

“Der Friedensbote”; “Magazin für Evangelische Theologie und Kirche”; “Messenger of Peace”; “Evangelischelr Kalender”; “Evangelical Year-book”: “Lektionsblatt für Evangelische Sonntagschulen”: “Christliche<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>Kinderzeitung”: “Evangelical Companion”; Deutsch-Amerikanischer Jugendfreund” : “Unsere Kleinen”; “The Children’s Comrade.”

The Synod supports nine pastors, five women and three unmarried lady missionaries in the Central Provinces of India: besides these 67 native helpers and 114 teachers are engaged in this mission work.

Though the Synod has, up to the present time, carried on its work almost exclusively in the German language, it is becoming more apparent every day that it must avail itself of the English language, in order to continue the work so nobly begun by the founders, that our posterity, though they may lose the language of their ancestors, may be brought up in their faith.

We cherish the hope that the German Evangelical Synod of North America may continue in the enjoyment of the blessings of the Almighty God in the future as in the past, and succeed in the accomplishment of all the duties that may present themselves, and show still greater results in the second half century of its history than in the first, all in compliance with the apostolic admonition: “Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all.” Eph. 4:1-6.

## **Brief History of the German Evangelical Synod of North America.**

Taken from the Appendix of the Evangelical Catechism, German and English on Parallel Pages, Eden Publishing House, Copyright 1896

On the 15th day of October, 1840, six clergymen assembled in Gravois Settlement, Mo. They came in response to an invitation extended by Rev. L. E. Nollau, who was then in charge of a small German congregation at that place. The place of meeting was a little log church of the most primitive construction. This was destined to be the cradle of the German Evangelical Synod of North America, an organization which, in the providence of God was to contribute much toward making religion and conscience a constant active force, first in St. Louis, Mo., and vicinity, and later on to extend its activity throughout the length and breadth of the land, wielding a potent influence as a spiritual and moral power in the American Commonwealth. St. Louis was then a small town of 11,000 inhabitants, but, if we are to believe the chronologists, it made up for its size in wickedness. Skepticism and antagonism to all things pertaining to Church and Christianity prevailed among a certain class of Germans, who had come to the “Land of Freedom,” and prided themselves in having cut loose from God and the Church, but were fettered hand and foot by the evil passions in their hearts.

It was to these people that missionaries were sent from Basel, Switzerland, and Barmen, Germany. The first men to bring the Gospel to the Germans, living in and near St. Louis, Mo., which was then considered as being in the “Far West” were Rev. G. W. Wall, Rev. Joseph Rieger, Rev. J. J. Riess and Rev. Philip Jacob Heyer. These pioneers were at work in the cause of their Master as early as 1836, Rev. Riess and Rev. Heyer still earlier. Later on others came to assist in the work, Rev. L. E. Nollau and Rev. Hermann Garlichs in 1837, the latter laboring at Femme Osage, Mo., and vicinity. Add to these Rev. Carl Ludwig Dauber, who had charge of a congregation at Quincy, Ill., and Rev. John Gerber, and we have the founders of the German Evangelical Synod of North America. Rev. Joseph Rieger and Rev. John Gerber were abroad at the time of the organization, but signed the protocol of the conference immediately upon their return. The following is the Article of Confession which these fathers have laid as a foundation on which they built, and on which the entire structure of the Evangelical Synod now rests, viz.:

“The German Evangelical Synod of North America, as a part of the Evangelical Church, defines the term ‘Evangelical Church’ as denoting that branch of the Christian Church which acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the Word of God, the sole and infallible guide of faith and life, and accepts the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as given in the symbolic books of the Lutheran and the Reformed Church, the most important being: The Augsburg Confession, Luther’s and the Heidelberg Catechisms, in so far as they agree; but where they disagree the German Evangelical Synod of North America adheres strictly to the passages of Holy Scriptures bearing on the subject, and avails itself of the liberty of conscience prevailing in the Evangelical Church.”

The foundation of the new organization was well laid, for it rests firmly on the Word of God, and this Word is not to be interpreted arbitrarily, but in accordance with the doctrine and precepts as enunciated in the Augsburg Confession, Luther’s Small Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism. These are the chief books on doctrine of the Evangelical Church. These books do not fully agree on all points of doctrine, but the Evangelical Church maintains that the points of difference are not sufficiently grave to justify a separation of the Lutheran and the Reformed Church, and advocate a common basis on which these may meet. In view of the fact that there is much on which both churches agree, and so little on which they disagree, the Evangelical Church advocates union of these two branches. It grants liberty of conscience in the interpretation of those passages of Scripture, on which they base their diverging views; provided, however, that they agree with either the Lutheran or the Reformed doctrine. This is done in the expectation, that as far as the Lutheran and the Reformed Church is concerned, the prayer of the Savior may become a reality, “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” John 17:21.

These principles found favor with many earnest Christian men and women, who had become wearied and disgusted with the spirit of hostility, which so often prevailed between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches, and they gladly welcomed the peace policy of the “Evangelical Association of the West,” as the Synod was then called. To the early pioneers of the Synod, deserving honorable mention, we add the pastors: A. Baltzer, later President of the Synod for many years, and a very potent factor in the development of this organization, and Prof. A. Irion, who was for many years president of the theological seminary of the Synod.

The additions to the Synod were, however, not restricted to individual pastors and churches that were occasionally added to the organization. Four distinct church organizations presented themselves for admission at different times during the first half century of the Synod’s existence. The first asking admission was the “German Evangelical Church Association of Ohio.” This Association was received in 1858 at Cincinnati, Ohio. Two years later a still greater addition was made to the “Association of the West” at Mansfield, Ohio, when the “United Evangelical Synod of the East” joined the “Evangelical Church Association of the West.” Though this was not a great acquisition in point of numbers, yet by this union a territory hitherto closed to the “Association of the West,” was opened to them and the assimilation that then took place proved a great blessing to the “Association.” It was found expedient to amend the name by striking out the word “Association” and putting in lieu thereof “Synod.” This was done in the year 1866. The Church was then called the “Evangelical Synod of the West.” An acquisition to the Synod surpassing in numbers any of those mentioned was the union with the “Evangelical Synod of the Northwest,” numbering forty-eight clergymen, and the “United Evangelical Synod of the East,” numbering twenty-five. This took place at the General Conference, held at Quincy, Ill., 1872. Five years later the name was again changed to: “The German Evangelical Synod of North America,” which it still retains. The Synod is divided into seventeen districts and four missions, as follows: Atlantic, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, North Illinois, Ohio, Pacific, Pennsylvania, South Illinois, Texas, West Missouri, Wisconsin, Mission District, The Northwest Mission, Manitoba, Canada, and Foreign Missions in India, and numbers 1,013 clergymen, 1,338 congregations and 259,593 communicant members in 1909. The Evangelical Teachers Association numbers ninety-three teachers.

Eden Theological Seminary, the theological school of the Synod, is located at St. Louis, Mo. The pastors of the Synod receive their training at this institution.

Elmhurst College, located at Elmhurst, Ill., is the institution where Christian young men receive their training, preparatory to entering Eden Seminary. The teachers for the parochial schools of the Synod also receive their education at this institution. Eden Publishing House is located at 1716-1718 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

The periodicals of the Synod are: