

*125th
ANNIVERSARY
1882-2007*



*ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
WARNER, SD*

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF JACK ESKE



This history of St. John Lutheran Church of Warner is dedicated to Jack Eske, the only son of the congregation who became an Ordained Pastor. He was ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament in 1959, and he continued to spread the Word throughout his life, even after his retirement.

Jack celebrated with us in times of joy and comforted us in times of tragedy. He anticipated being with us for our 125th Anniversary Celebration, but this was not to be, as Jack passed into the greater presence of God on December 13, 2006.

God bless Jack's memory among us!

HISTORY OF ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED YEARS: 1882 – 1982

In the late summer of 1882, Pastor David Lebahn was sent via the Milwaukee Railroad by the Lutheran Synod of Iowa to this part of the Dakota Territory to study the possibilities of organizing Lutheran congregations. He suggested that a regular pastor was needed, as there were sufficient families in the Warner and Aberdeen vicinities to warrant consideration. Soon thereafter, the congregation of German Lutherans was organized. The men who signed the organization papers and who joined their families in becoming the Charter Members were: P. Martin, E. Martin, H. Ihde, F. Troge, A. Rehfeld, C. Rehfeld Sr., W. Froehlich, W. Wobick, W. Gubin, W. Fuhrman, W. Sauck, and W. Rappe.

The first worship service was conducted in the public school house in Warner. Since the pastor could be with the flock only every few weeks, it was very difficult to keep the group together. By preaching several times every Sunday and two or three times on week days, Pastor Lebahn, with the assistance of F. Preu, a young pastor, was able to serve as many as twenty-eight different congregations and groups. Pastor Preu had been here without an official call to help Pastor Lebahn in his work.



Warner School-where first church services were held

The Warner congregation lost ground about as fast as it was gained. By 1885, when Pastor F. Preu was officially called to serve these many groups, the membership had dropped to about the same number as when it was founded. However, it was still the conviction of the Warner Lutherans that the field would be far more encouraging if the pastor could live closer to his people. So, a parsonage was built just outside the Warner city limits near the site of the present cemetery. Pastor Preu lived in this parsonage until 1893.

Also in 1882, very soon after the Warner congregation organized, a few of the members went to Aberdeen on the

occasion of that congregation's organization. The Warner men hoped that by the formation of a two-point parish set-up, the two congregations could afford to support a full-time pastor. However, this was not the case, and both congregations found the going very difficult because of the need of a regular pastor and regular worship services.

Discouraging as it was, the Warner Lutherans did not lose their courage. It was a great day for them when on May 6, 1889, they drew up their first Articles of Incorporation. The name that was chosen was the Evangelical Lutheran St. John Congregation of Warner, Dakota Territory. Signatures appearing on these Articles of Incorporation are: Pastor F. Preu, chairman; August Richert; Herman Froehlich; Fred Troge; and Wilhelm Rehfeld.

The next four years found the Warner congregation growing in spirit and in numbers. Being finally incorporated gave the members the added zeal they were longing for, and by the making of new contacts in the community, the membership increased. Also, having their pastor living so close to them kept them interested and active. Additional hope was given when the Synod Mission Board announced in 1893 that Warner and Aberdeen should be served by one pastor, as neither was large enough to support a pastor alone. Combined, however, they were large enough to have a man who did not have to divide his time among fifteen or twenty places. This was good news!

Then came the bad news! Pastor Preu was accepting a call to Janesboro, Illinois. This was still in 1893. In a matter of a very few weeks, F. Walther, the new pastor the congregations had called, arrived to take up his work. Very little is recorded about his stay, which was only for a period of several months. In 1894, Pastor J. Schaff came to Aberdeen with the intention of working also in Warner. However, he found the parish duties too difficult for his failing health, and he left in the same year. No pastor served either congregation from 1894 to 1896.

Pastor Wunderlich was the first to enter the sacred rites and pastoral services in a permanent church record. This record, all in beautiful German handwriting, gives evidence that there were seventy-five members belonging to the St. John Lutheran congregation by 1898. The bad news was that the pastor was leaving for another charge. Pastor Wunderlich served the Warner congregation during one of her darkest years.

During the remainder of 1898, the parsonage in Warner was occupied by two ministerial students who served consecutively, having been sent out by the Synod to give some bit of relief to the strained conditions. But the people had reached the point of no return both spiritually and financially. Late in 1898, the Warner congregation disbanded. The corporation was discontinued and the

parsonage sold to Ferdinand Kienow, who moved it to his farm two miles west of Warner.

Of major importance is the fact that from 1898 until 1901, Pastor F. J. Graeber and other Missouri Synod Lutheran men brought the saving Word to the Lutheran people of Warner. Sometimes the pastors drove in to Warner, and sometimes the people drove out to the Missouri Lutheran Church in Highland Township, seven miles west of town. This kept at least the faithful nucleus from joining other denominations or falling away altogether.

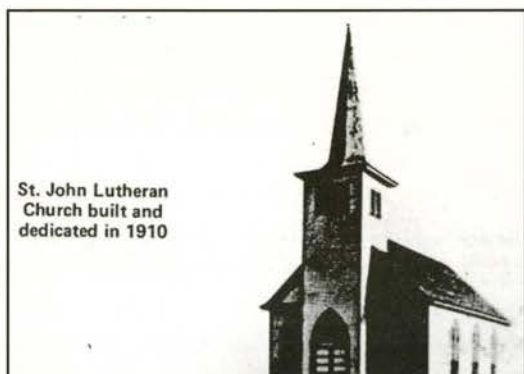
In 1901, an official call was sent by the Zion Lutheran congregation of Aberdeen to Pastor J. Knoll. His interest in the Lutheran people at Warner also rekindled the fire of hope in their hearts. He held preaching services in Warner whenever it was convenient.

The nucleus at Warner was still convinced that there was a need for a Lutheran Church here, and they did all they could to show Pastor Knoll the interest and respect he deserved whenever he found it possible to serve them. His work continued until 1908.

The prayers and the hopeful determination of the Warner people moved the Spirit of God to send into their vineyard an able servant in the person of the Rev. William Kraushaar. He was installed as pastor of Zion at Aberdeen and St. John at Warner on August 9, 1908. His ministry of twenty-one years was a glorious and fruitful one.

How many members there were in the congregation when Pastor Kraushaar arrived is not known. The following figures are copied from the 1909 and 1910 records: In 1909, there were eight infant baptisms; in 1910, there were eleven; in 1909, there were three communion services; in 1910, there were four; in 1909, thirty-two received communion; and in 1910, sixty-eight communed.

If what has been said is true, that "The best barometer in determining the spiritual life of a congregation is its regard for the Sacraments", then it would appear from the above figures that the St. John Lutheran congregation in Warner was beginning to show real spiritual vitality. The members themselves must have thought so too, because in 1910, they built their first church.



One of the members, Mr. William Rehfeld, had given the congregation a number of lots across the street south of the Presbyterian Church, and still having their sights raised to an eventual flourishing congregation, the members decided to build.

Humble yet noble in stature, this eight-windowed edifice, complete with a bell and a stately steeple that pointed in the direction of their petitions, was a tribute to the congregation's patience and an answer to their prayers.

Having dissolved their corporation in 1898, but having kept their corporate name, the group continued to do its work as a congregation affiliated with the Lutheran Synod of Iowa, even though they were not legally recognized as a corporation again until 1940. This did not dampen the zeal nor discourage the prayers. The growth in numbers from 1910 until 1925 was not phenomenal, but it was steady. This we have recorded for us partly in German and partly in English, and it tells us that in that fifteen year period, seventy-seven infants were baptized in the Warner Church. In the same period, there were twenty-seven confirmed, most of them along with the classes in Aberdeen.

Kindled with devotion to God and love for His church, the hearts of the ladies also caught fire, so that they too wanted to make some special contribution that would be really worthwhile. So it was that in November of 1911, a St. John Ladies' Aid Society was organized. Since the pastor could be with the Warner people so little (with his leadership limited to every other Sunday morning), the efforts of the Ladies' Aid were appreciated very much. They were instrumental in somehow keeping things going even when the way looked very dark.

About a dozen women turned out for the organization of the society. These charter members were: Mrs. Otto Dunker, chairman; Mrs. John Dunker, secretary/treasurer; Mrs. H. Rehfeld; Mrs. H. Ihde; Mrs. A. D. Rehfeld; Mrs. Wm. Sauck; Mrs. J. Rehfeld; Mrs. Charles Fuhrman; Mrs. W. Wobick; Mrs. G. Dunker; and Mrs. Richard Ristau.



Ladies' Aid Society-Picture taken March 26, 1920

Very soon after they organized the Aid Society, the members established certain worthy projects by which they

did service to their congregation. A very early project was the purchase of a communion set consisting of a chalice, paten, and flagon. In the minutes of the congregational meeting of March 23, 1924, the secretary entered the following paragraph: "It was decided that the Secretary is to write a letter of thanks to the ladies of the Lutheran Aid Society for their financial help toward paying the pastor's salary." This was not an unusual thing for those times. It is the first official entry of such a matter in the church records; yet, in the payment of the pastor's salary and in many other important matters, the Ladies' Aid Society took the lead. There is evidence of this in the church records all the way from 1924 to 1949.

If it had not been for the Ladies' Aid carrying the torch high, the fire would have gone out many times, especially during the depression and drought of the 1930's. Whenever the congregation failed to fulfill their financial obligations, the Ladies' Aid seemed to come to the rescue. That is why we have said that their efforts have been appreciated so very much. And it must be understood that their great assistance was not only financial. It was the women of the St. John congregation who were largely responsible for the Christian training of the children before confirmation. They were instrumental in building up the Sunday School membership from about fourteen pupils in 1912 to over one hundred in 1953.

Finally, at a congregational meeting on February 8, 1925, the women were recognized for their work by giving them full voting rights in the congregation.

Because of his versatile personality, many demands were made upon the time and ability of Pastor Kraushaar, even outside the congregations. Feeling a need for more education, he took a leave of absence to attend the University of Minnesota from September 1916 until June 1917. There he received his Master's Degree in Education. Pastor Richard Bunge was the supply pastor during this time.

Conditions were steadily growing worse in Europe because of the First World War, and before long the United States was involved too. The boys were being sent to camps all over the land, and St. John congregation was no exception.

In February of 1918, after many of her sons had gone to answer the call of duty, word was received that the National Lutheran Council was asking Pastor Kraushaar to join the fighting forces as a Chaplain. He was granted leave of absence and stationed in San Antonio, Texas. The pastor who served Zion and St. John congregations during this brief span was not recorded.

The language question was beginning to be a topic for lively discussion by the early 1920's. Finally, at a February meeting in 1925, it was decided to have an all English service one Sunday, and a part English and part German the next. Sunday School and confirmation instructions had

been held in English for a number of years already.

Early one Sunday morning in July of 1925, Pastor Kraushaar left Aberdeen by train on the first leg of a trip that was to take him around the world. He had been chosen by the Mission Board of the Synod to inspect the Mission Fields in New Guinea. He returned to Aberdeen to resume his work in July of 1926. During his one year absence, the Rev. Carl Musall was the supply pastor. Pastor Musall did much wonderful work among the young people. It was probably during his time here that the young people of over confirmation age began to hold special meetings to find their place in the program of the church. The young people, however, did not officially organize a Luther League until the time of Pastor Werner Spiegel, receiving their charter and first seal of affiliation in 1946.

In 1928, the names of sixty-two people appeared on the secretary's book as confirmed members of the Warner congregation.

After twenty-one years of faithful and untiring service as the pastor of St. John and Zion, Pastor Kraushaar accepted the Presidency of Texas Lutheran College at Seguin, Texas. A call was sent to Pastor L. A. Westenberger, and in September of 1929, he was officially installed as the pastor of the two-point parish.

In October of the following year, incidentally, the Iowa Synod, the Buffalo Synod, and the Joint Synods of Ohio and other States merged to form the American Synod.

In 1929, the congregation decided that since there were not sufficient funds in the church treasury, the Ladies' Aid was authorized to finance the installation of electric lights in the church. To indicate how difficult the times really were during this period, there is an entry in the minutes of the 1931 annual meeting to the effect that the electric lights were to be disconnected during the summer months to cut down on expenses!

The "crash" of 1929, with its continuing depression complete with dust storms, drought, and grasshoppers, made the 1930's not only the "Black Thirties" for the farmers, but also for the entire work of the church. Through all of the economic and spiritual reverses of the period, Pastor Westenberger worked hard and faithfully. The following statement was made ten or twelve years later: "To the discouragements and disappointments of the depression, Pastor Westenberger gave the very best years of his life." This is indeed a fine tribute to the shepherd who stood calmly by his congregations although they were operating "on a shoestring".

In 1933, the congregation instructed the church council members to make a list of the church members, and by personal solicitation to find out how many intended to support the church. The result of this project was that twenty-one families said they would do all they could. When the money was counted, the total

amount was \$157.00, the collection for the entire year. Twenty dollars of it was used for some miscellaneous expenses, and the remainder was given to Pastor Westenberg as his 1932 salary. He received it with gratitude, knowing the sacrifice it had meant for many of the donors.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1934

Income:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Balance on hand, Jan. 7, 1934 | \$ 14.05 |
| Church Dues | 106.00 |
| Regular Collections | 31.35 |
| Special Collections | 22.45 |
| TOTAL | <u>173.85</u> |

Expenses:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Pastor Westenberg's salary | 120.00 |
| Electricity | 3.35 |
| Insurance | 16.76 |
| Janitor Service | 10.00 |
| Special Collections sent away | 22.45 |
| Coal | 1.20 |
| TOTAL | <u>173.76</u> |

Elementary calculation tells us that they had a nine cent balance to start the following year!

After serving for ten years, Pastor Westenberg resigned for reasons of health and was honorably released by both congregations. Here we leave the "terrible thirties" with the summary statement that all of the struggles, bad as they were, did great things for the people.

A call was issued to Pastor Harold O. Bomhoff in 1939. He accepted and was installed soon afterward as pastor of both St. John and Zion. At his first meeting with this congregation on December 10, 1939, discussion was held on two important matters: (1) re-incorporation, and (2) an envelope system of church giving.

One year later, new Articles of Incorporation based upon suggestions of Attorney Elmer Thurow were drawn up and a new Constitution was approved by the congregation, making the St. John Lutheran Church of Wamer once again a legal corporation. The Pastor's Pension Plan of the church was also adopted at this time.

In February of 1941, Pastor Bomhoff was released in order to enter military service as a Chaplain, service which took him overseas to the European fronts. Pastor Ernest Theilen was called to supply the two congregations. During his brief ministry here, four baptisms were administered. It was at the meeting of the congregation over which he presided on December 14, 1941, that the first discussion was held on a possible building program.

The Second World War was going on by this time, and people were weary and worried as young men and women were called into active duty. This brought certain despair to our congregation and to the new pastor, Werner Spiegel, who

arrived here in June of 1942. It was his foresight also which prompted him to continue talking about the adoption of a building fund. The church was badly in need of repair, and there was a desire in the hearts of the people to have a pastor of their own.

But, let us not go too fast. These war years from 1941 to 1945 left a definite mark upon the congregation, for she gave up two of her sons, Ervin Rieck and Telford Morgan, who lost their lives during the conflict.

The Ladies' Aid Society supported a program with other women's groups in the community, whereby treats were distributed to the boys on the troop trains passing through Aberdeen on their cross-country trips. And so, in spite of the heavy hearts, the work of the church went on.



**Ladies' Aid
serving pheasant
sandwiches to the
soldiers passing
through**

The building fund became a reality in 1947, and by 1948 a substantial sum of nearly \$9,000.00 had been collected. Six men comprising the church council from 1947 to 1949 were going to be faced with a building boom and the handling of the kind of funds that were not dreamed possible ten years before.

For the next five years, these men, their successors, and their appointed committees would be responsible for properly managing the building fund, administering the regular council duties, and making major decisions in regard to calling a pastor, acquiring a parsonage, loosening the ties with Aberdeen, applying for Mission support, and other tasks.

In October of 1947, Pastor Spiegel made an extended trip to Europe to view the countries ravaged by the war. It could be said that he left his heart with these suffering people, for in the following year, 1948, he accepted a position with the Lutheran World Relief. He continued in this position until his untimely death in the early months of 1953.

When Pastor Spiegel left to assume his new duties, the Mission Committee placed a seminary student here by the name of LaVerne Streich. He lived in the homes of various members and served wherever he could in an unofficial capacity. He was also the supply pastor for the Aberdeen congregation during their vacancy.

In December of 1948, after being here only about three

months, Mr. Streich left, and another student, Dennis Mueller, was named to succeed him.

Church council meetings were held every month by this time, so that along with the regular parish duties and social contacts, the schedule of meetings made for an active ministry while Mr. Mueller was here.

Perhaps the four greatest accomplishments of the congregation during this time were:

- 1) The establishment of a church property fund, for the purpose of obtaining or repairing property not included in the building fund.
- 2) The application to the Mission Board of the Synod for financial assistance in the form of subsidy for the pastor's salary.
- 3) The official separation from Zion Lutheran Congregation.
- 4) The actual calling of the first pastor, a new experience for the congregation.

A call was extended to Pastor Andrew A. Kubik upon the suggestion of the District President, and he accepted, arriving here to begin work on July 1, 1949. No residence had been provided as yet, so he and his family moved into Aberdeen.

Pastor
Andrew Kubik
1949-1952



In the meantime, word was received that the Ralph Roger's house (as seen below), across the street west from the church was for sale, so at a meeting in August of 1949, the congregation voted to purchase this house.



A major accomplishment of Pastor Kubik was to provide a card file membership record. Having finished this task, he found that the congregation consisted of one hundred forty-six members in 1949 when he arrived. To this number he added

thirty-four by baptism and fourteen by confirmation.

Mr. Jack Eske (pictured below), son of Mr. and Mrs. Ezra Eske, entered Wartburg Seminary in the autumn of 1955 to study for the ministry. He was the first, and to this date, the only son of the congregation to become a pastor. He was ordained on June 15, 1959.



At a special meeting of the congregation on February 11, 1951, it was voted that the church be remodeled. The plan called for raising the church, digging a basement large enough to extend under a sixteen to eighteen foot narthex to be built on the north end, building a sixteen foot addition to the south end to serve as chancel area, and

redecorating the interior. Also, a kitchen, meeting room, and bathrooms were included in the basement plans. Art Jederberg of Aberdeen was employed as contractor, and Larry Udell as interior decorator. The total cost of the project was \$18,381.17, not including the approximately \$2,550.00 the Ladies' Aid spent designing and furnishing the kitchen. The rededication service for the remodeled church was held on May 18, 1952.



Raising the church to add on a basement



Remodeled Church—now with a basement

The major part of this work was financed through donations given to the property fund, with the remainder, \$4,500.00, being covered by a loan from the First State Bank of Warner.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1950

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Balance on Jan. 1, 1950 | \$ 362.90 |
| Current Expense Offering | 2165.74 |
| Loose Offering | 199.49 |
| Benevolence Offering | 230.62 |
| Specials -Envelope | 110.89 |
| Specials-Loose | 86.84 |
| Mission Aid | 1,406.25 |
| Miscellaneous | 237.39 |
| Rcvd Payment on Pastor's Loan. | <u>260.00</u> |
| TOTAL | 5,060.52 |

Expenditures:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pastor Salary | 2,603.16 |
| Pension Fund | 335.24 |
| American Lutheran Church | 359.97 |
| Wartburg Press & Concordia | 123.95 |
| Coal and Oil | 195.65 |
| Electricity & Telephone | 114.71 |
| District Dues | 32.20 |
| Property Fund & Lenten Offering | 155.52 |
| Travel Expense | 71.24 |
| Church Repair | 174.25 |
| Insurance | 96.50 |
| Janitor | 31.25 |
| Postage & Communion Supplies | 36.32 |
| Piano Tuning | 9.00 |
| Ingathering for Education | 174.05 |
| Gospel Sign | 25.00 |
| First State Bank | 3.78 |
| Miscellaneous | <u>28.62</u> |
| TOTAL | \$4,570.41 |

Balance on Jan. 1, 1951 \$490.11

In January of 1952, Pastor Kubik received a call from Regent, North Dakota, and he was granted a release from this congregation. Soon thereafter, they extended a call to Clifford Dirksen, a seminary graduate. He accepted the call and was installed on July 6, 1952.



Pastor
Clifford Dirksen
1952-1955

The greatest problem of the congregation at this time was not a financial one. More tragic than any material indebtedness was the spiritual indifference. This was showing up particularly in church attendance, so Pastor Dirksen's main emphasis was to be on church attendance. It was felt that although there were financial burdens to bear, if people would fill the church to hear the Word, they would be inspired to meet their financial obligations at the same time. Therefore, a "goodwill program" was launched to keep the church high in the minds of its members and to give it a position of dignity and prestige, even in the minds of outsiders. All this needed to be done, however, without sacrificing Christian principles.

By the spring of 1953, the \$4,500.00 building indebtedness had been paid, a Wurlitzer electric organ had been donated by Mr. and Mrs. A.D. Rehfeld, and the Brotherhood had started a program of landscaping around the church. The landscaping project was completed in 1954 with the planting of the shelterbelts east and south of the church.

On January 1, 1954, members of St. John voted to become a self-sustaining congregation, thus no longer receiving subsidy payments from the national church office. The same year, \$3,000.00 was spent remodeling the parsonage.

In 1953, a Pew Fund had been started by the Ladies' Aid in memory of Pastor Spiegel. By May of 1955, \$2,500.00 had been accumulated through memorial gifts and general donations, and twenty-six new oak pews were installed.

Pastor Dirksen received a call to Chokio, Minnesota in August of 1955 and was given a release by the congregation. He left Wamer on October 20, after a fruitful ministry of three years.



Pastor John Graepp
1956-1960

Pastor John Graepp arrived in Wamer in December of 1955 as a supply pastor. In February of 1956, the congregation gave him an official call, which he accepted in March.

In that same year, the Ladies' Aid purchased sound-proofing for the church basement, which was installed by members of the Brotherhood. The folding curtains in the Sunday School rooms were installed in 1959 at a cost of \$1,300.00.

In September of 1958, the St. John congregation celebrated their Diamond Jubilee. Reverend George Unruh of Fargo, President of the Dakota District, was the morning speaker. Reverend Wm. F. Kraushaar, D.D., President Emeritus of Texas Lutheran College, returned to the parish he had served so many years before to speak to the congregation in the afternoon.

At the time of the seventy-fifth anniversary, St. John numbered three hundred seven baptized members and one hundred eighty-three confirmed members, with an average Sunday attendance at one hundred seventy-two.

The Junior Choir and Mission Band, under the direction of Leona Rieck and Nona Rehfeld, were active during this time, meeting weekly and having a membership of up to twenty-eight children. The Junior Choir sang during Lenten services and every two weeks for worship services. During this period choir gowns were made by the mothers.

Pastor Graepp died very suddenly of a heart attack on February 26, 1960, and is buried in the Warner Cemetery. In the absence of a minister, Mrs. Emma Graepp successfully carried out the duties of confirmation instructor for the remainder of the year.

A church library was established in memory of Pastor Graepp, and by the end of 1960 already boasted nearly three hundred books. Thanks to continuing contributions and memorials, it is still much appreciated by the younger children of the congregation.

In 1960, a merging of the American Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, and United Evangelical Church occurred, resulting in the formation of the American Lutheran Church. (About a year later, Lutheran Free Church also joined this merger.) At this time the Ladies' Aid was restructured in accordance with the national church office recommendations, and was renamed "American Lutheran Church Women".

In the summer of 1960, Pastor Harold Darrow arrived to assume the duties of pastor of St. John.



Pastor Harold Darrow
1960-1964

Again, poor attendance and financial problems were plaguing the congregation, but by 1961 Pastor Darrow was able to report that contributions had exceeded the budget in both current and benevolent areas, and that the average attendance had increased. The senior choir had been reactivated under the direction of Marcia Darrow, and together with the junior choir presented Christmas concerts in 1961 and 1962.

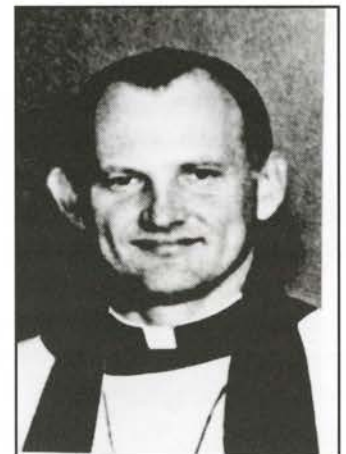
A Christian Fellowship Club was organized in 1960. The Club sponsored several programs as well as two family nights during the following years.

New hymnals, which were published after the merger, were purchased in 1961.

In 1962, the A.L.C. Women divided into six circles, five meeting in the afternoon and one in the evening. This was done in an endeavor to more successfully reach the women of the congregation. General meetings were then held only in April, May, September, and December, and by 1980 were only held once a year in September for the purpose of electing officers. Also, by 1980, the number of circles had been reduced to four, two meeting in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one in the evening.

The Brotherhood and Luther League took an active part in congregation activities during this period.

Pastor Darrow answered a call to Spencer-Salem in the summer of 1964, and a call was issued to Virtus Stoffregen. He accepted and arrived with his family in December of 1964.



Pastor
Virtus Stoffregen
1964-1968

Since Sunday school rooms were badly needed and the parsonage was rather inadequate, the church improvement committee began consideration of a parsonage-education unit combination in 1964.

On April 25, 1965, plans were submitted to the vote of the congregation, and were approved by a vote of seventy to twenty-one. Ground-breaking ceremonies were held on May 9, 1965.

The following cost estimate was given by the contractor, William Krause:

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Excavation | \$300.00 |
| Sewer System | 520.00 |
| Concrete | 3485.00 |
| Lumber | 9530.00 |
| Heating | 2133.00 |
| Plumbing | 1348.00 |
| Wiring | 885.00 |
| Wiring | 450.00 |
| Dry Wall | 450.00 |
| Labor | 4650.00 |
| TOTAL | <u>23,301.00</u> |



The final cost, including everything to make it ready to move into was about \$30,000.00. By the fall of 1965 the new parsonage was ready for use, and dedication ceremonies were held on October 24, 1965 (as seen below).



Parsonage-1981

With funds on hand, together with the money realized from the sale of the old parsonage to Mrs. Chris Rieck for \$7,000.00, only \$11,500.00 had to be borrowed for the completion of this project. The final payment on the indebtedness was made in 1970.

The Scholarship Memorial Fund was established in January of 1968 with a gift of \$200.00 from the Herman Kuhfeld family, in memory of Herman. This was established for the purpose of providing financial aid to a seminary student in the second year of school. In 1980, a gift of \$200.00 from this fund was presented to Dennis Napton, son of Mrs. Ed Kuhfeld.

Pastor Stoffregen accepted a call to Burr Oak, Iowa, and we bade farewell to him and his family on February 18, 1968. So St. John again was without a pastor until July 7, when Pastor Fred Rosin was installed.

Pastor Fred Rosin
1968-1971



Pastor Rosin enjoyed music and was an excellent singer, so the choir again became active. He was the first pastor of St. John to chant the liturgy, which was not always looked upon too kindly by some of the more conservative members! He instituted the "hymn of the month" in order to familiarize the congregation with a wider selection of hymns.

At the end of 1970, church membership remained nearly the same as it had been at the time of the Diamond Jubilee in 1958, around three hundred. *

Pastor Rosin answered a call to the Pierre-Hayes parish in March of 1971, and on July 11, 1971, Pastor John Setterlund was installed.

Pastor
John Setterlund
1971-1976



As well as being the only "bachelor" minister St. John ever had, he was also one of the most innovative. He introduced us to some different types of liturgy. We became much more comfortable with the liturgy of the new Inter-Lutheran Hymnal, which was published in 1978. (Pastor Setterlund served on the committee directing the editing of this hymnal.) He experimented with less traditional pew arrangements and eleven o'clock Christmas

Eve services. He also introduced the Passover Supper and Easter Vigil.

Fifth graders were admitted to Communion for the first time in 1973. Also in this year, Jean Rieck was the first woman in St. John's history to be elected as a council member!

An organ committee was appointed and a fund started to replace our aging organ. In July 1974, the congregation approved the purchase of a pipe organ to be constructed by Ulm Orgelwerks for the sum of \$10,000. This was completed and dedicated in 1977.

In 1974, Gertrude Rehfeld was elected President of the North Central Conference A.L.C. Women, the only woman of the congregation to ever serve on this Board.

Pastor Gilbertson, Bishop of the South Dakota District, visited the parish in May of 1974, and was honored with a reception at the church. In 1975, the South Dakota District voted to send The Lutheran Standard, the official magazine of the church, to every A.L.C. household.

In the summer of 1975, Pastor Setterlund took a leave of absence to tour Europe, and a student from Chicago, Jon Berg, filled the pulpit in his absence.

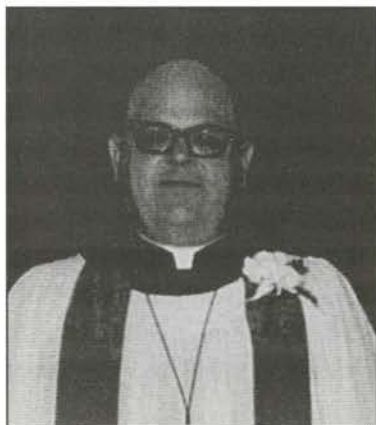
St. John congregation, in conjunction with Our Savior congregation of Redfield, sponsored a Vietnamese family. This family found employment in Redfield, and St. John assumed the responsibility of supplying them with groceries until they were self supporting.

Pastor Setterlund resigned in order to resume his studies at Wartburg Seminary, where he later received his STM degree (Master of Sacred Theology). We said goodbye to him on June 13, 1976.

In July of 1976, Alex & Lana Frick arrived with their family. Lana promptly organized a morning Bible study and testified to her faith most beautifully in word and song. Alex, a student, inspired the congregation to re-shingle the church during one of the worst crop years since the thirties!

Although we enjoyed the Frick's temporary ministry, we were happy when K. Duane Larson accepted our call. He was installed on October 17, 1976, and once again we settled into the routine of having our own pastor.

Pastor
K Duane Larson
1976-1978



Pastor Larson was instrumental in starting an organization known as STUBS. This organization involved youth from Scandinavia-Bethany, Trinity, and St. John.

Again in 1978, a pew fund was established, this time for the purpose of refinishing the pews which had been in use for over twenty years. This project was entrusted to a firm in Rapid City. Unfortunately, due to carelessness in transit, the pews arrived back in Warner severely damaged. It was only with threat of litigation that the firm assumed responsibility. Finally in 1977, the project was completed at a cost of \$4,600, nearly twice the original quote. (But this was still less than half the cost of new pews of much poorer quality!)

Pastor Larson left in October of 1978 to assume a chaplaincy position at Good Samaritan Village in Sioux Falls. St. John again faced one of its longest periods without a pastor.

It was nearly a year before we would again have a full time pastor, and much credit must be given not only to the church council, but to the Sunday School staff, the A.L.C. Women, and other dedicated members of the congregation for providing the leadership needed to hold the congregation together.

Pastor
James Darchuk
1979-1981



At last on July 22, 1979, James Darchuk was installed. Pastor Darchuk's emphasis was on involving people in church activities according to their talents. To this end he organized the following groups: the Education Committee, the Planning Committee, the Worship & Evangelism Committee, the Youth Committee, and the Anniversary (ad hoc) Committee. He organized the Junior League for pre-high school students.

The A.L.C. Women purchased storm windows for the church, which were installed in 1979. A fund had been established to replace the interior windows, with the one-hundredth anniversary of the congregation in 1982 as the

target date for completion. In November of 1980, the congregation approved a plan recommended by the Planning Committee calling for stained glass windows to be installed. Lynn Troske of Turton was given the contract, and the estimated cost was \$700-800 per window. These windows were easily financed through donations and memorials. Installation of the windows was complete by Christmas of 1981.

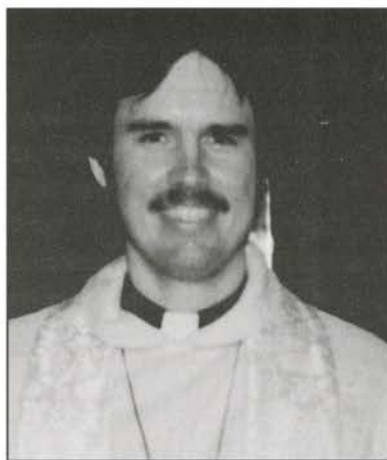
The American Lutheran Church initiated "The Seminary Appeal" in the summer of 1980 to raise funds for the renovation of the church's educational facilities. In 1981, members of St. John congregation pledged over \$6,000.00 to this fund.

Pastor Darchuk accepted a call to Our Savior Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls. On October 18, 1981, members were once again faced with the sad task of saying goodbye to a beloved pastor.

THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS: 1982-2007

After being without a pastor since October 1981, the congregation was happy to hear that Pastor Gary Heidt-Johnson had accepted the call to St. John.

Pastor Gary
Heidt-Johnson
1982-1985



Pastor Gary and his wife, Lori, arrived in Warner in March of 1982. They were immediately involved in the last minute phases of the 100th Anniversary Celebration, which was held the weekend of June 12, 1982.

Bethlehem Marketplace was started in December of 1982, the first year that Pastor Gary was here. It was a big production with the church basement transformed into the streets of Bethlehem at the time of Christ's birth. It included shops typical of that time, goats running in the streets, and Roman Centurions trying to keep the peace, as talk of a Messiah being born was circulated around

town. The final scene was the stable, where sharing space with a donkey and a sheep were Mary, Joseph, and a baby, "wrapped in swaddling cloths", lying in a manger. The scene ended with Simeon blessing the baby and pronouncing that he was indeed the long awaited Messiah.

This production was a gift to the community, and there was no admission charge or free will offering. Six hundred people attended the first event, but word apparently got around. Before the final production in 1996, attendance some years reached nearly one thousand. The congregation was reluctant to give it up, but after the old church was dismantled, it had to be discontinued. In the fourteen years of production, the congregation never failed to produce a baby to portray Baby Jesus.

In 1984, the tradition was started to present third grade Sunday School students with their own Bibles. The teachers of that time are to be much commended, trying to fit a Sunday School enrollment of nearly sixty students in every nook and cranny of the church and/or the parsonage educational unit.

There had been some rumbles about building a new church already in 1985, but evidently they were not taken too seriously, as it was decided to insulate and put aluminum siding on the church that year. The kitchen was remodeled at the same time.

Then in October of 1985, Pastor Gary accepted a call to Minnesota, and once again the church was without a pastor. And as before, the Council, with the help of the congregation, managed to keep all of the programs active.

Pastor
David Haven
1986-1992



But it was not a long vacancy, as Pastor David Haven and his wife LeAnn arrived in Warner

in April of 1986. Dave and LeAnn's children, Micah and Jenna, were both born here, so the parsonage once again had the heartwarming sound of the patter of little feet.

Both Pastor Dave and LeAnn were very musically talented, and they were generous in sharing their talent with the congregation. Pastor Dave and his guitar were especially popular with the young people.

The Junior League (Grades 6-8) under the direction of some enthusiastic leaders had always had an active agenda. The Senior League (Grades 9-12) had been fairly active under some excellent leaders, but interest from that age group was difficult to maintain. That was to change dramatically in the ensuing years. Under the direction of Pastor Dave and some very active leaders, there seemed no end to the activities in which they became involved. Attendance at the Lutheran Summer Camps was encouraged, and over the past few years many of the youth have taken part in activities at one of the several camps sponsored by Lutherans Outdoors of South Dakota.

Attendance at the National Youth Gathering has increased, with twenty-five Leaguers attended the Gathering in San Antonio, Texas, in 2006. This was accomplished by their own fund raising events with the help of the congregation and with the patience and leadership of dedicated leaders. The Longer/Later Confirmation program increased the youth's activity in the congregation. Part of the curriculum included community service and taking part in worship services. Several times a year the young people serve as ushers, greeters, and readers, and they do an excellent job. Hopefully a budding young pastor will emerge from one of these groups!

The women's group has had some major changes since 1982. At that time there were six Circles, with every woman in church enrolled in a Circle. Besides Bible Study, these groups served as work groups for serving funerals, banquets, and other tasks. With so many women entering the work force in the next years, attendance at Circles diminished to the point that this plan was no longer feasible. Work Groups were formed, and at the present time, 2007, there are two Circles involving about twenty-four women and seven Work Groups involving nearly eighty! Most of the Circle members are included in this number too, and it is an unusual month when at least two or three of the work groups are not used.

The women have come to play a large part in leadership positions in the church. Since 1973 at least one woman has been a part of the Council. Women are

represented on nearly all the committees of the church, and they are active as overseers of Sunday School and Bible School activities.

Though currently St. John does not have a structured organization for the men of the church, this does not mean that the men are not a vital part of the church. Men take an active part in membership on the Church Council. They contribute much to the physical upkeep of the church and grounds, serve on committees, are Sunday School superintendents and teachers, and participate in the church choir. Many beautiful pieces of furniture throughout the church were crafted by men talented in this area. The technical know-how for running the public address system has fallen largely on D. J. Adams, and he is now in the process of training others for the position. There are men who can be called upon to lead the services in the absence of the pastor. And, of course, the men are always on call when there is a need for heavy lifting or furniture moving! Possibly it is just as well there is not a "structured" organization, as it might only serve to limit them in their service.

One of Pastor Dave's innovations was the introduction of Soup and Bread suppers preceding Lenten services, something that has continued to this time. And it was with his encouragement that central air conditioning was installed in the parsonage in 1987.

In 1988, another merger took place in the National church, when the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches joined to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or as we know it, the E.L.C.A. After this merger, in lieu of District dues, each congregation added a percentage amount for benevolence as a line item to their monthly budget. In a Council Report from 1989, the Council President wrote, "Our willingness to give demonstrates our spiritual level on a calibrated scale. Through our benevolence program, we are experiencing the first fruits of giving. This is accomplished by having benevolence as a line item in the budget, and it is paid first, as the Bible teaches us to do." This attitude was strongly supported by Pastor Dave.

In 1986, it was decided to become a Mission Partner with the newly formed Holy Cross Church in Aberdeen. A line item of \$500.00 per year was budgeted for this purpose until 2006, at which time Holy Cross had become self-supporting. Rather than drop this item from the budget, the St. John Church Council made the decision to become a Mission Partner with Woyatan Lutheran Church in Rapid City, and this was added to the 2007 Mission budget. This church is new and is primarily involved in Native American ministry. In addition, over the years, line items for projects for Lutherans Outdoors, Lutheran Social Services, New Beginnings Center, World Hunger, Campus Ministry,

Answer the Call, and the Synod Building Fund (to name a few) have been incorporated into the budget amounts.

In 1988, a salary for a custodian was included in the budget, and a member of the church was given the position. In 1991, family work groups were formed, with three or four families assigned each month. Responsibilities besides cleaning included ushering, reading, greeting, assisting with communion, and money counting. The plan is not perfect, but with much patience and forbearance on the part of many, it is still working. A retiring council member wrote in 2004, "One of the best ways to gain a sense of belonging in our church is to become involved in the workings of the church. The fellowship and the sense of accomplishment gained from such service will help you to grow spiritually and enrich your life."

Through the years, secretarial work for the church had been done either by the current pastor or by volunteers. While all of this was much appreciated, in 1989 it was decided that at least a part-time secretary should be hired. Specific duties were laid out, and the position was opened for applicants. Marilyn Bender was hired, and it was evidently a good decision on the part of everyone, as she still remains as secretary!

Early in the 1990's, it was realized that the church was falling behind in the area of technology. With the assistance of congregational members who were knowledgeable in this area, the church office is now equipped with computers, copiers, and printers. Additional audio-visual equipment was purchased for use by the Sunday School and the congregation.

Discussion about a new church had continued through the years, and Pastor Dave was strongly encouraging it. With our baptized membership now at 318, it was obvious we needed more space, especially for Sunday School classrooms. The classrooms in the parsonage basement had served for over twenty-five years, but society had changed since 1965. Having the basement available to people coming and going all hours of the day no longer seemed appropriate. At a special meeting of the congregation in April of 1992, a vote was held to set up a Building Fund. It passed 66 to 31.

Once again, our congregation had to say goodbye to a much-loved Pastor. Pastor Dave received a call to Wenatchee, Washington and left in July of 1992.

But our vacancy was not as long this time, as Pastor Joanne Nagele accepted the call to St. John Church, and she arrived to take over her pastoral duties in January of 1993. Pastor Joanne has the distinction of being the first woman pastor to serve the Warner St. John Church. The church was in the throes of the first steps of building a new church, and some people questioned whether a woman

Pastor
Joanne Nagele
1993-



would be capable of overseeing a program of this magnitude. But she soon proved that she was as capable as any man when it came to understanding not only the construction process, but also the financial intricacies.

Thoughts of remodeling the existing church had long been discarded by this time. After visiting many churches and meeting with various contractors, the Building and Finance Committee together with the Church Council, contacted Bob Winter of The Church Builders to draw up plans to be considered. On April 10, 1994, a vote was held, and the result was 175 to 24 votes in favor of constructing a new facility as proposed by the Building and Finance Committee and the Church Council. Bob Winter of The Church Builders was hired as architect and contractor for the \$335,000.00 project. On May 1, 1994, the Committee proposed to add additional space to the previously approved plan for an additional \$52,000.00, totaling \$402,000.00. This was approved by a 47 to 2 vote.

In the midst of all this, Pastor Joanne surprised the congregation with the announcement of her impending marriage to Harold Stolen of Wessington Springs. The wedding took place in July of 1994. Unfortunately, Harold developed health problems which continued to worsen, and his death occurred in December of 1998. He was a kind and gentle man and was deeply respected and loved by all who knew him.

Hiring a professional to assist the congregation with the fund drive to finance the new church was suggested as the Building Committee and Church Council contemplated setting up committees for this purpose. Some of the congregation felt that the money could be better used by putting it toward the new construction. After much consideration by the Church Council and Building Committee and talking to other churches in the community who were well-satisfied with the professional they had hired, on May 1, 1994, it was voted to hire Dave Brunkow, affiliated with a firm in Brandon, SD, as a fundraiser consultant at a cost of \$11,000.00. By the time our pledges started coming in, nearly everyone agreed that it was the best money that could have been spent.

With "Rooted to Bear Fruit" from our Mission Statement as the theme, Mr. Brunkow formed appropriate committees who worked hand in hand with the Building Committee to make the fund drive succeed beyond the wildest dreams of anyone in the congregation. On November 13, 1994, at the Congregational Loyalty Dinner, it was announced that although the campaign was not finished, sixty two percent of the total cost had been covered by pledges. A week later it was announced that eighty seven percent had now been covered. By December 4, 1994, \$405,854.00 had been pledged. Bob Winter was notified of this, and he said the Warner Church project would be started as soon as his current job was finished. The new church would finally be a reality!

The St. John congregation had never pledged before, and at this time Pastor Joanne strongly encouraged that besides the pledges for the new church, pledges also be made toward the annual church budget. She set an example by sharing with the congregation that she had made the commitment to give ten percent of her income to the church. With her encouragement, at the same meeting on December 4, it was announced that pledges of nearly \$73,000.00 had been received toward the 1995 General Fund. Pledging has continued to be encouraged under the auspices of the Ministry Committee. Temple Talks are given through the month of September, culminating in a congregational dinner where the pledges are received. These pledges are strictly confidential between the member and the treasurer.

Groundbreaking for the new Church facility was held in May of 1996. Pastor Franklin Pudas, Development Director of the South Dakota Synod, officiated at the service, which was held outside. In spite of a rather showery day, a large crowd was present. The outline of the church had been demarcated, and with spades specially marked "May 5, 1996", anyone who wished was able to remove a symbolic shovelful of dirt. It was definitely a high point in the life of the St. John congregation.

Construction began in August of 1996. Volunteer labor was an important part of The Church Builders' program, and church members were called on to pledge volunteer hours. Many hours were spent by various members doing either hot back-breaking or cold bone-chilling work as the church building was erected. Other members did their part by furnishing meals for the workers.

The final cost of the church was approximately \$610,000.00. Enough money from pledges had come in by the time long-term financing was needed that the loan amount with the Aid Association for Lutherans (now Thrivent) was only \$247,000.00. The original interest rate was 7.25%.

Church financial records had traditionally been kept

by a treasurer, who was elected from current Council members. The decision was made that with the extra bookkeeping the building project would entail, it was time to make the treasurer a salaried position. Veronica Johnson was the treasurer at that time, and she consented to take the position. As with the secretary, it was a good decision, as she too still holds the position.

On July 13, 1997, a service was held to say goodbye to the church which would now be vacated, and which had served the congregation well for eighty-seven years. Former pastors assisting with the service included Harold Darrow, David Haven, Duane Larson, Clifford Dirksen, and Fred Rosin. At the close of this service, Pastor Joanne, carrying the Eternal Candle, led the congregation over to the new church. The visiting pastors each carried items to the new facility, and congregation members carried hymnals. A potluck dinner was held in the new fellowship hall, followed by a program of remembering.

The altar furniture and the organ were among the larger items installed in the new church. The stained glass windows from the former church had been artfully incorporated into the decor of the sanctuary. At a meeting on August 3, 1997, it was decided to purchase new pews. These were installed in November of that year.

The official dedication was held on September 28, 1997. Former pastors Clifford Dirksen, Fred Rosin, and Gary Heidt-Johnson, along with Rev. Jack Eske, the only son of the congregation, assisted with the service. Bishop Andrea Degroot-Nesdahl of the South Dakota Synod gave the sermon. A dinner followed with time for fellowship and rejoicing. It was indeed the culmination of long hard work and planning by more people than it is possible to mention.

Less than a month later, a long-time member of the congregation, Ray Rieck, died. His was the first funeral to be held in the new church. In December of that year, another member of many years, Walter Rehfeld, died. It was a great comfort to the families that the many people coming to pay their last respects to these well-known members of the church and community would find a welcoming sanctuary with seating room for everyone.

The big question confronting the congregation now was what to do with the deserted former church. Since no offers were made to take it, even as a gift, the only solution seemed to be to have it dismantled. There were many tears shed as people watched the building go, as it was the church where many of the members had been married, where their children had been baptized, and where funerals for beloved friends and family members had been held. The area was planted to trees and decorative shrubbery and turned into a Memorial Park. Since the old church bell could not be used, congregational members worked to make an attractive stone

marker to house the bell, and it was placed in the Memorial Park. A carillon system, given as a memorial, was then installed to call the congregation to worship.

In 1996, the Senior League sponsored a "Tree of Lights" at Christmas time, with the proceeds going to the building fund. Congregational members could purchase bulbs of various prices either in memory of or to greet or honor loved ones. It was well-received, and the tradition has continued.

In 1999, Jacobs Construction of Aberdeen was hired to level and gravel the church parking lot. A fund has now been set up to resurface it with asphalt at some future time.

There was not adequate storage space in the new church, so a group of volunteers built the storage shed southeast of the church in 2002. It was greatly appreciated, not only for the mowers and other outdoor equipment, but as a storage place for extra chairs and tables, and for items that needed temporary storage.

Built in 1966, very little had been done in the parsonage in the ensuing years. In September of 2002, a complete upgrade was approved, including a new basement floor, plumbing and electrical improvements, new kitchen cupboards and appliances, new vinyl siding, new windows, and other improvements that were deemed necessary. The cost for this, \$54,000.00, was to be added to the current loan, which by this time, 2003, was only \$11,000.00. Air conditioning for the church had been considered for some time, and at this same meeting costs for that, around \$6,000.00, were included, also to be added to the current loan. The loan for redoing the parsonage and the air conditioner was paid off in December of 2006.

Much of the work on the parsonage was done by volunteers, and the parsonage is again the beautiful home of which the congregation can be proud, and that our pastors deserve.

The glass enclosure over the north entryway had never proved satisfactory, and in fact was starting to cause damage to the church exterior. In October of 2006, the congregation hired Dave Jarvis Construction to remove the glass enclosure and build a drive-up canopy. A heated area with additional space for hanging coats was also included in this project.

In preparation for the St. John 125th Anniversary Celebration, a permanent sign was purchased through donations and placed in the parking lot. This sign, besides designating the name of the church, includes pertinent information concerning worship time, Sunday School time, and whatever else would seem necessary.

In another act of faith, in January of 2007 the congregation voted to install a new furnace/air conditioner in the parsonage for the amount of \$6,500.00. At the same time, a proposal for new carpeting throughout the entire church was approved at a cost of \$23,500.00. Both projects passed with an overwhelming approval. It was also decided to paint the entire interior of the church. Volunteers were called upon to paint the fellowship hall, bathrooms, kitchen, and Sunday School rooms. Lee Jenkins Construction was hired to paint the ceiling and walls of the sanctuary for the sum of under \$5,000.00. First State Bank of Warner is doing the short-term financing for these projects. Thrivent will again be considered for the long-term.

Baptized membership twenty-five years ago was 306, with confirmed members at 232. Baptized membership at the close of 2006 was 394, with confirmed members at 284. Sunday School students numbered 57 in 1984 (1982 records were not available), and in 2006 they numbered 87.

The total budget in 1982 was \$31,435.00, with \$2,310.00 budgeted for South Dakota District dues, the benevolent budget at that time. The proposed budget for 2007, approved at the January Annual Meeting was approximately \$131,000.00 with a total of \$20,675.00 budgeted for Mission. However, the true heart of the congregation is reflected neither in the number of new members nor the amount of the budget increases. St. Paul writes in 1st Corinthians 13:11-12, "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways". Members of St. John have achieved a level of maturity where they recognize needs outside of themselves and of the church proper. They recognize that church membership goes far beyond attending church services each Sunday, but also means involvement in the everyday workings of the church and the community.

St. Paul stresses the importance of each person's gift, recognizing that all are necessary, and that there is no one gift more important than another. There seems to be no end to the gifts displayed by this congregation, and more importantly, by people's willingness to share them. As reflected in the 100th Anniversary Booklet, "We dare not go backward, neither can we stand still; rather we must 'Work while it is day for night cometh when no person can work'." May the abiding presence of our Lord and his never failing help bless our talents and efforts in the building of His Kingdom.

PASTORS DURING AFFILIATION WITH ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ABERDEEN

| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Lebahn, David | 1882-1885 |
| Preu, F. | 1885-1893 |
| Walther, F. | 1893-1894 |
| Schaff, J. | 1894-1895 |
| Werr, M. | 1896-1897 |
| Wunderlich, H. | 1897-1898 |
| Graeber, F. J. | 1898-1901 |
| Knoll, J. | 1901-1908 |
| Kraushaar, William | 1908-1929 |
| Westenburger, L.A. | 1929-1939 |
| Bomhoff, H.O. | 1939-1941 |
| Theilen, Ernest | 1941-1942 |
| Spiegel, Werner | 1941-1948 |
| Steich, Laverne | 1947 |
| Mueller, Dennis | 1948 |

PASTORS OF ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WARNER (only), 1949-2007

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kubik, Andrew | July 1949-January 1952 |
| Dirksen, Clifford | July 1952-October 1955 |
| Graepp, John * | December 1956-February 1960 |
| Darrow, Harold | June 1960-July 1964 |
| Stoffregen, Virtus | December 1964-February 1968 |
| Rosin, Fred | July 1968-March 1971 |
| Setterlund, John | July 1971-June 1976 |
| Larson, Duane | October 1976-October 1978 |
| Darchuk, James | June 1979-October 1981 |
| Heidt-Johnson, Gary | March 1982-October 1985 |
| Haven, David | April 1986-July 1992 |
| Nagele, Joanne | January 1993- |

*Died during his pastorate

Jean Rieck deserves a special "thank you" for researching and compiling the information for this history book.

The 125th Anniversary Committee would also like to thank everyone who joined in helping us celebrate this special time in our church's history.

Committee members included:

Pastor Joanne Nagele, Gert Rehfeld, Jean Rieck, Ellen Welke,
Lynette Rieck, Stephanie Rieck, and Carmyn Streitz.









