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THE HISTORY OF LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION  
IN CATAWBA COUNTY

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School  
Appalachian State Teachers College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
James Robert Taglauer  
August 1961

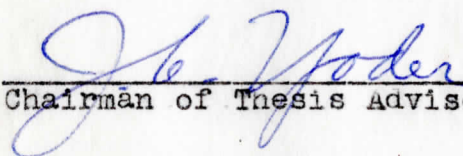
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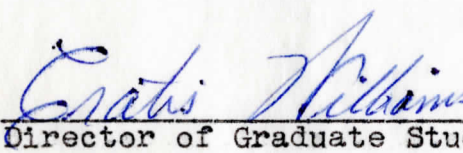
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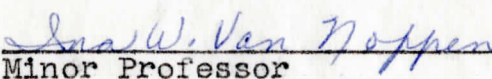
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## ABSTRACT

### I. THE PROBLEM

The history of schools is sometimes viewed with an air of lightness. The purpose of this study was to assemble the historical data of the Lutheran elementary schools of Catawba County. It was hoped that this study would reveal the role of the schools in the life of the local church and community.

### II. PROCEDURE

In writing the thesis, the author has endeavored to present the material clearly and in language which can be understood by the layman.

The material was gathered from books dealing with Lutheranism in North Carolina. These served as background for the Lutheran educational developments of the early 1900's. To continue his study, specific material was read. This provided data more related to the topic. Personal interviews were also used to supplement and supply information relative to the topic.

### III. FINDINGS

It was noted that a more systematic form of records would help to preserve data concerning an institution. Another finding indicates that a close relationship exists between interest and financial support.

The pastor's role in the life of the Christian Day School was found to be important. In many cases, the leadership which he exerted influenced the school.

The opportunity to contact people is afforded through the school. This personal contact should not be underestimated as a Christian influence in the lives of the people involved.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to thank the many people who contributed to the writing of this thesis. He is grateful to the chairman, Dr. J. C. Yoder, and members of the committee, Dr. L. Reynolds and Dr. I. Van Noppen, for their guidance and assistance. The writer is also indebted to his wife for her help in typing the thesis.

J. R. T.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The history of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, is relatively new in the Southeastern District. Its parochial system, equally new, is interesting and significant.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. It was the purpose of this study to gather the history of the Lutheran Elementary Schools of Catawba County as completely as possible. Their role in the church program is extremely prominent, as is their responsibility and stress upon the traditional "3 R's".

Importance of the Study. Historical data of schools are often viewed with an air of lightness. Only too often, problems arise, concerning an institution, which might be solved by an accurate written account of its history. While the age of these Lutheran Schools is still young, they are not too far removed from the minds of the founders. It was hoped that through this study, a rather complete history of these schools could be gathered.

#### II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The Missouri Synod is

the second largest Lutheran body in America.<sup>1</sup> It is characterized by its parochial system and its acceptance of Holy Scripture as the infallible and inspired Word of God.<sup>2</sup> Dr. J. W. Behnken is its recent president. Synod has undergone a quick growth spurt within the last ten years, in that time having doubled its membership. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod traces its beginning to the early Christians who settled in Perry County, Missouri. Thus the term, Missouri Synod, is historical in origin. Synod is composed of Lutheran Churches found over the entire United States and Canada. It serves in an advisory capacity to the districts and congregations within its fold. One of the eight major purposes for which this Synod exists, according to its constitution, is "the furtherance of Christian parochial schools and of a thorough instruction for confirmation".<sup>3</sup>

District. The Missouri Synod is divided into thirty-two districts.<sup>4</sup> Of these, thirty-one are geographical and one is organizational. The Southeastern District is a

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<sup>1</sup>Armin Schroeder and Cecil E. Pike, 1960 Statistical Yearbook of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 282.

<sup>2</sup>F. E. Mayer, The Religious Bodies of America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), p. 184.

<sup>3</sup>A. H. Jahsmann, What's Lutheran in Education? (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p. 110.

<sup>4</sup>Armin Schroeder, op. cit., p. 190.



geographical district. It includes the work of the Missouri Synod in Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Congregation. This consists of members who organize to carry out the work of the Church on a local level. This group may affiliate itself with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod on a local level. A given congregation is autonomous but works and cooperates with the Missouri Synod program. Congregational responsibilities include the preaching of the Gospel, administering the Sacraments, and educating its people, young and old, according to God's Word.

Minister. He is a man thoroughly instructed in theology, called by a congregation to guide and direct the affairs of the local congregation. His main responsibility is the spiritual growth of the people placed in his care.

Vicar. This is a man who has completed all but one year of his formal theological training. He is placed in a congregation for one year under direct supervision of the pastor. This year is to serve as a practical experience in pastoral work before receiving a full congregational responsibility. He may fill pastoral and teaching vacancies as time and abilities permit.



Lutheran Elementary Schools. Lutheran Schools are church schools.<sup>5</sup> Already in the period from 1840 to 1847 full-time parochial schools existed, for they were believed to be the best and most effective medium in aiding man to attain his goal.<sup>6</sup> The Christian day school was considered from the beginning as the ideal for which every congregation was to strive.<sup>7</sup> The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod owns and operates its own teacher training program. It is not to oppose public school education, but exists solely to instruct those who wish a Christian education. However, the Lutheran elementary school concerns itself with the whole child, the spiritual, the physical, the mental, the social, the emotional, and the aesthetic aspects of life.<sup>8</sup> Doctrines of the Bible are taught as Jesus commanded, "Go ye therefore and teach all

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<sup>5</sup>Wm. A. Kramer, "Lutheran Schools in American Education", Lutheran Education, Vol. 94, No. 5, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), p. 235.

<sup>6</sup>Raymond F. Surburg, "Historical Survey of the Lutheran Philosophy of Education", Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education, Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association, (River Forest, Illinois, 1956), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 20

<sup>8</sup>Wm. A. Kramer, "The Parish School and My Home", Parent Guidance Series, No. 7, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), p. 28.

nations . . . "9 Instruction required by the state or local authorities is taught in the light of God's Word.

Those who have Christian schools should join with fellow citizens in advancing the cause of the public schools. This can be done by participating in the discussions and programs concerning the public schools.<sup>10</sup>

Today there are 1,293 Lutheran Elementary Schools in America with 5,310 teachers instructing 149,201 pupils. Of these schools, fifty-two are located in the Southeastern District, seventeen in North Carolina, with four in Catawba County.<sup>11</sup> These schools are supported by the local church, and should not be supported by public taxes.<sup>12</sup>

The oldest Missouri Synod School is St. Matthew's in New York City, which goes back to 1753.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The Holy Bible, King James Version, Matthew 28:19.

<sup>10</sup>"Report of Parish Education", in Proceedings of the Forty-Second Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), p. 330.

<sup>11</sup>Schroeder, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>12</sup>Surburg, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>13</sup>Kramer, op. cit., p. 233.



Parochial. This word is an adjective referring to the Lutheran Elementary Schools, more commonly called Christian Day Schools, to distinguish them from Sunday Schools.

Parochial education, therefore, includes ". . . all the educational activities carried on by the local parish".<sup>14</sup>

Board for Parish Education. This Board consists of men either elected or appointed by the congregation to especially concern itself with the Christian Education Program of the congregation. Its powers are defined by the congregation. Because of the scope of the parochial school, a Board for Parish Education will necessarily concern itself with this endeavor. The Board should never consider this as the only arm of Parish Education. Today the term, "parish education", is employed to designate the type of education sponsored by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.<sup>15</sup>

Teacher. This is a man or woman sufficiently trained in theology and Christian Education. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod owns and operates its teacher training schools. They are Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska, and Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois. The two

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<sup>14</sup>Arthur L. Miller, "Parish Education", Lutheran Encyclopedia (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), p. 780.

<sup>15</sup>Raymond F. Surburg, op. cit., p. 9.

teachers colleges of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod became accredited by 1952 and, in order to meet the requirements for accreditation, have accepted and followed the standards which have come to control the program of teacher training in the United States.<sup>16</sup>

The teacher is called by a congregation to concern himself primarily with the Christian Education Program of the local congregation and the community. He is, in most cases, directly connected with the parochial school. In addition to his classroom work, the Lutheran teacher frequently functions as the church organist, as the director of the church choir, and as a leader of young people's groups in the church.<sup>17</sup> He may also be a worker in part time agencies of religious education, such as the Sunday School and Vacation Bible School.<sup>18</sup>

The "called" male teacher, having completed his training program, is classified as a "Minister of Religion in the Area of Teaching".

Intern. In the teacher training program, a man or a woman may obtain a year of practical experience prior to

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<sup>16</sup>Surburg, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>17</sup>General Catalogue, Concordia Teachers College, 1955-1956 (River Forest, Illinois: Concordia Teachers College, 1955), p. 15.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 15.



graduation by participation in an internship program. This exists as a joint program of the teacher training college and the congregation to which the intern has been assigned. The intern is required to complete several correspondence lessons from the college during his year of teaching. These are designed to help him in his beginning teaching. However, while the intern is at a given school, the principal serves as his supervising teacher.

Diploma of Vocation. Since each congregation is autonomous, it also has the prerogative of calling its own people to serve in a professional status. The Diploma of Vocation is a document issued by a congregation to a qualified person to serve in a certain capacity. This capacity is described by the congregation and is effective as long as both sides concerned are mutually agreed as to terms and conditions. The freedom to decide where one's individual talents can best be utilized belongs to the individual receiving the Diploma of Vocation. It is hoped that through diligent prayer to the Holy Spirit and honest evaluation of present effectiveness in a locality, a proper and pleasing decision can be made.

Solemn Agreement. A Solemn Agreement is issued to a lady teacher. However, the congregation may elect to offer a lady teacher a one year contract, or a Diploma of Vocation.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF REMAINDER OF THESIS

In the remainder of this thesis, an attempt was made to show (1) the purpose and function of these schools, (2) the historical data of each institution, and (3) their significance and influence upon the community.

## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Little research has been done showing the history of, relation to, and contribution of Christianity to the State. Much less has been made public about Church schools at the secondary level and the elementary level. Most of that which has been done was finished before 1939. During the data-gathering period of this study, it was noted that individual colleges and institutions would find much reward in preparing histories and studies of their past.<sup>1</sup>

I. LITERATURE ON STATISTICAL DISTRIBUTION  
OF LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

W. H. Beck gives a statistical evaluation of the Lutheran elementary schools in the United States.<sup>2</sup> In it, he expresses some of its early history, its spread over the States, and finally continues his work up to the year 1939. This book is necessary for study of schools in the early years of their growth. For purposes of this study it serves only to give a historical picture before the advent of Lutheran Schools in North Carolina.

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<sup>1</sup>Monroe, Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 211.

<sup>2</sup>W. H. Beck, Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1939).



The Statistical Yearbook of The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, gives an up-to-date report on enrollment, number of congregations, pastors, and teachers in Synod.<sup>3</sup> It further designates these facts on the district, state, and congregational level.

II. LITERATURE ON HISTORY OF RELATED  
LUTHERAN INSTITUTIONS AND EARLY LUTHERANISM IN  
CATAWBA COUNTY

Since the growth of public schools in North Carolina was slow in starting, the church took a leading role in establishing schools. This is a premise which motivated Luther Gobbel to write "Church-State Relationships in Education in North Carolina since 1776".<sup>4</sup> He shows the early views of education in North Carolina and states that schools were established by the church where public schools were not yet in practice. Commenting on the relationship of the church and the state at this time, he says, "In short, the present modus vivendi is, on the whole, one of friendliness, mutual understanding, and high resolve to carry on for a better state and happier people".<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Armin Schroeder, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Gobbel and Bell, Church-State Relationships in Education in North Carolina since 1776 (Duke University Press, 1938).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 228



Voight brings to light the history of Concordia College in Catawba County.<sup>6</sup> He further shows the influence of the institution upon the community. The study is one of the first objective recordings of the Lutheran Educational Program in Catawba County. It is recent and summarizes early documents and data in the history of the institution.

Charles J. Preslar writes an historical account of Catawba County.<sup>7</sup> In it he makes the following observation:

That persons of the German nationality were interested in education is attested by numerous records proclaiming the anxiousness with which they went about establishing individual schools. Their teachers were described as men of ability and profound scholarship. Usually, the teachers were also ministers.<sup>8</sup>

Preslar also gives insight into the purpose and drives of these people. That the school was important to them is evident. It is said that a primary concern of one of the colonies was to establish a "community house" for the purpose of both church and school.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Harry R. Voight, "A History of Concordia College" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, North Carolina, 1951).

<sup>7</sup>Charles J. Preslar, A History of Catawba County (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company).

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

Many people thought these colonies to be clannish and anti-world. In a sense this was true. Their doctrinal adherence kept them unified. Their language held them together. Their customs were unique. They were uninformed in the ways of the world, ignorant of the English language, and unacquainted with the shrewdness of the business man. However, they were well informed in their own language and well read in their Bibles and German devotional books.<sup>10</sup>

Professor George W. Hahn notes a very warming trend when he says, "And since the shackles of the language have been shaken off, the descendants of the Germans are fast taking first places in the wonderful strides the country is making in all industrial, commercial, and educational progress".<sup>11</sup>

That readers will not draw the wrong conclusion as to these references of descendants of Germans, Hahn continues by pointing out that the Lutheran denomination, as might be expected, has made wonderful progress in the country in the years following the Civil War.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>George W. Hahn, The Catawba Soldier of the Civil War. (Hickory: Clay Printing Company, 1911), p. 10.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

These two books by Preslar and Hahn give an early history of Lutheranism in Catawba County. Both are general in nature and serve as background material for this research.

### III. LIMITATIONS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Few of the studies made on this subject are recent. Neither do they specifically relate to Lutheran elementary education in Catawba County. It is the hope of the writer that "A History of Lutheran Elementary Education in Catawba County" will contribute to this area of research.



## CHAPTER III

## A PHILOSOPHY OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION

Introduction. Edwin Rian stated that "without question the most elaborate and complete system of education among Protestants is that devised and supported by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states".<sup>1</sup>

Early History. This system came about because of the thinking of the early Lutherans in America. Their definite ideas and thoughts had a direct bearing upon the establishment of parish schools, for they believed in Christian education. This belief was rooted in the Bible, which taught that the Word of God was to be held in heart and mind, and was to be taught diligently to descendants.<sup>2</sup>

Premise. The commands and pleadings of Jesus to teach His Word are a true basis for Lutheran Education.<sup>3</sup> He not only said that children should be educated in Christian doctrine, but people of all ages.<sup>4</sup>

Scope. The scope of Lutheran philosophy of education

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<sup>1</sup>E. H. Rian, Christianity and American Education (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1949), p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>The Holy Bible, King James Version, Deuteronomy 6:6,7.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Matthew 28:19.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., Mark 16:15

includes the children of pre-school, primary, junior and senior ages, the adolescent, the young adult, middle and old age.<sup>5</sup> Lutheran philosophy will stress Law and Gospel in their true proportion, and love as motivation, to all age levels.<sup>6,7</sup>

Survey of Instruction. The home is the chief agency of Christian education, but since the church also plays an important role in the Christian rearing of children, this responsibility is shared.<sup>8,9</sup> Since its first Synodical Convention, the congregations of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have been urged to establish and promote Christian Day Schools.<sup>10</sup> Teachers have been trained at accredited institutions. In-service programs, graduate studies, and professional literature has been made available.<sup>11</sup> This program has given the individual an opportunity to become a more effective and efficient teacher.

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<sup>5</sup>Raymond F. Surburg, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>6</sup>A. C. Mueller, "The Theological Basis of a Lutheran Philosophy of Education," Readings in The Lutheran Philosophy of Education, Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest: 1956), p. 59.

<sup>7</sup>A. H. Jahsmann, What's Lutheran in Education? (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>Handbook for Parents and Children of Immanuel Lutheran School, Seymour, Indiana, 1958-1959.

<sup>9</sup>Jahsmann, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>10</sup>Surburg, op. cit., p. 9

<sup>11</sup>Surburg, op. cit., p. 15.



Basis of Lutheran Philosophy. The Bible has always been basic in the program of Christian Education.<sup>12</sup> The Bible is the only absolute and infallible source of knowledge for the Christian.<sup>13</sup> If the Bible is the primary source of faith, then Lutheran thinking flows from and is in agreement with Biblical teachings.<sup>14</sup> However, when the Scriptures do not disclose a principle, a Lutheran educator turns to logical conclusions of reason and findings of science.<sup>15</sup> A Lutheran educator must constantly search and explore for more knowledge and wider horizons toward being a more effective teacher.

#### DOCTRINES BASIC

#### TO LUTHERAN PHILOSOPHY

Trinity. The Bible states that all men need to know

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<sup>12</sup>Surburg, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>13</sup>Arthur L. Miller, "Philosophic Basis of a Lutheran Philosophy of Education," Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education, Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest: 1956), p. 47.

<sup>14</sup>Jahsmann, op. cit., Introduction X.

<sup>15</sup>Paul Bretscher, "Toward a Philosophy of Lutheran Education," Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education, Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest: 1956), p. 66.



God.<sup>16</sup> This God is Triune, that is, He is three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Creation is ascribed to the Father, Redemption to the Son, and Sanctification to the Holy Ghost.<sup>17</sup> Yet, there is one God.<sup>18</sup>

Creation. The Bible describes the basic facts of Creation. We read that God created the heaven and the earth.<sup>19</sup> Through faith we understand that by His Word, God created the worlds.<sup>20</sup> As part of the creation act, man owes his very existence to God. Since man was to be the evidence of Creation, he was to live perfectly as he was created, having a rational mind and a spiritual soul. But man rebelled against his Creator, causing the anger of God to come upon him. God pronounced eternal death as punishment. Man was doomed!

Redemption. In His love, God declared salvation through His Son, Jesus, who would die for man.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>The Holy Bible, op. cit., John 17:3.

<sup>17</sup>The Apostles Creed, Luther's Small Catechism (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1900), p. 11.

<sup>18</sup>The Holy Bible, op. cit., Deuteronomy 6:4.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., Genesis 1:1

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., Hebrews 11:3a

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., Genesis 3:15

This did happen! Jesus did die!<sup>22</sup> Man's punishment was paid. Jesus did arise!<sup>23</sup> Man no longer needs to fear eternal death. Having completed His humiliation, Jesus ascended to Heaven. He will come again to judge the world, taking His believers to Himself in Heaven.<sup>24</sup>

Sanctification. Because of the wondrous love shown by God, we show our love to Him. This is done through the Holy Spirit's power.<sup>25</sup> He gives power to believe. He instills faith in the hearts of people. He gives strength to lead a new life for the Savior.

This new life is two-fold and has endless opportunities for service. It entails a life of love to God and fellow men here on earth and a preparation for eternal life in Heaven.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., Luke 23:46.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., Luke 24:6.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., Acts 1:11.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., Luke 24:49.

## CHAPTER IV

## CONCORDIA LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Early History. The early history of Concordia Congregation is not to be found in written form anywhere to the knowledge of the writer or anyone of his acquaintance.<sup>1</sup> However, we do know that Catawba County was settled by many Germans (Pennsylvania Dutch) of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.<sup>2</sup>

From the beginning, Conover appears to have been alert to the needs of education and educational facilities. At the beginning of the 1870's we find that the Reverend Adolphus Yount and the Reverend J. M. Smith were teaching a small school in the little dwelling, still to be seen (1911) just beyond the limits of Conover, on the Oxford Ford Road near Poplar Springs. About the year 1873 the school was moved within what are now the limits of the town. It was located near the dwelling of Mr. B. A. Hewitt. We are told that John Moser, the Reverend R. A. Yoder, and others taught for several years. Dr. P. C. Henkel also took an interest in

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<sup>1</sup>R. F. Lineberger, Seventy-five Years of Grace (Conover: Concordia Lutheran Church Anniversary Book), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Harry R. Voight, "A History of Concordia College" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, North Carolina, 1951), p. VI.



the work though being unable to give his time to the school as a teacher. Thus from these humble beginnings came larger and greater ideas in Christian education. About the year 1875, congregations of the Lutheran Church of the Tennessee Synod established a high school in the central part of the county.<sup>3</sup> This same building later became Concordia College. It was located at the very place where Concordia Lutheran Church now stands.

Public Relations. A very favorable relationship between the College and the Church existed from the beginning. Having the identical purpose of equipping the saints for Kingdom work, both of these institutions served each other. Instructors from the college would preach on Sunday and tend to the duties of a parish pastor during the week. Members of Concordia Church would hold a festival each fall and bring produce to be used at the college kitchen.

Although the building of Concordia College came first, the congregation had its beginning before the erection of the college.<sup>4</sup> Services were held in the rooms of Concordia College while plans for Concordia Church were in progress. By 1897, the congregation occupied the church building proper.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>George W. Hahn, The Catawba Soldier of the Civil War (Hickory: Clay Printing Company, 1911), p. 3

<sup>4</sup>R. F. Lineberger, op. cit., p. 4

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

Records make it very clear that the Reverends P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith conducted services in Conover, usually in the building used for a school, at least two years prior to the building of the college and the organization of the congregation.<sup>6</sup> Remembering the early establishment of the school in the Conover area and the responsibility toward its children, Concordia College also enlarged the present high school offerings to an elementary level. This elementary level seems to have become the school of the congregation.<sup>7</sup>

President of the College, W. H. T. Dau, who was acquainted with Missouri Synod Christian Day Schools, seems to have made the separation.<sup>8</sup> This was not a sign of tension or disagreement, but rather a sign of growth which both Concordia College and Concordia Congregation accepted. Dau believed that in order to develop the high school and college, it would be better to separate the primary department from the Synod's institution, and let the local congregation assume the education of the young as was the custom in Missouri Synod Congregations.<sup>9</sup> Not long after, Concordia

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.



Congregation employed the services of Mr. Preston M. Dellinger.<sup>10</sup> He taught in a little wooden building on North Main Street near the main intersection of Conover. In the year 1894, the Primary Department of the 1880's at Concordia College was Concordia Christian Day School, part of Concordia Lutheran Church.

Building Facilities. When Concordia Church was built, the congregation provided for space to teach its children. The rear section of the building was the school room, separated from the sanctuary by a wall which was later removed.<sup>11</sup> Classes continued here in this room until the year 1925.

Teacher Benefits. It may also be of interest to the reader to note that when one of the calls was extended, the salary of the pastor was listed as \$600.00 per year if he served as pastor only, and \$825.00 if he also served as the teacher of the school. During these years the school was often conducted by the pastor of the congregation.<sup>12</sup>

In 1919, under the chairmanship of C. R. Brady, Concordia Congregation participated in the campaign conducted by the Laymen's League to set up an endowment fund. This fund provided pastors and teachers financial assistance in retirement and times of need.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 9.



Course of Instruction. Bible Doctrine and Bible History were taught daily in a period set aside for that purpose. The secular subjects, reading, history, and others, were studied in the light of God's Word.<sup>14</sup> The First Reader of the Standard American Series, published by Concordia Publishing House, was used in the year 1920 and prior. Exactly when this series was introduced is difficult to determine. Marshall Simmons, living today in Conover, recalls that the book was used when he went to the first grade at Concordia. This same book may be seen at his residence.

From time to time, texts changed. One of these changes, introduced by Mr. Clarence Kurth, principal in 1924, was to the Beacon Phonetic System.<sup>15</sup>

Continued Growth. And so the Church and the school continued to grow. From its beginning shortly before the turn of the century to 1914-1920, the enrollment of the school increased from twenty-one to about fifty pupils.<sup>16</sup> Along with an increasing enrollment came the necessity for

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<sup>14</sup>1948 Yearbook, Concordia Lutheran Church (mimeographed), p. 1.

<sup>15</sup>Recollection by Clarence A. Kurth, personal interview.

<sup>16</sup>Statement by Clarence A. Kurth, personal interview.

more teachers. These were added by recommendation of the School Board to the congregation. It resolved to put on another teacher provided the congregation could devise plans for financing the increase in salary and other expense necessary to equip another teacher.<sup>17</sup> The challenge of adding another teacher was taken and after a few short weeks, the school board and the church council met.

The School Board reported that they have \$254.00 subscribed and that they have employed Mrs. Page of Virginia at a salary of \$50.00 per month.

They reported that all arrangements are complete for an additional teacher except the changes in our school room. The School Board recommends that we put a partition through our school room. The report was adopted.<sup>18</sup>

On April 11, 1924, a congregational meeting was held at which time this resolution was passed:

It was agreed with the School Board to employ Mrs. Page and Miss Lula Coiner to teach our school next year and that the salary be left to the School Board, provided they stay within our budget.<sup>19</sup>

To make space available for the two classroom school, it was resolved that the congregation should put a metal partition in the schoolroom and furnish the other necessary supplies for a two teacher school.<sup>20</sup> In August of 1923,

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<sup>17</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Council Minutes (July 7, 1923), p. 18.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>20</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Council Minutes (August 21, 1923), p. 23.



machinery was in motion for the expansion of Concordia Lutheran School.

Growth of the congregation demanded that the school be moved to new quarters and the entire room under the roof of the church be utilized for church purposes. Thus, on August 16, 1925, the motion was made and carried to construct two new classrooms and a basement at an estimated cost of \$10,000. The foundation for these two rooms was laid September 14, 1925. When this project was completed, the school was moved into these rooms, and the rear section of the sanctuary was finished.<sup>21</sup>

It is interesting to note that although the congregation was eager to furnish the necessary supplies for teaching, very little in-service training was carried on at this time. "There were no conferences, because there was nobody to meet with."<sup>22</sup>

Community Relationships. Concordia School came as a natural outgrowth of the College and the Church. It was accepted as part of the community from its beginning.<sup>23</sup> Private citizens looked with favor on the work and teaching of Concordia Lutheran School. The influence of the school

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<sup>21</sup>R. F. Lineberger, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>22</sup>Statement from Mr. Clarence A. Kurth, personal interview.

<sup>23</sup>Statement from the Reverend R. F. Lineberger, personal interview.



was so great that families moved to Conover in order that the children could attend.<sup>24</sup>

Closing of School. The natural responsibilities of an administrative body took shape in a resolution which recommended a standard by which to operate. "It was resolved that we recommend to the congregation that it elect a committee to draft a code of rules governing our school board in running our Parochial School."<sup>25</sup>

Despite the growth of the school and its success in the community, there was a lack of interest on the part of some people. Financial support through the congregation began to wane, leadership became indifferent, and general concern over the school began to diminish. On July 7, 1928, the church council began thinking through its problem of financial support of the school.

Our budget not being subscribed sufficient to take care of the running expenses of the congregation and the parochial school was discussed at length and no solution was found as all plans are being made to run the school.

The teachers are hired by the congregation for the coming year and we are obligated to them for their salary if the school is run or not.

It will be very necessary to raise enough money to run the parochial school for the following year or close same.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Statement from Lewis Setzer, personal interview.

<sup>25</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Council Minutes (April 11, 1924), p. 29.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 54

The school did operate that year. However, the council did not let the matter rest. The following summer, a similar resolution was considered with the members of the school board.

Church Council and School Board considered at length the proposition of our Christian Day School so the council and school board wish to remind the congregation that we have had difficulty for the past several years in financing same and no funds are in sight to run the school for the coming year and that definite action be taken by the congregation in regard to the running expenses. Therefore, the School Board with the Council not seeing any way to meet the running expense of the school have decided to make no arrangement for the coming session until action is taken by the congregation.<sup>27</sup>

Discussion continued. Meetings were held. Another situation arose. The present school teacher would not be with the school for another year so this matter was taken up and, in the discussion, the Reverend Mennen offered his services as teacher. This offer was brought before the congregation for further consideration.<sup>28</sup> On April 9, 1930, a general discussion again was held. This time definite action was taken. The question of the Christian Day School went into a general discussion and it was recommended to the congregation ". . . that we try and if possible carry the school as we did this past school year."<sup>29</sup> This action was carried through.

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<sup>27</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Council Minutes (July 9, 1929), p. 59.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., (April 9, 1930), p. 66.



The school was still operating but not under favorable conditions. Determination and "one-mindedness" to close the school formed when a recommendation to the congregation asked, "that for this school year (1933-1934) we run a one teacher parochial school and leave to our pastor and teacher whatever grades can be properly handled".<sup>30</sup> In the spring of 1933, the Church Council recommended the closing of the school.

Upon motion we recommended to the Congregation that we dispense with our parochial school at the end of the school year and open again when the congregation feels they are financially able to support same.<sup>31</sup>

Part-Time Program. A period of time elapsed when the school was discontinued.<sup>32</sup> Under the stress and strain of financial difficulties, the Finance Committee was enlarged in 1935 for the purpose of retiring a long standing indebtedness from the building of the school in 1925.<sup>33</sup> During this time, there was enough enthusiasm for Christian education to have a summer school program. It was resolved to endorse the action of the Board of Christian Education in regard to conducting a summer school during the month of August.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., (July 14, 1932), p. 82.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., (Spring, 1933), p. 85.

<sup>32</sup>R. F. Lineberger, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>34</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Council Minutes (April 16, 1937), p. 107.



We your Board for Christian Education recommend that the Congregation conduct a Bible School during the month of the coming August, to continue three months, that we employ teachers for three weeks, and appropriate \$100.00 for same. We recommend that the loose collection during the three weeks be used toward financing the school. We further recommend that Prof. Smith and Mr. Gerhardt Wagner in addition to the Pastor Mennen be secured as teachers, and that the Organist be asked to assist with the music. That the school curriculum be worked out by the faculty.<sup>35</sup>

This program was continued for several years. Little alterations were made in the program proper, except perhaps the date and duration. On April 20, 1941, the Sunday School recommended to the congregation that the summer Bible School begin the 16th of June and continue two weeks. This recommendation was granted.<sup>36</sup>

Re-opening of School. A change in leadership renewed thoughts and memories of the advantages of the Christian Day School. On April 7, 1946, a motion was made and passed ". . . to appoint a committee to investigate the possibilities of establishing a Christian Day School, also to get an estimate of how many children could be had, then report back to the Congregation within 30 days."<sup>37</sup> The report which the

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<sup>35</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (April 18, 1937), p. 4.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., (April 20, 1941), p. 24.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., (April 7, 1946), p. 50.

committee brought is not recorded, but it must have been favorable.

The following business and recommendations were made, . . . that we open a Christian Day School in September, 1946. The school to consist of two rooms with a maximum of 35 pupils to a room. Motion made and seconded to call a teacher. Several teachers were on the list, Mr. Harry Voight of Tinley Park, Illinois, was the teacher chosen. Motion made and seconded to pay teacher \$160.00 a month plus moving expenses and housing facilities. Motion made and seconded to employ a student teacher, who was also to assist the Pastor, his salary to be \$125.00 a month, also traveling expenses to and from his home. The following committee was appointed to find a house for the teacher: H. J. Isenhower, R. A. Hollar, and J. A. Bolick.<sup>38</sup>

On May 12, 1946, the congregation voted in special meeting to re-open the Christian Day School the following fall.<sup>39</sup> The re-opening of the school was met with much enthusiasm. Regretfully, seven children had to be turned away. Two rooms with a capacity enrollment of 70 pupils marked the beginning. Only grades one to six were taken.<sup>40</sup>

The classrooms, which had formerly served as the Day School, were remodeled and renovated by the members of the Laymen's League. Most of the work was done by the men "after hours".<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., (May 12, 1946), p. 50.

<sup>39</sup>R. F. Lineberger, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>40</sup>1946 Yearbook, Concordia Lutheran Church, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 2.



Construction of the present new school building was completed in 1947. It was dedicated early in 1948.<sup>42</sup> The Hickory Daily Record describes the building at the time of the dedication in this manner:

The new building to be dedicated on Sunday adjoins the Concordia Lutheran Church plant on College Avenue and contains well-lighted classrooms, music and work room, a reception room, the principal's office and lavatories, all on the first floor. The large classrooms are modern in every way, equipped with latest instructional materials. In the basement is the commodious kitchen, large dining room, and an assembly room with a stage for performances.<sup>43</sup>

The new building, which was dedicated in impressive services with the Reverend E. E. Pieplow preaching the dedicatory sermon on March 7, 1948, has proven very adequate.<sup>44</sup>

Extra funds were made available for the opening of the school. It was decided to use \$1000.00 of Golden Opportunity Fund for the initial cost of opening the Christian Day School.<sup>45</sup> Further cooperation was shown when Mr. Voight mentioned that it would be possible for the parents to have an interview with the teachers to discuss their child's progress.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>R. F. Lineberger, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>43</sup>Hickory Daily Record, March 5, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup>1948 Yearbook, Concordia Lutheran Church, p. 2.

<sup>45</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (July 14, 1946), p. 51.

<sup>46</sup>Concordia Parent-Teacher Association Minutes, p. 22.



Although the final administration of the school comes under the realm of congregational responsibilities, much of the policy making was left in the hands of the school board and the principal. All outside students who attended the Christian Day School were charged tuition to equal the cost of educating the child. It was decided to charge \$7.50 per month for all outside children.<sup>47</sup> This rate remained unchanged until 1957 when it was changed to \$10.00 for first child attending and \$7.50 for each additional child.<sup>48</sup> The School Board and Principal were given authority to purchase material for the school.<sup>49</sup>

Staffing. The principal, Mr. Voight, was installed at a regular morning service.<sup>50</sup> His personal effectiveness is borne out by the fact that he received several calls from various congregations throughout the country during his stay at Concordia. He was urged to return these calls and stay at Concordia. These requests were made by the congregation to Mr. Voight officially.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (October 13, 1946), p. 53.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., (July 9, 1957), p. 134.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., (July 14, 1946), p. 51.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., (July 14, 1946), p. 51.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., (April 12, 1949), p. 66.

Mr. Voight continued his work at Concordia until 1955, when he asked for a transfer to St. Paul's College, Concordia, Missouri, where he had accepted a teaching position. While at Concordia, he did his graduate work at Appalachian State Teachers College. The congregation encouraged more advanced training for its teachers. To this end it gave the principal \$100.00 for tuition.<sup>52</sup>

To fill the vacancy created by Mr. Voight's leaving, a list of candidates was drawn up.<sup>53</sup> A call was extended to Mr. Gilbert Pingel. He accepted the position. He was installed the first Sunday in August of 1956, and is serving presently as the principal.

Concordia Now. In the instruction of its pupils, Concordia Lutheran School stresses religion. It strives to give every child a Christian education.<sup>54</sup> Knowledge in the light of the Bible is set as the pattern for teaching.

Enrollment at Concordia has fluctuated between seventy-one and ninety-four. The percentage of children of congregational people was always in the high nineties since the re-opening of the school in 1946.<sup>55</sup> This seems to indicate that

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., (April 13, 1948), p. 60.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., (October, 1955), p. 121.

<sup>54</sup>Hickory Daily Record, March 5, 1948, p. 1.

<sup>55</sup>Statement by the Reverend R. F. Lineberger, personal interview.



the people were happy once again to have their school opened and operating.

Many aids were purchased for the enrichment of instruction in the three classrooms of the school. A hot lunch program was operated through the Federal Aid Program.<sup>56</sup> A school library was also added as a part of the educational program of the church.<sup>57</sup>

With modern facilities, trained teachers, and a community acceptance, Concordia faces a promising future. Its facilities for playground space were also enhanced when Dowd and Oliver Smith loaned a piece of property to the school. This could be used as long as the congregation desired to use it as a playground.<sup>58</sup>

To meet the needs of the church and school more adequately, Concordia Church purchased the Concordia College campus. When the new church was built on this plot of ground, the old church building was renovated into an auditorium-gymnasium building. This provided opportunity for a physical education program for various levels of instruction. The building also included a stage.

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<sup>56</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (January 11, 1949), p. 64

<sup>57</sup>1946 Yearbook, Concordia Lutheran Church, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (October 9, 1956), p. 128.



Parent-Teacher Association. Upon invitation of the Concordia School Board, a group of parents met on November 20, 1946.<sup>59</sup> This group chose to name itself, "Concordia Parent Teachers Association".<sup>60</sup> Its purpose was to bring the home and the school into closer relationship. To promote this purpose, students from Concordia presented a tape recording on the topic, "What Concordia Means to Me".<sup>61</sup> Various topics have been discussed by the principal. Guest speakers have been invited to present their particular subject as an aid to understanding the program of the school. Materials have also been given to the school by the Parent-Teacher organization. The child's part of the insurance cost has been paid by the Parent-Teacher Association.<sup>62</sup>

Consolidation. Some discussion has arisen from the Concordia Congregation as to the planning of a consolidated high school in Catawba County.<sup>63</sup> Concordia passed a resolution in 1950 promising to do their part in the establishment of such an institution.<sup>64</sup> This effort was lost in its planning stages, but a renewal of interest is taking place.

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<sup>59</sup>1946 Yearbook, Concordia Lutheran Church, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup>R. F. Lineberger, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>61</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (January 11, 1955), p. 115.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., (April 11, 1951), p. 73.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., (October 10, 1951), p. 78.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., (April 15, 1945), p. 46.

## CHAPTER V

## ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Early History. "Believing that our children needed something more than the Christian training available in our Sunday School, Saturday School, and Vacation Bible School, the congregation for several years discussed the advisability of starting a Christian Day School."<sup>1</sup> This was the formal beginning of St. Stephens Lutheran School.

The enthusiasm of the time seems to be caught in the booklet commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the church.

August 1, 1943, will always remain a memorable day in the life of our congregation, for it was on that day that a dream came true--the congregation resolved to begin our school with the next term.<sup>2</sup>

Under the leadership of Pastor Herman C. Scherer, the congregation planned for its venture in Christian education.<sup>3</sup> Through generous gifts of time, service, and money, the opening of a Christian Day School was made possible.<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>Fiftieth Anniversary of the Erection of our First House of God, 1906-1956, St. Stephens Lutheran Church, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>The Symbol, St. Stephens Lutheran School Yearbook (1946), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 2.



Reverend A. R. Kretzmann bought the first school desk.<sup>5</sup> The school officially opened its doors in 1943 in the Parish Hall of the Church.<sup>6</sup> It was decided to begin with grades six and seven.<sup>7</sup> The plan then proceeded to add one grade to either end.

And so the enrollment settled at thirty-eight during pre-school discussion and planning.<sup>8</sup> The teaching problem was dissolved when Mr. Carl Stapf was called from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. Stapf, meeting with the state requirements for teachers, was issued a state certificate.<sup>9</sup>

Enrollment grew and with it the number of grades. In 1946, the first grade was added and with this phase of expansion, St. Stephens had a complete curriculum for primary, elementary, and junior high ages.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>St. Stephens Lutheran Church Minutes (August 1, 1943), p. 146.

<sup>6</sup>Fiftieth Anniversary of the Erection of our First House of God, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>7</sup>St. Stephens Lutheran Church Minutes, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup>The Symbol, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup>Half Century for Christ, St. Stephens Lutheran Church, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup>Fiftieth Anniversary of the Erection of our First House of God, op. cit., p. 1.



Despite the growth and blessing of this venture into Christian education, the load of operating a full school, grades one through nine, became too difficult for the congregation. Grade nine was discontinued as a matter of conformity to the county public system.<sup>11</sup>

Staffing problems were met from time to time through the placement committee of Synod. Other teachers were secured from the area and were hired to teach.

Purpose. The major objective of the school was to train the children in the one thing needful, the Holy Bible.<sup>12</sup> Although the subjects required by state law were taught, they were not used as a means for a successful career in the business world.<sup>13</sup> It was of primary importance that the fundamentals of Christianity, the training of good and useful citizens of the state, and faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ be held uppermost in the instructional program.<sup>14</sup>

Transportation. Transportation sometimes proved to be a problem. The pastor's car was used to gather the children

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>The Symbol, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>13</sup>Half Century for Christ, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

from scattered areas in the community.<sup>15</sup> The pastor's car, together with the car of the neighboring pastor from Christ Church, Pastor L. Rittman, were means of transportation for some children in the first year of school.<sup>16</sup> Transportation was greatly improved when the congregation purchased a truck and a new bus body.<sup>17</sup> Now, up-to-date vehicles have been put into use for transportation purposes. They not only serve to transport most of the children attending St. Stephens School, but they also supplement the general church program whenever need arises.

Continued Growth. These continued experiences of growth and responsibility caused the various members to constantly evaluate the entire church program. Feeling that the school was important to the total congregational program, district aid was sought in an attempt to supplement the expenditures incurred by salary for the school staff.

In 1955, a schedule was adopted which proposed a monthly salary for women teachers with an "A" certificate. The starting pay was \$219.00 per month.<sup>18</sup> This schedule set

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<sup>15</sup>Half Century for Christ, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>16</sup>The Symbol, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>St. Stephens Lutheran Church Minutes (1955), p. 112.



forth a graduated salary on the basis of experience and professional training.

The lunch program was added to the educational program of the school, as well as other aspects of the total curriculum.<sup>19</sup> The school became known through the choir under the leadership of Erlo Warnke.<sup>20</sup> Instruction in instrumental music was offered to the pupils if they desired this activity.<sup>21</sup> Departmentalized teaching was given in grades above four and special teaching assistance was procured for some of the children so that more effective learning could take place.<sup>22,23</sup>

Supplies and materials necessary for teaching were paid for out of the congregational treasury with some assistance by the Parent-Teacher League. To keep the program of the school before the people and the entire congregation, it was decided to place a school annual in each home of the congregation.<sup>24</sup> This annual contained pictures of the personnel of the school, the student body, and various activities of the school program.

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<sup>19</sup>Statement by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence A Kurth, personal interview.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>St. Stephens Lutheran Church Minutes (1954), p. 99

<sup>22</sup>Statement by Clarence A. Kurth, personal interview.

<sup>23</sup>St. Stephens Lutheran Church Minutes (1955), p. 119.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., (1947), p. 187.



Building and Expansion of Physical Plant. Having outgrown its use of the early facilities of the parish hall, the congregation voted to build a school.

Whereas the Christian Education of our children is one of the prime objectives of our church according to the Lord to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and

Whereas such training of our children is God-pleasing,

Let it be resolved that we adopt the plans for the proposed school building as presented by the Board of Education and authorize the Board of Education to proceed with immediate plans to secure permission from the War Production Board to erect the said building as presented to the voters on May 20, 1945, all to the glory of God and the furtherance of His kingdom in our midst.<sup>25</sup>

It also became necessary to provide library equipment. Books were made available to the school through private individuals and organizations.<sup>26</sup> A library of classical records was given for use in the school program.<sup>27</sup> The congregation then authorized the erection of an addition to the present structure. In the fall of 1956, construction began for two rooms, a library, and a health room.<sup>28</sup> When the building was completed, Mrs. Carl Mueller was asked to classify and catalogue the books in the library.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., (1945), p. 165.

<sup>26</sup>St. Stephens Board of Education Minutes (January, 1948), p. 9.

<sup>27</sup>Statement by M. G. Setzer, Jr., personal interview.

<sup>28</sup>St. Stephens Board of Education Minutes (October, 1956), p. 141.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 180.

The area outside the classroom also needed attention. After the establishment of the school, the general playground area was put into usable condition and the Young People's Bible Class purchased much needed playground equipment.<sup>30</sup>

Community Relationships. From the beginning, St. Stephens Lutheran School has been accepted by the community. Its reputation was to serve as a motivation and aid in the establishment of another Lutheran School in the Hickory area. Its students have transferred to other schools in the county and city without lack of credit. The students' achievements compare favorably with the records of the pupils of the public school.<sup>31</sup>

Parent-Teacher League. The Parent-Teacher League, or Christian Education Association as it was first called, was organized in the same year as the founding of the school. It adopted as one of its aims to promote Christian education and to encourage graduates of the school to study for service in the church.<sup>32</sup> Its interest has also been civic and cultural. It has held membership in the North Carolina Symphony since 1953.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>The Symbol, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Half Century for Christ, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>32</sup>The Symbol, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>33</sup>St. Stephens Parent-Teacher Association Minutes (April, 1953).

Most of all, the interest of this group was directly concerned with educational opportunities for the children. It voted to give \$500.00 to help with the cost of replacing textbooks.<sup>34</sup> Besides sponsoring activities, the League promotes discussion of educational problems, better home-school relationships, and fellowship with parents and teachers.

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., (April, 1960).



## CHAPTER VI

## ST. PETER'S AND BETHEL PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

Early Parochial School. In the early 1900's, somewhere between 1913 and 1922, a parochial school was started at St. Peter's Lutheran Church. The wooden structure was located across the road from the present parsonage. The wood and labor was donated by members of the congregation. Soon, there appeared a two-room wooden structure known as St. Peter's Parochial School.

This school was taught by the pastor and an assistant. The children would meet in the larger room for opening exercises and then go to the designated classroom. Classes usually began at 7:30 A.M. and lasted until noon. During this time, catechism and Bible History were taught at great length. However, other subjects were also included.

A similar school was conducted near Bethel Church. The wooden structure was located not far from the present church building. The local historian, Pastor C. O. Smith, was teacher of the school for some time.

The program of the two schools was, generally, the same. Their purpose for being was the same, namely, that of Christian instruction.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by the Reverend W. P. Hunsucker, personal interview.

These schools were usually held during early summer. Public schools were dismissed during the middle of March. A one to two week interim followed and then the parochial school would "take up classes". Classes were held for about six weeks.

Some sixty to seventy children were in attendance. Some used horse and buggies, some rode bareback, and some walked to school.<sup>2</sup>

Parochial School Discontinued. In the middle twenties interest in these endeavors began to lag, and the schools were closed. The building at St. Peter's was used for many gatherings of church organizations. A popular gathering was the quilting party, which would sew quilts from the materials given them.<sup>3</sup> For a nominal fee, one could obtain a beautiful piece of handiwork.

Establishment of St. Peter's Kindergarten. In 1952, Pastor Roland Gabbert organized and taught a kindergarten class in the basement of the present educational building. Its purpose was to serve as a stepping-stone toward the establishing of a parochial school.<sup>4</sup> The Kindergarten at

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<sup>2</sup>Statement by Kirby Lail, personal interview.

<sup>3</sup>Statement by the Reverend W. P. Hunsucker, personal interview.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by Mrs. Dewey Houston, personal interview.

that time accepted four and five year old children. This practice was discontinued in 1954 when only five year old children were accepted. This was done to prepare children more adequately for their first year in school.

Facilities. The Lutheran Layman's League gave much moral and financial support to the Kindergarten program. In a short time, they purchased a station wagon, which is still being used to transport children to and from school.

Other facilities at the outset were very limited. As time went on, small items were added. The congregation became more and more enthusiastic about Christian Education. In 1958, it was decided to build facilities for the educational program of the church. With an eye to the future, the building was erected to meet the needs of a parochial school.

Tuition and Registration. When the Kindergarten was first organized, two dollars per month was charged for tuition. The tuition has increased to \$10.00 for members, and \$14.00 for non-members. An annual \$4.00 registration fee is required from each child.



## CHAPTER VII

## CHRIST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Early History. The early history of Christ Lutheran Church dates back to 1894, when Professor W. H. T. Dau of Concordia College, Conover, conducted preaching services in Hickory.<sup>1</sup> The Word which was preached brought results in the form of Christ Lutheran Congregation. From this beginning came a wider program of proclaiming the Gospel. Soon a building was purchased, a pastor was called, and the congregational work was begun.

During the course of years, the Sunday School program was established. To broaden the program of Christian Education, a Saturday School was added. This provided most of the children of the congregation with a basic Christian Education. To accomodate the growth of the enrollment in Saturday School and to formally begin the building of facilities for an educational program within the realm of Christ Lutheran Church, the congregation built the present Parish Hall.<sup>2</sup>

It was reported to the congregation that the Saturday School reached more people of the community with the

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<sup>1</sup>Fifty Years of Grace, Golden Anniversary of Christ Lutheran Church (1953), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

Christian view toward education, and that more time for instruction was available on Saturday than on Sunday morning for teaching of the Word of God.<sup>3</sup>

Early Plans for School. As the program of Christian Education grew, so did the needs of the congregation. In this manner the thought of a parochial school came to the members of Christ Lutheran Church. A motion to conduct a survey of the congregation and to report on the findings was approved. A unit of the early grades was thought to be the starting point.<sup>4</sup> This first endeavor was lost. Leadership became interested in other fields of service and congregational education for the parochial school was not yet strong enough to carry on by itself.

The matter was again brought before the congregation in 1954, when the voters assembly met on August 29. The subject for discussion was the opening of a Kindergarten. It was decided to operate a Kindergarten for one year.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after this motion was accepted, the pastor of the congregation accepted a call to another church.<sup>6</sup> The opening of a parochial school was delayed again.

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<sup>3</sup>Christ Lutheran Church Minutes (September, 1946), p. 126.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., (October, 1946), p. 138.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., (August, 1954), p. 20.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., (January, 1955), p. 28.



Opening of Christ Lutheran School. In the fall of 1955, Christ Lutheran Kindergarten opened its doors to six children with Mrs. Louise Sitton as teacher.<sup>7</sup> The Parish Hall was used as a classroom. Continued leadership under the Reverend G. R. Naumann prompted the congregation to determine the advisability of opening a Christian Day School.<sup>8</sup> Questionnaires returned were generally in favor of the plan to begin a school.<sup>9</sup> Finances were pledged toward a three year Building Fund Drive.<sup>10</sup>

It was also decided to call a teacher to instruct the grades.<sup>11</sup> The application for the teacher included special duties beyond the classroom. The teacher was to be the organist for the congregation, serve as substitute Sunday School teacher, and assist the Pastor in recreational activities of the congregation, especially young people's work.<sup>12</sup>

A teacher, James R. Taglauer, was assigned from Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois. Christ Lutheran School, with a faculty of two teachers and a student

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<sup>7</sup>Statement by Mrs. William Sitton, personal interview.

<sup>8</sup>Christ Lutheran Church Minutes (January, 1956), p. 67.

<sup>9</sup>Statement by the Reverend G. R. Naumann, personal interview.

<sup>10</sup>Christ Lutheran Church Minutes (February, 1956), p. 69.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>12</sup>Christ Lutheran Board of Education Minutes (March, 1956).



body of forty-two, began its second year on August 28, 1956. The Kindergarten now consisted of twenty-four children. This was four times its original enrollment. Grades one and two were instructed in the church basement. (This was a temporary arrangement until the new building could be built.) Fourteen children were enrolled in grade one, and four in grade two.

Plans for New Building. To meet the growth of the school and the Sunday School, plans were put in motion for the building of a four-room building. An architect, Carroll Abee, was employed and a building committee, consisting of Paul Sigmon, Harlan Roseman, and the Reverend G. R. Naumann, was elected to plan the building for Christian Education.<sup>13</sup>

The architect's plans were accepted and bids were let. The congregation awarded the general contract to Bumgarner Construction and Supply Company of Hickory.<sup>14</sup> Ground was broken on April 7, 1957.<sup>15</sup> The building progressed normally and on November 4, 1957, the children of Christ Lutheran School picked up their desks and chairs and moved into the new building.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Christ Lutheran Church Minutes (June, 1956), p. 84.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., (March, 1957), p. 109.

<sup>15</sup>Christ Lutheran School History Book, p. 8.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

The building was formally dedicated on November 17, 1957.<sup>17</sup> Among the participants at the dedication were: Dr. Arlo Nau, Chairman of the Hickory City School Board; Mr. Murray Tate, Hickory City Judge; Mr. Ed Weitzel, Chairman of Christ Lutheran Board of Education; Mr. Paul Sigmon, Chairman of Building Committee; Reverend G. R. Naumann, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church; Joan D. Michel, Kindergarten teacher; and James R. Taglauer, Principal and teacher.<sup>18</sup>

Tuition and Registration. When school began, tuition was set at \$12.50 per month for non-members. An annual \$10.00 registration fee was required of members of Christ Lutheran. In 1957, this was raised to \$15.00 per month for non-members and a \$10.00 yearly registration fee for all pupils.

Tuition for Kindergarten was also \$15.00 for non-members, but has increased to \$17.50 per month. Members of sister congregations pay \$12.50 per month, and members of Christ Lutheran pay \$10.00 per month.

However, a special resolution was adopted stating that all children of Missouri Synod pastors and teachers could attend tuition free.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>19</sup>Christ Lutheran Church Minutes (October, 1959).

Parent-Teacher League. Christ Lutheran Parent-Teacher League was organized in 1956 to assist in better home-school relationships. Its program includes the entire welfare of the church. Most of the programs which are sponsored by the P.T.L. are brought to the attention of the entire church.

In the past, the P.T.L. has bought playground equipment, contributed to the acquiring of a "carry-all" for transportation purposes, and supported supplementary texts for the reading program. Presently, they are purchasing books toward an accredited library. Discussions, topics, and lectures by capable people have helped to make the P.T.L. a most helpful group for the school's welfare.

Transportation. To provide transportation for the pupils, Christ Lutheran Church purchased a used school bus.<sup>20</sup> This served well until the pupils became too numerous and the mileage per trip became too great for one vehicle. In its place, two "carry-alls" were purchased.<sup>21</sup> These are still being used today.

To take care of part of the expenses of transportation, it was decided to give envelopes to children who were

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., (June, 1956), p. 84.

<sup>21</sup>Christ Lutheran School History Book, p. 22.



using the transportation facilities of the school. These were for free-will contributions.<sup>22</sup>

Christ Lutheran School Today. With its modern building and adequate playground, Christ Lutheran School offers instruction in the teachings of Christ through the Bible. Instruction in regular school subjects are taught in the light of God's Word. The school is staffed by teachers trained for work in the Parish School program.

A teacher workshop is held each year prior to the opening of school. During this time policies and procedures are discussed as well as pre-school planning, home visitations, and scheduling of classes.

All teachers are members of the National Education Association, the North Carolina Education Association, and the Lutheran Education Association. Membership in these organizations is provided through the congregation.

Christ Lutheran graduated its first class in 1961. This was a sixth grade class consisting of four boys and two girls. They were: Linnie Cline, Susan Hewat, Hal Queen, III, Sandra Smith, Richard Sigmon, and Linda Sue Travis. This graduation marked a step in the history of Christ Lutheran

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<sup>22</sup>Christ Lutheran Church Minutes (April, 1958), p. 143.

School since it was the first year that the whole building was in a complete program involving Kindergarten through grade six.

Enrollment during this year reached ninety-two. This showed a growth of eighty-six pupils in six years.

Christ Lutheran School is also participating in an internship program which provides experience for young teachers not yet graduated from the teacher training school. This program is in its second year at Christ.

Facilities for instruction include audio-visual tools, such as television, record player, radio, tape recorder, film strip and movie projector, a library of filmstrips, an elementary school library, and other facilities. Textbooks are generally listed on state adopted lists. The criteria for selection of texts was their adaptibility to the program.

An elementary bi-lingual program is carried on in the school. The languages taught are Spanish and German. This is not taught as a special subject, but is interwoven with the daily teaching.

## CHAPTER VIII

## TOGETHER IN EDUCATION

The aforementioned schools have provided for opportunities in Christian cooperation. These opportunities concern not only the leadership of the schools, but also the children and parents. Through this cooperation of activities and endeavors, it is hoped that even greater things will be forthcoming.

North Carolina Teacher's Association. During the school year, there are monthly meetings of the Lutheran teachers of North Carolina to promote in-service training. This association originated with the meetings of the faculties of the Catawba County Lutheran Schools. Now it embraces all the Lutheran Schools of North Carolina and reaches more than thirty teachers. This has proved to be a venture which assists teachers to grow professionally through lectures from authorities, discussions of various topics, and exchange of ideas and sharing of mutual problems.

Field Day. On the premise that children like to play, have fun, participate in games, and that teaching can be done outside the classroom, a field day was planned between St. Stephens, Concordia, and Christ Schools. Activities were planned for grades one to eight. This activity, in its fourth year, has proved to be a great experience for them.



Each year enthusiasm increases for the event. Other interscholastic sports are played on a very limited basis.

Spelling Bee. One of the events that seems to highlight the "getting-together" of the children of Lutheran Schools is the Spelling Bee. This idea began some four years ago when St. Stephens, Christ, and Concordia planned for a spelling bee. This again was planned for grades one to eight.

The activity met with the pupils' liking and has been carried on each year. Now it includes all the Lutheran Schools of North Carolina

Transportation. Transportation was carried on between Christ and St. Stephens for several years. The arrangement was made so that there would be as little duplication of bus routes as possible, and there could be a financial saving to both congregations. This arrangement was discontinued when conflicts occurred in scheduling, vacations, and school calendars. Plans are underway to prepare a workable schedule to serve both schools.

Lutheran Education Week. Each fall, Lutheran churches observe Lutheran Education Week. This calls to mind the educational program of the church. It refreshes the mind of the layman, pastor, and teacher as to the educational opportunities which are available in the church. At the same time programs, stressing Christian Education, are planned for presentation. Special publicity is given this week.

Lutheran Churches of Catawba County, especially those with parochial schools, take opportunity to organize and present a joint program to explain Lutheran education on all levels. Especially do they gather to praise God for blessings bestowed, particularly in education.

Programs and lecturers have been presented by these churches as part of Lutheran Education Week. One such program included a presentation by the school children and a talk by Dr. Allan Hart Jahsmann.

Plans for Joint Secondary Education. The churches of the area have tried several times to come to a working ground for the establishment of a high school. Meetings have been held and committees have been organized.<sup>1</sup> For no apparent reason the idea seems to have been cut short.

Last year, under the leadership of the late Reverend R. F. Lineberger, a committee was formed to petition Synod to build a Synodical training school in Catawba County. This petition was defeated on the floor of the Synodical Convention in favor of a school near Detroit, Michigan. Another group has been appointed, however, to study the possibilities of establishing a school for the training of pastors

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<sup>1</sup>Concordia Lutheran Church Minutes (April, 1950), p. 73.

and teachers near Atlanta, Georgia, to serve the Southeastern District.

Once again, at the time of this writing, there is sentiment toward the establishing of a consolidated junior high school. Time will tell if this project will materialize.



## CHAPTER IX

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It was a personal joy for the writer to become more acquainted with the history of the Lutheran Elementary Schools in Catawba County. There were several items that seemed sufficiently important to mention as a result of the study.

Records. It was noted that records are usually kept of most activities in a congregation. There seems to be a problem in preserving them and placing them in a proper location. One suggestion that the writer would make to the institutions involved is that a system be started to file records in a safe place to prevent loss or damage to these documents.

Financial Considerations. One important fact which keeps recurring is the financial support of these institutions. There seems to be a very close relationship between interest and financial support. Where the interest lags, eventually financial support becomes weak and, hence, the institution must close its doors.

A program to keep interest at a high level seems much in order. A direct line of communication between leadership, school personnel, parents, children, community, and congregational members is a necessary vein of life for the school.

Since financial support is a curbing arm as to the extent of Christian Education's program on a local level, it should be stated that the stewardship life of the congregation should be in harmony with the ideals and goals set forth.

Educational Role of the Pastor. As has been pointed out, the pastor is the spiritual leader of the congregation. In most cases, it was found that the pastor plays an important role in the success or failure of a parochial school. If Christian Day Schools are to be part and parcel of the congregation's program, then the pastor must also accept this responsibility. This responsibility includes doing the best with the facilities, personnel, gifts, and resources, to make this particular endeavor a faithful one.

Educational Program vs. Congregational Growth. It was also learned that where schools were in operation, the pulse of the congregation seemed to be more lively than those without. Constant evaluation, re-thinking of goals, better stewardship living and giving, and decisive meetings are a part of the Christian Day School Program.

One phase not to be over-looked is the opportunity afforded through the school of reaching the homes of people. To influence these homes in a Christian way, there must, of course, be communication. To bring the Gospel into the lives of people, educators in Lutheran Schools should not by-pass personal opportunities of Christianity. To live lives as



Christ-like as possible is one way to help the community grow. If this example is set in the classroom, those students before the teacher will help this type of living to grow, to spread, to become part of their lives.

People who want to be teachers, particularly Lutheran teachers, must be extremely good examples of Christian people. This is necessary! Recruitment for people who have been touched by the Savior's love are people who will be able to bring the message of salvation to others.

Success of the Christian Day School. Since the primary goal of Christian Education is preparation for life on earth and Life in Heaven, there is no real way of evaluating success of the school. However, some graduates from these schools have become leaders in the higher educational fields. Some have been chosen as the "citizen of the year" in their high school. Some have assumed pastoral and teacher positions to continue the work begun in their early lives.

In a very physical way, yes, the Christian Day Schools are successful. But let it not be said that the Day School automatically produces leaders. Rather let it be known, it is God working in people.



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