Des Moines if possible, thus making it the "most western college in the United States." The minutes also reported the selection of the Rev. Reuben Weiser of Pennsylvania as college president.

At the annual meeting in May, 1856, President Weiser reported that a building had been started on "college hill" west of Fort Des Moines, and that residents of Iowa's future capital city had subscribed \$10,000 toward the building fund. The cornerstone was laid following the meeting on May 21. Unfortunately, the Panic of 1857 created difficult building problems.



At the state conventions of 1858 and 1859, church executives presented a gloomy picture. The college was unable to meet its debts, church memberships were falling, and financial strength was waning. Ministers were receiving little or no salary. Annual salaries at the time ranged anywhere from \$49 to \$800, but eight of the ten salaries reported in 1859 were under \$500. In 1860 Central College was sold to the Baptists of Iowa. In the early 1900's the buildings and grounds were sold to the Catholic Church. Dowling High School is located where Central College stood.

The U.L.C.A. then purchased a school at Albion from the Marshall County High School Company, with the intention of making it over into a theological seminary; but lost this school, called Iowa Lutheran College, in 1870. One reason the synod probably did not hold on was that Carthage College was founded in Carthage, Illinois, that year, and it was felt this school would serve the educational needs of Iowa.

Thus, while there is no U.L.C.A. college in Iowa today, Iowa Synod gives its support to the general educational program of the U.L.C.A. by including Carthage College and Central Seminary at Fremont, Nebraska, in its annual budget. In 1954 this amounted to \$16,500 for Carthage and \$10,755 for Central.

In performing its educational work, the Iowa Synod is one of six Iowa Lutheran bodies of the



National Lutheran Council which cooperates in sponsoring Lutheran student organizations at four non-Lutheran colleges in Iowa: Iowa State College, the State University of Iowa, Drake University, and Iowa State Teachers College.

### *Deaconess Training Program*

Another important phase of the church in education is the deaconess training program. A deaconess may serve as a social worker in a single congregation, do nursing in a Lutheran institution if she is a trained nurse, teach, or do foreign mission work. A deaconess carries the title of "sister." She may marry, but she relinquishes her deaconess post when she does.

This new field of Lutheran work opened more than a century ago when Dr. William A. Passavant observed the work of deaconesses in Europe and brought the idea to America. The U.L.C.A. has two deaconess motherhouses, or training schools, in Philadelphia and Baltimore.

One of the earliest leaders in the deaconess program was a Des Moines woman, Sophia Jepson, now retired. Sister Sophia was consecrated in 1895, and was directing sister of the Baltimore motherhouse from 1903 to 1932. Another Des Moines woman, now a deaconess serving an Akron, Ohio, church is Sister Jane Wirt. Sister Harriet M. Franklin, formerly of Fairport, Iowa, now is on the staff of the Baltimore motherhouse.



The growth of the Iowa Synod of the U.L.C.A. has been steady, with a great spurt in membership over the last ten years. In 1860 there were 45 churches and 1,179 members in Iowa, but the number of churches dropped to 27 by 1879, with 1,191 members. In 1903, the synod had a baptized membership of 3,278. By 1923 the baptized membership had risen to 9,565, and by 1933 it had almost doubled — 18,862. Today the Iowa Synod has 34,044 baptized members — representing a gain of more than 10,000 in the last ten years — and 37 churches served by 41 pastors. There are 19 other ministers on the synodical roll serving in other capacities. The largest congregation in the Iowa Synod is that of St. John's in Des Moines, with a baptized membership of 6,159.

The 1954 budget for the synod is \$159,173. The giving allotment per adult member now stands at \$10.32. Much of the United Lutheran Church growth both in Iowa and the nation is accomplished through mission churches organized in unchurched areas through the combined efforts of lay leaders and synodical officers.

Two mission churches were organized in Iowa in 1953: St. Matthew Church at Davenport, with 72 adult charter members; and Faith Church at Eldridge, with 234 adult charter members. The newest mission congregation is that of St. James Church at Bettendorf, organized on March 7, 1954, with 106 adult members. It is being called



the "centennial church" because it was taken into membership at the Synod's state-wide centennial convention at Davenport in May of that year. Other areas now being considered as possible locations for mission churches are Urbandale (northwest Des Moines), Cedar Rapids, and Camanche. All three of the missions organized during 1953-1954 have pastors and have begun their own building programs. They will be partly supported by the Board of American Missions of the U.L.C.A. and partly by the Iowa Synod until the congregations can manage alone.

Although the Iowa Synod does not have a home for the aged in Iowa, it helps in the support of the Tabitha Home, a residence for the aged and for homeless children, located at Lincoln, Nebraska. The synod also helps to support the Nachusa Lutheran Home for Children at Nachusa, Illinois.

Both the Iowa Synod and its parent organization — the U.L.C.A. — maintain the vital interests of Christianity by activity in national as well as international interdenominational organizations. The U.L.C.A. is a member of the National Lutheran Council, the National Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Council of Churches. It confidently cooperates with these and other powerful church alliances in the spread of the Gospel.

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