

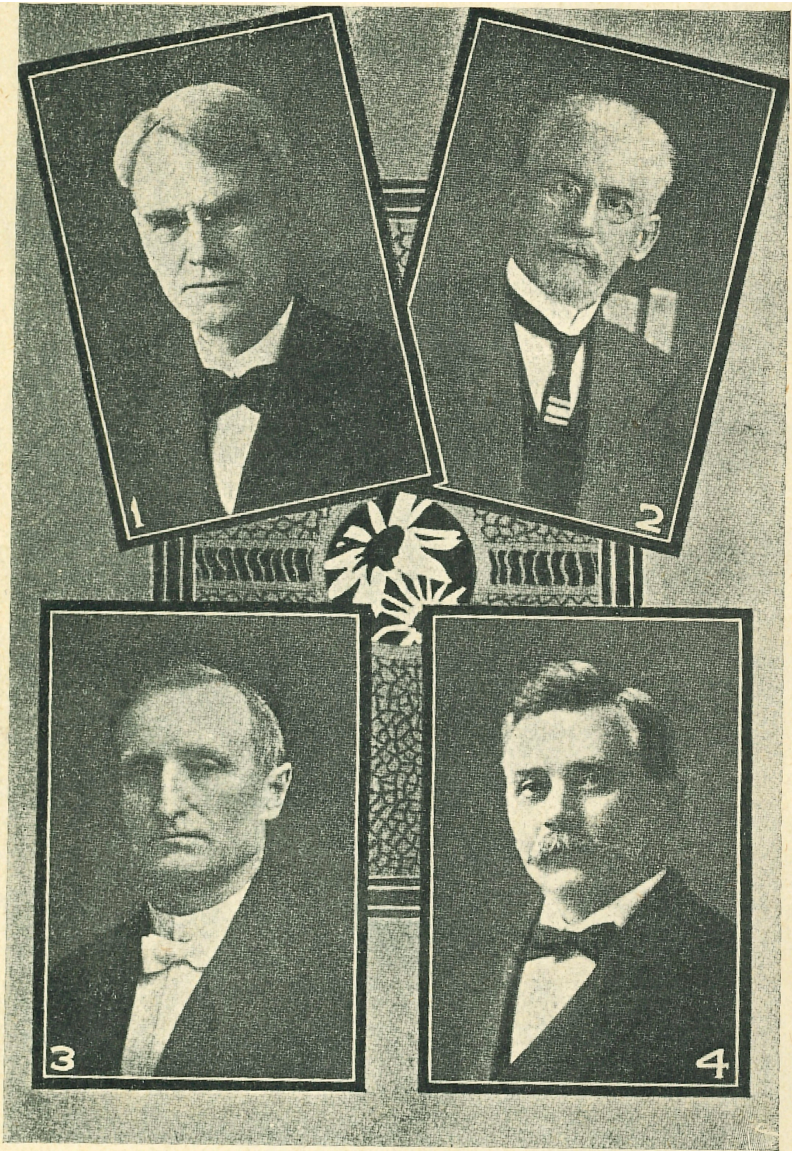
# Evangelical Fundamentals

## Part One

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# Evangelical Fundamentals

## PART ONE

### Evangelical Principles and History

containing

I. THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

by Pastor David Brüning

II. THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN AMERICA

by Pastor Ewald Kockritz

III. THE STORY OF THE CHRISTIAN YEAR

by Pastor Julius Horstmann

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# Introduction

There is a peculiar fascination about the study of history which never fails to attract the earnest and the thoughtful. Who of us has not enjoyed thoroughly the quiet hour at home when father or mother told their eagerly listening children of their own childhood and youth, of grandfather and grandmother, of the old homestead far away, perhaps across the sea, of some noble or famous ancestor, of lessons learned or of duties done, or of important deeds or events that became milestones on the pathway of their lives. Did not life seem brighter and bigger after that; did not the heart grow braver, the will stronger and the bonds of filial love more firm and tender as we listened, and did we not consecrate ourselves with a new determination to live up to the great and good and beautiful things that had been recounted?

It is a similar service which this little volume would perform for those who take the time to read it thru. It invites you to spend a quiet hour or so with the things of the past, to listen to the family history of your beloved Evangelical Church, who is our spiritual mother. It would unroll before its readers the interesting and inspiring story of the development of their Church, of the spirit that gave it life, of the soil in which it was nourished, of the fierce period of storm and stress and struggle that gave it strength and character, and how it was transplanted to the soil of the New World, where, in the sunshine of God's blessing, and nourished by the soil of a pure and earnest devotion to Jesus Christ and the Gospel of His Kingdom, and by the bracing atmosphere of full religious liberty, it has grown into a sturdy tree that is bringing forth good fruit. A knowledge of the noble men and the great deeds and events that have helped to make our Church what it is today can go far toward firing the reader with



new devotion toward Him who is the head of the Church, and with a new earnestness and enthusiasm for the great task entrusted to the Evangelical Church in America.

In publishing this volume the aim of the committee has been not so much the presentation of altogether new material, as the gathering together of such material of general interest and value which has already been published at one time or another. Pastor Bruning's exposition of the fundamental principles of the Evangelical Church deserves a much wider circulation than it has received, and even those who are familiar with it will find pleasure and profit in reading it again. Pastor Kockritz' Diamond Jubilee Memorial is worthy of a permanent place in our Evangelical literature and has been reprinted with such changes as condensation and the insertion of the statistics of 1915 made desirable. The article on the Christian Year (Evangelical Year Book, 1913) was added because of the value of this institution for an orderly view and presentation of the facts and truths of the story of Christ's redemption, and for preserving and fostering the sense of the historical continuity of the Church. Many new illustrations have been added to make the volume as attractive and interesting as possible.

*J. H. H.*

*Saint Louis, Missouri, June, 1916*

# The Evangelical Church

By David Brüning

It is no wonder that we of the Evangelical faith love our Church as ardently as we do. For it is not so long ago that the oldest among our fathers cannot remember, when there was no such institution as the Evangelical Church, and the Evangelical Christians longed for its coming as the Jews did for that of the Messiah.

For there were evangelical Christians long before the Evangelical Church came into existence. As their name implies, they were the Gospel Christians, for “evangelical” is an adaptation of the Latin word “evangelium,” signifying the Gospel. Scattered among the Christian churches at all times, in many cases solitary and alone, in others in little companies of two and three kindred souls, they ever held to the plain Gospel of Jesus Christ as the “power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Everyone that believeth in the Gospel they took to their heart and called brother. They had no part in the persecution of other Christians on the grounds of a difference in creed or doctrine. “Man’s inhumanity to man” in things religious appalled them. And while they were powerless on account of their isolation and insignificant numbers to check the oft-times intemperate zeal of the Church of their time, their prayers have steadily ascended to the throne of the Most High for the speeding of the day when all of Christ’s believers would be “one in His name.”

God alone knows their names and number. One by one they have gone to their reward, and perhaps none of their fellow-men realized that they were the true children of God, in that they endeavored to keep the New Commandment of Jesus Christ, to “love one another.” Truly, they set forth in their lives “the unity of the Spirit,” and foreshadowed by their Christian life the consummation of the ideal Church in which “there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male or female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus,” Gal, 3:28.

Their faith was a simple one; “Christ crucified for sinners,” their only wisdom. The difference between man-made creeds seemed to them to dwindle away into insignificance in the light of the great central truth. And while others held fast to particular forms of worship, to peculiar modes of Church government or to distinctive doctrines concerning the manner in which God imparts salvation to man, they ever exercised that toleration which condemns no man who places Christ in the pivotal position of his life and hope for time and eternity.

### **Man’s Inability to Fathom God**

They have ever held, - and that their position was a God-fearing and a logical one, every unbiased mind must concede, - that no man has at any time touched the bottom of the “depth of the riches both of wisdom and knowledge of God,” before which St. Paul stands overwhelmed. They agreed with him that “His ways are past finding out.” “My thoughts are not your thoughts” seemed to them conclusive in this direction. And when God adds, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts,” Isa. 55:8, 9, that appeared to them as God’s own verdict upon the pretension of any man or set of men to have entirely solved the mystery of God and to be alone able to point out the way to salvation.

On the contrary, God in His infinite and immutable glory, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy, blessedness and truth seemed to them like a diamond blazing and glittering in millions of uncounted facets. No one man’s spiritual eye, they contended, is able to behold all of these rays at one time. Nor is any one man’s mind equipped to gather all that all others have ever beheld, and present it as the only true doctrine of faith in all of its relations to this life and that beyond. And wherever a man arose who claimed to have pierced the blaze of light emanating from the eternal God, they viewed with distrust the attempt of such an one to coerce his fellow-men into acceptance of his propositions as the only correct ones. Yes, in view of the fact that the greatest and most sanctified of men are still mortal and fallible, they were loth to accept all of any man’s teachings without question,



Therefore they never granted that any man's doctrine of salvation was superior to God's Word, in that it might be better adapted to man's understanding and needs. Nor did they admit that such teachings were co-ordinate with the Scriptures, in that they state all of the truths embodied in Holy Writ.

### **The Bible the Standard of Creeds**

<sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>In a word, the Bible was their standard. Systems of theology and creeds were to be tested and proven by that standard. They remembered Paul's warning against the pride of intellect, "knowledge puffeth up." And when he states for himself and his enlightened scholars, "we know in part," a partial knowledge of God's wisdom and love in Jesus Christ seemed to them all that any man or any Church might ever hope to attain to. Thus no structure of man's sanctified understanding assumed in their mind the dignity of an observation tower sufficiently high and safe that one might with level gaze view Him before whom seraphim and cherubim ecstatically and humbly do cry: "Holy, Holy, Holy is Jehovah of hosts!" Isa. 6:3. They desired no rebuilding of the Tower of Babel! And while they remembered Christ's injunction: "Judge not!" and thus accorded to every Christian the right to hold his individual views with regard to God's plan and mode of salvation thru Jesus Christ, and while they prayed God to keep all men from error, they brooked no human authority over their immortal souls.

### **Evangelical Christians in the Church of Christ at all Times**

We believe that we are adhering to the strictest truth in asserting that the Christian Church of all ages has harbored believers of this mind. And wherever they conformed to the usages of the Church of their time, they practiced no hypocrisy in so doing. They simply granted to others the freedom of conscience in Jesus Christ which they claimed for themselves and, in lieu of something better which had not yet appeared, took part in the worship of the Church as they found it, yet all the while longing for the coming of that Church which would set up the word of no set of men as binding upon their conscience.

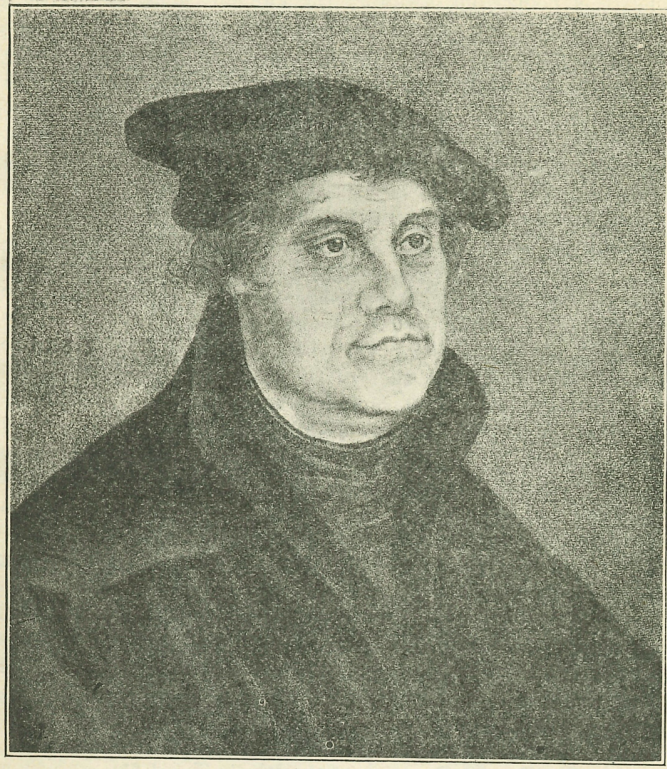
But the time eventually came when the Evangelical Christians

could no longer worship in the Church of their time. When the word of God came to be neglected, and the writings of the so-called Church fathers usurped the place of the Bible and were preached by the Church as the guide to salvation; when Jesus Christ was taught to be far away in heaven, while the priests claimed to represent Him on earth as ambassadors plenipotentiary; when the works prescribed by the Church took precedence over the sacrificial blood of Christ as means of salvation; when the clergy arrogated to themselves the prerogative of the Almighty God to forgive sins: then the evangelical Christians could no longer remain silent but arose and protested against the errors of the Church that the honor due to God might be rendered Him by man, and the road cleared of the rubbish of ages and the impediments strewn thereon by narrow and fanatical men.

### **The Reformation**

Thus the blessed day of the Reformation dawned. God himself raised up His servants, Martin Luther and Philip Melancton in Germany, and Ulric Zwingli and John Calvin in Switzerland and many another in these and other countries. It was a time of mighty strife of the Spirit of God with the wickedness of man, a wickedness so much the more insidious, since it fiendishly clothed itself in the garments of religion, a time of heart-ache and longing for deliverance from fetters that bound immortal souls in durance vile. A mere handful of men pitted their apparently puny strength against the combined forces of the Church dignitaries, - young purity against aged, seasoned rascality, - the sheep against the wolves. But God was in the midst of His own, therefore were they not moved. He helped them and that right early. Because they set their love on God, no evil befell them and with His own right hand did He get for Himself and them the victory. His name be praised forever!

To speak calmly and dispassionately of this time, when, at the hazard of life itself, deeds were wrought whose blessed results we enjoy to this day, is practically impossible. Our blood boils at the recital of the catalog of indignities inflicted in the name of the Church upon the souls of men. And we stand breathless while the story of the strife of the righteous against the uncircumcised



Martin Luther, Nov. 10, 1483 - Feb. 18, 1546. Thru severe spiritual struggles and a deep personal experience he was led to protest against the errors and the corruption<sup>SEP</sup> of the Catholic Church in the ninety-five theses posted on Oct. 31, 1517. He was a pioneer of religious freedom, and is the founder of Protestant civilization, "who gave to the Christian Church a new life, to the nations of Europe the open Bible, and to the German people a language and a literature."



of heart is being told, awaiting the announcement of the final victory of the Reformers, God's chosen servants. But let us endeavor to suppress our emotions in order to get a clearer view of the conditions then prevailing and a more definite conception of the fundamental principles of the Evangelical Church, which principles were crystallized in the struggle of the Reformation.

As we all know, a great part of the Christian Church had been Roman Catholic for many centuries preceding the Reformation. It is needless to enumerate the many outrages which had become common practice in the Church in the course of these many years. Secular history is full of the account of how the priests, the heads of the Church, abused their authority to make their position the more influential, yes, in many cases for so base a purpose as the enrichment of the treasury of their institutions. To achieve these ends unspeakable atrocities were perpetrated on noble men and gentle women in the ingenious and refined tortures of the Inquisition. The hands of the Church dignitaries reeked with the blood of their fellows, whom they put to death as heretics. Murder as foul as that of the righteous Abel was committed in the name of the so-called Holy Catholic Church, and the very angels in heaven must have hid their faces in pity, when the blood of these innocents stained the same earth that had drunk the blood of the dying Savior. And where it murdered not, nor tortured in the Inquisition, the general policy of the Romish Church was a stultifying, a debasing one. That the priest might have more power the souls of men were bound with fetters by the doctrines of the Church, only two of which the limited scope of this paper permits us to mention.

### **The Romish Doctrine of the Remission of Sins**

The first of these doctrines, which one might say had been invented for the purpose of the self-aggrandizement of Church and priesthood, concerns the remission of sins.

Now, no sane student of the Bible can conceive how the priest could evolve from God's Word a doctrine in this connection which could be made to subserve their selfish purpose. But learn how it was done. The priests started out by claiming to be able to forgive sins, for John 20:22, Christ says to His disciples after having

bleathed on them: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." This power, they claimed, was transmitted to each priest in so-called apostolic succession from Peter, the disciple of the Lord. But how they ever reconciled the fact that the disciples were authorized and empowered to forgive sins only after having received the Holy Spirit from Jesus Christ himself, with their claim to be able to do so, on whom Christ had never breathed and who are possessed of a spirit in direct opposition to that of the loving Christ, still remains to be satisfactorily explained. And it is a piece of almost inconceivable effrontery on their part to put themselves on the same high plane with a Peter, a John or a Matthew, Yet that was their doctrine, and they proceeded to enforce it to the extension of their influence over the souls of men and enrichment of their purposes. So they taught, "before we shall forgive your sins, you must confess them all to us, omitting none, you must be truly sorry for them and do certain works of penance." These works of penance were gradually arranged in a systematic schedule and were made the indispensable condition for the remission of sins. They were taught to consist of fasting, self-castigation, praying of rosaries, pilgrimages, donations of lands and houses to the Church and, most especially, money payments. This "conscience money" came to be a most fruitful source of revenue for the Church and priesthood, for the priests taxed those who confessed to them to the utmost. To say that it was a system of blackmail is to state but the bare truth.

What an aberration from the practice of the blessed Redeemer, who forgave sins without ever intimating the payment of money! And how different from Peter and John, who vehemently rebuked Simon, the sorcerer, who had the audacity to offer them money, with the words: "Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money!" Acts 8:20. The only way in which to explain why the people gave credence to such unbiblical teachings is to remember that they had no access to the Bible. Thus the clergy were able to build up an outrageous doctrine and practice, the essence of which was: "You must pay to have your sins forgiven under the penalty of having the Lord's

Supper, which is the assurance that your sins are truly forgiven, withheld by us, the only ones who have the power to administer it to you.”

### **The Romish Doctrine of the Lord's Supper**

This brings us to another error of the Church, the fallacious doctrine of the Lord's Supper, - an error, which in supreme audacity reached up into the very heavens themselves for material on which to work its baleful purpose, and which for perversion and malicious wickedness eclipses anything ever taught by blasphemous men.

As has been stated, the priests taught that the Lord's Supper is the assurance of the remission of sins. In the Lord's Supper the believer receives the body and blood of Jesus Christ as a sign that the sins forgiven by the priest on earth are forgiven by God in heaven. Now, the bread and wine used in the Holy Communion, they went on to state, are changed by us in substance entirely. The bread, a vegetable product, is turned into animal tissue, the flesh of a human being, and that flesh is the body which belonged to Jesus Christ when He was on earth. And the wine, the juice of the grape, is converted into the blood which once coursed thru the veins of the Savior. But, they insisted, the priest is the only person on earth who can effect that change. It is in his power to transubstantiate, as they expressed it the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper into the body and blood of Christ, and, what was of immense consequence, - it is also in his power to withhold that change at his discretion. So whenever the priest desires the body and blood of Christ, all that is necessary for him to do, is to speak the appropriate words, and, lo, the body and blood of Christ obey him and come into the bread and wine, entirely displacing by their substance that of the latter. Thus, they reasoned in a very frenzy and acme of presumption, even the Savior obeys us. Our power reaches even to Him. In a sense we are mightier than the Lord of the universe Himself!

But, thank God, the fullness of time came again for God's people. When these caricatures of holiness had overreached themselves in building up and practicing their cruel, selfish and unscriptural doctrines, God sent His own chosen servants, the great



Reformers, who arose in the strength of His Spirit and set about cleaning the defiled temple of God of the robbers and assassins of souls.

### **The Bible Doctrine of the Remission of Sins**

The Reformers contended that the forgiving of sins is God's unique work. In the face of the false doctrine of the Church they pointed to the statement of the living God, Isa. 43:25, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions." The Reformers stood on common ground in calling on the Bible as witness, that repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ are the only conditions imposed on those who seek the remission of their sins, the intervention of the priests being nowhere mentioned as essential in the New Testament. Christ on the contrary invites all who are weary and heavy laden to come directly to Him for rest. And that the works imposed by the Church are absolutely ineffectual as a means of salvation, Paul proves when he says, Rom. 3:28, "We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."

As for the priests who promulgated their self invented doctrines, the Reformers most appropriately termed them a horrible recrudescence of the Scribes and Pharisees of Christ's time, "binding heavy burdens upon the souls of men, devouring the widows' houses, being full of extortion and excess, appearing outwardly righteous to men, but within full of hypocrisy and deceit." And what a fatal resemblance to the Scribes and Pharisees in that they, the priests, presumed to be more than their fellow-men and insisted on being called "father," when Christ explicitly says, Matt. 23, (the chapter which contains the above characterization of the Scribes and Pharisees by the Son of God), "All ye are brethren. Call no man your father upon earth, for One is your Father, even who is in heaven!"

Ah, it was an immense step forward! It was the dawn of the liberation of the Church, the Bride of Christ, from the degrading, toils of base men. Thank God for the prayers and the noble, self-sacrificing labors of the Reformers! The memory of their travail of spirit, - of their strivings with hoary error, subtle cunning and age-long prejudice, - of their courage, when, altho in a minority,

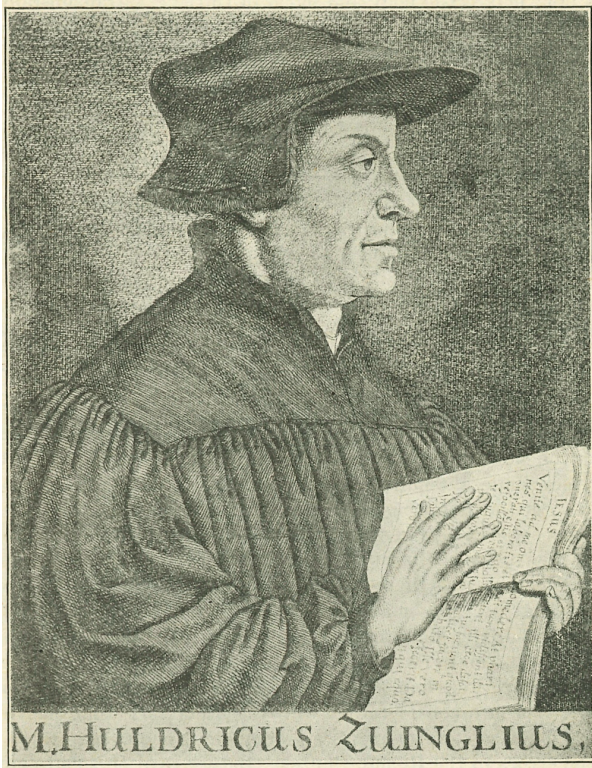
- a mere handful of men against the combined forces of the priesthood of all lands, - they discarded and denied the teachings of the so-called Church-fathers in so far as they agreed not with the clear sense of the Bible, and took the Word of God for the only basis of their doctrine, - these memories shall remain sacred to us forever.

And what a marvel of God's grace and what conclusive proof of the inspiration of the Reformers is the fact that they reached the same conclusion, tho those of Germany lived, studied, and prayed and taught hundreds of miles distant from those of Switzerland and tho for many years neither knew of the existence of the others! Mountains piled their snow-topped masses between them, the unbridged waters of mighty rivers separated them, the political boundaries of their respective countries raised barriers to divide them, yet, guided by one and the same Bible, and by it alone, thru the grace of God, they reached the conclusion and were unanimous in declaring that "A man is justified by faith without the works of the law." Surely, "this is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our sight!"

Now, had the Reformers of Germany and Switzerland been unanimous with regard to the correction of the second great error of the Romish Church, that concerning the Lord's Supper, as they were in the case of the one Jjust mentioned, there would probably today be one great Evangelical Church embracing the whole Church of the Reformation.

### **The Bible Doctrine of the Lord's Supper**

True, they were of one mind in showing how the Romish priests had debased the holy ordinance of the Lord's Supper from a sweet solace free to all repentant souls to a means of bolstering up their influential position in the Church. They were unanimous in teaching that the Lord's Supper is the memorial and sign of Christ's death on the cross; that it is to the believer the means of receiving the heavenly gifts of the remission of sins, life and salvation. But, they continued, nowhere in the New Testament are any grounds given for the doctrine of the Romish Church, according to which the priest who administers the Sacrament becomes a kind of holy magician who can juggle with the sacred



Huldreich Zwingli, Jan. 1, 1484 - Oct. 11, 1531, was repelled by the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church and aimed to remove from the daily practice of religion whatever interfered with the purity of original Christianity. He was a man of the people, with plain, practical common sense, and steadily opposed to every sort of fanaticism.

body and blood of the Savior of all the world at his pleasure. He does not “make” the body and blood of Christ. A transubstantiation of the elements into the body and blood of Christ does not take place, Christ neither explicitly nor tacitly having given to His disciples any such power. The intention of the Savior in instituting His Last Supper was solely that the believer might be thereby blessed, not that the priest who administers it might be glorified. Furthermore, they insisted that the partaker of the Holy Communion was to receive both bread and wine, not the bread only, as was the practice of the Romish Church, to withhold the cup being direct opposition to Christ’s words: “Drink ye all of it.” As for the stipulations required of those who desire to commune, repentance and faith is all that is necessary. These principles, which again placed the Lord’s Supper on the Bible foundation, they held in perfect unanimity.

### **Why the Reformers Differed**

Now we can readily understand how two sets of men like the Reformers, working entirely independent of each other, could reach the same general conclusion with regard to a certain Bible doctrine, while the minor details of their systems diverge. In the case of the Reformers we must always remember that in the first place these men were born in the Roman Catholic Church. There was no such institution as the Protestant Church before their time, nor was there a systematic presentation of the Protestant doctrine. The matter on which to build up that doctrine was in the Bible, and to the Bible they went. But nobody had arranged that matter in a scientific form. For this arrangement there was no precedent whatever. They were doing new work. Taking this into consideration with the other fact, that the German and Swiss Reformers were led by God in different ways to see the errors in the Roman Church, (Luther thru personal agony of spirit and danger of life itself, while Zwingli and Calvin enjoyed a much more peaceful development, the latter denying the doctrines of the papal Church on the grounds of their incompatibility with the human understanding enlightened by the Word of God), it is not altogether strange that the new doctrines of these men were not exactly alike in every detail. This was true in their

interpretation of the Lord's Supper. And tho these differences concerned only the *manner* in which Christ bestows the blessings of the Holy Communion, these men had worked so hard to make their respective systems compatible with the Word of God and reasonable to the human mind, that they were both to give up their individual schemes, when finally they were led to compare them. For when they did meet, their systems of belief were no longer in the making, but were practically finished. Had these men met earlier, things might have assumed an entirely different aspect. But to alter a system of beliefs on which they had spent the best years of their life, the scheme of salvation which seemed to them the only way to get rid of the error in the prevailing Church, seemed to them almost a denial of Christ himself.

### **In what the Reformers Differ**

And yet, as has been stated, these differences concerned only the *manner*, the way in which Christ employs the bread and wine of the Holy Communion to bless the recipient. But while they especially counseled toleration of others in these subordinate details, these differences were made the matter of frequent but fruitless dispute, and in the course of time were accentuated to such an extent, that finally Church was pitted against Church, nation against nation in the most sad of all controversies, that on matters not essential to salvation. One is led to believe that it was all due to a last effort of Satan himself, who, noting that the cause of God was being freed from the encumbrances of human tradition, error and greed concentrated his evil power on sowing seeds of discord among the members of the regenerated Church.

It will be of great interest and benefit to us to observe in what particulars the German and Swiss Reformers differed in their doctrines of the Lord's Supper.

Luther held that the words with which the Savior instituted His last Supper are to be taken literally. When Christ says: "This is my body, this is my blood," we are, however, not to think of His physical body and blood, but of the constituents of His spiritual being. By the almighty power of God, not of the priest, the believer receives "in, together with end under" the bread and wine, the body and blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of

sins, life and salvation. The bread and wine are, however, not changed in substance. They remain what they were, but the worthy partaking of them in the Holy Communion is the eating and drinking of the body and blood of the Savior. As the mouth of the partaker of the Communion eats and drinks the bread and wine, the soul of the believer receives the body and blood of Christ. This is, briefly stated, the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper and is taught by the Lutheran Church to this day. The doctrine and, in fact, the whole system of theology of the Lutheran Church was incorporated in the Augsburg Confession, which became and still is the principal doctrinal standard of the Lutheran Church.

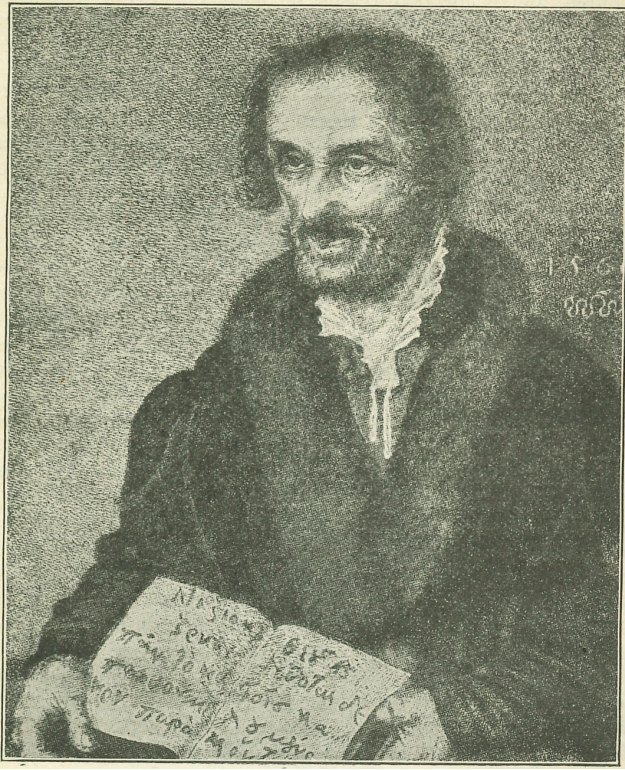
While the Swiss Reformers admitted the presence of the Lord in the Holy Communion, they denied His real presence in the bread and wine. These things are symbols, signs, they declared. These material symbols were chosen by Christ to represent to our senses the spiritual gift of soul nutrition, which Christ bestows in His Last Supper. Christ's words in instituting this sacrament, "this is my body, this is my blood," are to be taken figuratively. The Savior often speaks in this way. Thus He says, "I am the way;" "I am the vine;" "I am ilre door." These expressions surely require a tropical explanation. For Christ scarcely would have meant to say that He is, literally speaking, a road of stone or dirt over which carts run and feet tread; that He is a grapevine with loots, stern; branches, leaves and fruit, dead in winter and alive in spring; or that He is a door with hinges to be opened or closed at will. What He evidently means by these figurative expressions is, that He is the spiritual road to salvation; that He is the source of all strength of His believers, and that by Him they have access and entrance to God's favor. Thus when He uses the bread and wine in His Last Supper and says, "this is my body, this is my blood," He means to have us understand that He is giving us food and nutrition, not for our bodies, but for our immortal souls. Thus the bread and wine. symbolize and typify to our senses the spiritual nourishment which Christ gives. This is a condensed statement of the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper and is to this day taught in the Heidlelberg Catechism, which is one of the principal doctrinal standards of the Reformed

Church, and is for that reason included among the statements of teaching accepted by the Evangelical Church.

### **The Conference at Marburg**

Many attempts were made to reconcile these differences, which in the every-day practice of a Christian life were conceded by all to be immaterial. In the interest of the "unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace," which Paul admonishes us to endeavor to keep, conferences were arranged at which these differences were discussed and an agreement sought. One of the most noteworthy of these conferences was that held at Marburg, as early as 1629. It was arranged by Philip of Hessa and was attended by no lesser personages than Luther, Melanchthon and others for the Lutherans, and Zwingli and others for the Reformed people. The attention of these men was called to the fact that their disagreement was of personal opinion only. Christ does not give any explanation of the part that bread and wine take in the bestowal of the blessings of His Last Supper. The Savior leaves this point a mystery. Just what relation bread and wine bear to His body and blood is not defined by Him nor by any of the New Testament writers. Why endeavor to clear up a process left a mystery by the Son of God himself? And while it was granted to be but natural that each should hold his personal views with regard to the peculiar functions of the bread and wine in the Sacrament, they were entreated not to make these personal views the cause of a division in the Church, which Christ declared should be one, as His Father and He are one.

With this purpose in view the men mentioned met. Their conference lasted three days. In the discussion of their views many false impressions were corrected. The contending parties learned to respect each other and with joy took note of the earnest desire shared by all alike to find the Bible teaching with regard to the points in dispute. It must be said to the credit of Zwingli and his associates, that they especially displayed a most conciliatory spirit. After three days of discussion, Luther succeeded in formulating fourteen articles of faith of which all concerned were in perfect harmony and to which all subscribed. These fourteen articles covered the whole ground of the Bible doctrine of God,



Philip Melancthon, Feb. 16, 1497 - April 19, 1560, was the foremost teacher of his time and the founder of general learning throughout Europe. In Luther's translation of the Bible the accuracy is Melancthon's<sup>[1]</sup> while the force and beauty is Luther's. His irenic and judicial spirit, his blending of tolerance and progress, of sweetness and light, placed him far in advance of his time and his place in the work of the Reformation is only beginning to be appreciated.



of man's sin and of the salvation by Christ. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper was to be treated in the fifteenth, the concluding article. This article, however, revived the old dispute. Luther brought a piece of chalk into the meeting and at the beginning of the discussion wrote the words, "This is my body," on the table top at which he sat. After prolonged argument the fifteenth article was finished. However, it was couched in such vague language, that it formed no working agreement. The whole beautiful plan shattered on this reef. When the meeting broke up Luther left repeating, "This is my body," while the Reformed delegation still held to their symbolical interpretation of these words.

### **The Reign of Orthodoxy**

It was a great misfortune for the young Protestant Church that its leaders in the years following the Reformation had paid more attention to this old dispute than its importance to the Bible scheme of salvation warranted. As is often the case in the affairs of men, trivialities were insisted upon, while essential things were neglected. For while the Reformers admitted that the points on which their opinions diverged were of minor weight, and each conceded that a man could be saved even tho he held the opposing view, their successors placed these differences in the very foreground, and orthodoxy was made the prime condition for salvation. It fills us with sadness to note that the Lutheran and Reformed Churches were not only divided in opinion, but that an outspoken and bitter antagonism developed between them. Each claimed to be the "only saving Church." Those who disagreed with them were termed lost, the Lutherans condemning the Reformed and vice versa. They hurled all manner of abuse at each other and the very pulpits of the churches were desecrated by their heated and intemperate language. The zeal for the purity of doctrine was great, but the love of God and the fellow-man was but weak. The "rabies theologorum," the fury of the theologians, made the Word of God almost scarce in the land as It had been prior to the Reformation. There was much dispute, but little preaching. In the interest of truth it must be conceded that the leaders of the Church in that dark time were theologians of

the head, - and will anybody deny that their hearts were hard? - rather than the loving heart.

### **The Church of the Union**

But while this froth appeared on the surface, there was a strong undercurrent of piety in the Church. The number was great of those who deplored the lamentable quarrel and hoped that God would soon effect that union for which many had prayed ever since the Reformation. Nor were there lacking those who endeavored to reconcile the old difference, But not till the year 1817 were any of these attempts successful. And then again, as at the conference at Marburg, it was not a theologian, who became the human instrument of God to bring the controversy to a close, but a pious, God-fearing king. It was Frederick William III of Prussia, whom God had selected for this office. Thus in the year 1817, the third centennial of the posting of the ninety-five theses by Luther on the church door at Wittenberg, Frederick William III of Prussia succeeded in bringing together a number of the most prominent preachers of his kingdom. Then a book of worship to be used in the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of the kingdom was compiled. And no sooner had the initial step been taken, than congregation after congregation joined the rapidly growing ranks of the Evangelical Church, for that was the name of the new Church. From principality to principality the movement spread, till soon the whole German empire had heard of it and its churches were to be found in most of the cities, villages and hamlets of the whole land.

Men and women wept with very joy that at last the Word of God was restored to its rightful position and the learned disquisitions and impassioned invectives of the so-called orthodox preachers were debarred from the pulpits.

And leaving the barren wastes of theological discussion, the Evangelical Church entered the much more promising, long neglected field of active service of God and the fellow-men. The Church became a missionary Church. Foreign lands heard the good news of the Crucified One and the sheep from other folds were brought in one by one to the great Good Shepherd. Schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, orphan asylums and many other

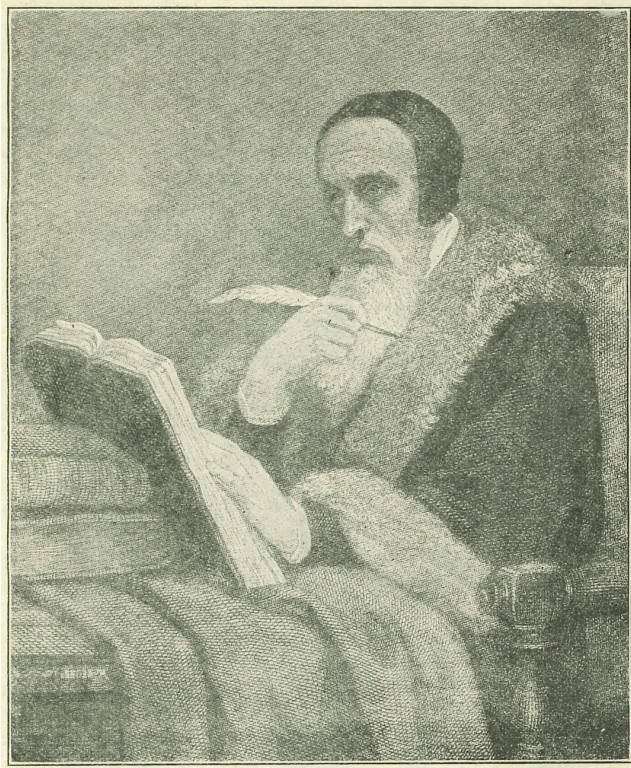
charitable institutions sprang up as testimonials to the active love of Christ, which recognized in every needy brother an opportunity to serve the Christ himself. Poetry, ever dear to the German heart, was again taken into the service of Christ, and hymns incomparable for depth of sentiment and beauty of form told of a love too great for ordinary speech. And no man will gainsay the statement that the Evangelical Church aided in saving the day for God's cause during the cynical, chilling time of rationalism just past!

### **The Principles of the Evangelical Church**

But on what basis was the union effected? It was the Bible. The Bible, the revelation of God's goodness, was made the only arbiter of faith. Whatever was not taken from the Bible was esteemed as of little consequence, no matter how brilliant in conception or presentation. But scant attention was paid to the results of speculation and Christian philosophy.<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> On the sure foundation of God's Word the Evangelical Church was grounded.

These principles were brought over from Germany by our fore fathers. Tho they left behind them home and fatherland, they took their faith, their dearest and most precious possession, with them. And in the land of the politically free they planted the Church of those whom Christ has by His truth made spiritually free, as the following declaration of principles, adopted at the organization of our beloved Evangelical Church in America, shows:

“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 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.”



John Calvin, July 10, 1509 - May<sup>11</sup><sub>SEP</sub>27, 1564, was the founder of a new church polity based upon the idea that religion is a real living force to be expressed in a life of duty to the glory of God. He systematized the teachings of the Reformation organized its life and work. As a religious teacher and a social legislator he will always remain one of the great figures of history.

But tho we give scope to the individual, constraining the conscience of no man in the non-essentials of faith, yet we are no more a Church of license than our government is one of anarchy. For we are limited in the exercise of our liberty by the healthful restraint of the Bible. Be it said again, the Word of God is our standard of faith. This is evidenced by our name, the Evangelical, the Gospel Church. Others may call themselves Lutheran after a man; Reformed because of some incident in history; Episcopal or Presbyterian because of a form of government, or Baptist after one of the sacraments, - we know nothing superior to the Bible. And by adopting the name "Evangelical" because the Gospel or good news of Jesus Christ is the very heart of the Bible, we recognize the sway and power of the Bible as the God-given guide to salvation.

### **The Need of Doctrinal Standards**

But why accept Luther's Catechism, the Augsburg Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism at all? Isn't the Bible sufficient? Yes, the Bible would be sufficient were all men unprejudiced and single-minded in their endeavors to find the truth and the whole truth therein stated. But so much that is false and erroneous has been taught about the Bible; - in the course of the centuries past the sacred Book has been interpreted to suit so many men's idle whims and perverted notions; - parts of it have so frequently been disconnected from the whole and made to fit into the pet scheme of some misled teacher, that it is necessary to have some general interpretation of its salient truths. And the above named books contain the interpretation which we accept. And tho they are old, there is no necessity for their revision or displacement. They were written in the time of great light sent from God. They contain all that is necessary to refute the errors of that time and the times preceding. And since the mind of man runs in ruts, whatever has disquieted or alarmed the Church since that time can easily be recognized as an old fallacy in a new garb. "There is nothing new under the sun," in the line of fallacious teachings alleged to be based on the Bible. The ingenuity of the evil one has long exhausted itself in this direction. And in these books we have the Bible doctrine as free from error, misunderstandings

or imperfection as man can make it. Therefore we hold to them, placing them next to, but below the Bible in point of importance, in the matter of the regulation of our faith. And as proof of our allegiance to the Bible we claim the privilege of going back to the precious Word itself in those points in which these books do not perfectly agree.

### **Dwelling Together in Unity**

As is evident, our Evangelical Church thus is composed of people of Lutheran and of Reformed inclination, but joined in that harmony of the spirit which the Psalmist commends to all in Psalm 133, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Nor is our union a cloaked disunion. We do not need to preserve a semblance of unity in our Church by muzzling our members or by throttling their consciences. Those of Lutheran inclination among us go not look askance at those of our people of Reformed inclination, and vice versa, Realizing that the differences are on points non-essential to salvation, we not only tolerate each other, but respect each other so much the more highly as we note the earnest endeavor of our fellows to find the truth. And while we do not encourage debate on the points of variance between the Lutheran and Reformed doctrine, we do not evade it where it can be entered and carried on in the truth-seeking spirit. For all things are ours: Paul and Peter, Luther and Zwingli, Melancthon and Calvin; but Christ is all in all. And in a spirit of unfeigned submission to the Word of God we hold to Christ above all and present to God and the world a people of single faith: Christ; of single purpose: The Kingdom of God; and of single principle: practical love to all men. Nothing could be plainer and simpler; nothing greater and more glorious.

And happy are we to note that these differences which once divided the Church in Europe are much less prominent today than they formerly were. For here in free America a new generation is growing up which has buried the arms of religious warfare. Nor are we busy about keeping their grave green. Let others invoke the thunder of God upon those who believe not as they would dictate, we would rather emulate the example and follow

the precept of the sanctified John, whose exhortation is: "Little children love one another!" And what gratification to note that the Evangelical spirit has forged its way into wider fields of activity, in that the efforts of many Christians all over the globe are today directed towards reaching that ground so long familiar to us, toleration and co-operation in the cause of God.

May His kingdom come! And when eventually the grand day shall dawn on which the desire of Christ will be gratified, "Holy Father keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given me that they may be one even as we are," John 17:11, we believe, in all humility be it said, that the Evangelical Church in America will be counted among those forces that have helped to bring about this happy union of the hearts of all that love the Eternal Christ.

# The Evangelical Church in America

By Ewald Kockritz

## Introduction

On October 15, 1840, in a little wildwood church in St. Louis County, Missouri, at a place now called Mehlville, there met a group of six ministers upon what they conceived to be a most important mission. The net result of that meeting was the organization of "The German Evangelical Church Association of the West." This little body has since grown into "The German Evangelical Synod of North America," a denomination with more than one thousand pastors in active service and nearly three hundred thousand communicant members.

The work of these founders was a work of faith - not for the present only but also for the future. Manifestly it was prompted by the same noble purposes and inspired by the same unfailing promises that have always been such a potential asset in the propagation of Christ's Kingdom on earth; and that the faith of these pioneers of our Church was beautifully rewarded, we see in its growth according to the law uttered by Christ Himself: "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

These six humble disciples of the Master have long since passed from the militant into the triumphant Church. Their work, in growing form, passed into other hands, and yet again into other hands, but there was never a lack of loyal servants ready to receive it as a holy charge and sacred duty; and it is thus that we are able to record the steady growth and sustained development of our Church throughout the first seventy-five years of its existence.

The children of this Church are not unmindful of the debt that they owe to those who have gone before. One generation is always debtor to another. We live in the present, but we live by grace of the past. No man liveth unto himself in or only in his own day.

The achievements that lie behind us have been wrought into the life of today and are indissolubly connected with it. The influence exercised upon the world's life is not only a present but a



permanent one. What we do for ourselves directly we do for others indirectly, and the result of our living and doing will manifest itself in some form or other for ages to come. When we understand these truths we shall not only be careful of the influences that we set in motion in our own lives, but we shall also be able better to appreciate what others of a past generation have done for us and the period in which we live.

And so grateful Evangelical people will always gladly seek the courts of the Almighty, there to render devout thanks for the blessings so freely and abundantly bestowed upon the German Evangelical Synod of North America throughout the period of its existence; to remember those who in its history have labored so faithfully and diligently for its welfare and up building; and to dedicate themselves anew to the task of carrying on this work with unabated zeal and undiminished vigor, in the fervent hope that their share in the building of the greater Church may also meet the approval of Him who is the Head, even Christ.

### **Beginning of the Evangelical Synod**

The German Evangelical Synod of North America may be characterized as the daughter of the Evangelical Church in Germany, but this relationship is one of spirit rather than of body.

The doctrinal affinity has always been maintained, but the two bodies are, and always have been, absolutely independent of each other. Splendid services in many ways have been rendered by the mother Church in Germany to the daughter Church in America, but they have always been voluntary and spontaneous rather than official, and were given only in order that the daughter Church might establish its independent existence and insure its success in the land of its adoption. From the very first beginnings the German Evangelical Synod of North America has been an independent, self-governing organization, without any official connection with any part of the Evangelical State Church of Germany.

The immediate and direct reason for the coming of the Evangelical Church to America is to be found in the large immigration of Germans during the early part of the past century. Thus we find many settlements of Evangelical people scattered thru the

country as early as the twenties of the nineteenth century, some in the East and some in the North, but most of them in the West. Among these Germans in the West there were also quite a number who were either sadly indifferent to all religion or openly hostile to it. The Evangelical Church had a duty to perform to Germans of both classes in these Western communities: to those who wanted the Gospel and to those who did not want it, but needed it nevertheless. It was these considerations that prompted various mission societies in Germany, -upon the urgent solicitation of interested people in America, to undertake the work that was afterwards to produce such a splendid fruitage.

The conditions existing in Missouri and the neighboring region about 1830 and after are of special interest to us, since it is there that our Synod really had its beginnings. The first impetus to the settlement of Germans in the Missouri valley was given by Dr. Gottfried Duden, who spent three years in what is known today as Warren county. His descriptions concerning the possibilities of that country, written in the most lurid and captivating style, induced many immigrants to seek this paradise of the West. The first people to settle there was a company of small farmers and farm hands, who had come over from Westphalia and Hanover. They were followed by a body of men of different type and character, men of larger means and of greater intelligence.

The former were mostly a pious folk in whose life religion was a vital factor. In their humble way they tried to translate, their faith into their manner of living and doing. The latter, however, composed for the most part of noblemen, and professional men. In their own superior knowledge, had outgrown all need of religion and its restraints. It is not to be wondered at that under such circumstances there was continual friction between the two factions and that comity in any form between them was unthinkable.

These "learned gentlemen" in 1834 organized what was known as a German society. Its headquarters were in the "Latin settlement" and its object was stated to be the cultivation of sociability. But little sociability, except perhaps among their own coterie, was cultivated. On the other hand, the cleavage with the

other faction became much greater because the spirit of liberal thought and atheism was assiduously fostered by this society. The result of such conditions upon the religious life of the community can easily be imagined. The life sank to a very low ebb and in some regions a religious service had not been held in fifteen years.

These conditions gradually became known in Germany and were also brought to the attention of sympathetic Christian men in the East. One of these, Mr. Richard Bigelow of New York City, deserves especial mention in this connection. It was he who with other prominent Americans, sent an urgent appeal to the missionary societies of Basel and Barmen for men to minister to the pressing needs of these pioneer Christians, and it was in response to this appeal that the Basel Missionary Society in 1836 sent two young pastors, George W. Wall and Joseph Rieger, to St. Louis.

### **Founders of the Synod**

The first of these to reach America was Herman Garlichs, who, although only a layman, preached the Gospel among the Germans in St. Charles and Warren counties in Missouri as early as 1833. Shortly after he returned to Germany, finished his theological course, received his ordination and returned to Missouri in 1835. He settled on Femme Osage creek, where he gathered a congregation and built a blockhouse, which now has the distinction of being our oldest parsonage.

John Jacob Riess was the first ordained man among the founders of the Synod to step upon American soil. He found his first field of labor in St. Clair County, Ill., and was the Evangelical pioneer in South Illinois.

Wall and Rieger, to whom reference has already been made, proved themselves worthy representatives of the great institution from which they had been sent out, and performed a pioneer work that will stand for all time as a memorial to them in the history of our Church.

Wall began his labors in St. Louis, at that time a small city of 11,000 inhabitants. There he toiled, often amid great difficulties and trials, preaching the plain and simple Gospel message to

doubters, scoffers and unbelievers.<sup>[1]</sup> With the exception of a period of three years, he labored in St. Louis until 1876, when he was called to his reward.

Rieger, during his first years in America, was a kind of traveling evangelist. He visited the scattered German communities in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, preaching, distributing Christian literature and organizing congregations. Later he filled the pastorate at Holstein, Mo., for thirteen years and spent the last years of his life at Jefferson City, Mo., where he died in 1869.

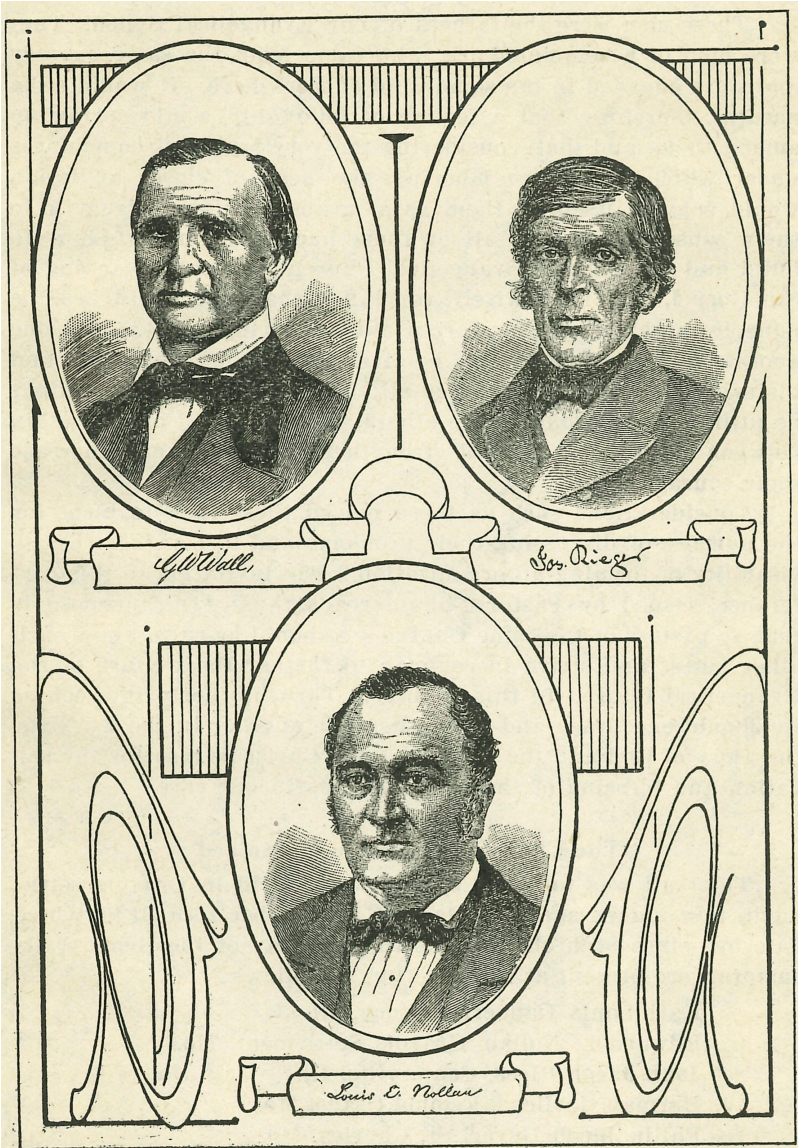
In the year 1837 the Rhenish Missionary Society sent over two young men, Philip Jacob Heyer and Tilman Nies, both of whom were intended as missionaries among the Indian tribes of Oregon. Nies, however, soon after his arrival suffered a complete breakdown in health and died near St. Charles, Mo., in 1838.

His companion, Heyer, instead of proceeding to the field of missionary operations as had been planned, now remained in Missouri, and later became associated with other pastors in organizing the Synod. However, his connection with that body was of but short duration.

In the meantime another pastor, Edward Louis Nollau, had been sent from the Barmen Mission House in 1837 to aid Nies in his work among the Indians, but the illness and subsequent death of Nies prevented the carrying out of this plan, and in 1838 Nollau took charge of the congregation in Gravois Settlement Mo., twelve miles from St. Louis, where two years later the Synod was born.

To these names must be added another, that of Karl Louis Daubert, who in 1840 came to Quincy, Ill., from Pittsburg, Pa., where he had served a congregation organized in 1837. He also is numbered among the founders of the Synod, although his connection with it was soon severed. He stayed in Quincy only until 1841, when he assumed charge of St. Paul's Church in Louisville, Ky., organized in 1836, which he served for thirty years. He died in Louisville in 1876.

Finally mention must be made of John Gerber, who had come over to America in 1834 and who was associated with these other men in the founding of the Synod. His connection, however, was severed in a very short time and eventually he drifted into other folds.



Three of the Founders

These men were the fathers of our Evangelical Synod. They were men of a common faith, who came from the same country and were engaged in the same kind of work here. It would seem natural, therefore, that a feeling of fellowship would spring up among them, and that, considering the very trying circumstances under which they were laboring, the need of closer affiliation would suggest itself to them as a means of giving strength to their cause. Each and all of them had the same mission -to build and develop the Evangelical Church thru the preaching of the Gospel, and they wisely concluded that this could best be done by organizing their forces and rendering such aid to one another as could consistently be given. The same perplexing and disturbing questions confronted all; the experiences of one might be utilized with profit by the others; a closer bond of fellowship between them could not but strengthen their faith and increase their courage.

Considerations such as these moved these men to meet for the purpose of discussing their problems and to consider the advisability of forming an organization. The invitation to this conference, issued by Pastor Nollau, reads thus: "Our purpose is that as pastors of the same Church we should learn to know each other better and strive in common to further the welfare of the Evangelical Church in this country. Thru brotherly intercourse we should encourage and strengthen one another in the work for the glory of God and the Savior Jesus Christ as also for the salvation and blessing of the congregations in our care."

### **The Church Association Organized**

This call was followed by a meeting held in Gravois settlement, now known as Mehlville, Mo., on October 16th, 1840, which date has since been observed as the birthday of the Synod. Six pastors were present at this meeting, as follows:

Karl Louis Daubert,	Quincy, Ill.
Edward L. Nollau,	Gravois Settlement, Mo.
John Jacob Riess,	Centerville, Ill.
Herman Garlichs,	Femme Osage, Mo.
Philip Jacob Heyer,	St. Charles, Mo.
George W. Wall,	St. Louis, Mo.

After mature and prayerful consideration, it was decided by these men to organize themselves as "The German Evangelical Church Association of the West," Pastor Daubert was chosen president and Pastor Nollau secretary of the Association. Twenty four resolutions were adopted defining the scope and objects of the association, and the following doctrinal statement formulated and subscribed to by those present:

"The German Evangelical Church Association of the West, as a part of the Evangelical Church, defines the term 'Evangelical Church' as denoting that branch of the Christian Church which acknowledges the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments 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 Reformed Churches, the most important being the Augsburg confession, Luther's and the Heidelberg catechisms, insofar as they agree, but where they disagree, the German Evangelical Association of the West adheres strictly to the passages of Holy Scripture bearing on the subject, and avails itself of the liberty of conscience prevailing in the Evangelical Church."

This doctrinal statement and the resolutions adopted by the Association were later approved and subscribed to also by Pastor Joseph Rieger and Pastor John Gerber, neither of whom could be present at the organization meeting, the former, because absent in Germany, and the latter, because hindered by unavoidable causes.

During the first eight or ten years of its life this new Association may be said to have led a precarious existence, and no doubt both hopes and fears were entertained concerning its future. Meetings were held semi-annually with a fair degree of regularity, but for a long time it was impossible to muster more men together than had attended the original meeting. Pastor Nollau shortly after returned to Europe and later entered mission service in South Africa, where he remained for three years; Pastor Garlichs accepted a call in the East; pastor Daubert went to Louisville, while Pastor Heyer devoted himself to private pursuits and Pastor Gerber withdrew from the Association.

These losses, coming just during the first years of the Associa-

tion's existence could not but seriously menace its future usefulness and power, and would indeed have proved so, had not new members, even tho in small numbers, been added from time to time. The first of these gains was recorded in 1844, when a young pastor was sent over from the Basel Mission House. Five others followed in the next year. In this same year, 1845, there came two young men sent out by the Bremen Missionary Society, who in later years were to prove a tower of strength to the Association. These two young men were William Binner and Adolph Baltzer.

Binner found his first field of labor in Waterloo, Ill. In 1850 he became the first instructor at the theological seminary which had just been founded. He was also the first editor of the *Friedensbote*, serving in that capacity from 1850 until 1857.

Baltzer's first charge was in Long Prairie, Ill.; his second in St. Louis, from whence he, went to St. Charles, where he remained for eight years. He next became connected with our Seminary, serving as a professor for a term of years and was then elected the first President General of the Association, which office he held up to the time of his death, in 1880.

Dating from this time, there was a distinct progress to be recorded in the affairs of the Association, and at the eleventh conference, held in June 1847, the records showed the names of nine pastors with twenty congregations. At the meeting held in October 1847, the revised catechism, prepared by Pastor Baltzer, was finally accepted and ordered printed, and everybody felt that a new epoch had dawned in the history of the little German Evangelical Church Association of the West.

### **Growth of the Association**

While, as we have seen, the efforts of the German Evangelical Church Association had to do especially with the religious work among the Germans in the West, similar activities had been carried on in other sections of the country. These sections had perhaps had an experience much like those observed in Missouri and Illinois and had received aid in a similar way, thru one or the other missionary society in Germany. As these various communities sprang up their attention was naturally directed to



those already in existence, and because of their similar aims end objects they gravitated toward a common fellowship. Such movements resulted in the absorption by our body of a number of smaller church bodies, organized independently, but later uniting their forces with us in forming a larger denomination.

The first of these associations to unite with us was "The German Evangelical Association of Ohio," organized in 1850. This union was effected in 1858 at Cincinnati, Ohio, and was followed in 1860, by a union with "The United Evangelical Synod of the East." In neither case was the resultant increase in the number of pastors large, but these unions with smaller bodies were important nevertheless because they afforded a widening field for the establishment of Evangelical work.

Two further unions were accomplished shortly afterwards, one in 1872 with "The United Evangelical Synod of the Northwest," and the other with a second "United Evangelical Synod of the East," in 1866. By the first of these unions forty-eight pastors were added to the membership of the Association, and it was at this time that a change of name was decided upon, and the title, "German Evangelical Synod of the West" selected. Twenty-five pastors were added thru the union effected in 1872. By reason of these further acquisitions, the Synod now had its pastors distributed over a considerable portion of the country, and it was felt that, the name "Synod of the West" was rather too limited a designation. Another change in name was therefore determined upon, and in 1877 our Synod became officially known as "The German Evangelical Synod of North America," which name it has since borne.

At the time of its organization the Church Association held semi-annual meetings, but with the increase in membership and the distance separating the pastors from one another, many changes became necessary and had to be gradually introduced. The first division into Districts occurred in 1857 at Evansville, Ind., when an Eastern, a Central and a Northern District were organized. At this meeting it was also decided to hold a General Conference every two years, to be composed of delegates elected by these several Districts.

This arrangement was satisfactory until 1872, when further

changes and additions were required, caused by the increase of our membership thru the affiliation of other synods, Thus at the General Conference held in Quincy, Ill., in that year a Northeast and Northwest District were formed. Two years later, at Indianapolis, Ind., two further Districts were formed and the names of all Districts designated by serial numbers, first, second, etc. Later the number of Districts was increased to eleven, and again to thirteen. with the growth of the Synod new Districts were continually added, until today we have seventeen Districts, two Mission Districts and two Mission Territories.

It has already been stated that in the beginning a General Conference was held every two years. This conference was composed of one delegate for every six pastors and one for every six affiliated congregations. In 1874 triennial meetings of the General Conference were decided upon, and in 1877 the number of delegates reduced to one representative for each nine pastors and one for each like number of congregations affiliated with the Synod. A further change was made in 1898, when the number of delegates was again reduced, this time to one in twelve, and in 1901 it was decided that thereafter the General Conference should meet quadriennially.

From the date of its organization until the present time there has been a steady increase in the number of Evangelical pastors and congregations from year to year. The Synod has never aimed at phenomenal growth or sensational activity, but has rather sought spiritual achievement and normal development along the lines of service most needed by the people it aimed to reach. The exclusive use of the German language until a comparatively recent date, and the different methods of church work brought over from Germany, are causes that limited our field and restricted our influence against forming a closer relationship with our American sister denominations, while their earlier arrival has given them the start in numbers, resources and opportunities. But like them we are impelled by the spirit of Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified and therefore lay claim to a share of the vast work in which they are engaged. In the firm conviction that in the idea to which we owe our existence we have definite and valuable contribution to

offer to the development of American Christianity we are ready to serve and to labor with all who trust in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior and Lord of men. As the years have passed our denomination has secured for itself a place among the Churches in our land; and it is becoming more evident that it has a-work to perform, and that it is going about it in a thorough fashion.

The following table will show at a glance the growth of our Synod during the first seventy-five years of its existence:

Year	Pastors	Churches	
1847	9	20	(Affiliated only)
1866	122	68	
1874	304	204	
1883	427	535	(Affiliated and Independent)
1895	839	1075	
1905	912	1198	
1915	1036	1348	

The annual reports for 1916 give the following interesting statistics:

Congregations (main and secondary)	1,348
Congregations affiliated with Synod	989
Church buildings	1,253
School houses	725
Parsonages	908
Cemeteries	530
Individual members (not all Churches reporting)	95,122
Families	84,563
Souls	373,602
Communicants (1915)	274,787
Baptisms	18,461
Confirmations	12,275
Marriages	8,758
Funerals	12,694
Benevolences	\$312,591.32
Value of church property	\$16,067,752.55

The following societies were reported:

Number	Character	Membership
217	Men's societies	13,389
952	Ladies' Aid societies	60,650
35	Young Men's societies	1,247
95	Young Women's societies	3,098
569	Young People's societies	29,435
92	Missionary Societies	4,723
354	Sunday-school teachers societies	8,077

### Polity and Organization

The Evangelical mode of government is democratic and representative. Whatever authority the Synod exercises is derived by the consent of the churches that constitute its membership, expressed in the District conferences and, thru these, in the General Conference. Every congregation joining the Synod subscribes to the doctrines and precepts laid down in the general constitution and statutes, but each congregation is given the largest possible latitude in the administration of its internal affairs. In other words, each congregation is left largely to attend to its own immediate business and the Synod acts only in the capacity of adviser or counsellor.

The congregations within a certain territory are organized into District conferences for the purpose of furthering the work of the Church in that territory. At the present time we have nineteen such Districts, as follows: Atlantic, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, North Illinois, Ohio, Pacific; Pennsylvania, South Illinois, Texas, West Missouri, Wisconsin and the Washington and Colorado Mission Districts. In addition to these there are two mission territories, that of Montana and that of Canada. The District conferences meet annually and are composed of the pastors and one lay delegate from each church holding membership in the Synod.

The General Conference is the highest legislative body and is composed of representatives elected by the District conferences. It meets every four years and alone exercises supervision and control of the entire denominational work in all its aspects and phases.



The Presidents<sup>SEP</sup> General: 1. Dr. G. Steinert, 1862-66; 2. Pastor A. Baltzer, 1866-80; 3. Pastor C. Siebenpfeiffer, 1880-82; 4. Dr. J. Zimmermann, 1882-1901; 5. Dr. J. Pister, 1901-1914.

The executive management and authority both of the Districts and of the Synod in general are vested in the officers elected by them respectively. Numerous general boards look after those particular branches of work assigned to their supervision and care. All denominational institutions, societies and agencies are regulated and controlled in this manner.

The highest executive officer of the Synod is the President General. It may be stated, in passing, that our Church has been singularly fortunate in the men chosen for this most important position, Five men tried and true have filled this office, and all of them have shown capacity for leadership, unflinching devotion to duty and a loyalty that could not be surpassed.

The first, to fill this office, as already noted, was pastor Adolph Baltzer, who was elected in 1857, Dr. G. Steinert served from 1858-1866, and Pastor Baltzer again from 1866-1880. The value of his services can hardly be overestimated. It fell to his lot to lay the proper foundation for the future of the work and he did so with splendid vision and sagacious forethought, and the success of the Synod is to be credited in no small manner to the splendid beginnings made under his administration.

Upon the death of Pastor Baltzer, the office of President passed automatically to the vice president, Pastor C. Siebenpfeiffer, of Rochester, N.Y., and at the General Conference which followed shortly after he was elected for the full term. Unfortunately, Pastor Siebenpfeiffer's poor health compelled him to resign in 1882, and he was succeeded by Pastor J. Zimmermann of Burlington, Iowa.

Pastor Zimmermann was elected for a full term at the General Conference in 1883 and was re-elected until 1901, when he retired on account of his advanced age. He died on September 13th, 1909. For more than fifty years he was associated with the work of our Synod, nineteen of which he spent at its head. He was a true servant of the Master. His life was modest and unassuming, but he had deep religious convictions and his heart was brave and true.

Our next President General was Jacob Pister, of Cincinnati, Ohio, elected at the general conference in 1901, who filled the office up to the time of his death, which occurred on October 8th,

1914. Dr. Pister was in every respect a man among men and qualified with gifts of learning as well as executive capacity, old-fashioned in his religious beliefs because he believed that the world even today needs the old-fashioned Gospel.

Upon the death of Dr. Pister, Pastor J. Baltzer, of St. Louis, Mo., succeeded to the office thus made vacant, having been elected as Vice-president at the last General Conference. Thus a son occupies an office that thirty-five years ago was filled by his father, Pastor Baltzer is of proven worth, sound judgment, familiar with the traditions of our denomination, and fully alive to the needs that this day and age bring with it.

### **The Question of Name**

It is a peculiar fact, and one important enough to be worthy of mention, that in the minds of a number of people our denomination is often confused with the Lutherans. We are not Lutherans, and we have no desire to be known as such.

This lack of discrimination is probably caused by the fact that Luther takes such high rank among the Reformers and is commonly regarded as the founder of Protestantism. Being a German, and having transformed the religious life of Germany, it is concluded without any further inquiry or investigation that the Protestant churches in Germany are all Lutheran; and since our church finds its origin in Germany we must naturally be Lutherans. That such deductions are inaccurate, we think has already been amply proved in these pages. Another reason for this confusion is the fact that Luther is looked upon as a great authority in our Church and is often appealed to. We perhaps hear the opinions and views of Luther cited more frequently than those of all the other reformers put together, But this does not make us Lutherans any more than the quotation of the Apostle Paul's views would make us Paulists. We cite Paul and Luther, but we also cite Zwingli and Calvin, Knox and Wesley. We follow these leaders, but only as they follow Christ, and thus we seek to obtain every possible profit out of their own rich experiences. We deeply appreciate the monumental labors of Luther; his life and spirit are woven into the texture of our religious thought and experience, but such appreciation does not require the sub-

stitution of his name for that which was the essence of his work, namely to give the world the gospel, or evangel. And so we desire to be known only as Evangelicals, and our Synod as a part of the great Evangelical Church.

The Evangelical Church does not claim to be the only true Church and does not deny to others the right of existence. The body of the Church has many members, but it has only one Head, that is, Christ. We claim for ourselves the privilege of being called a member of that body because of our connection with its Head, and we grant all others who recognize the same Head the same right to membership in, and as a part of that body, that we ourselves possess. This is neither indifference nor a disregard of the fundamental and essential things that make up the tenets of the Christian faith, but it is a relegation of relatively unimportant and inconsequential matters to a sphere where they will not render impossible the consummation of a greater spiritual, even if not organic, union that all Christendom with a few notable exceptions is striving for.

The principles of our Church are dear to us, and they are loyally defended by our people, not however by discrediting others who may hold views not exactly in accord with our own. If Christ be given His true place in these Churches, whatever their denominational name or character, we are ready to greet them and co-operate with them as Christian brethren.

The following statement will give the estimate held by our members concerning their church:

“We prefer our Evangelical Church because it is that denomination which, with others, accepts Christ as the only Head of the Church, and the Word of God as the only infallible guide of faith and life; because it grants freedom of thought regarding disputed doctrines that are not essential to saving faith; and because it extends the hand of fellowship to all Christians, regardless of denominational creeds and ordinances, seeking to fulfill the prayer of our Master: ‘That they may all be one; as Thou, Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.’ John 17:21.”



### **Denominational Institutions and Agencies**

The work of the Synod is carried on by means of various agencies and institutions, all of which, generally speaking, are under the control of the General Conference, which elects the various officers or boards to supervise and conduct the work.

What churches, singly and alone, without organization and co-operation could not possibly do, no matter how great their number, can be accomplished with comparative ease when the resources of all are combined for one definite object. The necessity of such denominational membership is, therefore, self-evident. The greatest possible efficiency can only be achieved when we leave the greatest possible membership and the closest possible co-operation. Even such churches as refuse to become members of the Synod, for reasons which to them seem good and wise, could not possibly enjoy many of the privileges they now have, had not other churches thought otherwise and done that which they are so averse to doing, namely, affiliate with the Synod and contribute their share to the success of the work that the Synod so faithfully is endeavoring to do.

With the same right that congregations might claim their right to remain "independent," individuals in their midst who are urged to become members of their churches might prefer to remain "independent." The conditions are exactly analogous. What the individuals are to a congregation, that the churches are to a denomination. The inherent strength of a congregation is its membership, pledged to the performance of certain duties; it is upon these that it must rely in every work that it undertakes. The strength of a denomination is measured by the number of churches holding membership, who have accepted certain responsibilities in common with all the other churches in that body, and it is upon such as have a heart-interest in the work, and prove it by their actions, that a denomination must in the end always depend in the carrying on of its denominational enterprises.

A congregation does not lose its independence by affiliating with the Synod because the Synod has very little to do with the local and internal affairs of any congregation; the true sphere of the Synod's work is that of carrying on as an organization or

combination of congregations a denominational work which cannot be effectively done even by any number of congregations as separate units.

The sphere of our denominational work covers every possible large of usefulness and endeavor in so far as we have been able, with the means at our disposal, to organize and carry on such work. Judged by our membership, we believe that this work will compare favorably with that of other denominations. Many branches of our activities are still in the formative period, but all give promise of ultimate success.

In order that those who are interested in our denomination may have some conception with respect to the extensive scope of work and effort to which our Synod stands committed, brief statements concerning our denominational institutions and denominational agencies will here be given.

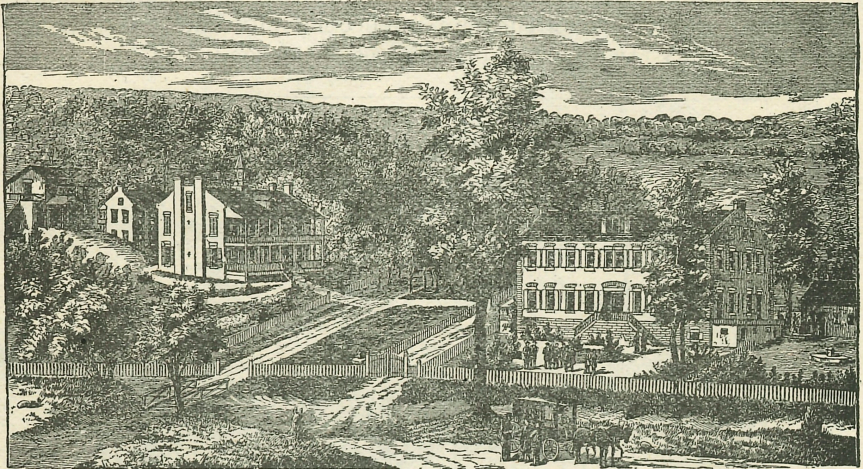
### **Eden Theological Seminary**

The necessity of training men for the Gospel ministry in the Evangelical Church was of course recognized by our Synod from the beginning. The first pastors, as we have seen, came from Germany, and many others, who have done invaluable services in our fold, received their education there and later followed the pioneers who first led the way to the United States. This source of supply could not, however, be altogether relied upon, nor continued indefinitely. Moreover, it was realized that men who had grown up amid the surroundings in which they were to labor and acquainted with the conditions peculiar to this country were very necessary to insure the perpetuation of the work already so auspiciously begun. To this there was added of course the moral obligation resting upon every Church to train its own workers for its own use.

Thus as early as 1849 Pastor Binner at his home in Waterloo, Ill., had gathered a class of young men whom he instructed in the essentials necessary for those desiring the office of pastor. Plans looking to the organization of a theological school were formulated in 1848, and the cornerstone of our first seminary, located near Femme Osage, in Warren County, Mo., laid on July 4th, 1849. Prof. Wm. Binner was chosen as first professor and on June 28th,

1850, with seven students, took possession of the completed building.

For thirty-three years the seminary was continued at its original place, but gradually, with a continually growing student body, it became apparent that on account of its inaccessible location and lack of room and equipment, a change would have to be made. The matter was thoroughly discussed at the General Conference in 1880, with the result that a nineteen-acre plot of ground on the St. Charles Rock Road, just outside St. Louis, was bought

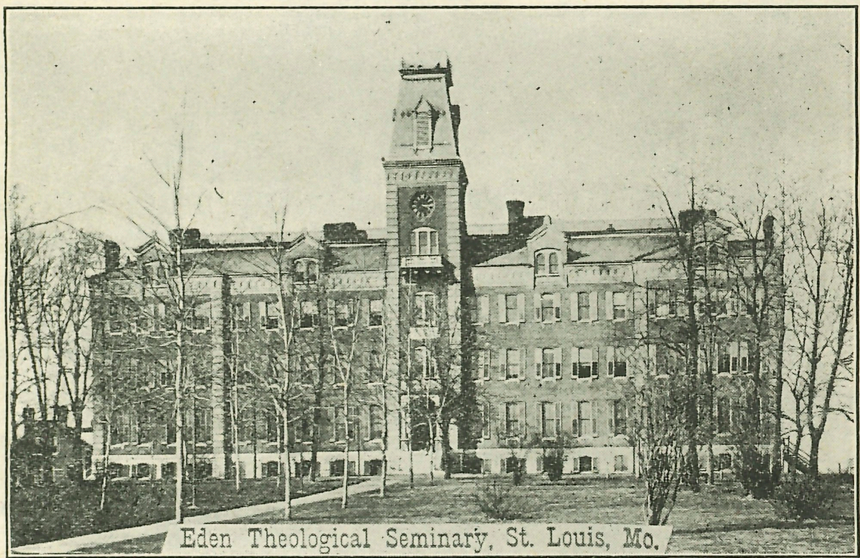


The old Seminary and College Buildings at Marthasville, Mo.

and preparations begun for a new seminary building. The cornerstone of the new building was laid on April 8th, 1883, and the completed building was dedicated on October 28th, of the same year. Since that time this institution has been known as Eden Seminary.

Several names are notable in the history of our Seminary. Its early success was largely due to the splendid services rendered the institution by Professor Andreas Irion. He entered the faculty in 1853 and until his death, seventeen years later, labored

and wrought for the welfare of the work with a zeal and skill that could not be surpassed. Prof. E. Otto, who passed to his heavenly reward on July 10, 1916, was also connected with this institution years back, first as a professor and then as director. Dr. L. Haeberle, known and loved by all, especially by the many now in the ministry of the Church, whom he taught during the course of his long professorship, came to the head of the institution in 1879 and served the institution continuously until 1902. Prof. W. Becker succeeded Dr. Haeberle as director, after having held a professorship for nineteen years prior to that time, so that the total length of his service extends thru a period of thirty-three years. Prof. Becker's splendid intellectual gifts and fine executive capacity are a most valuable asset of the seminary.



The first class to graduate from the of seminary in 1851 was composed of two young men who had been instructed by one professor. In 1915-16 there were seventy-eight young men in the seminary, instructed by four German and one English professor. The average number of graduates per year is about twenty-five. This will indicate to us not only how the seminary has grown, but also the supreme importance of the work done by it in supplying ministers to the congregations of our Synod. The present in-





Directors of the Theological Seminary: 1. W. Binner, 1850-57;  
2. A. Irion, 1857-1870; 3. J. Bank, 1871-72; 4. E. Otto, 1872-79; 5.  
L. Haerber, 1879-1902; 6. W. Becker, 1902-.

structors are Professor W, Baur, S. D. Press and F. Saeger. The vacancy caused by the death of Prof. G. Braendli has not yet been filled.

### **Elmhurst College**

With the organization of a theological school a most immediate and pressing need in our Synod was fairly met, but it was felt that the educational facilities must still be considerably improved in order to give prospective teachers and pastors the best

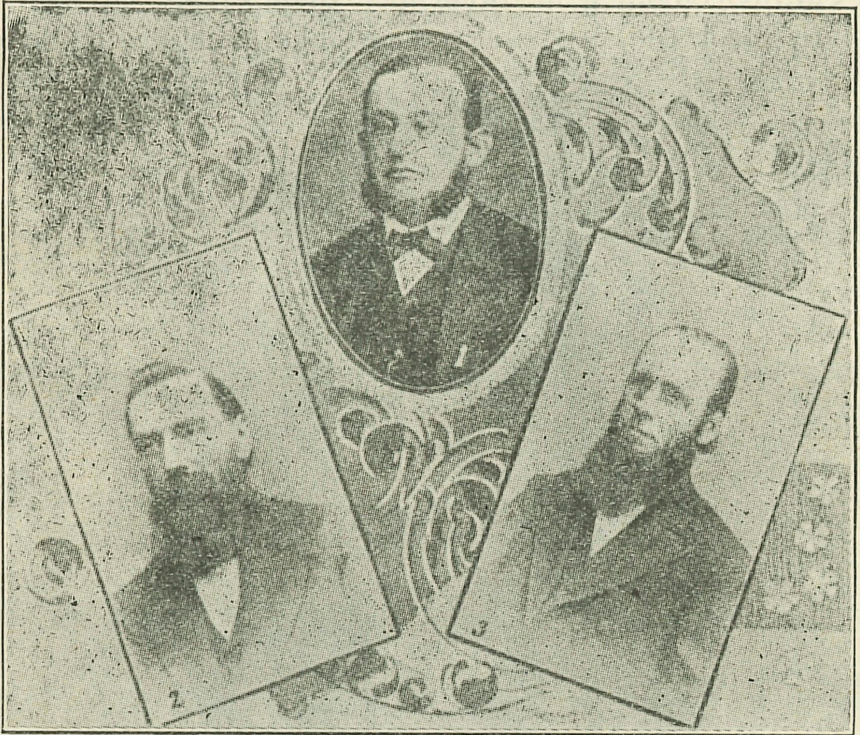


**Irion Hall, Elmhurst, Illinois**

possible opportunities to equip themselves for their high and sacred calling. These considerations prompted the organization of a denominational college in connection with the Seminary in 1858. In 1862 it was discontinued, chiefly because of conditions brought about by the Civil War. An Evangelical academy was established in 1867 at Cincinnati, Ohio, chiefly for the training of parochial school teachers. The work was begun under the direction of Pastor E. Roos and the enrollment the first year consisted



of twenty students. The first class, five in number, was graduated in the fall of 1868. This school was transferred to Evansville, Ind., in 1871. Plans were under way for a substantial building at this point and greatly enlarging the efficiency of the school when the Evangelical Synod of the Northwest united with our Synod and by the terms of that union turned over to us a school already developed, known as Melancthon Seminary, located at Elmhurst, Ill., sixteen miles from Chicago.



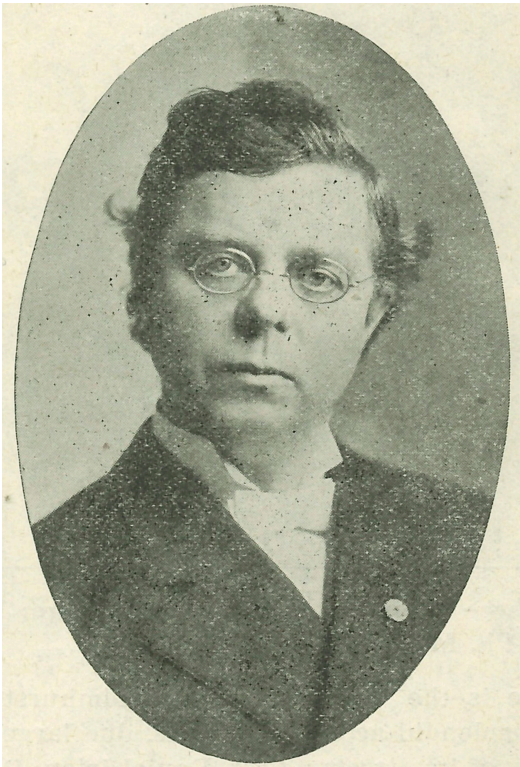
**The first three Directors of Elmhurst College: 1. Rev. C. F. Kranz; 2. Rev. Ph. Meusch; 3. Rev. P. Goebel.**

This college is the "Proseminar," or Elmhurst College. It has a record of splendid accomplishments, due largely to the unexcelled capacity of its director, prof. Daniel Irion, D. D., who has stood at its head for twenty-eight years. For the 1915-16 term the institution had 163 students, and the teaching body was composed of eight instructors, professors H. Brodt, C. Bauer, G. Stanger, G. A. Sorrick, H. Arlt, H. Breitenbach and J. Schmale. The institution aims to afford young men the preparatory train-

ing necessary to enter the theological seminary, and also to prepare young men for the work of parochial school teachers. The campus of the college comprises twenty-eight acres, and the facilities of the college are being continually improved to meet the requirements of the best educational methods of the present day.

### **Fort Collins academy**

The youngest of our educational institutions is the academy at Fort Collins, Colo., which was opened in 1914. This school is designed to meet the needs of young men who desire to equip



**Rev. J. Jans, Director, Fort Collins Academy**

themselves for Gospel service among their own people, the Russo-Germans, who within the last two or three decades have settled in large numbers in the region between the Arkansas river and northern. Montana.



The Fort Collins Academy owns a tract of land comprising twenty acres with substantial buildings that are sufficient for present needs. The work, however, is only begun and is capable of a wonderful development, as time will prove. The institution is under the direction of Pastor J. Jans, and during the first year twenty students were enrolled.

### **Field Secretary**

Our seminaries have a capable and efficient field secretary in the person of Pastor S. A. John, of Ann Arbor, Mich. This office was created at the last session of the General Conference in recognition of a need that was urgent and emphatic. All the educational institutions are in need of larger and more regular financial support, and Pastor John will be glad to correspond with any one interested in their work.

### **Home Missions**

In the plan for the extension of the Synod's work the missionary idea is of course the dominant factor. Both home and foreign mission work is emphasized in an equal degree and stands correlated in the conception that the Church has concerning its duty with respect to building Christ's kingdom.

Our Synod is the product of home missionary enterprises in a peculiar degree. The labors of our fathers in the Church were missionary and devoted to the welfare of those among whom they felt themselves called to work. For many years there were no settled, well-established congregations and the work of our pastors was one of sowing the seed on new and distant fields. In the course of time this seed brought forth its fruit in the form of self-sustaining congregations, and these in turn aided in spreading the Gospel seed in other hopeful fields. Such efforts were never without their reward, and by 1859 the seed and opportunities of home missionary enterprises had grown to such an extent that it was considered necessary and wise to organize them as a special branch of our denominational work and to undertake home missionary activities in a definite manner.

Considerably more than half of our congregation owe their origin to home mission work. Many congregations who at the

outset could not have hoped to support a pastor, and who indeed would have found it impossible even to organize, were supplied with a home mission worker. It was expected of course that such congregations would contribute as much as they could toward the support of the pastor and that they would endeavor to become independent as quickly as possible, but in many cases the salary of the pastor for the first year or two and a portion of his salary, for five or six years longer was paid out of the mission treasury. In many other ways substantial help was given to weak but promising congregations to put them on their feet and carry them thru the first and usually most anxious years of their life.

It stands to reason that such congregations, once self-sustaining and well on the way toward success, should not forget the hand that nourished them in infancy, and it is for this reason that the home mission work has always found great favor among our churches and that it has been done with increased success and broadened scope from year to year.

New churches have been organized thru the agency of the Home Mission Board in many of the larger cities with every promise of success, and in rural districts also, where large contingents of Germans may be found. The Board has been quick to see its opportunities for developing new congregations, and in every undertaking they have been loyally supported by the more than hundred workers who stand in the service of the Board. The Board in late years has devoted itself with special energy to the Northwest territory, and in many places in that region we already have thriving congregations. This is true of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, as well as Colorado and Oklahoma. In California we have a good foothold and in Texas the work is so far advanced that already the churches there for years have composed a separate District. Evangelical churches are to be found in Canada, as well as in Mississippi and Florida and everywhere our workers are busy extending the borders of our Synod.

Our statistics show that during the past ten years eighty-nine parishes, embracing 139 churches, have become self-supporting. According to the report for 1916 102 parishes, comprising 141 congregations are being supported out of the home mission treas-

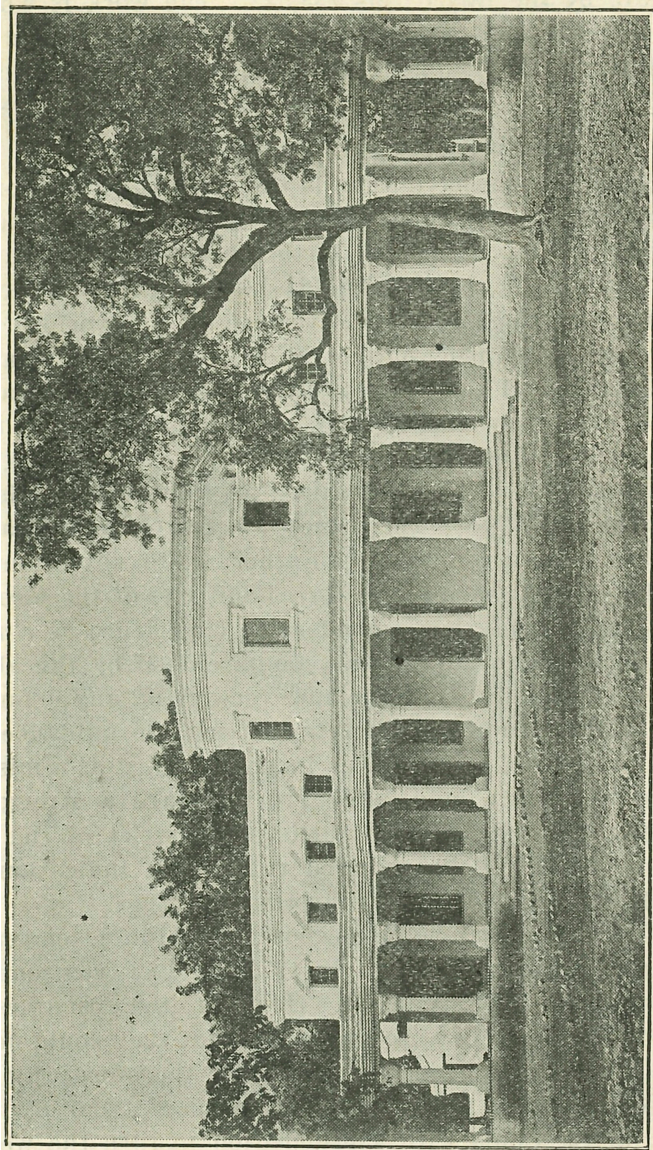
ury either wholly or in part. The amount expended for this purpose in 1915 by the Board was \$34,642. The work is wholly dependent on voluntary contributions and deserves the wholehearted interest and support of all of our churches and their members.

### **Our Foreign Mission Work**

Our Synod, as we have seen, is the product of missionary activity, and it is therefore perfectly natural that the missionary spirit should be an important factor in its development. This was true not only in the home field, but also with respect to the last command of the Master, "Go ye into all the world." At first the missionary offerings went to the missionary organizations in Germany which had sent the first missionary pastors, but when the Synod had grown sufficiently strong a field was providentially opened for it.

In 1867 there had been organized an independent missionary society in the city of New York, known as the German Evangelical Mission Society, and composed of Lutherans, Presbyterians, Moravians and Reformed members. Rev. Lohr, one of the most active members, had already had considerable experience as a missionary in western Bengal. He was commissioned by the above society and sent to India, without however having any definite field assigned to him, being told merely to trust the guidance of God to show him his field. He arrived in Bombay just as a missionary conference was being held, and here he heard a strong appeal read, asking for help in the Chattisgarh district of the Central Province of India. Lohr received this as an indication of the divine will and decided to locate in that field.

Rev. Lohr labored alone in his chosen field for eleven years with but moderate outward success, In 1879 a helper was sent him in the person of the Rev. A. Stoll. However, the resources of the German Mission Society were so limited that they could no longer carry on the work successfully. In 1883, therefore, this society sent two delegates to the General Conference of our Synod then in session at St. Louis with a proposition to turn the work over to us. This offer was accepted by a vote that was almost unanimous, and on May 20, 1884, the formal transfer was made.



**High School, Raipur, India**

At that time there were only two stations, Bistrampur and Raipur, and besides the two missionaries there were only six native helpers. The Bistrampur station had one out-station, two schools, a church building, a small hospital and other necessary buildings for the missionary and his family and helpers. The records showed 340 converts, 100 pupils in the schools and five native teachers. At Raipur, under Pastor Stoll, there was only a small congregation of about ninety souls and one native teacher who instructed about forty-five children in a building for that purpose.

When the Synod assumed charge immediate efforts were put forth to develop the work. In 1885 two new men were sent out: Pastors Theo. Tanner and J. Jost. A new station, Chandkuri, was established in 1886, and here also a leper asylum was founded in 1897. Further stations established were, Parsabhader, in 1893; Mahasamuadra in 1908, and Sakti in 1909. The reports for 1915 give the following survey of the field: 12 missionaries, 6 women missionaries, 10 mission homes, 7 main stations, 65 out-stations, 4,012 church members, 74 native unordained preachers, 192 native teachers, 62 schools, 4,211 day scholars, 2,817 Sunday-school scholars, 79 converts baptized last year, and 1,902 communicants.

Our missionaries not only preach the Gospel, but also teach in the schools, practice medicine, work among the lepers and outcasts, conduct orphanages, go upon preaching tours and engage in evangelistic work. They are ably assisted by the women missionaries, who along with their other duties, engage especially in Zenana work. Bible colporteurs and Bible women, native preachers and catechists are of course all utilized to the greatest possible degree. The war has greatly injured the foreign mission work, thru the interning of two missionaries, and thru loss of interest, and the need of means and of workers is especially urgent.

### **Church Extension Fund**

The Church Extension Fund was established by the General Conference in 1889. Its work during the first years was small and unpretentious, but during the past ten years it has grown in a

most satisfactory manner and it now boasts of a working capital of nearly a hundred thousand dollars.

The need of such a fund will be better understood when we realize how hard it often is for weak and struggling congregations to acquire the necessary church property to insure their growth and development. Under almost any circumstances it is always hard for a new congregation to obtain the necessary means to build, and borrowed money, if it is possible to get it at all, must be paid for at a higher rate of interest than can be afforded. The result is that such congregations are often put in jeopardy and not infrequently it has been the cause of their complete failures and final dissolution.

Our Church Extension Fund meets, so far as it possibly can, the needs presented in such cases. The fund, under certain stipulated conditions and the proper guarantee, loans sums of money to needy and promising mission churches at a low rate of interest. This money, however, must be paid back within a certain time in annual installments, so that at the end of a certain period it is back in the fund and can be loaned to other applicants. This money is therefore never idle, but is working all the time helping congregations in various parts of the country to acquire church property and equip themselves for doing their spiritual work. The fund is therefore really a missionary agent and helper, and it is of course perfectly clear that the greater the fund, the greater the service that it can render and the greater the resultant good both to the churches benefitted by the fund and to the Synod itself. The Church Extension Fund deserves well at the hands of our people, and as its purposes become better known it will no doubt receive still greater consideration.

### **The Immigrant Mission**

Our Immigrant, or Harbor Mission, located at Baltimore, Md., was established in 1887 by Pastors E. Huber and C. Kirschmann. At first the work was carried on in connection with that of Christ Evangelical Church, whose pastor at the same time performed the functions of missionary in connection with the immigrant work. The General Conference in 1901 authorized the erection of a suitable Immigrant Mission Home. This building

was completed in 1904 and from that period the missionary, Pastor Otto Apitz, who had already been connected with the mission since 1889, has given his entire time and attention to the work.

The work of the Harbor Mission is to render service to immigrants arriving at the pier; to immigrants who remain temporarily at the mission house; to immigrants in the city of Baltimore; to sailors on steamships in the harbor, and to guests departing to or returning from Europe. The Mission Home has a well equipped reading room, distributes free reading matter and affords a place of rest and recreation. The missionary visits the sick and performs all other services consistent with his office. The mission has always maintained co-operative relations with the Evangelical Seamen's Mission of Berlin, which have proved mutually profitable. The commissions from the sale of steamship tickets have been the chief source of income. Voluntary offerings for the work are also earnestly solicited.

### **The Ministerial Pension and Relief Fund**

The moral obligation imposed upon the Church with respect to the pastors who have grown old in the service of the Master has always been recognized and accepted, and we say this to its full and lasting credit. Pastors as a rule cannot lay up for themselves treasures on earth, and the problem of what is to become of them in their declining years, or what will become of their dependents in the event of their death, would be one of great moment and concern were it not for the knowledge that the Church which they have faithfully served will attempt to shield them to the full measure of its capacity against dire want and need. This assurance the pastors of the Evangelical Synod find in their Ministerial Pension and Relief Fund,

This fund was established in 1857. It was superseded by a fund created in 1874 by the General Conference, and in 1883 the purpose of the fund was changed to include also the teachers and their widows and orphans. This fund was maintained by contributions not only from the congregations, but also from pastors and teachers, and the relief given was based in each case upon

the needs of the individual applicants. This system was followed until 1914, when the fund was completely reorganized, and separated practically into two parts: 1. the Pension fund, and 2. the Relief fund. The Pension fund is supported by graduated annual fees paid by the members according to their terms of service, in addition to which it receives ten thousand dollars annually from the net profits of the Eden Publishing House. A fixed pension, graduated according to the term of service, is given from this fund to incapacitated or retired pastors and, after their death, to their widows and orphans.

Contributions from individuals and congregations are turned into the Relief fund, and are used in cases of special need where the amount paid out by the Pension fund is not sufficient to meet the emergencies of the occasion.

In 1915 over \$20,000 was paid out for ministerial pensions and relief, distributed among 92 pastors, 154 widows and 68 orphans. This is comparatively a very small amount for so beneficent a work and the average per individual seems low indeed. However, limited the the fund may be in its operations, it has held out a helping hand to many a worthy soul and has succeeded in protecting those given into its charge at least against urgent and immediate distress and suffering.

### **Week-day Christian Education**

The religious training of the youth has always been one of the cardinal principles in the scheme of work followed by our Synod. There are many divergent views in American denominations with respect to this question, but it is true also that it is one of the most, important problems that concerns all churches alike; for if we are to guard against spiritual atrophy in future generations means must be found here and now to that end, and surely there is no better safeguard, than the thorough and systematic instruction of the youth in the fundamentals of religion.

During 1915 509 pastors taught week-day school, in which of course the religious phase of the instruction was especially emphasized, and 724 gave catechetical instruction. The number of men and women teachers in the parochial schools was 151, and the



number of scholars was 17,985. The number of children in the confirmation classes was 9,793. It seems evident that this work does not receive the attention and support that its importance deserves, and it is carried on under great discouragements, but it is hoped that our congregations will better appreciate its tremendous possibilities and rally to its support,

### **Sunday Schools**

As early as 1854 we find seventeen Sunday-schools in existence in our Synod. However, the parochial school was looked upon as the chief means of religious instruction and the progress of our Sunday-schools during the first year of our history was therefore comparatively slow.

The impetus to a wider efficiency in the Sunday-school work was given in 1894 when the General Conference appointed a Sunday-school board composed of three members. The effort to bring order and system into the work really dates from that time. New and better methods were agitated and the teacher body encouraged to strive for greater efficiency. A teacher training course of three volumes was prepared in German, and this was followed by an English teacher training course, prepared by Mrs. E. K. Bomhard, entitled "Apt to Teach," which has just been published.

The General Conference of 1909 gave increased authority to the Sunday-school Board, and it is under their direction that a full list of Sunday-school periodicals and lesson helps has been prepared for all grades of the Sunday-school. (See Sunday-school literature page 63). Our literature now compares favorably with that of any other denomination. Another forward step was the appointment of a general secretary of Sunday-school work in the person of Rev. Theo. J. Mayer, which has already shown itself to be a strong forward movement in the development of our Sunday-school work. The first Summer Training School for Sunday-school Teachers was held in Elmhurst in 1915. The General Secretary, at 1718 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis, will gladly give aid or information in regard to the work.

The statistics show that we have in our Synod 1,302 Sunday-



**1. Dr. E. A. R. Torsch, President of the Evangelical Brotherhood; 2. Rev. W. N. Dresel, President of the Evangelical League; 3. Rev. Paul Pfeiffer, Chairman of the Central Sunday School Board; 4. Rev. Theodore Mayer, General Sunday School Secretary.**

schools, 13,382 teachers and 134,691 scholars. Sunday-school unions are organized in various Districts, meeting annually or semi-annually, and affording much help and inspiration to Sunday-school workers.

### **The Evangelical Brotherhood**

Local Brotherhoods were organized in various churches of our denomination as early as 1905 and 1906. Their aims, however, were numerous and divergent. With the growth of the federation idea a common aim and purpose was sought after, one that would express itself in terms of service for the Church, both local and at large. The development of this idea brought into being the first local federation, formed by the brotherhoods of New Orleans in 1909, and known as the Brotherhood of St. John. Next followed the organization of a District federation, that of Indiana in 1911; then that of the Atlantic District in 1912 and that of the Ohio District in 1913.

With numerous District federations in existence the next logical step was the organization of a national Brotherhood, and this occurred at the General Conference held at St. Peter's Church in Louisville, Ky., in 1913. The first national convention of the Brotherhood was held in October, 1914, at Evansville, Ind., and proved epoch-making in many respects. It did much to show that the national organization rested upon a stable basis and was a very needful agency in promoting the work of the Synod.

The records show that at the present time there are 217 men's societies in the Church with a membership of 13,398. This number should be considerably increased as the Brotherhood idea gains ground and men are brought to see the possibilities of a Brotherhood organization and the good that can be accomplished by it within the sphere of their respective congregations. Dr. E. A. R. Torsch, 714 Starks Bldg., Louisville, Ky., is president of the National organization and will be glad to furnish any desired information.

### **The Evangelical League**

The Christian Endeavor movement, launched more than thirty years ago, was the first organization seeking to meet the

problem of keeping young people within the pale of the Church. Various denominations were soon able to see the value of the idea and were not slow to call into life denominational organizations seeking to encourage and develop the growth of the spiritual life of young Christians and stimulate and increase their loyalty toward the Church.

In our own Church young people's societies have not been a novelty for three decades, but the systematic organization and federation of these societies into a national organization is a matter of more recent years. A committee to bring this to pass was appointed at the General Conference held at Quincy, Ill., in 1901. This committee met the following year at Cleveland, Ohio, when plans were fully matured and a general organization, known at that time as the "Jugendbund" effected. The aim of the League was declared to be: "To bring the young people of the Synod under the Word of God; to increase their knowledge of the truths of Christianity; to induce them to lead earnest Christian lives, and to secure their active co-operation in the upbuilding of the kingdom of God."

Dating from that time the League has made steady and gratifying progress. Six national conventions have been held, as follows: At Washington, Mo., in 1904; at Buffalo, N. Y., in 1906; at Evansville, Ind., in 1908; at Columbus, Ohio, in 1910; at St. Louis, Mo., in 1912, and at Louisville, Ky., in 1914. At the St. Louis convention the official name was changed from "Jugendbund" to "The Evangelical League." The 1916 convention at Cleveland promises to mark a great step forward in the development of the movement. For further information write to Rev. W. N. Dresel, president of the Evangelical League, 31 Lower Third St., Evansville, Ind.

Among the accomplishments standing to the credit of the League are: the memorial church at Raipur, India, built at a cost of \$2,300, and the church at Ogden, Utah, built at a cost of \$5,000. At the present time the League is engaged in an effort to raise \$10,000 as a gift to our educational institutions. Several District leagues contribute munificently toward the support of our foreign missionaries.

The 1915 reports show 589 young people's societies with

29,436 members; 36 young men's societies with 1,247 members and 95 young women's societies with 3,098 members, or a total of 719 societies with 33,780 members.

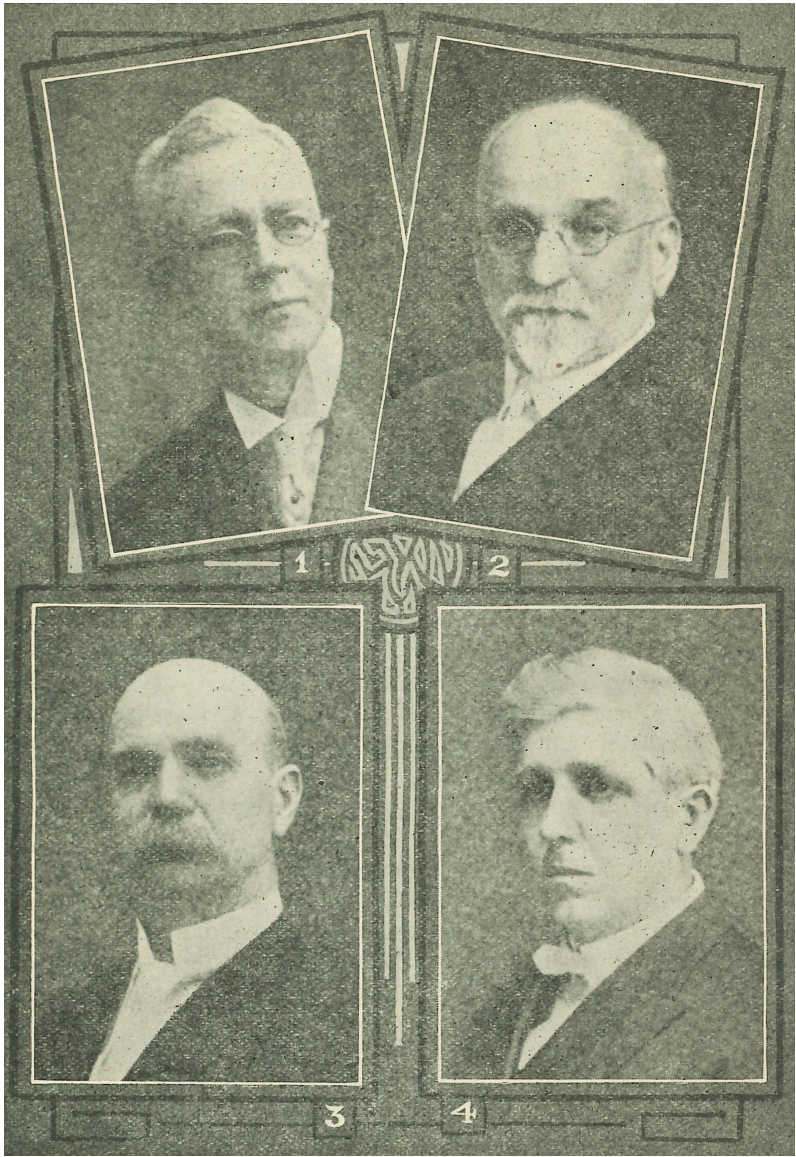
### **Denominational Publications**

The most important publication of our Synod is "Der Friedensbote," the official German organ of our denomination. The first issue of this paper appeared on January 1st, 1850, and it has been published continuously since, first as a monthly, then as a semi-monthly and later as a weekly. In its original form it contained four pages, later it was changed to eight pages and again to sixteen. During the early years of its existence the paper was edited by the director of the seminary, and later the work was done by one or more pastors in addition to their other duties, notably by the Rev. R. A. John, but as its importance and circulation increased, it was found necessary to have an editor devoting his whole time to the publication. Since 1898 the present editor, the Rev. Dr. Wm. Theo. Jungk, has filled this office. The Friedensbote has a circulation of nearly 30,000 copies, and is considered one of the best German religious weeklies, certainly it is the most widely read, in the United States.

Other German publications are: "Der Evangelische Kalender," "Magazin fuer Evangelische Theologie und Kirche," "Jugendfreund," and "Christliche Kinderzeitung" and "Unsere Kleinen" for the Sunday-school. Besides these there is published for use in the German churches and Sunday-schools the following material: "Gesangbuch der Evangelischen Kirche," "Liederbuch and Liederkranz fuer Sonntagschulen," "Singet dem Herrn" for Young People's societies, "Evangelischer Katechismus," "Biblische Geschichten," "Geschichten der Bibel" (Bible Stories), "Lektionsheft" (International Lessons), and "Vorbereitungs Kursus fuer Sonntagschullehrer."

The official English organ of our Synod is The Evangelical Herald, edited by the Rev. J. H. Horstmann. This paper was formerly published as the "Messenger of Peace," the first number of which appeared on January 1st, 1902, as a monthly. Later it was changed to a bi-weekly, and on January 1st, 1914, to a weekly under the new name given above. This paper seeks to do for our





The Editors: 1. Dr. Wm. T. Jungk; 2. Pastor Karl Kissling; 3. Pastor J. H. Horstmann; 4. Pastor Henry Katterjohn.

English-speaking people what the "Friedensbote" does for our Germans and has proven itself a necessary and welcome addition to our denominational publications. It is the only English periodical that gives full information in regard to all the work in which the Evangelical Church is engaged. The price is one dollar per year. The Evangelical Year Book is a 128-page annual review of progress in all branches of Evangelical church work, and contains in addition much other interesting and helpful reading matter, besides a complete directory of pastors and churches, the General and District officers, and all the denominational boards. It is published in October, and maybe secured from any Evangelical pastor for only fifteen cents, or three cents additional for postage if ordered direct from Eden Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The English Sunday-school publications are edited by the Rev. H. Katterjohn, whose services were engaged by the editorial commission in 1913 because of the greatly increased work incident to the expansion of our Sunday-school publications. The English Sunday-school publications are as follows: The Evangelical Tidings, The Evangelical Companion, The Junior Friend, The Children's Comrade, Rev. E. Kockritz, editor, and the following quarterlies: Junior, Intermediate, Senior and Home Department Quarterlies, also Bible Story Lessons (a four year course), Colored Lesson Pictures for the Bible Story Lessons and The Advanced Lesson Quarterly. (for senior and adult classes). The Evangelical Teacher is designed to help Evangelical Sunday-school teaching as well as all other educational work. The following material is also published for English churches and Sunday-schools: The Evangelical Hymnal, Christian Hymns, The Evangelical Catechism, Faithful unto Death, Bible Stories and Apt to Teach, a teacher training course. Catalog, price lists, sample copies and all information in regard to Evangelical publications may be secured from Eden Publishing House, 1716-18 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Our denominational publications, as will be seen, cover every possible field of service both for German and English churches. Our Synod has responded in an adequate manner to the call for Evangelical literature for Evangelical churches, and now that

this literature is being furnished it devolves upon all loyal Evangelical churches to use it and give to it the place that it deserves. Such support will unfailingly rebound to their own benefit, for it will be the means of continually improving and bettering these publications so that they will be able to meet in a yet better way the demands made upon them.

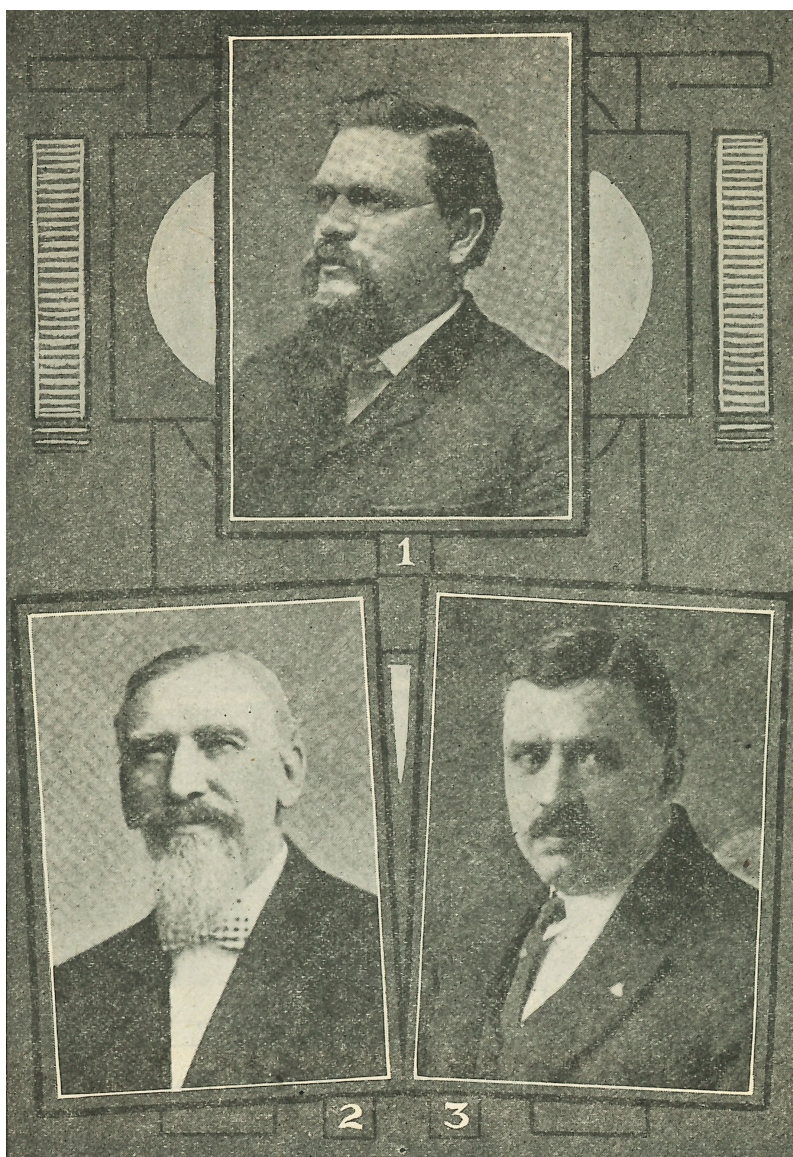
### **Publishing House**

Eden Publishing House, 1716-1718 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis, Mo., is our denominational publishing house and book depository. This establishment is the outgrowth of the action of the General Conference in 1889, by which a Board of Publication was created to carry on the publishing business for the Synod. This Board bought the book and stationary business of Mr. A. G. Toennies in St. Louis and made him manager of the concern. Soon after it was necessary to lease a larger building to carry on the growing business, and in 1895 the General Conference authorized the election of a suitable building at the present location. This building was completed in 1896, and has been added to from time to time until today it is in every respect a complete printing and binding establishment.

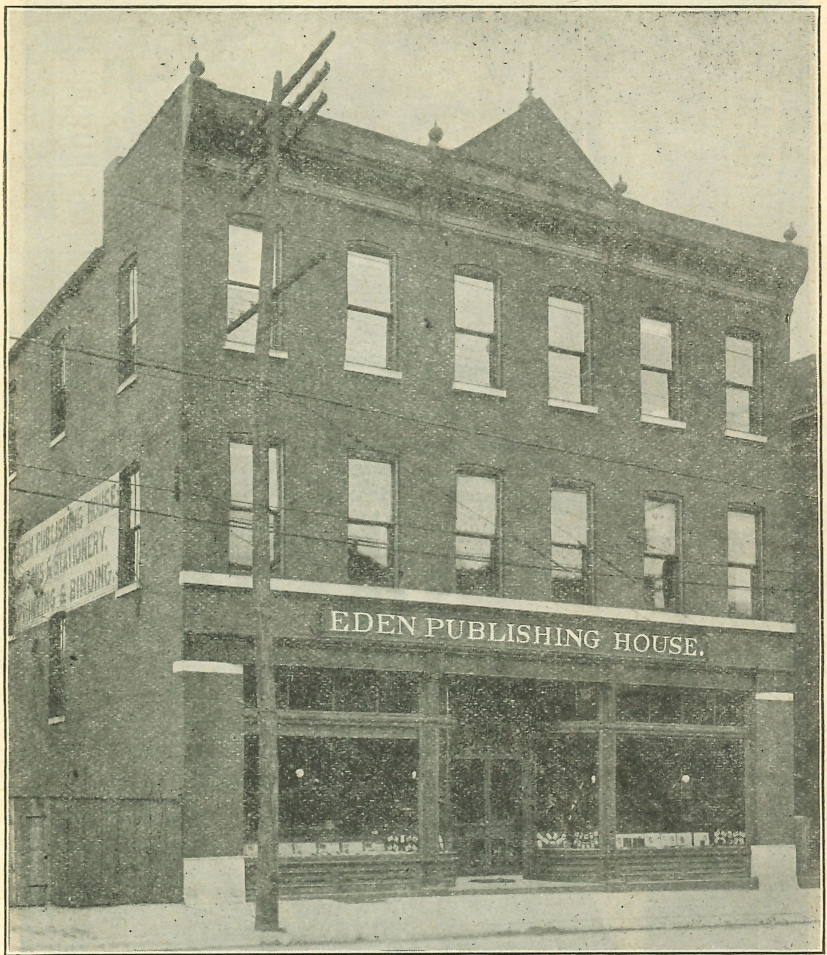
It is here that all our denominational publications are printed and the editorial offices located. Four editors are at work upon the various publications and about sixty men and women are employed in the composing rooms, printing department, bindery, salesroom, etc. Mr. Ernst William Meyer is the present manager of the concern and has done much, to develop the business and bring it up to the highest standard of efficiency. The branch house at Chicago was established by the General Conference in 1905 and put in charge of Rev. C. Kurz. Mr. Adolph Baltzer is the present manager of the Chicago branch.

The profits derived from the publishing house range from about \$20,000 to \$35,000 per year. Thus in the course of years Eden Publishing House has earned literally hundreds of thousands of dollars. What becomes of this money? It is distributed according to the enactment of the General Conference into the treasuries of certain of our denominational institutions, e.g. Home and Foreign missions, Church Extension Fund, Seminaries,





Managers of the publishing Business: 1. Pastor R. Wobus; 2. Mr. A. G. Toennies; 3. Mr. E. W. Meyer.



**Eden Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.**

and Ministerial Pension and Relief Fund. The publishing business is run by the Synod not for private profit, but for the benefit of the Church.

### **Charitable Institutions**

Our Synod has always had a warm heart for the needs of the aged and infirm, the orphans, the sick and the unfortunate. It is of course impossible to picture this work in all its phases, important and interesting though it be, and yet brief reference to it must be made.

The Synod supports and supervises eleven orphan homes. More than five hundred children are finding a home in these orphanages and are prepared for future Christian citizenship.

There are four homes for the aged and infirm located at St. Louis, Detroit, Bensenville, Ill., and San Antonio, Tex., where some two hundred weary pilgrims are finding a haven of refuge in their declining years.

At St. Charles, Mo., and near Marthasville, Mo., the Synod maintains institutions for epileptics and feeble-minded. There are more than one hundred people in these two asylums, receiving not only the most approved scientific treatment for their physical ailments, but also the tender spiritual care that is so necessary in their condition.

At Blue Springs, Mo., the Synod owns a tract of land which is gradually being converted into a Pastor's Home. Here modest and unpretentious cottages are being built, as legacies and funds permit, for the use of invalid pastors whose needs are very urgent and who otherwise would be practically homeless. Five such cottages have already been built and are occupied at the present time.

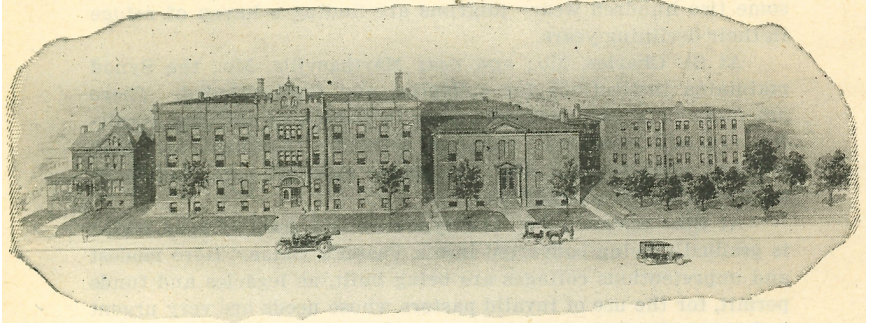
Our Deaconess work deserves special mention, since it is this work upon which greater stress is being continually laid by our Synod. It was first inaugurated in 1889 by a number of our pastors in St. Louis, and it is there that we find it best developed. In addition to a large and splendid hospital, at which nearly two thousand patients are treated yearly, there is located here the mother house for training deaconesses. In this training school there are about fifty young women who are preparing themselves for a great life work.

Other deaconess institutions are found at Evansville, Ind., Lincoln, Ill., Fairibault, Minn., Chicago, Ill., Louisville, Ky., Milwaukee, Wis., Cincinnati, Ohio., Buffalo, N. Y., and Marshalltown,



Iowa. Deaconess associations have also recently been organized in Cleveland, Ohio, and Detroit Mich., and no doubt in a short time the names of these two cities can be added to those of the others as being actively engaged in the work.

It was the Master's command to "heal the sick." It lies within the province of the deaconess work not only to attempt this, but also to minister to the higher, the spiritual needs of man. Such work is therefore God-ordained and strictly Evangelical, and when our Church once realizes the full import of this truth, she will go forth into the midst of the unfortunates everywhere,



**The Evangelical Deaconess Home and Hospital, St. Louis, Mo.**

clothed in the garments and livery both of spiritual and humanitarian service and minister to the whole needs of a sin-stricken humanity.

### **Mutual Church Insurance**

This insurance fund, as indicated by the name, is operated by the Synod for the benefit of its members, and has proved itself able to save large amounts in insurance premiums. It was organized in 1892 and the amount of outstanding insurance at the present time is over \$5,000,000. The assessments are based upon probable losses, providing of course for a safe margin for possible emergencies, but it is remarkable how cheap this insurance is compared with the regular companies. The question as to whether or not it is safe, is answered by the statement that the

fund passed thru such trying experiences as the St. Louis cyclone and San Francisco earthquake absolutely unscathed; that all just claims are promptly paid, and that it has a reserve fund of approximately \$400,000. The benefits of the funds are available for any Evangelical church. For further information address the general secretary, Mr. John Zurawski, Burlington, Iowa.

### **Mutual Aid Societies**

It has been the aim and practice of the Synod to aid and protect its invalid pastors, teachers and their widows and orphans. Many will gratefully acknowledge the good work already done and the assistance received.

The Mutual Aid Association of Evangelical Christians, founded in 1886 in St. Louis by a number of pastors and laymen, however, was organized for the purpose of aiding the families of laymen in their hour of need. Its members are distributed in the various congregations of our Synod. All members of congregations served by pastors of our Synod are eligible to membership. The benefits do not exceed \$1,000. Death benefits paid over \$240,000. The reserve fund amounts to \$50,000. The assessments are graded. The affairs are managed by a board of twelve Evangelical men all residing in St. Louis. The membership is nearly 1100. Local chapters may be organized in any Evangelical church. Rev. G. M. Poth, 4281 Tholozan Ave., is the general secretary of the Association and will gladly furnish further information.

### **Conclusion**

The facts connected with the origin, growth and present status of our beloved Church have thus been briefly stated. Much more could have been said - perhaps in some instances more should have been said, and yet again there are some things that cannot be said. We have followed the outward development of a denomination that has sought diligently to go about its Master's business, but who shall measure or even estimate the hidden growth and progress of the spiritual life that has been going on in the hearts of men, of which the former is but the outward expression and evidence? What has been wrought into the lives of

those who have been guided by the precepts and doctrines of our Church; the victories that have been won by her children above whose head she has held her hand of defense and shelter; the hopes and aspirations that have been sown as seeds of promise; the regenerated lives that have been given to the world as its finished product, of these things we cannot speak: God knows, and we are satisfied.

But enough has been said to encourage us in our future work. Our work during the past seventy-five years has not been in vain, and it will not be in vain during the coming generations if the same loyalty and devotion that has characterized it in the past be brought to bear upon it. It may never be a large work compared with that of other denominations, but whatever its proportions, may we never lose sight of the fact that it is God's work, assigned by the heavenly Taskmaster; and may we therefore do it, willingly, cheerfully, and thoroughly, so that we shall never have cause to be ashamed of it, nor it have cause to be ashamed of us. Those who desire to be fully informed as to the work and progress of our church work should read the Evangelical Herald, which furnishes complete information as to all branches and phases of Evangelical work and should be found in every Evangelical home. The Evangelical Year Book furnishes an annual resume of Evangelical progress.

There is every reason why we should look into the future with confidence and courage. God's help and blessing has been our hope and inspiration in every past experience; His Divine approval and signal favor has rested upon all our tasks and labors and He has made us to feel and know that with them He has been well pleased. He will not do less in the future if we bring to bear upon our work the same spirit of loyalty and devotion that has characterized it in the past, and He will do more if by increased energy and zeal we prove ourselves worthy and deserving of greater blessings.

In faith and hope and love we therefore commend ourselves anew in willing obedience to the gracious direction, the boundless mercies and tender care of Him who will not suffer our foot to be moved, and who has promised to be with us always. In this

world there is uncertainty and everywhere about us we see the evidences of changes and decay. The future of every human institution is entirely problematical, but not so with the Church of Christ. She has the promise of perpetual existence and Christ is in the midst of her. Amid the doubt, despair and unbelief so rampant in this world the foundation of God yet standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His."

May we therefore continue to build "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord;" and may our Synod and its churches always be a beacon light to the pilgrim, pointing the way to the celestial city, an ornament to the communities in which we labor for the Lord, and a living testimony to the love of God in Christ Jesus, by which the world has been redeemed.

# The Christian Year

Rev. Julius Horstmann

The appearance of Jesus Christ in the history of the world means the incarnation of God's grace, love and truth, (John 1:14; Titus 2:11). God is Love, and Christ has revealed this love to men, leading them to realize its meaning and to apply it to human conditions. In order to continue the work which He had begun, Christ established His Church, the entire body of believers. Of this Church Christ is the Head, (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18), and as His body, (Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:24), it is the instrument of His Spirit in working out His plans and purposes.

By thus coming into the world and identifying Himself with mankind, its conditions, its problems and its development, Christ, and His Church with Him, became a part of human history, making use of time to accomplish the object of His divine mission, i.e., the redemption of man from sin and its dire consequences. It is essential to the life and work of the Christian Church that the historical facts in the life and work of its Founder and Head be kept constantly in view, not only by the Church itself, but also by those not yet allied with it, for in no other way could the meaning of that life and work and its living power be established and maintained. It was therefore only proper that the Church should present these historical facts in their relation to the passing of time, in order to impress them as deeply as possible upon the life and the work of every age. The year being that unit of time which lent itself most readily to such a presentation, the *Christian Year* gradually came into existence. It is the story of the redemption chronologically arranged within the cycle of one year, so that even the passing of the seasons and the very flight of time are turned into messengers of God to proclaim the salvation of the race.

## A Gradual Development

The present arrangement of the Christian year is a gradual growth. Its beginning may be traced to the Old Testament, where the four great festivals, Passover, Pentecost, the Feast of



the Tabernacles and the Day of Atonement, recurred annually at fixed seasons. Jesus and His disciples kept these ancient festivals and after His ascension His followers continued to do likewise. As the date of the suffering and death of the Savior coincided with the Passover and the coming of the Holy Spirit occurred on the day of Pentecost, it was impossible for Christians to observe these two chief Jewish festivals without commemorating the fulfillment of the Old Testament observances in those incidents which were so vitally important to the life and being of the Church, even though the New Testament nowhere records the institution of any Christian festival. It was only in the course of the second century that the anniversaries of the death and resurrection of Christ first came to be commemorated.

The resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week was really the birth of the Christian Year. From the beginning the followers of Jesus assembled on the first day of the week in commemoration of this wonderful event. Jewish Christians of course continued to keep the Sabbath (Saturday) also, so that there were two holy days observed each week. In the second century Irenaeus wrote "the Sabbath is abolished." Tertullian, in the same century, mentions two names for the Christian holy day, "Day of the Sun" (*Dies solis*), and "Lord's Day" (*Dies dominica*). In an ancient document (*Apostolic Constitutions*) we read "Let the slaves work five days, but on the Sabbath day and the Lord's day let them have leisure for instruction in piety." In the fourth century we find that Christians were enjoined to work on the Sabbath (Saturday), probably for the purpose of breaking down the Jewish custom of keeping that day. In 321 A.D. the emperor Constantine commanded rest on "the venerable day of the Sun." The nations of northern Europe later adopted this pagan term for the day, while the Latin nations retained the "Lord's day" of the New Testament.

The "Pascha of the Crucifixion" (Good Friday), and the "Pascha of the Resurrection" (Easter), were being celebrated at the close of the second century, and Pentecost, or Whitsunday, also became an annual festival not long afterward. Epiphany originated in the Eastern Church as a commemoration of Christ's manifestation to the world as God's Son at His baptism, by the

voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son," etc. In the Western Church the manifestation became associated with the Magi. Though celebration of the Ascension is referred to by Augustine in the fourth century.

In many instances the innovations of heretics and the tenacity of heathen ceremonials, even among converts, led to the establishment of orthodox feasts for the purpose of displacing the old corrupt practices. Augustine (353-430) complains sadly that he found his basilica empty when his services coincided with Floralia, (April 28th) or the Saturnalia (middle of December). The custom of beginning the Christian year with Advent was derived from the Nestorian heretics. From this time on saints' days, martyrs' days and numerous other festivals were added, so that the calendar became overloaded, until the Reformation reduced their number to a minimum.

In ancient times religious festivals were distinguished from ordinary festival days by the suspension of all public business, as well as of every kind of games and amusements which would interfere with devotion. The churches were specially decorated; Christians were expected to attend worship attired in their best clothes; love feasts were held and the rich showed especial kindness to the poor; fasting was strictly forbidden; and public prayers were to be said in a standing posture. Everything was to express the joyful devotion of the Christian toward his Savior and his Master.

Taking up the Christian year as it has been observed since the Reformation by the Protestant churches of Germany and the Scandinavian countries, we find it introduced by the

### **Advent Season**

This season extends from the fourth Sunday before Christmas to Christmas Eve. In some parts of the ancient Church it embraced five Sundays, in others six. In the Greek Church (Russian) it lasts forty days.

The name of the season (from the Latin *adventus*) suggests preparation for the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and the Scripture lessons present a series of remarkable scenes: the

great Deliverer escorted with shouts to the place of His suffering; the triumphant Deliverer coming in the clouds of heaven to release His captive people; the outstretched hands and longing looks of the millions in the old sin-worn world, praying for a Redeemer, and the herald-prophet meekly retiring as the Redeemer comes into view.

### **The Christmas Season**

This season extends from Christmas Eve to Epiphany, January 6th. The birth of Christ was at first celebrated on January 6th, and the Armenian Church still holds to this date. The Western Church adopted December 25th as the time of the date of the nativity, partly from the conviction of many of its leaders that this was the actual date of Jesus' birth, partly from the adoption of the pagan Brumalia (December 25th), which celebrated the shortest day in the year and the "new sun," or the beginning of the lengthening of days following the Saturnalia (December 17th-24th). These pagan festivals were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set entirely aside by Christian influence. The pagan festival with its riot and merry-making; was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit or in manner. In spite of the protest raised against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, and the charge of idolatry and sun-worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival, the date rapidly gained acceptance and became at last firmly entrenched.

The religious significance of Christmas has been to commonly minimized among Christians, the day among adults being degraded into one merely for the exchange of presents, in too many instances given and received in a sense of obligation or as a kind of barter, rather than in the Christian spirit of sincere affection or friendship. Even in far too many Christian homes the children are not taught to link their merry-making on Christmas with the gift of God to the world in person of His Son Jesus Christ. The event which the day commemorates lends itself naturally to the exercise of benevolence and the spreading of true happiness, and the thoroughly Christian character of the day cannot be too strongly emphasized.

The design of the proper services throughout the Christmas season is to set forth the humanity of our Savior and the historical fact that the "Word was made flesh." December 26th, the day of St. Stephen, the first martyr, is celebrated in most Evangelical churches as second Christmas day.

New Year's Day, although not a specifically Christian festival, nevertheless has always had a religious character. When the Romans, according to the ancient legend, made the year begin on January 1st, that day was held sacred to Janus Bifrons, a two-headed figure, who was thus supposed to turn at once back upon the old year and forward into the new. On the establishment of Christianity the usage of a solemn inauguration of the new year was retained, but considerable variety prevailed, both as to the time and as to the manner of its celebration. It was not until late in the sixteenth century that January 1st was in most countries accepted as the first day of the new year.

The early fathers in reprobation of the immoral and superstitious observances of the pagan festival, prohibited all festive celebration among Christians; and on the contrary, directed that the Christian year should be opened with a day of prayer, fasting and penitence. In Evangelical churches New Year's Eve service gives expression to the Christian's need for God's mercy in view of the sins of the past, while that of New Year's Day has a message of hope and trust in the love and power of God. The first Sunday in the new year has been appointed a day of general penitence and prayer.

### **Epiphany**

The celebration of the Epiphany season goes back to the second century. It is first found with the Basilidians of Egypt, with whom it was the commemoration of the baptism of Christ. January 6th, the present Epiphany day, was in many instances celebrated as the day of Christ's birth. At first the festival commemorated the attestation of Jesus' divinity by the voice from heaven at His baptism (Matth. 3:16, 17; John 1:33, 34), which was also regarded as a revelation of the holy Trinity. Afterward the Epiphany became a composite festival, commemorating the nativity according to the flesh, the adoration of the Magi, the ad-

monition of the angel to flee into Egypt, and finally the first miracle at Cana, which was called by some “the birthday of Christ’s power.”

Today, in the Evangelical Church, Epiphany proclaims the divinity of Christ, as Christmas, which immediately precedes it, sets forth His humanity. This meaning is indicated by the lesson of the day, which shows the Light of the world appearing to the Magi, the representatives of the Gentile world. The day is not celebrated by a special service, partly because it follows too soon after Christmas, partly because it is difficult to give it a special significance in addition to that of the greater festival. The lessons for the six Sundays following show the child Jesus in the Temple displaying a remarkably spiritual mind; the first miracle at Cana; the healing by Jesus of two of the worst diseases which afflict man; Christ calming the tempestuous sea; Jesus enforcing His teaching with the simplicity and pointedness of the parable, and finally the transfiguration. The number of Sundays after Epiphany in every year are governed by the date of Easter for that year.

### **The Lenten Season**

From the beginning of the fourth century at least Easter was preceded by a season of preparatory penitence and fasting. This mode of observation was suggested by Matth. 9:15, “The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.” The period of fasting varied at different times and in different regions for forty hours to forty days before Easter, and perhaps even longer. After the analogy of Christ’s fast preceding His temptation, the forty years pilgrimage of the Israelites and Moses’ and Elijah’s fast, the custom of observing forty days became more and more general and was finally adopted generally by the European Church after Pope Gregory I in the seventh century, who ordered that Wednesday of the sixth week before Easter, namely Ash Wednesday, be the first day of the fast. This restricted the season to exactly forty days, the Sundays being excluded, since the Lord’s day has never been regarded as a fast day. The name Lent goes back to Anglo-Saxon *lencten*, “spring,” (German “Lenz”).

The three Sundays before Lent are known as Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima (seventieth, sixtieth, and fiftieth, respectively), probably because at one time in some part of the Church, the Lenten fast began that many days before Easter. It is said that in the Middle Ages the monastics were wont to begin the Lenten fast at Septuagesima, the Eastern churches at Sexagesima and the secular clergy at Quinquagesima.

*Shrove Tuesday*, from the Anglo-Saxon *shrive*, *shrift*, meaning to hear, confession, is the evening before Ash Wednesday and was at first a day observed by the confession of sin and the receiving of absolution. Being the eve of a rigorous season of abstinence, it became a common thing for the people to indulge in extravagant sports and inordinate feasting. These celebrations, still held in some places, are called carnivals (Italian "*carnevale*," farewell to meat), in German "Fastnacht," the eve of the fast season.

*Ash Wednesday* derived its name from the practice of sprinkling the priests and the people with ashes as the formula was repeated, "Remember O man, that dust thou art, and unto dust thou must return; repent, that thou mayest inherit eternal life." The ashes used were those of the consumed palms of the preceding year.

Lent was at first a time of free commemoration of Christ's suffering, but later numerous forms of outward discipline were enjoined. Criminal trials and punishments were forbidden, also weddings and popular amusements; a reverent silence was imposed upon public and private life, and works of devotion, penance and charity were multiplied. While many of these outward forms are retained by or within Evangelical churches, it is not because of ecclesiastical ordinances, but as an expression of the spirit of the season. The services of the Church, both Sunday and mid-week, emphasize the commemoration of the Lord's suffering, meditation on our own spiritual condition, preparation for the Easter communion, works of mercy and gifts for the cause of Christ, and prayers for the children about to be confirmed; all, this, however, not only for the special season, but *throughout the entire Christian life*. As the Lord's day should inspire and govern the spir-

itual life of the Christian during the week that follows, the Lenten season should consecrate and control the Christian's life during the entire year.

The Sundays in Lent receive their names from the first words of the Scripture lesson in the Latin service, *Invocavit*, *Reminiscere*, *Oculi*, *Laetare*, *Judica*. The lessons portray the victorious activity of the Christ in contrast with the story of the Lord's suffering which is real and preached in the week-day services. On the first Sunday Christ overcomes Satan and we are shown how we also may approve ourselves in temptation; on the second Christ casts out a demon and we are assured that God intends our sanctification; on the third He demonstrates His triumph over the devil and all his works, which Christians are expected to renounce; the fourth Sunday illustrates the prophetic office of the Savior; the fifth His priestly, and the sixth His royal office. It is the custom in Evangelical churches to have the examination and confirmation of children, respectively, take place on the last two Sundays in Lent, in order to more thoroughly awaken their spiritual life and make the religious impressions most deep and lasting. It is wholly in keeping with the spirit of the season that churches and individual Christians should undertake special evangelistic efforts during Lent.

The Lenten season culminates in Passion or Holy Week, which is introduced by Palm Sunday, commemorating the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. *Maundy Thursday*, usually celebrated by an evening service, (the term *Maundy* comes thru the French *Mande* from the Latin *mandatum*, "a commandment," referring to the words of Christ, "new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another") celebrates the institution of the Lord's Supper. *Good Friday*, distinguished by a special service, is the memorial day of the Savior's death and has always been regarded as a day of sacred sorrow and silence, in recognition of which various ceremonies are observed in many churches. The Great Sabbath is the day of our Lord's repose in the grave.

### **Eartes**

If the Christian year is an epitome of the work of redemption and of the Church's history, Easter Day is the life-germ of the

Christian year, and its recognition as such, coupled with Jewish influence, has made the Easter festival at first the beginning of the Christian year. It is a fact beyond all dispute that “the resurrection of Christ clearly establishes the redemption of all - sufficient for eternity,” and that it is, therefore, “the foundation of all faith, the source of all new life, and a positive pledge for our future resurrection and perfection.” Thus the day very naturally represents both the inspiration and the climax of human hope, the seal of man’s salvation.

The English *Easter* and the German *Ostern* are both derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Ostara* or *Eastre*, the name of the goddess of spring and the dawn, Easter day was the first of the Christian festivals to be celebrated and was known in the Early Church by the name Pascha. Originally it commemorated both the death and the resurrection of the Savior and the season covered fifteen days, i.e., the week before and after Easter. With the growing observance of Lent, however, the week before Easter became the climax of that season, while Easter day was made to inaugurate a season of its own, the keynote of which was the resurrection of the Savior and the life, light and joy which it brought to the world. The gloom and the severities of Lent gave way to the supreme joy at Christ’s bursting the bonds of death, the greatest and most important fact in the Christian religion. For this reason the season was prolonged to fifty days, from Easter Eve to the eve of Pentecost, seven weeks of joy to banish the six weeks of gloom that had preceded it.

During the third century fierce disputes about the proper time of celebrating Easter almost threatened to disrupt the Church. Originally the Christian Easter had been celebrated on the same date as the Jewish Passover, the fourteenth of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year; in some parts of the Church it was celebrated on a certain Sunday, which made it a movable feast each year; in others still different customs prevailed. This point was settled by the Council of Nicea (325) which decreed that Easter Sunday was to be the Sunday immediately following the fourteenth day of the so-called paschal moon, which happens on or first after the vernal equinox.



The fixing of the date for Easter day is therefore a somewhat complicated and difficult process. It must follow the vernal equinox, and so the solar year has to be taken into account. It must follow the fourteenth day of the paschal moon, and consequently the lunar month has to be considered, and with these conditions the days of the week have to be reconciled, as Easter day must be a Sunday. The rule observed is that Easter shall be the first Sunday following the fourteenth day of the calendar moon, which happens on or after March 21st. This calendar moon is not the real moon of the heavens, but an imaginary moon, created for ecclesiastical reasons and purposes. Nor is March 21st always the date of the vernal equinox; it is usually the twentieth and sometimes the nineteenth. The date of Easter is therefore quite artificial.

The following are the earliest and latest dates on which the various church festivals can fall:

First Sunday in Advent, November 27th to December 3rd; Septuagesima Sunday, January 18th to February 22nd; Ash Wednesday, February 4th to March 11th; Easter, March 22nd to April 25th; Ascension Day, April 30th to June 3rd; Trinity Sunday, May 17th to June 20th.

Most of the great church festivals depend on the date of Easter. The beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is determined by the end, Easter Sunday, and so is Ascension Day and Pentecost, the seventh Sunday after Easter, as well as Trinity Sunday and the number of Sundays that follow, until the first Sunday in Advent again opens the new Church year.

### **The Easter Communion**

The celebration of the Lord's Supper early became one of the chief rites connected with Easter. Those who had become cold and lax in their attendance on religious ceremonies, felt that they must commune at Easter, if at no other time. An annual Easter communion was made obligatory in 1216 by the Lateran Council in Rome, failure to do so being punished by excommunication, an ordinance which is still binding upon Roman Catholics.

Among large numbers of our church members the idea seems to prevail that there is some special merit in Easter communion,

and that attendance at that time will make up for a lack of faithfulness during the year. The result is that the Easter attendance is usually enormous and entirely out of proportion with the attendance of other days, causing discomfort to those who attend and frequent over-exertion on the part of the pastor, in addition to the formalizing effect which insistence on attendance at any one occasion always tends to produce.

Most certainly all who are entitled to the Lord's Supper and hunger and thirst after righteousness are always welcome at His table, and just as certainly no true Evangelical pastor ever complains of the work involved in offering the blessings of the sacrament to those who yearn for them, just as real Christians will gladly hear any discomfort for the sake of God's children. But there are numerous other opportunities for partaking of the Lord's Supper, and each one of them is just as precious as the Easter celebration, while at the same time the objectionable features may be entirely avoided, because only comparatively few persons usually attend. Christians with a healthy spiritual life cannot be satisfied with one attendance at communion during the year, nor will they find satisfaction in a mere outward observance of customs.

Most Evangelical churches also celebrate *Easter Monday*.

The Sundays after Easter, Quasimodogeniti, Misericordias Domini, Jubilate, Cantate, Rogate and Exaudi give expression to the joy resulting from the resurrection and look forward to greater triumphs, larger blessings, and deeper joys. Their Latin names are derived from the opening words of the respective Scripture passages, which were long read only in the Latin language.

*Ascension Day* is observed on the fortieth day after Easter in: memory of our Lord's ascension into heaven. Its observance is first mentioned in the beginning of the fifth century. The ascension of Christ signifies that all gifts of faith are celestial and eternal and directs our faith and hope heavenward. Possibly because it falls on a week-day late in the festival season Ascension Day has never taken rank in popular esteem with Christmas,

Good Friday, Easter and Pentecost. In view of the materialistic tendencies of our age the day deserves much more attention and emphasis.

### **Pentecost**

This festival derives its name from the Greek word *Pentecoste*, fiftieth, because it is the fiftieth day after Easter. It is one of the earlier Christian festivals and in point of time corresponds with the Jewish Feast of the Weeks, which marked the conclusion of harvest and later commemorated the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai.

The Christian Pentecost is connected with its Jewish predecessor not only historically thru the events recorded in Acts 2, but also internally, being early regarded as a festival of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the Spirit. Because it was customary in the Early Church for those about to be baptized on that day to wear white garments, the name Whitsunday was often used. Commemorating the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples at Jerusalem, it is properly reckoned as the birthday of the Christian Church in history. From this day begin the activities of Christ's followers as a distinct movement and organization. *Pentecost Monday* is also extensively celebrated.

### **Trinity Sunday**

At one time the whole week following Pentecost was one of sacred joy and celebration, closing with the Sunday following, the lesson for which therefore very fitly sets forth the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the human heart. In time Christian believers gradually came to think that it would be proper to dedicate a festival to the doctrine of the Trinity and, in the fourteenth century the Sunday after Pentecost was fixed as the best day for this celebration, as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit suggests that the revelation of the Trinity is now complete. Trinity<sup>117</sup><sub>SEP</sub> closes the festival half of the Church year.

The remainder of the Christian year, containing from twenty-two to twenty-seven Sundays, numbered from Trinity Sunday, is devoted to the practical application of the great Gospel facts and

truths to the Christian life and character. It is a growing custom in the Evangelical Church to set aside several of these Sundays for special purposes, as Mission Day, Harvest Home, and, in some instances, Day of penitence and prayer. The anniversary of the Reformation is observed on Reformation Day, the Sunday nearest to October 31st, the date on which, in 1517, Martin Luther nailed his famous ninety-five theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg. The Thanksgiving Day appointed by public authority is also observed in all Evangelical churches. The last three Sundays point to the end of the world and the goal of the Christian faith, the last one being devoted to the memory of departed loved ones.

Thus the seasons and Sundays of the Christian year serve to remind us of the facts of our Savior's life on earth and their meaning to us, and prevent any part of his life from being overlooked or neglected. The Scripture lessons for all the Sundays and festivals of the Christian year may be found in the calendar of the Evangelical Year Book; the passages are given in full in the appendix to the Evangelical Hymnal, the contents of which correspond to the course of the Christian year. Aside from their devotional and musical value these hymns, in connection with the Scripture lessons, offer a splendid means of getting in touch with the spirit of the Christian year and may also well serve as a guide for family devotions.