

# Golden Memories

*A Jubilee Album*

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

of

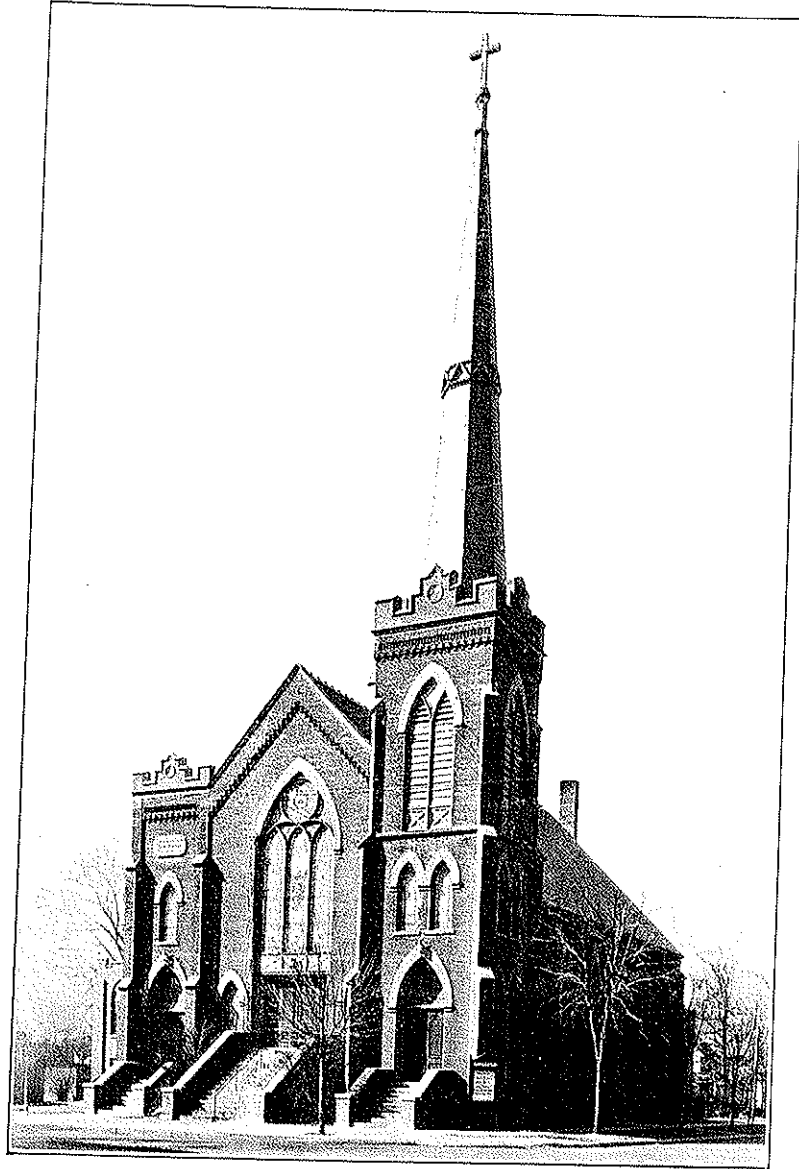
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS

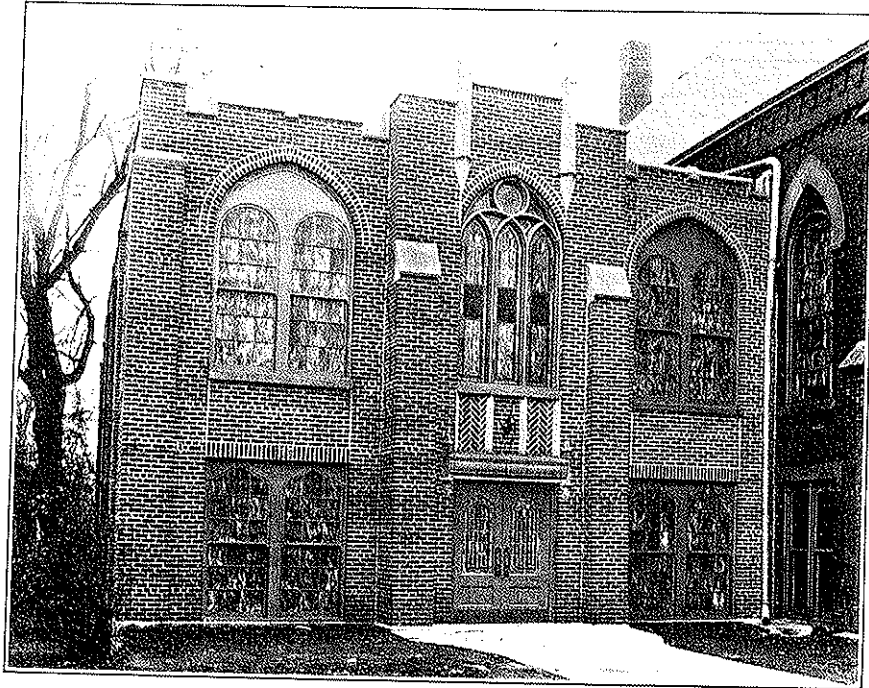
1883-1933



*Published by the Zion Congregation*

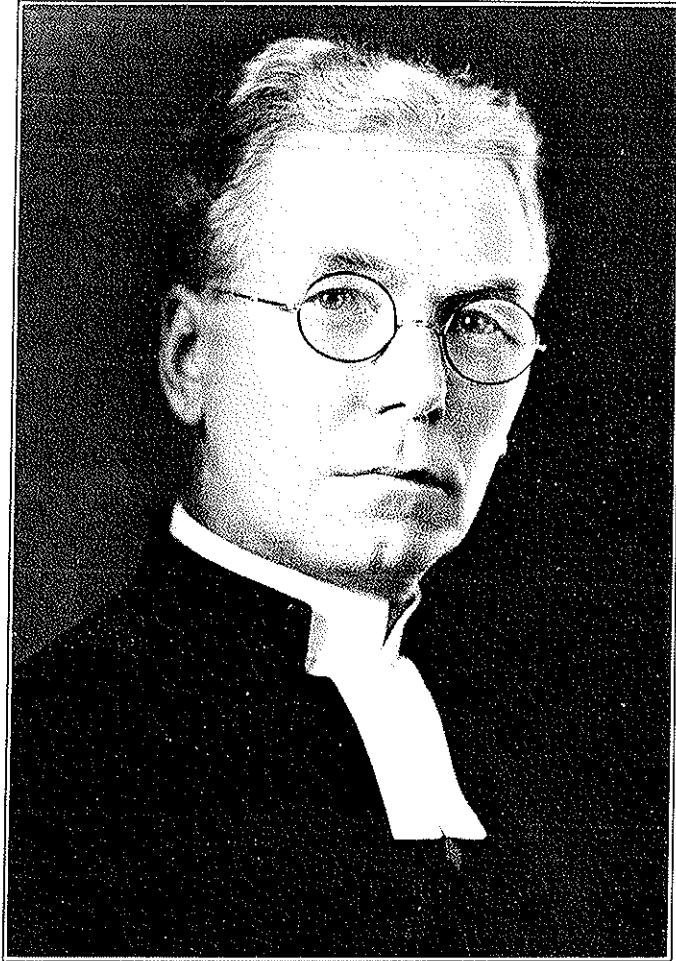


ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDING, ERECTED 1929

3



REV. E. G. KNOCK

## FOREWORD

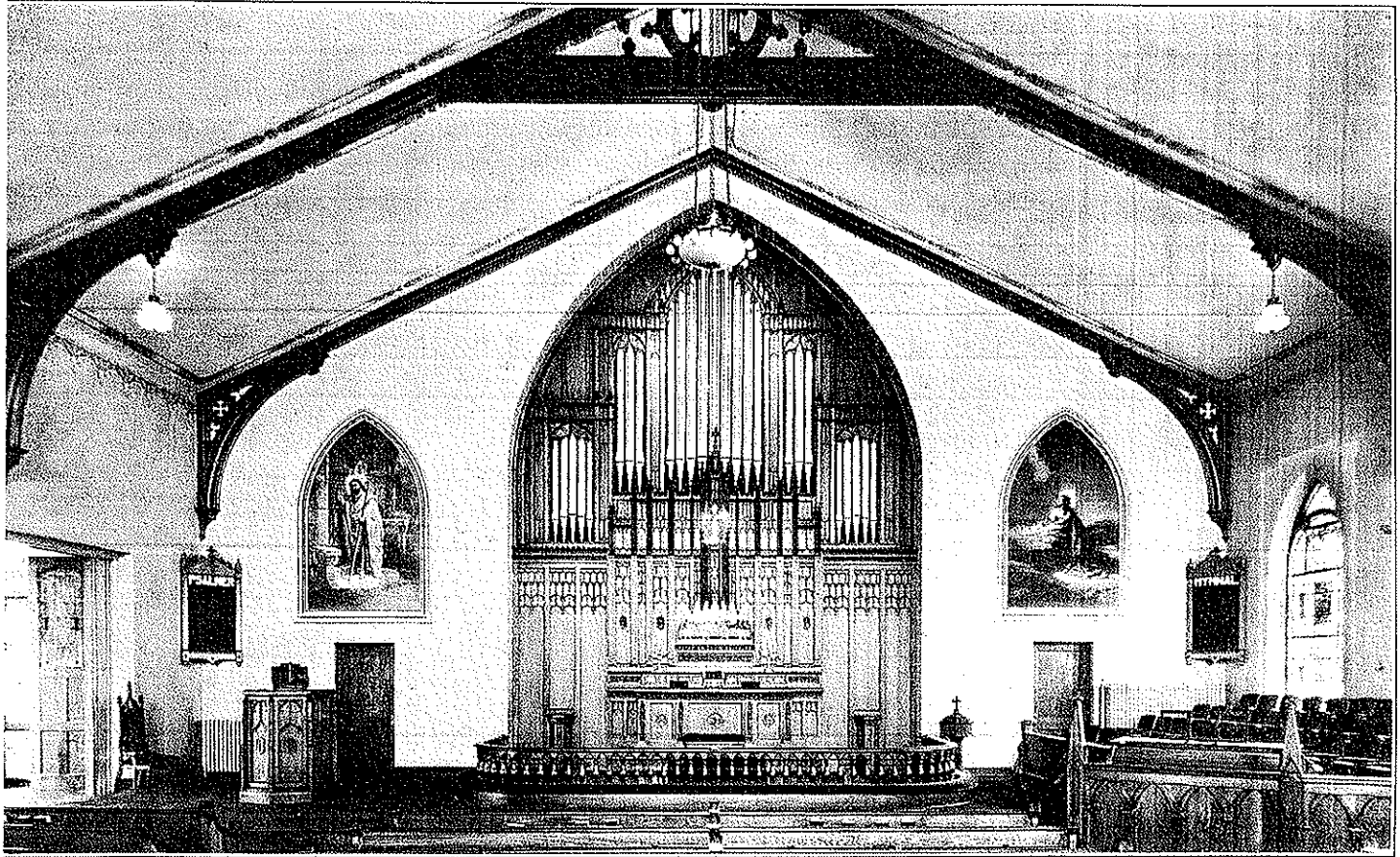
*"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and for ever."—Hebrews 13. 8.*

THE history of Zion Lutheran church is an inspiring one. He who reads that history thoughtfully becomes impressed at the faith, the devotion, the earnestness of the rank and file of members who have and who do belong to the congregation. Especially is the spiritual element predominant. To this can be traced the remarkable growth and development of a congregation which today in true humility has the distinction of being one of the largest in the Augustana synod.

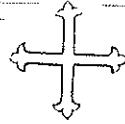
It is fitting that we keep alive the memory of that history. This fiftieth anniversary album, entitled "Golden Memories," aims to preserve for posterity the history of Zion church during its first half century. May this publication serve as an inspiration for continued service to Christ and His church.

We stand on the threshold of a new half century. Complex problems today face the Christian church and Christians as individuals. Some of these problems are new; most of them are old ones in new guises. To overcome them and to escape their blighting influence, the same unconquerable faith in Jesus Christ and the same unquenchable thirst for the Word of God are needed as dominated the lives of the men and women to whose memory Zion church will ever be grateful.

Upon Jesus Christ who "is the same yesterday and today, and for ever" our church is built. May Zion church through the means of grace and the power of the Holy Spirit be instrumental in continuing the ministry of leading souls to Christ.



INTERIOR OF CHURCH



# HISTORY

## ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

*"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father and he will show thee; thy elders and they will tell thee." Dt. 32. 7.*

**Introduction** God has always been desirous that His people should remember the days of old and recall what He has done for them even through past generations. Israel was thus commanded to commemorate many of the past events which evidenced God's love and saving power. Each Christian and each congregation has ample reasons to pause along the way and consider what we by the grace of God enjoy today as a result of the work and sacrifices of Christian parents. Here is true the words of Jesus: "For here is the saying true, One soweth and another reapeth. I have sent you to reap that whereon ye have not labored: others have labored and ye are entered into their labors" (John 4. 37, 38) We will then recognize that the Church is of divine origin and is an organism rather than an organization since it grows by means of an innate power that can transform a human life. Each branch has power to shoot new twigs which will grow into large limbs. It is quite natural therefore that new congregations should come forth from older churches.

**Zion's Origin** The origin of the Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church of Rockford is thus quite natural. Its early history is tied up with that of the First Lutheran Church which grew so fast and became so large that it was impossible for all the members to find room in the church building which was only ten years old. It was therefore discussed at one of the annual meetings what should be done to give spiritual care to all the Swedish Lutheran immigrants that were settling in Rockford at that time. It was recommended that another congregation should be organized and that members of the First Lutheran Church be given the right to affiliate themselves with this new organization. Later, however, opinions began to differ as to the advisability of this new move. The question arose whether or not it would not be better to have only one large congregation in Rockford and enlarge the

church so that all its members could be accommodated. It is quite natural that the opinions would differ on this question since it was not at that time easy to foresee the great development that would take place in Rockford as well as in other large cities. It is well that God who knows and sees all, can lead and direct His people also along the line of church organization. Today we thank God for twelve Lutheran churches in Rockford, six of which are members of the Augustana Synod. Even so there is a large field for further mission work in gathering thousands of unchurched citizens into the fold of the church.

**Deep Conviction** Truly it was the Lord that placed the deep conviction into the hearts of many of the members of the First Lutheran Church that God's kingdom should be furthered best if another Swedish Lutheran congregation were organized. It would mean no small sacrifice for them to leave the old, well established congregation and begin a new work, since they had no funds at hand for a new venture. Let us remember that the men and women who were the leaders in this movement were deeply spiritual and prayed earnestly that God would guide and bless them in their contemplated step.

**Church Organized** The meeting of organization was held on the 7th day of August, 1883, in the Swedish Methodist Church basement, the present Jewish Synagogue on First Avenue. Mr. C. F. Anderson was chosen as chairman for the evening. He offered a prayer that God would guide and bless the purpose of this meeting. Mr. J. Bergsten was elected secretary. Before the names of the charter members were recorded it was stipulated that membership in this new organization should be granted no person who was known to live an ungodly life or who for such an offensive life had been expelled from any other church, or any person who was a member of any secret society. The names of 146 charter members were recorded. The following resolution was adopted: Recognizing the need of more pastors and an extended church work among our own people of this city, resolved that we hereby organize ourselves as an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation on the basis of the Bible and the unaltered Augsburg Confession under the name of The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church in Rockford, Illinois, and also that we adopt as our constitution the one recommended by the Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod. The constitution was read and adopted article by article.

The first deacons elected were: C. F. Anderson, Jonas Larson, Jonas Håkanson, J. A. Glans, J. P. Kron, and Isaac Peterson. The following trustees were elected: Andrew Borg, G. L. Wennerstrom, N. P. Nygren,



Frank Anderson, C. Rydberg, and C. O. Nelson. As secretary for the year J. Bergsten was elected. The question arose as to a future church building and the following building committee was elected: Andrew Kjellgren, C. F. Anderson, John Benson, Chas. Bjorklund, O. Johnson, J. Jacobson, August Carlson, Chas. Kåberg, and C. M. Danielson. It was decided to ask for admission into the Illinois Conference of the Scandinavian Ev. Luth. Augustana Synod. It was also decided to rent Chick's Hall for \$10.00 a month and that services should be held in this hall the following Sunday at 10:30 A.M. The trustees were authorized to gather money for the church. Mr. C. F. Anderson was elected chairman of the church council.

**Church Work Begun** Another meeting of the newly organized church was held the following week, Aug. 14th, when further steps were taken to promote the work. It was decided to start a Sunday school at once. Mr. Jonas Larson was elected to have charge of the services until a pastor could be secured. Mr. Andrew Kjellgren was elected organist and choir director. A Ladies' Sewing Circle was also organized the first month and Young People's Society was begun just a little later. Both of these organizations worked with zeal and gathered substantial sums for the work during the early years of our church.

**First Pastor Called** At a special meeting held August 20th, 1883, Rev. C. J. Petri of Philadelphia, Pa., was called as the first pastor in Zion. He was the son of Mr. Isaac Peterson, charter member and first deacon in our congregation. Out of the 102 voting members in the church 95 cast their vote for this first pastor. Rev. Petri declined the call.

**Church Site Purchased** The question of buying a lot where the church should be built was discussed at a meeting held September 11th, 1883. At this time the following men were elected as a committee to select a site for the church: P. Nelson, F. Anderson, A. Borg, and A. Kjellgren. At a meeting held Sept. 17th a report from the committee was presented to the congregation and gave it a choice of several locations—5th Street and 4th Avenue, 6th Street and 5th Avenue, 6th Avenue between 7th and 8th Streets, 5th Avenue and 7th Street. A closed ballot was taken, 56 voting members being present. A majority of 14 votes was cast for the Haggquist property on 5th Avenue and 6th Street at a cost of \$1,200.00. A subscription to pay for this lot was started at this time. This property was bought from Haggquist and is the present site of our church. The subscription for the new church met with encouraging success wherefore work for the erection of the new church was begun at once. Oct. 9th plans for the church were presented



GROUP OF CHARTER MEMBERS, AUGUST, 1933

First row: Mrs. Christina Lantz, Mrs. Anna M. Johnson, Mrs. Albertina Swenson, Mrs. Alma Glans, Mrs. Amanda Sandine, Mrs. Carrie Jacobson, Mrs. Amanda J. Frithiof, Mrs. Hulda Peterson.—Second row: Eskil Kjellstrom, Hans Swenson, Olof Erickson, Chas. A. Ekstrom, Chas. Borg.

and size and dimensions were determined upon. It was to be 56x96 feet with an 11-foot basement, one tower but no steeple. Many members donated free labor in the excavation and the laying of the foundation.

**First Annual Meeting** The first annual meeting of the congregation was held Jan. 4th, 1884, at which time the Church Council gave the following report:

Beloved Congregation!

Grace and Peace through our Lord Jesus Christ!

To this first annual meeting we greet you welcome. Our work as a Church Council has hardly been noticeable. We have held 23 meetings, three of which were held in conjunction with the trustees. Our greatest worry has been how to secure a pastor. Since we received a negative reply from Rev. C. J. Petri, we have privately written to several pastors in the Augustana Synod, but have received no encouraging reply; wherefore we have turned to Rev. C. G. Lundell who is not a member of said Synod and his reply has already been read before the congregation. He is willing to come and pay us a visit as soon as circumstances will permit.

No definite number can be stated as to the size of our congregation, but we believe that we can safely say that there are 200 communicant members.

The services of the congregation have been well attended as a rule, especially as we consider the meager gifts we possess as speakers. The congregation has a choir that contributes greatly to the inspiration of our divine worship. The church is greatly indebted to the choir for its faithful work.

A young people's society has been organized within the congregation which works for the gathering of funds for a church. The elder and the younger sewing circles have been busily working for the same purpose.

Although we have experienced many difficulties, we have also enjoyed much encouragement which easily outweighs the former and cheers us on in our future work. If the Lord be for us, who can be against us?

Respectfully,

THE CHURCH COUNCIL.

At this meeting the membership fee was fixed at \$1.00 for men and 50 cents for women for the first three months. For the past year since the organization of the church it had been \$2.00 for the men and \$1.00 for the women. It was decided to lift four collections during the year for the charity fund of the church. A resolution was also adopted asking the building committee to exercise the strictest economy in the erection of the new church.

**Call Pastor Lundell** At a special meeting of the congregation held March 18, 1884, a unanimous call was extended to Rev. C. G. Lundell of Little Indian, Illinois, to become the pastor of the Zion Church. Rev. Lundell was a member of the Ansgar Lutheran Synod. The salary offered was \$800.00 a year. Rev. Lundell accepted the call and entered upon his duties as pastor of Zion July 1st, 1884.

PASTOR C. G. LUNDELL

*July 1, 1884—May 1, 1888.*

**Without a Church Home** When Rev. C. G. Lundell arrived and took up the work as pastor in Zion the services were held in Chick's Hall on East State Street. This hall soon became too small wherefore the congregation rented the Metropolitan Hall a few blocks farther east where the services were held until the basement of the new church was ready for use.

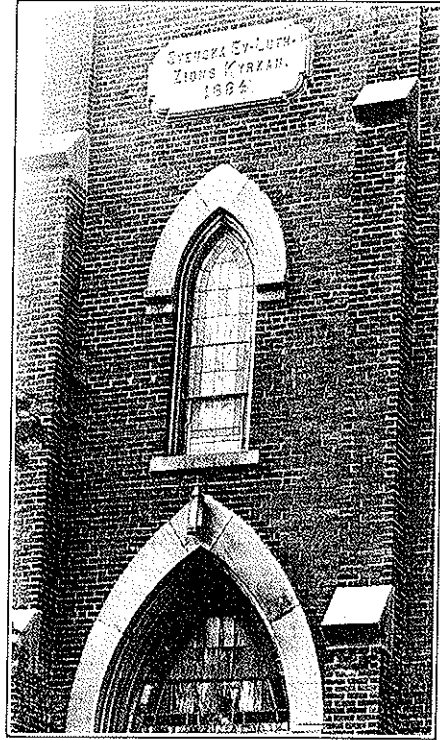
**Zion Church Erected** The foundation for the new church had been laid when Pastor Lundell arrived. The building committee consisted of the following members: Andrew Kjellgren, C. F. Anderson, Chas. Bjorklund, John Jacobson, August Carlson, C. M. Danielson, A. J. Nyberg, P. Nygren, David Carlson, and Andrew Borg.



REV. C. G. LUNDELL

The corner stone was laid Sunday, July 20th, 1884, 3 P.M. The following pastors were present: C. G. Lundell, H. Lindskog, Nelson, Hullman, Rinhard, Tensk, Vanborn, and Bronse. The church basement was completed for services September 7th, 1884. The church basement was dedicated Sunday afternoon, Oct. 19th. At that occasion Pastor Lundell was assisted by Rev. H. Lindskog. This was a day of great rejoicing. The members felt that the Lord had helped them in a wonderful way.

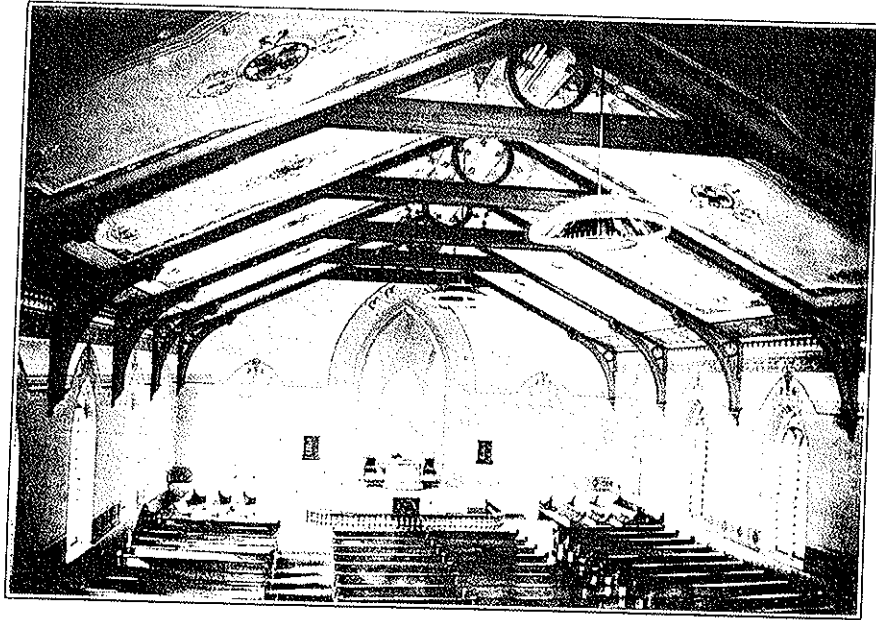
The perplexing problem for the congregation was the financing of the great project. The subscription work which had been begun the previous year received new impulse and life when Pastor Lundell arrived. As an index of the spirit in which this subscription work was assumed, it might be stated that at a special meeting held Oct. 14th, 1884, just a few days before the dedication of the basement, it was resolved that the members should do their utmost in a financial way for the congregation, even to the extent of borrowing money for the church. Members gave many hundred days of free labor in the construction of the church. N. P. Nygren and Andrew Borg supervised the work. They were faithful and most efficient for the task. Mr. Nygren was not permitted to see this work completed, since the Lord called him home to occupy a temple not made with hands, February 24th, 1885. His was the first funeral service that was held in Zion Church.



BUILDING BEGUN IN 1884  
COMPLETED IN 1885

**Zion Admitted to Conference** At the organization meeting our Zion Church voted to ask for admission into the Illinois Conference of the Augustana Synod. This petition was met with opposition on the Conference floor by a local group that did not look with favor upon the move to organize another Lutheran Church in Rockford. In the face of this opposition the Zion Church decided at a special meeting March 4, 1884, to with-

draw this petition. Pastor Lundell was admitted into the Illinois Conference in the early part of 1885. At another special meeting of the congregation August 18, 1885, it was again decided to ask for admission into the Conference. This petition was granted and thus the Zion Church became a unit in the Illinois Conference of the Augustana Synod. The members rejoiced because this had been their wish from the very meeting of organization.



ORIGINAL INTERIOR OF ZION CHURCH

**The Church Completed** The construction work of the church was carried on with the greatest possible haste. Since the basement had been completed all the services were held there during the early part of the year 1885. At the annual meeting January 7, 1885, the trustees reported that the total cost of the church building to date was \$13,795.85, on which rested a debt of \$8,180.24. A subscription to the amount of \$1,500.00 was yet to be collected. At a special meeting of the congregation March 24, 1885, the building committee presented plans for the completion of the auditorium of the church, the cost of which would amount to \$3,515.00. At this meeting it was decided to complete the auditorium immediately. A subscription for that purpose was begun that evening and amounted to \$500.00. The finishing of the interior of the church was pushed speedily during the summer so that the dedication services could be held October 11th, 1885. Rev. Erland

Carlsson, President of the Augustana Synod, officiated. He was assisted by Rev. M. C. Ranssen, President of the Illinois Conference, Rev. S. P. A. Lindahl of Rock Island, Rev. G. Peters and Rev. C. G. Lundell of Rockford. This was another day of rejoicing in Zion and thus was completed a brief but important chapter in the history of the Zion Lutheran Church. The membership was estimated to be 400 communicants and 300 children.

**Days of Testing** The young congregation had encountered many difficulties during its two first years both with regard to the right to exist as well as to procure a house of worship. It was also beset with strange winds of doctrine from the various sects which seemed to be almost fanatical in their mode of work. Pastor Lundell in his report to the congregation at the annual meeting held January 7th, 1886, writes thus: "Another thing has caused myself and the church council great concern. It is the spirit of these latter times together with all these party strifes, sect-leaders and heretics who work in secret, annoy and afflict God's church and faithful pastors and all persons who have the responsibility of seeing to it that the Word of God be taught in its truth and purity and that church discipline be exercised in accordance with God's Word. Sad to say, we have not been spared entirely from the wild rampage and ravages of these spirits, because some of our members have been influenced by them. It is a strange spirit that possesses these people since they become self-sufficient, selfish and biased; they are possessed by spiritual pride so that they despise and ridicule all other churches and pastors. They are characterized by their hatred toward all pastors and churches. If it were God's Spirit that directed them, they would be humble and charitable. May God save us from them and keep us sober, sensible and vigilant so that we may shun them, for it happens to them as the apostle says: They deceive and being deceived, and because they would not believe the truth God will send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie. Lord, help!" The above quotation gives us a faint idea of the bitter struggles that existed in those early days. The members that remained steadfast became more firm in their Christ faith.

**Development** The Zion Church was vigorous and active from its very inception. There were 146 charter members and at the first annual meeting it was reported that Zion had 200 communicants. At the annual meeting, January 6th, 1886, reported 400 communicants and 200 children, not a little growth in two and a half years. The number of deacons and trustees was now increased from six to nine. Our congregation has never received any aid from the Home Mission Board but paid its own expenses even the first year. The membership fee during the early years was fixed at six dol-

lars for the family, or four dollars for the men and two for the women. Full membership fee was required of all confirmed members who had passed their 18th birthday. No member was eligible for office until 21 years of age. The Illinois Conference was invited to hold its convention at the Zion Church in the fall of 1887. Prayer meetings were held in the homes and the mid-week service was held in the church basement. Church discipline was exercised and several members were expelled on account of drunkenness and other ungodliness. The names of delinquent members were read at the annual meeting. If they did not pay their obligations by the first of May the church council was authorized to drop them from the church. All subscriptions and other gifts to the church were announced from the pulpit. The first report of a parochial school was given for the year 1886 by Mr. Jonas Larson as teacher. Eight months of school had been conducted, three months in the spring and fall and two in the summer. Total attendance for all three terms was 185. Mrs. Danielson and Mr. C. Anderson assisted as teachers. The Sunday school reported an average attendance of 140 pupils. The Young People's Society was reorganized February 10, 1886, and adopted the name Earnest Workers. It had a membership of 49 that year. In 1887 the Men's Society was revived.

**Vacant** September 1st, 1887, Pastor Lundell resigned as pastor of the  
**Pastorate** Zion Church. He considered that the welfare of the congregation would thereby be promoted. He remained as pastor of Zion until May 1st, 1888, when he moved to Pecatonica. The Cemetery at Pecatonica became the last resting place for this faithful servant after having finished an active ministry in Pecatonica for nine years; Ogema, Wisconsin, four years; Alta, Iowa, five and a half years and in Algona-Bancroft, Iowa, twelve years. In 1919 he retired from the active ministry and died May 1st, 1922. At this anniversary we shall gather at the grave of Zion's first pastor and place a wreath there in deep appreciation of the faithful work he performed in our midst.

At the resignation of Rev. Lundell the Zion Church had to look about for another pastor. At a meeting held September 29th, 1887, several candidates were proposed by the church council. Rev. C. F. Sandstrom received the largest number of votes and was extended the call to become pastor in Zion. The call was declined.

At a special meeting held December 26th, Student S. G. Ohman of the Augustana Theological Seminary was extended a call as pastor of Zion after his ordination the following June, at a salary of \$800.00. This call was declined since it was not unanimous. A second call was unanimously extended to Student Ohman who accepted the call and took up his new duties as pastor of Zion shortly after his ordination to the holy ministry. He preached his initial sermon July 1, using as text Mt. 16. 13-19.



## PASTOR S. G. OHMAN

*July, 1888—June, 1894.*

**A Spiritual Awakening** In a wonderful way God had directed Rev. Ohman to become the pastor of the Zion Church. God knows where He has His servants and He knows where there is a special work for them to do. It was with a great deal of anxiety that the young pastor entered upon his new duties in Zion. The congregation was only five years old but the leaders were old and experienced from their active work in the First Lutheran Church under Pastor Peters. With Christian zeal and youthful enthusiasm Pastor Ohman preached the Word of God and with deep reverence the people "received it not as the word of men but as it is in truth, the Word of God." The result was that a deep spiritual awakening sprang up in the congregation. Many souls were turned from darkness to light, many slumbering souls were quickened and many persons were brought into a living fellowship with God's kingdom on earth. It was no "man-made" revival, but one that was a result of prayer and the earnest preaching of God's Word. Our church has reaped much blessing all these years from that spiritual awakening. Thank God that it was only a forerunner of other revivals which have come to Zion. May we ask the Lord for new showers of blessing.



REV. S. G. OHMAN

**Pipe Organ Bought** A reed organ on the small gallery in the rear of the church auditorium supplied the music during the early years. Mr. Andrew Kjellgren had served as organist during the first years and was succeeded by Mr. C. A. Nygren, January 23, 1886. After Pastor Ohman had taken up his work in Zion the question of a pipe organ became a live issue. At the annual meeting January 1st, 1889, it was decided to procure a pipe organ as soon as possible. The organ was purchased February 2, 1889. An addition, 12x24 feet, was built as a chancel in which to place the pipe organ. The choir-loft was built in this chancel. The new pipe organ necessitated another organist. A special meeting for the election of an organist was held August 12, 1889, at which meeting Mr. Johan Johanson was elected to serve until the end of the year. Mr. C. A. Nygren was again elected at the annual meeting, January 1st, 1880. At a special meeting January 29th, 1890,

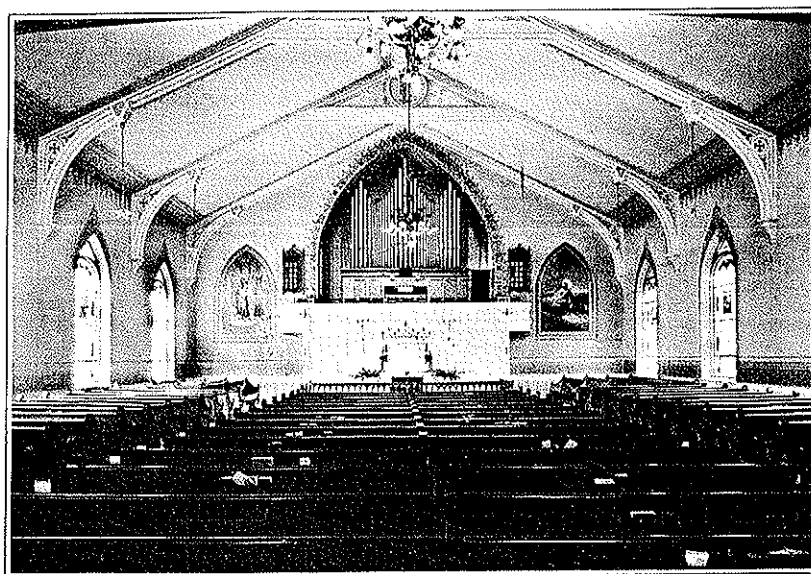
Mr. C. H. E. Oberg was elected organist and choir director with a salary of \$125.00 and a free-will subscription. Mr. August Anderson was elected organist for the year 1891 at a salary of \$200.00. The following year Mr. Wilhelm Swenson was chosen for this position at a salary of \$300.00 per year. An organ pumper was hired each year by the trustees.

**Church** The membership fee had been \$6.00 a year for man and wife since the organization of the church until January, 1888, when it was raised to \$5.00 for men and \$3.00 for women. Collectors gathered the fee each quarter by visiting the members. A loan system was introduced in the church by means of which the members could loan their money directly to the congregation at a specified interest. The 25 cents fee to the Augustana College and Theological Seminary caused more or less of worry to the Board of Administration since it was so difficult to collect. The debt of the congregation was still drawing a great deal of interest. At the meeting January 1, 1892, it was decided to take up a subscription during the year for the reduction of the debt. At that annual meeting a start was made and \$1,500 was subscribed by the members present. A subscription committee continued the work, but the depression of 1893 came with its devastating effect on all business and made impossible the payment of a great part of the subscriptions.

**Parochial School** Even during these years of financial distress great interest was manifested in the support of the parochial school which was conducted in the church basement eight months each year. It was almost self-supporting by means of the fees that were collected from the pupils. The Swedish language was the chief subject taught, although religious instruction was also imparted each day.

**Parsonage Question** April 19, 1892, a special meeting of the congregation was called for the purpose of considering the question of building a parsonage. Since so few members were present it was not deemed advisable that the congregation should build a parsonage, but it was resolved that the pastor could build his own home and that the congregation would assist him by means of a subscription. A committee was elected to solicit money for the pastor's house. The pastor bought a lot across the street from the church on sixth street and erected a home during the year 1892. At the following annual meeting the pastor reported that he had received \$175.00 for his home and expressed his thanks for the gift..

**Rev. Ohman Resigns** At the annual meeting January 1, 1894, Rev. Ohman reported that Zion had just 1,000 communicant members. The congregation had thus had a phenomenal growth during these eleven years. The services were well attended and the future looked bright. Then came the disheartening news that Pastor Ohman had resigned. On April 25, 1894, his resignation was considered by the congregation, since the church council had refused to accept it. Pastor Ohman insisted that the resignation



SECOND INTERIOR OF ZION CHURCH

be accepted as he felt he should accept the call as superintendent of the Augustana Hospital in Chicago. Rev. P. M. Lindberg of Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, was called as pastor in Zion at a salary of \$1,200 per year. This call was declined. A call was then extended to Rev. J. A. Eckstrom of Escanaba, Michigan, at a salary of \$1,000.00. This call was accepted and Rev. Eckstrom entered upon his duties as pastor in Zion, November 4th, 1894.

## PASTOR J. A. ECKSTROM

*November, 1894—January, 1901.*

**Financial Difficulties** When Pastor Eckstrom came to Zion the indebtedness of the congregation amounted to \$13,193.00.

The conditions in the business world were anything but encouraging. Many of the members had lost their property and had misgivings about the future. The young pastor was full of energy and leadership. He devised plans for the gathering of money to pay off the indebtedness. He organized the men into a group called "The Troop of a Thousand Men," that had as its only purpose the gathering of funds for the reduction of the church debt. Each man was to pay 50 cents per month for this cause. The first year it gathered \$769.00. A subscription was also taken during the year and amounted to \$1,485.60.

In 1899 the debt was \$9,865.00 and the company that held the first mortgage demanded that \$3,000.00 must be paid. On October 8th a notification was read before the congregation stating that if the loan was not paid before November 20th the church would have to face a foreclosure. That Sunday the pastor was able to announce that someone would give \$1,500.00 if we raised \$1,500.00 before November 10th. The financial situation of the church was placed before the people in a most earnest way, and then all those would contribute \$5.00 to the cause were asked to rise. Almost every one did so with great enthusiasm. Prayer was offered and the doxology was sung. Pledge cards were signed and thus \$1,000.00 was raised that morning. In the evening it was increased to almost \$1,400.00. The subscription work was continued so that the whole amount was raised and even some smaller notes were also paid off. By January 1, 1901, the debt had been reduced to \$6,100.00. Pastor Eckstrom speaks of these years as a time of "financial depression and spiritual expression."



REV. J. A. ECKSTROM

**Church Activities** This period seems to be characterized by many activities in the church. Besides the Elder and the Younger Ladies' Sewing circles there was organized a Ladies' Aid Society in August, 1894, whose purpose was to gather money for the church. At each communion service an offering was lifted for the charity fund. During the summer of 1895 a student, Mr. Martin Parson, was engaged for the first time to conduct the Swedish school. The school was cut down from eight months to three months a year. A parish paper "Till Verksamhet" was published in 1895 and was continued for some years. Prayer meetings were held on Tuesday evening in the homes and were conducted by the deacons. Week-day preaching services were held at the church basement on Thursday evening and were in charge of the pastor. The Sunday school supported a native worker on the foreign mission field.

**Church Bell** Mr. Jonas Håkanson donated \$250.00 to the Zion Church for a church bell. This gift was gratefully acknowledged at the annual meeting, January 1, 1896. A committee was elected to put the belfry in shape and to buy a bell. A bell was bought from the Cincinnati Bell Co. A dedication service was held March 11, 1896, at which occasion Rev. L. G. Abrahamson and C. R. Chinblom from Chicago were guest speakers. Thus the generous deed of Mr. Håkanson still speaks to us each Sunday when the church bell calls us to divine worship.

**Local Improvements** During the year 1898 quite a few improvements were made on the church property. The wood-work of the church was painted, a cornice placed on the towers, Fifth avenue and Sixth street was macadamized. The outlook seemed more hopeful. A Confirmation Society was organized in 1898 and was to meet the first Thursday of each month. The Sunday school convened at 3 P. M. each Sunday.

**Rev. Eckstrom Resigns** To the great sorrow of the congregation Rev. J. A. Eckstrom resigned as pastor of Zion in September 1900. On the 26th of September the congregation held a special meeting to act on this resignation. The pastor requested that his resignation be accepted since he had determined to accept a call to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Rev. Eckstrom concluded services in Zion January 1, 1901. At the above stated meeting, September 26th, 1900, Rev. N. P. Sjoström of Springfield, Mass., was called as pastor at an annual salary of \$1,200.00. The call was accepted and Rev. Sjoström arrived in time to have charge of the annual meeting, January 4th, 1901.

## PASTOR N. P. SJOSTROM

*January, 1901—February, 1912.*

**Another Step Forward** A large and promising field lay before the young pastor in Zion.

The services were well attended, large communion services were held the first Sunday of each month, the various societies evidenced great interest in the extension of the Kingdom of God. During the year 1901 the young People's Society gathered \$952.57, whereby it was able to pay for the installation of the chandeliers in the church auditorium. A Finance Society was organized for the purpose of assisting in the liquidation of the church debt. The result was that \$1,100.00 of the debt was paid off that year, leaving only \$5,000.00 yet to be paid. The following year a subscription was taken in the congregation with the gratifying success that enough was gathered to pay off the whole indebtedness and also to pay for the expense of enlarging the gallery so that it could seat almost 300 people. This additional seating capacity was needed as the church was often found too small to accommodate all the people who would worship in Zion. The Young People's Society donated the 300 seats that were placed in the gallery. The total cost of building the addition to the gallery was \$851.65. The pastor's salary was raised from \$1,200.00 to \$1,400.00 per year. The annual Christmas offering which had been a part of the salary of the pastors for all these twenty years was still retained.



REV. N. P. SJOSTROM

**A Year of Improvements** On November 9th, 1902, the total indebtedness of the congregation had been wiped out and during the year 1903 the addition to the gallery had been built. The year 1904 can be characterized as a year of many improvements to the church property. New gas fixtures in the basement and a new furnace were installed, the whole interior of the church was decorated and painted, new carpets in the pastor's study, slate roof on the church and new metal roof on tower. The old debt to Augustana College and Theological Seminary was also settled at \$500.00 and the receipts from a concert. In the year 1906 our congregation bought the lot adjoining the church property on the south side at a sum of \$1,300.00.

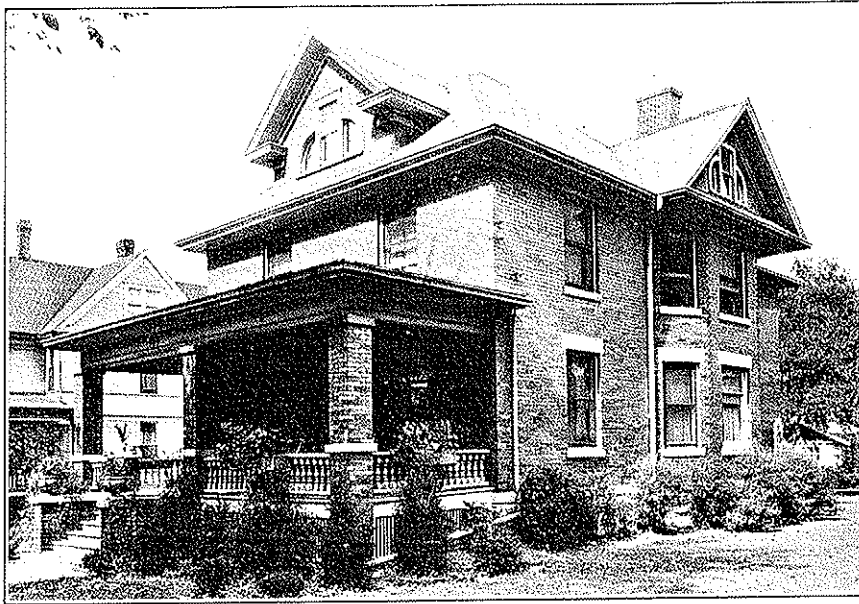
**The Deaconess and Charity** For many years the congregation had desired to do more for poor people in its midst both within and without the congregation than it was doing by means of the monthly collections which did not seem to suffice. Therefore, when the debt had been paid a resolution was adopted by the congregation that a deaconess should be secured as soon as possible. It took a year and a half before this wish could be realized. In the summer of 1905 Sister Anna C. Carlson from the Deaconess Institute in Omaha arrived and took up her work. She taught five weeks of summer school and reported 118 nursing days and two nights the first half year. The second year she reported that she had given 154 days and 16 nights in nursing the sick and had taught eight weeks of summer school, besides visiting other homes where her help was needed. She continued her work also during the year 1907, but in the beginning of the year 1908 she was broken down in health and had to return to the Deaconess Home in Omaha. Thus ended the work of a deaconess in Zion.

**A Spiritual Awakening** During prayer-week in the year 1907 a spiritual revival was sent from heaven upon the Zion Church. The Holy Spirit worked mightily in the hearts of our members and brought many souls into a true and living fellowship with Christ. This revival was similar to the one that came during Rev. Ohman's term as pastor. There were no man-made plans but a spirit of united prayer that God would quicken souls and bring them from darkness to light. The prayer-week was extended for many weeks, and days of real rejoicing were experienced in Zion. Many of our members can today look back upon those days as the time when the Lord gave them a new heart, and they came to peace with God. It brought new life and spirit into the whole church. The services were better attended, the faithful Christians were cheered and strengthened, and were brought into deep humility and joy. They experienced that they were in the presence of the Lord. It is a comfort to know that our "labor is not in vain in the Lord."

**Permanent Organist** At the annual meeting, January 1st, 1906, Prof. A. D. Bodfors was elected permanent organist at an annual salary of \$350.00 and with the following stipulations: If Professor Bodfors for some reasons would desire to discontinue this position he should forward his resignation to the Board of Administration at least three months before the annual meeting of the congregation, and if the congregation should on its part wish to have a change of organist it should give Professor Bodfors three months notice and also that the congregation reserves the right to take such action without needing to state the reasons why a change is desired. Professor Bodfors had high ideals about church music and worked faithfully to share this appreciation with his choir members. He devoted much practice with the

church choir. He organized larger choruses that rendered special programs at various festive occasions. The large chorus rendered for several years the great oratorio, Handel's Messiah.

**Erected Parsonage** The question of building a parsonage was raised at the annual meeting in January 1907. The Young People's Society was asked to gather money for such a fund. The trustees were elected as a committee to procure a lot. The Dorcas Society also gathered money for this project. At a special meeting, April 14th, 1909, the question was presented to the congregation if it were willing to buy a certain property on Sixth avenue at a cost of \$5,000.00. This proposition was voted down



ZION CHURCH PARSONAGE, 1933

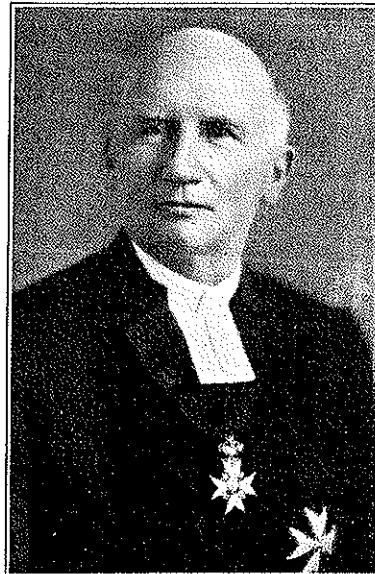
and a committee elected to select a suitable lot for a parsonage. Members of this committee were Messrs. Chas. Lundberg, John Kullberg, Chas. Stark, Alec Johnson, and J. A. Bowman. This committee reported at the next annual meeting, January 1, 1910, and stated that it had bought the Bildahl property at 920 Fifth avenue at a cost of \$3,030.00 and had deeded the same to the Board of Trustees of the Zion Church. It was decided to build a parsonage during the year and the following were elected building committee: the trustees, Rev. N. P. Sjostrom, C. J. Lundberg, and Alec Johnson. The cost of the house was not to exceed \$5,000.00. On April 27th, 1910, this



committee reported to the congregation and presented plans and estimated cost of a parsonage, but since the cost exceeded the stipulated amount the building committee was instructed to keep within the limit. The total cost of lot and parsonage was \$8,393.88. A subscription was taken and with donations from the various societies total indebtedness at the following annual meeting was only \$3,452.00.

**Pastor Sjostrom Called by Death** It seems strange that Pastor Sjostrom should have been permitted to enjoy the comforts of the new home only a little more than a year. During the fall of 1911 he began to fail in health but was able to take care of his work until after the annual meeting, January 1, 1912, when he went to the Augustana Hospital in Chicago for medical treatment and care. It was found necessary to perform an operation January 29th. His sufferings were intense, but he was patient and courageous. He rested firmly on the Rock of Ages. The faith that he had preached to others was his own hope for salvation. On Tuesday, February 6th, 1912, he was called from his labors to enter into the rest which Christ had prepared for him. Funeral services were held in the Zion Church and interment in the Scandinavian Cemetery of Rockford. The Zion Church and the community mourned the loss of a true friend.

**Zion Seeks Another Pastor** At the annual meeting conducted by Pastor Sjostrom it was decided to hold the adjourned meeting February 7th, but how could a sorrowing congregation hold a business meeting the day after its beloved pastor had been taken from its midst? The adjourned meeting was held March 27th, at which occasion it was necessary to extend a call to another pastor. The choice fell on Rev. G. E. Hemdahl of Paxton, Illinois. His salary was fixed at \$1,500.00 per year, free use of the parsonage and a Christmas offering. This call was accepted and Rev. Hemdahl held his initial sermon the first Sunday in October, 1912. During the vacancy Dr. L. G. Abrahamson of Rock Island served as vice pastor. He confirmed one class of catechumens.



DR. L. G. ABRAHAMSON

## PASTOR G. E. HEMDAHL

*October, 1912—July, 1918.*

**Forward Movements** In his first annual report Pastor Hemdahl states that the church basement had been renovated during the year, the Dorcas Society having paid the bill, also the parsonage and pastor's study had been decorated. At this meeting the question of the women's right to vote had been raised, but it was tabled because the congregation had a constitution that forbade it. A definite fee for the members recently confirmed was adopted — 50 cents for the year they are confirmed, \$1.00 for the following two years, one-half the regular fee the third year and afterwards full fee, which was \$5.00 for men and \$3.00 for women. A new church record was made by the pastor during his first half year in Zion. The congregation decided January 1st, 1913, that one English evening service should be held each month. A committee was elected to gather money for a monument which should be placed on Rev. Sjostrom's grave. It was unveiled All Saints' Day, 1914.



REV. G. E. HEMDAHL

**Church Steeple Erected** At a special business meeting July 16th, 1913, the question was raised what to do about the tower of the church which had been damaged by a tornado July 8th. It was decided to repair the damages by building a steeple in keeping with the size and architecture of the church. A subscription was started for the project that evening, amounting to \$255.00. A committee was elected to take further subscriptions and to have charge of the building operations. Bids were opened August 21st and the bid of Mr. Andrew Boden, \$2,323.00, was accepted. The work should be finished by November 15th, 1913.

**Active Societies** The Men's Society that had been active early in the history of Zion had laid down its work for some time but was revived in 1913. During these years the Young People's Society held two meetings each month. A Confirmand Society was organized with the latter classes and was in fact a Junior Luther League. Its purpose was to keep the confirmands true to the church and to train them for active work in the Young People's Society. This society financed the installation of new windows in the church basement.

**Woman's Suffrage** The women of the congregation were granted the right to vote by a motion passed at the annual meeting January 1st, 1914, when the constitution of the church was changed to this effect. The change of constitution was ratified at the next annual meeting. It was stipulated that only male members would be eligible to hold office and serve as delegates to Conference and Synod conventions. The membership fee was, at that same meeting, raised to \$6.00 for men and \$4.00 for women.

**Mission Boxes** During the year 1911 mission boxes were distributed to the members and were brought in on Thanksgiving Day, when a mission festival was held. In his last report Pastor Sjostrom stated that enough money had been received to cover the apportionment of 35 cents per member for home missions and also enough to pay for the expenses of the summer school. During Pastor Hemdahl's time of service these mission boxes were continued with gratifying results.

**Sunday School in Rockview** Pastor Hemdahl had observed the growing field for more Sunday school work in Rockview and brought the same to the attention of the congregation at its annual meeting January 1st, 1917. Immediately after New Year Mr. Oscar Anderson assisted

in organizing a Sunday school in Rockview. A hall was rented at the corner of 14th Avenue and 20th Street. Mr. N. A. Nilsson was the first superintendent. In the report for the year 1918 it is stated that Mr. Edwin Carlson was superintendent and teacher of the Bible Class, Miss Elsie Carlson, pianist, Mrs. Louis P. Nicols, secretary, Mrs. Edwin Carlson and Mrs. Oscar Anderson, teachers. There were 70 pupils en-



TABOR CHURCH CHAPEL

rolled. The following year it was reported that Alfred Johnson was superintendent and Miss Alma Wanfalt was the pianist. In the fourth annual report Mr. Nicols stated that there were 90 pupils enrolled and that faithful teachers had assisted in this work.

**World War** During the year 1917 the World War wrought many changes in the church work, not least in our own Zion Church since 117 of its young men enlisted or were drafted into the service. Three Zion young women served as Red Cross nurses. Camp Grant was located at Rockford and many Lutheran young men from other parts of the country were stationed here in their training for active service across the sea. Through various organizations our church endeavored to minister to the spiritual and social wants of the soldiers. It was a year for serious reflection since both the war and the Spanish influenza were taking many of our members and friends from our midst. Five of our young men died in the service. There was much need of prayer in our church and homes during those experiences.

**Pastor Hemdahl Resigns** Rev. G. E. Hemdahl resigned as pastor of Zion April 23rd, 1918. The Church Council refused to accept the resignation, but Pastor Hemdahl was convinced that he should not withdraw his resignation. A special meeting of the congregation was held July 3rd, 1918, to call another pastor. At this time Rev. Felix Hanson of Jamestown, N. Y., was chosen. This call was declined. Rev. C. E. Hemdahl held his farewell sermon and left for Wahoo, Nebraska, July 29th, 1918.

**Pastor Erlander Fills Vacancy** The Church Council called Rev. J. E. Erlander of Anoka, Nebraska, to fill the vacancy in Zion until a permanent pastor would be obtained. At a special meeting of the congregation held Oct. 2, 1918, Rev. C. A. Lund of Escanaba, Michigan, was called as pastor of Zion. Also this call was declined. Another special meeting was held December 18th, 1918, at which time Rev. Carl Solomonson of Fergus Falls, Minnesota, was called as pastor at a salary of \$1,800.00, Christmas offering and free use of the parsonage, etc. This call was accepted. During the half a year of vacancy Zion was well cared for by the experienced and able veteran, Pastor Erlander. With untiring zeal he walked



REV. J. E. ERLANDER

from home to home to visit those who were sick with the influenza and brought hope to the dying and cheer to the bereaved ones. He will long be remembered for his blessed work during those dark days.

### PASTOR CARL SOLOMONSON

*February, 1919—February, 1928.*

**Rev. Solomonson Assumes Duties** On the 9th of February, 1919, Rev. Carl Solomonson held his initial sermon in Zion, Rockford. He had a large field before him, but his many years of service in various capacities made him equal to his task. Most of the work was yet carried on in the Swedish language, only one English service a month was held in Zion at that time. The Rockview mission presented new opportunities for expanded work. Pastor Solomonson was awake to the situation. The Zion Church petitioned the Illinois Conference to place a home mission pastor on the field in Rockview. At a special meeting of the Mission Board and representatives from the three large Augustana churches in Rockford the question was discussed, but no action was taken. The Zion Church authorized its student in the summer of 1919 to canvass that territory, calling at 500 homes. The Sunday school was continued.



DR. CARL SOLOMONSON

**Extensive Repairs** The church needed a better heating plant and many general repairs. During the first three years of Rev. Solomonson's pastoral work many and expensive repairs were made. A new steam heating plant was installed in 1919 at a cost of \$4,300.00, toilets at a cost of \$915.00 and other repairs necessary to make room for the boiler brought the cost of the repairs to a sum of almost \$8,000.00, which amount was covered by donations from societies and individuals. During the year 1920 the interior of the church was decorated and the two paintings on either side of the altar were procured, all at a cost of \$2,605.00. Art glass windows were installed at a cost of \$1,800.00. Societies and individuals donated new hymn books, a baptismal font, candelabras for the altar, a new altar, the missal stand, and altar covering. Thus the church presented a pleasing effect.



PHOTO OF GROUP TAKEN AFTER SWEDISH SERVICE, SEPT. 17, 1933

**Large Contributions** These were years of great ingatherings for various causes. During a few years Zion contributed about \$9,000.00 to general purposes, such as the Pension Fund, Augustana College and Theological Seminary for new buildings, Augustana Hospital and the European Relief.

**Envelope System** At New Year, 1921, the envelope system was introduced for the ingathering of the membership contributions of the church. The results were very encouraging the first year when it compared the receipts of the former year. In 1920 the membership fees amounted to \$5,833.80 and in 1921, the first year with the envelopes, \$9,419.95. The weekly envelope system is used in Zion today with the same gratifying results.

**English Services** At the annual meeting in 1918 a petition was presented by the Young Men's Luther Society asking for one more English evening service. The question was tabled. At the adjournment meeting in 1921 it was decided to alternate the use of Swedish and English at the Sunday services. This program was reversed at the next annual meeting, when it was decided to hold the regular morning and evening services in the Swedish language and a brief English service at 10 A.M. in connection with the Sunday school. The following was the schedule for the Sunday services — Sunday school at 9:30 A.M., English service at 10 A.M., the Swedish morning service at 10:45, Swedish evening service at 7:30. English mid-week services were held during certain seasons of the year. In 1927 an English evening service was held the first Sunday of each month. This continued until 1929.

**Chapel in Rockview** The Sunday school in Rockview was in need of better quarters for its work. A committee had been elected to look for a suitable location and had investigated several sites but was able first in 1922 to find a location that seemed to meet the demands of its members. The two lots on the southwest corner of 12th Avenue and 19th Street were bought at a cost of \$825.00. Plans for the chapel were presented by Mr. B. C. Harvey at the annual meeting in 1924 and were adopted. The work on the chapel was begun in April and on the 27th of July, 1924, it was dedicated by Dr. P. Peterson, President of the Illinois Conference. When the chapel was completed the people in Rockview desired to have regular services there. This was granted, wherefore services were held the first and third Sunday evenings of each month, beginning September 21st. A Rockview Dorcas Society was organized January 18th and had 50 members by the end of the first year. The Junior Mission Band had 55 members. Since the work was developing so fast in Rockview the Church Council recommended to the con-

gregation that it turn over this whole mission to the Mission Board of the Illinois Conference. This transaction took place in February, 1925, when the Tabor Lutheran Church was organized and received the lots and chapel, valued at \$9,000.00, for the sum of \$2,000.00. In June the Tabor Church received its own pastor.

**A City Missionary** The Zion Church called Dr. Betty Nilsson, who was spending some time in America on her furlough from India, to become a city missionary in the service of the church. Dr. Betty accepted the call and visited 180 homes from which the children come to the Zion Sunday school but the parents are not members of the congregation. The purpose was to win these homes for Christ and His Church. She found many objections why people cannot come to church nor accept Christ's invitation for salvation of their souls.

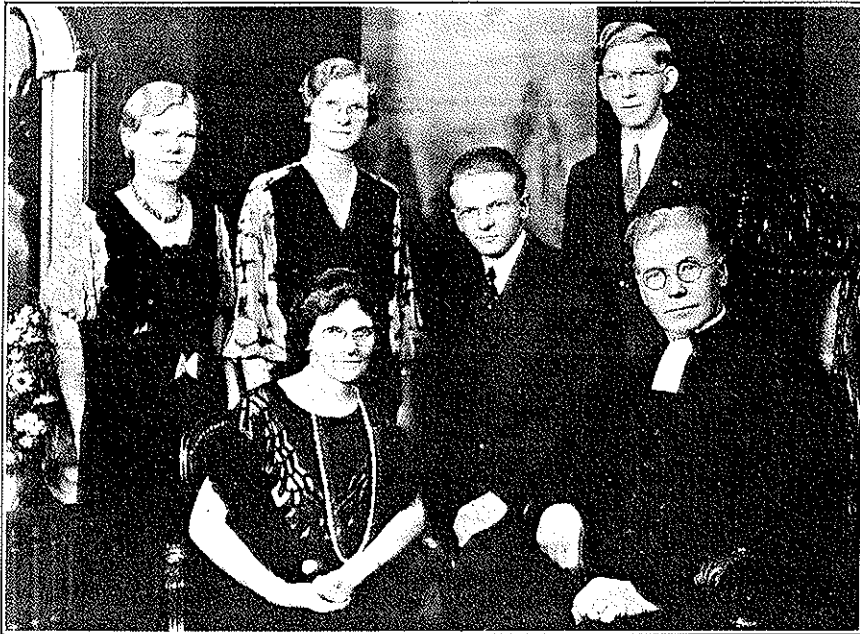
**Augustana Synod Meeting** The Zion Church had the pleasure of entertaining the Augustana Synod at its 64th annual convention June 8-13, 1923. The congregation celebrated its fortieth anniversary the previous week, at which occasion Pastors S. G. Ohman, J. A. Eckstrom, and G. E. Hemdahl were present and brought inspiring messages. The Zion A Cappella Choir rendered a concert one evening. Rich blessings were brought to our congregation during those ten festive days.

**New Organ** For some time it had been a general feeling in the congregation that the organ which had served since the year 1889 was not able to meet the demands of the present day for church music. The Luther League sponsored this new project and gathered by subscription a sum sufficient for a new organ. At a meeting May 25, 1927, the congregation voted to buy a Geneva organ at the price of \$7,000.00 and the old organ in trade. The new organ was installed that same summer.

**Sickness and Death of Pastor** During the fall of 1927 the pastor's health began to fail him. He was unable to conduct the annual meeting January 2nd, 1928. He received medical treatment at the Augustana Hospital in Chicago and recovered so that he was able to return home and take up his work, but it proved to be too much for him and he had to return to the hospital where he died February 5th, 1928, at an age of 56 years, 3 months, and 5 days. Funeral services were held in the Zion Church and interment in the Lutheran Cemetery at Scandian Grove, Minnesota. Again the Zion Church felt keenly the loss of a beloved and able pastor. It had reasons to thank God for the consecrated service of Pastor Solomonson.



**Vacancy** During the vacancy Evald B. Lawson and Gilbert Monson from the Augustana Theological Seminary had charge of the congregation. Rev. J. A. Benander served as vice pastor and confirmed the class of catechumens which Pastor Solomonson had started to instruct before his sickness and death. On May 16th, 1928, the congregation extended a call to Rev. H. E. Sandstedt of Chicago to become its pastor. This call was declined and another meeting was held July 12th when a call was extended to Rev. E. G. Knock of Denver, Colorado. He accepted the call and arrived in Rockford November 8th, 1928. His initial sermon was given November 11th.



PASTOR KNOCK AND FAMILY

PASTOR E. G. KNOCK

*November, 1928—*

**English Services** Since the World War the use of the English language had come into the Sunday school and confirmation classes more and more.

There was a decided need of more English services in order to take care of the large group of young people in the congregation. At the annual meeting January 1st, 1929, several steps were taken in this direction. It was decided that all the evening services should be held in the English language, the half hour English morning service in connection with the Sunday school

was extended to an hour service by placing the Swedish service at 11 A.M. The new Hymnal of the Augustana Synod was procured so that the complete morning service could be carried out. Regular communion services in the English language were also introduced. The individual communion cups were adopted. The large attendance at all these English services evidences the fact that the congregation made no mistake when it took this step.

**Sunday School Building** Another outstanding need in Zion for many years had been that of more room for the large Sunday school. The proposition of a new addition was voted down in 1927, but the need of more room was still present. At the annual meeting in 1929 it was decided to erect an addition to the church during the year at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.00. A building committee was elected to present plans at the adjourned meeting, February 6th, at which time the committee reported plans for the west side and the south side. It was decided to build on the south side a two-story structure 72x36 feet. The building was dedicated by Dr. Peter Peterson, President of the Illinois Conference, November 3rd, 1929.

**Change of Organist** At the adjourned meeting February 5th, 1930, Prof. A. D. Bodfors resigned as organist and choir director. For more than 25 years he had served faithfully in Zion and had tried to raise the standard of church music among our people. His resignation became effective May 1st. The Church Council was authorized to secure another organist. Mr. Allen Elmquist, organist of the First Lutheran Church in Moline, was called. He accepted the offer and took up his work here in the month of August, 1930. He has organized several choruses among the young people so that Zion has become well known for its many efficient choruses. The members enjoy to sing in these choirs and have thus a direct part in the work and worship of the church. Music holds an important place in the life of every church. Zion has always evidenced much interest in choir singing, even during the early days of its history a choir sang regularly at its services.

The Zion Church has always had a heart for the sick and the poor. Ever since its organization it has lifted offerings for its charity fund. It has a visiting committee among the deacons, in the Dorcas Society and the Luther League. Since Rev. Erlander was retired from active ministry and was living in Rockford, the Zion Church Council called him to serve as assistant pastor in visiting the sick and the shut-ins. He took up this work in 1929 and continued faithfully until the Lord called him to the eternal rest, October 10th, 1932. He was at that time taking a few months' vacation with his children in Nebraska. The Zion Church will long remember the blessed work of this man of God both during the vacancy in 1918 as well as his work as assistant pastor.

**Further Improvements** During the year 1930 further improvements were made to the church property. The basement then received a renovation, the kitchen was enlarged, the radiators were lowered so as to give more heat, the entire basement painted and new wiring and electric fixtures for the auditorium of the church. The Dorcas, the Brotherhood, and the Luther League financed these improvements. The organ console was moved down from its position above the pulpit and a new choir-loft was built on the floor level. The choirs did not have room in the crowded space in front of the organ. During the year 1931 the chancel of the church received a complete change. A new altar and reredos with organ front was installed, a new pulpit placed at the side of the altar, a choir room added to the northwest corner of the building and new doors into the church from choir room and pastor's study. The entire auditorium was decorated and new carpets laid in aisles and chancel. The total cost of these improvements amounted to more than \$10,000.00. The Dorcas pledged \$5,000.00 for this work. The Zion Church has now a very valuable building which is well suited for the work that needs to be done in the Sunday school, the choruses, and various societies. It has been a gradual growth as a plant which sheds the old material and adds new growth each year.

**Conclusion** In this historic sketch we have tried to present the growth of the Zion Church. Naturally much of the presentation has had to do with the material developments of the church building. These improvements have importance in this history simply because they touch the spiritual life of the congregation. In this country where there is a separation of church and state, the contributions for the upbuilding of the church must be entirely voluntary. Every gift and contribution evidences, therefore, some spiritual interest in God's kingdom. The important work is not the gathering of money but in the teaching of God's Word and the administration of the sacraments. It is impossible, therefore, to relate the most important work. It is often done unobserved. The regular Sunday services, the Sunday school, the prayer meetings and the Bible Studies, the Vacation Bible school which has been conducted in Zion all these fifty years. Who can estimate the real significance of all this work? The influence of a life that touches the children and young people lives on for ever. We recall the work of Mrs. Beckman who with her loyal helpers taught the summer school for so many years. Her reward was not her salary, for it was generally not large, but the joy of helping the youth to a better and higher life. We refrain from mentioning more names as it will be impossible to do it justly. God knows what His faithful followers have done. Not one little deed is forgotten nor shall it go unrewarded. Eternity will reveal the real value of the work in Zion during these fifty years.



BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION, 1933

First row: Martin Rosene, Alfred Wessman, John Kullberg, Rev. E. G. Knock, Axel Rosell, Herman Svaren, Charles Borg.—Second row: Charles Krans, John Holmberg, Gust E. Swanson, Hugo Jacobson, Minnard Stark, Hugo Goodin.—Third row: Carl Swanson, Ferdinand Fritz, C. O. Blomquist, Edwin Gustafson, Lawrence Farb, Herman Johnson.

Most of the founders are at rest. Their labors follow them. The earnest zeal they manifested should inspire us to greater sacrifice and work. Above all should the knowledge that the Church is Christ's body on earth and that He through it is carrying on His work of reaching lost souls with His saving grace, cause us to become most earnest and zealous in our work and worship. We are only beginning here what we hope shall be our privilege throughout all eternity—we shall be His own and live with Him and for Him to the praise and glory of His name.

## DEACONS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| C. F. Anderson, 1883-94, 1901-06   | John Dahlin, 1898-1905                        |
| Jonas Hokanson, 1883-84, 1887-95   | Frank Anderson, 1898-1900                     |
| J. P. Kron, 1883-86  | Claus Swenson, 1898-1900                      |
| Jonas Larson, 1883-91  | B. A. Lodin, 1898-99                          |
| J. A. Glans, 1883-99, 1907-09  | J. N. Johnson, 1898                           |
| Isaac Peterson, 1883-86  | S. P. Hawkinson, 1900-02                      |
| J. M. Wallin, 1885-87, 1908-10,<br>1911-13                                   | Jonas Peterson, 1902-04, 1908-10              |
| P. G. Heggquist, 1886-91   | Andrew Johnson, 1906-08                       |
| Peter Nelson, 1886-87, 1889-91   | Chas. Sandstedt, 1909-11                      |
| L. Carlson, 1886   | Alfred Johnson, 1911-28, 1930-32              |
| P. J. Larson, 1887-89, 1896-1901,<br>1904-06                                 | John Eklund, 1912-15                          |
| Andrew Kjellgren, 1887-92  | Victor Stomberg, 1913-21                      |
| Peter Rosene, 1888-93, 1899, 1907-<br>18, 1922-24                            | Swan Peterson, 1914-19                        |
| Chas. Borg, 1891-93, 1895-97, 1901-<br>15, 1918-26, 1929-31, 1933-35         | Oscar Peterson, 1914-22                       |
| John Rodin, 1891   | John Wanfalt, 1916-21                         |
| Fred S. Anderson, 1892-94  | Oscar Anderson, 1916-17                       |
| Oscar Larson, 1892-94  | Aug. Wicklund, 1919-21, 1924-26               |
| Nels Johnson, 1893-95  | Louis P. Nicols, 1920-28                      |
| Anton Danielson, 1893-95, 1906-11  | A. J. Stauf, 1921-23, 1931-32                 |
| Alf. Swenson, 1894-1904  | Henry Lindstrom, 1921-23                      |
| John Alander, 1894-99  | C. J. Carlson, 1923-28, 1930                  |
| John Kullberg, 1895-97, 1899-1904,<br>1908-13, 1915-20, 1922-30, 1932<br>-34 | C. O. Blomquist, 1924-27, 1929-31,<br>1933-35 |
| Edwin Carlson, 1895-97, 1901-02,<br>1903-05, 1910, 1912-14                   | Hugo Jacobson, 1925-33                        |
| John Pihl, 1896-1901, 1927-29  | Hugo Goodin, 1927-33                          |
| Chas. Stark, 1896-97, 1900-20, 1922  | Chas. Lindstedt, 1928-29                      |
|  | Gust E. Swanson, 1929-31                      |
|  | Philip Stark, 1930-32                         |
|  | Carl Swanson, 1931-33                         |
|  | Lawrence Farb, 1932-34                        |
|  | Herman Svaren, 1932-34                        |
|  | Chas. Krans, 1933-35                          |

## SECRETARIES OF THE CONGREGATION

J. Bergsten, 1883-85	S. P. Hawkinson, 1914
J. P. Ek, 1886-88	Henry Lindberg, 1915-16
F. A. Sandahl, 1889	Louis P. Nicols, 1917-20
Axel Carlson, 1890	John S. Bloom, 1921-25
Frank Erickson, 1891	Alf. Johnson, 1926-27
Louis Sandine, 1892-93	S. P. Hawkinson, 1928-30
John Kullberg, 1894-1910	Philip Stark, 1931
A. G. Johnson, 1911	Carl Swanson, 1932
Wm. Winquist, 1912	Reuben Swenson, 1933
John Kullberg, 1913	

## TRUSTEES

Andrew Borg, 1883-97	Chas. Krans, 1922-27
N. P. Nygren, 1883-84	C. Dahlgren, 1895-97
C. Rydberg, 1883-89	C. M. Danielson, 1895-1904, 1908-
G. L. Wennerstrom, 1883-89, 1894-	10
96	John Holmberg, 1898-1900, 1933-35
Frank Anderson, 1883-90	Axel Carlson, 1896-1904, 1908-19
C. O. Nelson, 1883, 1886-88, 1891	Frank Carlson, 1898-1903
Oscar Peterson, 1884-86, 1891	Chas. Segurd, 1898-1906, 1908-25
Chas. Sahlen, 1885-87, 1891-94,	L. J. Swenson, 1898-99
1900-02	Andrew Kjellgren, 1903-05
Chas. Nelson, 1886-87	Chas. Dahlberg, 1903-05
M. Nyberg, 1886	N. P. Nelson, 1904-09
John Bengtson, 1887-93	Oscar Lustig, 1906-11
Oscar Bergquist, 1887-92	Alf. Wessman, 1906-20, 1930-31,
Albert Anderson, 1888	1933-35
F. O. Lind, 1888-90, 1896-1911	Jonas Peterson, 1912-14
John Ek, 1889-91	A. D. Bodfors, 1907-18
Herman Lind, 1890-92	Oscar Warner, 1907-09
Frank Segurd, 1891-1902	Frank Nelson, 1910-12
A. G. Nyberg, 1891-92	Joseph Lyden, 1910-12
Louis Sandine, 1892-94	Dr. Emil Lofgren, 1911-16, 1930-32
David Carlson, 1892-97	Louis Bildahl, 1912-14
J. A. Bowman, 1893-95, 1897-99,	C. V. Haroldson, 1913-21, 1927-29
1901-06	Louis Erickson, 1913-15
Olof Erickson, 1893	Wm. Nordstrom, 1914-16
Gustaf Pehrson, 1894-97	Andrew Lindman, 1915
Aug. Lundgren, 1894-96, 1899-1904	Lawrence Lundgren, 1916-27

Louis Nelson, 1916-17, 1920-26	Mauritz Nelson, 1927-32
Henry Lindberg, 1917-22	Reuben Swanson, 1928-30
C. A. Johnson, 1917-28	Oscar Norberg, 1928-30
Gust. E. Swanson, 1918-19, 1923-25, 1933-35	John Bloom, 1929
Martin Rosene, 1919-33	Fred Johnson, 1929-31
B. C. Harvey, 1920-26	John Anderson, 1930-32
David Lodin, 1921-29	Edward Gustafson, 1931-33
George Peterson, 1926-28	Ferdinand Fritz, 1931-33
Axel Rosell, 1926-34	Minnerd Stark, 1932-34
	Herman Johnson, 1933-35

JANITOR SINCE 1910



JOHN MELLBERG

Who was named janitor of Zion Church on  
January 1, 1910, and who has served  
continually since.

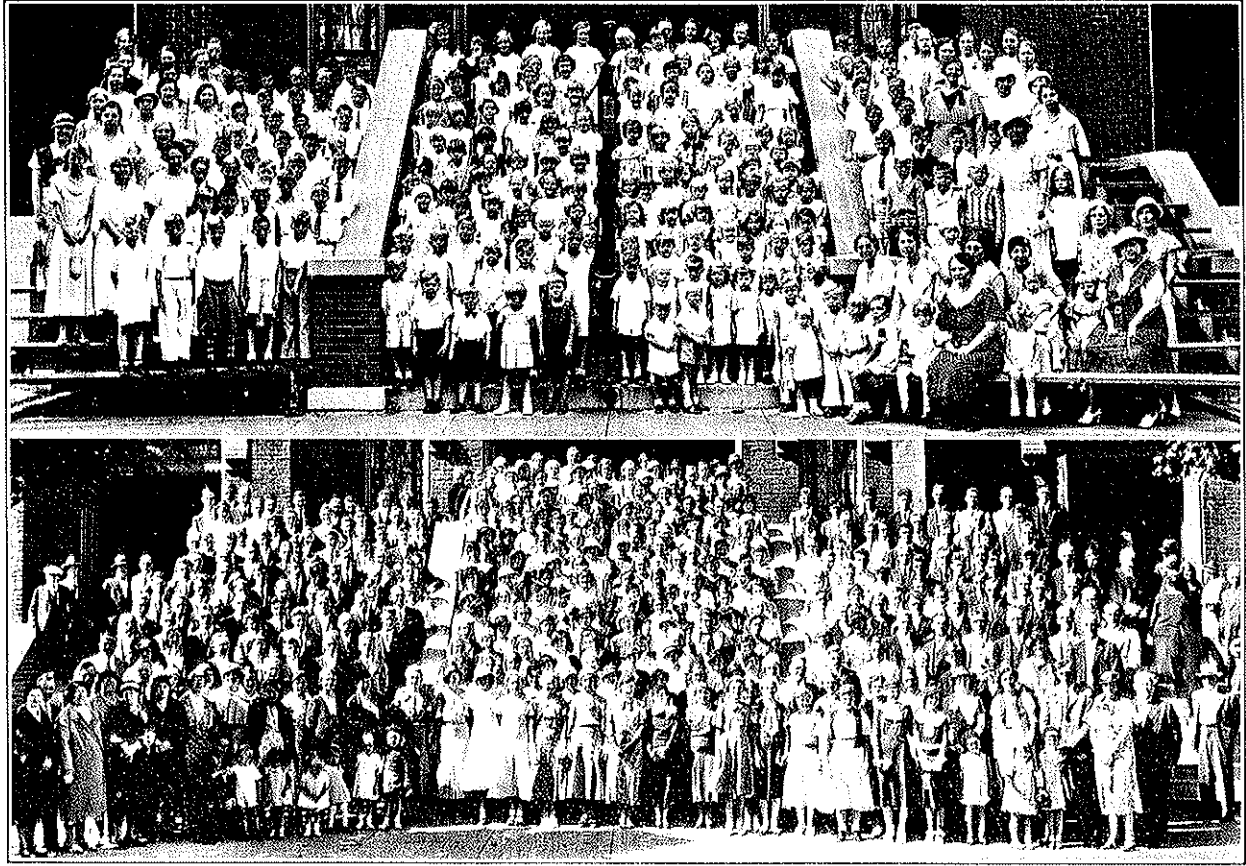
	CHURCH		MEMBERS		CONFIRMED	BAPTIZED		RECEIVED		BURIED			MARRIED	SCHOOLS			CHURCH		General Expenses	Total Expenses
	Value	Debt	Communicants	Total		Members	Non-Members	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Non-Members		Scholars	Sunday		Salaries	Other Purposes		
															Teachers	Scholars				
1884	\$13,795	\$ 8,180	330	650		32	68		1	4		8				\$ 679.00	\$ 2,584.00	\$	\$ 3,663.00	
1885	19,000	11,000	400	612	13	71	80	20	2	6	3	25	35	14	105	800.00	1,151.50	48.50	2,000.00	
1886	20,000	10,000	400	752	16	64	97	52	4	8		20	185	20	200	1,121.00	773.38	105.62	2,000.00	
1887	20,000	8,000	435	785	12	71	49	16	4	6	11	21	111	20	220	1,230.00	520.00	250.00	2,000.00	
1888	26,636	12,439	535	900	16	50	102		3	10	10	5	200	20	240	1,729.18	1,973.53	272.89	3,975.43	
1889	28,950	13,493	730	1,100	23	46	172		9		9	17	225	24	290	1,100.00	1,796.76	425.04	3,321.80	
1890	28,950	13,493	730	1,100	23	46	172		9		11	17	225	24	290	1,276.00	1,620.76	425.04	3,321.80	
1891	27,335	13,874	762		27	92	73		6		10	27				1,575.00	1,487.39	379.12	3,441.81	
1892	27,200	12,496	916	1,621	37	103	126	85	2	8	14	30	159	25	369	1,717.00	2,841.79	325.93	4,884.72	
1893	26,666	13,096	1,000		30	81	64		5		17	20	137	23	350	1,700.00	1,167.80	237.42	3,105.22	
1894	26,575	13,193	700	1,435	19	57	14	10	6	5	11	18	73	24	375	1,700.00	585.98	137.84	2,423.82	
1895	26,575	12,000	800	1,600	63	130	94	46	13	13	37	30	130	25	400	1,562.00	3,052.14	145.40	4,759.54	
1896	26,575	11,353	625	1,611	71	110	99	68	4	3	25	29	200	28	472	1,731.71	2,039.90	310.31	4,078.92	
1897	26,944	10,430	767	1,488	48	23	61	34	12	3	29	44	200	29	500	2,001.15	2,193.66	240.29	4,435.10	
1898	26,785	9,865	730	1,589	54	28	51	22	8	4	36	25	171	30	500	1,870.00	3,072.00	223.60	5,265.60	
1899	26,873	6,300	760	1,519	63	28	130	44	13	11	6	24	244	31	500	1,785.00	5,119.07	272.02	7,176.99	
1900	26,917	6,100	760	1,514	65	24	130	33	7	12	2	20	208	30	500	1,858.00	1,195.37	310.86	3,364.23	
1901	27,000	5,000	825	1,600	59	25	101	60	22	10	12	42	34	33	525	1,815.00	2,599.06	458.11	4,782.17	
1902	26,925		902	1,682	62	30	107	88	27	19	5	54	46		205	1,950.00	6,706.33	965.83	9,622.16	
1903	28,600		1,014	1,785	78	40	115	112	41	10	3	32	51		210	2,040.00	3,471.85	829.81	6,341.76	
1904	29,600	700	1,075	1,864	53	34	150	91	24	8	6	36	42		225	2,148.00	3,551.88	1,624.27	7,324.15	
1905	29,600		1,150	1,965	108	20	87	136	79	13	5	32	80		273	2,457.40	2,303.52	1,269.37	6,030.29	
1906	30,200		1,215	2,037	77	52	105	65	24	14	2	26	74		266	2,846.30	3,865.16	1,500.57	8,221.02	
1907	37,041		1,225	2,105	81	41	92	107	64	16	4	31	54		250	3,297.11	3,380.87	1,627.01	8,304.99	
1908	30,780		1,225	2,171	103	40	94	47	22	15		40	35		214	2,957.21	2,689.06	1,495.06	7,142.23	
1909	33,900		1,230	2,278	81	36	78	68	28	13	1	30	46		221	2,880.00	5,720.62	1,349.07	9,949.69	
1910	39,587	3,452	1,100	2,150	88	35	66	65	20	7	3	49	46		268	2,931.00	9,224.68	1,392.56	13,548.24	
1911	39,600	3,100	1,110	2,282	80	33	94	43	4	20	5	55	45		210	2,958.00	2,684.07	1,360.77	7,002.84	
1912	39,600	3,100	1,103	1,608	79	27	50	30	10	15	21	26	148		784	2,668.00	4,601.81	2,314.97	9,584.74	
1913	41,800	3,800	1,236	1,647	92	28	66	49	14	16	2	35	33		840	3,315.00	6,840.44	2,137.08	12,292.08	
1914	41,800	3,800	1,304	1,707	87	35	64	65	11	18	5	31	23		191	3,282.00	6,750.83	2,506.25	12,539.08	
1915	42,000	3,000	1,320	1,721	87	22	61	47	22	13	1	26	31		147	3,851.00	5,050.00	2,290.20	11,191.20	
1916	42,000		1,380	1,789	77	16	70	60	26	10	2	36	48		168	3,382.00	5,543.40	3,338.26	12,263.00	
1917	42,000		1,432	1,847	81	18	64	108	44	21	2	48	48		163	3,485.00	5,298.13	3,015.62	11,808.75	
1918	42,000		1,326	1,726	88	24	69	49	22	16	4	53	27		62	3,688.63	7,474.01	2,375.38	13,538.02	
1919	45,000	3,000	1,337	1,695	82	14	42	24	7	17	17	16	29		60	6,056.81	10,552.30	3,187.82	18,796.93	
1920	45,000	4,300	1,308	1,661	62	19	6	33	8	17		15	22		108	5,136.00	13,645.00	5,840.92	24,623.00	
1921	45,000	5,225	1,242	1,571	57	11	53	39	2	13	1	26	29		69	806	5,148.80	4,947.59	7,367.08	17,490.55
1922	45,000	5,450	1,221	1,544	89	20	31	42	13	25	1	25	32		69	833	5,562.36	7,267.06	6,558.12	19,387.49
1923	45,000	3,800	1,334	1,658	84	19	49	47	22	24	33	51	82		72	783	6,203.83	8,613.20	6,635.75	21,542.78
1924	43,844	3,490	1,325	1,540	71	15	82	46	17	30		35	42		101	904	6,351.00	5,098.70	19,519.91	30,969.61
1925	44,057	2,400	1,324	1,635	88	18	74	56	10	21	1	38	29		154	1,212	6,835.37	7,045.23	9,904.03	23,784.63



	CHURCH		MEMBERS		CONFIRMED	BAPTIZED		RECEIVED		BURIED			MARRIED	SCHOOLS			CHURCH		General Expenses	Total Expenses
	Value	Debt	Communicants	Total		Members	Non-Members	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Non-Members		Scholars	Sunday		Salaries	Other Purposes		
															Teachers	Scholars				
1926	44,403	2,000	1,346	1,662	84	29	51	49	11	24	1	34	56	130	75	1,230	6,560.54	6,413.20	7,595.37	20,569.20
1927	50,965	3,200	1,318	1,641	85	17	63	29	10	17	5	32	35	109	74	1,219	6,742.14	12,790.18	5,755.76	25,288.07
1928	51,000	2,200	1,545	1,855	88	7	20	30	5	15	10	5	106	81	1,159	7,392.00	8,176.26	12,058.03	27,626.29	
1929	75,000	0,000	1,570	1,919	52	16	73	81	42	23	1	40	32	103	80	1,254	6,846.31	16,847.56	8,412.43	32,106.24
1930	75,000	8,000	1,575	1,925	68	13	41	57	22	28	4	40	20	135	80	1,173	7,488.24	9,911.36	11,260.63	28,660.24
1931	80,000	13,500	1,710	2,314	51	29	32	35	4	23	1	26	20	140	80	1,121	7,913.96	10,650.11	8,565.75	27,129.82
1932	80,000	13,500	1,743	2,321	71	16	30	18	2	23	1	23	13	163	85	1,133	7,416.16	7,093.57	8,977.30	23,487.03
Totals					3,073		4,534	3,279	1,052	656	159	1,339	1,626							\$576,166.32

These figures have been taken from the Synodical Reports as far as possible and are as nearly correct as can be found.

MARTIN F. ROSENE.



BIBLE CLASS DEPARTMENT (lower); BEGINNERS' and PRIMARY DEPARTMENT (upper)

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## THE ZION SUNDAY SCHOOL

A present enrollment of 1,050 pupils in the Zion Sunday school makes it one of the largest in the Augustana synod. Outstanding and placing it in a class by itself, is its large Bible class department, which accounts for a trifle more than one-half of the entire Sunday school enrollment.

The Zion Sunday school enrollment at the present time is divided approximately as follows: Bible classes, 534 in twelve classes; intermediate, 223 in twenty-eight classes; primary, 146; beginners, 81; and attending Cradle roll, 43. There are sixty-five classes altogether, taught by as many teachers.

Indicative of the importance attached to religious instruction by the founders of Zion Church is the fact that a Sunday school was organized simultaneously with the congregation. About twenty-five persons are said to have attended the first Sunday school class.

At its fifth anniversary, in 1888, the Zion Sunday school had an attendance of 200 children, divided into twenty classes. That year, the total Sunday school income was reported to be \$317.48, of which amount \$113.40 was for the Illinois conference children's homes and \$25.50 for charity. Even that early, Zion Sunday school celebrated July 4th with a picnic. In its early years, the school met at 3 P. M. Instruction was entirely in the Swedish language.

As early as 1893, an English class was organized as was also an adult Bible class with Andrew Kjellgren as the teacher. From that start has grown Zion's splendid Bible class department, in which work Zion was a pioneer long before most congregations recognized its importance.

In 1900 the Sunday school had 490 pupils in thirty classes; by 1910, it had grown to 872 pupils and fifty-one teachers. In another decade, the regular Sunday school attendants had fallen to 670, but in addition, there were 65 pupils enrolled in the Swedish Sunday afternoon Bible class, 150 in the Cradle roll and 97 in the Rock View Sunday school.

The enrollment figures for 1933 tell the story of a continued vigorous growth in most of the Zion Sunday school departments.

Zion Sunday school has always been one of the largest contributors to the Illinois conference children's homes. From 1911 to 1920, just to take a single decade, the Zion Sunday school turned over \$3,061.78 to the children's homes.

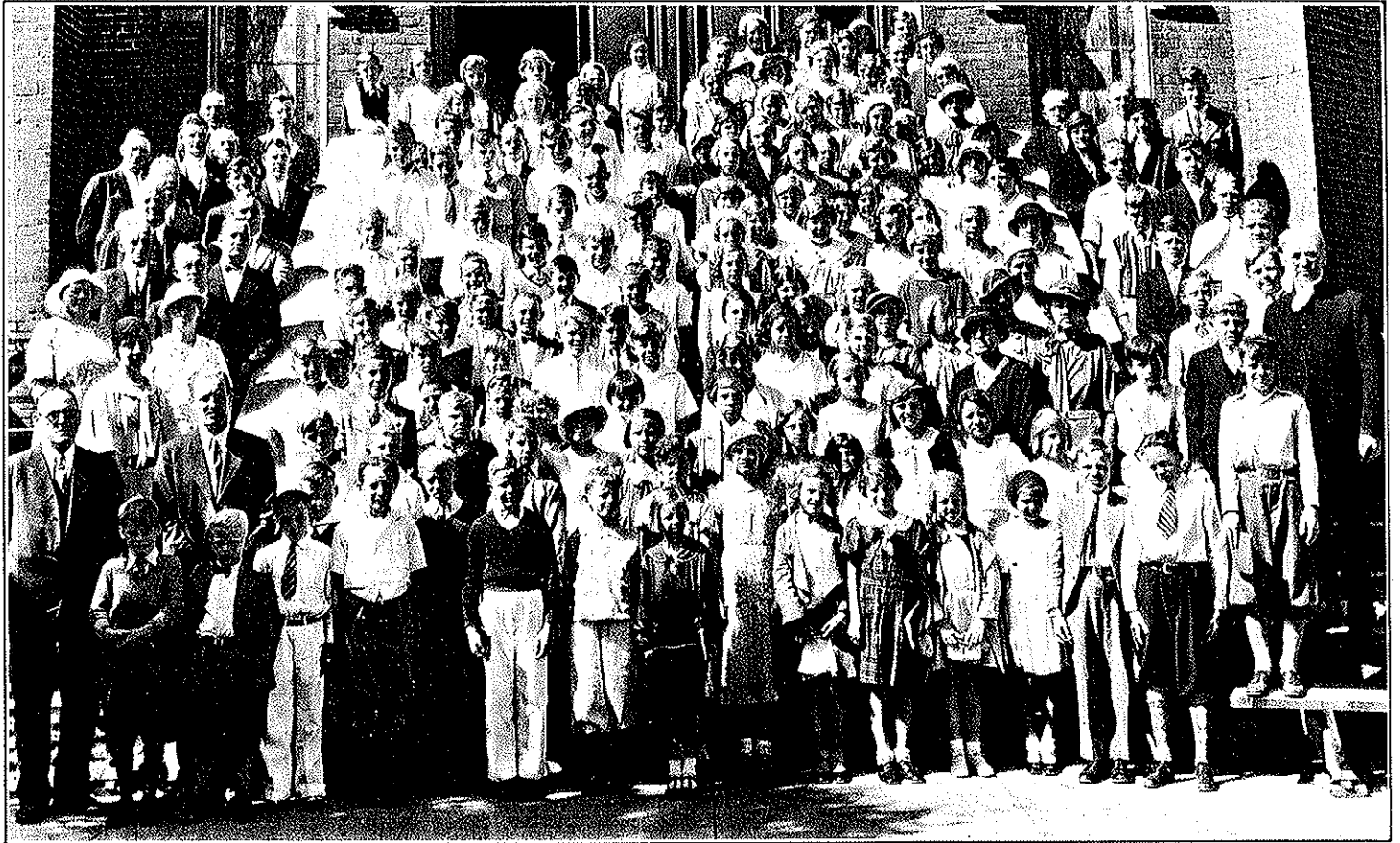
From 1921 to 1930, the figures was even larger, it amounting to \$500 and \$600 annually. In the years of depression the yearly contribution has fallen considerably.

It was the home missionary spirit of Zion Sunday school which established the Rock View Sunday school in 1917, from which small beginning has grown the Tabor Lutheran Church. Rock View Sunday school was given over to Tabor Lutheran Church by formal action of the Zion congregation on April 8, 1925. It then had 180 children divided into fifteen classes and taught by fifteen teachers. It was first on January 1, 1917, that the Zion congregation voted to support the work at Rock View. On January 1, 1924, the congregation voted to erect a Rock View chapel to house the Sunday school.

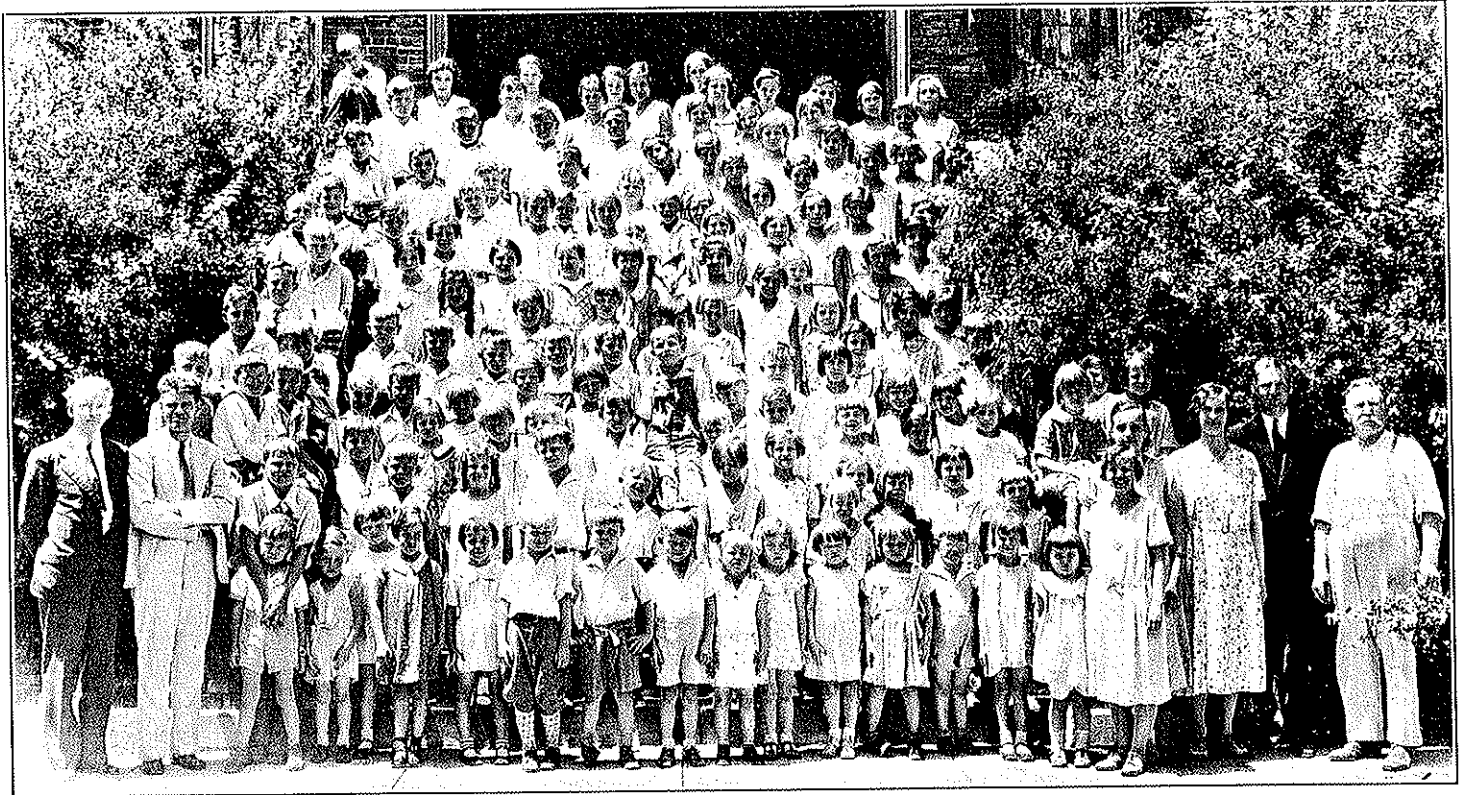
In 1929 Zion completed the erection of a two-story Sunday school addition to its church property which has provided greatly improved accommodations for the religious instruction. Large as it is, the Zion Sunday school can be greatly expended without overcrowding its present facilities. To bring about this further increase in enrollment, we need more of the home missionary enterprise—more of that spirit that sets a child on desire to bring another child to Sunday school and the zeal that inspires teachers to make personal calls in homes where children of Sunday school age live. An attempt should also be made for more regular attendance.

Religious education in Zion Sunday school is now exclusively conducted in the English language, a transition that has occurred during the last fifteen years. All Zion Sunday school pupils, except the beginners and primary classes, are present at an English worship every Sunday from 10 to 11 A.M. immediately following the instruction period of 9:30 to 10 A.M.

The work of the Sunday school is more significant in our own day than at any time in the past. It is from among the children and young people that our church must find its recruits and its future strength. The winning of an adult to church membership is exceedingly difficult and nigh impossible if such person has not had a Christian training as a child. Let no effort be too great to win a child for Christ.



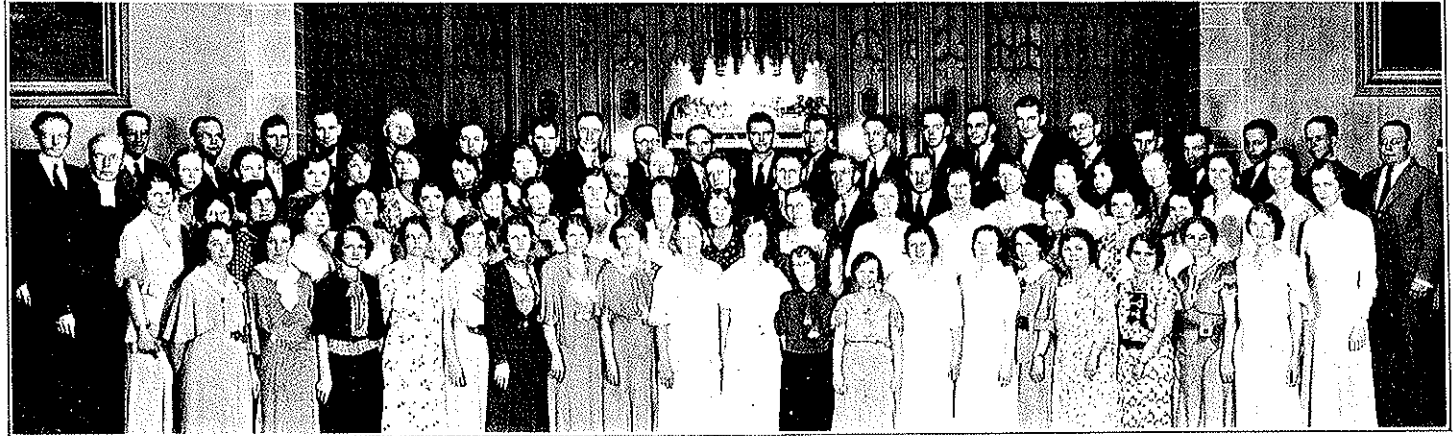
INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, 1933



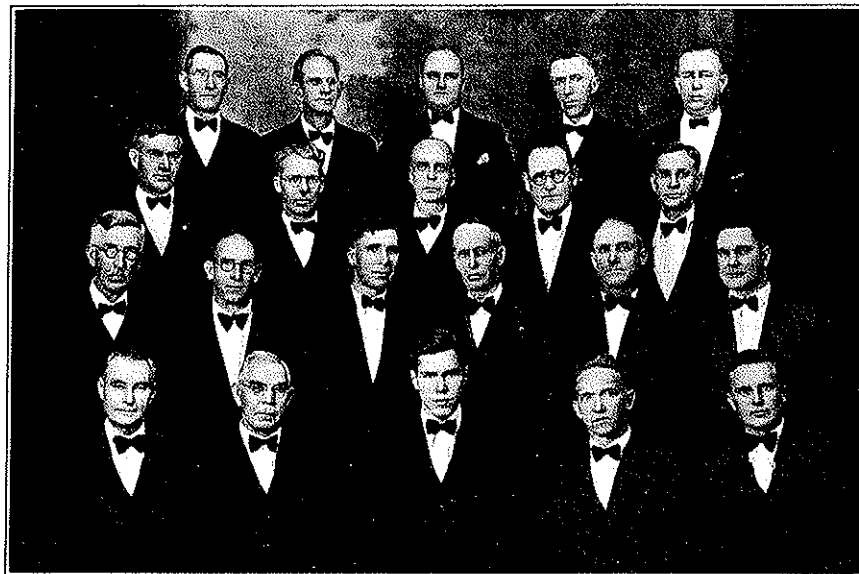
ZION MISSIONARY SOCIETY (upper)



SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND OFFICERS (lower):



ZION CHURCH CHOIR, 1933



ZION BROTHERHOOD CHORUS



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## THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

The golden period of musical development may be said to be the present in the Zion congregation. Nearly 200 members of the church have been meeting weekly during the past year in song rehearsals. Not less than eight active choruses are in existence at Zion and taking part regularly in worship and programs. Their director is Allen Elmquist, who is also church organist. Under his leadership, music has been given new significance and impetus in Zion.

The musical organizations in Zion at the present time, with their full memberships, are the following: Zion Senior Luther League chorus, seventy voices; Zion Luther choir, forty-six voices; Swedish choir, sixteen voices; Brotherhood Male chorus, twenty voices; Junior Girls' chorus, directed by Violet Lofgren, sixteen members; Zion Young Men's chorus, thirty voices; Arions, forty young women; and the Jubilee "Messiah" chorus, with over one hundred voices.

Excluding duplications, there are about 200 young and older persons in Zion who are active in one or more song groups. In addition, a number of quartets and octets exist.

Persons who have served Zion Church as organists and choir directors are not many. Their terms of service have been long and well received. They are as follows:

Andrew Kjellgren, 1883-1886; C. A. Nygren, 1888-1890; C. H. E. Oberg, 1890-1891; August Anderson, 1891-1892; Wilhelm Swenson, 1892-1894; Frithiof Swenson, 1894-1901; Mrs. Frithiof Swenson, 1901-1905; A. D. Bodfors, 1905-1930; Allen Elmquist, 1930-.



ALLEN ELMQUIST

From its very start, Zion Church has had a choir. Other singing groups have also had their existence, only to be disbanded after many years of splendid service. The first mention of a young people's chorus is believed to be found in the congregational minutes for 1904, when Mrs. Frithiof Swenson is asked to meet once a week to rehearse with young people who want to form a chorus.

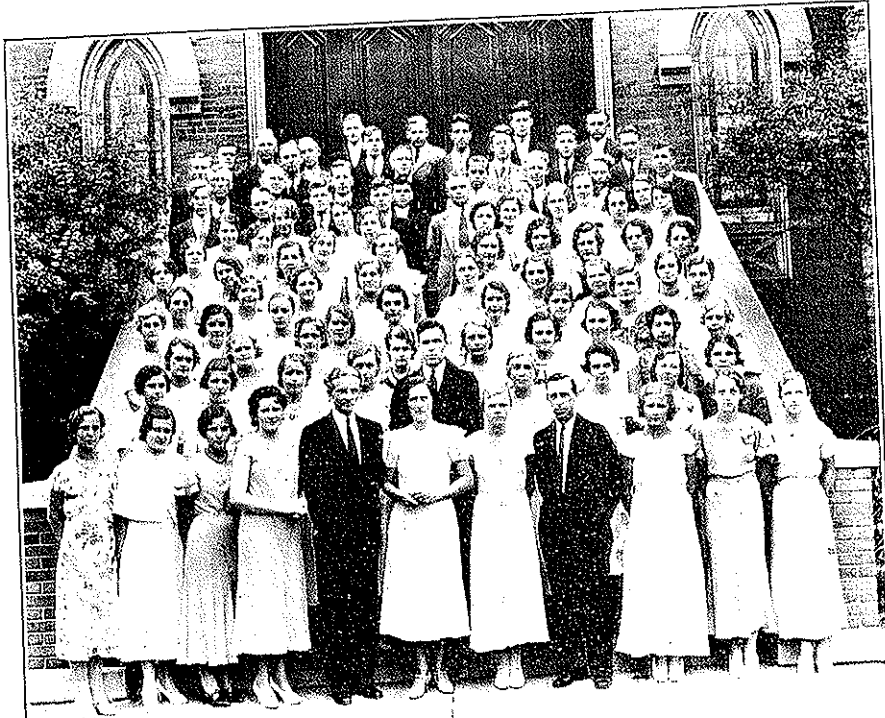
A new chorus was started by Prof. Bodfors in 1908. In 1916, Handel's "Messiah" was rendered by a chorus of one hundred singers under Prof. Bodfors's direction. When Zion observed its fortieth anniversary in 1923, the existing musical organizations were the Zion choir, the Zion male chorus, the Zion A Cappella choir and the Zion Ladies' chorus.

It was while Evald B. Lawson was a student pastor in Zion during 1926 and 1927 that he organized the Zion Young Men's chorus from which grew the Luther League choruses.

Most of Zion's singers at the present time are taken from the ranks of the young people. This is of double significance. It is a means of keeping these young people faithful to and active in their church. It also means that an interest in things musical is being created that will have a most beneficial influence on the congregation for years to come.

In the Epistle to the Colossians, Paul wrote: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God."

Not only are music and song intended for spiritual uplift; they are also the channel and the vehicle for teaching and admonishing one another in the way the Lord would have His people walk.



JUBILEE "MESSIAH" CHORUS (above); ZION LUTHER CHOIR (below)



ZION YOUNG MEN'S CHORUS (lower); ZION LUTHER LEAGUE CHORUS (upper)



ARION CHORUS (above) ; JUNIOR GIRLS' CHOIR (below)



SENIOR AND JUNIOR DIVISIONS OF ZION LUTHER LEAGUE

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## ORGANIZATIONS

### THE ZION LUTHER LEAGUE

A steady growth has been recorded for the Zion Luther League in recent years. Where in 1929 the average attendance at the Zion Senior Luther League meetings during the year was 72, by 1931, it was 85; in 1932, close to 150; and for 1933, approximately the same.

The Zion Luther League consists of a senior and junior division, with 167 enrolled in the senior group and 72 in the junior division at the first of 1933. That is the largest Luther League enrollment in any congregation of the Rockford district.

What is still more important is that the Zion Luther League enrollment is an active membership of young people who are always ready to support the church and to participate in its activities.

Organized young people's work in Zion Church dates back to August 8, 1883, the day following formation of the congregation. The young people's group was then known as the Zion Aid society and had for its specific aim the gathering of money for the church building. The young women, according to the constitution of the young people's group, were to assist with sewing while the young men were to take part on the programs, which consisted principally of talks, debates and discussions. Gustaf Peterson was elected the first president.

Already in January, 1884, the membership was 87, while the income the first four months amounted to \$487.00. For some reason or other interest in the society died out in 1885, so that on February 10, 1886, a new organization was formed. This was called the Earnest Workers. J. D. Carlson was elected president.

On August 8, 1888, the young people named a committee of three to raise funds for a pipe organ. This is the first of many distinct projects which have been undertaken by the young people, who throughout the fifty years of Zion Church history have in numerous instances been among the first to sense needs of the congregation and to take steps to raise money for them.

During 1892, the young people's society started a fund for erection of a steeple for the church. The society also bought a piano for the church that year.

The designation of "Luther League" for the young people's society is mentioned for the first time in the church records in the minutes of the annual congregational meeting January 1, 1897. The society the previous year had paid for repairs in the basement. At a bazar in 1892, it had raised \$838.79. A membership roll of 93 in 1896 had been reduced to 42 in 1898 with the result that the membership roll was abolished and all young people of the congregation were considered as members.

This gave new life to the group, which in 1900 installed electric lights in the church and turned over \$250.00 to the general church treasury. Electric light fixtures were purchased by the Luther League in 1901. The sum of \$500.00 also was paid into the church treasury.

One project after another was undertaken by the young people. In 1902, they purchased 300 chairs for the balcony; in 1903, their offer to redecorate the church was accepted. At the congregational meeting on January 1, 1907, the Luther League asked permission to start a fund for the erection of a parsonage. This was granted and in 1908, the Luther League sponsored ten concerts to raise money for the fund. In 1914, the Luther League paid \$569.00 for repair and redecoration of the church parlors. In 1920 the Luther League paid \$525.00 for the two oil paintings now on either side of the altar in the church auditorium.

Recognizing the need for a new organ, the Luther League in 1924 started a fund for the purchase of such organ. More than \$7,500.00 was raised among the young people alone so that by 1927 a new organ was purchased and installed. Since then, the league has installed new light fixtures throughout the entire church.

The Zion Junior Luther League was organized in 1923. Back in 1913 a junior group was formed from among the last few confirmation classes at that time. This society had its existence for a number of years.

Thus is the splendid record of the Luther League of Zion Church. What is more significant, however, than the record of achievements is the humble, self-sacrificing loyal spirit in which all the activities of the Luther League have been carried out. Not only to itself and to its church is its membership loyal but also to the district and conference Luther League organizations. If appealed to, the Zion young people can always be depended upon to respond.

It is only to be regretted that more of the large classes of young people who have been confirmed at Zion have not been prevailed upon to affiliate with



the Luther League. Upon the Luther League is placed the responsibility of winning and keeping faithful to the church and Christ the young men and young women who pass through our Sunday schools and are confirmed by our pastors.

The Luther League program, simply stated, is to keep young people faithful to Christ and His church and to win for Christ those who have not yet accepted Him as their Saviour. The Luther League must always be an ally of the church in its program.

### THE BETHANY SOCIETY

Compassion for the sick and poor brought about organization of the Bethany Society in 1904. The original group consisted of young women who, inspired by God's Word, banded together to be of service to those in need. To the present year, the original aim of the society has remained unchanged and hundreds of good deeds are to the credit of the group.

Not less than half, sometimes more, of the society's income has been used to relieve suffering and need. The other part has been turned over to the congregation or used for improvement on the church property.

The outstanding event annually is the stocking festival in November, at which time gifts of stockings and money for children at the orphanage in Joliet are received. The origin of this stocking festival dates back to 1919, when the first such event was held to supplant the annual "harvest" sale. The first stocking shower netted 216 pairs of stockings for the Joliet orphanage. Since then, the festival has netted about 200 pairs annually. In addition to this service, the society at Christmas time has rendered financial aid to poor families.

Wishing to enlarge its membership, the Bethany Society on Jan. 31, 1912, decided to invite all the young women of the church to join the organization, whose name was changed to "The Young Ladies' Endeavor." This was done and the Bethany group merged its identity in the new society. Its aim remained the same. This group took an active part during the World War in the Patriotic League and in Red Cross work.

On Feb. 12, 1920, the group voted to change back to its original name, the Bethany Society, by which name it remains known today. At the present time, the society has no membership roll, but meetings are held once a month in connection with the Swedish mid-week service. Their entire income in recent years has been used for charity.



THE DORCAS SOCIETY

## THE DORCAS SOCIETY

"Dorcas is the organization which always pulls the heaviest load." This statement is found in the annual report of the Rev. G. E. Hemdahl given January 1, 1917.

Even during the recent trying years of financial depression, the Dorcas society has retained its membership and has been of great financial assistance to the congregation. Burdened with the obligation undertaken in 1931 of financing the installation of a new altar and the remodeling of the church necessary for such a change of the interior, the society has already paid off every cent of the debt, amounting approximately to \$5,000.00, and is again ready to render direct financial aid to the congregation.

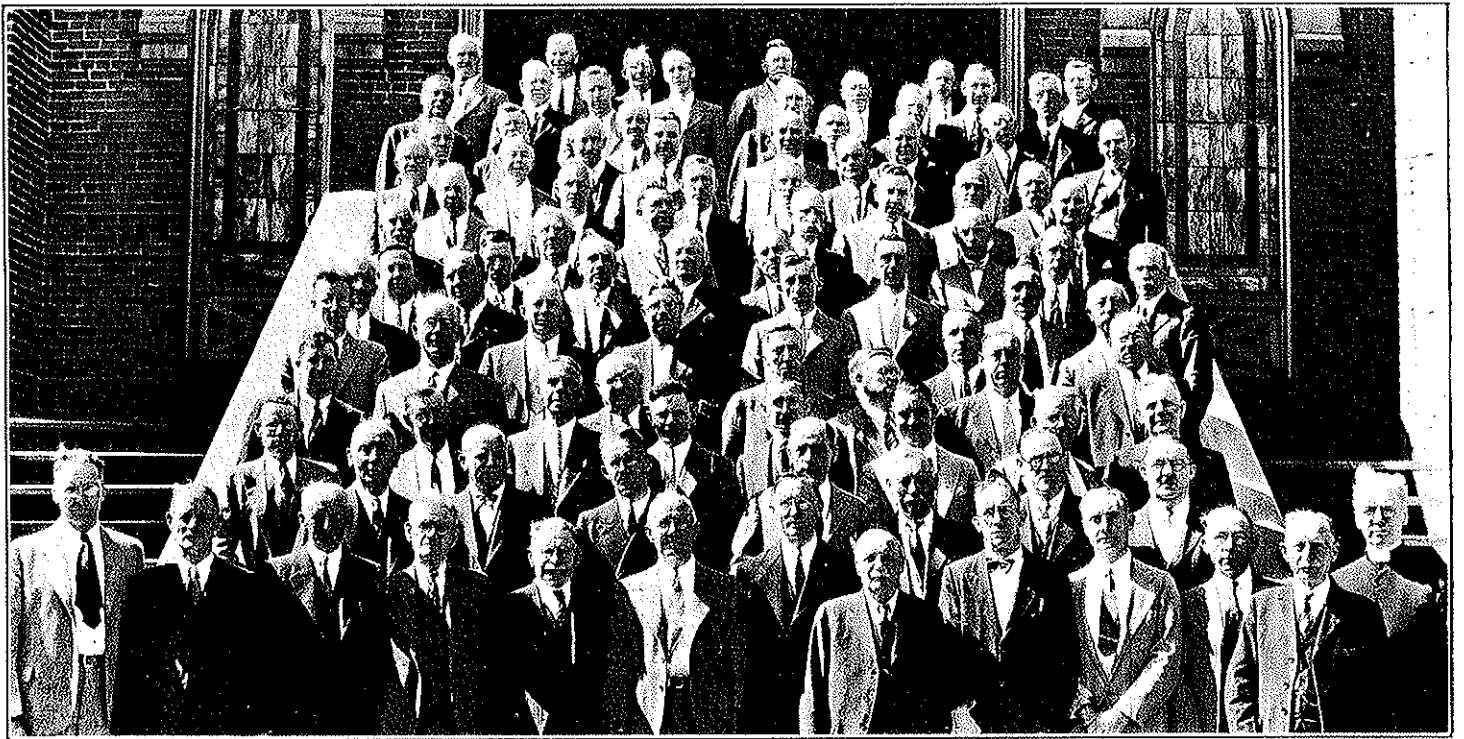
Since early in the pastorate of Dr. Carl Solomonson, a distinct adjunct of the Dorcas society have been the "circles," groups of ten to fourteen women, which strive throughout the year to be of financial aid to the parent organization. Twenty-three such "circles" are in existence at the present time. They meet monthly in the homes of members. Even in 1932, these circles reported an income of \$1,767.89.

Although an earlier women's organization, known only as the "sewing society," was in existence almost from the start of the congregation, the Zion Ladies' Aid society was organized during 1894 at the request of the church board. Its aim was specifically "to assist the congregation in gathering money for its needs." The first meeting was held August 9, 1894, with forty-three charter members. In the first five months, the income of the society was \$59.95, of which \$52.00 was turned over to the congregation.

The name Dorcas, as applied to the Ladies' Aid society, is mentioned for the first time in the pastor's annual report of January 1, 1897. By 1901, the Dorcas had attained a membership of 100 women. The income that year was \$437.68. By the end of 1902, the membership had increased to 150. It did not surpass the 200-mark until 1911. Since then the society has not only maintained its numerical strength but has increased its membership to 255 in 1933. In addition, many women affiliated with the circles are not counted on the membership roll of the society.

The Dorcas has always turned over the greater part of its funds for use by the congregation. In addition, however, the society has used a set portion of its income for charitable purposes. For many years it gave \$150.00 annually to the Deaconess institute at Omaha. Other institutions of the synod and city have also been remembered with liberal gifts.

Without the Dorcas society, the congregation many times in its history would have faced a financial crisis. By the unswerving devotion and aid of the women, such a crisis has always been averted.



ZION LUTHERAN BROTHERHOOD

### THE ZION LUTHERAN BROTHERHOOD

The Zion Lutheran Brotherhood this year celebrated its twentieth anniversary. First organized in 1913, the men's organization has had a continuous existence since. Affiliated with the group are about one hundred men.

In its twentieth anniversary year, the Brotherhood is showing signs of renewed vigor with the organization of guilds which are to be to the parent organization what the circles are to the Dorcas Society and what the clubs are to the Daughters of Zion. The experiment is bold for a men's group but is deserving of success.

In every guild is a group of ten to fifteen men banded together for closer fellowship and for the study of problems of the church. There are eight such groups now organized or in the process of organization under the direction of the Zion Brotherhood. They meet once a month in the homes of members.

The Brotherhood meets monthly in the church for a program of spiritual or educational benefit. Once a year, usually, it sponsors a banquet, quite often a father and son affair. The first banquet was held in November, 1914. After the World War, the Brotherhood sponsored a "homecoming" banquet for all the Zion men who had served in the army and navy.

For years, the Zion Brotherhood has sponsored a men's chorus. It was the Brotherhood which paid for the lots in Rock View upon which the Tabor Lutheran church stands. Almost every year it has contributed to the financial needs of the church. Its income every year for the month of December has been used for charity.

But long before the Zion Brotherhood was organized, men's groups had been active for shorter or longer intervals in the congregation. In the pastor's report for 1887, mention is made of a men's society which had been meeting monthly. Its purpose was to help pay off the church debt.



GROUP OF USHERS AT ZION, 1933

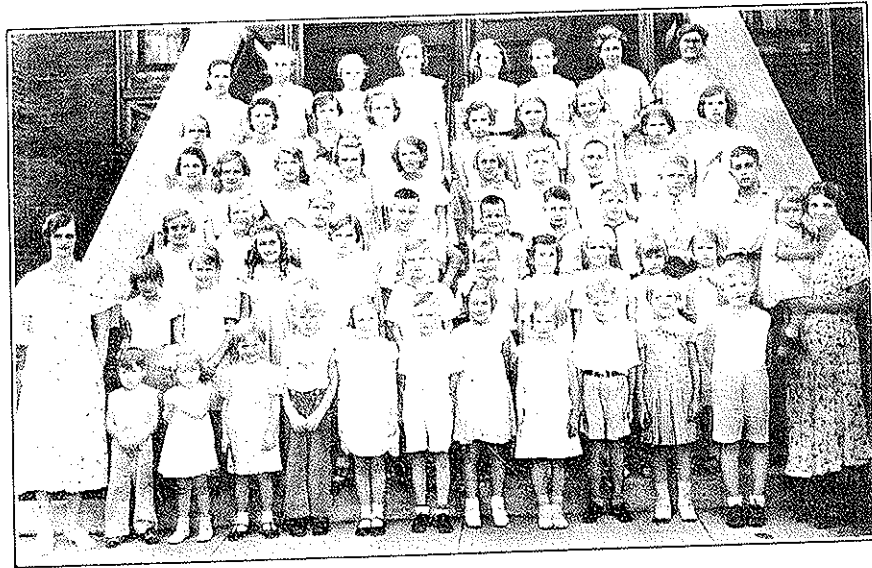


DAUGHTERS OF ZION

### MISSIONARY SOCIETIES IN ZION CHURCH

Missions, both home and foreign, have always found a warm and sympathetic heart in Zion.

Back in the early 'nineties, the India Mission society was organized as the forerunner of the present Woman's Missionary Society. It met monthly and a report from those years indicates that the women at their meetings engaged in handiwork while one member read aloud from some worthwhile and interesting book. On January 2, 1893, this society reported it had raised \$60.70



ZION JUNIOR MISSION BAND

for missions in India and had also collected old clothes. It set as its 1893 project the furnishing of a room in the Children's home at Joliet.

In 1896, Mrs. J. A. Eckstrom, wife of the pastor, started in her Sunday school class to gather money to pay for the salary of a missionary on our field in India. Three years later the entire Sunday school took up the work.

Interest thus aroused in missions caused Mrs. Eckstrom to organize in Zion a Woman's Missionary society, of which she was elected the first president. It met monthly in homes of members. When Mrs. Eckstrom moved with her husband to Worcester, Mass., she was instrumental in organizing a similar Woman's Missionary society there. She also became the first president of that society.

Quietly and unassumingly for nearly thirty-five years, the Zion Woman's Missionary society, now affiliated with the Augustana Woman's Missionary Society, has aroused interest in missions among Zion church members and raised funds with which the church has carried the Gospel of Christ far and wide. Meetings are held monthly at the church. Programs have as their aim that of imparting missionary education and inspiration.

In March of 1914 a Mission band was organized for younger and older girls. This has since become the Junior Missionary society, which has boys and girls among its members. It, too, works for the cause of missions and instills in the children the spirit of missionary interest and giving.

Back in 1907, a forerunner of the Junior Missionary society was organized in Zion. This group of young girls was called "Mission Friends." In a single year, \$44.00 was sent to Porto Rico and \$35.00 to India.

#### DAUGHTERS OF ZION

As the Zion congregation celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, the Daughters of Zion this year observes its tenth anniversary of organized endeavor.

The Daughters of Zion is a unique organization that has been greatly responsible for holding together the large number of girls confirmed annually in Zion Church. It serves as a clearing house and a centripetal force for twelve smaller organizations or clubs of Zion girls. Whenever a class has been confirmed in recent years, the girls in that class have secured an adviser in an older person and have organized a club.

Thus, there now exists the following clubs of this nature: Willing Workers; Dava Sahayam; Semper Fidelis; Sunshine circle; Happy Helping Hands; Ever-Ready Girls; Alpha; Fidelity; Betty Nilsson; Naomi Girls; LOA Girls; Lydia Rohlin; and the 1933 class of girls who are just being organized. They meet monthly in the homes of members.

All these groups with their members are affiliated with the Daughters of Zion, which sponsors a spiritual or missionary program every other month at the church. In enterprise and affiliation, the Daughters of Zion is the young women's missionary society of the congregation. Most of the girls pay dues to the Augustana Woman's Missionary Society. Missionary projects are carried on both by the clubs and the Daughters of Zion for the assistance of missionaries on the foreign fields.



## ATHLETICS IN ZION CHURCH

Athletics for the young men of Zion church have been recognized semiofficially since before the World War, but only since about four years ago has the congregation at its annual meetings officially elected an athletic director.

Almost since athletics came into favor in Zion church, the leader and director has been Evar Peterson. When the position of athletic director was created by the congregation, Mr. Peterson was named to the position without opposition. For the past two years he has been assisted by Ernest Carlson.



EVAR PETERSON

Approximately sixty young men of the church participate in the fall and winter in a church basketball league and in the summer a playground baseball league. Six to eight teams compete against each other in the two sports. Twice a year the group sponsors a banquet for the athletes, at which time the champion team is awarded with suitable trophies or mementos.

## BRIEF ITEMS

- Aug. 7, 1883—Congregation organized.
- Sept. 7, 1883—Lot selected for erection of church.
- July 1, 1884—Rev. C. G. Lundell became first pastor.
- July 20, 1884—Corner stone of church laid.
- Sept. 7, 1884—First service held in church basement.
- Oct. 19, 1884—Basement dedicated.
- Oct. 11, 1885—Completed church dedicated.
- July 1, 1888—Rev. S. G. Ohman preached first sermon as pastor of Zion church.
- 1892—The first piano for church was bought.
- 1894—Ladies' Aid organized.
- March 11, 1896—Church bell dedicated. Donated by Jonas Hakanson.
- 1900—Electric lights installed in church by Luther League.
- Jan. 1, 1902—Started drive for \$5,000 to pay church debt.
- Nov. 9, 1902—Church debt paid in full. Special observance on Thanksgiving day, 1902.
- 1903—Balcony built.
- 1904—Bethany club organized to aid sick and poor.
- 1905—Church secured services of Sister Anna Carlson as deaconess.

- 1906—Lot south of church purchased.
- Jan. 1, 1907—Trustees named committee to raise money for a parsonage.
- 1909—The stone steps were built in front of the church.
- 1910—Parsonage built.
- Jan. 1, 1910—John Mellberg elected janitor.
- Feb. 6, 1912—Rev. N. P. Sjöstrom died.
- Jan. 2, 1913—Decided to hold English service last Sunday every month.
- July 8, 1913—Roof of church tower blown off by storm.
- July 16, 1913—Congregation voted to erect steeple.
- 1913—Zion Brotherhood organized.
- 1914—Electric lights were installed in the dining room of the church.
- March, 1914—Girls' Mission band started.
- Jan. 1, 1915—Women have first opportunity to vote at congregational meeting.
- Jan. 27, 1915—Decided to install motor to pump organ.
- 1915—The garage on parsonage lot was built.
- June, 1916—Church steeple hit by lightning.
- Jan. 1, 1917—Congregation voted to support Sunday school work at Rock View. Sunday school started immediately at 14th Avenue and 20th Street.
- Feb. 9, 1919—Rev. Carl Solomonson preached his first sermon at Zion.
- 1919—Cradle roll organized.
- Jan. 1, 1920—Envelope finance system voted by congregation. System adopted for use Jan. 1, 1921.
- March 1, 1922—Double morning service started: Sunday school, 9:30 A.M.; English service, 10 A.M.; and Swedish service, 10:45 A.M. Evening services were in Swedish.
- 1922—Baptismal font still in use donated by Charles Segurd and Martin Rosene.
- Oct. 22, 1923—Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Sweden guest at Zion.
- 1923—Daughters of Zion organized; also Junior Luther League.
- April 8, 1925—Congregation voted to give Rock View Sunday school and chapel to Tabor Lutheran church.
- Jan. 27, 1926—The congregation adopted the 1915 constitution.
- Oct. 7, 1927—Dedication of new Zion organ, paid for by Luther League.
- Feb. 5, 1928—Death of Dr. Carl Solomonson.
- Nov. 8, 1928—Rev. E. G. Knock and family arrived from Denver.
- Nov. 3, 1929—The Sunday school building was dedicated.
- May 10, 1931—The new altar was dedicated.

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## GREETINGS FROM FORMER PASTORS

FROM DR. S. G. OHMAN

Beloved in the Lord:

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel *from the first day until now*, being confident of this very thing that he which hath begun a good work in you *will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*. Phil. 1. 3-6.

With these precious words of the apostle Paul I wish to greet you, members of the Zion Lutheran Church, upon your 50th anniversary as an organized body of Christ. To become a Christian is great, to remain a Christian is greater. Paul thanked God for both with reference to the Christians at Philippi. He expressed a sentiment to the contrary in his letter to the Galatians. "I marvel that ye are *so quickly removing from him* that called you *in the grace of Christ* unto a different gospel." Gal. 1. 6. We seriously deplore every case of "kid-napping" and we brand it as a most devilish crime. But I am afraid that the devil has been too prosperous in his cruel business of "kid-napping" the children of God, removing them from the grace of Christ. In this business of his there are many smart agents employed, and they are all busy. That's why God is losing so many of His children. It's a grievous loss. Thank God for every one who has been kept in the grace of Christ from the first day until now. Let us hope that there are many of these in the Zion Lutheran Church.

Fifty years do not seem long to us looking backwards. Such a period of time might, nevertheless, be pregnant with important events and great accomplishments. This can truly be applied upon the history of your church. She came into existence under rather peculiar circumstances. The mother church, the First Lutheran, gave a forced birth to a big child, and certain controversies made that birth a very severe and painful one. At first the child was not expected to live, devoid of all nourishment by its mother and her denominational connection. However, as new blood was gradually infused into its body and some bad blood was later tapped out, this child grew and developed wonderfully in grace and wisdom of God. We cannot expect much of a young child, but it knows enough to *cry*, anyway, and so your church was crying, that is,

a *praying* church from her initial period. The Gospel of Christ and His sacraments became more and more her fountain of strength.

I am not to write the history of your beloved Zion. Just a few recollections.—Rev. C. G. Lundell was your first pastor, a very sincere and lovable man. I became his successor 1888 having received twice your call shortly before my ordination to the ministry on the 24th of June. Your first call I refused simply because I considered myself too young and inexperienced to be the pastor of a flock which my predecessor confessed he could not “handle.” However, your second call I accepted after renewed prayer to God and at the advice of my fatherly teacher, Professor Hasselquist. I remained with you for six years, or till June, 1894. You received me very cordially. At the social reception many kind words were spoken to me, both by Rev. L. A. Johnston of the First Lutheran and by members of your Church Board, all pledging a hearty support and coöperation with the new pastor. I particularly remember Andrew Kjellgren, C. F. Anderson, Jonas Håkanson, Jonas Larson, Andrew Borg, Gustaf Person, J. A. Glans, Andr. Rosén, Charles Borg, and other pioneers of those days—men with the spirit of God, deeply interested in the welfare of the Church and in the success of their pastor’s work. Coöperation with such men was both instructive and encouraging. With the exception of a few individuals who subsequently and consequently “kicked” themselves out of the Church because they possessed stronger heels than brains, they all treated me very kindly unto the last, when both the Board and the congregation, at the motion of Deacon Glans, unanimously refused to accept my resignation. It was rather painful to sever the tie which mutual love and confidence had knitted together between flock and shepherd.

My happiest recollection from my work in Zion is above all, how it pleased our dear Lord to answer our humble prayers for a spiritual awakening of our people in Rockford. Similar prayers must have ascended from members of the First Lutheran because the Lord’s answer came to them simultaneously. People flocked in great numbers to our services and prayer meetings, and the Lord’s Spirit worked wonders upon hundreds of souls, young and old. My library room became like a physician’s office where spiritual patients, one after another, were received for advice upon “the one thing needful” and for personal application of the Gospel. We had to call in helpers from the Seminary at Rock Island when the work with the dear souls grew too burdensome for one pastor. Some of you probably will still remember the students Wenner and Cassel. The former returned later as a pastor to Sweden and is yet serving his Lord in one of the churches in Stockholm. I was recently a guest at his home, and we talked then about our happy experiences in Rockford.—There was a certain group of young men won for Christ in those days, and they became very active in the work for Christ and the Church. Some of them

have finished their course and reached the glorious goal above, others are still with you in prayers and labor. No doubt, souls have been saved in your Zion during periods before and after the one now referred to, but such a *general* awakening of our Rockford people may never since have occurred. May God grant it soon again. We all need it.

At the same time I have no confidence in so-called revivals "made up" merely by human endeavors to the glorification of sensational preachers and for the amusement of an excitable audience. Too much show and fabrication, usually no lasting result. There is a difference between the genuine and the false, the real and the imitative, in the spiritual realm as well as in the commercial, though the outward similarity might be very deceiving. It's up to the disciples of Christ to find it out.

Most of my memories from Rockford are of a pleasant nature. They are all dear to my heart, interwoven with my "first love" as a pastor and due to the kindness of my friends. We all err and make mistakes, but as Christ has forgiven us so we should forgive one another. It's now nearly 40 years since I left you, and many changes have naturally taken place during so many years. A large number of your membership and three of your pastors have been transmitted—let us hope—to the Church triumphant, crowned with the victory of life eternal. I have missed many of them at my repeated visits in Rockford, your beautiful city, ever dear to me.

During these festive days of your 50th Jubilee, oh dear Zion, look backward with thanks and praise to our ever-present Lord, our adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ, and look forward with living hope and trust in Him who is with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Faithfully yours,

S. G. OHMAN.

New York City, Sept. 16th, 1933.

FROM DR. JOHN A. ECKSTROM, WORCESTER, MASS.

To the Pastor and Members of the Zion Lutheran Church,  
Rockford, Illinois.

Having been invited by the pastor to send a greeting for your Fiftieth Anniversary Book, I do so with great pleasure. I welcome the opportunity to live over in my mind again my six years of service in your congregation. I welcome the opportunity to send you this greeting of love and fellowship in the Spirit of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

When I came to Zion in November of 1894, the congregation was only eleven years old and I was thirty-two years old, both of us rather young, and

in many ways inexperienced. We worked together until the end of the year 1900 when I went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I stayed until 1905 and then moved to Worcester, Massachusetts. We pastors, especially, sing with Tillman,

“Ready to go, ready to stay, ready my place to fill.  
Ready for service, lowly or great, ready to do His will.”

Rockford and Zion have always been very dear to me. I praise the Lord for expressed friendship to me by Rockford people, both as a student and as a pastor, both in a spiritual and a material way. I appreciate what the friendship of Rockford pastors and Rockford people has meant to me, especially that of Dr. L. A. Johnston. Your present pastor has also been very friendly to me. The same is true of Pastors Lundell, Ohman, Sjostrom, Solomonson, Hemdahl, and other Rockford pastors.

Financial depression and spiritual expression characterizes, at least in part, the condition in Zion during my time of service there. The financial depression was caused in part by political and economic disturbances. The spiritual expression was due in part to the spiritual revival which had just swept over our country. Rockford and Zion were blessed in a wonderful way. This was expressed in splendid attendance at church services, in Sunday school, at prayer meetings, in personal work, and in the sacrificing spirit among the members.

There was also splendid activity in our Church Board, our church choir under the able leadership of our organist, Frithiof Swenson, as well as in our Young People's Society and Dorcas Society. A Young Woman's Missionary Society was organized by Mrs. Christine Eckstrom, which society was probably one of the first of its kind in our Synod. Meetings were held on the last Thursday of each month, to study the blessed cause of missions, and to support a native worker in India.

Church work in those days was rather different from what it is now. In those days Swedish emigrants with a Lutheran background, well trained in catechism and Bible history, came to Rockford in great numbers. The Swedish language was used almost exclusively at our church services. We were, many of us, strangers in a strange land. We needed our Swedish churches. We needed each other. But, while the work may be more difficult now, the church of Jesus Christ, and Zion as a part of it, is marching on, even in our day, and under prevailing conditions, to victory.

It will be a great pleasure for me to celebrate with you the Golden Anniversary of Zion. Let us together praise the Lord for His grace and blessing bestowed upon us. Let us remember with tender gratitude the pastors and members of Zion who have been called home. Let us, who are still in our Master's service, during this Jubilee festival, pray for more faith and strength for life and service in His Name.

Sometimes in our church life as well as in our individual lives, our paths lead us down in deep valleys. But often in times of distress we are brought nearer to God and nearer to each other. At other times our paths lead us over mountains of sunshine, and we are cheered and inspired to glorify our God and to serve Him willingly. Yes—in days of shadow, or in days of sunshine—nearer to God, and nearer to each other.

May your Golden Jubilee be not only a festival of great rejoicing and sincere thanksgiving over what God has done for Zion, but may it also be a festival that will give you inspiration and strength in order to carry on in the future, as in the past, your God-given work in the service of your loving Saviour and His blessed Church.

Yours in Christ and His Church,

Worcester, Massachusetts.

JOHN A. ECKSTROM.

FROM REV. G. E. HEMDAHL, ROCK ISLAND

To the Zion Lutheran Church, Rockford, Illinois.

Dear Congregation:

I surely appreciate the letter received from your good Pastor E. G. Knock, expressing the hope that I would be able to attend your fiftieth anniversary, and also send a greeting for your Anniversary Album. I am sorry, that I am not strong enough to attend, but do hereby send a greeting.

It was in the first part of April, 1912, that I received a pastoral call to Zion. I hesitated a great deal to accept, knowing what demands a congregation the size of Zion would make on a pastor, and also what gifted men I would be requested to succeed. It was with great hesitancy I left Paxton. Since the call came entirely unsolicited, I thought it must have been the guidance of the Lord that led up to it, and in prayerful spirit I accepted it, taking up service after six months, October 1st.

I noticed at once that I was serving a congregation that had been fostered by faithful pastors. A great portion of the congregation had received its spiritual bringing up in such parts of Sweden where the people were very churchly. Names of parishes such as Brålanda, Frändefors, and others of that type, were familiar in the church record.

I was encouraged from the start by faithful church attendance; not only Sunday mornings, but also Sunday evenings and even at mid-week prayer meetings. The communion table was as a rule well attended.

The outstanding days of the church-year in Zion was Christmas day, when the church was filled to overflowing; the communion service on Thursday evening of Holy Week, when Dr. L. G. Abrahamson was often-times invited to

preach the communion sermon; and the third occasion was Thanksgiving Day evening service when we took up the annual offering for the mission. It was an inspiration to see the people coming forward with their missionary boxes, the offering totaling several hundred dollars.

Zion had as a rule a very active Church Board. They were able and willing to serve in calling on sick members, prevailing upon those outside of all church connection to join our congregation, and especially active in our Sunday school work. From the Sunday school we received our large confirmation classes. Faithful and able Sunday school teachers had given these children a good preparation. We hope that most of these are faithful to their confirmation pledge.

During my service in Zion, a Sunday school was organized in that part of the city called Rock View. I had noticed the large number of children there, who had a long distance to church, and consulting one of my deacons, Mr. Oscar Anderson, who lived in that part of the city, he agreed with me that a Sunday school ought to be started there. He offered to supply the meeting-place, an empty store, at a nominal cost. We took up the question with the Church Board, and it was decided to begin at once. We had a large Sunday school in a short time. Later mid-week services were added. This mission developed in a few years into the Tabor congregation, so Tabor can truly be said to be a daughter-church of Zion.

We organized a Swedish Sunday school afternoon Bible class under the leadership of Mr. Alfred Johnson. It became a special meeting place for our Swedish young people, who had no homes in this country. After the Bible study hour they served a light lunch and stayed for evening service. It had a splendid attendance from the start, and I take for granted that it still exists.

The Luther League was very active and always had proper programs. It was a strong factor in the church.

A large chorus of 100 voices was organized, under the efficient leadership of Prof. A. D. Bodfors. They rendered the greater part of the oratorio, "Messiah," once each year successfully, both as far as audience and rendition concerns.

The Ladies' Society was the strongest of the church organizations. Zion has had some excellent church workers among the ladies. It took a long time to read the membership list, and especially the Johnsons. It can truly be said of these ladies that like Mary of Bethany "they did what they could."

The Ladies' Home and Foreign Missionary Society had a great year, when our own Dr. Betty Nilsson, this most devoted missionary spent a furlough with us.

The Brotherhood was organized and had monthly meetings, when the Brotherhood choir usually appeared. Other good numbers were rendered. We had an annual banquet on John Ericsson Day, when some noted speaker would be invited.



The congregation was in good financial condition, considering its size. The first fall we paid our share of the Conference Home Mission debt. Later we raised and paid the debt on the parsonage.

On the thirtieth anniversary of our congregation a severe storm swept over our city and partially wrecked the front of our church. In repairing this, we also built a church spire in accordance to the original drawing of the church, the tower never having been finished. A few years later we remodeled the basement and made it more practical.

The English language was introduced during these years, by having one English Sunday evening service a month.

While we were serving Zion we had many encouragements in word and deed, both from individuals and the church-at-large. Now in our old age we often speak of our pleasant years in Rockford.

We shared many dark days in some homes, and this made such homes dearer to us; and likewise many happy occasions which brought cheer.

May the Lord strengthen your present pastor to hold out in his strenuous work, and may He continue to bless the Zion congregation. May the new generation be faithful to the Lord and follow His guidance, and they will be like their parents, greatly blessed, and be a blessing to others.

Yours in Christ,

Rock Island, Ill.

G. E. HEMDAHL.

## GREETINGS FROM SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ZION

FROM REV. C. J. FRANZEN, EAST ORANGE, N. J.

To the pastor, and the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Zion Church, Rockford, Ill., upon their celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Zion Church,

Greetings and congratulations:

*"Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* I Cor. 15. 57.

Dear friends in Christ our Saviour!

Nothing could be more agreeable to me than to be present with you and participate in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of our church. My reason for expressing this sentiment is well understood.



REV. C. J. FRANZEN

Zion is my home church. The very name "home church" has a special significance to all of us who are by circumstances compelled to sever our contact with the church for any specific length of time. We are the children who have gone out from our parental homes, and from our spiritual home, and have established our own, and adopted the church of our present habitat. Any and all prospects of a visit at the old home removes the sense of separation and fills the heart with joy.

Most, if not all of my earlier Christian experiences are connected with Zion, its pastors, people and work. The home-like atmosphere, so characteristic of Zion, made a profound impression on me. The strict adherence to the old truths, and approved by centuries, and the fellowship of true believers have made Zion a real spiritual home. To live through these experiences again, as it were, to refresh the memory of associations and contacts of years gone by, and once more feel that spiritual warmth which radiates from the children of God, and sets the soul on fire, would be exceedingly pleasant, and what is more, it would be most beneficial.

It has been my privilege to serve Zion in the capacity of school teacher, and assistant to the pastor. The summer months of 1916-1917 will always be held in grateful memory. The one who profited the most by this venture was the teacher who learned to know and appreciate the worth of the congregation. He also discovered that the home church is very sympathetic and generous towards its school teachers. The congregation did not take offence by reason of neither my age nor membership, or that I lacked a great deal of practical experience as a preacher, but to the contrary by its attitude and faithful attendance made the otherwise strenuous work pleasant and easy.

Zion has accomplished much, and may well look back upon the fifty years of its existence with such pride as befits a Christian church. Not in words boastful of self, but in words of thanksgiving and praise to God who has guided the way, supplied the strength and courage to carry on.

A fiftieth anniversary naturally invites a look into the past. It is a summary of what has been achieved, and an inventory of the stock on hand after half a century's continuation in the conduct of God's business. It also invites a forward look. The future is just a step ahead. Whatever the future has in store is closely connected with the past. It is natural to rejoice over the victories already won, but there are still more to be won, and regardless of past experiences, human nature is so constituted that it will look forward to the future, to the unknown, with hesitation, misgivings and doubt. First when God's purpose has become our very own can we enter into harmony with the will of God and with Christ our Saviour who will lead us on to victory. To him be honor and glory for ever. Amen. Yours in Christ,

C. J. FRANZEN.

FROM REV. LINUS A. HERMAN, ALBERT CITY, IOWA

To the Zion Lutheran Church, Rockford, Illinois.

Greetings!

*"Let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."* Mt. 5. 16.

Your kind invitation, through your pastor, to attend your fiftieth anniversary celebration, October 18—22, 1933, gave me much joy, not merely because of the honor you thereby bestowed on me as a former member, but chiefly because of the faith in God which you manifest by arranging a great spiritual feast in these times of adverse economic conditions, thus proclaiming very effectively that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" Ps. 46. 1.

While men nowadays are groping about in darkness, trying to find a way out from the troubles that beset them, you come forward with banners of victory and songs of thanksgiving and praise to God for his salvation from sin and destruction, from hopelessness and uncertainty. You possess the means that can cure the world of its ills; you have tried them and found them efficacious, and now you step forth rejoicingly to announce your great discovery of a weary laden humanity. It is your privilege and your duty to do so.

This is no time for the Church to retrench and retreat, awaiting a more opportune time for making a grand offensive against the forces of unbelief and despair. "Now," if ever, "is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation." Therefore, "Onward, Christian Soldiers, Marching as to war, With the Cross of Jesus Going on before."

Stand forth, O Zion Church, and sing your jubilant songs of thanksgiving to God for His lovingkindness and His mercy during the past fifty years in your history! And "let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

I regret that I can not be with you in person, but I rejoice with you over the victories already won through our Lord Jesus Christ, and over the opportunities that are yours of telling "the old, old story of Jesus and His love" to this time and generation.

Faithfully yours,

LINUS A. HERMAN.



REV. L. A. HERMAN

## FROM REV. G. M. THIMELL, ST. PAUL, MINN.

It is with real pleasure that I send a greeting to "My Home Church" on its fiftieth anniversary. In looking back and estimating the influences that wrought, in the hands of God, the greatest and deepest impressions on my soul I find that there were two: my beloved parents and the Zion Lutheran Church. It was at my mother's knee that I learnt to know of Christ's wonderful love and His sacrificial death. It was in the Zion Church, during an evening service, when I was about six years old, that I first heard God's definite call to enter the holy ministry. Pastor Ohman was preaching that evening. It is with a thankful heart that I remember and can now appreciate the spiritual nurture I was given in the Zion Sunday school, the only Sunday school that I ever attended as a child. I no doubt had several teachers, but there are three that I remember with special gratitude. They were Mr. John Dahlen, Mr. John Peel, and a Mrs. Larson, whose first name I cannot now recall. Pastor J. A. Eckstrom was my confirmation pastor and instructor and he has always occupied a large and warm place in my heart. Pastor N. P. Sjostrom gave me much valuable help and encouragement when I left to take up my studies at Rock Island. I spent one summer in Zion working under the valued tutelage of pastor G. E. Hemdahl. But I must not continue any further with my reminiscences.



REV. G. M. THIMELL

As a pastor I would urge upon all the readers of this greeting a continued and deeper study of God's Word. Have you, dear reader, made use of the wonderful riches of John 10. 10, where Jesus says, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." I wonder if you appreciate the rich blessings that are offered to you in the words "and may have it abundantly." There are many Christians who have never understood what Christ offers in these words.

In these words Christ tells us that He does not want us to be limping, halting, ailing, blue, down-hearted, discouraged, invalid or semi-invalid Christians. He tells us that He wants us to be healthy, strong, robust, cheerful, joyful and happy Christians. Christians that are full of life vigor and energy; Christians that can have such an assurance as the apostle Paul in Romans 8. 31-39. Have you temptations? Jesus would have you not only to see and know the same but to have abundant strength to resist and to conquer. Have you trials? Do you say, half-heartedly, despairingly, "I suppose it is for my

best, but why this should come to me I don't know." Jesus would give to you patience, perseverance and that full faith and confidence that says with Paul, "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good." Has God called you to a task? In God's employment program no one is left out. He has an important task for each and every one. Sometimes we think that the task is too hard, too difficult. But not so. For every task that God gives He also provides the necessities. Note that He says "Abundant Life," not abundant strength, or abundant faith, or abundant love, etc. By saying "abundant life" He wishes to tell us that He will give unto us that Life which will provide us with whatever we are in need of, be that what it may. May Jesus become and be for you and unto you your "Abundant Life."

St. Paul, Minn.

G. M. THIMELL.

FROM REV. ENOCH N. SANDEEN, SEATTLE, WASH.

I was one of those bashful boys from across the water. Alone I came to Rockford and lonely I sat down wondering what to do next. The Lutheran Church was dear to me from childhood. Why not go to church! I did. Sunday morning—two days after my arrival—I found myself at Zion. On that day my certificate from home was in the hands of that beloved pastor, Nels Sjostrom. What a noble soul he was and how I adored him! In his announcements he wished to have volunteers for singing in the junior choir the following Tuesday. On Tuesday evening I sat in the last bench in the basement, waiting, trembling, ready to run.



REV. ENOCH SANDEEN

At that moment a large but soft and paternal hand came down upon my shoulder and a musical voice asked me: "Well, who are you, young man?" It was A. D. Bodfors, one of the great men to whom I owe two-thirds of what I am. One more look at me and again he spoke: "You must go to school. Augustana for you. There is something in you that points that way." It was the case of the dwarf being lifted on the shoulders of the giant—I could see greater visions and dream greater dreams. And I went. May God who knows all things bless all the lovely things that this friend and other friends have done for me.

Yes, I remember Eklund, Stark, Kullberg, Grant—those were men of oak, I thought. They helped to make life interesting and beautiful. And then there was an old lady whose smile brought a bit of God into the heart . . .

Today we are separated by two thousand miles. And still Zion is as dear

to me as ever. It remains the spiritual home. To it I look back with gratitude. To it I can turn once more and say: God was good when He led me to you!

May God richly bless you of Zion! May He do this for the sake of one who is praying for Zion!

Yours in Jesus Christ,  
 ENOCH SANDEEN.

FROM REV. CECIL G. JOHNSON, PONTIAC, MICH.

As one of the sons of Zion I would on this very joyous occasion bring to you a greeting from the precious Word of God. In Psalm 48 verses 10 and 11 we read these words, "According to Thy name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth: Thy right hand is full of righteousness. Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments." How fittingly true these words become when we think of the history of Zion! I am thinking of her history from the point of view of one who has gone out from Zion with the right hand of God full of righteousness. To the ends of the earth is literally true when we think of Zion's missionaries on the foreign fields, and her sons spreading the gracious judgments of God in home land fields. Zion has reason to rejoice that she by the grace of God has contributed so many of the Lord's laborers to the fields already whitening unto harvest. As one of her sons I rejoice with Zion and thank God that in the days of my infancy and youth she cradled me and fed me, sowing the seeds which finally grew and bore fruit unto eternal life. May God bless Zion today, may He bless the memories of all the faithful workers in Zion in past years, and may He bless all her sons and daughters who have gone out from the shadow of her wings to bring the blessed Gospel of Peace to the far corners of the earth. May God bless the Zion of the future, and may it be ever true that Zion brings to men the right hand of God full of righteousness and the true and gracious judgments of our God.

Pontiac, Mich.



REV. CECIL JOHNSON

CECIL G. JOHNSON.

## FROM DR. BETTY A. NILSSON, RAJAHMUNDRY, INDIA

Dear friends in Zion!

*Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King!*  
Ps. 149. 2. This is the year of jubilee. This is a time to rejoice. God's children have reason to be happy and Jesus has spoken to us that His joy may remain in us and that our joy may be full. I also rejoice with you out here and say with Paul, "I thank God upon every remembrance of you, always in every supplication of mine for you all making my request with joy for your *fellowship in the gospel.*"

I thank God for the spiritual home and fellowship I have found in Zion. I thank God for the many Christian friends who pray for our work in India. Your prayers have been heard. A multitude numbering 160,000 have accepted Christ in our Lutheran mission in India. Just think of their voices blending with ours this beautiful Sunday in singing praises to our God and Father in heaven! Bow your hearts unto God and make intercession for them again that they may be kept in the faith! Be not weary in well doing, but continue to help us that the children may get a Christian education, that the sick may be healed, that the weak and ignorant may be taught, admonished and strengthened. The work is not in vain in the Lord. There are still millions of unsaved who have not been touched by the gospel.

One more missionary, Miss Pauline Whitteker, has just been called from our missionary circle to join the church triumphant. Who will take her place? Who will shepherd the 200 little girls in the boarding school who have lost a loving, sympathetic teacher-mother? Who will guide the Bible women in the Samalkot district now and inspire them to draw the non-Christians into the fold by living and teaching Christ in us, the hope of glory?

I thank God when I think of the Daughters of Zion, the mission society and the juniors and the work they are doing out here in India by helping to pay missionaries' salaries, supporting scholarships and upholding us with their prayers. The Bible woman and other proteges of Zion send you their greetings. They also thank God for you.

I thank God and rejoice for the many dear friends in Zion who have gone to join the great white throng. In that throng are also thousands from India, a great multitude which no man could number of Sweden, America, India, China, Africa, yes, *all nations* and kindred and people and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. And, members of Zion, are you not glad that you have had



DR. BETTY NILSSON

a share in sending the gospel to some of these? Are you not going to continue to show your joy and gratitude by making even greater sacrifices in giving and praying and working that God's kingdom may come, and that many more be won for our King? Yes, let the children of Zion, little and big, be joyful in their King.

O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling,  
To tell to all the world that God is Light;  
That He who made all nations is not willing  
One sould should perish, lost in shades of night.

Give of thy sons to bear the message glorious;  
Give of thy wealth to speed them on their way;  
Pour out thy soul for them in prayer victorious,  
And haste the coming of the glorious day.

Publish glad tidings; tidings of peace;  
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.

Hymnal 376.

Yours in Christian love and fellowship,

BETTY A. NILSSON.

#### MISS LYDIA ROHLIN

Missionary in Africa 1928-1933.

Miss Rohlin sailed from America Oct. 6th, 1928, to London where she spent six months studying tropical diseases and the African language. Four years of happy service was rendered on our Augustana field in the Tanganyika Territory, East Africa. Miss Rohlin has felt a special call to minister to the lepers. When she returns to Africa it is her desire to devote herself to leper work. She can truly say: "Ye did not choose me, but I have chosen you and appointed you that ye shall go and bear fruit, and that your fruit shall abide." John 15. 16. Our Zion Church is glad to have had the privilege of sending one of its members with the gospel to the people in the dark continent. Miss Rohlin came home on her furlough in April, 1933.



MISS LYDIA ROHLIN