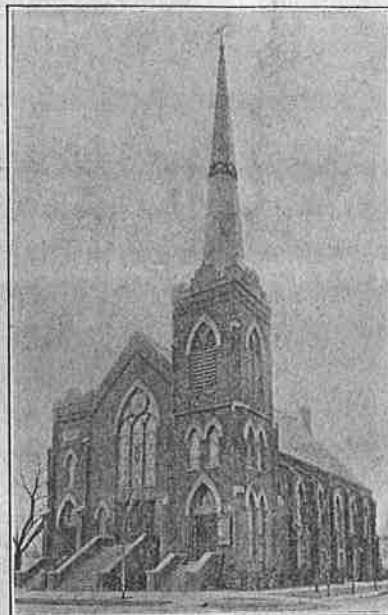


Zion's Sixtieth Anniversary

1883 - 1943



OCTOBER 20, 22, 24, 1943

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

Rockford • Illinois

PASTORS IN ZION



REV. ALF A. WATTMAN.

REV. E. G. KNOCK

1884-1888 .....	Rev. C. G. Lundell
1888-1894 .....	Rev. S. G. Ohman
1894-1900 .....	Rev. J. A. Eckstrom
1901-1912 .....	Rev. N. P. Sjostrom
1912-1918 .....	Rev. G. E. Hemdahl
1919-1928 .....	Rev. Carl Solomonson
1928- .....	Rev. E. G. Knock
1942- .....	Rev. Alf Wattman



BRIEF HISTORIC FACTS  
*Concerning*  
THE ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS



The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rockford, Illinois, was organized at a meeting held August 7, 1883 in the Swedish Methodist Church on First Ave. There were 146 charter members, most of whom had come from the First Lutheran Church. It was recognized that one Swedish Lutheran Church in Rockford was not able to accommodate and care for the spiritual needs of the large number of Swedish immigrants that were coming to this City.

At the meeting of organization it was decided to rent Chick Hall on East State Street and to conduct services there the following Sunday at 10:30 A. M. Mr. Jonas Larson, newly elected deacon, was asked to take charge of the services until a pastor could be obtained.

The day after the organization of the Zion congregation, August 8, 1883, the young people of the Church organized The Zion Aid Society. By the end of the year this society had 87 members and had gathered \$478.55 for the building fund.

Rev. J. J. Petri of Philadelphia, Pa., a son of one of the charter members, was called as pastor of the newly organized congregation, August 20, 1883. This call was declined.

The lot on which to build the new church was bought at a meeting held September 17, 1883. The price of the lot was \$1,200.00. It is located on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Sixth Street.

Rev. C. G. Lundell of Little Indian, Illinois, a member of the Swedish Lutheran Ansgarius Synod, was called as pastor of Zion on March 18, 1884. He accepted the call and preached his initial sermon here July 1, 1884. His salary was \$800.00 and a Christmas offering. The congregation then consisted of 200 communicant members.

The foundation to the new church had been finished when Pastor Lundell arrived. The corner stone was laid July 20, 1884.

The first service in the basement was held September 7, 1884. The basement was dedicated October 19, 1884.

October 11, 1885, is an historic day in Zion since on that day the sanctuary of the church was dedicated and Rev. C. G. Lundell was installed as Zion's first Pastor. Three prominent guest speakers were present, namely, Rev. Erland Carlson of Chicago, President of the Augustana Synod, Rev. S. P. A. Lindahl, Secretary of the Synod, and Rev. M. C. Ransen, President of the Illinois Conference. Fifty communicant members were received into the church that day.

The total cost of the church was \$13,795.85. The debt was \$7,050.00.

At the annual meeting January 7, the Pastor reported 330 communicant members in Zion.

At the annual meeting in 1886 the number of deacons and trustees was increased from six to nine.

Rev. Lundell resigned as Pastor in Zion early in 1888 and moved to Pecatonica, Ill., May 1.

Pastor S. G. Ohman preached his first sermon in Zion July 1, 1888. He was ordained at the Synodical convention in Galesburg June 24 on the call to Zion.

In his first annual report Pastor Ohman states that Zion had 600 communicant members.

During the time of Rev. Ohman's pastorate a deep spiritual awakening came over Zion. This spiritual awakening was experienced at the same time in the First Lutheran Church. Hundreds of souls in our Lutheran churches were brought to a new life in Christ. This spiritual revival was not man-made and could, therefore, leave lasting blessings which are still evident in Zion.

The first piano for the church was purchased in 1892.

Swedish school was conducted in Zion even during the time of the public school. As a rule it was held for 8 months. Jonas Larson taught such a school for a number of years. In his report for 1888 Mr. Larson reports 44 pupils enrolled. He also conducted the vacation school which was called the Swedish School. Often 200 pupils attended the vacation school.

A pipe organ was purchased in the year 1889. In order to provide room for it, an addition, 12x24, was built as a chancel and choir loft.

At the annual meeting January 1, 1894, Pastor Ohman reported that Zion had 1000 communicant members.

Pastor Ohman resigned from Zion April 25, 1894, and assumed his duties as superintendent of the Augustana Hospital in Chicago during the month of June, 1894.

Rev. J. A. Eckstrom of Escanaba, Mich., was called as pastor in Zion at a salary of \$1,000.00. He accepted the call and came here November 4, 1894.

The church bell was donated by Jonas Hokanson. It was dedicated March 11, 1896.

Electric lights in the sanctuary were installed in 1900 at a cost of \$180.00. They were donated by the Young People's Society.

When Pastor Eckstrom came to Zion in the year 1894 the debt of the congregation was \$13,193.00. By the year 1899 the debt had been reduced to \$9,865.00, but the creditors were pressing hard for more payment and threatened to foreclose on the mortgage against the church property. On October 8 such a letter was read to the congregation. A subscription was taken that day at both morning and evening services that amounted to \$1,500.00. A friend of the church had promised to give an equal amount if \$1,500.00 were raised by the congregation. There was rejoicing in Zion that day. By January 1, 1901, the debt had been reduced to \$6,100.00.

Rev. J. A. Eckstrom resigned from his Zion pastorate in September, 1900, and moved to Grand Rapids, Mich., January 1, 1901.



Rev. N. P. Sjostrom of Springfield, Mass., was the next pastor to take up his work in Zion. He was called at a salary of \$1,200.00. He came in time to conduct the annual meeting of the congregation, January 4, 1901.

One of the first objectives in Pastor Sjostrom's program was the liquidation of the church debt which was \$6,100.00. A Finance Society was organized which helped reduce the debt by \$1,100.00. A subscription was taken in 1902 so that by November that year the entire debt had been paid.

The gallery of the sanctuary was enlarged in the year 1903.

The lot south of the church was bought in the year 1906 at a cost of \$1,300.00.

Sister Anna C. Carlson of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha took up her work in Zion during the summer of 1905. She reported 118 nursing days and 2 nights the first half year. She worked willingly and faithfully. Her health broke down and she had to return to the Deaconess Home in Omaha early in 1908.

The parsonage question was revived during 1907. It had been before the congregation in 1892 but lost out. At the annual meeting January 1, the Young People's Society and the Dorcas Society were asked to raise money for the parsonage. The Trustees were authorized to procure a lot. They reported at a special meeting, April 14, 1909, a certain property on Sixth Avenue which could be had for \$5,000.00. The proposition was voted down. A new committee was elected. It reported that the Bildahl property at 920 Fifth Avenue had been bought for \$3,030.00. It was decided to build a parsonage during the next year. It was finished during the year 1910 at a total cost of \$8,393.88 for lot and house.

The stone steps in front of the church were built in the year 1909.

John Mellberg was elected janitor of the church at the annual meeting, Jan. 1, 1910.

Rev. N. P. Sjostrom died February 6, 1912, after a brief illness and was buried in the Scandinavian Cemetery. The Zion Church erected a monument over his grave. His death caused deep sorrow in the congregation as well as in the community. A spiritual awakening had come over Zion during his ministry. The blessings of this God-sent revival are still evident in our congregation.

During the vacancy from February 6 to October 1, 1912, Dr. L. G. Abrahamson had charge of the congregation. He confirmed the class of 1912.

Rev. G. E. Hemdahl of Paxton, Illinois, became the next regular pastor in Zion. He took up his work here the first Sunday in October, 1912.

At the annual meeting, January 1, 1913, it was decided that one Sunday evening service each month should be conducted in the English language.

The Church tower was damaged by a tornado July 8, 1913. At a meeting held July 16 the congregation decided to repair the damaged tower and erect a steeple above the tower. The cost amounted to \$2,323.00. The work was completed by November 15 that same year.

The Swedish Lutheran Brotherhood was organized in January, 1913. Pastor Hemdahl was its first president.

The women of the church were given the right to vote by a change in the constitution which was voted at the annual meeting January 1, 1914, and ratified January 1, 1915.

In his annual report, January 1, 1917, Pastor Hemdahl recommended that a Sunday School be organized in Rockview. This was done shortly after New Year. Seventy pupils were enrolled the first year.

During the First World War Zion had 117 young men in the service of our country. Three young women were serving as nurses in the Red Cross.

Pastor G. E. Hemdahl resigned as pastor in Zion April 23, 1918, and accepted a call to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Wahoo, Nebr. He preached his farewell in Zion July 29, 1918.

Rev. J. E. Erlander filled the vacancy for half a year.

During this vacancy pastoral calls were issued to Rev. Felix Hanson of Jamestown, N. Y., and Rev. C. A. Lund, Escanaba, Mich. Both these calls were declined.

On December 18, 1918, a call was issued to Rev. Carl Solomonson of Fergus Falls, Minn, at a salary of \$1,800.00. Rev. Solomonson accepted the call and held his initial sermon here February 9, 1919.

A Cradle Roll was organized in the Sunday School in the year 1919.

During the year 1919 a steam heating plant was installed in the church at a cost of \$4,300.00, new toilet at a cost of \$915.00, and with other improvement the total cost was almost \$8,000.00.

During the year 1920 the sanctuary was decorated, the two oil paintings on either side of the altar procured, all at a cost of \$2,605.00. Art glass windows were installed at a cost of \$1,800.00.

The monthly envelope system was put into use January 1, 1922.

Two lots on the corner of 12th Avenue and 19th Street were bought by the Church in 1922 as a building site for the new chapel where the Rockview Sunday School could convene and the newly organized societies could hold their meetings. The cost of the lots was \$825.00. The work on the new chapel was begun in April, 1924, and was dedicated on July 27, 1924, by Dr. Peter Peterson, President of the Illinois Conference.

The Zion Church was host to the Augustana Synod for the 64th annual convention, June 8-15, 1923. Zion celebrated its 40th anniversary the previous week.

In May, 1927, the congregation decided to purchase a new Geneva Pipe Organ at a cost of \$7,000.00 and the old pipe organ as a trade-in. The Luther League sponsored this project. The organ was installed that same summer, and dedicated October 7, 1927.

On March 22, 1922, a beginning was made to hold double morning services. Sunday School was held at 9:30 A. M. and a half an hour English service at 10:00 A. M. followed the instruction period. The Swedish service was held at 10:45 A. M. All the evening services were yet in the Swedish language.

The baptismal font in the church was donated in the year 1922 by Chas. Segurd and Martin Rosene.

After the chapel in Rockview had been completed and put to use, the mission developed rapidly. Evening services were held twice a month, a Dorcas Society and a Junior Mission Band were organized. The Zion Church Council recommended to the congregation that this mission be handed over to the Mission Board of the Illinois Conference for further care. This was done in February, 1925. By action of the Zion Church April 8, 1925, the chapel was "sold" to the Tabor Lutheran Church for the

nominal sum of \$2,000. The original cost of the chapel and lots had been about \$9,000.00. Thus the Rockview Mission developed into the Tabor Lutheran Church which was organized in February, 1925. It soon received its own pastor.

Pastor Solomonson's health began to fail him in the fall of 1927. He went to the Augustana Hospital in Chicago for medical care and improved so that he could return to his work. The work was too much for him. He was not able to conduct the annual meeting January 2, 1928, and returned to the Augustana Hospital where he died February 5, 1928, at an age of 56 years. Again Zion felt the loss of an able and beloved pastor.

During the vacancy, after Pastor Solomonson's death, Evald B. Lawson and Gilbert Monson of the Theological Seminary had charge of the work over the week-ends. Rev. J. A. Benander of the Salem Lutheran Church was vice pastor. He confirmed the class of 1928.

Two pastoral calls were now issued, the one after the other, but both were declined. The first one was issued to Evald B. Lawson to become pastor in Zion after his ordination to the holy ministry the following June. The other was issued to Rev. H. E. Sandstedt of Chicago. A call was then issued to Rev. E. G. Knock of Denver, Colorado. He accepted the call and arrived in Rockford November 8, 1928, and preached his initial sermon November 11.

Many unsolved problems met the new pastor in Zion. The language question had not yet been solved. At the annual meeting January 1, 1929, it was decided to purchase the Augustana Synod Hymnal and to hold complete morning services also in the English language in connection with the Sunday School. The schedule then read: Sunday School at 9:30 A. M.; English morning services at 10:00 A. M. and Swedish morning service at 11:00 A. M. It was also decided that all evening services should be conducted in the English language and that regular communion services should also be held in the English language. The individual communion cups were also adopted.

Another problem which had been discussed for several years was that of additional room for the Sunday School. At the same annual meeting in 1929 it was decided that during that year an addition should be built to the church. A building committee was elected. This committee reported at the adjourned meeting, February 6, 1929. It was then decided to build the addition on the south side of the church and connected with the church. It was to be a two story structure, 36x72 feet, at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.00. The new building was erected that summer and was dedicated November 3, 1929, by Dr. Peter Peterson.

Prof. A. D. Bodfors resigned as organist and choir director at the adjourned meeting February 5, 1930. He had served Zion for more than 25 years. His resignation became effective May 1.

Allen T. Elmquist of Augustana College, organist and choir director at the First Lutheran Church in Moline, Illinois, was called as organist and music director in Zion to succeed Prof. Bodfors. Mr. Elmquist accepted the call and took up his work in Zion during the month of August, 1930. Mr. Elmquist is still filling this position.

The weekly duplex envelope system was put into use in January, 1930.

Improvements to the church property were made during the year 1930. The basement was renovated and painted, the kitchen enlarged, the radiators in the basement were lowered from their position in the ceiling, new wiring and electric fixtures installed in the sanctuary, the organ console was moved from its position above the altar and pulpit and built into the choir loft which was erected on the floor level.



In 1931 Zion procured its new altar and pulpit. The choir room and with it a new stairway was built. The entire sanctuary was decorated and new carpets were laid in chancel and aisles. The total cost of these improvements amounted to more than \$10,000.00.

At the annual meeting, December 11, 1935, the congregation decided to call a theological student to serve his internship year in Zion. The first student interne to serve Zion was Otto Magnuson. Other internes have been Kenneth Farb, Walter Carlson, Mark Wickstrom, and Alf A. Wattman.

At the annual meeting December 10, 1941, the Church Council recommended to the congregation that an assistant pastor be called and recommended that Alf A. Wattman be the candidate. The congregation voted to issue such a call to Alf A. Wattman to become assistant pastor in Zion after his ordination to the holy ministry the following June. The call was accepted. Alf A. Wattman was ordained June 14, 1942, in Jamestown, N. Y., and entered upon his new duties as assistant pastor July 1, 1942.

On July 3, 1942, all of Zion's members were grieved to hear of the death of John Mellberg, who had served faithfully as janitor for thirty-two and one-half years. His friendliness, sincerity, and fine Christian spirit have left an inspiring memory with all those whom he contacted.

The house and lot south of our church were bought by the Dorcas Society and given to the Zion Church. The cost of the property was \$2,100.00.

During the summer of 1943 the young men of the church painted the prayer room and Pastor Wattman's study. They also overhauled the heating plant. The floors were sanded and réfinished. The Mary Martha Society is donating an altar and a pulpit for the prayer room of the basement.

The present enrollment in the Sunday School is 1000. The communicant members in Zion about 1700. Zion has 84 young men and 3 young women in the service of the country.

Seven charter members are still with us in life. They are: Chas. Borg, Olof Erickson, Chas. Ekstrom, Mrs. Christina Lantz, Mrs. Alma Glans, Mrs. Albertina Swenson and Mrs. Helena Wennerstrom.

During the past 15 years since Pastor Knock came to Zion there have been 885 baptisms, 805 confirmed, 573 communicants received into membership, 428 marriages performed and 895 funerals conducted.

The Zion Church has never asked for mission aid but has been self-supporting since its organization.

The blessing of the Lord has rested upon Zion during these 60 years. Every pastor in Zion has worked diligently and faithfully for the upbuilding of the congregation in a spiritual way and for the furtherance of the Christ's kingdom at large. To the Lord be honor and glory.

Christians, while on earth abiding,  
Let us ever praise and pray,  
Firmly on our God confiding,  
As our fathers in their day;  
Be our children's voices raised  
To the God their fathers praised.  
Let His bounty, failing never,  
Be on us and all forever.



ZION'S SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

ZION IN HISTORY

Wednesday, October 20, 7:30 P. M.

HISTORICAL AND FAMILY NIGHT

Organ Meditation.....	Allen Elmquist
Hymns 299, 212.....	Congregation
Scripture Reading and Prayer.....	Rev. Paul Frykman Pastor, Alpine Lutheran Church
Anthems .....	Swedish Male Chorus "Herdens Söndagssång" "Hör Oss, Herre"—Wennerberg
Swedish Reminiscences.....	John Kullberg
Presentation of Charter Members.....	Pastor Knock
Anthem.....	Swedish Male Chorus "Thou, My Strength and Redeemer"
Address.....	Dr. J. A. Benander Pastor, Salem Lutheran Church
Greeting from District.....	Rev. Ralph Nelson President of Rockford District
Cello Selection.....	Rev. Luther Knock
Greeting from the Board of Administration.....	Alfred Johnson
Hymn 214.....	Congregation
Benediction .....	Rev. Clarence Anderzon Pastor, Tabor Lutheran Church

ZION IN SONG

Friday, October 22, 8 P. M.

"GLORIA PATRI"

Sacred Concert presented by the A Cappella Choir

Allen T. Elmquist, Director

I

ZION, ITS FOUNDATION

"Our Father Who Art in Heaven"

God, The Father: "Thou Life of Life" .....	<i>Tchesnokov</i>
God, The Son: "Beautiful Saviour" .....	<i>Christiansen</i>
God, The Spirit: "Lo, God Is Here" .....	<i>Mueller</i>
Revealed Through His Church: "Built On A Rock" .....	<i>Christiansen</i>
Revealed Through His Saints: "How They So Softly Rest" .....	<i>Willan</i>

II

ZION, ITS WORSHIP

"Hallowed Be Thy Name" "Gloria Patri" .....	<i>Palestrina</i>
"Thy Kingdom Come" "Lost In The Night" .....	<i>Christiansen</i>
"Thy Will Be Done" "Lord Of Spirits" .....	<i>Reissiger</i>
"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread" "I Sat Down Under His Shadow" .....	<i>Bairstow</i>
"Forgive Us Our Trespases" "Out Of The Depths" .....	<i>Bach</i>
"Lead Us Not Into Temptation" "To Thee, O Lord, I Cry" .....	<i>Gretchaninoff</i>

III

ZION, ITS REDEDICATION

Prayer For Strength "Prayer" .....	<i>Drozdoj</i>
Prayer For Service Prayer Response .....	<i>Purcell</i>
Prayer For Continued Grace "Nunc Dimittis and Gloria" .....	<i>Tschessnokoff</i>
Benediction "The Lord Bless You" .....	<i>Lutkin</i>

ZION IN WORSHIP

Sunday, October 24

ENGLISH COMMUNION, 10 A. M.

Prelude ..... Allen Elmquist  
 Hymn 244 ..... Congregation  
 Preparatory Address, "The Riches of the Redeemed" ..... Pastor Wattman  
 Confession and Absolution  
 Anthem, "O Bread of Life" ..... A Cappella Choir  
 Announcements and Offering  
 Consecration and Distribution  
 Hymns 235, 234, 242 ..... Congregation  
 Closing Service

SWEDISH COMMUNION, 11:30 A. M.

Prelude ..... Allen Elmquist  
 Psalm ..... Congregation  
 Skriftemålstal—"Sions Andeliga Rikedom" ..... Pastor Knock  
 Körsång ..... Kyrkokören

CONFIRMANDS' REUNION, 2:45 P. M.

Organ Meditation ..... Allen Elmquist

Milton Lindstrom, Class '24, Presiding

Hymn 259:1, 2 ..... Congregation  
 Scripture Reading and Prayer ..... Mrs. Herman Nelson, '19  
 Hymn 499;1, 3 ..... Congregation  
 Announcements and Roll Call of Classes  
 Offertory, "Fantasy in G Minor"—*Bach* ..... Clara Mae Sandehn, '38  
 Tribute to Departed Confirmands ..... Pastor Knock  
 Hymn 470:1 ..... Congregation  
 Address, "Do You Remember?" ..... Dr. Albert Loreen

Pastor, First Lutheran Church

Tribute to Men and Women in Armed Forces ..... Judge Fred Kullberg, '19  
 Hymn, "God Bless Our Men" ..... Congregation  
 Benediction ..... Pastor Wattman

PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING SERVICE, 7:30 P. M.

Prelude ..... Allen Elmquist  
 Hymn 291 ..... Congregation  
 Scripture Reading and Prayer ..... Pastor Wattman  
 Anthem ..... A Cappella Choir

"Beautiful Saviour"—*Christiansen*

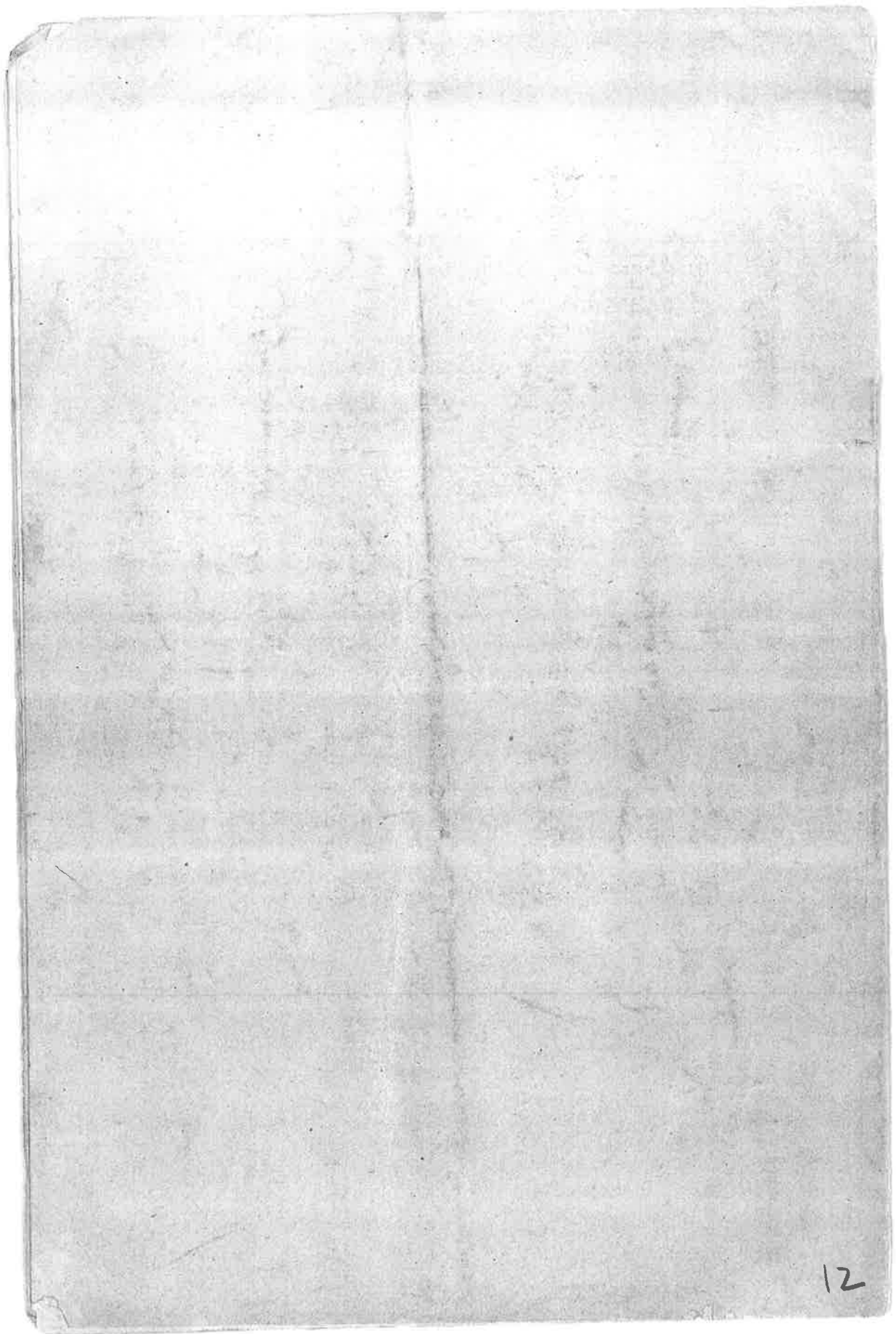
Announcements ..... Pastor Knock  
 Offertory ..... Allen Elmquist  
 Hymn 327 ..... Congregation  
 Address, "Waiting Thankfully" ..... Dr. Oscar Benson

President of the Illinois Conference

Anthem ..... A Cappella Choir

"Wake, Awake . . . The Watchman Crieth"—*Christiansen*

Hymn 299 ..... Congregation  
 Benediction ..... Pastor Knock



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