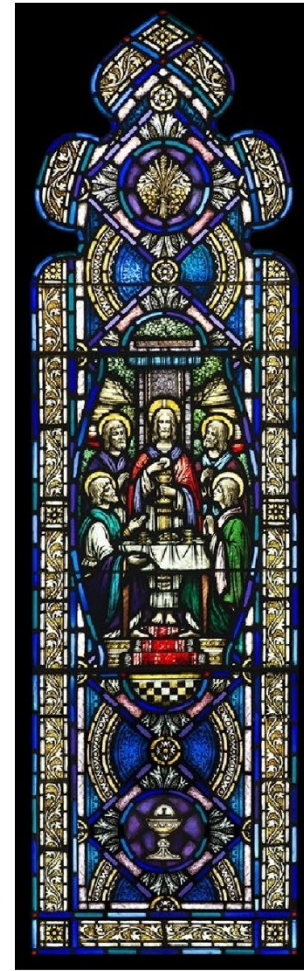
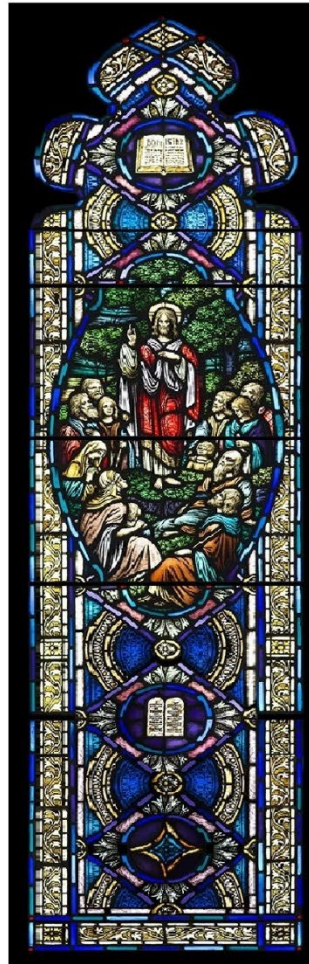


*100th
Anniversary*



*Glory
to
God*

*Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
South St Paul, Minnesota*

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

100th Anniversary of Grace Lutheran Church

A Brief History of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of South St. Paul

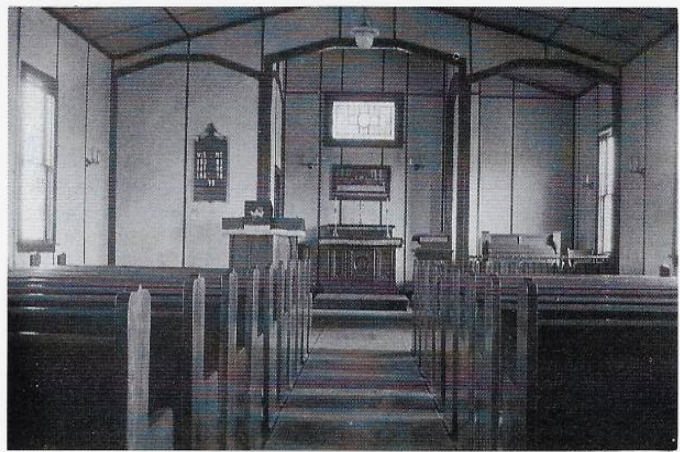
1920-1927

In 1920, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod sent the Rev. Arthur Koehler to South. St. Paul, Minnesota, to establish a mission congregation. With the aid of the Synod's Church Extension Fund, three lots were purchased for the new mission church and the construction of a new chapel. The property purchased was described as Block 4, Lots 13, 14, and 15, of Hepburn Park addition to South St. Paul. A warranty deed was issued by John F. Meyer and George F. Kramer to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin. The property is located on the Northeast corner of 8th Avenue South and Southview Boulevard where the Church has been located to this day.



Rev. Arthur W. Koehler, 1921-1945

A new chapel was erected at the site and dedicated to the Glory of God on December 19, 1920. No regular services had been held before the dedication, but Rev. Koehler faithfully canvassed the area acquainting people with the new missionary project. On Christmas Day, 1920, the first regular services were held at the small chapel in both German and English, with an attendance of 38. Regular services continued in both languages during the holidays and on Sunday mornings and the mission congregation started to grow.



Original Church Building 1921

The Grace Evangelical Lutheran congregation of South St. Paul, Minnesota, was formally organized on March 6, 1921, which marks the anniversary date for the church. The church's constitution established the congregation on the basis of God's Word and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as set forth in the Book of Concord of 1580. Nine men and five women comprised the little flock that sought

to establish God's Zion in their midst. The names of the organizers and charter members were: Ernest Esslinger, Oscar Nelson, Melvin Schofield, Charles Krech, John C. Hahn, George Esslinger, Sr., Gustav A. Krueger, August Bortz, Charles J. Plan, Mrs. J.C. Hahn, Mrs. Paul Oesterreich, Mrs. Oscar A. Nelson, Mrs. Fred T. Schulze, and Agnes L. Krech. A special thank you at the time was made to Emmanuel Lutheran Church of St. Paul, for granting releases to a number of families living in South St. Paul so that they could join the new Grace Evangelical Lutheran congregation to help build the Lord's kingdom here on earth. Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of South St. Paul, Minnesota joined the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on May 8, 1922.

On Palm Sunday, April 9, 1922, the first Confirmation class of six boys and five girls was confirmed.



FIRST CONFIRMATION CLASS - 1922

Seated in Front: Majorie Esslinger; **Row 1:** Frieda Klegin, Marie Plan, Pastor Koehler, Margith Eide, Edith Dohlin; **Row 2:** George Johnson, Melvin Weichelt, Harold Moe, William Uhlendorf, Peter Aszman, Theodore Sandquist.

During the summer of 1923 the congregation, with the assistance of the Synod Mission Board, undertook the task of erecting a modern and beautiful parsonage adjacent to the chapel. The construction cost of the parsonage was \$6,975. The church received a generous gift toward the construction such that only a small portion of the cost needed to be financed by the growing congregation. A note in the amount of \$1,500 was signed at the June 6, 1923 Council meeting so that construction of the parsonage could proceed. The parsonage was erected in 1923 and is still used as the parsonage 100 years later.

By 1925, membership had rapidly grown to 320 members since its humble beginnings five years earlier. The small chapel erected in 1920 quickly became cramped for the growing congregation and a larger church building was needed to accommodate the work of the new and growing church.

1928-1944

On February 27, 1928, the congregation passed a motion to begin construction of a new church building. Bids for construction were received and the lowest bid of \$26,584.15 was accepted and the total cost of construction and furnishing the new building was \$28,000. Chapel fixtures were removed by the Grace Lutheran Men's Club on May 7, 1928 and construction commenced. Services were held at the South St. Paul Junior High School (which later became Central Elementary School) during construction.



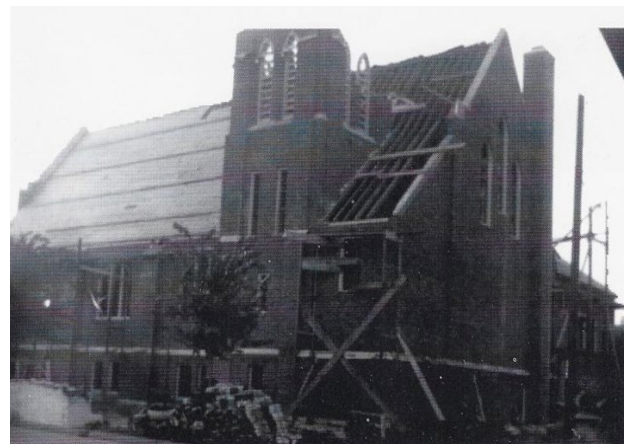
Excavation of new church site 1928



Construction site with parsonage in background



Church Construction 1928

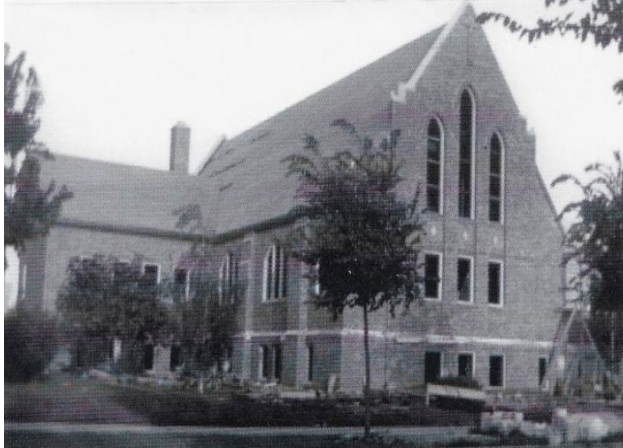


Church Construction 1928

Title to the church property passed from the Synod to the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of South St. Paul on June 1, 1928. The cornerstone was laid in a special service on July 1, 1928. On October 28, 1928, the congregation paraded from the Junior High School that served as a temporary worship facility to the beautiful new church building to celebrate a dedication service.



Congregation on October 28, 1928 when the new church building was dedicated.



Church Exterior



Church Interior

During the depression years in the 1930s, the growth of the congregation slowed to an average of 10 members a year. Capital improvements during the time period included the construction of the canopy over the rear entrance door in 1938 and general painting and maintenance. The congregation was active in promoting fellowship by hosting numerous ice cream socials, talent shows, basket socials and picnics. The Synod continued to subsidize the church during these years until the congregation became self-supporting in 1940. During the Second World War years, the congregation once again grew rapidly and totaled 860 communicants at the end of 1945.

1945 –1960 and 25th Anniversary

In March, 1945, Pastor Koehler accepted a call to Hutchinson, Minnesota after almost twenty-five years of faithful service to the congregation. During his pastorate and through the grace of God, the tiny mission church started in 1920 had firmly taken root in South St. Paul with over 800 communicants by the end of 1945.

Pastor Winfred Schaller was installed as a new pastor at Grace Lutheran on June 17, 1945. During Pastor Schaller's ministry, Grace was privileged to celebrate its 25th anniversary with three English services and a German service on March 3, 1946. Also, a special anniversary service was held on March 4, 1946 for the Ladies Aid and Men's Club celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversaries. In September, 1948, Pastor Schaller accepted a call to Nicollet, Minnesota.



Rev. Winfred Schaller, 1945-1948

On December 19, 1948 Pastor Albert G. Eberhardt was installed as the new pastor. During the 10 years of his pastorate, membership continued to increase and several changes were made to the church property. In January 1950, a new three-manual organ was ordered at a cost of \$14,900 and was dedicated on January 28, 1951. In 1953, additional classrooms and a church office were added on the north side of the church at a cost of approximately \$15,000. The classrooms were desperately needed as the Sunday School had grown to over 500 children. On January 8, 1954, the first stained glass window for the main church was ordered. The remaining windows were made and installed over the next seven years with the last two windows installed in April 1961. (See Special Stained Glass Window insert accompanying this book.) In 1958, the present choir rehearsal room was constructed for \$7,000.



Rev. Albert G. Eberhardt, 1948-1959

In 1957, the congregation decided to call a parish worker since the congregation was growing too large for one pastor. Mr. Egon Banke was installed on April 29, 1957 as a parish worker. The congregation purchased the house next to the existing parsonage for Mr. Banke and his family to live in while he served

the congregation. This house would later become the vicarage where vicars lived during the year they served our congregation.



Sunday School, Early 1950s

During the late 1950s Pastor Eberhart served as a part-time institutional chaplain in addition to his duties as Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church. In 1959, he requested and was granted a peaceful release from his call at Grace Lutheran to accept the call as full-time institutional chaplain in the St. Paul area.

The Rev. Harold Sauer accepted the call to serve as Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church and he was installed on September 20, 1959. The congregation continued to grow during Pastor Sauer's pastorate and the congregation decided to call an associate pastor following the departure of parish worker, Egon Banke. During Pastor Sauer's pastorate he graduated the largest confirmation class in the church's history with 44 students.



Rev. Harold Sauer, 1959-1964

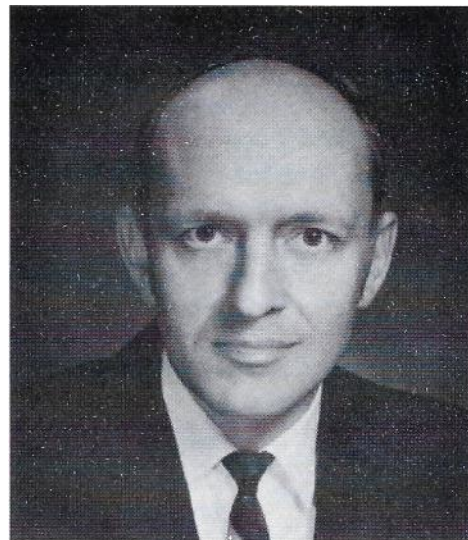


Largest Confirmation Class – 1960

Row 1: Joyce Kronschnable, Shirley Riggs, Sandreya Choban, Karen Sarafolean, Katherine Bester, Carolyn Bohrer, Diane Ringler, Barbara Bowe, Sandra Ollom, Sharon Crist. **Row 2:** William Schussler, Bruce Bester, Glen Krone, Max Kearns, Allen Palodichuk, Pastor Sauer, Richard Patterson, James Conway, Larry Schindeldecker, Allen Neubarth, Laurence Schwanz. **Row 3:** Grant Fleischauer, David Bierbrauer, Susan Eide, Marlys Yeske, Kathleen Boldt, Norma Bierbrauer, Joan Devich, Allen Strus. **Row 4:** Robert Faehnrich, Shirley Chapin, Dennis Kuchera, Lawrence Schroeder, Earl Meyer, Esther Soderquist, Richard Weimer. **Row 5:** Dianna Raduechel, Karen Leyk, Noel Zaspel, Gregory Brown, Kenneth Detlie, Glenn Boche, Susan Frieese, James Greengard. **Absent:** Roberta Schroeder.

1961-1990 and 50th Anniversary

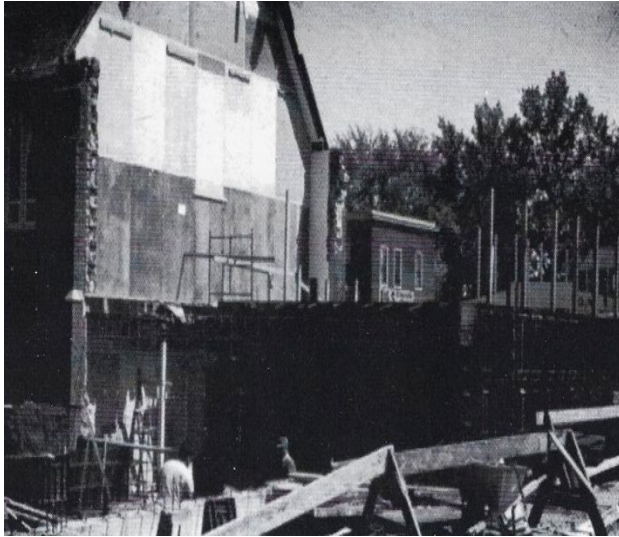
Rev. C.G. Sengbusch accepted the congregation's call to serve as an associate pastor and he was installed on July 9, 1961. In 1964, Pastor Sauer accepted a call to a parish in Muskegon Michigan. The congregation decided to fill his position with third year students assigned from the seminary in Mequon, WI during their Vicar year. The first Vicar assigned to Grace Lutheran in 1965 was Verne Voss. He was the first of twenty-six Vicars who served our congregation from 1965 to 1991. The Vicars lived in the house next to the parsonage before returning to the seminary to complete their final year of ministry training.



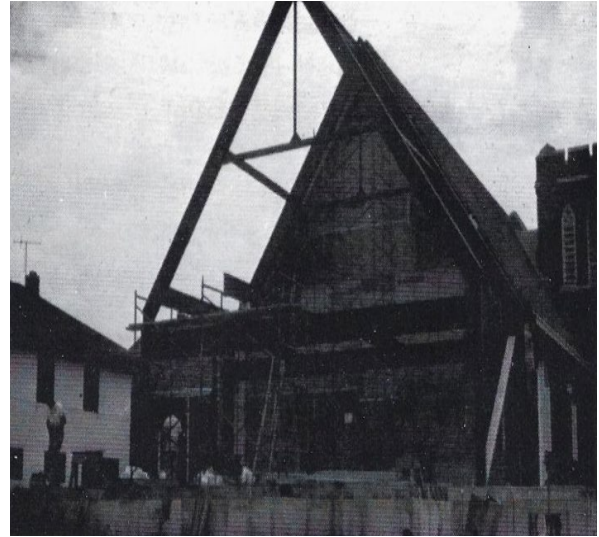
Rev. Carroll G. Sengbusch, 1961-1991

In October 1965, the congregation decided to undertake a church expansion project because of overcrowded conditions during Sunday School classes and the 10:45 am (late) service on Sundays. A Building Expansion Committee was formed and a general plan for expansion to construct a new entryway (narthex), balcony and rear of the church addition, and kitchen was adopted in July 1966. The total cost of the expansion was \$159,000 which included a construction cost of \$106,900 for the structure and the

balance for a new heating unit, kitchen equipment, pews and carpeting. A loan was taken out by the church for the expansion and construction commenced in May, 1967. The service of dedication for the completed expansion was held on September 19, 1967. The expansion increased seating by 159, improved the front entrance, and provided a new kitchen and heating plant.



Church Addition Construction 1967



Church Addition Construction 1967



Completed entryway and new addition - 1967



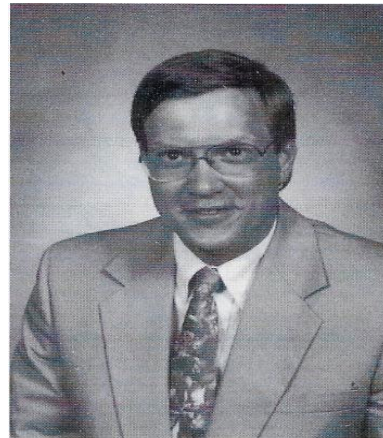
Wall Statute in New Entryway

In March, 1971, the congregation celebrated 50 years of God's grace. Two celebration services for the 50th Anniversary were held in the morning and a festival service was held in the afternoon. Dinner was served by the ladies' groups of the congregation. For the 60th Anniversary, the congregation held a formal mortgage burning ceremony during the anniversary service in 1981 when the building expansion loan was paid off and the church became debt free.

In the Spring of 1987, the church entered a contract to have the organ renovated after thirty-six years of faithful service. The cost for the renovation was just over \$50,000. The newly renovated organ was dedicated in a special service in September 1987.

In May, 1988, the congregation purchased the property located next to the second parsonage (vicarage) for \$60,000. The decision to purchase the property was made in case the church's ability to utilize the parking lot across the street would be impeded in the future. The house was rented out following the purchase. 1988 also was the first year the church started videotaping services. The early service was videotaped for shut-ins and the late service was videotaped and shown to the Southview Acres Nursing Home residents. Prior to this time, only audio tapes of the services were available to members unable to attend church. October 8, 1988 was the first On The Road Again celebration where the Ladies Aid and Guild made roasters of chili and baked items for sale on Southview Boulevard during the celebration.

Pastor John Dorn accepted our call and was installed on September 24, 1989. Pastor Dorn led the Evangelism/Outreach Committee focusing on outreach into the community and canvassing to attract new members. This also included broadcasting our services on local cable TV for the first time to reach not only our members who could not make it to church but the community at large. This effort continues to this day with the weekly recording and broadcast of our services each week on local cable TV. Our dedicated Lights Camera Action group staffs the camera and sound board during our services.

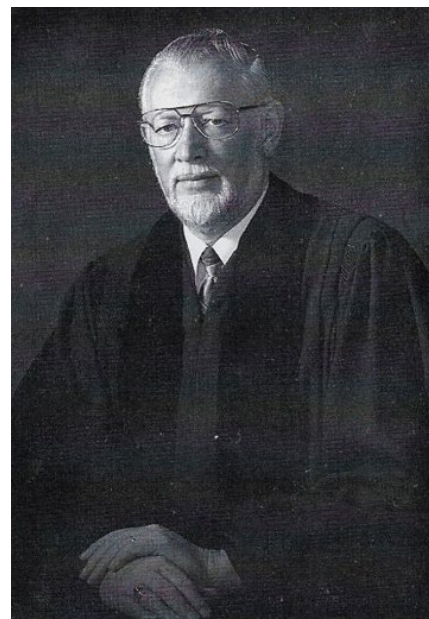


Rev. John S. Dorn 1989-1996

1991-1999 and 75th Anniversary

In May, 1991, Pastor Sengbusch accepted a call to a parish in East Farmington, Wisconsin. Pastor Fredrick Fallen accepted a call to serve Grace Lutheran Church as our senior pastor along with Pastor Dorn. Pastor Fallen was installed as senior pastor on August 25, 1991.

In 1992, the Trustees remodeled the sacristy. The Evangelism/Outreach Committee produced original shows for local cable TV called "Christian Adventures" with separate programs for children, teens and adults all geared toward outreach. The Evangelism/Outreach Committee in conjunction with the Young Peoples Society, hosted a visit by the youth group from our sister congregation in Pierre, SD and they joined in canvassing the community as an outreach project.



Rev. Frederick S. Fallen, 1991-2008

In March 1994, the congregation approved a bid for \$95,759.00 for the construction and installation of an elevator and new entrance on the Southview side of the church to provide access for the disabled and for those having difficulty with the steps entering the church. In addition, the elevator provides easier transport of caskets for funerals. The elevator was dedicated at a special service on September 25, 1994.



Side Entrance Before Elevator Addition



Side Entrance After Elevator Addition

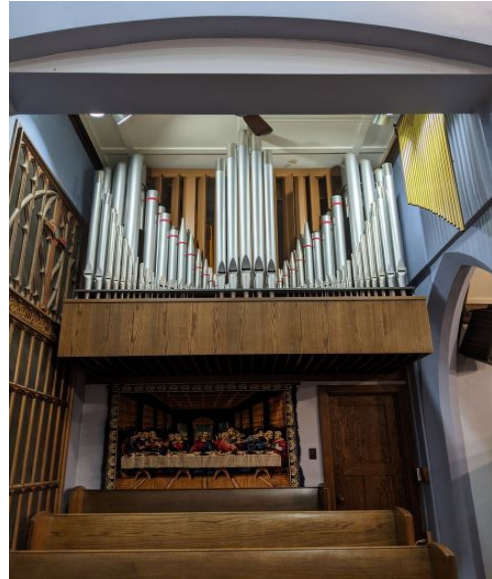
On May 8, 1994, the congregation dedicated the Synod's new hymnal, *Christian Worship*. This was the first update to the hymnal since 1941. On Saturday, December 10, 1994 the Sunday School sponsored its first "Christmas for Kids" community outreach program. This program invited children from our church and the community to attend a day of fun activities and to learn about the true meaning of Christmas.

In January 1996, Pastor Dorn received and accepted a call to become pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Pickett Wisconsin and Zion Lutheran Church in rural Oshkosh Wisconsin. He preached his farewell sermon on April 14, 1996.

The church celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 1996. Prior to the anniversary service that year, the congregation conducted a series of special services and events. A confirmation reunion service was held on January 21, 1996 with the Rev. Carroll Sengbusch of Zion Lutheran Church, East Farmington, Wisconsin preaching. Pastor Sengbusch served at our church for 30 years between 1961-1991. On February 18 a marriage reunion service with the Rev. James Frey of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Belleville Michigan, preaching. Pastor Frey was a vicar at Grace Lutheran from 1977 to 1978. On March 17, an all organization reunion service was conducted with Rev. Robert Schultz of Trinity Lutheran Church, Manitowoc Wisconsin preaching. Rev. Schultz is a son of our congregation. On the evening of Saturday, April 27, the congregation hosted a catered dinner and social gathering at Drkula's Bowling Alley in Inver Grove Heights for the congregation and guests to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Grace Lutheran Church.

The 75th anniversary service was held on Sunday, April 28, 1996 with two festival services. Preaching in the morning was Rev. Larry Cross, President of the Minnesota District. In the afternoon the preacher was Rev. Douglas Westenberg, Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Hadar, Nebraska. Pastor Westenberg was our last vicar in 1990-91.

During the late 1990s the church completed many capital projects. In 1997, the office area classrooms were remodeled by adding dropped ceilings and improved lighting and the elevator loan was paid off. A new sound system and sound board were installed in the church for \$13,000 in 1998. The parsonage kitchen and bathroom were remodeled in 1999 and the house next to the vicarage was sold. This property was purchased years earlier to possibly be used for additional parking, if needed. Also in 1999, a new rank of pipes was added to the organ for \$12,000 and installed above the choir loft in the church.



New rank of organ pipes above choir loft

The church continued its commitment to ministry and outreach throughout the late 1990s. The church made its last payment to St. Croix Lutheran High School in 1997 to fulfill its \$100,000 pledge for the school's "Completing the Vision" campaign. The Sunday School started a new "Together with Jesus" program for one and two-year-old children and their parents in 1997. Parents received guidance on effective parenting, took part in fellowship, learned to share their faith with their children and discovered the importance of family devotions. Ten children were part of the inaugural class together with their parents. The Ladies Aid hosted the 1997 Lutheran Women's & Missionary Society spring rally at our church. The Guild and Ladies Aid helped organize the church's participation in the "On the Road" celebration for the reopening of Southview Boulevard after a long closure due to construction. The Guild and Ladies Aid with the assistance of the church council set up tables outside of church on Southview Boulevard and sold chili and baked goods for the annual street celebration that continues to this day.

2000-2010

In 2000, the north basement Sunday School classrooms were remodeled by lowering the ceiling, adding new lighting, new carpeting and paint. New accordion doors were also installed. In 2002, a new fire escape was installed from the choir rehearsal room to the second floor of the parsonage and to the ground for \$30,884. The vicarage was torn down in 2003 to provide a nice side yard for the parsonage. In 2005, trumpets were added to the organ and are located in the balcony. The Sunday School and Congregation Picnic was moved to Dakota Lodge at Thompson Park in West St. Paul after several decades at Kaposia Park in South St. Paul.



Organ Trumpets in Balcony

On August 14, 2006 the Evangelism Committee was reactivated after being dormant for several years to continue the work of evangelism and outreach to grow and strengthen the congregation. On Christmas Eve, 2008, the blower and motor went out on the pipe organ and services had to be conducted with our piano until the parts were received in early 2009.

Pastor Ken Gast served our congregation as a visiting pastor in late 2007 and early 2008 while Pastor Fallen was recovered from several medical issues. In 2008, Pastor John Ehlers was called to serve our congregation and was installed on June 15, 2008. Pastor Fallen retired from the ministry on November 23, 2008 after forty-three in the ministry with his final seventeen years in the Lord's service as our pastor. In 2009 the congregation started a Visitation Ministry where church member teams were trained to assist the pastor by making calls to members who could not make it to church or were hospitalized.



Rev. John Ehlers, 2008-2011

An Altar Committee was formed and assumed the work of maintaining and changing the altar paraments for each season, changed candles, cleaned and maintained the communion ware and decorated our altar and the church with poinsettias at Christmas and lilies at Easter.



Altar on Communion Sunday



Altar and Poinsettias at Christmas

2011-2020

In 2011, the congregation celebrated its 90th Anniversary with a special festival service followed by a catered dinner in the church basement with entertainment provided by the Young Peoples Society who performed a skit and a fashion show of attire through the decades. The summer of 2011 also brought the modern convenience of **AIR CONDITIONING** to the sanctuary. After decades of discussion, air conditioners were finally installed in the sanctuary.

Pastor Ehlers accepted a call to Cross of Glory Church in Peoria, Arizona and his farewell sermon was on October 23, 2011. Pastor Gast served as a vacancy pastor until Pastor Thomas Hartwig accepted a call to serve our congregation. Pastor Hartwig was installed on February 12, 2012 and currently serves as our pastor.



Rev. Thomas R. Hartwig, 2012-Present

In July 2014, the congregation established the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund. The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to provide continuing annual support for specific needs identified and approved by the congregation. On September 18, 2014 three subaccounts were approved and funded by the congregation with an initial deposit of \$51,125.18. The three subaccounts within the Endowment Fund and their stated purposes are: 1) Outreach Support for outreach and evangelism efforts of the congregation; 2) Christian Education Tuition Assistance providing tuition assistance for members' children attending a WELS Christian elementary school, St. Croix Lutheran Academy, or a WELS preparatory school; and 3) WELS Ministry Training that provided tuition assistance for any member of the congregation training for the full time preaching or teaching WELS ministry at the college or seminary level. The first distributions from these accounts took place in July 2018 and will continue annually for their stated purpose. At the end of 2020, the Endowment Fund had a balance of \$93,237.69.

2014 saw the completion of a multi-year project to replace all the windows in the church with energy efficient metal clad windows. A Craft and Quilting Group that started informally in 2011 was formally established in 2014. Crafters and quilters (and non-crafters) gather together on a Saturday once a month in the church basement to work on individual or group projects, share handiwork tips, and enjoy fellowship and a pot luck lunch. 2014 also saw the installation of an electronic sign on the corner of 8th Avenue and Southview Boulevard that displays announcements for upcoming services and invites visitors to join our worship.



New Electronic Sign Installation Volunteers



New Electronic Sign

Between 2015 and 2020 many projects were undertaken to enhance the church property. In 2016, the front entrance doors from the 1967 expansion were replaced with beautiful decorative wooden doors to enhance our church entrance. A new stove was purchased in 2017 for \$7,500 to replace the original stove installed as part of the church expansion project in 1967. The wood louvers in the bell tower were removed and completely replaced in 2017 with long lasting white PVC material. Our boiler system underwent a major repair in 2017. In 2019, the Ladies Aid and Grace Guild merged to form Faithful Friends of Grace to continue their joint mission together. A new dishwasher was purchased and installed in the church kitchen in February 2020 for \$16,000 replacing the original dishwasher from 1967.

The COVID-19 global pandemic started in March 2020. The pandemic and the various governmental orders requiring social distancing and face coverings impacted worship services and church activities but the work of the church continued. Our church conducted its regular services each week by implementing cleaning, social distancing, and masking protocols to ensure the safety of our members and visitors during worship. Sunday School was cancelled for the balance of 2020 but the Sunday School staff delivered the planned Sunday School lessons and crafts to the homes of the children during the Spring of 2020 to complete the year. Our church janitorial staff made sure the church was clean and sanitized for weekly services and for communion. Pastor Hartwig, with the assistance of dedicated members from the Light Camera Action group conducted video recordings of the regular church service each week for broadcast on cable TV and to deliver DVDs to members. In addition, the group separately recorded Pastor Hartwig's sermon each Saturday that was uploaded to the church website for those members unable to attend live services so they could watch online. Throughout 2020, and despite the decline in live church attendance, our membership's financial contributions to support the work of the church did not wane and in fact increased during the year. Despite the pandemic and the unprecedented difficulties, our congregation continued its mission to share and hear God's Word and participate in the Sacraments.

Grace Lutheran Members in the Preaching and Teaching Ministry

Several of our members pursued the preaching and teaching ministry at our synod's college and seminary.

Son of our congregation, Rev. Robert Schultz, son of Erwin and Dorothy Schultz, attended the Wisconsin Lutheran Synod seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin and is recently retired from the ministry having served as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church of Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Pastor and Mrs. Schaller had two sons in the ministry, Rev. Ralph Schaller was serving in Michigan in 1947 and Rev. Winfred Schaller, Jr. graduated

from the seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin in 1947. Lance McMorrow, graduated from our seminary in 2002 and served in our synod's church in Owasso, Michigan.

Members graduating from Martin Luther College (f/k/a Dr. Martin Luther College) in New Ulm, Minnesota that went into the teaching ministry are: Dr. Cindy Whaley, professor at Martin Luther College; Brent Schacht, teacher at St. Croix Lutheran Academy, Leann Reich (nee Witz), Colleen Wright, Heather Duquaine (nee Crist), and Wendy Schultz. Rachel Hensler, Pastor and Donna Hartwig's daughter, graduated from MLC in 2018 and married Nathan Hensler who is a teacher at Zion Lutheran School in South Milwaukee. They are expecting their first child in November 2021.

Grace Lutheran Church Secretaries and Custodians

Our church has been blessed over its history with dedicated church secretaries and custodians who tirelessly work behind the scenes to assist our pastors, vicars, organizations and individual members. Our longest serving employee was Evelyn Witz, who served as the church secretary for 40 years between 1959 and 2009. Evelyn was also active in the Grace Guild and Ladies Aid and with Lights Camera Action group and was part of the original group videotaping our services. Evelyn was succeeded in her role as church secretary by Brenda Lindeman who faithfully serves us today.



Happy Retirement Evelyn! 1959-2009



Brenda Lindeman, Secretary, 2009-Present

Praise be to God for His blessings to our congregation these past 100 years! During our 100 years, there were 3199 baptisms; 2657 confirmations; 1098 marriages; and 970 funerals. We pray that God will continue to bless our congregation and the work performed here all to His Glory.

Music Program, Christian Education, and Organizations

Our church is blessed with several programs, organizations and societies that support the work of the church, enhance our worship, and provide opportunities for fellowship with each other.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAM

Choirs have contributed to our services since 1921. Over the years the church has had a Senior (Chancel) Choir, Chapel Choir for teenage members, Junior Choir for elementary age children and a Cherub Choir for first and second grade students. These choirs enhance our worship at regular worship services and at holiday and festival services.

The first choir director was Rev. Koehler. Other directors of the Senior Choir were Mr. Karl Anderl, Mr. A.O. Christiansen, Mr. Egon Banke, Mr. Tom Johnson, Mr. Maynard Johnson, Mrs. Audrey Johnson, Mrs. Irma Bowman, Mr. Arlen Boll, Miss Christine Kaufman, Mr. Richard Pickard, Mr. Mark Oppitz and Ms. Kendra Hemmelman who is our current choir director.



Chancel Choir

The children's choirs in the past were directed by Miss Adrienne Allen, Mrs. Marge Ott, Mrs. Audrey Johnson, Mrs. Marlis Dreier, Mrs. Marge Knoch, Mrs. Paula Schultz, Mr. Richard Pickard, Mr. Mark Oppitz and current choir director Ms. Kendra Hemmelman.

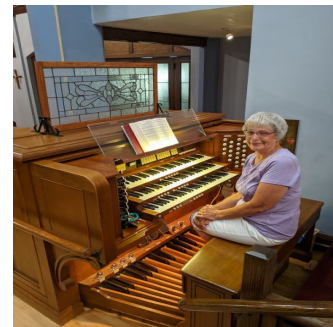
Organists through the years were Ethel Waldhauser, Esther Priddy (from 1930 to 1944), Mrs. Charles Bester, played organ for our German services from 1944 to 1951, Robert Koehler (from 1944 to 1946), Mr. Karl Anderl, Corrine Nelson, Mrs. Marge Ott (Assistant), Mrs. Frances Sneitzer Motz, Mr. Tom Johnson (1951 to 1959), Mr. Maynard Johnson (1959 to 1962), Mr. Egon Banke, Mr. Arlen Boll, Mr. Ronald Papp, Miss Christine Kaufman (1962 to 1968), Miss Gretchen Kaufman, Mr. Richard Pickard (1968 to 1991) and Mr. Mark Opitz (1991 to 2014) and our current organist, Mrs. Karen Miller. Interestingly, Karen Miller is related to our first pastor, Reverend Arthur Koehler. Karen's grandfather was Reverend Koehler's uncle!



Richard Pickard, 1968-1991



Mark Oppitz, 1991-2014



Karen Miller, 2014-Present

Our church has enjoyed music as part of our worship and fellowship beyond the choirs. In January 1922, our church formed an orchestra that performed at various church functions, talent shows, and plays in the 1920s and 1930s. We also have had members over the years play trumpets, guitars and other instruments at our services and gatherings. We have hosted the St. Croix Lutheran Academy Croixaliers and the Cantabile Singers. Special guest musicians and organists have come to our church to perform at our services and at special concerts. In addition, our Sunday School children have sung at Advent and Lenten services, Christmas and Easter, and at Mother's Day services.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM

Sunday School



Sunday School Students and Teachers, 2002



3, 4 and 5 year olds, 2002

Our Sunday School carries on the important mission of providing the Word of God to children from age 3 through 8th grade through Bible stories, catechism memory work, Bible passages and hymns. After our first church building was dedicated on December 19, 1920, Rev. Koehler organized our Sunday School as a place where the Word of God would be taught in its truth and purity to all children of the congregation as well as to any children of the community.

On January 9, 1921, at 9:00 am the first Grace Lutheran Sunday School session was held with 20 students in attendance. There were six separate classes to accommodate the different ages of the children attending. The first Sunday School offering collection that day was 83 cents.

In 1926, Sunday School enrollment approached 200 students and the Sunday School started the first library for the congregation. That same year, the congregation approved chartering a bus transport students to and from Sunday School in response to reports that children had difficulty getting to church because of the distance and some lived on farms. The charter bus service continued for another fifty-six years until 1982. By 1951, the Sunday School peaked at 521 students with a teaching staff of 36 teachers.



Sunday School students with charter bus, 1929

The Sunday School Children's Christmas service is an annual highlight for our congregation to hear the Christmas story told by the children in words and song. On December 24, 1921, the first children's Christmas service was held with 49 students. In the mid-1950s the Sunday School Christmas Program was held at the South St. Paul Senior High School Auditorium to accommodate the over 500 students, their parents and guests. Later, the Christmas program was held at church with separate services in the afternoon and evening the Sunday before Christmas. The Christmas Program was later moved back to Christmas Eve at 4:00 in the afternoon. Following that service, each child was given an old fashioned bag of goodies that included an orange, peanuts in the shell, and various candies.

During the holidays the Sunday School sponsors a food drive each Thanksgiving and a mitten tree each Christmas to provide food and gifts to the those that need it during the holidays. The Sunday School also sponsors a home or foreign mission each year and provides a mission gift from its contributions.

In May, the Sunday School participated in a special Mother's Day service where the children sang and handed out roses to all the mothers in attendance. Later in May, the Sunday School holds a closing service and hands out awards to students that finished their memory work and had outstanding attendance. The service is followed by a Sunday School and Congregation Picnic. For decades it was held outdoors at Kaposia Park in South St. Paul and was later moved to Thompson Park in West St. Paul which had an indoor climate controlled facility. As was the case at the first picnic in 1921 at the Karl Krueger's farm and the decades that followed, the picnic had delicious food, fun games for adults and the children and wonderful Christian fellowship with friends and families.



Perfect Attendance Pin



Sunday School Tug O' War at Congregation Picnic, Kaposia Park, May 1983

Vacation Bible School

The congregation sets aside one week during the month of June for our successful Vacation Bible School program. Vacation Bible school provides an opportunity for Kindergarten through 6th Grade students in the community to learn about God and the Gospel message through Bible lessons, songs, crafts, skits, and games. Many volunteers work tirelessly to prepare for the week and to assist in decorating, preparing snacks, and of course teaching the wonderful lessons and leading fun activities for the students during the two and half our sessions.

Confirmation and Release Time Classes

Christian instruction extends beyond Sunday School. Confirmation classes for 6th, 7th and 8th graders have been held each year since 1921 and 2657 students have been confirmed at our church. Our pastors and vicars have conducted the confirmation classes where students learn about the Bible and the six chief parts in Luther's Small Catechism.

For several years the congregation provided weekday "release time" classes for students in grades three through eight who attended the local public schools. Students were released from public school classes for one hour a week to attend religious classes at their churches. These classes were discontinued in 1976.

WELS Christian Day Schools and St. Croix Lutheran Academy

Our congregation provides financial support for families whose children attend WELS Christian Day Schools for Kindergarten through 8th grade. Children of our congregation have attended: Crown of Life (f/k/a Emmanuel Lutheran) (West St. Paul), St. John's (St. Paul), St. Andrew's (St. Paul Park), St. John's (North St. Paul), Bloomington Lutheran, Pilgrim Lutheran (Minneapolis) and St. Croix Lutheran Academy Middle School (West St. Paul). Members of our congregation have volunteered at these Christian Day Schools supporting their work.

Our congregation also supports our Synod's local high school, St. Croix Lutheran Academy (f/k/a St. Croix Lutheran High School). In May 1958, Grace Lutheran Church joined the Twin City Lutheran High School Association when St. Croix Lutheran Academy in West St. Paul, Minnesota was established that same year. Teenage students of our congregation have attended St. Croix Middle School (opened in September 2009) and the High School. Members of our congregation have served on the General Board and Board of Regents of the school and have volunteered in other roles at the school. Our congregation provides financial support to the high school each year in our annual budget. Our congregation also awards scholarships and financial assistance to families whose children attend St. Croix Lutheran Academy.

ORGANIZATIONS OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

During the first 100 years of Grace Lutheran Church, a number of organizations were organized for Christian fellowship and education in God's Word among our members. Some of these are still active today and some have been disbanded. Following is a brief summary of those organizations:

Faithful Friends of Grace (f/k/a Ladies Aid and Grace Guild)

The Grace Lutheran Ladies Aid and Grace Guild merged in 2019 to form a combined organization called the Faithful Friends of Grace. This group traces its history back 100 years to just before the founding of the church when the Ladies Aid had its first meeting on February 10, 1921. The Grace Guild was formed

on February 22, 1949. These organizations have been at the heart of numerous activities at our church and have supported the congregation and its members in countless ways. We acknowledge the dedication and zeal which their members, past and present, have shown in Christian love to promote spiritual growth and donate funds to assist in building the kingdom of God.

The Ladies Aid Society purchased the first pulpit for the small chapel in 1922, bought hymnals and light fixtures for the church and parsonage, and provided financial help to the congregation as needs arose. In earlier years it supported and worked for the children of an orphanage, and were active in and contributed to a free bed fund at St. John's Hospital Auxiliary. During World War II, the Ladies Aid supported Red Cross projects, remembered our congregation's servicemen and women with cards and letters, collected clothing for our church's needy and to be sent to Europe for post-war relief.

The Ladies Aid had many fundraiser projects such as ice cream socials, bake sales, greeting card sales, vanilla sales, fun plays performed by the group, luncheons, suppers and chicken dinners where up to 400 people were served. In

the early days a chicken dinner meant processing from chicken coop to frying pan.



Ladies Aid

The Grace Guild was formed and organized on February 22, 1949, with 23 charter members and was open to any woman in the congregation who wanted to join. Members of the Guild were also members of the Synod's Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS). Through the years the Guild maintained the nursery, assisted with the Cherub and Junior choirs, sponsored many fellowship gatherings for its own members as well as for the congregation, supported many mission endeavors through the LWMS and contributed yearly to the church's scholarship fund to provide financial assistance to students.



Grace Guild

These combined organizations serve at confirmation banquets, funeral luncheons, receptions, Lenten soup and sandwich suppers between Wednesday night services and help the Church Council with Easter morning breakfast. They help with the On the Road Again Southview Boulevard celebration in October by making roasters of chili and baked goods for sale where they use the funds to support their work, missions and the church's Scholarship Fund. They sponsor book sales and blood drives and look for opportunities

to assist the congregation and its members. They send get well cards, baby and sympathy cards to members and provide gifts to the church staff.

Grace Golden Agers

The organizational meeting of the Grace Golden Agers was held on September 13, 1973 with 28 members in attendance. A constitution was adopted. The purpose of the organization is to furnish an opportunity for education, especially in matters pertaining to the Lutheran Church in its work; and to foster Christian fellowship among the senior citizens of the church. Throughout the years, the Golden Agers have enjoyed many outings to various sites around the Twin Cities, have eaten at local restaurants, have had many informative speakers at their meetings and have been entertained by musical groups from our church and other organizations. The group meets monthly for a dinner at noon followed by fellowship and a program.



Golden Agers

Young Peoples' Society

The earliest mention of the Young People's Society is in the Men's Club minutes from 1926 when they held joint meetings to plan social functions for the young church. Through the years, YPS has served as an organization for our teenagers to meet regularly, have a devotion, and plan social events and service activities. The YPS in the early years of the church helped with the plays, amateur nights, ice cream socials and other fellowship activities. More recently, the YPS has undertaken service projects at the church doing yard work, painting and helping with the On The Road Again celebration and the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. They have had fundraisers selling Christmas wreaths and swags and flowers in the spring. The group has also attended the Synod's International Youth Rally events with other Synod youth groups in St. Louis, MO, Estes Park, CO, Lake Buena Vista, FL, Ames, IA and Knoxville, TN.

Grace Lutheran Pioneers and Grace Lutheran Girl Pioneers

Lutheran Pioneers is a Christ-centered organization for boys of the Wisconsin Synod to promote good citizenship, to learn about nature and the beauties of God's creation, and to develop outdoor skills of interest to adolescent youth. Train 326 of Grace Lutheran Church in South St. Paul was chartered in October 1973. Lutheran Girl Pioneers is a Christ centered organization for girls of the Wisconsin Synod to offer up to for fellowship and encourage service to family, church and community. Caravan 299 of Grace Lutheran Church was chartered in April, 1974. Over 250 boys and girls participated in our Pioneer program that has been led by over 50 dedicated leaders over the years.

Our Pioneers meet weekly four times a month from September through April to work on various skills outlined in the program and special activities planned by the leaders. One meeting each month is set aside for a special outing. Spiritual leadership is provided by the pastor. By proving proficiency in the

various skill areas, the members advance through the levels of the program. Many boys and girls who complete the program stay involved and become Junior and Senior Leaders.

The Pioneers combine learning and fun with Christian Fellowship. They work on various projects to develop skills not only in the outdoors but also crafts and life skills that will nurture them to be faithful adults leading a Christ-centered life. During Christmas and Easter, the Girl Pioneers host tea parties for the girls, mothers and grandmothers. All Pioneers go on educational outings, participate in campfires, hayrides, sliding parties, and district campouts. In February, they go on the annual winter camp out at Camp Croix. In March they build and race pinewood derby cars and in April, they have an awards banquet. Each summer they go on a canoe trip, oftentimes at a church member's cabin who serves as a host.



Bird House Project, 2008



Mother Daughter Tea, Easter 2008

The Lord has blessed the Pioneer program at Grace with boys and girls who enjoy the program, parents who take an interest in their children and are willing to help when needed, strong spiritual leadership, and the backbone of the organization, dedicated leaders that have spent years providing the continuity needed to keep the program running smoothly.

Grace Lutheran Men's Club

The Grace Lutheran Men's Club was organized on May 4, 1921, and had an active role in the church for 50 years until it terminated on November 10, 1971. The Men's Club spearheaded organizing gatherings such as picnics, ice cream socials, plays and talent shows. They cut down Christmas trees from the Overholser farm in Hinckley and returned to place two large trees inside the church. They decorated the church at Christmas, and provided Christmas gifts for Sunday School children and teachers. They worked on projects at the church to improve the building and parsonage. The canopy covering the rear entrance to this day was constructed by "Mr. Bester" from the Men's Club in 1938. They formed an Athletic Committee that organized and coached teams that participated in kittenball, softball, basketball, and bowling leagues. The trophies from these leagues are on display in the church basement. "Mr. Overholser and Mr. Schultz" from the Men's Club made shuffleboard sets in 1938 to be used in the church basement.

God has truly blessed our congregation these past 100 years and we pray His blessings continue.

100th Anniversary Member Memories

The 100th Anniversary Committee asked members, past and present, to contribute their own favorite memories of Grace Lutheran Church in South St. Paul to make the history book their own. Enjoy!

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Ernie Ott | In the middle to late '50's, the organist got the choir a "Gig" (Job) to sing Christmas carols for the patients of the old Anchor Hospital, only we were not allowed in the basement as that was where the city jails resided. |
| Eleanor Sneitzer | <p>In Sunday School, I received a nativity scene, which I treasured and it was displayed on my Christmas tree every year until I was 94 years old and moved to assisted living.</p> <p>My parents used to register with the pastor, the day before they took communion. That was in the 30's.</p> |
| Anita Nye | <p>I remember the Guild putting on skits at different functions, having style shows, Christmas Boutiques, Mother-daughter banquets, and the fun Guild family picnic at the Nye's with a softball game. Everyone played softball from toddlers to old folks. Of course we didn't have any old folks!</p> <p>There was always opportunity to bring desserts to church. Just happened that during one of the weeks during Lent when my kids along with Donnie and myself were in all the organizations, it was our turn to bring a dessert each day to church.</p> |
| Friend of Grace | What ever happened to the tug-o-war rope from the church picnic? I loved watching the kids put their hearts into pulling on that rope at the picnic. |
| Friend of Grace | I remember when we paid off the building loan for the balcony expansion and they burned the mortgage in church after the service. That was a big day! |
| Friend of Grace | I taught Sunday School after I was confirmed. My students would give me aftershave gift packs for Christmas every year. The only problem was I hadn't started shaving yet! |
| Friend of Grace | I enjoyed the annual All Organization party held every year when all the church groups would get together for dinner and entertainment in the church basement. I especially enjoyed the year the Young Peoples' Society put on The Gong Show. That was real funny and entertaining. |
| Friend of Grace | I can still hear Pastor Sengbusch telling the kids to line up in the basement for the Christmas program and to put our chewing gum in the basket by the door before we marched up the steps. How did he know we were chewing gum? |

Friend of Grace	My family enjoys the Easter service and breakfast. It is so nice to see everyone and their families at the services and the breakfast. I remember the Easter sunrise service when Vicar Al Gumm had some large cymbals that he clanged in the church balcony during the processional hymn that brought everyone to attention.
Brenda Lindeman	Vicar Tim Grams dressed up as "Psalty" for Vacation Bible School Fire drills for Sunday School Grace's entry in the Kaposia Days Parade A goat jumping over Pastor Ehlers roof into courtyard one night Pioneer Christmas caroling and party afterwards
Trudy Kinsey	I was confirmed my freshman year at SSP High School by Pastor Koehler at Grace Lutheran Church. It was an exciting time for me as I had no religious up-bringing prior to that time. Also Pastor Eberhart performed my marriage ceremony on June 3, 1950, and he baptized my daughter, Deborah Kinsey in 1951. I lived in Phoenix for many years and when I returned to MN, I rejoined Grace Lutheran in 1992 when Pastor Fallen was our Pastor.
Weber gals	When we attended Sunday School and had perfect attendance, we got a pin. Second year was a wreath to go around the pin. Then the 3 rd year and so forth, a bar with the year printed on it was added. If we went out of town, we would attend a church where we were. Then we would present the church bulletin to our Sunday School teacher the Sunday we came back to get credit. It was a wonderful achievement. Now that we are older, we still enjoy attending church weekly. Praise to God!
Friend of Grace	In December – our church had a cookie and craft sale. At first we sold the items on Sunday after each church service. In 1996, the sale was moved to Saturday mornings. Then the plate of cookies sold for \$2.00. We even sold next to new items too. That ended in the year 1998. Not sure when the bake sales ended (year?) or the craft sales. Do you remember what year that was ended?
Friend of Grace	Candlelight Service on Christmas is so special to me. What a beautiful way to bring Christ into our world each year. The singing and the last song <i>Silent Night</i> in German and English, what else could you possibly want? Growing up in the 60's and 70's the church was always filled. That is where I met some good friends, made special bonds, and have stayed in contact with these people all the years.
Friend of Grace	Ladies Aid had a group of ladies to bring entertainment to the residents of Golden Oaks Nursing Home. It was mostly singing groups from Shepherd of the Hills, Emmanuel, and/or St. Croix Lutheran School. They would bring in cakes or cookies. Looking at the minute notes it started in 1992 to 1997. Then the Golden Oaks supplied the activities.

- Friend of Grace I remember the fellowship we had attending the spring and Christmas Luncheons. Sometimes we had a pot luck or have Tinucci's or the Coop deliver the meals. Then we play games or bingo. In 1995 our ladies group went to Mendakota Country Club for lunch at spring and December. Doris Meyer's son was a chef there. Many years the ladies had the luncheons at Southview Country Club with Alice or Barb making the arrangements. Sometimes we would go to Red Lobster on Robert Street, Emma Krumbree's in Inver Grove Heights, and Kouhry's in Inver Grove. Also, the ladies have been to Angelo's in South St. Paul. In 2017 we started going to Concord Lanes. Part of the fun was the Pastor reading the left/right story. (not sure of what year that was started.) It was a lot of fun and great fellowship!
- Brenda Lindeman I remember the Sunday of the Church picnic we would give out awards for perfect attendance and memory work and then at the end the Sunday School teachers would go up on the steps and sing the song, *One Life Touches Another*, together. It felt really special to do that.
- I also remember the Christmas Sunday School program when each of the students carried a different country's flag which we put in stands up by the steps. I am not sure if that is the same year that at the end of the program, the teachers and students went down the outside aisles with our candles and sang *Silent Night* in the dark. It was so moving!
- Friend of Grace I remember a Sunday family night and the program was spoofs of TV commercials. Ron Freiling and Marlin Giese (remember him?) were Albert and Stanley from the NSP commercial. I still smile whenever I see Ron because I think of that.
- Denny Crist I recall, as a child, back in the early 1950's when we would ride the Jitney bus, provided by the church, to and from Sunday School. There were many of us kids at Sunday school. A few years later Orell Piper, Darryl Schimdt, and I were police boys with flags to guide kids across the streets to church. In the summer, the church got us to go to bible camp at Camp Emmaus in Menahga, Minnesota.
- On Wednesday afternoons we got out of school to attend Time Release Classes at church. I remember listening and watching Bible story movies in the basement. Pastor Eberhart was our pastor then. Wonderful memories.
- Marsha Mortel I remember being in the Children's Choir when we sang at Sunrise Service on Easter Sundays. I remember having Confirmation preparation classes with Pastor Sauer. You better have done your homework! I remember how different the church looked when they painted the walls blue and installed red carpeting.
- Ilene Gourhan I remember attending Time Release Classes on Wednesday afternoons and Christmas programs held at the South St. Paul Senior High School and later at the Church. One year I was one of the angels during one of the programs. We all had costumes. Also the Cherub, Chapel and Senior Choirs.

- Ron Freiling, Jr I remember spending time with the Sengbusches. I knew Pastor and Jeff very well. Had fun walking through the whole church. I remember when there were 3-4 Christmas shows for the Sunday School. I remember the YPS outings and events. The talent shows we put on and the newspaper drives. I remember singing in the Choir for all the Easter Services and enjoying time with friends.
- Eleanor Sneitzer In 1935 my parents would sign up at the Pastor's home for communion with Rev. Koehler. In 1930, we had a bus that would pick up Sunday School children from the south end of town.
- Lance McMorrow I have many fond memories of being a Lutheran Pioneer. During the late 70's and early 80's we had lots of kids and members involved in the program. I don't know how the leaders kept all us kids corralled. The leaders were caring and patient as they taught us about God and his creation. I especially remember Bill & Cheryl Bremel, Betty Ohman, Roger Forester, Randy Schacht, Gordy Waldhauser, Ed and Dianne Lattery and Mike Tuhy later on. The winter camp outs at Camp Croix and the canoe trip down the Namekagon River were annual highlights of getting to experience and be in awe of God's creation with fellow Christians. Pinewood Derby races, District Campouts, annual harvesting of the Church's Christmas trees, swimming at Central Pool, or bouncing on the trampolines at St. Croix Lutheran High School were some of the many fun activities we got to do in Pioneers.
- I enjoyed and was inspired by Pastor Fred Fallen's many creative and engaging sermon series such as The "World's Greatest Camping Trip" as we learned about Israel's exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land and when he dressed and spoke as the different participants in Jesus' Passion (ex. King Herod, Judas, Pontius Pilate, Peter) during the Wednesday Lenten services one year.
- Friend of Grace I have been a member of Grace Lutheran for almost 40 years now. I have many wonderful memories over the years. I can remember running up "the curly stairs" as a little kid in the church choir. My daughter was baptized in this church. I was baptized in this church and my little brother too. My dad was baptized in this church and I believe one of my grandparents were also baptized at Grace.
- Barb Zegar My kids had fun at the church picnics; especially the "cake walk". One had a tantrum because she wanted to go back for more cake. My girls enjoyed being in Pioneers where they learned a lot. They went canoeing, Christmas caroling, learned to set a table, and went to the Planetarium. They had fun making and racing their Pinewood Derby cars. Thank you to Beth and all the Pioneer leaders. We really miss Betty Ohman who did so much! I thank Carol and Brenda, along with all the Sunday School teachers.
- Randy Schacht Several decades ago when I was an elder during a church service, the pastor seemed a little nervous and suddenly said to me: go to the vicar's house; he's scheduled to preach in five minutes. So I ran and knocked—no response. So I walked in and called his name—again no response. I then walked around, found the bedroom and he was snoring away. I woke him up. He looked at the clock,

jumped out of bed, put on his church garments, and took off running. He got there just as the pre-sermon hymn was ending—AND gave a great sermon about 2-3 minutes after jumping out of bed. That's an experience I never forgot.

Arlene Schacht

When my husband and I got married on August 9, 1958, it was the hottest day of that year—and no air conditioning in the crowded church at that time. Up at the altar Pastor Eberhart had a steady drip-drip from his chin unto the Bible. After our vows were spoken and the final prayers were spoken and we were walking out of church, as the female guests rose to leave, their skirts etc. were stuck to the varnish on the pews. They just had a difficult time standing up! Even the photographer could not get his camera to function properly because of the heat and humidity—but we did get some good black and white photos, thank God.

Overholser memories of Grace Lutheran Church

My grandfather and grandmother, Royal and Alberta Overholser moved to South St Paul from Pine County in 1925. At some point shortly thereafter, they joined Grace Lutheran Church. Based on a 1957 commemorative plate, Royal served as congregation president at some point before then. They had three sons who were all members and were confirmed between 1940 and 1944. Walter ended up as the longest tenured member of the sons. Walter and Phyllis Vollbrecht were married at Grace on May 10, 1952. They were members to 1980 when they moved to Hinckley, MN.

Steve & Chris

Christine Pieper: confirmed class of 1966

Steve: confirmed class of 1967

Aside from early memories of Sunday School and confirmation class, some of my earliest memories of Grace were with my grandfathers. Carl Vollbrecht served as church custodian for several years after he retired from Armour and Co. in the mid-1960s. One summer when I was around 10 or 12 I worked as his helper. I cut the grass and tended flower beds that summer while Carl worked inside. He spent many hours at the church and was there for every event during those years and I was there to help for various duties. Most of the time, my work wasn't quite up to his standards but I did learn a lot about the inner workings of the church building.

Grandparents Royal and Alberta were active in the church for many years. They had moved to South St Paul from the Hinckley area right after getting married in 1925. I am not sure when it started, but Royal owned land outside of town and planned to grow and sell Christmas trees. He never did develop that into a business but for many years he provided the 2 tall Christmas trees that were placed on either side of the Altar during Advent and Christmas. Later, when it got too difficult to locate the right trees, they purchased 2 artificial trees that replaced the real trees during the season. I am not sure how long those trees lasted but they were also used for many years.

Royal and Alberta celebrated several anniversaries in the church basement. They held gatherings for their 25th, 40th and 50th anniversaries at the church.

My mom, Phyllis, sang in the church senior choir for many years. I started with the Chapel choir but graduated early to the Senior choir to help with the tenor and base sections. Then Christine joined the

group as well. The early Easter Sunday sunrise service and then the 3 other services were some of my favorite days in the choir. We got up at about 4 am to make it to the church to warm up and sing at the 6 am service. And that was just the start of the day. Later it was Christine and I doing the same thing in the senior choir. Some of our favorites were the Christmas Cantatas that we sang at the candlelight services and the Hallelujah Chorus on Easter services. We marched in for processional hymns or walked up the spiral steps to the choir loft many, many times. We also enjoyed the Christmas caroling events with the choir.

We enjoyed the many meetings and outings with the YPS groups and a new Vicar each year. And we had great times at the annual all congregation parties in the church basement.

In 1984 Steve was transferred to Miami, FL with the Pillsbury Company and we left the congregation for several years. We returned in 1989 and rejoined the choir and our son Mike was confirmed in 1990. Later we moved to Prior Lake and left our Grace membership.

Pieper Family memories

Marvin Pieper and Betty Groves were married at Grace on June 28, 1947. The Groves family had been members earlier and Marvin had been a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Rosemount. They spent many years as members of Grace and Marv spent many years as an usher and several as head usher. Christine was born and baptized in 1952 and attended Sunday School and confirmation classes and was confirmed in 1966. Marv and Betty moved to Dresser, WI in 1974 and they became members of Grace Lutheran Church in Nye, WI.

Steve and Christine remember the Christmas programs in the 50's and 60's that were so large they had to be held at the SSP high school auditorium. Christine taught Sunday School classes in the late 60s through the 70s. She sang in the various children's choirs and joined Steve in the senior choir for many years also.

Steve and Christine were married in 1972 at Grace. Our 2 sons were born and baptized in 1975 and 1977. The boys enjoyed Sunday School and the annual Christmas program. When Jon, the oldest, was 3 years old at the 1978 program, he was in the front row of kids and what did he do, he pretended he had a Star Wars fighter flying around and paid no attention to the teachers. Chris was embarrassed as we watched from the balcony, but the congregation had a nice chuckle at the sight.

Later both Jon and Mike were married at Grace in 1998 and 1999.

We have many fond memories of our activities and sharing in worship at Grace Lutheran Church.

Congratulations on your 100th Anniversary.

VICARS

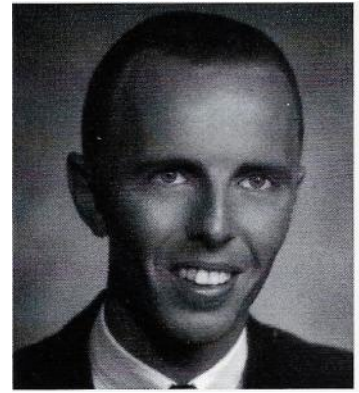
Grace Lutheran Church was fortunate to have 26 vicars serve our congregation between 1965 and 1991. Each made significant contributions to our church and our members benefited from their service and friendship during their year with us.



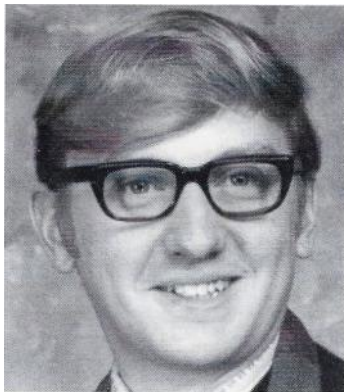
Vicar Verne Voss
1965-66



Vicar John P. Schroeder
1966-67



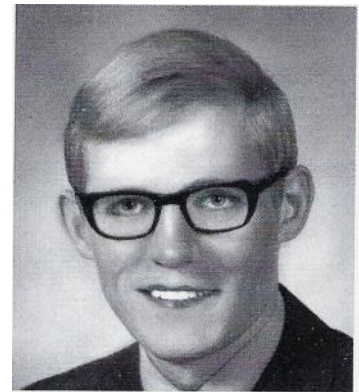
Vicar Oliver H. Lindholm
1967-68



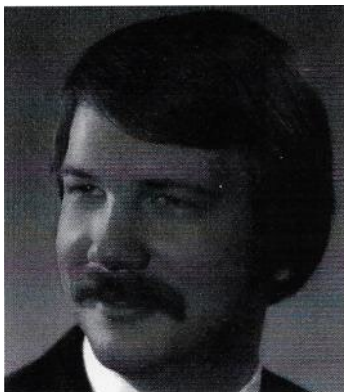
Vicar John Huebner
1968-69



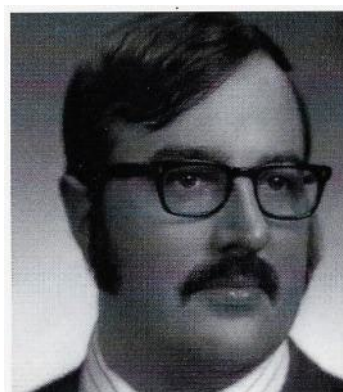
Vicar Kurt Mau
1969-70



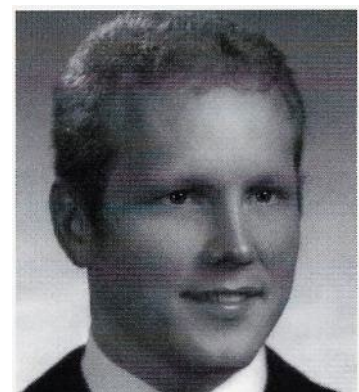
Vicar Glenn Groth
1970-71



Vicar Arthur Koepsell
1971-72

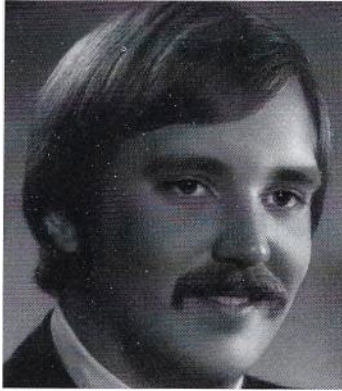


Vicar David Schottey
1972-73

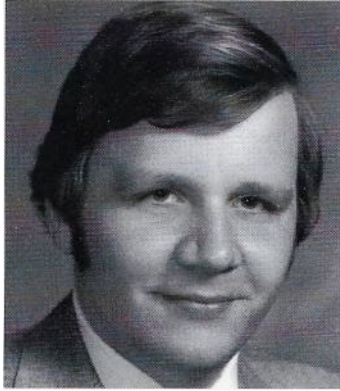


Vicar Paul Lemke
1973-74

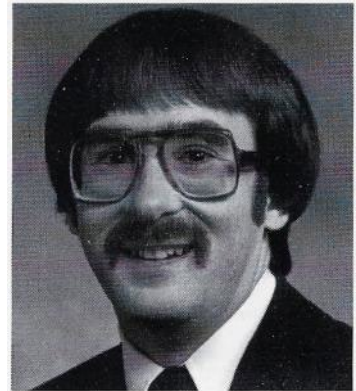
VICARS



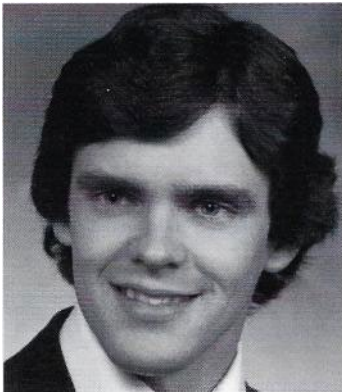
Vicar James Seelow
1974-1975



Vicar Thomas Wilsmann
1975-76



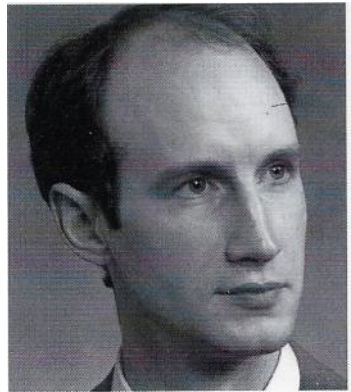
James Lindloff
1976-77



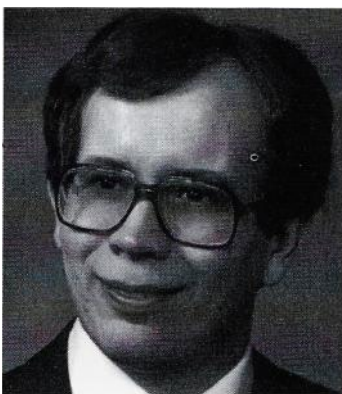
Vicar James Frey
1977-78



Alan W. Gumm
1978-79



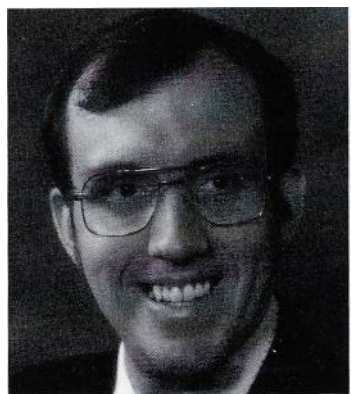
Vicar Steven Steiner
1979-80



Vicar Michael Feuerstahler
1980-81



Vicar Dennis Strong
1981-82



Vicar Richard Warnecke
1982-83

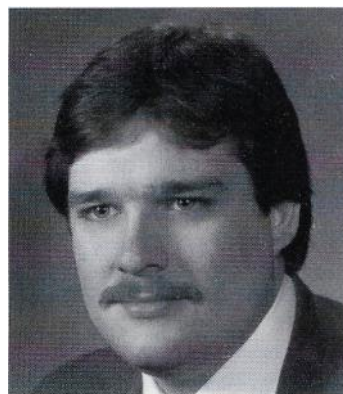
VICARS



Vicar Jeffrey Bass
1983-84



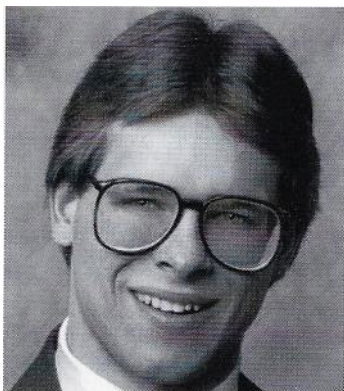
Vicar Kelly Pochop
1984-1985



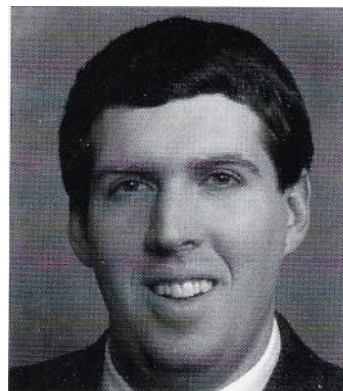
Vicar Jeffery Limpert
1985-1986



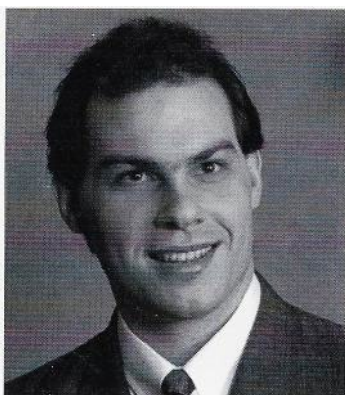
Vicar Mark Anderson
1986-87



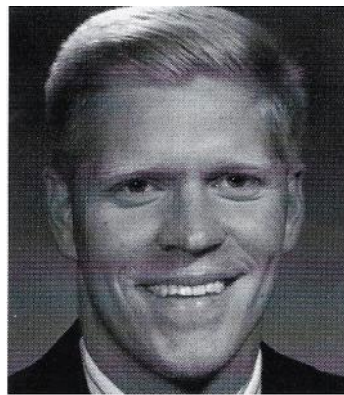
Vicar Tim Grams
1987-88



Vicar Keith Siverly
1988-89



Vicar Mark Aufdemberge
1989-90



Vicar Douglas Westenberg
1990-91

This space can be used to write your own memories or have others sign your book with their memories.

