Twenty-five Years

A Celebration

Translated from the original Danish
Femogtyve Aar - Et Festskrift
and edited by the
Staff and Volunteers of and for the
Danish American Archive and Library

Original Danish published in 1921 by
The Danish Lutheran Publishing House
of Blair, Nebraska

Translation published January 2, 2026
Copyright ©2026. Danish American Archive & Library
Blair, Nebraska, USA
License is granted for free attributed, non-derivative, non-commercial purposes.

Contents

LIST OF FIGURES iii

Introduction 1

Some Leaves from Our Earlier History 7

The Augsburg Conference–The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Body 11

The Mission Association—The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America 15

Preparations for Union 17

The Union Meeting in 1896 21

The United Church's Work 25

The Institutions of the Body 41

The United Church's Mission Among Our Countrymen 53

The United Church's Mission Among the Heathen 63

The United Church's Representation in Denmark 69

Our Deceased Coworkers 71

A Look Ahead 77

List of Figures

1 The Pilgrim Fathers . . . 2
2 Luther in Worms . . . 3
3 Hans Egede . . . 8
4 C. L. Clausen . . . 9
5 The church at Argo . . . 12
6 Old Trinity Seminary . . . 14
7 The Old Folkschool in Elk Horn . . . 16
8 Pastor H. I. C. F. Mathiesen . . . 18
9 Inner Mission worker C. B. Kier . . . 18
10 Pastor P. L. C. Hansen . . . 22
11 Pastor H. Hansen . . . 23
12 The Association Meeting . . . 26
13 The Board . . . 35
14 Dana College and Trinity Seminary . . . 42
15 Dana College Faculty 1920-1921 . . . 44
16 The Danish Lutheran Publishing House in Blair NE . . . 46
17 The Elim Home in Elk Horn IA . . . 48
18 The Bethania Home in Waupaca WI . . . 49
19 Deaconess Mother House: 'Eben Ezer' . . . 50
20 The old church in Brisbane . . . 60
21 The church in Salt Lake City . . . 62
22 The school in Oaks, Oklahoma . . . 65
23 The church in Kurume, Japan . . . 67
24 A village church in Denmark . . . 70
25 A pioneer church & parsonage in Potter NE . . . 75
26 A new parsonage in Boomer IA . . . 76
27 The Collection Committee . . . 78
28 One of our newer churches: Fresno CA . . . 79

Introduction

"Remember the days of old,
consider the years of generation after generation.
Ask your father, and he will make it known to you;
your elders, and they will tell you."

Deuteronomy 32:7.

The year 1921, in which the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, by God's great grace, is able to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary, is a great and remarkable commemorative year—not only in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, but also in the history of the modern world. As proof of the latter, let us recall that shortly before we entered the year 1921, our great and mighty nation commemorated with grand festivities the religious refugees who in November 1620 landed in Plymouth Bay and—likely without themselves realizing it—laid the foundation of the mightiest and greatest free state the world has ever seen. And let us, as Lutheran Christians, not forget that this event is one of the fruits for which the world is indebted to the renewal in the Christian Church that God accomplished in the sixteenth century through His servant, Martin Luther.

And let us thank God that the freedom to worship God as His Word and conscience dictate—the freedom the Pilgrim Fathers sought in America's wilderness—has also been granted to us by the United States, and that we owe this freedom to the fact that in 1921 we can celebrate a twenty-five-year jubilee in America. And let us, as a church body, pray, hope, and work that this freedom may endure for us, our children, and our grandchildren through a thousand generations, and that by God's Word and Spirit they may be made capable of using this freedom to the blessing of both state and church, and to salvation for themselves.

As people of Danish stock, we will also remember that in 1921 it is two hundred years since Schleswig was incorporated under the Danish Crown under King Frederick IV—that Schleswig which we are now reunited with under the Danish Crown, and from which we hope never again to be separated. This is an event that gladdens us both on behalf of our countrymen and on behalf of humanity and truth. It is an honor to know that it was

sons of our people, among whom were not a few of our own, who were permitted to cast the heavy weight into the balance at last, and thus fight for the liberation of Southern Jutland from the iron yoke under which it had long sighed, hoping against hope. We know that many—also among the members of our church body—took up the pilgrim's staff and journeyed to America because German oppression lay heavily upon their old homeland, and they now rejoice in the liberation of their brothers—lamenting together with us that all too many of their brothers still had to continue living under German rule.

But as Lutheran Christians, in this jubilee year we will especially remember that it was this very year, four hundred years ago, that the man of God, Martin Luther, at the great Diet of Worms, as an outlaw before the emperor and the highest representatives of both the empire and the church, spoke the winged words by which he, according to human calculation, risked his life:

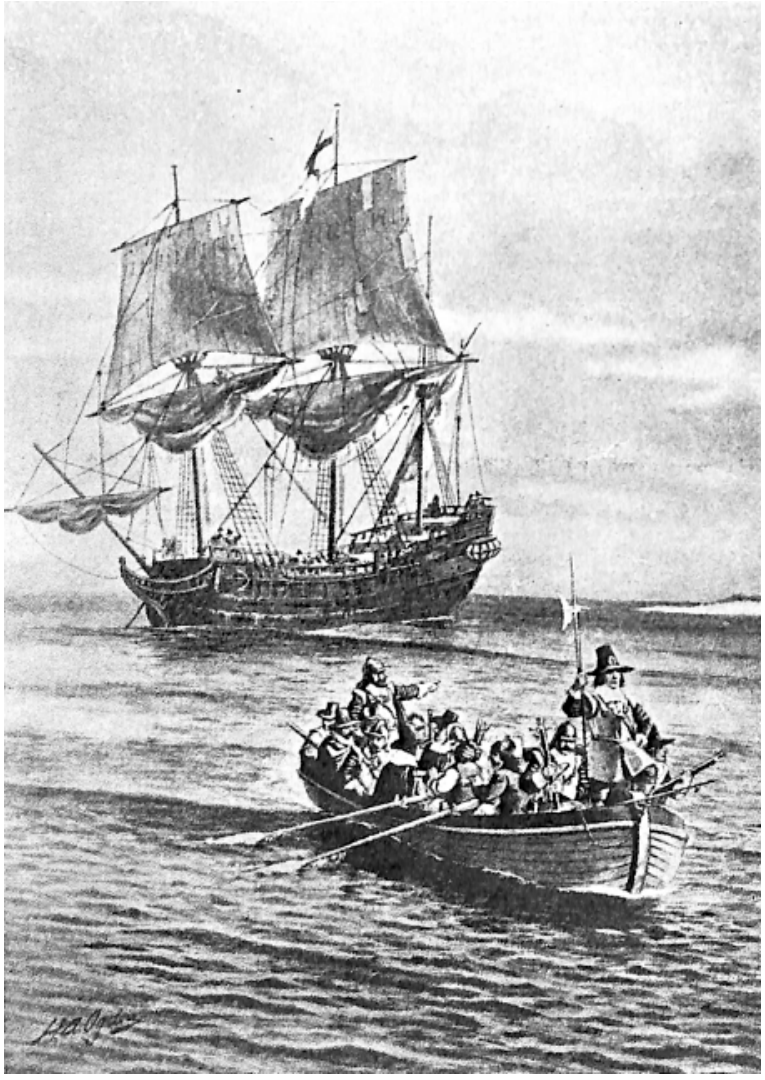

Figure 1: The Pilgrim Fathers

"Unless I am convinced by the testimony of Holy Scripture or by clear reason—for I believe neither the popes nor the councils alone, since it is clear that they have often erred and contradicted one another—I am bound by the Scriptures I have cited, and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. Therefore I neither will nor can recant, for it

is neither safe nor advisable to act against one's conscience. Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me. Amen."

In these words, as anyone can see, there is talk of the authority which alone has the right to bind a Christian's conscience, namely Holy Scripture, God's Word—and neither popes nor church assemblies. We have all the more reason to remember these mighty words, in which an entirely new world comes into view, since in our work among our countrymen here in this land we have had no human authority to rely upon, but only God's Word, which even now shows its power both to bind and to free consciences. Of it one can truly say: "The more strongly it binds, the more freely it sets free."

Of other events from the remarkable year 1521 that we have reason to remember in our jubilee year, it should briefly be mentioned that in this year Luther, as a prisoner at the Wartburg, translated the New Testament into his German mother tongue, as it had never been translated before. This book, which appeared in print in 1522, is also the forerunner of the translation of God's Word into our own mother tongue, the source of the knowledge of God, His kingdom, and the order of salvation among our people that is the prerequisite for our work among this people, and without which our work among Danish emigrants would have been—if not in vain—then so difficult that we have no proper conception of it.

Likewise it should be mentioned that in 1521 the first textbook of Christian doctrine according to Lutheran understanding appeared, namely Philip Melanchthon's so-called Loci, or chief points of Christian doctrine. The book was written in Latin, which at that time was the common language among scholars, but its content is not Roman Catholic, but genuinely evangelical, and well known also among our people in general, since we possess this content in popular form in Martin Luther's

Figure 2: Luther in Worms

later work, The Small Catechism, which appeared eight years after Melanchthon's Loci, namely in 1529, and which has circulated among our people from generation to generation for centuries, and has followed them also to this land and made it possible for us to find an entrance among this people.

Let us not forget in this our festival year that we stand in deep debt to teachers and pastors in our old fatherland who, with diligence, impressed Luther's Small Catechism upon children and young people—work without which we would have been forced to build on bare ground as teachers and preachers among Danish emigrants here in this land.

Finally, it should be mentioned that in 1521 the purified Gospel was preached for the first time in our fatherland, when Luther's former friend, later acknowledged as an enthusiast, A. B. Karlstadt, at the invitation of King Christian II, came to Copenhagen in the spring of 1521 and preached there for several weeks, but soon left the country, where he did not seem to feel at ease. The promise he gave the king to return he forgot to keep. Nevertheless, he deserves to be remembered as—if not the first—then at least one of the first Lutheran preachers in Denmark. And as we remember him, let us not forget that we owe the Lutheran pastors in our old fatherland great and heartfelt thanks for their proclamation of God's Word among our people—a power that we may have reckoned with far too little in our work here across the ocean.

There were not a few of our emigrants who brought the New Testament with them to America, which the pastor gave them on the day they were confirmed and wrote a commemorative verse in. Hymnbooks that they received at confirmation are still found among many of our older congregation members, as are catechisms and Bible histories. What it means to work among a churchgoing population—even if conscious Christianity may be weak—is known to those who have tried to labor in places where people have grown up in ignorance of the most basic religious truths, as is the case with many who were born here in this land to parents who were occupied with everything else except providing for their children's instruction in those things that cannot be bought with money and gold.

We have lingered—perhaps a little too long—over the year 1521. Let us now leap ahead one hundred years to the year 1621, when the dreadful Thirty Years' War was raging in Europe; or, in other and perhaps more easily understood words: when Jesuitism and its henchmen sought to exterminate evangelical Christianity in the world with sword and blood—one of the many fiery trials the Lutheran Church has passed through. In that year, on May 11, the well-known German pastor and religious author Johann Arndt died, whose Four Books on True Christianity, in a Norwegian translation, are found in many homes among our people and have been a faithful guide for many toward personal Christianity. Let us, together with him, remember the many old and new devotional books that have been and still are our fellow workers in our churchly labor among our

emigrated people, in that they have opened both ears and hearts to serious reflection on things that cannot be counted and weighed!

Let us then make a leap of two hundred years and pause at 1821, the year when the once so mighty conqueror of the world, Napoleon Bonaparte, died like a wing-shot eagle on the rocky island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic. In that year, on June 17, the "Danish Missionary Society" (Dansk Missionsselskab) was founded at Kongens Lyngby near Copenhagen, with the zealous pastor Bone Falck Rønne as chairman, and with the motto: "Fear not, only believe." As a mission church, this event has a right to be remembered by us in this our festival year—not only because several of the pastors who have worked and still work in mission among our people in America received their training at that Society's school, but for reasons of health were not sent out by the Society mentioned—an organization that has held faithfully on through good and bad times, and especially in later years has found strong support among Danish church people—but just as much because "D.M.S.," which works for the outward mission among the heathen, helped bring it about that the association of pastors and laypeople who set themselves the task of working for spiritual awakening among the baptized people in our fatherland adopted the name "Inner Mission," or "Church Association for Inner Mission in Denmark," as the association's full name is. As a church body we stand in great debt to this association in our fatherland and its great work within the Church in Denmark, through which not a few of our members came to conscious faith in Christ and His work of salvation before they emigrated to America. It is due in no small measure to "Inner Mission" both that mission among Danish emigrants here in this country was begun, and likewise that later there came to be a united Danish Church over here. Yes, we stand in a great debt of gratitude to Inner Mission in Denmark, from whose circles many of our earliest as well as later workers in the Church have come, and whose periodicals and books have found wide circulation among the members of our church body, especially the older ones.

Some Leaves from Our Earlier History

The Oldest Danish–Norwegian Mission in America

If Greenland belongs to North America, just as Norway in former times belonged to Denmark—and scholars do indeed maintain that geographically Greenland is a part of North America—then the first Danish mission in America began in 1721, the year when the Norwegian pastor, born of Danish parents, Bishop Hans Poulsen Egede, traveled to distant, almost forgotten Greenland in order, as he thought, to proclaim the Gospel to his countrymen, who were still sitting in the darkness of Catholicism. To his amazement and disappointment he found no countrymen, but instead the land populated by heathen Eskimos, "Skrælings," as the old Norsemen called them. Among these wretched people he and his heroic wife, Gertrud Rask, carried out a work in the service of Christianity and humanity that has made their names shine forever like stars in the heaven of missions.

But thus H. P. Egede was in fact the first Lutheran pastor who set out to preach the Gospel among his countrymen in faraway America, and therefore he should be remembered also by us, in the two-hundredth year after his departure for his mission field, on May 3, 1721.

Claus Laurits Clausen

Nearly a hundred years after Egede's departure from Bergen in Norway, there was born on Ærø the man who in the past century was the first to preach the Gospel also to his Danish countrymen here in this land, and in any case one of the first whom we have special reason to remember in this our festival year, because he is the one who in our old fatherland spoke especially in favor of mission among Danish emigrants.

C. L. Clausen was born on November 3, 1820. Before, in the early summer of 1843, he came to the Norwegian settlement of Muskego, Racine County, Wisconsin, where his intention was to work as a schoolteacher for the settlers' children. He had experienced

in his fatherland a serious Christian awakening and, young as he was, had taken an eager part in the life of religious gatherings both on his native island and on Langeland. He entertained the thought of going out as a missionary among the heathen in Africa and therefore studied for several years, and in particular was not a little influenced in a Grundtvigian direction, especially by the capable Magister Jakob Chr. Lindberg.

Since it is now 101 years since Clausen first saw the light, we will here remember him especially as the one who has been the most active spokesman for mission among his own countrymen here in this land—both by visiting Danish settlements, founding Danish congregations, writing about the Danes' circumstances in newspapers in Denmark, and not least through his personal visits to his old fatherland in 1857 and later in 1867. Of these visits, the latter contributed to the fact that pastors on Funen took hold of the matter in order to get the cause begun, as we shall later see. Pastor Clausen has left deep traces in the Lutheran Church in America. He was an exceptionally gifted preacher, about whom a Norwegian has sung:

Figure 3: Hans Egede

The bells rang together with their own power, when around the settlement the message was brought: "Now Clausen is coming!" Soon young and old gladly listened to the Lord's Word.

His first wife, Martha Frederikke Clausen's farewell hymn, "So now we will say farewell to one another," is still sung in our churches and gatherings, and will continue to be sung as long as Danish is sung in America.

From Our More Recent Past

We should remember with joy and gratitude the Norwegian and Swedish Lutheran pastors and congregations who took care of our countrymen before these obtained pastors from their own church in their midst. And not least we should remember the men who saw to it that Danish congregations could get Danish pastors to serve them. In this way they contributed to the fact that we this year can celebrate a jubilee as an Evangelical Lutheran church body. And if we turn to such as have worked for Danish mission in America without themselves having been here in the country, then we must not forget the men—pastors and a layman—who, especially as a fruit of Pastor C. L. Clausen's warm advocacy of the cause, in 1868, at a meeting in Ryslinge, came together and formed the "Church Association for the Diocese of Funen," and put mission among Danes in America on its program. It was at this association's meeting in Odense on October 7 and 8, 1869, that the "Committee to Promote the Proclamation of the Gospel among Danes in North America" was formed, and came to consist of the following men, whose names ought to have a place in this our memorial and festskrift:

Pastor Johannes Møller, Odense. Pastor Johannes Clausen, Ryslinge. Pastor Dr. Ludvig Helveg, Odense. Pastor G. Strøm, Marslev. Chamber Councillor Plesner of Vedersø.

These men—of whom, as far as we know, only Pastor Joh. Møller still lives, as a very old man (he was born in 1832)—deserve the thanks of all Danish Lutheran Christians in America for their work in this important but long-neglected cause in our old fatherland: their sending out of workers, collection of monetary contributions, and information about the work in America through the little booklet Messages from the Danish-American Mission, which did not cease until the dissolution of the "Committee," when the split took place in the Danish Church in America.

Figure 4: C. L. Clausen

Several of our older pastors received their training for the pastoral office under the committee's supervision and with its support, counsel, and guidance, both before and after their being sent out to the work in America, and therefore stand in a great debt of gratitude to its members. Likewise, Flor's Folk High School in Askov should be remembered on this occasion, because it opened its doors and received the first candidates for the ministry who were trained for work among their countrymen in America, namely the now-deceased Pastor Jens Petersen and Pastor emeritus Olav Kirkebø from Norway, as well as their professor, now Pastor P. Rieman in Faxe on Zealand.

Fifty Years Ago

While we, as a united Danish church, can celebrate a twenty-five-year jubilee, it is quite in order to remember that this summer it is fifty years since the beginning was made toward the establishment of a Danish Lutheran church body in America. On June 12, 1871, the steamship Thyrringia of the Hamburg Line landed in New York, and had aboard Missionary A. S. Nielsen from Vendsyssel as well as mission student Rasmus Andersen from Asperup on Funen—the first men whom the "Committee" on Funen had sent out to work among countrymen in the U.S. And thus the beginning was made of the body that in 1874 took the name "The Danish Church in America." It is not the intention here to go more deeply into that body's history, all the more since it is told in Professor P. S. Vig's writing Danish Lutheran Mission in America in the Period before 1884, to which we therefore permit ourselves to refer. As is known, it was a portion of pastors and congregations who previously belonged to the Danish Church who in 1896

joined together with the Blair body and formed the United Danish Church, which this year holds its jubilee.

It would be only slightly fitting to fill a festskrift like this with a detailed account of the reasons that, after many long struggles, led to the split in the Danish Church in 1894. Such struggles are of little edification while they are going on, especially when they concern matters about which all Christians ought to agree, and there is in any case little joy in reviving them again, all the more since many of the men who took part in these struggles have long since left the Church Militant. Only this much shall be said: that the struggles lasted from about 1880 to 1894, and were fought between two directions that gradually arose within the body; that each of these directions had its own paper, especially from 1892, when Danskeren was started; that the struggles concerned not the Word of God, but what should be called the Word of God—either Scripture or the Apostles' Creed—and that the struggle was far from being carried on with prudence or moderation by either side, which seldom is the case in such struggles. In the end there were two associations within the body: "Dansk Folkesamfund" of 1887 and "the Mission Association," which came into being in 1893.

It should be noted that a large portion of the body's pastors, who had not taken direct part in the dispute, formed a middle party that sought to bring about peace between the contending parties, among other things by getting adopted a somewhat revised constitution for the body and permission to form a "Mission Association." The reason why, nevertheless, the greater part of the Mission Association's members refrained from signing the adopted constitution by the time set at the close of the annual meeting in Racine did not lie in the fact that they in themselves had anything particular against this constitution, but in this: that for them the hope of real cooperation in the body had been broken. It is deeply regrettable that it should come to that. But history seems to confirm the truth that cooperation in a free church is impossible if there is not agreement in what is essential—and agreement about what it is that is essential. The separation in 1894 must be lamented, because it separated old friends from one another, congregations were split, and many minds were filled with bitter thoughts, and so on. But, as said, it seemed unavoidable, although surely neither party took joy in it.

The Augsburg Conference–The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Body

As we have seen, the "Committee" on Funen, as well as the men it sent out, were chiefly of the Grundtvigian tendency. As a consequence, "Inner Mission" did not think it could send its young men—who had mission in America in view—to the Committee's school. The lines of direction were at that time rather strict in Denmark.

Through letters from some of the pastors of the "Norwegian-Danish Conference," Pastor Vilh. Beck, chairman of Inner Mission, had become aware of Augsburg Seminary as a school to which one could point young men who wished to become pastors among their countrymen in America, and where they could seek their education. Young Danish men who had been spiritually awakened in Norwegian congregations, or had come to America from awakened circles in Denmark, likewise sought Augsburg. After passing their examinations, these young men became pastors in the Conference, but for Danish congregations—often such as they had served during vacations while they were at the school, which from 1872 had its home in Minneapolis, formerly in Marshall, Dane County, Wisconsin. In the Norwegian body they went under the common name "the Danish Brothers." The old Pastor C. L. Clausen, the Conference's first chairman and one of the men who had a part in bringing Augsburg Seminary to Minneapolis, was not counted among the Danish Brothers.

By working together in the Conference with older men—several of whom had grown gray in the service of the Church—they obtained a practical training in the pastoral office that was of great help to them. Nevertheless, as Danes they felt themselves especially called to labor among their own countrymen here in the land. Thus they had their own

mission association, which contributed funds to Danish mission, and from 1877 they had their own paper, Kirkebladet ("The Church Paper"), published by the Danish pastors in the Conference with Pastor A. M. Andersen of Racine, Wisconsin, as editor. Later they worked hard to get a Danish professor appointed at Augsburg Seminary. There was some negotiation about the matter, but it was never realized.

Later, among the Danish pastors, there was talk of establishing a Danish folk high school. This was in 1882. But neither did the folk high school come to anything—at that time.

The Conference was a Norwegian body, even if it called itself Norwegian-Danish, and of course work among Norwegians was the great main matter. Not only that, but the Danish pastors were hindered in their work among countrymen by being cried out as "Norwegians." Taken together, this naturally led to the thought of withdrawing from the Conference, which was discussed—first man to man, later at smaller and larger meetings—until at last, at a larger meeting in March 1884 in Omaha, Nebraska, it was realized by a unanimous decision to that effect. A reasoned request was then submitted to the Conference's next annual meeting, which approved the matter and wished the Danish Brothers God's blessing on their work, and also resolved to strike "Danish" from its name. But then what? It was not a large and mighty flock, either of pastors or of congregations, that had separated from the Conference—only six, yes, literally six pastors and their respective congregations.

Were they to form a separate body? Seek connection with Inner Mission in Denmark and work as its representative in America? Or should they unite with the Danish Church? The first seemed somewhat risky. The second did not succeed; Inner Mission already had its hands full of work. Union with the Danish Church gave rise to many misgivings, since they were under the impression that this body did not acknowledge Holy Scripture to be the Word of God. The result was that they had to stand alone. At the summer meeting, determined at the withdrawal meeting in Omaha, held at Argo, Burt County, Nebraska, from September 11 to 14, 1884, they agreed to call themselves "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Body in America," and adopted a constitution. At that founding meeting the number of pastors

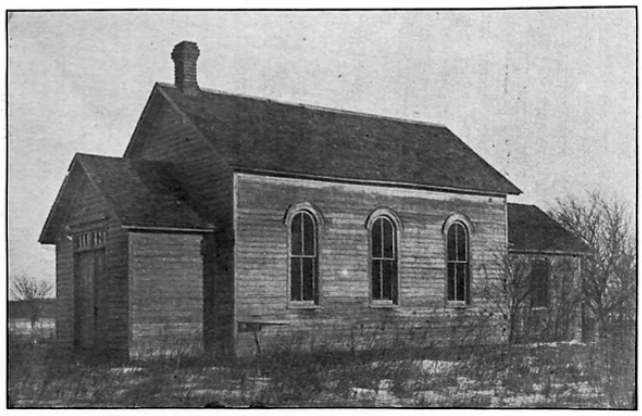

Figure 5: The church at Argo

was increased to nine, since two were ordained and one, who had previously belonged to the Danish Church, was received into the new Danish body at his request. The nine pastors served nineteen small congregations and fifteen preaching stations.

The Blair Body's Work up to 1896

"The Blair body" became the external nickname for the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Body, because its center came to be in Blair, Washington County, Nebraska. To that town Pastor A. M. Andersen moved from Argo in the autumn of 1884 and began holding school for prospective pastors in his home. Given the circumstances under which it stood, the young body took up the school question vigorously, so as not to be dependent on a supply of pastors from Denmark, and through united effort it succeeded in erecting the first school building on the hill west of the town of Blair in 1886, where Trinitatis Seminary has since had its home. The intention was to obtain a man from Denmark as head of the pastors' school, but despite several attempts at this it did not come about. Nor did it succeed with Pastor P. C. Trandberg, who had come to America in the early summer of 1882. The body called him in 1887, but he declined the call; instead he sought connection with the Congregationalists, at whose theological school in Chicago he accepted a professorship, which he held for some years. Some of the young men who had studied there under the old free-church spirit became pastors in the Blair body, some of them after studying for a time at the school in Blair. The little body from 1884 grew steadily, from nine pastors, nineteen congregations, and a membership of about 1,500, to, by 1896, forty-two pastors, fifty-seven congregations, and a membership of about 6,150. Besides the congregations there were also a number of preaching stations.

In time various enterprises were begun. Thus, in addition to Kirkebladet, which from 1884 was the body's organ, the publication of Børnebladet ("The Children's Paper") began in 1890. From August 1896 De Unges Blad i Amerika ("The Young People's Paper in America") appeared. "Mission" stood in large letters on the new body's banner—both inner and outer mission. In 1892 the young Pastor N. L. Nielsen, sent out by the body, began his missionary work among the Cherokee Indians in Indian Territory, now Oklahoma. In 1893 the body began a bookstore in Blair, the "Danish Lutheran Publishing House," which at first, however, was a joint-stock company. In 1895 the body established an orphanage in Waupaca, Wisconsin.

As will be seen from what has been said, the young body was active in many areas. Even though it had no official connection with Inner Mission in Denmark, it fully had that association's moral support and received, among other things, a large part of its ministerial candidates from the awakened circles in Denmark; likewise several pastors from there visited the body's congregations, as well as missionaries passing through on their way to their field of labor on heathen soil.

The congregations of the body were willing to give, and did so at times almost beyond their strength. They had ample opportunity for this, both through additions to the school and through contributions to the body's many undertakings.

Gradually there were approaches between this body and like-minded pastors in the Danish Church. As means toward this, mention should especially be made of the collection of religious songs that the Blair body produced in 1892 and published under the name Sangeren ("The Singer") in two editions, one with and one without melodies. This songbook, which has since appeared in many printings and with supplements, found strong acceptance especially in the circles of the "Mission Association" within the Danish Church, where many of the songs were new and carried out their mission. There is something in "singing oneself together," and there is a deep truth in what Bjørnson has said: "Song unites, as it makes things fade away." We know the Catholics' judgment on Lutheran hymns: "Heresy has been sung into more hearts than it has been preached into." Sangeren, which soon can hold a thirty-year jubilee, has, despite its shortcomings—which are now clear enough—performed in its time a significant mission that ought not to be forgotten in this our festival year.

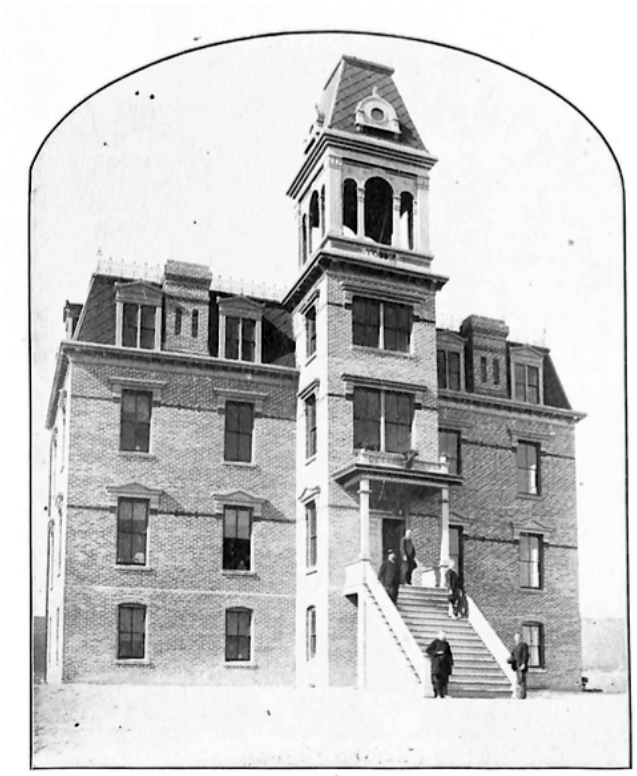

Figure 6: Old Trinity Seminary

Sangeren and Danskeren first saw the light in the same year, 1892, and both have made—let us say—great contributions to the two becoming united into one; for just as Sangeren found its way across the border and into the neighbor's house, so too did Danskeren. And each carried out its errand. Therefore they too ought to go together as guests of honor at our great memorial celebration in this our twenty-fifth year. For although Danskeren has, in a manner of speaking, passed away, it has only done so in order to rise again and continue its work in Luthersk Ugeblad ("Lutheran Weekly"), which we hope will prove a worthy heir to its predecessor. Other times demand other clothes, we know well enough—but it is the spirit, the kernel, that matters all the same.

The Mission Association—The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America

The Mission Association was, as said, formed within the Danish Church and with that body's permission at the meeting in Racine in September 1893. Its coming into being was due in no small measure to the weekly paper Danskeren, published by Jersild Publishing Company, Neenah, Wisconsin, whose first number appeared in June 1892. This paper likewise had great importance in preparing the way for the birth of the United Church.

Immediately after its formation the Mission Association began publishing the small weekly paper Missionsbudet ("The Mission Message"), later, after the founding of the United Church, merged with Kirkebladet under the name Dansk luth. Kirkeblad ("Danish Lutheran Church Paper").

At a meeting in Elk Horn in 1894 the Mission Association bought Pastor Kr. Anker's folk high school in Elk Horn, which he had purchased in 1891 from the Danish Church, in order to train pastors there. Immediately after that they issued a call to Pastor P. S. Vig, then pastor in Luck, Wisconsin, as teacher of theology at the school in Elk Horn, and he accepted the call.

At its annual meeting in Elk Horn in October 1894 the Mission Association resolved to change its name to "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" and to have itself incorporated in the State of Iowa under that name.

From that meeting the following is quoted here from an old record book:

"The Association for Evangelical Lutheran Mission among Danes in America, gathered for a joint meeting in Elk Horn, Iowa, in September 1894, declares that we stand and

will stand in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, are in full agreement with its doctrine and confession, and take a firm stand against all foreign teachings, in that we in our doctrine and practice wholly and unconditionally submit ourselves to God's Word. On this foundation we will stand in cooperation with all Danish Evangelical Lutheran Christians and work toward the time when there can become a Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."

It was a serious step that had been taken, and they were also fertile times, when many came to earnest reflection on where they stood and what they wanted. The Christian people were with them, perhaps as never before. The young people filled the school in Elk Horn; there were six young men preparing themselves for the pastoral office, and more were expected. The meetings around the Danish settlements were well attended, the papers spread, and everything promised a rich future.

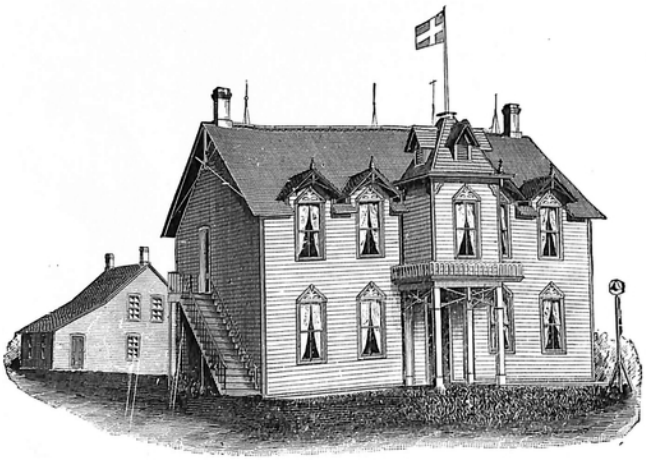

Figure 7: The Old Folkschool in Elk Horn

Preparations for Union

The young Elk Horn body of 1894 was thus the third body in America that laid claim to be genuinely Lutheran, and as such it stood between two others: on one side the Danish Church of 1874, on the other the Blair body of 1884.

It was natural that the young body's members, formerly belonging to the Danish Church, had brought certain prejudices with them. Properly considered, under the circumstances and given human nature, it could almost hardly have been otherwise. It has shown itself not to be so easy for a church body to love its neighbor. And the Blair body's prejudices against the newcomer from Elk Horn were perhaps no less. If on the one side one feared "Methodism," then perhaps on the other side fully as much "Grundtvigianism."

That it turned out otherwise is due—next to God's good Spirit, who is the great Uniter in the Church—especially to Danskeren and to Inner Mission in Denmark, which advised the two youngest of the Danish church bodies in America to unite.

From the beginning Danskeren had gained fairly wide circulation in the Blair body, and in its columns men from both sides spoke for rapprochement and possible union of the two bodies. This had the effect that minds were set in motion in that direction, and visits from both sides to larger and smaller meetings in each of the bodies contributed no less.

That such meetings came about was due especially to two men from the old fatherland who visited the congregations of the two bodies.

Mathiesen and Kier in 1895

Figure 8: Pastor H. I. C. F. Mathiesen

Figure 9: Inner Mission worker C. B. Kier

The gifted but quiet Pastor H. I. C. F. Mathiesen, then assistant pastor in Asaa in Vendsyssel, will be remembered by many from his visit to many of the congregations that now belong to the United Church during his stay here in the summer of 1895, together with the Inner Mission worker, the manufacturer C. B. Kier. His sermons are not forgotten even after the passing of twenty-six years and have had great significance for many. Pastor Mathiesen also brought with him several new songs and tunes, which he sang in among us, so that they are sung to this day. We have good reason to give his portrait a place in our festskrift and to remember him as the man who has shown that he can not only speak for a cause but also suffer for it—both imprisonment and mockery. We will also remember his companion, the South Jutlander, Inner Mission worker Kier, at our memorial and thanksgiving festival, especially for his "The Young People's Library," which found no small entrance among us and carried out its quiet mission. In 1895 the "North Church" (as the Elk Horn body came to be called) held its annual meeting in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where a very large assembly of people from both bodies had occasion to hear Pastor Mathiesen preach on Sunday at the main service on "The Three Crosses," and later, probably Tuesday evening, on "The Great Catch of Fish," an Inner Mission sermon. Pastor Mathiesen's

visit and the annual meeting in Cedar Falls were an important step toward the union of the two youngest Danish bodies in America.

Busch and Beck in 1895: The Annual Meeting in Racine, Wisconsin

Pastor A. Busch, then parish pastor in Bøvling and Flynder near Lemvig, made a journey in America in the summer of 1895 together with the Inner Mission worker Hans Chr. Beck and visited a number of the congregations in the two bodies. These men, who at that time stood in the full strength of their manhood and both were exceptionally capable, made their contribution to the two bodies' drawing closer and making the final decision to enter into union. These visits from the old fatherland had particular significance for the congregation members in the two bodies, in that they received a sense that they belonged together and therefore ought to stand together.

Perhaps it was harder for the pastors as a whole, since several of them had worked in the same settlement, but each from his own group—and various other things that were not so easy to get past. Even so, it was not without much anxiety that the "North Church's" pastors—and later also the congregations' representatives—agreed to unite with the Blair body. A committee was then chosen which, together with a similar one from the other body, was to work out proposals regarding the new body's name and constitution. The Blair body had already, at its annual meeting in Albert Lea in June, resolved on union with the "North Church" and elected a committee.

The Union Meeting in 1896

First a little about the place where the meeting was held. Minneapolis, known by the name "The City of Mills," the larger of the Twin Cities on the upper Mississippi, is well known in the history of the Lutheran Church among Scandinavians in America. We cannot go further into that here. But we must pause at a few points. Not very far from the church where the union meeting was held lies Augsburg Seminary, which has had its home here since 1872, and where not a few of the Blair body's pastors had received their education. It was therefore entirely fitting that one of their old teachers, Professor Sven Oftedal, spoke to us one evening during the union meeting, and we received a living impression of this man's powerful eloquence.

Likewise it must be mentioned that it was in Minneapolis that "The United Norwegian Church" was formed in 1890 through the union of three of the earlier Norwegian church bodies, among them the Conference to which the founders of the Blair body had once belonged. It was to that great meeting that the old C. L. Clausen, who had worked strongly also for the founding of Augsburg Seminary, sent his brotherly greeting by letter—he was prevented by bodily weakness from being personally present. This naturally leads also to mention a man who certainly would have been present at our union meeting, namely Pastor P. C. Trandberg, who died suddenly in Minneapolis on June 16, 1896, after having attended the Blair body's last annual meeting in Albert Lea, Minnesota, from June 4 to 11 of that year. As one who by his awakening voice has influenced many of us, and as one who has been teacher to a portion of our older pastors, Pastor Trandberg deserves a place in our festskrift.

This remarkable farmer's son from the rocky island in the Baltic Sea had a very restless course of life, both in Denmark and in America, where he spent the last fourteen years of his life. But all who have known him will agree that his preaching had an awakening influence on many people wherever he went about in the world. His lack of ability to discern spirits may have been more noticeable than his willingness to give everything he owned, both spiritually and materially, for the advancement and strengthening of God's

kingdom in the world. He was a mighty witness to the truth that one of our hymn writers has expressed in these words:

The word that God so lovingly let Himself be reconciled through His Son, the word of Jesus' death and blood— it has so strong a tone that it awakens him again who once in sin died away, when he truly receives it!

Yes—may that always be and remain the chief keynote in the preaching in our little church body! — — —

Immanuel's Congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where the union meeting was held, had been formed by Danes, some of whom had been members of St. Peter's Congregation of the Danish Church, likewise in Minneapolis. The congregation's pastor was Pastor A. S. Nielsen. It gave us the most heartfelt welcome and in the best way provided for our well-being during the busy meeting. The meeting was opened with a worship service, at which the chairman of the North Church, Pastor P. L. C. Hansen, served at the altar, and the chairman of the Blair body, Pastor H. Hansen, preached on the text Luke 12:32. The opening meeting was on September 30, 1896.

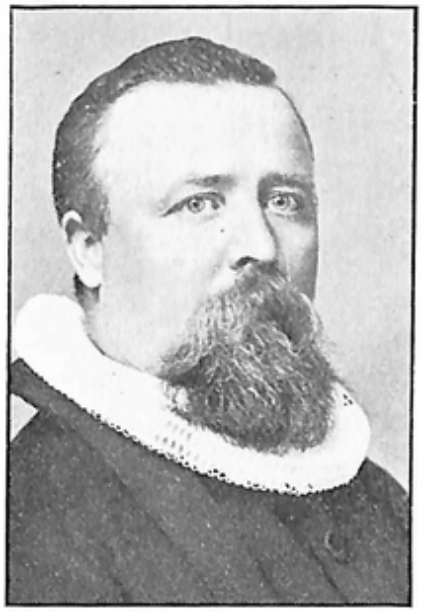

Figure 10: Pastor P. L. C. Hansen

The organizational meeting was held the same afternoon, with the two bodies' chairmen as presiding officers and with the election of the necessary committees. It appeared that 36 pastors had come, 22 of them from the Blair body; and 20 lay delegates, 6 of them from the Blair body. Many pastors sent written greetings to the meeting, and likewise many congregations that did not find themselves able to be represented at the meeting.

In order to understand why the representation at the union meeting was relatively small—only 56 delegates in all—one must remember the long distances, and especially that each of the bodies in question had already held its own annual meeting at which the union had been adopted unanimously, so that many regarded the meeting in Minneapolis as a repetition of something that had already been accomplished.

There is no reason to give a report of the meeting, since such a report was long ago published in print.

After the constitution of the new body, reviewed by a committee chosen by the meeting for that purpose, had been approved by roll-call vote by all of the meeting's

delegates, and the necessary measures for the future work had been adopted, and elections of officers had taken place, this significant meeting concluded—by which there began a new chapter in the history of the Lutheran Church in this our new fatherland.

The administration of the new body came to consist of the following men:

• Pastor G. B. Christiansen, Owatonna, Minnesota, Chairman.

• Pastor A. L. J. Søholm, Waupaca, Wisconsin, Vice Chairman.

• Pastor N. S. Nielsen, Waupaca, Wisconsin, Secretary.

• Mr. Hans Andersen, Blair, Nebraska, Treasurer.

• Pastor P. L. C. Hansen, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

• Pastor L. Mathiasen, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

• And the laymen P. Clausen, Albert Lea, Minnesota; J. Hemmingsen, Oconto, Wisconsin; and P. C. T. Munk, Blair, Nebraska.

Figure 11: Pastor H. Hansen

At its founding, the new body numbered 63 ordained pastors, 8 missionaries—among them 1 theological candidate and 2 theological students. One hundred twenty-one congregations were served by the body's pastors, 75 of which belonged to the body. In addition, 35 preaching stations were served. So far as one can see from the figures given, the new body comprised a membership of 12,000 to 14,000, adults and children.

Of the 36 pastors who were present at the union meeting in Minneapolis in 1896, the following seven have died: N. Lang, L. Mathiasen, M. C. H. Rohe, J. N. Jersild, G. Grill, H. J. Dahlstrøm, and P. L. C. Hansen. Of the 20 lay delegates, the following are known to have died: M. N. Rahbeck (later ordained as a pastor), H. Bønnelykke of Waupaca, Wisconsin, E. P. Fisher of Shennington, Wisconsin, S. P. Svendsen of Albert Lea, Minnesota, and M. J. Schultz of Vermillion, South Dakota.

Of the other pastors who were present at the union meeting, seven are pastors emeriti, one has left the body, and twenty are still in the Church's active service, one of them in the Danish National Church.

The United Church's Work

After having briefly accounted for the body's origin and the prerequisites for it, it will be in order to give an account of the activity of the said body during the past 25 years. And since the body's legislative authority ultimately lies with the annual meeting, it will be best to begin with

The Annual Meetings

The time for the annual meeting of the body is set for the first half of the month of June. As a rule, the location is decided by the preceding meeting, which determines which of the places that have sent an invitation is to be accepted. If no such invitation is received, the annual meeting entrusts to the body's administration the task of receiving invitations and deciding which of them shall be accepted. Since the body has most of its congregations in the Middle States, it is natural that most annual meetings have been held there. Of the places where we have thus far held an annual meeting, Greenville, Michigan lies farthest east; Blair, Nebraska farthest west; Elk Horn, Iowa farthest south; and Kenmare, North Dakota farthest north. The body has had an invitation from as far west as Selma, California, but felt it had to decline the invitation because of the long distance and the expensive travel for the delegates. Here shall be given a list of the places where the body has assembled for annual meeting during the past 25 years. Of these, the following stand highest:

Blair, Nebraska, 4 annual meetings: 1897, 1900, 1911, and 1921. Hutchinson, Minnesota, 3 annual meetings: 1899, 1904, and 1920. Racine, Wisconsin, 3 annual meetings: 1902, 1910, and 1913. Kenmare, North Dakota, 3 annual meetings: 1906, 1912, and 1918.

The following places have hosted 2 annual meetings: Greenville, Michigan (1898 and 1914). Elk Horn, Iowa (1903 and 1909). Cedar Falls, Iowa (1905 and 1919).

One annual meeting has been held in each of the following places: Albert Lea, Minnesota (1901); Council Bluffs, Iowa (1907); Waupaca, Wisconsin (1908); Luck, Wisconsin (1915); Harlan, Iowa (1916); and Neenah, Wisconsin (1917).

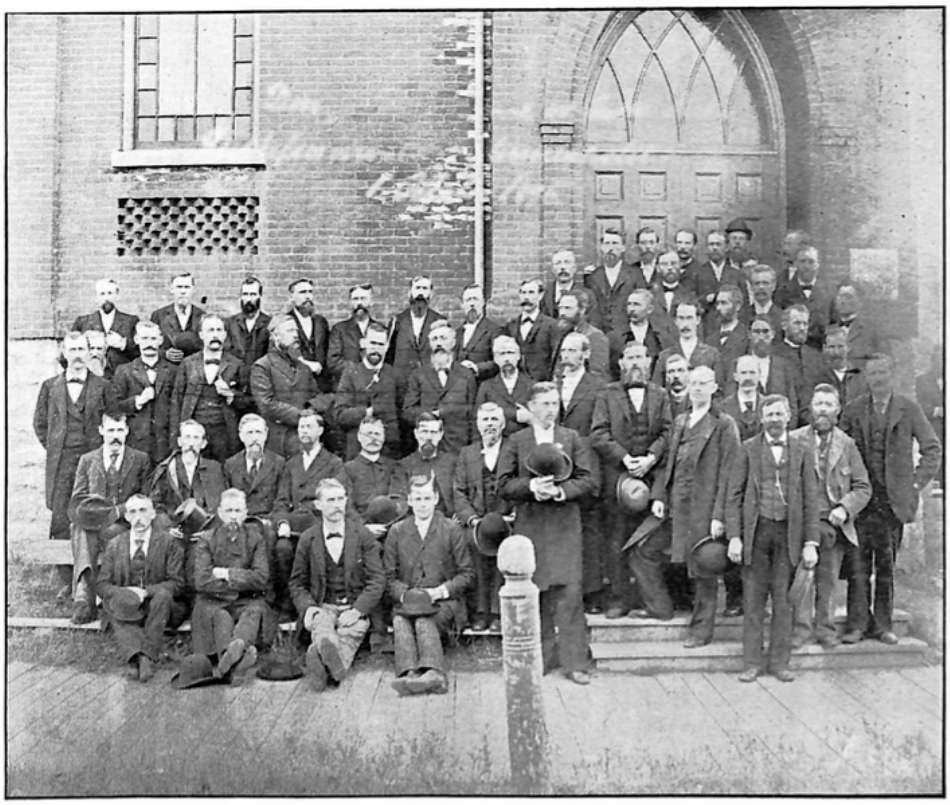

Figure 12: The Association Meeting

Regarding the size of the annual meetings, one must distinguish between the delegate annual meeting, consisting of pastors and congregational representatives, and the many visitors, young and old, who from the very first have taken part in these meetings of the body.

If we take the number of delegates from the first annual meeting in 1897 to the 24th in 1920, the annual reports show that these 24 meetings were attended by a total of 1,214 lay delegates and 1,467 pastors. The smallest number of delegates occurred at the annual meeting in Kenmare in 1906 with 44 pastors and 25 lay delegates, and the largest number of delegates came at the meeting in Hutchinson, Minnesota, in 1920 with 86 pastors and 84 lay delegates.

As is natural, not only the location where the meeting is held, but also the importance of the matters to be brought before the meeting, has great influence on the number of delegates. As it gradually became more difficult to get the railway companies to give delegates reduced fares to smaller meetings, it became a considerable expense for a smaller congregation to be represented at the body's annual meeting if it lay far from the meeting place. And travel to the annual meeting in such a case makes a significant dent in the

pastor's salary, which as a rule is not among the larger ones. If one takes the average of the above figures, one finds that there have been a little over 61 pastors and between 50 and 51 lay delegates present at each of the said 24 annual meetings; and that must, when one considers the great area over which the body's congregations are scattered, surely be called generally good, and it shows significant interest in the body—without which a free church cannot exist.

When one then speaks of the general attendance at the annual meetings from the visitors' side, one must again distinguish between the Sundays of the annual meeting and the festival days, among which Sunday again occupies the foremost place.

As a rule the deliberative meetings are attended by a large assembly of both men and women, and therefore they are usually held in a fairly spacious place—church, hall, or tent.

For the annual meeting is— and therein lies part of its great significance—the great yearly mission meeting in the body, where there is opportunity to hear voices both from the distant Atlantic coast and likewise from the Pacific coast, and often visitors either from Denmark, Japan, or from one or more of the other Lutheran bodies here in the country.

Each annual meeting is opened with a church service, where a pastor appointed by one of the body's chairmen preaches, and often is granted the grace to strike the tone that becomes dominant throughout the entire meeting. Each working day during the meeting is opened with a longer morning devotion, in which one of the pastors speaks on a predetermined theme. And during the deliberative meetings there are usually a couple of the pastors who hold a meeting in another room, either for the young—of whom a large crowd is usually present at each annual meeting—or for the older. All in all, our annual meetings are among the busiest times throughout the whole year for our church people. There is not much time for sleep and none at all for boredom for the one who has interest in the great work in which we all ought to take part if it is to succeed. Old friends who have not seen one another since they were children have more than once found one another at our annual meetings; new friendships have been made, perhaps for life; new impulses have been given; the discouraged have received new hope; and all of us have gotten a sense that we belong to the same great family, however far apart we may be in everyday life. It is no exaggeration to say that our annual meetings are among the greatest and best people's gatherings that have been held among Danes in America, and for many they have been a festive time of incalculable importance.

But Sunday during the annual meeting is nevertheless the high point of it all. It is the day when most gather both from the farther and the nearer surroundings. In the morning there is an ordination of new workers in the Church's service. At the church service there have often been as many as 1,000 people present. After the sermon an offering is taken for the body's mission, which sometimes amounts to many hundreds of

dollars. After the feeding of the many people, a meeting is held in the afternoon, where several usually speak, and an offering is taken for the body's mission to the heathen. And after supper there are meetings again, perhaps in several places. If the annual meeting is held in a city, several of the body's pastors often preach—at request—in several of the city's churches and in English.

Danish hospitality has set up a beautiful memorial in our annual meetings, in that the congregations have not been afraid, time after time, to invite them and to take upon themselves all the work it requires to provide food, lodging, and accommodation for several hundred guests for a whole week, and to care for them in the best way—and to do it with joy. In doing so they have carried out a great work for the Church, which deserves both thanks and appreciation. And what applies to the annual meetings also applies to the district meetings. And it deserves emphasis here that the honor that these larger meetings have succeeded so well belongs not least to our faithful women, old and young, who have not been afraid to put their shoulders to the wheel and carry out the great work that no one else could—at least not as well as they.

The Body's Administration Through 25 Years

It is the administration's task to represent the body between annual meetings, to see that the annual meeting's decisions are carried out, to receive requests for admission into the body from congregations and pastors and to lay these before the annual meeting accompanied by necessary information, in appropriate cases to make decisions in matters that require quick resolution, and to bring proposals before the annual meeting concerning matters that concern the whole body—all of it under responsibility to the annual meeting, which in all matters has the deciding authority. In other words, this means that the administration is the body's servant and church council, which on its behalf signs and concludes contracts, makes loans, etc.—certainly a responsible position, not least in turbulent times—and the reward has often been criticism that is not exactly gentle, as the free conditions under which we live bring with them.

The Body's Chairman

This title in reality stands for what in more ecclesiastical language one would call the body's bishop. And if one does not wish to cling to mere names, it can rightly be said that the United Danish Church in America is an episcopal body. The chairman is elected directly by the body for a period of three years and can be re-elected as often as the body decides. He is the administration's ex officio chairman, who lays its decisions before the annual meeting. Likewise he is the body's ex officio ordinator, who, if he himself is prevented, can have the vice chairman function in his place. As ordinator he signs and issues ordination certificates and receives the ordinands' vows. Likewise he performs most church dedications in the body, but here too can have either the vice chairman or another pastor function in his place.

Regarding the examination of the qualifications of men who have submitted a request for ordination in the body, as well as the admission of pastors from other bodies—and removals from office—the chairman and the administration as a whole consult with the ministry assembled at the annual meeting, whose decision is then presented to the annual meeting for final determination. Visitations in the congregations, carried out by the district chairmen each within his district, can in extraordinary cases be carried out by the chairman when the congregation and pastor concerned request it. It will thus be seen that the office of chairman is very far from being what is called a sinecure or "sleeping post." The United Church is in the (surely rare) circumstance that its chairman can celebrate a twenty-five-year jubilee together with his church body, since Pastor G. B. Christiansen, K.D.[1], has for the entire time since its founding been this body's chairman.

Gottlieb Bender Christiansen was born October 27, 1851 in Vejlby Parish on Funen; his parents were Chr. Gottliebsen and Else Cathrine, née Nielsen. In his early youth he had come to conscious faith in his Savior under the influence of the awakened circles in his home district; he emigrated in 1877 to America with the thought of becoming a preacher of the Word among his emigrated countrymen. As a spiritual son of Inner Mission in Denmark, he went to Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis, which he attended for four years. In 1881 he was ordained to the pastoral office by Pastor Joh. Olsen, C. L. Clausen's successor as chairman of the Norwegian-Danish Conference, for a call from a Danish congregation in Council Bluffs, Iowa, which essentially owes him its founding, since during his school vacations he had worked there. He served there until 1885, when he accepted a call from Albert Lea, Minnesota, where he remained until 1890, when he was called as superintendent and professor at Trinitatis Seminary, Blair, Nebraska, and pastor for the congregation in Blair. While he was pastor in Albert Lea, he was for some years chairman of the Blair body, for whose founding he had worked and among whose leading men he was rightly counted. Pastor Christiansen was likewise an active spokesman for the union whose result was the United Danish Church in America. It was therefore wholly fitting that he was chosen as chairman of the new body, and through the now elapsed twenty-five years he has continually been chosen as his own successor. It goes without saying that through his long term as chairman he has gained an unparalleled knowledge of both the body's congregations and clergy, since there are surely few congregations he has not been in, and most of the younger pastors have been ordained by him. He has lived through many heavy times, since the burdens of the body fall not least upon the one who has care for the whole. His cheerful Funen temperament and bright view of life, and especially his courageous Christian faith, have helped him over all difficulties and let him see a golden edge even on the darkest cloud. The knight's cross that the Danish king, King Christian X, honored Chairman Christiansen with in 1912 is not only an honor for the church body he represents, but also for the man who received it, since

[1] Knight of Dannebrog

he has performed a great and significant work in the service of Danishness here in this country—work that we are glad has been appreciated in this fine way by the king of our old people.

The Body's Vice Chairman

To this important office—whose significance is surely not appreciated as it deserves—the United Church at the founding meeting chose Pastor A. L. J. Søholm, then longtime pastor in Waupaca, Wisconsin, and he held it for sixteen years, until 1912. Since he is now the oldest pastor in our body and only recently has withdrawn from active service, a brief outline of his long and active life among us shall be given here.

Anders Larsen Jensen Søholm was born in eastern Southern Jutland, near Christiansfeld, on June 16, 1844. His parents had moved there from Funen and had this son named after the well-known layman from Funen, Anders Larsen of Gamborg. The young Søholm had an appetite for books and attended Lyngby Seminary near Grenaa, where he passed the teacher's examination. He obtained a position near Ribe. As a believing young man he took an eager part in the awakening that was aroused in northern Southern Jutland by Pastor A. C. L. Grove Rasmussen, then parish pastor in Gram. It was this man who undertook to travel with the committee's first emissary to America in 1871.

The thought of serving as a preacher of the Gospel among his emigrated countrymen in America had awakened in the young schoolteacher, and he had already for some time, under Grove Rasmussen's guidance, prepared himself to take up such a work. Together with his young wife, who like he was a South Jutlander, he traveled in the summer of 1872 to America and came to Perth Amboy, New Jersey, one of the places that Grove Rasmussen had pointed out in his report to the committee as needing a Danish pastor. Søholm was recommended by the committee on Funen but was not directly sent out by that society. After receiving a call from the newly founded congregation in Perth Amboy, he was on September 8, 1872, in Cedar Falls, Iowa, ordained to the pastoral office by Pastor A. S. Nielsen. As pastor in New Jersey he found opponents both in the Norwegian synod pastor, Pastor O. Juul, who had already founded a Danish congregation in Perth Amboy before Søholm's arrival, and likewise among the Methodists, who had a Danish congregation in the same city. But the young Danish pastor did not lack work. He found his way to many places where there were countrymen, in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and New England, and everywhere he gathered them around the preaching of the Word. He is the first who began emigrant mission in New York, which for so many Danes has been the gate through which they entered the new world. Already in April 1873 Kirkelig Samler reports this.

Søholm's work in the East was interrupted in 1878, when he went to Waupaca, Wisconsin, while Pastor R. Andersen took his place in the East. From Waupaca, where he served Holy Spirit Congregation for a little over twenty years, he ranged widely among his countrymen and founded and served many small congregations. In 1888 Søholm was

chosen chairman of the Danish Church in America and held that office until 1891. That he was a capable and vigilant chairman is known to all who know him. For many years he was treasurer of the pastors' pension fund, which he tended with great care. He was an active worker in the Mission Association. At the founding of the United Church he was chosen vice chairman and held that office until 1912, when Pastor I. Gertsen became his successor. Only quite recently Pastor Søholm, who is now over seventy-six years old, has withdrawn from active service, which he has stood in for over forty-eight years.

Pastor Iver Gertsen, who became vice chairman in 1912, was born in Engum near Vejle on February 13, 1861, came to America in 1889, studied theology at Chicago Theological Seminary and Trinitatis Seminary, Blair, Nebraska, and was ordained in 1892. Pastor Gertsen was for many years editor of De Unges Blad ("The Young People's Paper"). He is now pastor in Spencer, Iowa.

The Body's Secretary

This office has changed hands frequently during the past twenty-five years, so it would carry us too far here to do more than mention the men who have held it. Its first holder was Pastor N. S. Nielsen, then pastor in Waupaca, Wisconsin, now in Reedley, California.

In 1899 Pastor Nielsen was succeeded by his uncle, Pastor A. M. Andersen, then in Viborg, South Dakota, for many years editor of Danskeren.

At the annual meeting in Albert Lea, Minnesota, in 1901, Pastor L. Johnsen, then pastor in Waupaca, Wisconsin, was chosen as Pastor Andersen's successor in the office, which he held until 1909, when he was succeeded by Pastor A. S. Nielsen, a brother of the body's first secretary, and now pastor in Eugene, Oregon. Pastor Nielsen was succeeded in 1916 by Pastor E. Prøvensen, then pastor of Nazareth Congregation, Cedar Falls, Iowa, now parish pastor in Hjørring, Denmark. He was succeeded in 1919, at the annual meeting in Cedar Falls, Iowa, by Pastor M. N. Andreasen, pastor of Nazareth Congregation, who now holds the office. This office is of great importance, since the man who holds it is in reality the body's historian, who records the annual meeting's proceedings and publishes the "Annual Report"—a document of the highest importance for the body both now and in days to come.

The Body's Treasurer

This office too has had several holders since 1896. We can therefore merely mention them, and only for the deceased add a few words of remembrance to their names. The first to hold this office in the United Church was Hans Andersen, manager of the Danish Lutheran Publishing House in Blair. Andersen was in the office until in 1900 he was succeeded by Marcus Beck. Hans Andersen, who while he was in Blair was overloaded with work, later tried many things. Thus he was for a time manager of the mission home in Brooklyn, New York, a "homesteader" in North Dakota, and finally founder of the

Danish colony in Buffalo, Wyoming. There he was injured by a load of timber and died in 1919, leaving a large family. Andersen was known as a capable and conscientious man.

Marcus Beck was a South Jutlander from the Skærbæk area, born in 1847, came to America in 1866, and in the beginning of the 1870s to Washington County, Nebraska, where he was one of the older settlers. After farming for some years, he moved to Blair, where he lived until his death on March 24, 1911. Beck was treasurer of the body first from 1900 to 1908, when, because of illness, he was succeeded by Professor C. X. Hansen. But already at the annual meeting in 1909 Beck was chosen for his old office, which he then held until his death.

Marcus Beck was a very helpful man, highly respected by all who had dealings with him in his many offices in the body. Thus he was a member of several building committees, of the board for the Danish Lutheran Publishing House, etc. He was always willing to help and understood how to help people as few do.

Beck's successor in the office became Otto Hansen, who thus this year can celebrate a ten-year jubilee. He is from the Holsteinborg area on Zealand, was for many years a member of the congregation in Argo, Nebraska, but has now for many years lived in Blair.

By virtue of his position, the treasurer has to deal with a multitude of different people and matters, just as a large amount of money passes through his hands from year to year. That he has his hands full of work goes without saying.

The Other Members of the Body's Administration

These, who have changed not a little through the twenty-five years, would take too much space here to list. However, we shall mention those elected at the founding meeting in 1896.

Peter Laurits Christian Hansen, born April 29, 1854, in Barløse near Assens on Funen. After receiving education at several folk high schools in Denmark, he came to America in the summer of 1882 and was ordained a pastor in Elk Horn, Iowa, in September 1882. At the formation of the "Mission Association" in 1893, Hansen, who was then pastor in Cedar Falls, Iowa, was chosen as its chairman, a position he likewise held in the "North Church." Hansen, who in 1897 became pastor in Elk Horn after Pastor Anker and also principal of the folk high school there, went in 1899 to Oregon, where he helped found the Danish settlement near Eugene. From there he went to San Francisco, where he succeeded in forming a congregation and building a church. In 1910 he returned to the eastern states, where he served as pastor in Minden, Nebraska, and Kenosha, Wisconsin, until in 1918, with broken health, he went to California. There he was severely visited with illness and adversity. Last summer he lost his second wife, and on February 18, 1921, he himself passed away in his home in Turlock, California.

The next member of the administration in 1896 was Pastor Laurids Mathiasen, pastor in Council Bluffs, Iowa. This man, who was born in Lindum near Viborg on May 4, 1849, was in his youth awakened to life in God and from 1878 was employed as a worker in Inner Mission in Denmark. In 1888 he emigrated with his family to America, and the same year he was ordained pastor for the congregation in Hutchinson, Minnesota. In 1889 he accepted a call from the congregation in Council Bluffs, Iowa, where he served until his death on May 15, 1900. Pastor Mathiasen was the friend of the saints, and many have through his quiet testimony been won for God's kingdom. Otherwise reference is made to Pastor I. M. Hansen's memorial writing about him. His workday was not long here in the Church Militant.

Besides the named pastors, the United Church's first administration consisted of three laymen: P. Clausen from Albert Lea, Minnesota; J. Hemmingsen, Oconto, Wisconsin; and P. C. T. Munk, Blair, Nebraska.

As one will see, these three men were representatives from each of the former bodies, and at the same time each from his own part of our old fatherland.

Peder Clausen was born on April 5, 1849, in Lindelse on Langeland—the island that in earlier days sent so many of its capable sons to the United States. Clausen came here in 1869, to Rochester, Minnesota, and has lived in this state ever since. In 1878 he came to Albert Lea, where, having for several years belonged to the Conference, he helped found a Danish congregation. Clausen also took part in forming the Blair body in 1884 and was elected treasurer of the young body. He has on several occasions held a seat on the administration of the United Church and has generally been a very active man in the work of God's kingdom, both in the congregation to which he belongs and more broadly among his countrymen, young and old. For many years he has, together with his son, operated a large flower nursery in Albert Lea.

Jens Hemmingsen was born in Elmelunde Parish on the island of Møn and came in 1870 to Oconto, where he found work at one of the large sawmills to which this town owes its existence, and where a group of young Danes were employed. Before long Hemmingsen became foreman at the mill. The Danes had joined together and organized a congregation, apparently with Pastor J. L. Grøtheim of the Conference—then residing in Marinette, Wisconsin—as pastor, and had also erected a church building.

At an invitation, Pastor N. Thomsen in Neenah, Wisconsin—then the Danish Church's mission pastor—came in July 1874 to Oconto to preach to the Danes there. Through Thomsen's preaching, J. Hemmingsen experienced a serious Christian awakening and from that time on was a faithful and devoted disciple of this his spiritual father in Christ, in good days and bad. This is also borne witness to by the fact that he made sure a fine memorial was placed on Pastor Thomsen's grave at Greenville, Michigan. Between J. Hemmingsen and the late Pastor J. N. Jersild there existed a deep Christian friendship that probably has few parallels in the history of our church.

In this connection it may suffice to recall that it was doubtless more than anyone else due to this faithful friend that Pastor Jersild—who himself was poor—was enabled to begin publication of the weekly paper Danskeren, which has played a major role in making it possible for us this year to celebrate a jubilee as a united Danish Church in America. It is therefore fitting that Jens Hemmingsen, who is one of our most enlightened and experienced laymen, is given a place in this jubilee volume.

Peter Christian Tolstrup Munk was a North Jutlander, born in Bryrup, Tyrsting Hundred, northwest of Horsens, on June 4, 1842. He came to the United States in 1869 and found work in Omaha, where Pastor G. M. Erdahl of the Norwegian Synod exerted strong influence upon him—an influence he always remembered. From Omaha Munk came in 1871 to Burt County, Nebraska, where he became a member of the congregation in Argo, the mother congregation of the Blair body. Regarding this capable and prudent man, who died very suddenly in his home in Blair on April 1, 1900, reference is made, for further details, to Trinitatis Seminarium, 1911, page 40.

The Present Administration and Church Council of the Body

Chairman: G. B. Christiansen, K.D. Regarding him—who is the only member of the administration still occupying the post to which he was elected a quarter of a century ago—reference is made to the information already given in this volume.

The same applies to the Vice Chairman, Pastor I. Gertsen.

The Secretary of the Body, Pastor M. N. Andreasen, may be described as follows: Mathias N. Andreasen was born in Aalborg on May 2, 1871, emigrated in 1890 to the United States, and was admitted as a student at Chicago Theological Seminary, with Pastor P. C. Trandberg as instructor; however, he took his final examination from the seminary's English department in 1893. The same year he was ordained as a pastor in the Presbyterian Church and served a Danish-English congregation of that body in St. Paul, Minnesota, until 1897, when he sought and obtained admission to the United Danish Church at its annual meeting in Blair, Nebraska. Since 1918 he has been pastor of Nazareth Congregation, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Prior to 1897 Pastor Andreasen was editor of The Free Church Messenger, a weekly published by The Synod of Minnesota, and from 1916 to 1919—when he was elected to his present post—he was editor of Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad.

Regarding the treasurer of the body, Otto Hansen, reference must likewise be made to what has already been stated above.

The lay members of the Church Council are Mr. Carl D. Skow and Mr. Laurits Vedsted. Mr. Skow was born in Horsens and for many years has operated a substantial dry-goods business in Racine, Wisconsin. He has been elected to the body's administration for several terms and has taken a leading role in congregational work in his home city.

Mr. Laurits Vedsted was born in Vester Vedsted near Ribe and thus comes from the part of Southern Jutland that remained with Denmark in 1864. He lives near Staplehurst, Nebraska, and since 1910 has held a seat on the body's administration. Mr. Vedsted has taken an active part in the work of the body both in his home area and more broadly, and he is also one of those who have made the largest contributions—both in money and labor—to the body's new school, for the advancement of this important cause.

The Pastors of the United Church

As already mentioned, at its founding the United Church numbered 63 ordained pastors. Over the years this number has increased—primarily through the ordination of young men trained wholly or in part at the body's own seminary, but also partly through admission from outside—to 143, as reported in the annual report for 1920. Over the course of the 25 years, a total of 19 pastors have died. These will be remembered separately elsewhere in this jubilee volume.

Of the 143, thirteen are pastors emeriti. Six are employed in other work within the body. Three serve as missionaries in Japan, two in Queensland, one in the former Danish West Indies, one among the Indians, and one among the Mormons in Utah. Three of the body's pastors serve in Canada.

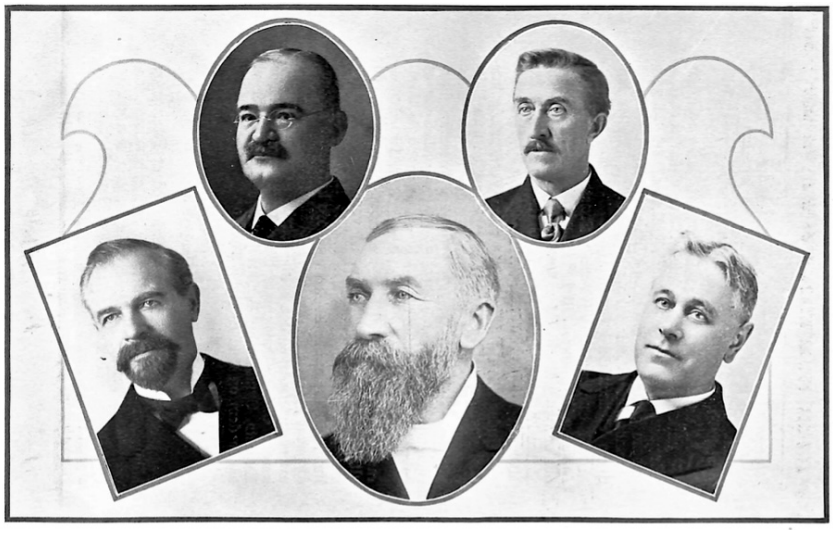

Figure 13: The Board: L to R, top to bottom–Skow, Vedsted; Gertsen, Christiansen, Andreasen

Of the body's present pastors, 24 were born in America, 2 in Norway, and 10 in Southern Jutland. Of the 107 born in Denmark, 60 are from Jutland, 18 from Funen, 15 from Zealand, 8 from Lolland, 3 from Bornholm, 2 from Møn, and 1 from Falster.

During the recently concluded great World War, three of our younger pastors served in the army—one as a chaplain in France, one as a camp pastor, and one in connection

with the Young Men's Christian Association. Likewise, all our pastors, as far as possible, worked to aid our soldiers by supporting enterprises with this purpose, such as the Lutheran Brotherhood, the Red Cross, and others. But better than all this is that we may say that the pastors of our body as a whole have preached the Gospel of the Cross, through faith in which sinners may find justification before God and peace in the heart, and have steadfastly held fast to Holy Scripture as God's revealed Word and the only sure guiding star in this world of darkness, sin, and death. For this we owe them—and God—our heartfelt thanks.

The Congregations of the Body

The United Church is a body of pastors and congregations—not of pastors who are lords over the congregations or ruled by them, but who gather and are gathered with the congregations around God's means of grace and work for the advancement of His kingdom both inwardly and outwardly. Here we shall especially speak of the body's outward growth during the past 25 years, insofar as it can be traced by numbers.

According to the printed report of the union meeting in Minneapolis in 1896, there were 75 congregations within and 52 congregations outside the body—that is, congregations served by the body's pastors without formally having joined it—as well as 35 preaching stations, with a total of between 10,000 and 11,000 souls.

According to the secretary's report to the annual meeting in 1920, the body now counts 176 congregations—of which only 12 stand formally outside the body—as well as 42 preaching stations. The total number of souls in the congregations amounts to a little over 25,000, of whom somewhat more than 16,000 were confirmed.

The value of all the congregations' church buildings is $1,007,050, and of the parsonages $335,660. During the church year there were 26,228 communicants. In all the Sunday schools there were 963 teachers and 7,531 children.

From these figures one will immediately see that the United Church is not a large body in terms of membership numbers, and its growth over 25 years has not been especially phenomenal—far from it. Yet several factors must be considered. First, there is a great difference between the number of congregational members and the churchgoing population in a given area. Most Danish emigrants, when the national census is taken, are Lutherans and register as such; as a rule they also have their children baptized and attend the nearest Sunday school. And if the distance is not too great, they also attend church now and then, especially on major festivals, and they prefer to have a pastor cast earth on the dead and speak a word at the coffin—for after all, one is a Christian! And for all this they are willing to pay. But from there to seeking admission as a member of a congregation is a very long step, the necessity of which most do not recognize.

Second, one must remember that 25 years is more than two thirds of a human lifetime, and that most of those who helped form the United Danish Church in 1896 are now

either dead or aged and retired. Thus the United Church is now, in terms of members and workers, to a very large extent an entirely new body. This is evident in many ways and will become even more apparent in the next few years that lie ahead.

Third, one must consider that our Danish population—even in our congregations—is highly mobile, and has been so especially during the past 25 years. Land in the old settlements has risen so enormously in price that it is generally impossible for a newcomer to buy it with any hope of eventually working his way up to an independent position. As a result of the high land prices, older farmers have sold their farms and moved to the nearest town—often not to a place where there was any activity from our body. This means loss for the congregations to which they belonged. And this loss is not offset by the new owners of the farms joining the local congregations, for that has far from always been the case. And young, capable farmers sold their smaller farms in the old settlements at high prices and moved with their families to new areas, where they could obtain more land for less money and achieve material independence for themselves and their children. But there was no church there, and the hope that one might arise over time diminished year by year. In this way many of our older rural congregations have suffered great losses of members and have had to fight a hard battle for their existence. Some of our small rural congregations have had to dissolve because of the migration of their members. For the same reason, many former members of our body now sit in small, scattered groups far away, so that it is almost impossible to reach them with the means of grace.

When all this is taken into consideration, it must be said that despite everything the United Church has experienced an unusually large growth over the past 25 years. For this we owe thanks, next to God, to our pastors and congregations, for they have worked, and the Lord has allowed their work to prosper.

But as we give thanks, let us not forget to listen to the call: "Further on! Farther out!"—which sounds to us from our great and difficult mission field.

The Size of the Congregations

If one takes the stated number of congregations and mission stations—218 (176 plus 42)—and divides the total number of souls, 25,112, by this figure, one arrives at an average of just over 115 souls per ministry. But if one examines the number of souls reported for individual congregations in the annual report for 1920, one finds that the numbers range from 825 (the congregation in Elk Horn, Iowa) down to as few as 8 (a mission congregation in Mesita, Colorado)—a very wide variation indeed.

The Age of the Congregations

It is of great interest to see that the oldest Danish congregation in America belongs to the United Church, as does the second oldest and a considerable number of the older ones, as the following years will show:

1850–1860, the period when thousands of Danish Mormons emigrated to Utah to find the New Zion, saw the founding of The First Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Racine, Wisconsin, in 1852.

This congregation, now known as Emmaus Congregation, was from the beginning Scandinavian, as the name indicates, but gradually became predominantly Danish and is the mother congregation of all the Lutheran congregations in what is, in terms of population, the most Danish city in America. It will next year be able to celebrate its 70th anniversary.

1861–1870, the period when emigration from Denmark grew ever larger and was relatively greatest to Wisconsin, where the number of Danes in 1870 amounted to 5,212, saw the founding of the following Danish or partly Danish congregations:

- The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Hartland, Wisconsin (1867).
- Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Indianapolis, Indiana (1868).
- Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Havana, Minnesota (1869).
- The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Oshkosh, Wisconsin (1869).

We must here content ourselves with having mentioned these five veterans of the Danish mission among emigrated Danes in this country and must skip the period 1871–1880. Regarding that period, reference is made to the appendix to the secretary's report to the annual meeting of 1920, which shows that no fewer than 30 congregations were founded during that time which now belong to the United Church: 10 in Wisconsin, 6 in Minnesota, 6 in Nebraska, 5 in Iowa, and one each in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and South Dakota. Of these 30 sister congregations, the following three were founded in 1871 and can therefore celebrate their 50th anniversary this year: Nazareth Congregation, Cedar Falls, Iowa; Holy Spirit Congregation, Waupaca, Wisconsin; and the congregation in Nelson, Minnesota. The following congregations must wait until next year to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary, since they were founded in 1872: the congregation in Ellendale, Minnesota; Our Savior's Congregation, Neenah, Wisconsin; and the congregation in Cushing, Wisconsin. The latter congregation is, so far as is known, the only one that held its services in a log church, which has now unfortunately disappeared, apparently without any photograph of it having survived.

The Value of the Congregations' Properties

As we have already seen, the United Church is not a large body—especially when compared with the large English, German, and Scandinavian Lutheran church bodies in this country—and neither is it nearly as large as it could and should be, given the number of Danes who have immigrated to the United States. Nor is it a wealthy body in terms of values that can be counted—though, as is well known, the greatest values cannot be counted. Nevertheless, considering assets and equity, the values that the body's

congregations have invested in their church properties are by no means insignificant. The secretary's report to the 24th annual meeting states that the value of all church buildings in the body is $1,007,550 and the parsonages are valued at $366,600. These values are certainly set too low. At current prices for building materials and construction labor, one could safely add 50 percent without being far off.

According to the annual report, the most expensive of the body's churches cost $45,000, and the least expensive $500—a not insignificant difference.

Measured in Danish currency, this is a very large sum that Danish emigrants and their children have spent to have God's Word among them. In this respect they have nothing to be ashamed of.

And even so, it is probably only a small sum compared with what a similar number of Danes outside our congregations have spent over the same number of years.

Congregational Expenditures for Church Purposes in a Church Year

To give readers an idea of what congregations in a small free church can contribute over the course of a year for church purposes, the following figures are given, according to the chairman's report to the 24th annual meeting:

a) For congregational purposes:

Pastors' salaries $150,000

Operating expenses 50,000

New churches 15,000

Total $215,000

b) For body-wide purposes: District mission, foreign mission, pension fund, school, orphanage, home for the aged, etc.

Total $68,827.20

Grand total $282,827.20

These figures are not given to suggest that the annual outlay has been of similar size throughout all the past 25 years, nor that all congregations have given in proportion to their size—far from it. Some small congregations give large contributions, and larger congregations give smaller ones. But taken as a whole, it must be said that it is to the honor of the congregations that they have not held back when they understood that it was a matter of opening both heart and purse, and they will certainly not do so in the future either. They have more and more come to understand that this is our common cause that is at stake.

Some of our people have remembered the Society in their wills with large sums for this or that of the Society's many activities, and there will be more who will do so in the

future. But it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that what keeps the Free Church going is not merely the large sums from a few individuals, but especially the small and steady gifts from the many. It is the many small streams that form the great river, as the old saying goes, and this old truth still applies today.

After we have now made the readers acquainted with the work in the former church and have seen some of the fruits of this work—particularly as these can be seen as results—it is time that we make them acquainted with the Society's work in other forms.

The Institutions of the Body

After we have now become acquainted with the workers in the United Church and seen some of the fruits of this work, insofar as these can be seen in numerical terms, it is time that we become acquainted with the body's work in other forms.

First among these, both in terms of time and importance, comes:

The Body's School in Blair, Nebraska

After referring the reader to the publication Trinitatis Seminarium 1886–1911, a brief outline of the history of this our oldest institution will be given here, especially in the later years. It has now become customary to date the age of this school from 1886, but in reality it is two years older, having begun in October 1884 with Pastor A. M. Andersen as principal and first teacher. It shares with the first Christian congregation the fact that it had its home in a house where it lived together with the principal's family, with his wife as housemother and hostess for most of the students. The school received its own building only in 1886.

That this building was erected in Blair and not, for example, in Omaha had, like so much else in the world, its reason in money—or rather in its absence on the part of those who were to raise a similar sum as that offered by each of the named cities. Since the offer from Blair was the smallest—or rather the largest one dared commit to—the school was placed in Blair. And it was indeed built under conditions of hardship, but built it was. It then became the school of the Blair body until the founding of the United Church in 1896 and during that time had Pastors A. M. Andersen and G. B. Christiansen as principals and a total of eight younger men as teachers in the various subjects during the stated period, six of whom later became pastors in both the Blair body and the United Church.

As far as can be determined, the school from 1884 through 1896 was attended by approximately 372 students, mostly young men and some young women.

Of theological students who had wholly or partially received their education at the school, a total of 23 were ordained during that period as pastors in the body. Of these

men, P. Thisted, Joh. Markussen, and G. E. S. Grill are deceased; one has resigned the ministry; one is a pastor in Canada; one in Denmark; one is a missionary among the Indians; and one is pastor emeritus.

The United Church's School from 1896 to 1921

At the union of the bodies it was decided that Trinity Seminary should be the United Church's seminary, but because of circumstances remain in Elk Horn until the autumn of 1897. This decision was followed.

The period named in the heading falls into two distinct phases. From 1896 to 1899 the school was a seminary and pro-seminary and only for men. From the beginning of the school year 1899 to the present, the school has been for both men and women and has served as seminary, pro-seminary, normal school, business school, junior college, and general folk high school, as the higher classes of the school in Elk Horn were transferred to the school in Blair by decision of the annual meeting. From 1897 to 1899 the students themselves provided their board, having formed a "boarding club," hired a housekeeper, etc. But since 1899 the school has provided both board and lodging for the students.

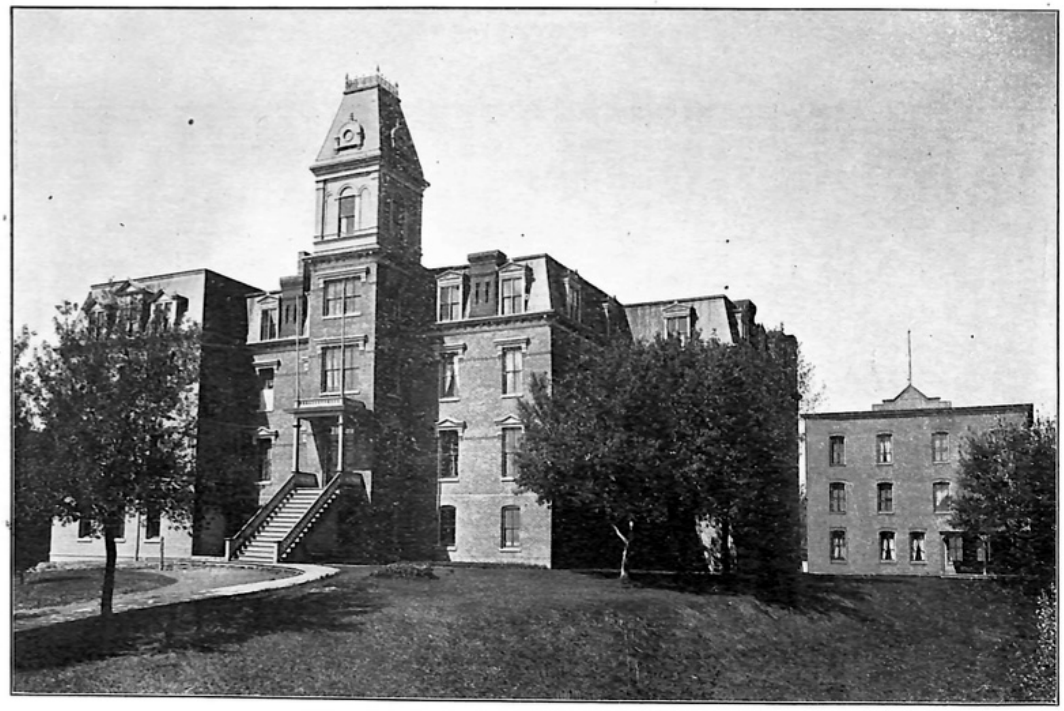

Figure 14: Dana College and Trinity Seminary

What follows is an overview of the school's teachers and students from 1896 to the present...

The School's Administrators and Principals

Principals of Trinity Seminary

Pastor P. S. Vig: 1896–1899

Pastor Kr. Anker: 1899–1905

Pastor J. P. Jensen: 1905–1908

Pastor S. C. Eriksen: 1908–1909

Pastor P. S. Vig: 1909–

Principals of the Entire School

1896–1899: Pastor P. S. Vig

1899–1905: Pastor Kr. Anker

1905–1908: Pastor J. P. Jensen

1908–1914: Prof. C. X. Hansen

1914–1919: Pastor L. A. Laursen

1919– : Prof. C. X. Hansen

Teachers of Theology

Pastor P. S. Vig: 1896–1899; 1902–1905; 1909–

Cand. theol. V. C. Mengers: 1897–1899

Pastor A. N. Andersen: 1896–1897

Pastor H. O. Frimodt Møller: 1897–1902

Dr. theol. J. N. Lenker: 1900–1903

Pastor J. P. Jensen: 1904–1908

Pastor Harald Jensen: 1899–1902

Pastor S. C. Eriksen: 1905–1909

Pastor V. W. Johansen: 1907–1909

Pastor N. P. Lang: 1909–

Assistant Teachers

Pastor Kr. Anker: 1904–1905

Pastor C. C. Kloth: 1904–1905

Teachers at the College & Proseminary

Prof. C. X. Hansen, B.A.: 1896–

A. J. Dahm, B.A., B.D.: 1896–1899

V. C. Mengers, B.D.: 1896–1899

H. W. Foght, M.A.: 1899–1902

Sigurd Anker, B.A.: 1902–1904

Mathilde Berg: 1899–1903

Hilda Herfort: 1903–1905

Caroline Johnsen, M.A.: 1906–1912; 1915–

N. T. Lund, B.A.: 1906–1914

A. K. Petersen, B.A.: 1909–1910

Andrew Sinamark, B.A.: 1910–1912

Nellie Falk, B.A.: 1910–1912; 1913–1915; 1917–1918; 1920–

Carrie S. Nielsen, B.A.: 1912–1913

Petra Jensen: 1909–1912

Agnes Kleven, B.A.: 1914–1915

Lindquist: 1913–1914

Marie Brandt: 1917–

Annice Johnson, B.A.: 1919–1920

Ellis V. Nielsen, B.A.: 1912–1913

Hans C. Jersild, B.A.: 1919–

Paulus F. Falck, B.A.: 1919–

Teachers in the Business Department

Edward Stephensen: 1899–1900

Fanny Gates: 1900–1901

Myrtle Fuller: 1901–1902

Louise Langstaff: 1902–1904

Chas. E. Gaydou: 1904–1905; 1910–1914

N. H. Debel: 1908–1910

Marinus Poulsen: 1914–1915

M. L. Kirkegaard: 1916–

Elisabeth Jacobsen: 1920–

Teachers in Music

Mrs. Alice M. Foght: 1899–1901

Emma C. Laursen: 1901–1902

Anna Nielsen: 1902–1903

Gertrude Mead: 1904–1905

Amanda Hansen: 1905–1914

Agnes L. Nielsen: 1914–1918

Carrie Sinamark: 1918–

Ray French, violinist: 1904–1905

J. H. Swihart, violinist: 1909–1918

Ethel L. Jensen, violinist: 1918–

In addition to those listed, there have been some who taught a single subject, just as several of the theological students have served as part-time teachers during the winter terms. The theological teachers have always taught several subjects in the preparatory department. Finally, it should be noted that only the School's and the Seminary's prin-

cipals, as well as the teachers of theology, are appointed by the Society. The others are appointed by the School's principal in consultation with the faculty.

Not a few of the younger teachers have, in their time, been students at the School.

Students of the School over 25 Years

As far as can be calculated, the school—or schools—in Blair from 1896 to 1921 were attended by a total of exactly 3,130 young men and women. It must be remembered, however, that many students are counted across several school years. The given number is based on enrolled names, and for this reason the number of individuals is not as large as the number of names. Most of those enrolled were young men, but over the years there have also been many young women among the students.

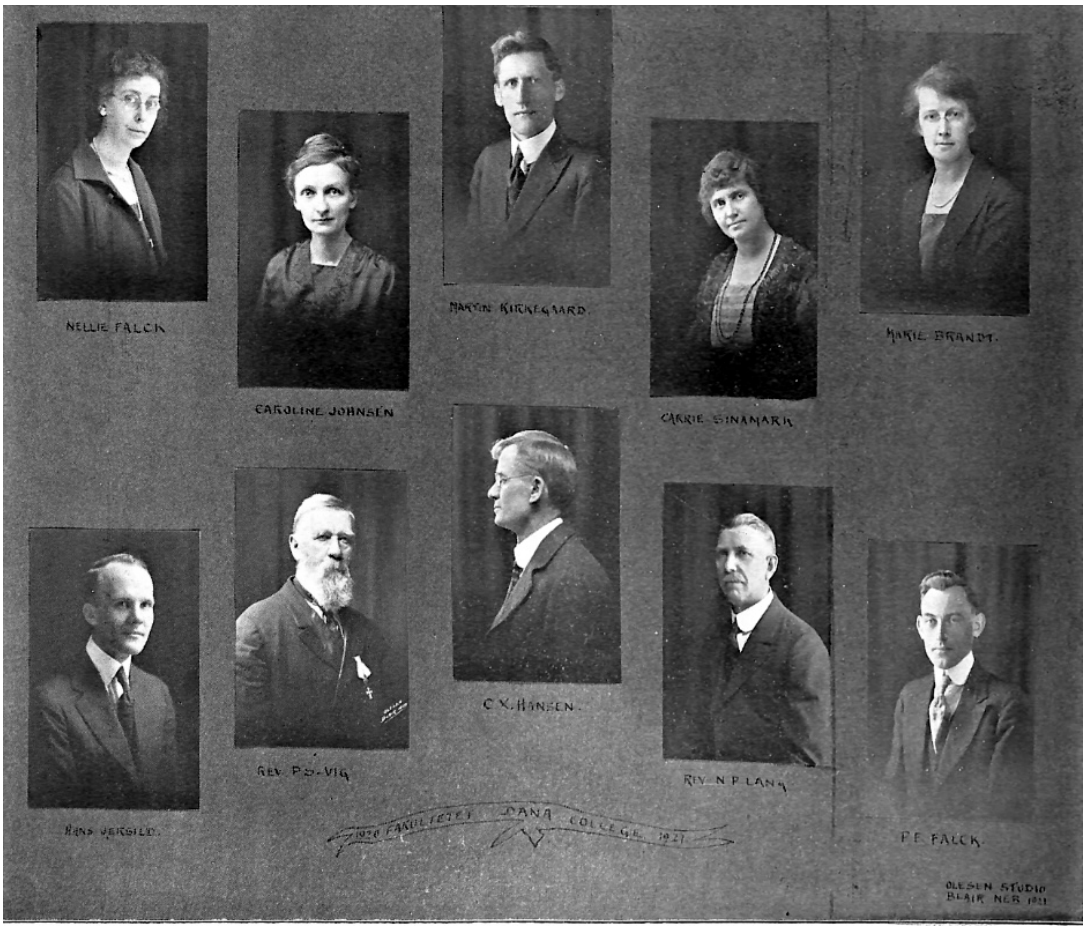

Figure 15: Dana College Faculty 1920-1921

How many of the 3,130 studied theology? Briefly stated: since 1896, as mentioned earlier, 98 young men have been ordained to the pastoral office in the United Church,

and the great majority of these have received their education wholly or in part at Trinity Seminary. The number of those ordained and those studying is approximately the same. As far as is known, only three young men abandoned their theological studies—two because of illness and the third because he did not believe himself suited to be a pastor.

Many former students of the school today occupy important positions in society as teachers of youth, businesspeople, physicians, jurists, judges, lawyers, county officials, and the like. The future is even more promising in this respect, as a large number of former students are now continuing their studies at various state universities and other institutions of higher learning.

Altogether the school sent between 100 and 150 of its students into Uncle Sam's service during the great World War, and several of the young men now preparing for the pastoral ministry served in the trenches at the front.

Some years ago the graduates of the school's various departments formed an Alumni Association, through which the connection between them and the school is maintained. The Alumni Association publishes a paper entitled Hermes with 3–4 issues per year, and it holds its annual meeting at the school at the close of each school year. We expect that this student association will continue to show its interest in the school and work persistently for the program which it has set forth in its journal and given the name "The Greater Dana."

On the School's Buildings

Here it need only be stated that they bear honorable witness to what people of modest means can accomplish in difficult times through united effort, and at the same time constitute a strong exhortation to us, who live under better conditions, not to allow them to put us to shame, but to work according to our ability as they worked according to theirs.

The main building, consisting of the central structure and its two wings, was erected in three different periods, respectively in 1886, 1893, and 1905. The lowest floor in all of these buildings is solid masonry, while the remaining three floors are what is called "brick veneer." These three buildings have cost a total of $22,000 to construct. The women's building, which was erected in 1899, cost $3,000. The gymnasium building cost approximately $1,260, and the heating plant, which was erected in 1916, cost approximately $11,000.

Regarding all the buildings, qualified experts both within and outside the community have stated that they are good for their time, but do not meet modern requirements for school buildings, just as they are both insufficient in size and poorly arranged—a consequence of having had to be built in several stages. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that we need both more space and better facilities, a conviction which the community

has also arrived at and has taken steps to realize in the near future. More about this later in another connection.

Danish Lutheran Publishing House

Under this name are included a bookstore, publishing house, printing office, newspaper publishing, bookbinding, paper trade, etc. No fewer than four periodicals are printed and distributed each week, namely Luthersk Ugeblad—a merger of Danskeren and Dansk Luth. Kirkeblad—the children's magazine The Little Lutheran, and Our Lutheran Youth. Over the years, not a few books have been published from here, partly by the house's own publishing firm and partly works printed for others.

The business, which was begun in 1893, was transferred to the United Church in 1896. It was initially operated with borrowed capital and in rented quarters. Since 1898 the business has had its own building, and the church body has invested its own funds in the enterprise, so that it is no longer burdened by heavy debt.

Figure 16: The Danish Lutheran Publishing House in Blair NE

Like so many other branches of the community's work, it has felt the effects of the World War—both in the rapid advance of the language transition under which we as a church body have been placed, the great rise in the cost of goods and wages, and not least in the difficulty of obtaining books and newspapers from Denmark at prices that the reading public we can count on will pay. Nevertheless, the business has managed reasonably well.

Since our purpose here is not to recount its history, but only to give the main points of this branch of the community's work, we shall merely mention that, despite the difficult times, the report for the publishing house to last year's annual meeting shows that in the church year 1919–1920 it had a total turnover of $28,200.20 and showed a small surplus.

The business, which has a value of slightly over $30,000, is governed by a board of five members elected by the annual meeting in such a way that each member serves for five years. At its head stands a manager elected by the board. This position has during the past 25 years been held by the following men: Hans Anderson, Paul Petersen, H. Skov Nielsen, and the present manager, Pastor J. J. Kildsig, who assumed the position on August 1, 1920. In addition to the manager, there are approximately 12 daily employees in the business.

The Community's Orphanages

Already several years before the founding of the United Church, each of the then-united church bodies had its own small orphanage: the Blair Synod's was in Albert Lea, Minnesota, and the North Church's in Elk Horn, Iowa. These small homes, which have carried out a very important task among fatherless, motherless, and orphaned children of Danish origin, have indeed seen—if not a particularly great—yet a good growth during the past 25 years and have been nurseries for our church body for not a few grown men and women who are participating in this jubilee celebration. We shall now take a brief look at each of these homes.

The Elim Home in Elk Horn, Iowa

The home owes its establishment to the congregation in Elk Horn and began its work in 1890 with A. L. Boysen and his wife as housefather and housemother, together with four children. For the home, 40 acres of land were purchased and an ordinary-sized farmhouse was built, such as houses were in those days. Since then, both the house and the family have been considerably expanded.

It cannot be stated exactly how many children have lived in the home during the years of its existence, but one is not far off in saying approximately 200, and certainly a similar number have had to be refused admission due to lack of space. It is supported by gifts from the congregations, partly in money and partly in clothing and food, as well as by annual payments for such children whose father, mother, guardian, or relatives are able to pay for them. The home is governed by a board elected by the church body's annual meeting. The board appoints the superintendent of the home, supervises it, and reports through its chairman to the annual meeting.

A. L. Boysen and his wife, both South Jutlanders from the region around Tønder, managed the home until 1897, when they withdrew due to poor health, taking two of the children with them as their own. They were succeeded by N. P. Christensen and his wife, who, like the Boysens, were childless themselves. They served until 1902, taking one of

Figure 17: The Elim Home in Elk Horn IA

the children with them as their own. They were followed by F. D. Klyver and his wife, and these in turn by Hans Bo and his wife, also South Jutlanders, from the Haderslev area. The present superintendent is Pastor M. Mathiesen, the son of a schoolteacher from the island of Als, who together with his faithful wife is particularly suited to oversee such an important and difficult task, and it is our hope that they may have the strength and desire to continue it for many years.[2]

According to the most recent report (1920), there were 19 children in the home.

From the beginning until now, the congregation in Elk Horn has been a faithful supporter of this home, which it transferred to the United Church at its founding on the condition that the property should always be used as an orphanage.

The Bethania Home in Waupaca, Wisconsin

This home was begun in August 1895 in Albert Lea, Minnesota, where P. Clausen made the use of a house available for this purpose for one year, and Mrs. C. Petersen from Waupaca, Wisconsin, assumed the position as housemother of the home. At the founding of the United Church, the home was transferred to this church body, which at its annual meeting in Blair in 1897 decided to move the home to Waupaca, Wisconsin, where the Danish population subscribed $600 for this purpose. Thirty acres of land were then purchased, particularly beautifully situated just west of the town, and suitable buildings were erected with space for approximately 40 children. The new home was put into use

[2] After this was written, Pastor Mathiesen has resigned his position and is traveling to Denmark.

in October 1898. The housemother from Albert Lea continued her work in Waupaca for 13 years with great care and skill.

Figure 18: The Bethania Home in Waupaca WI

This home, which according to the most recent report had 16 children, is governed by the same board as the home in Elk Horn, but naturally has its own superintendent.

It is supported in the same manner as the Elk Horn home. Each year, the children in our Sunday schools usually take up an offering for the orphanages, just as not a few of the children send their gifts there. It would be highly desirable, as has also been repeatedly pointed out, that we might be able to see our way to expanding this important branch of our church body's work, since many Danish children are lost each year through admission partly into Catholic orphanages and partly into such institutions that have only the children's temporal welfare in view.

It should not be omitted to add that the large Danish association, "Dansk Brodersamfund" (Danish Brotherhood Society), gives its annual contribution to the orphanages of our church body.

Eben Ezer in Brush, Colorado

The history of our small church body, short as it is—and insignificant in the eyes of the great world, of course—nevertheless bears strong witness to the fact that it takes a person with a calling and the will to set a cause in motion so that it actually moves forward, and to see when it should be set in motion. Such a person does not at all need

to be a highly gifted individual in the usual sense of the word—such a one may more easily see the many obstacles to the cause, but not that these exist only to be overcome; and it is surely the latter kind that are in the majority. I shall briefly mention some of the former kind in relation to our church body. Without an A. M. Andersen, there would probably never have been a Kirkeblad among the few Danish pastors in the conference. Without a Kr. Anker, there would probably never have been an expanded folk high school in Elk Horn; without an N. L. Nielsen, never an Indian mission on the part of our church body. And where would Danskeren have ended up without Pastor J. N. Jersild? And the mission in Japan without J. M. Th. Winther?

In the first school year at Trinity Seminary, after it had become the United Church's seminary for pastors, we had not a few remarkable personalities among the students, among them a somewhat short-winded young man who did janitorial work. While he was cleaning, he constantly had to go outside to get fresh air. It was his lungs that were affected. When he left the school together with another young man whose lungs were in even worse condition, they traveled west in order to breathe mountain air. It was a matter of finding a room for the one who was most ill; but there was not a single house in the great city of Denver that had a room to rent out. During this difficult journey, J. Madsen promised that if the Lord would grant him strength, he would try to see whether it might not be possible to gather funds to build a house where there could be room for those whose lungs were afflicted.

Figure 19: Deaconess Mother House: 'Eben Ezer'

Something like this, approximately, was the beginning of the great complex of activities which, under the name Eben Ezer, bears witness that He who is also the God of those with diseased lungs has allowed it to succeed thus far. "Eben Ezer" is a name that encompasses many undertakings, all of which stand in the service of self-giving love. At the outset, it was all merely an ordinary frame house, where Pastor Madsen and his wife lived next door to as many sufferers from chest disease as there was room for. But now there are numerous buildings housing a sanatorium, hospital, home for the aged, deaconess home, printing office, and so on. Many men and women have devoted their lives to the service of helping love as "Brothers" and "Sisters." And many are the younger and older men and women who over the years have found help at this extraordinarily beautiful place out there in the Mountain State with its high, pure air, and in the large, beautiful garden with the many lovely homes surrounding the great, dignified church that forms the center of the entire enterprise. Everyone has something to do at Eben Ezer, for work is one of the greatest blessings of human life.

This fine undertaking is directed by a board consisting of representatives from the two Danish church bodies in this country. An annual board meeting is held at the home, at which an account is given of the work throughout the year as well as of income and expenditures. For many years already, Eben Ezer has had its own periodical, Føbe, which monthly brings news to the many friends of the enterprise, near and far.

The Eben Ezer work is supported by voluntary gifts in money and labor, the latter especially by young men and women who, without financial compensation, serve for shorter or longer periods wherever help is needed. In both church bodies, an offering for Eben Ezer is taken each year on the 13th Sunday after Trinity.

According to the superintendent's report to the church body's annual meeting in 1920, there were 35 elderly residents in the home for the aged, 148 patients had been treated at the hospital, and 82 at the sanatorium. There are surely few of those who have visited Eben Ezer who will ever forget this oasis in the desert of self-interest, or the spirit that met them there.

There has often been talk of establishing yet another home for the aged somewhere within the church body. And there is no doubt that there would be good use for such a place, where elderly Christian people could live out their final days among like-minded individuals. It is heavy to be old and alone in this busy age and in our busy country and generation, and even heavier is it to be placed in a poorhouse, as has been the case for not a few elderly people whom friends would surely be willing to help place in a home for the aged, if such a place existed.

The Pastors' Pension Fund

For elderly pastors, it has until quite recently not been considered necessary to arrange anything special. For many years, contributions have been collected for the widows

of deceased pastors, and a committee chosen by the church body has taken care of this matter, collecting contributions and distributing what was received to the widows according to its best judgment, and submitting its report to the church body's annual meeting. Likewise, the pastors among themselves have had a pension fund and have made their own contributions to it.

Only in recent years has the church body directly taken this matter into its own hands and decided to collect a pension fund for this purpose, appointing a man to work at gathering contributions for it. After spending a year traveling among the congregations of the church body, Pastor A. C. Weismann was able to report to the annual meeting in 1920 that the fund had reached the amount of $60,000 and that there were good prospects of reaching $100,000. Several widowers had donated relatively large gifts for this purpose, and the cause had met with great goodwill in the congregations he had been able to visit. It was to be expected that church members would see to it that their elderly pastors should not suffer want when they are no longer able to work in the service of the church, neither they nor their survivors.

Our people have always been willing to share their poverty with their pastors in days now past, and they will also be willing to share their prosperity with them when they are placed in circumstances where they are no longer able to work. And already now there are not a few of them in such a position. There are probably none of them who are rich, but all the more who are the very opposite—some who are already dependent on the labor of their children, and so forth. All this our church people know and will ensure that none of our worn-out workers come to suffer want. And what applies to the pastors ought to apply just as much to the pastors' widows, who have borne their heavy share of the work and have often been placed in circumstances worse than those of the poorest maidservant, raising a large group of children under meager conditions, having to work while others slept, and always being ready to help wherever help was needed. They deserve help, and they will receive it.

The United Church's Mission Among Our Countrymen

Mission is the work of the Holy Spirit, for which He is "sent," as Scripture says—sent from the Father in the Son's name. But for that very reason, mission—the great work of rescue, whose goal is the salvation of the world and of souls—should also be the work of the congregation that itself has been won through mission. Therefore the Church has always, whenever it was conscious of this, been a missionary Church—not always in the same way, but always with the same goal in view. For the great means of grace are addressed to "all." This "all" stands in the words of the Gospel: it is to be preached in the whole world as a testimony to "all peoples." And baptism is addressed to "all nations," just as He who instituted the Lord's Supper said that "all" are to drink of that cup, which is the new testament in His blood, poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins.

To God's honor we must say that the pages of church history bear loud witness that in the times when Christ's Church was poor and humble in its own eyes, it was also a missionary Church. And with thanksgiving to God we will remember on this our festival that the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—which itself is a fruit of the diaspora mission—has not forgotten the holy duty of mission, despite its smallness and poverty. And even if it must confess that will and ability have only too often stood in poor proportion to one another, and that matters have been so-so even with our judgment, it is nevertheless a fact that it has tried to go about mission's great errand—from the newly arrived immigrant who stepped ashore in the great new world, all the way to those far away whom it is our God's will should also hear the holy call of the Gospel. Let us, as we take a survey of the great mission field that has also been ours, begin at the beginning.

The Emigrant Mission

As already mentioned, we still have among us the man who took the first step in this great and significant field. It was in late summer of the year 1872 that the young Danish pastor A. L. J. Søholm, then in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, made his first journey to Castle Garden, New York, and stationed himself at the great people's gate into the new world, there to extend a hand to his Danish countrymen and greet them with a "Welcome" in their mother tongue upon their arrival in the new world, and to help them find their way with advice and practical assistance as best he could with their affairs and with the journey to their destination. And he continued this work as long as he labored in the eastern states; and when in 1878 he went to Wisconsin, he got Pastor R. Andersen to take his place, who has continued the work until now. When in 1896, shortly before the founding of the United Church, a new Danish congregation was formed in Brooklyn, New York, and Pastor J. J. Kildsig was called as its pastor, he too took up the mission among the emigrants.

Later this work was joined with a mission home in Brooklyn, N.Y., which also became a home for emigrants and a gathering place for young Danish men and women who work in the great world city.

This home has the whole time been closely connected with Salem Congregation in Brooklyn, whose pastor for a time also served as the home's superintendent. J. J. Kildsig has been pastor of the congregation twice during the past 25 years; Pastor Kjær replaced him the first time, and last year he was replaced by Pastor J. F. Knudsen.

The home's managers have been: Mrs. B. Knudsen, Hans Andersen, Miss Kirsten Nielsen, Miss Anna Skivesen, Mrs. D. Mikkelsen, Mrs. A. J. Laursen, Miss Juliane Jørgensen, and the present manager is Wm. Hellenberg. The home has been of great help to many people, not least in the difficult war period, when people who wished to travel to Europe had to be provided with passports and with passports in the correct form—something that people in general understood very little about. And in general the mission home can safely be recommended to people who wish to travel to Europe or who are coming from there, as a good place to turn, where there is no danger of being exposed to swindling in any form. The home is owned by Salem Congregation and has a value of about $10,000.

Schools for Children and Youth

The mission we have just mentioned naturally leads the mind to our youngest countrymen—the children who grow up in our homes and in a short time are to become our successors—and to the work that has been done on the congregations' part so that this hope might become reality. The Christian school has had, and has, its origin in the Christian home and in the Christian congregation. So it has also proved to be in the mission of which our church body is a fruit.

This schooling has had and has different forms among us—or perhaps more correctly, different levels. The first of these, and the most significant, is the home: the Christian home and the use of God's Word in the home. Many homes have been a school where father and mother taught the children the Danish language and Lutheran catechism in poor pioneer cabins—cabins that today they would not even let their chickens live in. May we always have such homes, even now when the houses have become both larger and finer and the means more abundant!

Sunday Schools

The next level is the small Danish Sunday school, which now is found in most of our congregations—perhaps not exactly every Sunday, but still for the most part. But shortly after the children entered it, they truly came into the language question, about which so much has now been spoken and written. This question is already old as far as the children are concerned, since they went to Danish Sunday school but to English weekday school five days a week, in order to prepare to become English-speaking American citizens. From the schools the language question entered the homes, from there into the Sunday school, and from there naturally also into the church, as the language question has quite naturally become this: Is it right in the long run to work toward having the religious language be different from the language we more or less all use in everyday life? Is it right toward our children and youth? Is it right with respect to our fellow citizens who do not understand our religious language? And is it right with respect to our new homeland?

In other words, the language question is not nearly as simple and straightforward as many—whatever side they take in it—seem to think. But it is here, and we cannot avoid having to deal with it. We shall not discuss it further here. Rather, it is entirely right that we with great gratitude acknowledge the work that has been done in our Sunday schools up to now, regardless of the language in which it has been done. Thanks be to the men and women who have not grown weary of working where it was far from always appreciated as it deserved! Let it be a joy for them to think that without this work there would not have been so many who this year are taking part in celebrating this great festival in our church body.

According to the secretary's report to the annual meeting in 1920, there were then 159 Sunday schools in the church body with a little over 900 teachers and nearly 8,000 children. The largest Sunday schools are found in Elk Horn, Iowa, with 270 children and 10 teachers, and in Albert Lea, Minnesota, with 250 children and 20 teachers. The Sunday schools have made their great contribution to the church body's enterprises, for example to the orphanages and the heathen mission. It is a joy to see the children listed as contributors in their own paper—a testimony that they too are part of the great common work in the United Danish Church in America. God grant that it may never be otherwise!

Vacation Schools

As is known, the public school in most places holds vacation from June 1 to the first week of September each year. For children in the countryside there is work enough, but for children in the cities it is a dangerous thing with the long vacation, which unfortunately many use for everything other than what is good and beneficial. In many of our congregations it has until now been the rule that during part of this time a religious school was held—some places by the pastor, but more often by a theological student, who through this work both managed to earn part of the money his schooling cost and at the same time had occasion to preach, hold youth meetings, and so on. For many of our present pastors, this school work has been a very useful pre-school for the pastoral office, just as this summer work has been a blessing for the children, even though the weather at times could be a little warmer than they wished.

In later years, when other work has been paid unusually well, and as a consequence it has not been so easy for congregations to pay the teacher roughly the same as he could earn at other work, the vacation school has perhaps slackened somewhat. This is not a happy sign, since the vacation school is a very important condition for our future work as a Lutheran church body. And in particular, the use of the English language should by no means bear if that we no longer keep the vacation school going, but should rather promote it all the more, since it is a well-known fact that the condition for understanding a sermon in English is familiarity with the religious expressions in that language—something the common school does not deal with—something everyone who has taught confirmation students in English knows well enough.

Confirmation Instruction

Preparation for confirmation has many obstacles to contend with—not only that far from all the children who enroll have the same prerequisites in knowledge, nor only that confirmation does not contribute to promotion in the grades in which they go with their peers in the common school, but perhaps just as much that few—if any—of these peers have anything left over for confirmation, but all the more against it as "an Old Country notion"—and the judgment of one's peers at that age carries more weight than most older people may be inclined to believe. Added to this is that confirmation class is held on Saturdays, when other schoolchildren have freedom, and homework demands its time on the other days, and suchlike. And children of fourteen years in America are not the same as children of the same age as we once were in the old fatherland.

Therefore it takes both interest and good sense to be able to lead a confirmation class—something not every teacher has who is involved in this difficult but significant work. Added to this in recent years is the language difficulty on the pastor's side—the difficulty that has existed on the children's side for many years without special notice being taken of it—without counting the mother who was to help her children with their pastor-lessons.

But love overcomes all obstacles here as well. There are perhaps many testimonies that pastors have seen many of their confirmands in church for the last time on the very day they were confirmed. But there are also, God be praised, not a few testimonies of the complete opposite: that a bond was tied between the teacher and his pupils that lasted throughout this life and shall continue in the one to come. We rejoice in that, and we hope that greater seriousness will be brought to confirmation instruction, so that we not only help the children enter the ranks of adults, but to find and follow Him who takes His seat at His table—He who died for us, that we might live by and in Him, both while we live and when we have died from this life. And it is in the spring that the seed must be sown which will bear fruit both for the Lord and for His Church on earth. God grant us love and the understanding that love alone can give!

Bible Classes

For many, confirmation is only an ending, but the intention was surely that it should also be a beginning—namely, in life as an adult Christian. Most of us, or at least many, have carried impressions with us from our confirmation that we can always remember. But many of us can also remember that there came a time after our confirmation when it was not the Lord's ways we followed, nor were His ways either our desire or our law—and as far as we can see, this time has become so long for many that it looks as though it will last a lifetime.

Here it was intended that the Church should help the young people who have gone through confirmation instruction by means of Bible classes and youth meetings. There is no doubt that here lies a large and important field of work, which requires great wisdom to cultivate in the right way, for only thus can it become a blessing to the Church. It is easy enough to draw up a program that both looks good and is good; but here, as everywhere, it is the carrying out that matters. There are now in many of our Sunday schools small Bible classes for young people who have been confirmed, and such are needed everywhere. But it takes both understanding and enthusiasm to lead them, and these cannot be bought in the marketplace. We need such enthusiasm everywhere—enthusiasm for planting the translation of the Bible in the hearts of our young people. Thanks be to God for all the enthusiasm of this kind that we have, and may He give us more of it, that our church body may flourish to His honor, for the old saying is true even now:

When each will honor God's Word, then all will go well in the house!

The Youth Movement

From the very beginning, the United Church has emphasized work among young people, both in the individual congregations and as a church body. There are youth associations in most congregations, where meetings for the young are held every week, with readings, singing, and lectures. In many places the young people have their own

small library; in some places their own meeting room and their own officers, while in other places there is no separate organization.

On the church body's side, mention may be made of the publication of De unges Blad ("The Young People's Paper"), which has now been merged into Our Lutheran Youth.

For many years youth meetings have been held at our church body's annual conventions, where young people from the various congregations in the church body are gladly present in large numbers. There is no doubt that these meetings have had great significance. And the youth-work committee elected by the church body at its annual meeting has done a great deal at each convention by bringing the young people from the whole church body into contact with one another.

Now youth federations have been formed in each of the districts into which the church body is divided. Each of these federations has its officers and holds its larger meetings in the congregations of the district. From the federations a central committee is chosen, which takes care of matters concerning the whole of the youth's common work and reports to the church body's annual meeting.

According to the central committee's report to last year's annual meeting, the eight circuits of the federations totaled between three and four thousand members. Their work as a whole has been to support the youth associations' paper, Our Lutheran Youth, which now has nearly 3,000 subscribers, and to support the church body's various undertakings with financial contributions. The young people's contributions for the past year amounted to close to $3,000.

There is no doubt that youth work among us is showing signs of progress, which is greatly gratifying, since it is the church body of the future that is at work here. And it is to be hoped that there may always be the best understanding between the old and the new in the work toward realizing the ideal expressed in the name we bear: "The United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." This is especially needed when we look at the many who stand outside connection with the Church, and the many who have grown up within the boundaries of our church body but lack a living connection with us. We need them and they need us; but if they are to be united with us, then there must be work not only for unity, but also with united strength along the whole line and in all branches of the great work, inward and outward. May God grant us success and good counsel in this, and send us the light of His grace!

The Church Body's District Mission

Each—or at least most—of the church body's congregations forms the center of a larger circle of Danes who have not formally joined the Church, but have not separated themselves from it either. As a result, each of the church body's pastors has district mission work within his own area.

But when we speak here of district mission, the word is taken in a somewhat different sense. Where within the area assigned to a district there is a larger Danish population—especially in a larger city—that does not have pastoral care among them, the district appoints a pastor to carry on continuing mission work, promises to support him, wholly or partly, with a certain amount per year, in the hope that the population in that place will in time itself be able to maintain and pay its own pastor. In this way mission has been carried on in not a few places in the church body's districts and is still carried on now, and several congregations have in this manner been won into the church body.

If the church body had been able to see its way to appoint a mission pastor whose task would be to investigate where there was need for such mission work, there is no doubt that still more could have been gained from the great field. But we thank God for what has been achieved despite our small strength and limited means, and we have hope that both much more can and will be achieved. Only if we are faithful to God and His saving Gospel, He will let our work succeed—yes, more than we can either grasp or understand.

Mission in Queensland

For not a few years there have been negotiations with Danish Christians in New Zealand about a closer connection between them and our church body. One of our younger pastors, who now works in the mission in Japan, for some years served as pastor for a congregation in New Zealand, and a man from there was a guest at one of our annual meetings about six years ago and told us about conditions over there. But negotiations about cooperation, which for a number of years had been carried on with a Danish pastors' conference over there, have been broken off—perhaps partly because of the great World War. In any case, no connection has been established between us and our Lutheran fellow Christians on that distant island beyond what has already been mentioned.

A young man, P. C. Ligaard, who for a number of years had stayed both in Queensland and in New Zealand, studied theology at our seminary with the purpose of taking up work in Queensland. While he was at the school he received a call from a small Danish congregation, a meager remnant of the Lutheran work that in earlier times had existed among Danes over there. He accepted the call and went out, with a promise from friends in the United Church that they would support the work with their gifts.

The work succeeded beyond all expectation over there, though it took a hard toll on the pastor's health to have to travel around and gather the scattered Danes for the preaching of the Word. In order to regain his health, Pastor Ligaard made a journey to the United States in the summer of 1919 and attended the church body's annual meeting in Cedar Falls, Iowa, where he made the church body acquainted with the conditions and the work over there and asked to be given coworkers. The church body resolved to meet this request, and at last year's annual meeting Candidate of Theology C. B. Larsen was

ordained as pastor on a call from the congregation in Kingaroy, Queensland, to which he traveled with his wife a short time after the annual meeting.

Thus there are now two of the church body's pastors at work in Queensland, and the small congregation in Brisbane has been received into the United Church, just as the church body has taken up the mission in Queensland as part of its work. It is our hope that this distant branch on our church body's tree may grow and bear fruit for the salvation of many souls.

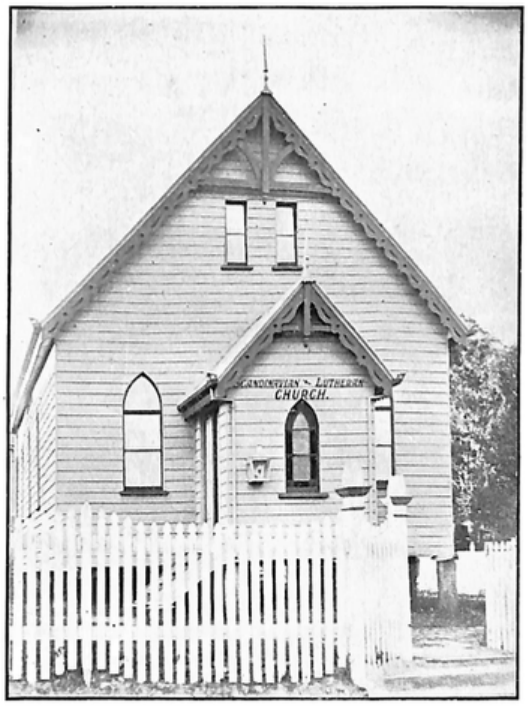

Figure 20: The old church in Brisbane

Likewise, one of our church body's pastors, Pastor J. P. Christensen, called and paid by the large English United Lutheran Church, is working as pastor on the former Danish island of St. Thomas in the Danish West Indies—a name which of course is no longer used. Yet on St. Thomas there is one of the oldest Danish congregations outside Denmark, which can trace its age back to the seventeenth century. It would have been very desirable if we had been strong enough to take over the work on the former Danish islands in the tropics after the pastors of the Danish national church. But there too we have tried to do what we could by sending one of our pastors there.

The Colony Mission

Danish Lutheran mission work in America began, naturally one might say, in small Danish colonies in town and country. And we need not be ashamed when comparing the colonies where Danish mission work has been carried on with those where that has not been the case—whether socially or morally. But Danish mission work has also labored to gather Danes—especially from the large cities—in places where it would be possible for them to work their way toward independence and obtain their own homes.

With regard to our church body, one may point, for example, to Elk Horn, now the largest Danish settlement in America. It can be shown that many of the oldest settlers came there from the large cities in the East, and came there for the sake of the folk high school. And in Nebraska the same has been the case with Blair. Likewise, it can be shown that several of our older congregations supplied the first settlers to several of our new settlements. Thus, for example, it is younger members from the congregation in

Elk Horn who started the settlement at Standard, Canada, and members from the Pella congregation in Omaha who were the first in the Danish settlement near Dickson, Canada, just as the congregation in Hutchinson, Minnesota, has made a large contribution to the great Danish new settlement in and around Kenmare, North Dakota.

That these colonies did not leave their old homes in order to escape the influence of the Church is shown by the fact that they took care to form a congregation in their new home as soon as it was possible. Among the newest Danish settlements that owe their establishment to church people may be mentioned Buffalo, Wyoming, which has both a congregation and a resident pastor in its midst.

It is impossible here to list all the congregational colonies, for there are many, but it is fitting and Christian that at this our festival we remember with thanks all those who in this way have worked for the welfare of our people and for the expansion and spread of our church body. Among the pastors who have worked especially in the service of this cause, it may be permitted here to mention Pastor emeritus H. Hansen in Alameda, California. Pastor Hansen is the oldest of our living pioneer pastors, just as he was the first pastor for the Danish colony in North Dakota, which now spreads so widely that it reaches far into Montana. Likewise the recently deceased Pastor P. L. C. Hansen should be mentioned in this connection.

The Mission in Utah

We use this expression in order to avoid the ambiguity that lies in the designation "the Utah Mission," which can also mean the mission that proceeds from Utah—and that, unfortunately, is all too well known among Danes both in Denmark and America, and has led thousands of awakened countrymen to Utah, so that among our congregations there are not a few who have relatives there and have had them for many years. The thought of carrying on mission work among our countrymen in Utah goes far back in time.

Already before the founding of the United Church, a call had been raised for this cause. When the United Church held its first annual meeting in 1897, it took up the idea of this mission and sent an appeal to the new committee in Denmark for possible cooperation in carrying out this cause. At the annual meeting in Racine in 1902, the Church Council was authorized to begin mission work in Utah and to call a pastor to labor in this work. At the same meeting the women also took hold and subscribed money for this mission. The Church Council called Pastor H. Hansen as mission pastor, and he—well known from his work as a pioneer pastor—accepted the call, traveled to Utah to examine conditions, and then made a journey to Denmark to awaken interest for the work of this cause among Christians in our fatherland.

Pastor Hansen's journey to Denmark bore fruit in this, that by letter to the church body's annual meeting in 1904 the committee promised to assume half of the expenses

that this mission would require in order to be begun and maintained—a promise they have faithfully kept to this day. In 1906 Pastor Hansen was replaced in the work by Pastor Harald Jensen (Kent), who served in the work until 1912. During his time a congregation was organized (1907) and a church was built (dedicated in 1911) in Salt Lake City, and Pastor Kent made several journeys around Utah and Idaho and preached regularly in Pocatello, Idaho, and Ogden, Utah.

Pastor Kent was replaced in the work by Pastor J. Th. Lund, and he again in 1916 by Pastor J. C. Carlsen, the church body's present mission pastor in Utah, who works tirelessly for the cause through travels over the great mission field, tours through the church body's congregations, publication of a small mission paper, Tabor, and so on. According to the latest annual report, the congregation in Salt Lake City numbers 94 souls, and there were 45 children in the Sunday school. The church building has a value of $14,000, the parsonage of $5,000. Pastor Carlsen has been promised an assistant in his extensive work, but it has not yet been possible to find a man for the position.

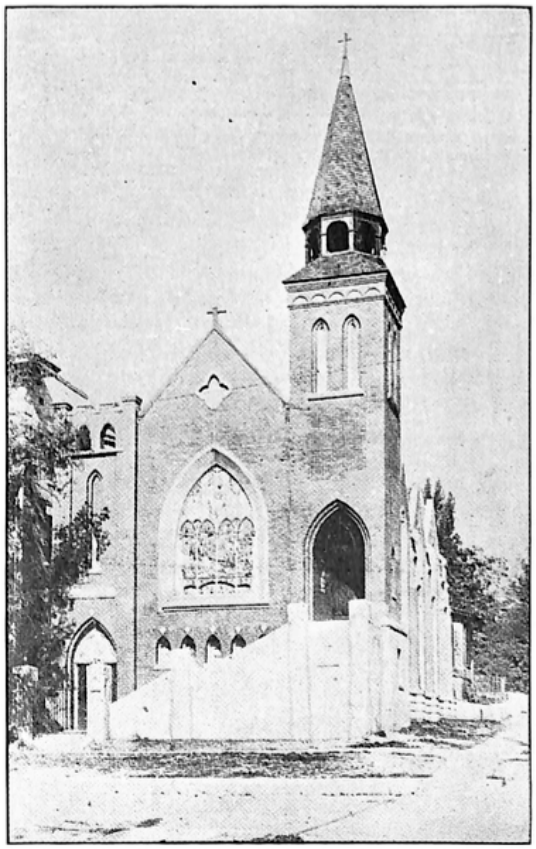

Figure 21: The church in Salt Lake City

It is to be hoped that this long-neglected work may continue to succeed for the salvation of souls and the preservation of our countrymen from the spiritual contagion which in the past has ensnared so many of them and led them away from God and His Church.

One of the fruits of the small mission in Utah is that vigorous work against Mormonism has been taken up in Denmark, both by word of mouth and in writing, by men who know Mormonism from firsthand experience. To mention only one thing, reference may be made here to Pastor H. O. Frimodt Møller's article "Mormonism" in the Church Lexicon for the Nordic Countries, which is quite a bit more thorough than articles on that subject usually are in Danish literature.

The United Church's Mission Among the Heathen

From the time the very first small congregations were established among Danish emigrants here in this country, one finds that they have taken part in supporting mission among the heathen with their gifts. This is surely due in part to the fact that several of the first pastors among Danes in this country had either been missionaries among the heathen—such as N. Thomsen and A. Dan—or had prepared themselves for such work—such as R. Andersen. Another reason is surely that all true Christian mission is of one kindred, the branches on the same tree, the great missionary command in Matthew 28:18–20.

That first the Blair Synod and later the United Church obtained its own missionaries on the heathen mission field is due, next to God, especially to two young men, both of whom for a time had been students at the church body's seminary. For it was they who began the missions, or it was their work that caused mission work, so to speak, to be laid at the church body's door, and which it regarded as its duty to take up.

As we now shall hear a little about these missions, it is best to follow the path the Lord has taken with respect to their origin. We therefore begin with:

The Mission Among the Cherokee Indians in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), since 1892

Niels Laurids Nielsen, born March 22, 1863, in Vorgod near Ringkøbing, where his father was a schoolteacher, had from his boyhood felt called to become a missionary among the heathen. A stay he made in his early youth in the Moravian Church colony at Christiansfeld helped to strengthen him still more in this. He therefore went to the Danish Missionary Society's school in Copenhagen to prepare for this work. From there, in 1890, he came to the Blair Synod's seminary in Blair.

Through a correspondence that the school's then superintendent, Pastor G. B. Christiansen, had carried on with a Danish man who had his home in Indian Territory—also about possible mission work among the Indians—Student Nielsen's attention was drawn to this mission field, and in 1892 he traveled with the church body's approval to Indian Territory in order to become acquainted with conditions and the possibility of beginning a mission there.

He set about what naturally had to be first: to learn the Indians' language—certainly not an easy task, since there is not much of a literature in this language, and there were also only few teachers. With the help of a half-Indian who understood English, Nielsen succeeded both in studying the language and in speaking to the Indians, whom he gathered for meetings where he told Bible stories for children and old people, which his interpreter then translated for them. They seemed to be interested in this, so the meetings were well attended. After some time, some of the older Indians approached Nielsen through the interpreter to ask whether he would not begin a weekday school for their children, whom they would like to have taught to read, write, and so forth.

Nielsen agreed to this. The school began with eight children, and more soon came. But then the time came when Nielsen was to return to the school in Blair to complete his studies. The Indians, however, wanted him to stay and continue teaching their children, and when he traveled to Blair they sent an application with him to the church body, asking that it would permit him to return and continue his work of teaching school as soon as possible. The application was granted, and after a short stay at the school in Blair, Nielsen returned and resumed his work of holding school for the children and speaking God's Word to the elders.

Thus the winter of 1892–93 passed, but in the spring of 1893 Nielsen became seriously ill with malaria, which for a time completely robbed him of his strength. At the Blair Synod's annual meeting in Racine, Wisconsin, in 1893, Nielsen was accepted as a missionary among the Cherokee Indians. The church body also ensured that a piece of land was donated to the mission, and that a schoolhouse and a mission house were built on it.

In the summer of 1893 Nielsen received a faithful helper in his mission work when he was married to his fiancée, Jensine Christensen from Herring. Pastor Korenrup Bang, in whose home she had served as a housemaid, accompanied her to Blair and married her and Nielsen in the Blair congregation's church on September 7, 1893, after which the newlyweds traveled together to the school work among the Indians. At the church body's annual meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1894, Nielsen was ordained as pastor.

It was a long time before he was able through baptism to incorporate anyone from his mission into Christ's congregation. But at last the day came—Easter Day 1898—when he was permitted to baptize one of his pupils from the school, a sixteen-year-old girl who, when she was dangerously ill, received her father's permission to be baptized, which she

had long desired. In baptism she was given the name Anna England. She became the first of a group of siblings which, according to the report to the United Church's most recent annual meeting (1920), numbers 170 souls, of whom 56 are confirmed.

As white farmers gradually pushed the Indians away from the area where Nielsen had begun his work, it became necessary for the mission to move as well. Nielsen and his wife therefore moved from Moodys, their first home, to the town of Oaks, in an area where the Moravian Church had once had a mission. Here the Indians are more intermixed with whites, and they have learned to cultivate their own land, so they are more settled.

On June 11, 1902, the "Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Congregation among the Cherokee Indians in Oaks, Oklahoma" was organized, with the membership number given above. In 1913 the small congregation built its own church. There are also a missionary residence and school facilities. Just as the mission from the beginning was school work, so it has continually kept a school in operation. Because of the long distances and the hilly terrain, which make it impossible for the children to go home every day, Nielsen has had to establish a boarding school. This has naturally increased the work considerably for both him and his wife.

Figure 22: The school in Oaks, Oklahoma

A whole series of the church body's younger women with teacher training have been Nielsen's coworkers, several of them for many years. Several of the children who have attended Nielsen's school have been students at the church body's school in Blair; one of these later became a teacher at the school in Oaks. Pastor Nielsen and his wife are now old in the work and have long experience among the descendants of this land's original population, so it will be difficult to find successors and continuers of the work who can endure with something of the tenacious perseverance that characterizes Pastor Nielsen.

One of the most encouraging signs in this mission is that the small congregation has taken up mission work among its tribal kinsmen who are still without Christ and without connection to His Church. The school work is one of the main factors in this mission and has won recognition from the state.

The United Church's Mission in Japan

Just as we have seen that the mission among the Cherokee Indians led us to the awakened circles in West Jutland, from which Pastor N. L. Nielsen came, so also the mission in Japan, as far as our church body's work is concerned. And just as it was a student from our church body's seminary who began the mission among the Cherokee Indians, so it was a young man who had taken his final examination at Trinity Seminary who became the pioneer of the mission in Japan. Of this there is space here only for a few notes, and for fuller and more detailed information we must refer to the excellent little booklet Our Foreign Missions, which the church body's Church Council published in 1915.

The man whom, next to God, we may thank for the fact that our church body also became involved in mission among—and within—the people who, without comparison, are likely to come to play the greatest role among all Asian peoples, we shall here briefly describe.

Jens Mikael Thøgersen Winther was born on October 25, 1874, in Brejning parish near Ringkøbing and was raised in a Christian home. From his earliest childhood his mother had destined him to become a missionary among the heathen. This thought, which always stood before him, led him to seek to acquire all the knowledge he could; thus he attended a folk high school in order to be able to teach children. His plan to seek admission to the Danish Missionary Society's school was prevented from being carried out when Winther received an inquiry from the "Lutheran Mission Association" asking whether he would go with one of its missionaries to China and teach children. After serious consideration he answered yes.

The route to China was laid via America, where Winther wished, if possible, to obtain some further education before proceeding to his mission field. After he and the other missionary had been in America for some time, it became apparent that the missionary's health was not such that he dared venture to go to China, whereupon he asked to be released from his service, and Winther was then accepted as the association's missionary in his place.

At the same time he received permission to go to Japan, which was considered healthier for Danes than China.

Winther then enrolled as a student at the United Church's seminary, then located in Elk Horn, Iowa, from which he graduated in 1898. He was ordained at the church body's annual meeting in Greenville, Michigan, in 1898, and shortly thereafter traveled to Japan to begin his difficult work. He landed in Yokohama on September 7, 1898. It was intended that Winther should investigate conditions in Japan and then, if he did not find them suitable, travel on to China. Because of a misunderstanding, however, about eight months passed before he received the funds promised by the society, so that he could travel about; and before the money arrived, he had immersed himself so deeply

in the Japanese language that, when the funds finally came, he felt he ought to remain where he was—convinced that this was God's will.

With the help of the kind Dr. Whitney, he found a home where he could both live and receive instruction, namely with a Japanese pastor's family in Tokyo, who now belong to the United Danish Church: T. Yonemura and his wife. After the funds had arrived from the association in Southern Jutland, Winther made his first larger journey in Japan, namely to Kyushu, to visit the American Lutheran pastor Dr. R. B. Peery, who had invited him. Here the foundation was laid for the cooperation between Winther and the missionaries sent out by the American "United Synod of the South," which has now led to the United Danish Church and the U.S.S.—now a part of the large American "United Lutheran Church"—jointly carrying on mission work in Japan.

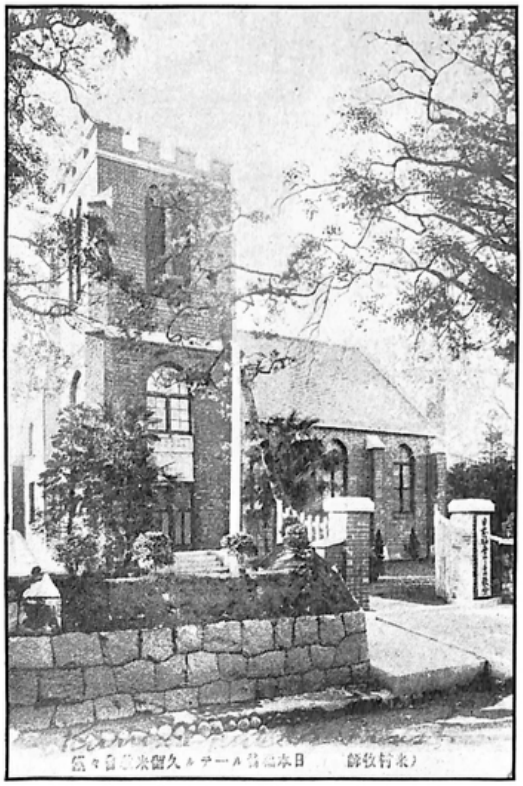

Figure 23: The church in Kurume, Japan

In Dr. Whitney's home in Yokohama, Missionary Winther was married on September 1, 1899, to his fiancée, whom Pastor N. Hansen from Cedar Falls had accompanied to Japan. Mrs. Winther is from western Southern Jutland and came together with Winther to America in 1896 to visit her sister, Mrs. Pastor N. Hansen. From an early time she had been involved in heathen mission work as an intercessor and contributor, and since her marriage she has faithfully stood by her husband's side in the difficult work on the mission field in Japan.

Yes, truly a difficult work! The Japanese language is exceedingly difficult to learn. From a reliable source it is known that Pastor Winther—who is both a diligent and capable worker and an unusually gifted linguist—once stood right on the brink of giving it all up; he could not learn the language. He had his belongings packed and was ready to leave. Yet he decided once more to speak in the mission hall—and then it came, and he stayed.

And the difficulty for non-Japanese to live in Japan! Missionaries must obtain most of their food supplies from America. Pastor Winther had to pay dearly to learn from

experience that it is not possible for a European to live like a Japanese. That attempt nearly cost him his life.

As already mentioned above, it was initially the small mission association in Schleswig that supported Winther in his work on the mission field, along with the friends he had gained during his stay in America. Gradually matters developed so that in 1903 the United Church took over the mission in Japan as its own, while the association in Schleswig promised to continue supporting it—a promise it has faithfully kept. Already since 1901 Pastor Winther's loyal language teacher, Pastor Yonemura, had been his coworker. In 1903 Miss Ella Johnsen from Gayville, South Dakota, traveled to Japan to work in the mission; in 1909 Pastor J. P. Nielsen and his wife went out as workers in Japan; and in 1916 Pastor D. G. M. Bach and his wife likewise went out, after having worked for some years among countrymen in New Zealand.

In 1906 Pastor Winther's health made it necessary for him to make a journey to America in order, if possible, to recover, and at the same time Miss Johnsen's hearing became so poor that she had to give up the work. Thus only the faithful Yonemura remained in Japan, and matters looked truly dark. Yet brighter times came.

Already in 1902 Winther had the great joy of being able to baptize the firstfruits of the mission. A judge, Kiuchi, who for a long time had faithfully attended the mission meetings, asked to be baptized, which took place on March 16 of that year, to the great encouragement of the small mission and its workers. Gradually more followed. The small Sunday school, which was an important branch of the mission work, bore fruit. One of its first pupils, the young Hajime Inadomi, was baptized and shortly thereafter traveled to America to be educated to proclaim the Gospel to his countrymen. His then-pagan father gave his seventeen-year-old son 200 yen and wished him success on the journey. Later he himself followed his son into the Christian Church.

The young Inadomi has now been in America for about ten years and during that time has won many friends through his gracious nature and his joyful Christian faith.

Since 1901 the mission has had its center in Kurume, where for a time it seemed impossible to find a house that could be rented, and the one finally obtained no one dared live in because ghosts were said to be at play there. The congregation there has had its own church and missionary residence since 1911. From the very beginning the missionaries have had to work toward educating native workers. And since 1909 Pastor Winther has worked together with the English Lutheran Mission as a teacher at its seminary in Kumamoto. There are now three ordained native pastors working in the mission, all from Kurume and all educated at the school in Kumamoto, and not a few are preparing for the pastoral office.

The United Church's Representation in Denmark

Since 1899 the church body has had its representatives in our fatherland, namely a committee consisting of the chairman of "Inner Mission" together with several pastors and laymen. In particular, those pastors and missionaries who had visited us before the union in 1896 have been active spokesmen for the United Church at home by writing in church and other newspapers about church conditions among Danes in America, and by giving counsel and guidance to those who wished to travel to America. That this has been of the greatest importance to us, we are well aware, and we stand in a great debt of gratitude to all the men who over the years have spoken our cause at home.

This cooperation has, among other things, borne the fine fruit that Danish Christians have now, already through our committee, worked together with us in the mission in Utah, which has been discussed elsewhere in this book.

The committee at present consists of the following men:

- Pastor C. Moe, chairman of "Inner Mission"
- Pastor C. Asschenfeldt-Hansen
- Pastor H. O. Frimodt Møller
- Pastor A. Busch, chairman of the Danish Missionary Society
- Pastor H. J. Kent
- Editor E. Kjersgaard
- Missionary Poul Holk

As is known, Pastors Frimodt Møller and H. J. Kent have previously been pastors in the United Church, and Pastor Busch has twice visited America. We rejoice in this link

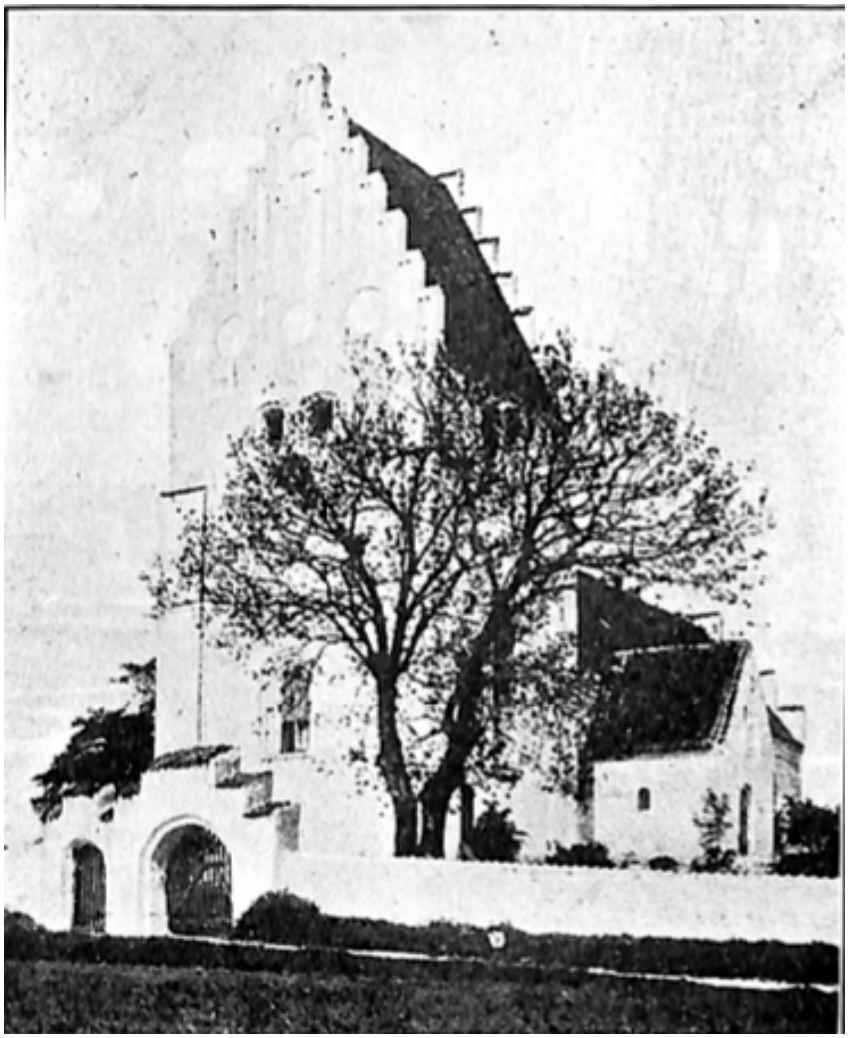

Figure 24: A village church in Denmark

between us and our old mother church, and rejoice that it was willing to be represented at our 25th anniversary jubilee.

Our Deceased Coworkers

It is fitting and Christian that at our great festival and in this our commemorative year we remember those of our coworkers who have already been called away from the field of labor and now rest from their works, but who have contributed so that we who remain in the work can celebrate this jubilee with joy and thanksgiving to the God who allowed our humble efforts to succeed far beyond what we could have expected. As already mentioned above, the great majority of those who twenty-five years ago took part in founding the United Church have either departed from the Church Militant here below or have reached such an advanced age that they can no longer take an active part in the work of the Church.

By the nature of the matter and the limits set for this book, it is impossible here to list the names of all the many who deserve to be remembered by us on this occasion. We must therefore content ourselves with mentioning those who have stood in the service of the Word among us, and even of these we can give only a brief account. As far as possible, they will be mentioned in the order in which they were called away—by what we hope was a blessed death—from this world.

Marinus Nielsen Rabæk, from the Ringkøbing area in Denmark, was educated at the seminary in Elk Horn, received a call from the Danish congregation in Arcola, Texas, was the first to be ordained in the United Church in October 1896, and was likewise the first of this church body's pastors to be called away by death, namely in June 1897. He died in Cedar Falls, Iowa. And the young woman who was his chosen bride, later Mrs. Eline Uhrenholdt, has recently died as a widow on the distant mission field in Sudan, Africa. Pastor Rabæk died of tuberculosis, which he had carried for several years.

Niels Lang, born in Jernved near Ribe, came as a young man with his parents to Nysted, Nebraska. He was a student at the folk high school in Elk Horn, Iowa, in 1884–85, was admitted to the seminary in West Denmark, Wisconsin, in the autumn of 1888, and was ordained in 1892 as pastor of the Danish congregation in Ringsted, Iowa. In 1896 he joined the United Danish Church. In 1897 Pastor Lang accepted a call from Holy Spirit Congregation in Waupaca, Wisconsin, but his time of service there was short,

for already in the winter of 1898 he was suddenly called away from his work by death. His widow and two children lived for many years in Racine, Wisconsin.

Laurits Mathiasen. Concerning this remarkable man, who died as pastor of the Danish congregation in Council Bluffs, Iowa, on May 15, 1900, reference may be made to Pastor I. M. Hansen's memorial volume A Man of God, in which a detailed account of his life is given.

Niels Clemmen Jensen, the son of a farmer from Bornholm, born in Aakirkeby on April 4, 1852, was spiritually awakened through the ministry of Pastor Trandberg on his native island in the 1860s. He trained as a schoolteacher and graduated from Blaagaard in 1881, later studied under the "Committee for Danish-American Mission" in Copenhagen, and was sent to the United States in the spring of 1884. He was ordained in Cedar Falls, Iowa, on May 10, 1885, as pastor of the Danish congregation in Rutland, Iowa. From there he traveled in 1887 to New Denmark, Wisconsin, the oldest Danish settlement in America. His final ministry was in Clay County, Iowa, where he served several small congregations and made numerous journeys to Minnesota to preach to countrymen there. Pastor Jensen belonged to the "Northern Church," but did not at first join the United Church, of which he became a member in 1900. He died in the spring of 1901 following an operation for gallstones, leaving a widow and six children, who faithfully cared for their mother. One of the daughters is now a teacher in our Indian mission.

Rudolf P. Bennesen was born in Copenhagen on November 20, 1870, and as a young man learned the trade of painter. He came to the United States in 1892, was trained as a pastor in Elk Horn and Blair and at the Lutheran Seminary in Chicago, and was ordained in Greenville, Michigan, on June 4, 1898, as pastor of the congregations in Greenville and the surrounding area. In 1903 he accepted a call from Orange, Wisconsin. He served there only a very short time and died on May 14, 1903.

Mads Christian Hansen Rohe. Concerning this man, one of our old pioneer pastors, born in Ørbæk, Ore Parish near Bogense, who from his arrival in the United States in 1878 and from his graduation from Augsburg Seminary in 1877 until his death in North Dakota on January 16, 1906, served in many places among his countrymen in Nebraska, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and North Dakota, reference is made to Pastor I. M. Hansen's book Pastor Rohe's Memorial Tablet (Blair, 1911) for further information.

Jens Møller, born in Skaarup near Svendborg on April 22, 1867, attended free school and folk high school before emigrating to America in 1889. There he attended the folk high school in Elk Horn and in 1894 entered the seminary, where he studied for two years, followed by two years at the seminary in Chicago under Dr. Weidner. He was ordained on June 4, 1899, as pastor of the congregations in Jewell Junction and Scranton, Iowa. From there he traveled in 1900 to Denver, Colorado, where he served as pastor until in 1905 he accepted a call from the congregation in Potter, Nebraska. By that time he had

already been ill for several years with tuberculosis, of which he died on April 3, 1907. His widow and son live in Blair, Nebraska.

Jens P. Jensen, born on February 24, 1871, in Pjedsted near Vejle but raised in North Schleswig, learned the blacksmith's trade as a young man and emigrated to the United States in 1890. In 1892 he entered the school in Blair, where he later completed both the pro-seminary and the theological seminary. He was ordained on June 10, 1900, as pastor of the Danish congregation in Looking Glass and Annesker, Nebraska. He served there until in 1903 when he was called by the United Church to be a teacher of theology at Trinity Seminary, of which he became president in 1905. In this office he died on April 9, 1908. His widow and children now live near Froid, Montana.

Christian Hansen, born near Hampton, Nebraska, on January 19, 1875, and raised in the Danish settlement there, came as a very young man to the school in Blair and completed the pro-seminary and later the theological seminary. In 1900 he was ordained to serve as assistant to Pastor N. L. Nielsen in the Indian mission. He later accepted calls from the congregation in Portland, Oregon, then from Kenosha, Wisconsin, and in 1907 from Bethania Congregation in Kimballton, Iowa. During a visit to Cedar Falls in 1908, Pastor Hansen died suddenly and unexpectedly. His widow and two children live in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Pastor Christian Hansen was the first American-born pastor ordained in the United Danish Church and one of the men who seemed to have an active future before him when his life's course was suddenly cut short.

Søren Hillerup Jørgensen was born on May 22, 1848, at Skalberg School on Funen, where his father was a teacher, but grew up in Asperup, to which his father was later transferred. Jørgensen was trained as a schoolteacher at Blaagaard Seminary and emigrated in 1876 to the United States after serving for some years as his father's assistant teacher. He was for some years a farmer, but then came to serve as a missionary in the Danish Church, which in 1883 recommended him for ordination. After serving as pastor in Latimer and Peterson, Iowa, and in Gordon and Plainview, Nebraska, he received his final call near Mason City, Nebraska. There he died on January 26, 1909, having diligently carried on mission work among scattered countrymen in Nebraska. One of his sons is a pastor in the Presbyterian Church; a daughter is married to one of the United Church's pastors.

Peter Petersen Thisted, born in Hundborg, Thy, on September 20, 1859, learned the carpenter's trade in his youth, came to the United States in 1887, became a student at Pastor Trandberg's school in Chicago, was ordained in the Blair Synod in 1894, and served as pastor in several places in Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, and finally in New Lisbon, Wisconsin, where he died on May 19, 1915. He is buried in Wisner, Nebraska, beside his first wife. His second wife and five children survived him. Pastor Thisted served for several years as treasurer of the Widows' Fund in the United Church.

Jens Petersen, born in Hammer Thorup near Næstved in 1839, belonged to the first group of students trained at Askov Folk High School for the pastoral ministry in America and was sent out by "the Committee" in 1874. He was ordained the same year as pastor of the congregation in West Denmark, Wisconsin. He remained in Wisconsin until 1888, when he became pastor in Ludington, Michigan, later served as pastor in Gordon, Nebraska, and Lincoln, Nebraska, and in 1899 joined the United Church. For several years he was editor of Kirkebladet and for a time vice-chairman and chairman of the Danish Church. In 1915 he traveled to Denmark and later lived in Roskilde, where he died in July 1916. Friends in America have erected a monument on his grave.

Frederik Christian Møller, born in Skaarup on Funen on May 9, 1844, was trained as a seminarian and schoolteacher, emigrated in 1868 to the United States, was a schoolteacher and farmer from 1868 to 1879, studied at Augsburg from 1879 to 1883, and served as pastor of Norwegian congregations in Minnesota from 1883 to 1893. Because of poor health he traveled to Washington, where he died on July 23, 1916. He belonged to the Blair Synod prior to the founding of the United Church.

Jens Nielsen Jersild, born March 21, 1855, in Aulum near Holstebro in a Christian home, lost his mother early and experienced a hard childhood. As a young man he worked as a farmhand, merchant, and teacher of children. He was trained for the pastoral ministry in America at Askov Folk High School and later through a course in Copenhagen. He came to the United States in 1884 and was ordained as pastor of the Danish congregation in South Chicago and Chicago's South Side on September 1, 1884. In 1886 he accepted a call from the congregation in Carlston, Minnesota, and in 1890 from the congregation in Neenah, Wisconsin. There, in June 1892, he began publication of the weekly paper Danskeren, which in 1898 passed to the United Church and which from New Year 1921 was merged into Luthersk Ugeblad. After selling the paper to the church body, Jersild started a larger knitting factory in Neenah, but continued to serve the congregation in Oconto until his death on May 10, 1917. He collapsed and died while digging in his garden. His widow and ten children all live in Neenah.

Gudmund Grill, born October 1, 1867, in Otterup on Funen, attended officers' school in his youth and became a second lieutenant. He emigrated to the United States in 1891, graduated from Trinity Seminary, and was ordained in 1894 as pastor of the Danish congregation in Yankton, South Dakota. He later served as pastor in Hampton, Nebraska; Warren, Pennsylvania; Spencer and Des Moines, Iowa; and finally in Waupaca, Wisconsin, where he died on November 27, 1917, after undergoing several operations. He is survived by his widow and seven children.

Harald Julius Dahlstrøm, born in Copenhagen on July 5, 1835, came to America in 1884 and was ordained as pastor of the congregation in Muskegon on November 9, 1884. He later served as pastor in Racine, Wisconsin; Sleepy Eye, Minnesota; Kenosha, Wisconsin; and Des Moines, Iowa. He lived the last years of his life in Racine, Wisconsin,

where he died on March 3, 1919. Regarding this gifted man's long life and work in Denmark and America, reference is otherwise made to Pastor I. M. Hansen's fine memorial volume Dahlstrøm's Memory (Blair, 1920).

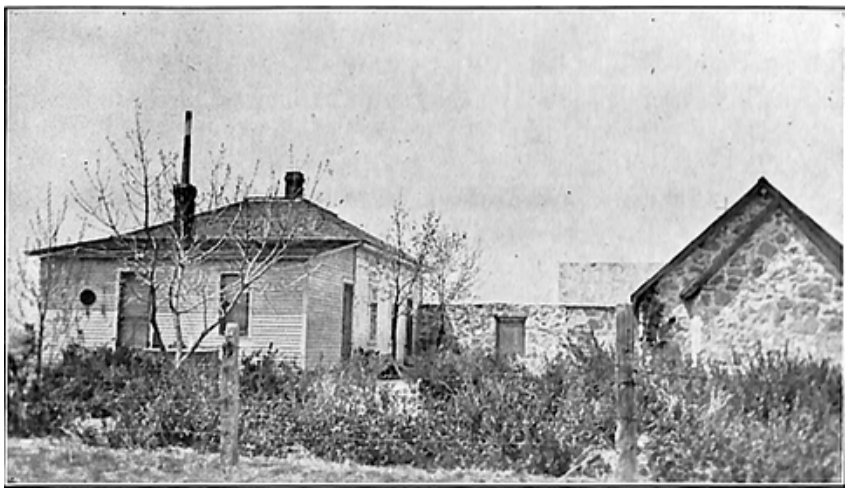

Figure 25: A pioneer church & parsonage in Potter NE

Johannes Markussen, born in Østerby, Daler Parish near Tønder, on October 12, 1855, came to the United States in 1874. He was a farmer for a number of years in Seward County, Nebraska, before deciding to study for the ministry. He attended Trinity Seminary and on June 6, 1891, was ordained as pastor of the congregation in Turin, Iowa. He later served as pastor in several places in Nebraska, lastly in Minden, but in 1917—because of poor health—he retired and built a house in Cordova, Nebraska, where he died on June 29, 1919.

Jens Gundesen, born September 21, 1856, in West Jutland, received his theological education at Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis. He was ordained on June 5, 1892, as pastor of a Danish congregation in Menomonie, Wisconsin, traveled from there to Canada, and for some years was pastor in Dickson. He later retired and lived on his farm, where he died on January 29, 1920.

Peter Laurits Christian Hansen. Concerning him we must content ourselves with referring to what was said earlier under the church body's first administration.

Figure 26: A new parsonage in Boomer IA

A Look Ahead

Over the course of the quarter-century that now lies behind us as a church body, much has changed. This applies both to our people and to the circumstances under which we live and work. The demands now placed upon us and the tasks before us are different and greater than those we faced twenty-five years ago. Above all, it is a new generation we now have to deal with—a generation with different prerequisites and with different aims in view.

It ought to be the Church's task to keep pace with the people in order to win the people—win them for God. But in order to keep pace with the people it is necessary to understand their way of thinking and to meet their needs. Only in that way is it possible for the Church to continue its course of life from generation to generation and to carry out the work the Lord has set it to do.

A New and Larger School

One of the tasks that lies first before us—so that we may continue our work among our people—and concerning which there seems to be much agreement, is a new and larger school: not only larger and more up-to-date buildings, but more teaching staff than we have hitherto been able to command, in order to meet our youth's need for learning, which is one of the most encouraging signs among us. It seems to have become clear to us that if we lose our youth, then we cut off our own future and work against ourselves.

We must aim not merely for a Danish-American school, but a school for Danes and Danish-born people in America, and a school in an Evangelical Lutheran spirit, so that in the best sense it both will and can work for and with our Church and our people under the conditions in which they are now placed. This is the great main matter in our work at the close of the first and the beginning of the second quarter-century of our life as a Danish church body outside Denmark. About this there seems to be the happiest agreement among us, even though the times are unsettled and opinions about various things concerning the realization of the plan may be divided.

Already at the annual meeting in Kenmare in 1918, the idea of a new school was discussed, though one did not yet see one's way to proceed to action. The year after, at the meeting in Cedar Falls, it was decided to take up the task, and a committee was appointed to investigate and prepare the matter during the year. And finally in 1920 the annual meeting in Hutchinson decided to build a new school in Blair and for that purpose to raise half a million dollars, of which half is to be used for building, and the other half to be set aside as an interest-bearing school fund. The fundraising committee came to consist of the following men: Pastor J. J. Kildsig, Pastor J. A. Larsen, Mr. L. Vedsted (Staplehurst, Nebraska), Mr. Chr. Christiansen (Vermillion, South Dakota), and Mr. P. N. Kruse (Spencer, Iowa).

It was a great task that the 24th annual meeting undertook, but our church people's pledges of financial contributions toward carrying out this cause are its practical answer that it does not consider the matter too great or impossible. Our now overcrowded school seems to give well-founded hope that we need not worry that the new and larger buildings we have planned will stand empty. All this is a very encouraging sign that our mission for the future in America does not look hopeless. No, we have reason to say with the poet:

Here there is summer sun enough, here there is seed-soil enough, if only we, if only we had love enough! Here there is a poet's urge through the course of work to lift our land—if only we lift together as a band!

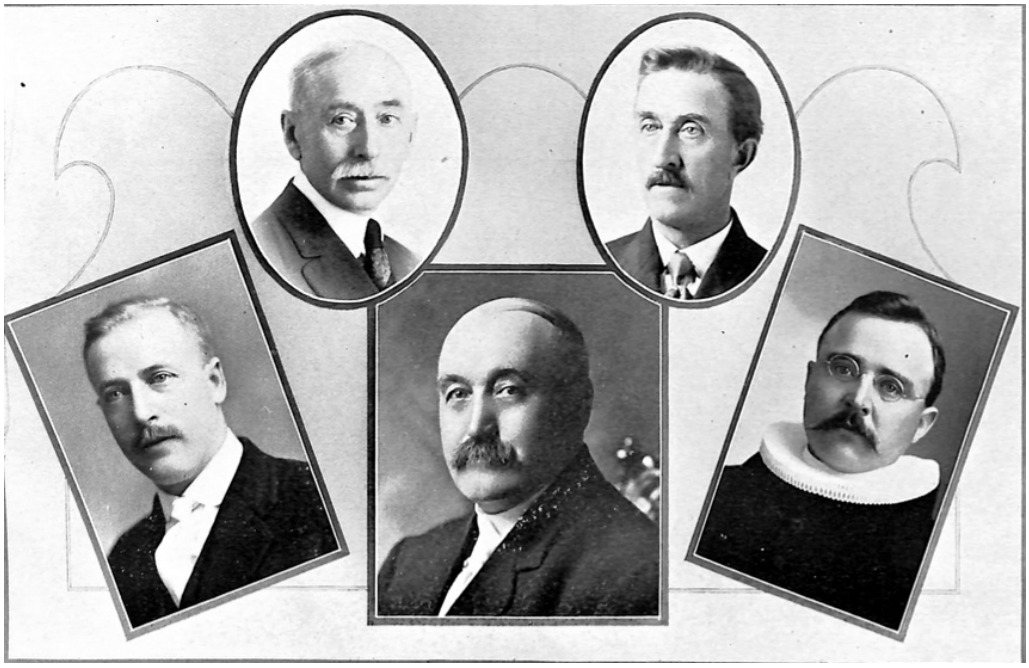

Figure 27: The Collection Committee: (l to r) Kruse, Christiansen, Kildsig, Vedsted, Larsen

A United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

On this great matter many good and true words have been spoken and written, which will not be repeated here. But we can surely all agree that it ought to be a goal we strive toward, even if we cannot now agree on the road and the manner by which it is to be reached. Yet there are surely several things that could indicate that it is not as distant as it has been. In that connection, may one not dare apply the words that were once written with other circumstances in view:

"Again what was divided bends together;
someday in time it shall become one."

Figure 28: One of our newer churches: Fresno CA