

1850 ——— 1950
100th
ANNIVERSARY

First Ev. Lutheran Church



Galveston, Texas

ONE CENTURY—ONE FAITH
ONE SAVIOUR—ONE HOPE

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Galveston, Texas

Dear Friends:

In line with the original intention of the Anniversary Committee to place an Anniversary Booklet in the hands of every family in the congregation, these are now being sent into all our homes.

It is our sincere hope that in looking back over this first century of our history, you may be brought to a deeper appreciation of the accomplishments and heritages of your church. We hope that through these pages you may be led to more fully understand the task confronting us in this present day, and to visions of an even more effective and glorious program in the future.

In this spirit we bring you this Booklet dedicated to our "One Century- One Faith - One Saviour - One Hope".

Yours in Christ,

THE VESTRY

December 9, 1952

ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF
FIRST EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH



1850 - 1950
GALVESTON, TEXAS

A centennial called us to remember our yesteryears. We have looked back over these years, one hundred of them, attempting to tell you the history of our church and its organizations. It has been a tremendous task for much of that record is in German script which should be translated verbatim into the English language that future generations may read. The Bible School records also were in German until the year 1912. Everyone was asked for items of historical interest. Many responded but many did not. We feel sure, therefore, that some of our church history is still hidden in the past. Nevertheless, we send this centennial volume forth with the hope that our members and our friends will appreciate the faithful stewardship of our people, who with God's providence, planted a church in this community one hundred years ago.

The Editors

1950.



REV. EDWARD V. LONG, Pastor

PASTOR LONG'S CENTENNIAL MESSAGE

The honor and privilege of being a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed a joy in itself. Yet the privilege of being a pastor to a congregation of believers, observing its Centennial, greatly increases that joyousness.

"ONE CENTURY — ONE FAITH — ONE SAVIOUR — ONE HOPE" — this has been our centennial theme — and how appropriate! The first century of our congregation's existence has passed, and with it many things have changed — the pastors, the members, the buildings and property, and the methods used. But for us and among us one thing has not changed.

The words of that Man of Bethlehem, and Nazareth, and Calvary, are still the same, and they are still the reason why this church stands and why it opens its doors when the Lord's Day comes. In the inspired, abiding and enduring Word of God we find our ONE FAITH — ONE SAVIOUR — ONE HOPE.

As the strength of First Lutheran has been found in its CHRIST-CENTERED faith, so our prayer must be that the future generations will continue to build upon this same everlasting foundation.

We must let Christ speak to our human hearts in their every need! We must suffer our little ones to "come unto Him" and "learn of Him" as He has commanded! We must direct and guide the maturing minds and ambitious souls of our youth to follow Him and to do His will! We must allow His spirit to enter and strengthen our homes. We must live our declining years gracefully, looking to Jesus for strength and comfort! We must enter that dread portal called death — unafraid, for the Risen and Victorious Lord has promised to make us conquerors!

Then — and only then — shall we take our place in history with the countless numbers of early and present-day Christians who have worshiped, worked, and witnessed that Christ's kingdom may come and that His will might be done.

Then — and only then — shall we be numbered among those whose lives have been given in writing a story without end — a story of God's people on God's earth seeking God's kingdom in God's way.

Your servant in Christ,

Edward V. Long Pastor

HISTORY OF
1850 FIRST EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH 1950
Galveston, Texas

Ps. 16: 6. "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

The beginnings of First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Galveston, Texas, are laid in the Lutheran Missionary Seminary of St. Chrischona near Basel, Switzerland. The flag of Texas had scarcely been unfurled when missionaries came and planted the banner of the cross beside it. When Texas became a republic, favorable terms were offered to all those who would settle the new republic. Colonists signed up not only in the United States but also in Europe. Many of these colonists who came were Lutherans and helped to establish the oldest Lutheran churches in Texas. These early immigrant settlements were without spiritual leadership, however, and in 1849 a certain Christian gentleman wrote to his relatives in Switzerland deploring these conditions. This plea from Texas was communicated to Dr. Christian Spittler, Dean of the Lutheran Missionary Seminary near Basel. Thus it came about that two young Lutheran pastors, Rev. Theobald Kleis and Rev. Adam Sager, were dispatched to Texas. They landed in Texas at Galveston but proceeded on into the interior according to their instructions. Records reveal that prior to this two other missionary pastors, Rev. G. Guebner, a graduate of the Lutheran Seminary at Lexington, Georgia, a member of the South Carolina Synod, and Rev. Caspar Braun of the Pittsburgh Synod worked in Texas dealing solely in baptisms and burials in Galveston. The Rev. Guebner returned to Galveston after the departure of the St. Chrischona missionaries and gathered the few Lutheran families on the island into a congregation. This was the beginning of First Lutheran in the fall of 1850, known then as the First German Evangelical Church of Galveston, Texas, and chartered by the State of Texas in 1851.

Soon after the organization of this congregation, Rev. Guebner departed for other mission fields and six more Chrischona

men came to Texas, each one destined to become pastor of First Lutheran. The first of these six to take charge of the congregation of Lutherans in Galveston was the Rev. H. Wendt in 1851. The first thing he did was to start a school to be maintained by the church. There were no public schools in Galveston in 1851. What this school meant to the city of Galveston is testified by the fact that it continued even after public schools were established in 1871 and records show that the public schools rented the church school in 1874. The Lutheran school was open to children of any age and any creed.

In this same year, 1851, the First Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Texas was organized in Houston, Texas. In 1853, it held its third convention in Galveston at which time the Galveston congregation was received into the Texas Synod.

In 1854, First Lutheran made arrangements for holding Sunday services in the Lyceum Hall located on the corner of Winnie and Bath Avenue (Twenty-fifth Street). This hall belonging to the Lyceum Association founded in 1840, was the center of culture in Galveston. Prior to this, however, services must have been held in the school house because volume one of the church records reveal that on February 9, 1851, Christina Rudi was baptized in the school house and the same evening, evening services were commenced with a "pretty good attendance."

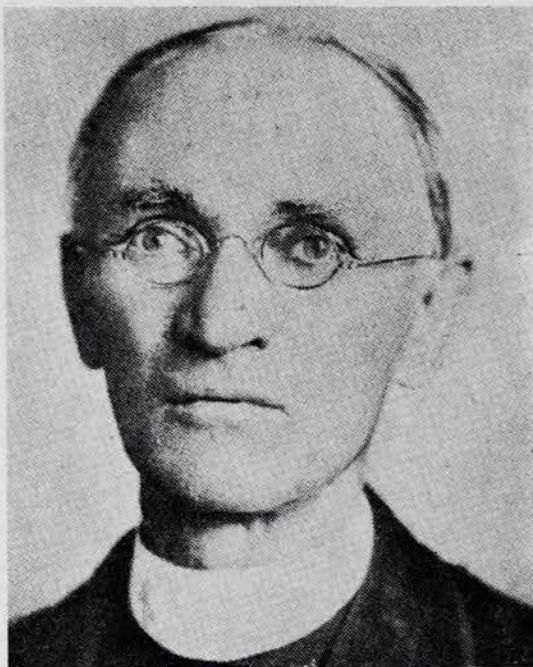
In the year 1855, First Lutheran bought the Lyceum Building and moved it to the present church property which then consisted of two lots purchased from a German organization known as the "Freundschaft Bund." Today the old Lyceum building is preserved in the west wing of the church.

In 1915 when the present church structure was remodeled, the Lyceum building was raised and bricked in to become a part of the church as we know it today. The marble slab in the narthex is the cornerstone of the Lyceum Building on the back of which is the old Lyceum inscription, "Knowledge is Power," which reminds us of the great Scriptural truth, "And the truth shall make you free."

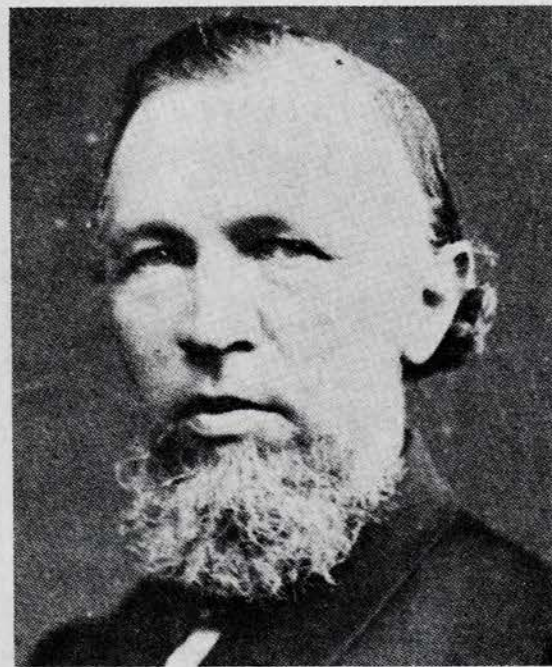


LYCEUM BUILDING
West Wing of Present Church.

In 1856, Rev. Wendt went back to Europe to visit his homeland and the Rev. F. Ehinger filled the pastorate in his absence. Rev. Wendt did not return and the church was without a pastor until 1859 when J. G. Ebinger was called. He gave the church splendid service but the continued illness of his wife necessitated his return to Germany. He was succeeded by Rev. L. Zahn who remained but a short time.



REV. F. EHINGER



REV. J. G. EBINGER

In 1861, Rev. H. Bohnenberger assumed the duties as pastor and served until his death in 1864. With his people he shared the privations of the Civil War and at times was the only Protestant pastor in Galveston during these trying times. His services were denied none who asked them. Following his war experiences, he experienced the yellow fever epidemic. Forgetful

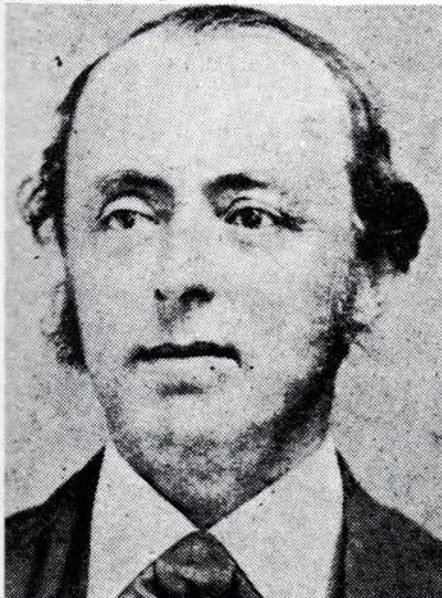


CHURCH CEMETERY PLOT

Old City Cemetery, Galveston, showing grave markers of Rev. H. Bohnenberger; Rev. Fred Gloor and wife, Theresa; Rev. Johann C. Roehm and wife, Louise; Goettlieb M. Roehm, Hanna S. Roehm, Louise F. Roehm, Julia Hasskarl and Karolina Lang.

of self, he was everywhere the cry of distress was raised. He contracted the disease in November, 1864, and died on the fifth day of November. A plain monument in the Lutheran lot of the Old City Cemetery marks his resting place.

It was during Rev. Bohnenberger's ministry that a Mr. Fred Gloor was appointed superintendent of the church school. On the death of the pastor, which took place while the war was still going on, it was difficult to get a pastor and Mr. Gloor was



REV. F. GLOOR

prevailed upon to take up the ministry. He reluctantly consented, was ordained at Brenham, and served the church until November 11, 1876. His body also rests in the Lutheran lot next to Rev. Bohnenberger.

It was during Pastor Gloor's pastorate, on January 12, 1868, to be exact, that the congregation passed a resolution to erect a church. Work on the new building was rushed and services were held in the new church in May of the same year. The church build-

ing committee consisted of Messrs. Emme, Stieling, and Maser and Messrs. Wolfer and Maser undertook the construction of the church building. This is the building enlarged and improved in 1915, which stands today as a memorial to the consecrated workers who worshiped at First Lutheran during these one hundred years.

Participating in the dedication of the church in 1868 was Rev. J. C. Roehm of Frelsburg, Texas, who was destined to become its next pastor and one of the most lovingly remembered pastors of First Lutheran. He served from 1877 until his death



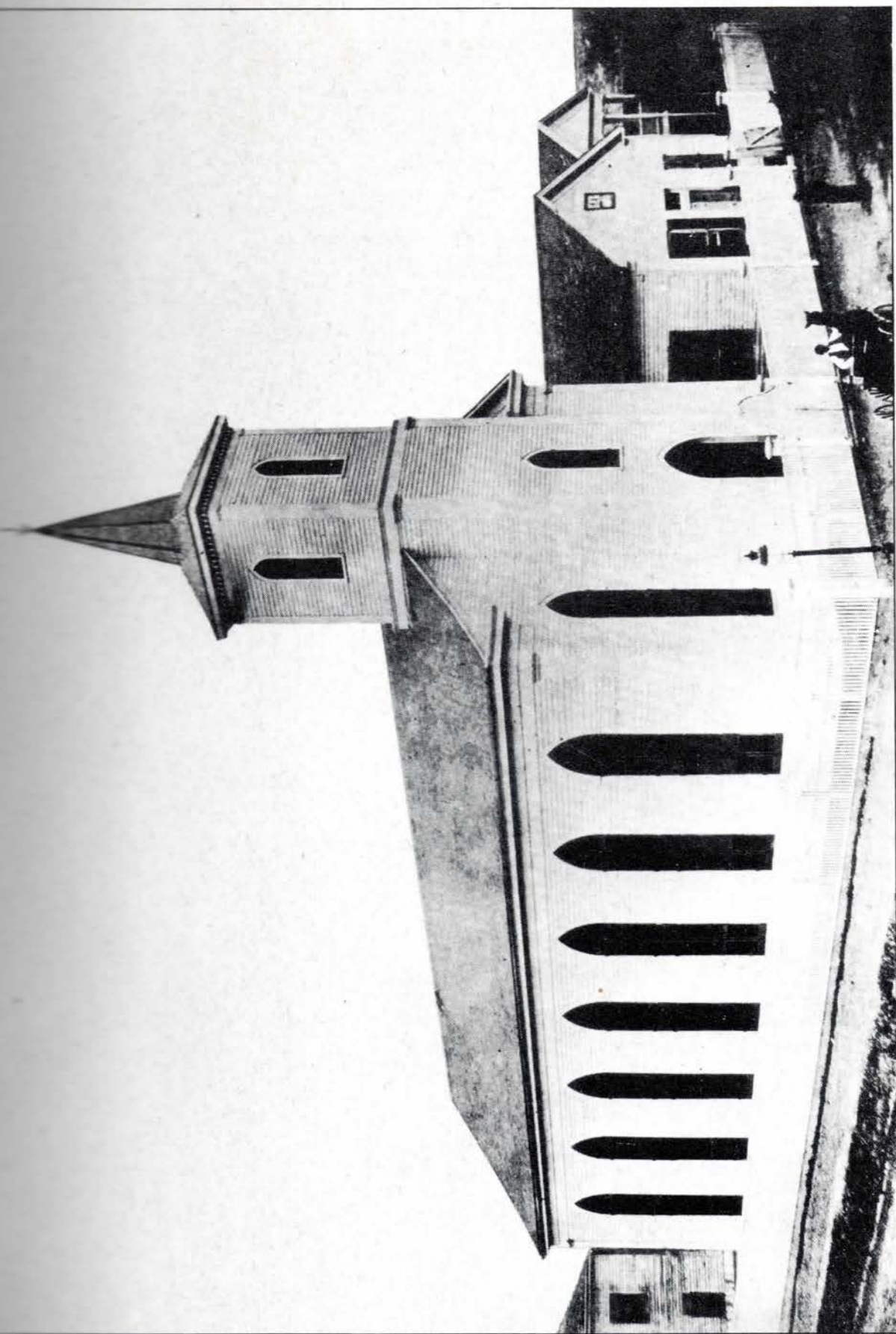
REV. JOHANN C. ROEHM

June 2, 1902. In 1892 his son, John Roehm, became his assistant and remained with his father five years. Rev. G. J. Ide of Dubuque, Iowa, succeeded him and became pastor upon the death of the elder Pastor Roehm.

that took place during those twenty-five years: "Beloved Congregation and celebrants: With the prophet Samuel we cry out today on this festive occasion: 'Ebenezer, hitherto has the Lord helped us!' In these twenty-five years, through free-will offering, a church has been built, the building debt (\$8,000) paid, and current expenditures met and certain improvements made on the Lord's house, the purchase of an organ, new communion vessels, a baptismal font and altar crucifix and two beautiful paintings—'Christ Knocking at the Door' and 'His Continuous Helping Hand'."

This excerpt from the twenty-fifth anniversary sermon of the dedication of the church preached by Rev. J. C. Roehm reveals much

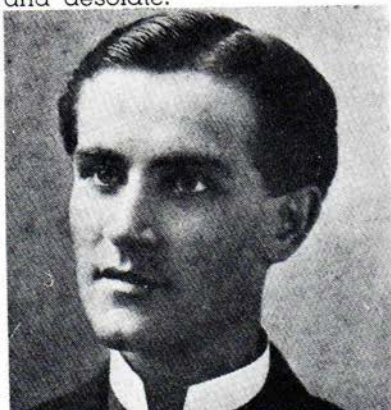
In January of 1900 the Vestry decided to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of First Lutheran. This anniversary never was held, for in September Galveston suffered the 1900 storm. The editor of the **Tribune**, Clarence Ousley, in his book, **Galveston in 1900**, describes First Lutheran on that never-



FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, Erected 1868.

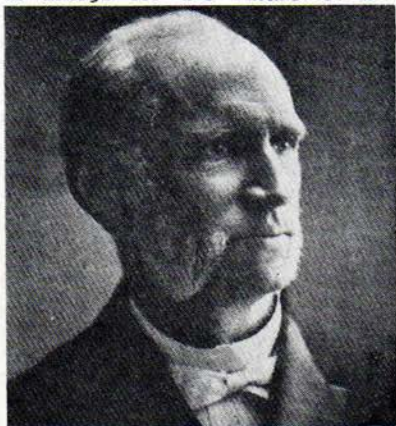
Reconstructed into present church, 1915. Smaller building at right served the congregation from 1852 --1868.

to-be-forgotten Sunday that followed September 8: "Go with me over heaps of ruined homes to the churches—The German Lutheran Church has much damage to interior furnishings, but the old Lyceum is in perfect order and is a shelter for the homeless and desolate."



REV. G. J. IDE

the Galveston congregation. When he resigned, he was followed by Rev. C. P. Hasskarl of Waterloo, Iowa, who enlisted the cooperation of the youth of the church and welded them into a force that promised great things for the future of the church. It was here that the Sunday School showed a phenomenal growth due to the fact that Bible School classes in English were increased and confirmation classes in German abolished. Pastor Hasskarl served First Lutheran until 1916. In 1915 he undertook the ambitious task of creating out of the original structure and old Lyceum building the present church structure.



REV. C. P. HASSKARL

Rev. Hasskarl left Galveston in 1916 to follow a call to the Lutheran Church in Nordhelm, Texas.

Rev. O. L. Proehl, of Pittsburgh, Pa., who succeeded Rev. Hasskarl, was installed on January 14, 1917 and remained with

us for a period of two years. During this time he was assisted in part by Rev. G. Obermeyer.



REV. O. L. PROEHL

Rev. Proehl inaugurated impressive changes in our congregation. Feeling the need of an English service every Sunday morning, he supplemented the German service with a 10 o'clock service in the form of Matins, developed primarily for the older Sunday School pupils.

The Sunday School branch at Bethany Mission on Seventeenth and Ave. M½ was also instituted, its purpose being to provide a closer meeting place for children who could not conveniently come to the main church. During the year of 1918, the first children's choir began work under the leadership of Oscar Springer and Alice Hoffman.

Rev. Proehl's brilliance as a teacher and scholar gave him the distinction of being called to the Presidency of Wartburg College at Clinton, Iowa, by the Synod of Iowa. His first resignation, presented to our congregation was denied, but after urgent calls, Rev. Proehl offered his resignation without recourse and left this congregation in March, 1919, to be followed by the Rev. Victor Albert who came from Dubuque, Iowa, on the 19th day of March, 1919. His zeal was manifested in many outstanding developments which were effected during his twenty-seven years of service. The building, housing Bethany branch Sunday School, was purchased in 1920. Rev. H. J. Fisher, a



REV. VICTOR ALBERT

young graduate from Dubuque Seminary, assisted Rev. Albert until May, 1922. In November, 1923, the Vestry adopted the envelope system as the official method of collection.

At a congregational meeting in April, 1924, it was decided that there would be only one German service a month and that on the first Sunday of each month.

The Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1925 was largely the result of the thoughts and labors of Pastor Albert and his workers' council. It was they who inspired the congregation with the idea that no less than \$15,000 should be given as a Thank-offering in commemoration of this event, the money to be used for the purpose of purchasing the property west of the parsonage and a newer and larger organ. This celebration was held from Sunday, November 8th, through Wednesday, November 11th, 1925. On November 8th, Rev. O. L. Proehl, Clinton, Iowa, addressed the Sunday School session, and preached the English sermon. Rev. John Harder of Houston preached the German service and Rev. C. P. Hasskarl, Dunlay, Texas, conducted the evening service.

"The Kingdom of God", a cantata, was presented by the choir on Monday. Luther's Birthday was celebrated on Tuesday with a service and sermon by Rev. O. L. Proehl, President of Wartburg College, Clinton, Iowa. Rev. Proehl spoke on "The Working Force of the Reformation in Church, State and Home." On Wednesday the congregation came together for an informal evening and many addresses were made by former pastors. The choir sang "A Song of Praise" (Ashford).

As the century turned to its last quarter, the Congregation focused its attention on the purchase of a new Pilcher organ. Funds were provided, but on October 30, 1926, the bank, in which the church's funds had been placed, failed. Since the organ had already been shipped, Rev. Albert made a special appeal to the membership for contributions. A payment of \$3000 was due in November, and by December 5th \$3571.50 was collected and the organ installed. The old organ was donated and shipped to the Lutheran College at Seguin, Texas. During this same year a new pulpit and lectern were installed and the old pulpit was sent to St. Johns in Houston.

Many events transpired in rapid succession during the year 1927. In January, the moving picture, "Life of Martin Luther", was shown four times to overflowing houses. On April 25th, the membership of the vestry changed from 14 to 15 men—to be elected 5 each year on a three year basis.

The present sight of St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 48th and O½, four 25 foot lots, was purchased in September, 1928, at a cost of \$2200.00 for the purpose of building a west end mission. Plans were made for building St. Paul's and given to Johnson Bros. June 24th, 1929.

Need for an assistant pastor grew, and on April 8, 1929, Rev. A. L. Pfennig was called and installed by Rev. Albert and Rev. E. A. Sagebiel.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church was dedicated by Rev. E. A. Sagebiel, Rev. Albert and Rev. A. L. Pfennig. St. Paul's first Bible School was held on October 20th, 1929, with 52 present. Church services began on December 8th, 1927, and operated until April 29, 1946, when it was offered to the Mission Board of The Texas District American Lutheran Church to be operated as a separate church.

First Lutheran celebrated its 80th anniversary on the first Sunday in November, 1930. This date also marked the 400th year of the Augsburg Confession, with special services commemorating it. Taking as his text Psalm XVIII, 19 "Thou hast led me forth, also into a large place," Rev. Albert spoke of the history of the local church since its formation 80 years ago.

It was during this year that the Iowa, Buffalo and Ohio Synods merged into the American Lutheran Church, of which First Lutheran is a member.

The church parsonage, 2212 Avenue L, was purchased at a cost of \$7500.00 on January 10th, 1931, and the choir was vested in November, 1933.

The time passed swiftly into the 85th anniversary year. During this year the new altar and window above were dedicated. A large and beautiful Fellowship Congregational banquet

was held at Hotel Galvez November 8th, 1935, with a special program and speaker, Rev. A. Hartmann of Brenham.

The need for a parish worker grew and in October, 1938, Miss Doris Gundlach was called. Miss Gundlach stayed until August 15th, 1939. It was in this same year that Dr. Heironymus conducted a week's Leadership Training Course.

The parish house became a reality in 1939. Plans and specifications were prepared and an architect was employed in January. This beautiful building was completed and dedicated on July 7th, 1940, as "A Thankoffering to God and a Memorial of our 90th Anniversary." Festival services and a special fellowship dinner and program at the Galvez Hotel marked the occasion.

During this same year, on December 2nd, 1940, the vestry moved to abolish the German Services.

The church received a new charter from the State on April 2nd, 1942.

Hundreds of Galvestonians and out-of-town visitors paid tribute to Rev. V. Albert on the occasion of the 25th year of his pastorate in this community on March 19th, 1944, at a reception



PARISH HOUSE

held on Sunday afternoon. Mr. George Reyder, master of ceremonies, spoke of the love and esteem which the membership of First Lutheran held for its Pastor and presented him with a substantial check from the congregation. Dr. Bodensieck preached at the morning service and Rev. Theodore Streng of Brenham delivered the sermon at the vesper service.

"When one looks back 25 years it is really a lifetime, but it has been one of pleasant association of happy service and of real contentment," said Rev. Mr. Albert on this occasion. "Contentment comes," he philosophically declared, "when the surroundings are pleasing, when the work is congenial and when our loved ones are with us."

The Church celebrated its 95th anniversary with a Festival Service on Sunday, November 25th, 1945. Rev. Geo. H. Reck of Zion Lutheran Church in Houston preached the morning service, and Rev. A. L. Pfennig, then Pastor of First Lutheran Church in Shreveport, conducted the Festival Service in the evening. On Monday, November 26th, a fellowship and family evening were held for the congregation, friends and visiting clergy with an informal program and dinner in the Parish House Auditorium. Miss Greta Oppe spoke on "Here is the Power."



PARISH HOUSE DEDICATION PROCESSION
Led by Rev. Victor Albert and Rev. A. Streng of Texas Lutheran College.

On November 5th, 1945, the church improvement committee reported to the vestry a resolution that "as a fitting and worthy project to commemorate the 100th anniversary of First Lutheran Church's splendid contribution to the upbuilding of God's Kingdom in our beloved city that we recommend the construction of a new church and respectfully suggest that the matter be presented to the next congregational meeting."

The year of 1946 brought the onset of a new era within the church. During the latter part of the year our beloved Pastor Albert took to his bed with a prolonged illness. The congregation's needs were graciously maintained by Rev. Lorenze Larsen of Zion Lutheran Church, together with Pastors from the District. On December 31st, 1946, Pastor Albert was called to his eternal home and the congregation mourned its loss. Pastor Albert's ministry covered 27 years.

A Victor Albert Memorial Loan Fund was established in his memory to be used for Lutheran ministerial students. A bronze plaque in the Parish Hall was dedicated to his memory during the Sunday School hour on January 1st, 1950.



REV. VICTOR ALBERT MEMORIAL PLAQUE

As the century was turned to its close, the Lord graciously bestowed upon us one of His most faithful and trusted servants. Pastor Edward V. Long came to us from Toledo, Ohio, following a call sent to him on January 21st, 1947. He attended his first vestry meeting on May 5th, 1947, and was installed during a beautiful and impressive ceremony on May 11th, 1947. Rev. C. N. Roth, President of the Texas District of the American Lutheran Church, delivered the sermon and installed Pastor Long. On the Thursday following Pastor Long's installation, an informal Galveston Night service, presided over by Galveston Pastors, was held honoring our new Pastor.

Our church has progressed rapidly under the enthusiastic, capable and loving guidance of Pastor Long. An eight o'clock Sunday morning service was authorized on June 2nd, 1947, and began officially with its first service on the Sunday of June 29th. During this same year the church donated \$300.00 to Texas Lutheran College for furnishing Room No. 7 in Langner Hall.



PASTOR LONG



REV. THOMAS SWYGERT and REV. LONG

On January 19, 1948, the congregation passed a resolution authorizing the vestry to call an assistant pastor. The Rev. Thomas Swygert accepted the call on June 16th, 1948. He was not installed until September 19th, 1948, and an informal reception was planned for him following the vesper service on the evening of his installation, Rev. Fred Meuser having acted as a substitute during the summer months.

A centennial steering committee of seven was appointed at this time. A public address system was installed and as a memorial to the late Dr. Ralph H. Long, Executive Director of the National Lutheran Council and father of our Pastor Long, our congregation contributed \$2000.00 to Lutheran World Action for the support of a refugee home on the Island of Fohr in the North Sea.

A retrospect of the year 1949 shows us that the average church attendance for the year marked the largest church attendance record in its history. (The educational branch of our congregation, the Bible School, showed a healthy growth likewise.)

Probably one of the most significant things attempted in 1949 was the completion of a church membership directory of active members—members who attend church worship, commune, and share in the support of the congregation.



CHURCH NURSERY and BIBLE SCHOOL ANNEX

In keeping with the expansion program, plans finally materialized whereby the property (two lots and improvements) immediately west of the Parish House was purchased for \$20,000. The houses on the property with the exception of one two-story house were sold and the money spent towards remodeling and equipping this building for a Nursery and Senior Department.

A Weekly Parish Paper was started beginning February 24th, 1949.



Honoring Mr. E. H. Wittig, Sr.
Senior Choir Director for 50 years.

The Midland College Choir of Midland, Michigan, was presented in concert at the church January 23rd, 1949.

Mr. E. H. Wittig, Sr., was honored with a service observing his 50 years as Senior Choir director. A reception was held following the service and a fine wrist watch presented as a token of esteem.



MRS. JULIUS BODENSIECK

In November the Texas District Luther League held a very successful convention in the Church. A beautiful banquet was planned for them at the Hotel Galvez with Mrs. Bodensieck as guest speaker.

Free outdoor movies begun the year before were continued through the summer months.

Much needed hand rails, additional hymnals, pulpit and lectern lamps, and welcome cards placed in the front of each hymnal, were all welcome additions to the Church during this year.

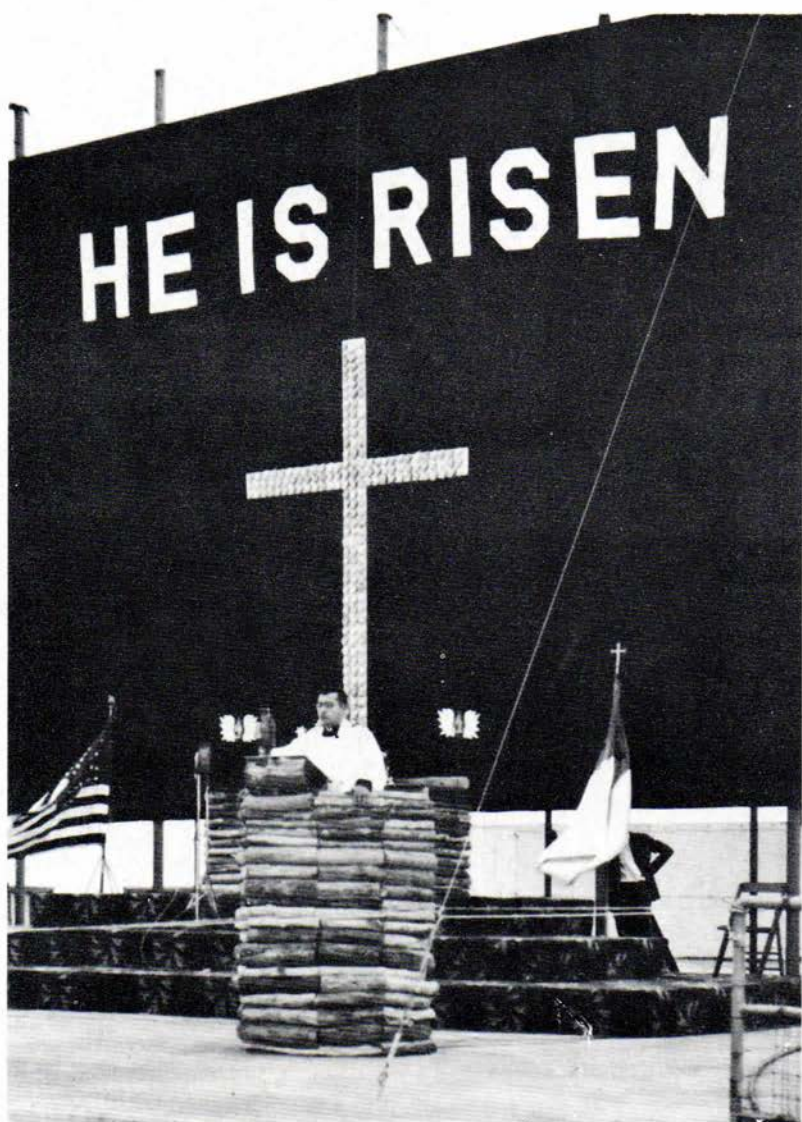
As one of the many special services and programs to be held during 1950 in observance of the 100th Anniversary of the congregation, the church sponsored a concert by the young American artist, Richard Elsasser, minister of music at the Wilshire Methodist Church, Los Angeles, California. This concert was sponsored by a group of church patrons.

The month of April, 1950, was rich in the history of the church. Stephen Haboush brought us a message from the Holy Land. He depicted the life and customs there by means of pictures and costumes.

Dawn of Easter Sunday, April 9th, found First Lutheran congregation, together with a generally invited public of over 3000 souls, at the municipal pier over a quarter of a mile out over the Gulf of Mexico, to worship the Risen Christ. First of its kind in America, this unique service provided an inspiration never to be forgotten by those in attendance. It appeared as though the Lord were present in person to illustrate His magnificence and power. Every stroke of nature was in conformance with the glory and exemplification of this service. The altar, lectern and pulpit were constructed of driftwood and from the altar, banked high with Easter Lillies, rose a ten foot cross of sea shells framed against red drapes.



THE CENTENNIAL EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE.



DRIFTWOOD ALTAR — PASTOR LONG PREACHING

Pastor Long's sermon thesis was that belief in the resurrection is fundamental to "an everlasting march to victory"—victory over death.



A PORTION OF THE CONGREGATION
EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE



BILLBOARD ANNOUNCING EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Miss Nancy Swinford sang "Open the Gates of the Temple." Choirs of the Stephen F. Austin and Lovenberg Schools sang "The Green Cathedral." During the service porpoises played around the pier and pelicans and gulls flew over to witness the event. Two movie news reels photographed much of the event, and the entire service was transmitted to all parts of the state by the Texas Quality Network.

The Twentieth Annual Convention of the Texas District, American Lutheran Church, was held in Galveston April 17th - 20th, 1950. Dr. Emmanuel Poppen, President of the American Lutheran Church, was a distinguished visitor. During the convention the District honored the 100th Anniversary of the Galveston Church with a service at which time Rev. H. C. Ziehe of Taylor presented an historical paper on the beginning of Lutheranism in Texas. This convention was said to be the best organized and most inspiring convention in the history of the Texas District.



REV. LONG and DR. EMMANUEL POPPEN

"The Call of the Woodlands" was the feature of the 15th Annual Flower Show sponsored by the Intermediate Luther League. Held on the church lawn this was a special festival arranged for our anniversary celebration.



"CALL OF THE WOODLANDS" - FLOWER FESTIVAL



THE CHURCH'S CENTENNIAL PICNIC

On May 24th, at a Festival Song Service, the choir sang the sacred cantata "Hymn of Praise" by Frederick Wilck. This cantata was the choir's contribution to the 100th Anniversary Celebration.

The church's centennial picnic arranged by the Y. U. League, was held on June 25th at the Galveston County Park at League City.

Following a barbecue lunch hundreds of members, together with their families and friends, enjoyed active games or restful quiet in the shade of the beautiful moss-covered trees.

A vesper service was held at 5:30 P.M. with Rev. Thomas Swygert delivering the sermonette. Speaking from an improvised altar at the foot of the grassy slope of a small but natural amphitheatre, Pastor Swygert spoke on the beauty of God's earth which has been placed here for our enjoyment and His glorification.

A parish worker was added to the staff to assist in the office and help with the Bible School and youth work. Miss Jean Minneman, a graduate of Capital University, assumed this position July 1, 1950.

October was designated the Anniversary Month and was opened by an Anniversary Communion Sunday. Rev. Edward Long spoke on "My Dear Old Church—Its Sure Foundation."

Homecoming Sunday followed with Rev. O. L. Proehl, Student Pastor, University of North Dakota and former pastor of Lutheran Church, officiating at the morning service and delivering the sermon "My Dear



REV. PROEHL
Preaching on Homecoming Sunday
of the Anniversary Month.

Old Church—Its Compelling Mission." The Ladies' Auxiliary held its Annual Thank-offering at the vesper service. Prior to the vesper service, Miss Meta Roehm of San Antonio, daughter of Pastor J. S. Roehm, and grand daughter of one of our earlier pastors, Rev. J. C. Roehm, was presented in an organ recital. Following the service, a reception honoring Rev. and Mrs. Proehl, Miss Meta Roehm and Mrs. Roehm, was held in the Parish House Auditorium.



LIVING DESCENDANTS OF REV. J. C. ROEHM
 Mrs. J. S. Roehm and daughter Meta, Miss Lydia Becker
 and Mr. Carl Becker.

"My Dear Old Church—Its Faithful People" was the theme of the sermon on Reunion Sunday, October 15th. All members having been baptized and confirmed in this church were invited to renew their faith at this time.



Mrs. Marie Becker

Mrs. Amelia Oppe

Oldest Confirmands

Sunday, October 22nd, was designated as Family Sunday. We were honored with the presence of Rev. Robert W. Long, Pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio, and brother of our own Rev. Edward Long. Rev. Robert Long spoke on "My Dear Old Church—Its Inclusive Unity."

A Centennial Festival Song Service, honoring past choir directors, members and organists, was held after the vesper service.

On October 29th, "My Dear Old Church—Its Everlasting Unity" was the concluding sermon in the series held during the month of October.

At the vesper service a new venture among Lutherans of Galveston and the mainland was the first Joint Lutheran Reformation rally held in commemoration of the 433rd anniversary of the Reformation. Rev. George Reck, pastor of the Zion Lutheran Church in Houston, was the guest speaker. The joint choir members from the First Lutheran Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church and Zion Lutheran Church, Galveston, sang the anthem. Dr. Ericson and Rev. Pfennig participated in the service. The offering was taken for Education Ingathering.

Over 200 members attended the Centennial Banquet held at the Galvez Hotel, November 9th, 1950. The speakers' table was



Pastor Long and his brother, Rev. Robert Long



Centennial Banquet - Pastor Long Speaking



Mr. Adrian Levy Speaking for Community at Centennial Banquet



Dr. Clarence Albers, Guest Speaker at Centennial Banquet

flanked with an arrangement of large chrysanthemums. Lighted tapers ran the length of the tables held together with green satin streamers bearing the golden letters, One Hundredth Anniversary.

Mr. Adrian Levy, Sr., brought greetings from the community. He reminisced on the part the church and its people have played in the history of Galveston.

Dr. Clarence Albers, first president of our brotherhood and professor at the University of Texas, delivered the main address.

The vesper service on Sunday, November 16th, was designated a "Youth Service." Rev. A. Windecker, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Freeport, delivered the message. This service was in celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the International Luther League of the American Lutheran Church.

Rev. F. G. Roesener, pastor of St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Austin, preached the Centennial Thanksgiving Service on November 23rd.

The first cantata ever to be presented by our Junior Choir was the Christmas Cantata, "Music of Bethlehem" by Fred B. Holton, presented on Universal Bible Sunday, December 10th, observed throughout the Christian world.

The Centennial Christmas Service was based on John 3:16.

The New Year was ushered in with the traditional and symbolical candlelight service. Preceding this service a family fellowship was held with games, singing and refreshments.

During the centennial year, membership directories were prepared and given to each family. Centennial plates were offered for sale by the Ladies' Auxiliary, and our pastors participated in the daily meditations "Thought for the Day" over radio station KGBC.

The 10:30 A. M. services were broadcast over station KGBC for a period of 12 weeks from October to December.

Thus ends one hundred years of love and fellowship in God.
"As we enter into the second half of the 20th century and the first year of our church's second century, as Christian people we can do no better than to enter with humble prayer and worship." Working together and praying together, we look forward to our second 100 years.

One Century—One Faith—One Saviour—One Hope.

"This Church is Thine, O Lord,
You are her Foundation and her Head.
We are Thy hands,
Through us Thou buildest
As we believe and as we serve."

IN MEMORIAM

Rev. G. J. Ide, Pastor, 1902-1906

Deceased April 23, 1951

Age 75 years

CHURCH STAFF



Pastor Swygert and Pastor Long



Mrs. Julius Franke, Secretary



Miss Jean Minneman
Parish Worker



Mrs. Ed. Hildebrand
Organist



Mr. E. H. Wittig, Sr.
Senior Choir Director



Frank Carter
Janitor

THE VESTRY

Preserved in a brown ledger costing \$1.90, written in German script, are the earliest minutes of the vestry dated December, 1851. According to a memorandum on the flyleaf no records were kept of the year 1850, or of the work of Pastor Guebner. As one turns the pages of this rare old volume, dating from December 1851 to December 1872, there comes the realization that here is recorded the earliest history of our church. The first page reads as follows:

Protokolle
der
Kirchenrathes Sitzungen
und
Gemeinde Versammlungen
der
Evangelisch Lutherische Gemeinde
zu
Galveston

which translated reads:

Minutes
of the
Meetings of the Vestry
and
Congregational Assembly
of
Evangelical Lutheran Church
at
Galveston

At the first Vestry meeting in December, 1851, meeting with Pastor Wendt were three gentlemen—Emme, Schindler and Bueger. The last named person must have been the secretary because his signature is attached to the minutes although it seemed a practice then for the vestry men, including the pastor, to sign them. The important business of this important meeting was the steps to be taken to incorporate the congregation into a church under the laws of Texas. At the next meeting, February 2, 1852, Pastor Wendt asked for a congregational meeting

to discuss and decide a six-point agenda among which were the election of four "Vorsteher" (Vestrymen), a location for "Gottesdienst" (Worship), the incorporation of the congregation.

This first congregational meeting was a specially called one in February. The first order of business was a motion to open with prayer and Scripture. The 4th ch. of Ephesians was read. The following men were nominated for chairman of the meeting: Hoffman, Heinshorn, Schneider and Behrens. Mr. Hoffman was elected. G. C. Emme was instructed to negotiate the rental of the Lyceum building for \$40 but if he met with opposition to raise it to \$75.

At the next Vestry meeting arrangements were made for confirmation on Palm Sunday and The Lord's Supper on Easter Sunday.

On June 28, 1852, the first annual congregational meeting was held and four vestrymen elected—Emme, Schindler, Hoffmann and Tietze, Emme receiving the highest number of votes. Tietze was elected secretary. It is interesting to note the Scripture chosen for this first congregational meeting—Hebrews 10: 23-24

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised)
And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."

The work accomplished by Pastor Heinrich Wendt this first year is really remarkable when we remember that he did not come to Galveston until November, 1851, and had only a seven-family congregation to start with.

One of the most interesting Vestry meetings recorded is that of April, 1856. It concerns itself with the church school, its curriculum, and "lesson books," McGuffey's Readers and Webster's spelling book being chosen for the learning of the English language. The subjects taught were religious history, Bible history, music, geography, arithmetic, English and German grammar, reading and writing both in German and English.

The Constitution of the congregation dated December 28, 1851, is in this first volume and 93 signatures are attached.

The Constitution must have been revised in 1860 and it, too, is followed by a list of those who evidently subscribed to the constitution, and they resolved to read it every six months in the church.

The volume closes with instructions for the care of the church by the "Kirchendiener" on Sundays and festival days.

If our church bell could speak, it would tell that in October, 1881, the Vestry paid the janitor \$2.00 to toll the bell for the funeral of the president of the United States, President Garfield; and again in 1890, \$1.00 for the funeral of Jefferson Davis.

In February, 1860, the Vestry installed gas in the church and in November, 1895, electric lights were given to the church by the confirmation class.

In August, 1893, the Vestry endorsed the overture made by the Synod of Iowa and other states that the Texas Synod merge with it. This was consummated May 9, 1894, and continued until August, 1930, when the American Lutheran Church was formed.



OFFICERS FOR 1950

President, E. A. Lobenstein; Vice President, B. F. Pietsch; Financial Secretary, Gus F. Jud; Treasurer, L. E. Schott; Secretary for the Vestry, Mrs. J. A. Franke (not pictured); Trustees: Gus F. Jud, Chairman, H. F. Wittig, Secretary-Treasurer, E. A. Lobenstein and C. A. Lehman.

Other members of the Vestry: H. Strickmeier, Chas. Steding, III, A. C. Schaper, Chas. Jahn, Raymond Zorn, Walter Janssen, Geo. Prino, Walter Gates and Rev. Ed. V. Long, Pastor.

The backbone of any church is its vestry, an organization whose duties it is

"to see that the services of God's House be held at the proper times, and conducted in accordance with the Order of the Church; that the pure Word of God be preached, as the Church confesses it, and only by those duly authorized according to the Constitution of this Congregation; that provision be made for the Christian instruction of the young; that strict discipline be maintained, the erring admonished and impenitent offenders excluded from the communion of the Church; that the property of the Congregation be cared for, and all that related to its worldly affairs properly administered. To assist the Pastor in the care of the sick and needy, in the cultivation of harmony among the members, in the promotion of the general welfare of the Congregation, and abroad."

The Vestry spends many hours giving serious thought to the affairs of the church and endeavors to handle them as deemed best.



Purchase of property west of Parish House, April 12, 1949, by a committee of the Vestry: Messrs. Gus: F. Jud, Geo. Reyder, E. A. Lobenstein, Ed. W. Hildebrand.

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

THE ALTAR GUILD



Mrs. Edward V. Long, Pastor Long, Mrs. A. C. Shaper, Mrs. T. J. Fundling, Mrs. J. A. Franke, Miss Alma H. Reyder, Miss Hattie Wittig, Mrs. R. S. Zorn, Mrs. C. E. Wegner, Mrs. Marcus Howell, Mrs. Laura Albert.

The Altar Guild is the church's organization to care for all things pertaining to the Altar Service and the needs of the chancel, pulpit and lectern.

In the history of the church, Christians feel that their churches should be beautiful houses of worship, places where God, through His Son, can commune with them and they with Him. A sense of worth erects these buildings and their loving care for them.

In this care, women have an honored place in the furnishing of altar and chancel and in the care and devotion to the needs of the sanctuary as expressed in terms of time and artistry. These needs have been cared for by devoted women throughout the years.

Since the year 1919 a special church Altar Committee has cared for paraments and articles for altar service, all chancel needs, and provided fresh flowers in the memorial vases on the altar for every worship service.

In 1947 the Altar Guild, with an increased membership, was formally organized.

The Ladies' Aid Society and the Ladies' Auxiliary provide flowers and chancel decorations for the Palm Sunday and Easter services. On other church festival days, flowers and evergreen decoration are provided by members of the congregation.

The Memorial Altar Flower Chart, on the church bulletin board, records dates available for providing memorial flowers on the altar. Following the services these flowers are generally used to bring cheer to the sick in the hospitals and shut-ins in the homes.

Membership is limited to 12 members including two members who are custodians of the pastors' vestments. The members serve by twos a month at a time, for a definite time each year. Rotation in membership will begin in 1951. At the end of a three-year membership, no member will be reappointed for at least one year.

Officers for 1950:

Director, Pastor Long; President, Miss Hattie Wittig; Vice President, Mrs. Laura Albert; Secretary, Mrs. Marcus Howell.

Members:

Mrs. Ed. V. Long, Mrs. J. A. Franke, Mrs. T. J. Fundling, Miss Alma H. Reyder, Mrs. R. S. Zorn, Mrs. A. C. Schaper, Mrs. C. E. Wegner, Mrs. Mamie Grady, Mrs. A. C. Chimene.

New Members:

Mrs. G. A. Baron and Mrs. R. H. John.

BIBLE SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

The religious education program of our church is, and has been, the pride of our church and our community. This religious education program centers around the Bible School with its week day activities, catechetical classes, Luther League and other youth organizations and missionary societies. The following pages will give you further details regarding the activities.

No record has been found as to when Sunday School was first held in the early church, but in Book 1, page 6, April 1852, you may read that the Lyceum had been rented for church services and on Easter Sunday forenoon at 10:30 and afternoon at 3:30, a children's service would be held.

One of the early superintendents still living, is Mr. E. H. Wittig, Sr., who served the Bible School as superintendent from 1890 to 1910. On May 25, 1902, the beloved Pastor Roehm, the only one of the six missionaries who stayed with the church until the end of his life, conducted his last service. On June 2 he was laid to rest in the church cemetery lot with the children of his Sunday School lovingly depositing flowers on his grave.

Mr. Wittig was succeeded by Mr. H. F. Brunkenhoefer who served until July, 1916, when Mr. Henry J. Schutte was elected superintendent. Mr. Schutte is remembered for his "400 class", whose ambition it was to enroll four hundred in the Sunday School. The annual report of the Bible School showed 480 enrolled in the Centennial year. Mr. Schutte served until May, 1921, when he moved to Houston. He had a lot to do with the change from German to English classes. Until 1913 all Sunday School minutes were written in the German language. At a meeting of the Bible School December 1, 1912, this resolution was passed: "Inasmuch as most of the teachers are English speaking and do not understand the translations in the German language, it was decided that in the future the meetings be conducted in the English language." But it was not until the first Sunday in 1916 that German singing was discontinued in the Sunday School. In 1916 the Constitution was translated into English by Miss Greta Oppe and Mr. Walter Rapp. It was in 1919 that the present Constitution was adopted. On October 15, 1916, Pastor Hasskarl gave the Sunday School his farewell address.



ST. PAUL'S MISSION
48th St. and Ave. O½



BETHANY MISSION
17th St. and Ave. M½



BIBLE SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Rev. O. L. Proehl effected many changes which benefited the Sunday School. He divided the Sunday School into a systematic body of classes according to the General Council of the Lutheran Church. He outlined a plan to establish a Mission Sunday School in the East and West sections of Galveston. In July, 1917, Rev. George Obermeyer was called as assistant to Rev. Proehl and placed in charge of the Bethany Mission at 17th and Ave. M. In the year 1920 the church property was acquired for Bible School purposes - and subsequently sold when the Parish House was built. In 1929 the church bought property at



NURSERY DEPARTMENT



NURSERY CLASS

48th O½ and built St. Paul's Chapel which is now a separate congregation under the same young man that assisted Rev. Albert and his services to St. Pauls, Rev. A. L. Pfennig.

As early as 1894, however, the Vestry endorsed a Sunday School in the West End at 30th Ave. M on a Sunday afternoon. The following year the Texas Mission Board and the Vestry considered the possibilities of a West End Mission. Rev. George Fritschel took charge and a building was dedicated at 39th and M, March 8, 1896. He was succeeded by the well-known and beloved Pastor John Harder. In 1909 the Synod asked First



BEGINNERS DEPARTMENT



PRIMARY DEPARTMENT



PRIMARY DEPARTMENT



JUNIOR DEPARTMENT



JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

Lutheran to take over the mission. The Vestry did not respond and this church was closed.

When the church was remodeled in 1915, the Sunday School met in the Y.M.C.A. The pupils took a marked interest in the building of the church and contributed the window, "Christ Blessing the Children", and the other window in the Lyceum annex, as well as a number of Bible Class windows.

On March 17, 1916, we find the first reference to the Cradle Roll and the committee appointed to set it up: Mrs. Henry J. Schutte, Mrs. Ed. Hildebrand and Miss Anna Puella. The an-



INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT



INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT

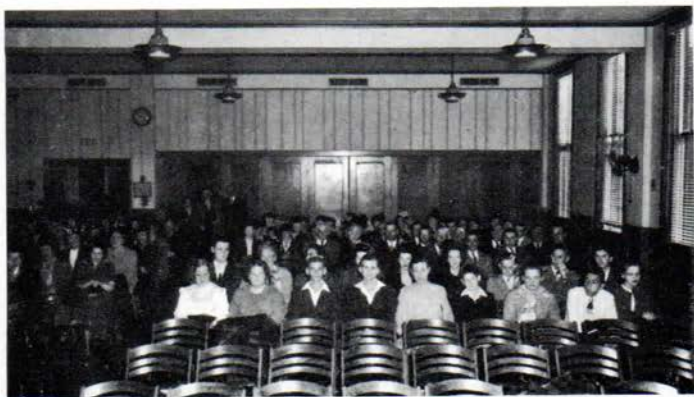
nual report showed 51 babies enrolled. Today the Cradle Roll and Nursery occupy the lower floor of the recently acquired property west of the Parish House.

The year before Mr. Puelle visited the Bible School and suggested a children's choir. This later developed under the leadership of Mr. Oscar Springer and Miss Alice Hoffman. Today the church has both a children's and a junior choir.

With the coming of Rev. Victor Albert in 1919, systematic teacher training was begun and the Bible School became affiliated with the newly organized Sunday School Teachers' Asso-



ADULT DEPARTMENT



ADULT DEPARTMENT

ciation founded in San Antonio, Texas. The envelope system was introduced in 1921.

In August, 1922, the basement of the church was renovated to provide quarters for the growing Primary Department at a cost of \$1600. The Vestry appropriated \$500 and the Bible School \$1100. Miss Greta Oppe became its first grade leader and continued to supervise its work until 1940 when the Parish House was built and the Juniors called her to be department superintendent.

The Home Department began in 1924 under the able leadership of Mrs. Carl Becker.



CONFIRMATION CLASS



ADULT CONFIRMATION CLASS

No history of the Bible School would be complete without mentioning the Monday Bible Hour which Pastor Albert conducted with an able staff for so many years for the children 10-13. Back in 1913 Mr. Schütte suggested stereoscopic views as a means of creating interest in the Bible School. In 1927 the Bible School purchased its first projection machine with slides on the life of Christ. No rainy day kept Bible Hour children at home. That was the day the projection machine was brought out and heavy brown wrapping paper darkened the windows—a far cry from the beautiful color films and movies that our present Pastor Long has introduced into our Parish work.

There is one item in the Sunday School of long ago that might need clarification in future years, namely this:

"Check to O. Springer for 10,000 Sunday School tickets, \$5.25." These "tickets" were Scripture passages, the "Memory passages" of today. There is also a character in that Sunday School of yesteryear who deserves a passing word—Mr. Henry Deubner, Sr., who served the Bible School as librarian until July, 1921.



REV. AND MRS. E. F. HANNEMANN
Missionaries in New Guinea

In 1935 the Bible School voted \$300 for the support of Rev. E. F. Hannemann, missionary to New Guinea, but as early as 1926 the Sunday School was helping to support three missionaries in New Guinea.

In 1942 Missionary Hannemann and his wife were guests of the Bible School.

Officers of Bible School Teachers' Association in this Centennial Year are: Miss Alma H. Reyder, president; Mrs. W. B. Jones, vice president; Miss Ruth Albert, secretary; Mrs. R. S. Zorn, financial secretary; Mrs. Henry Deubner, treasurer; Mrs. E. H. Lhoste, librarian; Mr. E. A. Lobenstein, secretary of attendance.

Under the leadership of Pastor Long and his assistant, Pastor Thomas Swygert, much has been accomplished by the Bible School and the youth of the Church during the Centennial Year.

ORGANISTS AND CHOIRS

Music is an essential part of worship and has a definite and an important place in all church services.

God manifests Himself through His Word, proclaimed by the minister, but the choir and organist are also in His service and carry out their task in prayer, song and music through the rendition of anthems and organ selections in worshipful spirit.

Conscious of the church's rich musical heritage, the choir realizes that its major responsibility is the singing of hymns and the liturgy with spirit and reverence as a help to congregational participation.

Our choirs dating back to 1886 have held the high aim of beautifying and enriching the service solely as an aid in devotion and in preparing the spiritual mood for the sermon and scripture reading.

The church's records show that the following organists have served First Lutheran Church beginning in the year 1886. Mr. Carl Brandes and Miss Elma Kuhlhorn—elected organist 1887. Mr. Carl Brandes requested permission of vestry to organize a church choir.

- 1889 Teacher Bandlitz, organist, but later moved from the city.
- 1889 Teacher E. Richmond and Mr. Wiesepope also served a short time.
- 1890 Carl Brandes again called as organist.
- 1893 Mr. Alex Jancke is listed as organist.
- 1894 Mr. E. Schneller was called as teacher and organist and organized a church choir.
- 1895 Prof. Fred Hermann was elected choir director and organist and also served through 1896.
- 1897 Mr. Hermann resigned and Miss Bertha Volger was elected.
- 1898 A new organ was installed.
- 1898 The first notation that Mr. Ernst Wittig was made choir director. This position he held through
- 1899 and has continued to serve through the years to the present.
- 1900 Our organist, Miss Bertha Volger, died in the 1900 disaster.
- 1901 Music teacher Mr. F. J. Ressel became organist and continued in this capacity for three years.

- 1904 Mr. Ressel resigned and left for Europe. Mr. Oscar Springer assisted as organist and in
- 1905 was elected.
- 1907 Mr. Springer resigned but held the place until 1908.
- 1908 Knut Johnson took over as organist for several months.
- 1908 Mr. John Bird was elected organist and served to 1909.
- 1910 Miss Elsie Oppe (Mrs. Ed. Hildebrand) was employed as organist and has held the position these forty years and carried on the work successfully and with honor and ever increasing progress.

The present church choir, in its own special sphere of ministry, is ever in full accord with the church's program of constant, uninterrupted service and of wholehearted cooperation and fellowship with other church organizations and community sacred musical recitals.

The choir and organist have contributed inspirational parts in observance of the church cycles, and to the many anniversary commemorations and festivals of our own First Lutheran throughout the years, to special observances of the larger church body



SENIOR CHOIR, 1950

E. H. Wittig, Jr., Ed. Hildebrand, Wilson Dickey, George Bock, Carl Hansen, Jean Minneman, Alma E. Reyder, Mrs. Carl Hansen, Mrs. Geo. Wolfer, Mr. Geo. Wolfer, Elsa Wittig, Barbara Barnett, Mrs. Marvin Echols, Jr., Anita Reyder, Mrs. E. H. Wittig, Jr., Alma. H. Reyder, Mrs. Wilson Dickey, Mrs. Ed. Hildebrand, Mrs. A. C. Schaper, Hattie Wittig, Mr. E. H. Wittig, Sr., Greta Oppe, Mrs. E. A. Lobenstein, Mrs. Houston Schirmer, Mrs. Ed. V. Long (not pictured).

and to the Reformation celebrations with the presentation of cantatas, specially prepared anthems and sacred organ music fitting the occasions.

Among the celebrations in which the choir had a special part may be here noted that in April, 1916, at the dedication of the newly remodeled church, special anthems were rendered by a Junior and Senior Choir;

1919. For Easter observance the choir gave the Rendition of the Cantata by H. W. Petree "Life Everlasting".

1925. At the Diamond Jubilee, the 75th anniversary of the founding of our church, a special augmented choir of fifty participants, with orchestra, provided the music and anthems and presented the cantata "The Kingdom of God" by Heyser.

1933. On the occasion of the 450th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther's birth the choir presented the splendid Reformation Cantata by Christiansen. At this time, also, the church choir of 25 members appeared robed for the first time in churchly vestments of black cassock and white surplice.

January 1935. In observance of the 400th anniversary of Luther's translation of the Bible into the language of the people the choir presented the Christmas Cantata, "The Christmas Glory", as an expression to God for the rich heritage of the open Bible.

October 1935. In commemoration of the 85th anniversary of our church the choir's part was the rendition of the Cantata "The Holy City" by A. R. Gaul.

In 1940 for the 90th anniversary there were specially prepared anthems and musical selections.

1944. In March the choir took a vital part in the service honoring Pastor Victor Albert for his 25 years of consecrated service in the ministry of our church and in the service of our Lord.

1946. At the installation of Rev. Edward V. Long as pastor of First Ev. Lutheran the choirs' anthems of praise had their place of devotion in the service.

1948. At the service of music to honor Mr. E. H. Wittig, commemorating his fifty years of faithful and loyal service as choir director, the children's choir, the Junior Choir and the Senior

Choir rendered their anthems in homage to God and in recognition of a man's loyal service to his church.

The choir has at times sponsored splendid concerts and recitals by visiting choirs. Among these may be mentioned the organ concert of sacred music by the internationally known organist, Edward Rechlin, the concerts by the Texas Lutheran College, and, Richard Ellsasser, the latter sponsored as one of the many special services and programs held in 1950 in observance of the One Hundredth Anniversary.

The membership stands at twenty-five.

Officers for 1950:

Director, E. H. Wittig, Sr.; President, Hattie Wittig; Organist, Mrs. Ed. Hildebrand; Secretary, Greta Oppe.

JUNIOR CHOIR

Organized in the Fall of 1945 the Junior Choir now has an enrollment of 37. This choir, composed of boys and girls over 12 years of age, sings for the eight o'clock service on Sunday mornings, except for one Sunday allotted the Children's Choir and an occasional soloist. This group has sung anthems with the Children's Choir, participated in the Centennial Song Service with the Senior Choir, presented special music for Youth Services on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Eve Midnight services and on occasions has sung at the Letitia Rosenberg Home for Women.



JUNIOR CHOIR, 1950

The Junior Choir presented the Christmas Centennial Cantata, "The Music of Bethlehem".

The purpose of the choir is to supply music for the eight o'clock service on Sunday mornings, lead the congregation in worship, and introduce new hymns by singing them as anthems.

Directors: Miss Jean Minneman and Mrs. E. W. Hildebrand.

THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Children's Choir was organized in June, 1948, with an initial group of twelve children. The choir, composed of children between the ages of 6 and 12, has grown to its present membership of 36 members. Once every month the group sings at the eight o'clock service, and at special services when the opportunity presents itself: Rally Day, Thanksgiving, and the Midnight Service on Christmas Eve.

The purpose of this choir is to provide a vital part of the education of the children in church life, and a training ground for the Junior and Senior Choirs.

Miss Jean Minneman and Mrs. E. W. Hildebrand, directors.



THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR, 1950

THE LADIES' AID SOCIETY



The oldest of the organizations of our First Ev. Lutheran Church is that of the Ladies' Aid Society.

A group of 17 Christian women, members of our First Ev. Lutheran Church, held the initial meeting November 22nd, 1882, at the church with Mrs. Dorothea Schmidt as chairman.

Their plan in mind was to bring spiritual comfort and material assistance to the needy in the name of the Lord and His church and to bring a sense of His Presence and love with every service given and every visit made.

A meeting on November 21st, 1882, led to permanent organization and to the resolution to adopt a constitution.

The meetings were set for the first Wednesday of each month at the church, opening with prayer and scripture reading by the Pastor.

At the January meeting in 1883, the following officers were elected to serve for the year:

President: Mrs. Helene Hildenbrand

Secretary: Mrs. Theresa Aschoff

Treasurer: Mrs. Helene Beissner.

The following year Mrs. Susanna Wolfer was elected vice-president. These ladies held office for many years. At the death

of Mrs. Hildenbrand, Mrs. Biessner was elected president and served in this office for a long time.

The purpose and task of this organization is to help poor and sick people when in need, to assist in church and mission work.

These objectives were striven for throughout the years, and many thousands of dollars were used for this purpose. A list of approximately 8 to 10 families were on the monthly roll for financial and material aid.

Only the interest of the \$10,000.00 legacy, gift of Mr. Henry Rosenberg, was used for charitable purposes.

In the early days of service, some of the projects receiving support and substantial contributions were: toward Henry Rosenberg Bust for Rosenberg Library; for repair to church storm damage; assistance to many storm sufferers; to keep church cemetery in good condition and clean; in 1915 for church remodeling and for organ purchase and installation; regularly to Texas and foreign mission work; to Red Cross Fund; contributions of clothing and food for European relief after World Wars I and II; to placing the art glass window, "The Announcement to the Shepherds" in sacred memory of Pastor J. C. Roehm; a memorial donation to the church at her 75th anniversary celebration.

Two houses were built on the empty lots 2412-2418 Ave. G, owned by the organization. Rent moneys are placed in the society's treasury for its stipulated purposes as aid to the needy and for mission support.

At the meeting of January, 1924, it was voted to change from the use of the German language to the use of the English in the regular meetings.

In more recent years the same policy of service had been carried out and the 10 minute devotional of scripture reading and prayer, conducted by the Pastor, is augmented and given added interest by an inspirational talk on some timely topic contributing interest and information for the edification and upbuilding of its members.

The social hour with refreshments at the close of each meeting brings a closer contact and a firmer bond of friendly fellowship among the members.

On November 22, 1933, the Ladies' Aid observed the Golden Anniversary with an appropriate program, with a fellowship banquet at Hotel Galvez, and on the following Sunday a special service of Thanksgiving and praise was held in commemoration of this anniversary of 50 years service.

In June 1944, the Charter granted the Ladies' Aid Society under the laws of Texas in 1893 was renewed and extended for an additional period of 50 years, from the expiration date of the original charter. The name was changed to the Ladies' Aid Society of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Galveston, Texas.

Support to missions, community needs, Lutheran Welfare, Lutheran World Action, Superannuated Pastor's Fund is given annually.

A monthly contribution has been made to the church since organization.

The appointed standing committees with quarterly change of personnel are in constant touch with the ill and needy in the homes, hospitals and institutions for women and children, to give words of cheer, the handclasp of Christian fellowship, spiritual comfort and material help where needed throughout the year.

Officers for the year 1950 are:

President: Miss Alma E. Reyder,
Vice-President: Mrs. Annie Johnson,
Secretary: Miss Hattie Wittig,
Treasurer: Mrs. Mamie Grady.

The membership enrolled numbers 44 active workers and 4 honorary members.

As co-workers with God, members and officers strive to give whole-hearted support and unstinted cooperation in time and effort to carry on the church's work in their particular sphere of service.

With prayer for wisdom and God's guidance, the Ladies' Aid looks forward to His blessing upon their work and for an increasing use of its members to the greater glory of His name in the coming 68th year of service.

THE LADIES' AUXILIARY



The Ladies' Auxiliary of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized April 6, 1916, under the leadership of Mrs. W. H. Schutte and Mrs. H. F. Brunkenhoefer.

The first officers were:

Mrs. H. F. Brunkenhoefer	President
Mrs. W. H. Schutte	Vice President
Mrs. O. M. Springer	Second Vice President
Miss Emilie Koester	Secretary
Mrs. H. Koester	Treasurer
Miss Isabella Freund	Cor. Secretary

The object of the organization was to raise money for the church and create a spirit of fellowship among its members, but in later years when our church merged with other synods to form the American Lutheran Church its object was changed; (1) to work for the welfare of our church, (2) to create interest in the program of the American Lutheran Church, (3) to promote sociability among its members and in 1921 it was voted to extend the scope of the work of the auxiliary and study the missionary activities of the American Lutheran Church as well as our own church.

In 1931 the auxiliary joined the Women's Missionary Federation of the American Lutheran Church fully realizing this would prove an additional outlet for missionary activities. "What

a privilege it was to have a part in so many varied and far-reaching activities in the cause of Christian Missions."

In 1937 under the guidance of Rev. Victor Albert the auxiliary formed circles to increase the membership and to more deeply study the Word of God. Seven circles were formed and have given the members more active participation in Christian Service, and helped to develop leaders.

Miss Emilie Koester answered God's call for workers in His vineyard and became a deaconess and recently celebrated her 25th anniversary in this worthy cause.

Many of the activities and accomplishments which the Auxiliary participated in through the years are as follows:

Formed Red Cross Serving Units in World War I and World War II and over 6000 garments were made and many kit bags donated.

Also assisted in all "drives" for war funds as well as serving service men meals and taking care of their bodily needs.

Served with the Ladies' Aid Society in furnishing Thanksgiving dinners to children of Home for Homeless over a period of years.

Sent clothes to needy children in Poland.

Donated annually to:

Superannuated Pastors Fund,

Good Samaritan Home of North Dakota,

New Guinea and India Missionary Work.

Christmas cheer has been provided yearly for needy families.

Monthly visitation to sick and "shut-in".

Clothing sent to Europe for refugees.

Donated to the Home Economics Department of Texas Lutheran College.

Quite recently the Auxiliary has sponsored the work of the Junior Mission Band and has organized a Mission Band for all children between the years of 6 and 11.

We too, give annually a "Thank Offering" to the Women's Missionary Federation through our "Thank Offering Boxes."

These little boxes are indeed a magic box. How few and small the coins which are put into it, yet how great and far-reaching the work that is carried on with them.

We have through the years grown spiritually and have become a well informed group on all missionary activities not only of our own church, but the church at large.

Much credit and appreciation is given the Pastors of our church throughout the years for their help and advice and guidance.

We are thankful too, for the fine leadership, and for the growth in Christian knowledge that has become ours through the years. "What shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits to us."

We answer with the Psalmist, "I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving."
Officers for 1950:

President—Mrs. Max M. Wegner.

First Vice-President—Mrs. Victor Albert.

Second Vice-President—Mrs. Henry Deubner.

Secretary—Mrs. Maurice Rosofsky.

Treasurer—Mrs. Carl Hansen.

Corresponding Secretary—Mrs. W. F. Hegmann, Jr.

MEN'S BROTHERHOOD



On Monday night, February 21, 1927, all men of the church were invited by Ed. W. Hildebrand to attend a social gathering to be held in the church parlors. About forty men attended. Following a splendid supper, served by a group of ladies, Mr. Hildebrand, acting as chairman, explained the object of the meeting which was primarily to acquire an expression in regard to forming a men's society. A discussion followed, with benefits and necessities cited and a vote was cast in favor of forming a Men's Society.

A committee consisting of Pastor Albert, chairman, Mr. R. C. Hauser, Mr. C. C. Albers, Mr. C. A. Lehman, Mr. Carl Becker, Mr. George Reyder and Mr. V. A. Reinhardt, secretary, was selected to draw up a constitution, choose three titles for the organization and select three men as candidates for each office.

On March 14, 1927, the title Men's League was voted the name of the organization and the following officers were elected:

President, C. C. Albers; First Vice-President, R. C. Hauser; Second Vice-President, G. A. Lehman; Secretary, V. Reinhart; Treasurer, George Wolfer.

Mr. C. C. Albers moved from Galveston in August, 1927, and was succeeded by Mr. R. C. Hauser.

On April 20, 1931, a motion was adopted that the Men's League adopt the principles of the National Lutheran Brotherhood.

On April 12, 1937, the four-fold plan of the National Brotherhood was adopted from cover to cover.

On September 17, 1938, in a communication to the Texas Lutheran Brotherhood, the name Lutheran Brotherhood was first used and it was in the same year that the Men's League elected to become affiliated with the Texas District Brotherhood.

On March 13, 1950, in line with a recommendation to completely reorganize this organization, a new constitution was submitted by the Executive committee. This constitution was thoroughly discussed and adopted after a few changes and additions were made.

The name of this group as adopted in the Constitution was the Men's Brotherhood. Practically all of the men's organizations in the American Lutheran Church are called Brotherhoods so this is in line with the national organization of which the group is a part.

Objectives of the organization are:

- To win the unsaved for Christ,
- To bring back the lapsed member,
- To develop the church life of the youth,
- To increase the attendance of men at church services,
- To practice and promote Christian fellowship,
- To practice and promote Christian stewardship,
- To make God's work the program of the church and to make the members conscious of this very fact that we are about our Heavenly Father's Business.

Officers for 1950:

President—Walter Janssen.

First Vice-President—H. B. Strickmeier.

Second Vice-President—A. E. Jud.

Secretary—Glynn I. Myers.

Treasurer—E. A. Lauzon, Jr.

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

On March 2, 1902, permission was granted to Pastor G. J. Ide to organize a Luther League—a request of Fred Koehler and Henry Buttleman.

A group of girls under the leadership of Miss Hattie Wittig organized May 19, 1922, as the Junior Missionary Society of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church becoming a study group of church missions and related topics. The main objective was to



EARLY MEMBERS OF THE JUNIOR MISSIONARY SOCIETY

inform themselves regarding the work of the church missions at home and abroad; to learn of the life and work of outstanding missionaries, both of the past and present, and to serve in the spreading of the gospel of salvation in the field locally. The Junior Missionary department of the Missionary Outlook was used as a study guide. The membership was composed of young people ranging from confirmation age upward and kept an average enrollment of thirty members.

The officers elected at the initial meeting were: Herma Koester (Mrs. W. Balderach), president; Adeline Schutte (Mrs. Max Roitsch), secretary-treasurer; Miss Hattie Wittig, sponsor; Pastor Albert, director. Charter members included: Anita Reyder, Mildred John, Elsie Deubner, Herma Koester, Caroline Ulrich, Adeline Schutte, Henrietta Jahn, Marie Fretwell, Mildred Johnson, Anna Vautrin. The enrollment grew to an active thirty members.

The offerings were used as gifts to mission causes, and locally to assist in bringing cheer and gifts to residents of the Old

Ladies Home, the Home for Homeless, the children's hospital and to other shut-ins.

Meetings were held on the first and third Friday of each month until in recent years when meetings were called for special purposes only.

Because of the duplication and similarity of interests and programs, the Junior Missionary Society was absorbed by the Luther League. However, a meeting was held in November, 1944, for the purpose of planning Christmas gifts for the Ladies at the Letitia Rosenberg Home for Women. This was the last meeting of the Junior Missionary Society after a period of twenty-two years of happy fellowship and loyal service in the name of and with the blessing of our Lord and Master.

These organizations grew into Junior, Intermediate and Senior Leagues, and in 1945 the Luther Leagues changed their program of the Luther League of America to the full program of the Luther League of the American Lutheran Church.

The object of these organizations was to establish firmly the young people of this congregation upon the foundation of God's Word; to assist them in being loyal members of the congregation; to train them to become active and faithful workers in the Church at large; to foster among them the spirit of Christian Fellowship and social intercourse.

In the summer of 1948 the young people of the church were reorganized with the goal of becoming established on a more



FIRST LUTHERAN YOUTH

solid basis. The name of the Senior Luther League was changed to

A. **First Lutheran Youth** (F.L.Y.) and was composed of young people above the Intermediate Luther League age group. A new constitution was written and adopted, which binds this organization to the youth movement of the American Lutheran Church.

This organization has taken an active interest in Federation, District and International Luther League affairs by attending rallies, the Leadership School, the Bible Camp and conventions.

Officers for 1950:	Jan. to Sept.	Sept. through Dec.
President.....	Catherine Schaper	Catherine Schaper
Vice-President.....	Alberta Plain	Leslie Schroeder
Secretary.....	Joyce Klyng	Anna Belle Schaper
Treasurer.....	Mrs. Stanley Lang	Mrs. Stanley Lang

B. The **Intermediate Luther League**, composed of children age 12 through 14, was sponsored by the Bible School until 1949 when the sponsorship was assumed by the Vestry. The Vestry supervises its program through an Educational Activities Committee. A new constitution was prepared and adopted.



INTERMEDIATE LEAGUE

The work of the Intermediate League follows the plan of the Luther League of the American Lutheran Church; sponsors the sale of Christmas seals for the Grace Lutheran Sanitorium at San Antonio, Texas, and the annual Church Flower Festival.

Officers for 1950: Jan. to Sept.

President.....Ida Akin
Vice-President..... Benny Wedhorn
Secretary.....Elise Goodwin
Treasurer.....Norvel Maser

Sept. through Dec.

Jerry Hansen
Floyd Muehlberger
Joyce Ann Lhoste
Mary Agnes Hasselmier



HIGH SCHOOL GROUP

C. In October 1950, a **High School Group** was formed as an auxiliary to supplement the age groups already existing in the youth organizations. This group follows the general program of the Luther League of the American Lutheran Church.

The officers elected were:

President—Karl Deubner
Vice-President—Elise Goodwin
Secretary—Jane Macklin
Treasurer—Fred Maser, Jr.

THE Y - U LEAGUE



On January 20, 1949, a group of approximately fifty married people met at the Parish House for the purpose of organizing the married couples of First Lutheran Church. This organization was named the Y - U (Young-United) League.

This league is composed of young married couples whose combined ages do not exceed 80 years.

The Y - U League has the responsibility of the church nursery and supplies baby-sitters during the 10:30 A.M. services. It cares for the linens and toys and sees that the nursery is open for special services. The League also fits itself into the activities of the church where needed. It helped to decorate the Pier for the first Easter Sunrise Service, assumed responsibility of the church-wide picnic held in League City and provided gifts and entertainment for underprivileged children.

The objectives of the organization are:

1. To provide Christian fellowship with congenial friends.
2. To cultivate Christian character.
3. To help build a Christian philosophy of life.
4. To strive to make home life, community life and international life more Christian.
5. To increase religious knowledge based on the Bible and other religious literature.
6. To strengthen the cause of Christ in the Church, at home and abroad.

Officers are: Marvin Echols, president; Waunita Schaper, first vice-president; Mildred Rosofsky, second vice-president; Louise Cooper, secretary, Jan.-Apr.; Lillian Seay, secretary Apr.-Jan.; Eugene Lhoste, treasurer.

JUNIOR MISSION BAND



The Junior Mission Band, organized October 21, 1950, is made up of children from age 6 through age 11, and any child may become a member by attending the semi-monthly meetings. These meetings are held on the first and third Saturday mornings at 10 o'clock.

The Band is sponsored by the Ladies' Auxiliary of First Lutheran Church and follows the programs outlined in the *Missionary Outlook*, the monthly magazine of the Women's Missionary Federation. Its leader is Mrs. Helen Steding.

The aim of the Junior Mission Band is to teach children to become missionary minded; to help them to realize the need of spreading the Gospel and their responsibility in doing so. It gives them a common project in which to work together; it teaches leadership; and through fellowship, enables the children to become better acquainted with those of the same faith as they grow up.

COMMITTEES

USHERS' COMMITTEE



Although existing for many years in faithful service, this committee presented its first formal report in 1949.

It is the duty of the Ushers' Committee to function at all church services, both regular and special, and to see to the comfort of the congregation.

Committee, 1950:

Charlie Steding III, Chairman;

Henry Strickmeier, Co-Chairman.

Members:

Charles Zinke, R. S. Zorn, George Prino, C. F. Johnson, M. Rosofsky, E. A. Lauzon, Jr., J. A. Franke, G. I. Myers, W. Gates, T. Schaper, S. Lang, Donald Bell.

M. Rosofsky and E. A. Lauzon not pictured.

CHURCH BUILDING COMMITTEE



At the annual meeting of the congregation April 29, 1946, the following recommendation was voted upon and carried:

"Be it resolved, that as a fitting and worthy project to commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of our Church's contribution to the upbuilding of God's Kingdom in our beloved city, we recommend the construction of a new church and respectfully suggest that this matter be presented at the annual meeting of the congregation."

On the basis of this resolution, a permanent Building Committee, consisting of 15 members, was appointed in 1949 for the purpose of planning for a future new church.

The following are members of this committee:

George Reyder, chairman; Miss Greta Oppe, Miss Hattie Wittig, Mrs. Max M. Wegner, A. H. Schaper, Walter Janssen, Miss Alma Reyder, Benjamin Springer, Ed. Lobenstein, Carl Becker, Henry Deubner, George Wolfer, Carl Hansen, G. F. Jud, Ed. W. Hildebrand, Rev. Ed. V. Long, ex-officio.

100th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES
FIRST EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
Galveston, Texas



GENERAL COMMITTEE: Carl A. Nau, Chairman; Harden F. Wittig, Vice-Chairman; Miss Alma H. Reyder, Gus F. Jud, E. W. Hildebrand, Mrs. E. A. Lobenstein, J. W. Dickey; Pastor Long and Pastor Swygert, Ex-officio.



HISTORICAL: Carl Becker, Chairman; Hattie Wittig, Carl Hansen, Mrs. V. A. Albert.
Mrs. H. Durham and Julia Theobald not pictured.



EDITORIAL: Mrs. Max Wegner and Miss Greta Oppe, Co-chairmen;
Mary Jane Steding, Irene Herthal, Mrs. J. A. Franke.



PHOTOGRAPHIC: Mr. J. W. Dickey and Mr. H. Wittig, Co-chairmen.



BANQUET: Mr. H. C. Deubner and Mrs. Geo. Wolfer, Co-chairmen; Mrs. R. Zorn, Mrs. E. R. Pietsch, Mrs. Donald Bell, Mrs. H. C. Deubner, Mrs. Fred Maser. Alma E. Reyder not pictured.



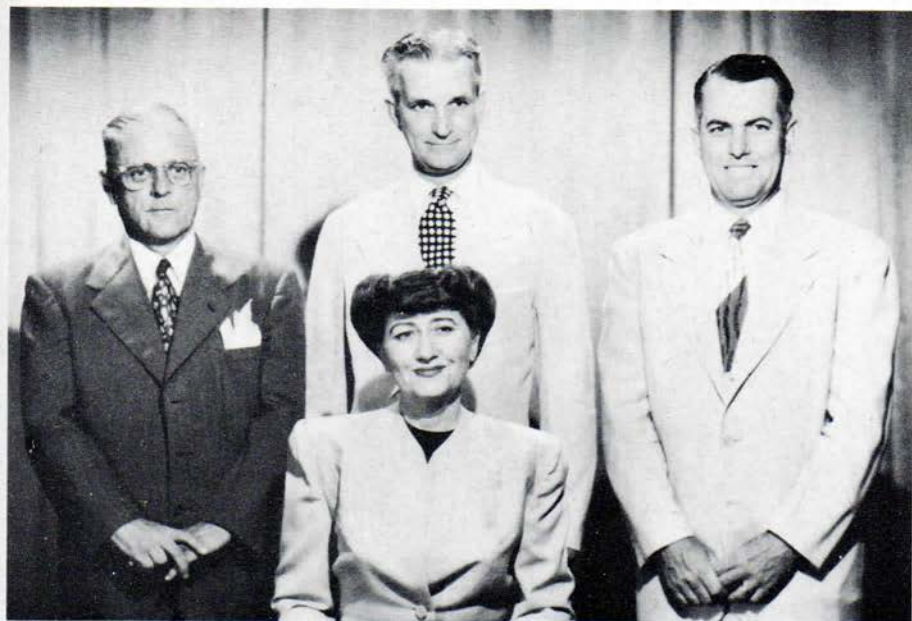
CHURCH DIRECTORY: Mrs. Harold Schaper, Chairman; Anna Belle Schaper, Co-chairman; Mrs. Geo. Prino, Ruth Albert. Committee members not in picture are Mrs. T. R. Boyesen, Alma Lehman and Evelyn Schneider.



CONVENTION: Mr. Geo. H. Reyder, Chairman; Carl Becker, Raymond Zorn, Julius Franke, Chas. Steding, III, C. A. Lehman, Mrs. Carl Hansen, Alice Amundsen, Mrs. C. E. Zinke, Mrs. H. B. Strickmeier, Mrs. Chas. Steding, III, Mrs. George Prino, Mrs. Ed. Lobenstein, Mrs. Carl Nau, Miss Julia Reyder, Mrs. Dorothy Steding, Mr. B. F. Pietsch, Miss Alma E. Reyder, Mrs. O. M. Scales, Mrs. Fred Maser, Mrs. Geo. H. Wolfer.
Not Pictured: Mrs. C. E. Zinke, Mrs. George Prino, Mrs. Geo. H. Wolfer.



FINANCE: Mr. E. A. Lobenstein, Chairman; E. W. Hildebrand, Lawrence Purjet, Marcus Howell, Walter Gates, Mrs. L. G. Sanders, Anita Reyder.
Lawrence Purjet and Anita Reyder not shown.



ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET: Benjamin Springer and Mrs. L. G. Sanders, Co-chairmen; A. C. Becker, Donald Bell.

SPEAKERS: Dr. Carl A. Nau, Chairman; George Wolfer, Alma H. Reyder and Greta Oppe.

PUBLICITY: Mr. Gus F. Jud, Chairman.



EARLY CHURCH ACTIVITIES



Teacher Carl Brandes and his school.



Picnic Group, 1905



CONFIRMATION CLASSES



Nursery Party, 1922



Confirmation Class, 1929



Vacation Bible School

PRESENT DAY CHURCH ACTIVITIES



Outdoor Scene—Christmas



Another Christmas Outdoor Scene



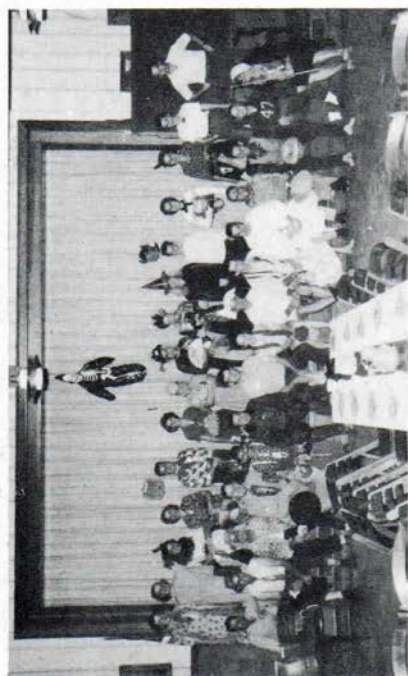
Teacher Training Class



Church Tellers



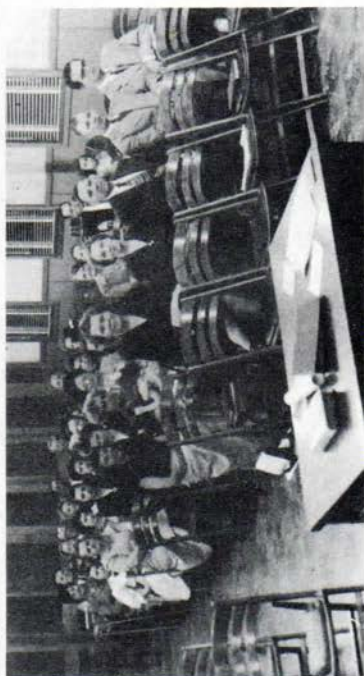
Parish Paper Helpers



Halloween Party, Y - U League



Scene from "Little Women"



Parent-Teachers Meeting



Parent-Teachers Meeting





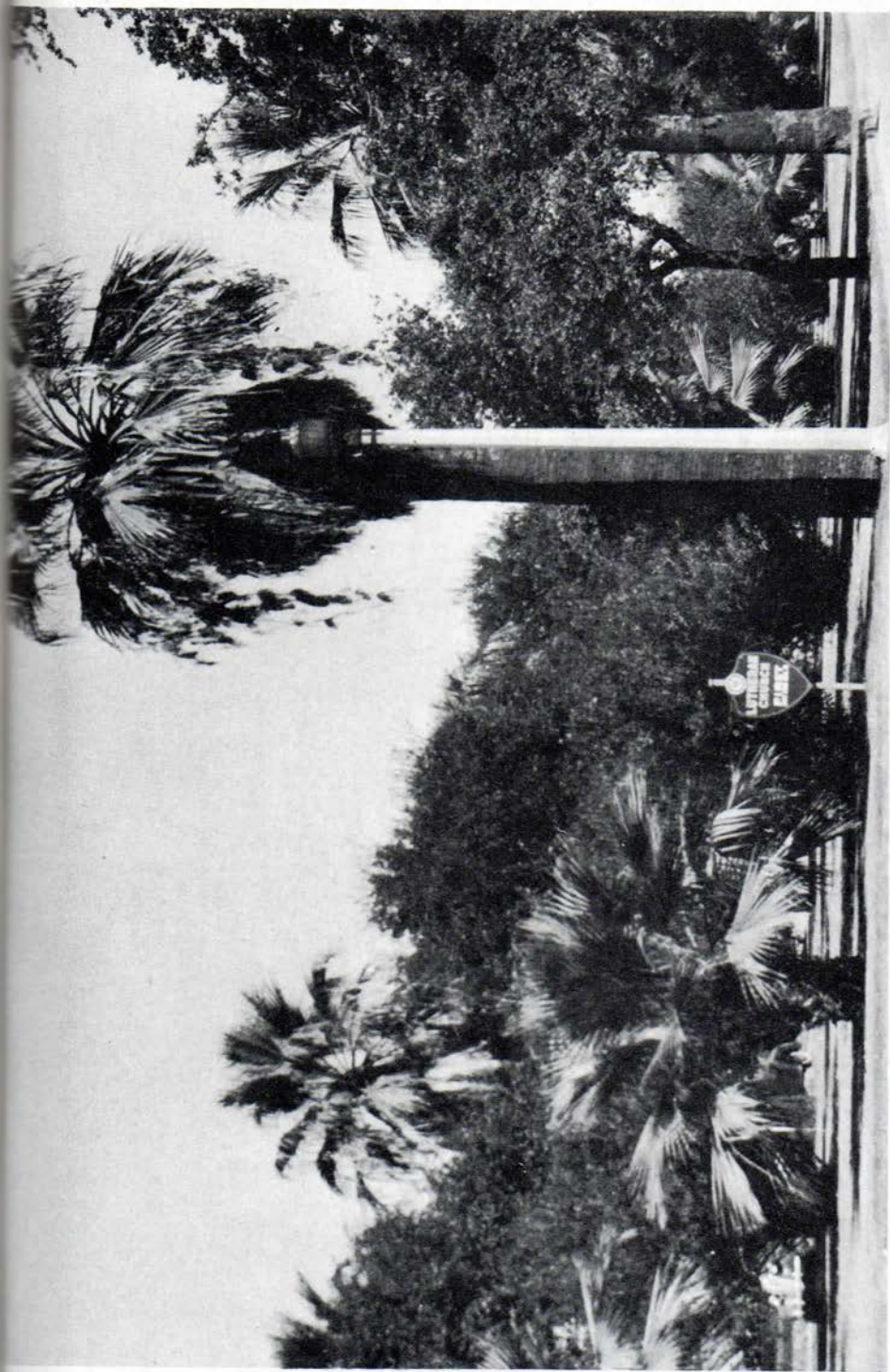
Candle Light Service, December 26, 1948



A Baptism



Communion



First Lutheran Church Marker, 24th and Broadway

CENTENNIAL FIGURES

The extent to which the influence of First Evangelical Lutheran Church has reached in its first century is most adequately reflected in showing the number of individuals reached in the performance of official acts of the pastors.

Our pastors have in the course of 100 years officiated in the following ways:

- 10,116 persons have been baptized
- 4,250 persons have been confirmed
- 3,559 marriages have been solemnized
- 4,538 persons have been buried

Certainly the ministry of our congregation has had a far-reaching and impressive effect upon the homes of Galveston and surrounding territory.

For the benefit of posterity we record certain facts taken from our annual report for 1950—the centennial year. At its end our congregation numbered 1675 baptized members and 1177 confirmed members. Eight hundred individuals communed at least once during the year while a total of 4307 communions were administered—an all-time high.

Another record is to be noticed in the fact that 38,596 persons worshiped during the year at all services. The average morning attendance at worship was 450 and for the evening 157—also the highest record. The total average attendance per Sunday was 607, by far the largest recorded. Average Bible School attendance was 360 per Sunday, establishing another high mark.

The members supported their church in the most generous way, contributing \$29,401.96 towards local expenses and \$8,785.29 for benevolence purposes, all exclusive of the contributions of the Bible School.

As future generations read these facts and figures, we pray that they may be moved to exceed them all in expanding the out-reach of Christ's Gospel.