

*Morton Grove early 1900's looking east from Ferris and Lincoln Avenues*

*"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ....The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light and the Lamb is its lamp."*

*Rev 21: 10 & 23*

## The Lord Planted the Seed

In the 1890's Morton Grove consisted of ten or twelve houses. There was one street called Lincoln Avenue, which terminated at the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad tracks (now the Amtrak). The other streets were only dirt lanes. The few sidewalks were made of wood. The village did not have electric lights, gas or street lights. It was a quiet little town consisting of families mostly of German heritage. An enterprising gentleman of Chicago thought it would be the perfect place to establish an old folks' home.

The superintendent of the home, Mr. Theodore Kollerman, a religious man, was anxious to have the residents supplied with the Word of God. He asked the Reverend Fred Detzer of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Niles Center (now Skokie) if he could conduct services at the home. Beginning in 1897, services were held occasionally by the Reverend Detzer. After a few years outsiders began to attend the services and more room was required. Permission was granted to hold services in the public school. In order to have services every Sunday, the Reverend C. Buenger, pastor of St. Matthews Church in Niles, was asked to alternate preaching on Sunday afternoons. Reverend Buenger took over the entire workload in May 1902, when Reverend Detzer could no longer continue to serve.

## And the Seed Took Root

The attendance at divine services in the school building continued to increase. The people talked about organizing a congregation. On July 5, 1902, nine men assembled in the village municipal building and organized "Die Evangelische Lutherische Jerusalem Gemeinde". The following men were the organizing members:

Adolf Pochlmann  
August Pochlmann  
Fred Dilg

Ludwig Freier  
Henry Budde  
John Hilmann

Charles Peschke  
Charles Blischke  
Julius Geweke



*Reverend Julius Toepel*

In 1902 Pastor Buenger of St. Matthews accepted a call to Kenosha, Wisconsin. Both congregations were served by students from the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary at Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. On March 1, 1903, Mr. Julius Toepel, a candidate for the ministry, was installed and ordained as pastor in both congregations by his father, the Reverend Adolf Toepel assisted by Pastor Buenger.



*Reverend Carl Buenger*

## *We Build on the Cornerstone of our Faith*

In August of 1902, Mr. Ahrensfield, owner of a subdivision in Morton Grove, donated to the congregation a plot of land 50x125 feet on the corner of Fernald and Capulina Avenues, and the congregation bought an additional lot measuring 46x125 feet adjacent to the donated lot. Since the congregation again had a pastor and adequate land, it decided to have plans drawn up for its first church building. The building committee consisted of Fred Dilg, H. Fraedrich and



*Die Evangelische Lutherische Jerusalem Gemeinde*

August Poehlman. After looking at several plans, they accepted and contracted with Mr. Louis Rugen to build the church.

The work began immediately and on June 14, 1903 the cornerstone was laid. Pastor Buenger preached and Pastor Toepel laid the cornerstone in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

On September 23, 1903, the church was dedicated. Three services were held. Pastor Adolf Toepel, father of Pastor Julius Toepel preached in the morning service. Pastor Carl Buenger of Kenosha, Wisconsin and former pastor at the congregation preached at the afternoon service. Pastor Fred Detzer of Niles Center and former pastor for the small group that organized the congregation, preached at the evening service.

During Rev. Toepel's pastorate the congregation made application for membership in the Wisconsin Synod. The application was accepted by the body in June of 1904. Under Pastor Toepel's pastorate four members were received into the voters' assembly.

Later the following names were added as charter members:

Henry Miller  
Carl H. Dethmann

Gustav Leichnitz  
Charles Heinzerling

Carl Schroeder  
Friedrich Wiegand



Did you know — two of our founding fathers became mayors of M.G.

— Herbert Dilg and Adolph Poehlman

Mr. Julius Geweke, attorney at law, serving as secretary, was instructed to draw up papers for incorporation. The congregation was incorporated under the laws of the state of Illinois on December 21, 1903. St. Matthews of Niles, was asked to recognize the Morton Grove congregation as a daughter congregation and to permit its pastor, Rev. C. Buenger to serve them. The petition was granted and Pastor Buenger preached every other Sunday at the Morton Grove congregation. Affiliating itself with St. Matthew meant that the congregation committed itself to the following Articles of Faith and incorporated these articles in its constitution.

*"This congregation accepts and confesses all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, as a correct presentation and true exposition of Christian Doctrine, drawn from, and in full agreement with, the Holy Scriptures; hence, no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation which is in any degree at variance with the following symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, viz.:*

- 1) *The Three Ecumenical Creeds — the Apostolic, the Nicene, the Athanasian;*
- 2) *The Unaltered Augsburg Confession;*
- 3) *The Apology of the same;*
- 4) *The Smalcald Articles;*
- 5) *Luther's Catechisms, the Large and the Small;*
- 6) *The Formula of Concord;*

*And we set forth that according to this norm of doctrine and faith all controversies which may arise in this congregation shall be decided and adjudged."*

The first officers of the congregation:

Julius Geweke	President
Charles Blischke	Secretary
August Poehlmann	Treasurer
Ludwig Freier	Trustee
Henry Frederick	Trustee
Adolf Poehlmann	Trustee

The organists were Mrs. Julius Geweke and Miss Clara Sonne.



Did you know — The Poehlman brothers owned and operated the largest greenhouse in the United States, The Poehlman Rose won first place at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. The Poehlman Brothers Company closed its doors in 1931 — a victim of the great depression.



Did you know — in lieu of monetary donations, some members would make donations of coal to heat the church.

### First Resident Pastor Called

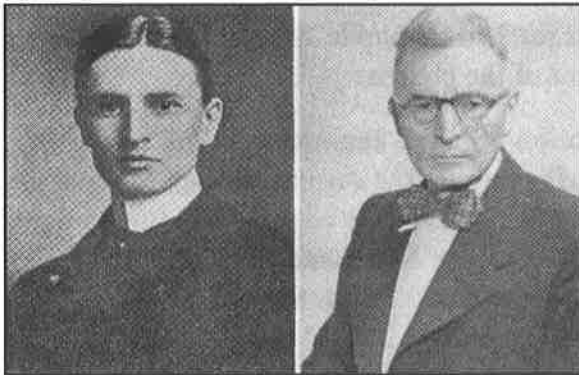
Pastor Toepel served the congregation until August of 1904, preaching every Sunday afternoon. The congregation now felt that it was strong enough to support its own pastor. They called Mr. Theodore Thurow, one of the 1904 graduating candidates for the ministry from Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary at Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. He was ordained and installed as pastor on August 14, 1904, by his father, the Reverend C. Thurow of Root Creek, Wisconsin, assisted by Pastor Julius Toepel.



*Reverend Theodore Thurow*

During Pastor Thurow's pastorate, thirteen members were received into the voters' assembly. An attempt to start a school was made but the morning that school was to begin only four or five children showed up. Pastor Thurow's pastorate was short-lived and ended in November of 1905 when he accepted a call to Litchfield, Minnesota. During the vacancy, Pastor Hans Moussa, who was doing post graduate work at the University of Chicago, served the congregation by preaching on Sunday mornings.

### A New Shepherd for the Flock



*Reverend Otto P. Heidtke in 1906 & 1952*

The congregation extended a call to Reverend Otto Heidtke, pastor at Albany, Wisconsin. He was installed at Jerusalem on April 29, 1906 by the Reverend Hans Moussa, who was assisted by Reverend Professor Martin Sprengling and Pastor Julius Toepel.

In the summer of 1906 construction of the parsonage was started next door to the church. It consisted of only four rooms. It was completed by September and was dedicated by Pastor Toepel. The pastor moved in immediately.

Pastor Heidtke was married to Miss Elsa Schmidt on January 24, 1907. A few years later, the upstairs rooms were added to the parsonage by Mr. Henry Fink. He probably did this work without pay as he usually donated his work to the church. In 1912 a dining room, bathroom and kitchen with a basement were added to the present building. The Honold Bros. were the contractors of the original and latest addition.

When the church was organized in 1902, the German language was used at all services and meetings of the congregation. In 1908 Pastor Heidtke started to conduct Sunday evening services in the English language. By 1920, services in both languages were held on Sunday morning.

Did you know — one of our early members, Arthur Juern, married to Florence [nee Selle] was the first mailman in Morton Grove.

They had two sons, Ron and John.

Ron still lives on Fernald Avenue a few houses from the church.



*Rev. & Mrs. Heidtke and Mr. Geweke*

In the summer of 1943, Mr William Geweke, one of our founding fathers, sat with the pastor and informed him that he has willed his house to the congregation. The congregation could do as they pleased with it.

At the time the church had many debts and there were strong sentiments to sell it. After much consideration, it was decided to keep it and it still serves as a teacherage today.

It is the house next door to the parsonage.

## Let the Little Children Come Unto Me

After several false starts to establish a Christian Day School in 1904 and 1905, the pastor finally convinced the congregation to establish the school. Many were opposed to the parochial school because they didn't think it would be able to compete with the high caliber public school in Morton Grove. In the fall of 1906, the school was opened with thirty-five children of various grades attending. The pastor taught the children because the congregation was small and couldn't afford to pay a teacher. When enrollment reached 50 pupils, Mrs. Heidtke took over the lower grades. Classes were held in the basement of the church.

As the number of students increased, the congregation began to consider building a school building. In June of 1909, they purchased a plot of ground at the corners of Capulina and Georgiana for \$575.00. The village board agreed to vacate the alley running North and South behind the church in exchange for a like piece of land on the North end of the new lot purchased. The congregation now owned a plot of ground 100 X 266 feet.

Did you know — Thanksgiving Day dinners were served at the church. The local baker on Fernald Avenue would cook the turkeys for the congregation.

## Our First Teacher is Called

In 1920, due to poor health, the doctor ordered the pastor to give up teaching. The congregation seeing the value of the Christian Day School, decided to call their first teacher. Mr. Otis Stelljes was called from our teacher's college at New Ulm, Minnesota. He is remembered as a good musician and had a good command of the English language. He was with us for four years. He resigned and was later called to Kenosha, Wisconsin.



*Mr. Otis Stelljes  
First School Teacher*

Mr. C. Kraemer of Letterdale, Iowa started teaching in the fall of 1925. He was a faithful worker and very effective teaching Christian virtues in the children in his classes.



Did you know —Some of Mr. C. Kramer's students still are members of our congregation Alvin Lindemann, Ruth Clark (nee Hirshak), Evelyn Dilg (nee Juern).



*Mr. C. Kraemer 1925-1935*

## The Church Fire- March 22, 1929

It was the Friday morning before Palm Sunday and Confirmation Day. The Pastor was awakened by strange crackling noises. At the same time someone was knocking on his door and shouting "Your church is on Fire!" The fire department was called and came at once. They managed to save part of the building. Faulty wiring was listed as the cause of the fire. The public school offered and we accepted the use of their auditorium for church services. They also let us use one of their classrooms to hold school until the end of the school year.

## Time to Rebuild on the Firm Foundation

The congregation decided to rebuild the damaged portion of the church and add a school auditorium, kitchen, and two classrooms. They also added brick veneer to the exterior of the church. The construction was completed at the cost of \$40,000 and dedicated on February 9, 1930. The church was overflowing for the three dedication services held in the morning, afternoon and evening. Rev. C. Buenger of Kenosha, WI, the Rev. W.H. Lehman of Libertyville, IL, the Rev. S. Jedelev of Wilmot, WI, and the Rev. H. Knuth of Milwaukee, WI, were the guest speakers at the services. The congregation was alive and full of hope for the future growth of their congregation and school.



*Rebuilt church rededicated in 1930*



Did you know — simultaneously as these services were preached in English,  
they were also being preached in German in one of the classrooms.

### The School Closes.....and Reopens

Then came the lean years of the depression. The pastor reduced his salary to \$80.00 a month and the teacher to \$70.00 a month. Due to the debt of the church and school building, the congregation still could not carry the load. The doors of the school were closed in 1935. It saddened the congregation to have the schoolrooms empty and the schoolyard quiet.

In July of 1946, representatives of St. Paul's Church in Skokie approached our congregation with the idea of joining together in a consolidated Christian day school. Representatives of St. John's of Niles were then invited to join in the tentative consolidation. With the understanding that their present teacher, Mr. Walter Papenberg, would remain a teacher in the consolidated school, the Niles congregation voted to accept the proposed consolidation. Mr. Edward M. Lindemann of Antigo, WI had already been called as principal. The congregations were canvassed for prospective students and an enrollment of ninety children was reported. In view of the large enrollment, Mrs. Mable Windhorn, a member of St. John's was added to the teaching staff. On September 22, 1946, the three teachers were installed in a service at Jerusalem Church. Pastor Heidtke preached the sermon and Pastor Arndt of St. Paul's performed the act of installation. The Niles Township Lutheran School was established on the property of the Jerusalem Church. The congregation once again had its precious Christian Day School .



Did you know - After lunch recess, Mrs. Windhorn would always read a chapter from a book  
(I recall the Bobsey Twins). She knew how to settle down the first and second graders.  
She also made us practice good penmanship (which I thank her for today).

In 1948, Mrs. Eleanor Behrens was added to the teaching staff to teach kindergarten. In 1949 Mrs. Elizabeth Bolin, a member of Jerusalem, became the kindergarten teacher. In 1950, a fifth teacher, Miss June Wahl was added to the staff.

- Mrs. Bolin - kindergarten
- Mrs. Windhorn - grades 1 and 2
- Miss Wahl - grades 3 and 4
- Mr. Papenberg - grades 5 and 6
- Mr. Lindemann - grades 7 and 8 and principal

As the enrollment increased, more space was needed. The school had become so crowded that the kindergarten class had to be held on the stage of the auditorium. In 1950 a classroom was added to the existing school at Jerusalem. This room was added to the northeast corner of the school building and included a basement and storage room with an outside entrance.

In 1951, Mr Papenberg accepted a call to New York. Mr. Melvin Schwartz of the Wisconsin Synod was called and accepted the position. In 1952, Miss June Wahl returned to school for further studies and Mr. Alvin Loesel of Frankenmuth, MI accepted the call to replace her. In 1954 Mrs. Bolin was replaced by Mrs. Eleanor Seiferth as the kindergarten teacher. The members of our congregation that served in the consolidated school were Mr. Melvin Schwartz, Mrs. Lydia Schwartz, Mrs. Elizabeth Bolin and Mrs. Eva Hausman.





Did you know -A Christmas program was put on every year. As I recall, it was usually held at St. Paul's in Skokie because they had the largest church. The program varied but almost always included the "Christmas Cantata" - I think I can still sing it almost word for word. We wore red, green or white short "capas" that were made out of cotton percale and cut with a pinking shears.



Did you Know - A hot lunch was available to about 100 students everyday. We had two cooks Mrs. Leona Johnson ("Cookie") and Mrs. Myrtle Lindemann. The mothers of the school children would rotate volunteering to help them with the meals. They ran a tight ship and made sure the children ate all of their lunch. You were often sent back to the table to finish your lunch. The children in the upper grades took turns cleaning the lunchroom after the meal. They had to wash and dry the tables off, sweep the floors and take out the garbage before they could go out for recess.



*Mr. Melvin Schwartz*



Did you know - Mr. Melvin Schwartz (24 years) and Mrs. Anita Boldt (29 years) have the record for the most years teaching at Jerusalem School. Mr. Schwartz is now retired and living in Bristol, WI. and is a member of Faith Lutheran in Antioch, WI. Mrs. Boldt continues to worship with us at Jerusalem.

Many changes were taking place around Jerusalem. The population was growing in Morton Grove and consisted of a more diverse mixture of nationalities. The German language services were no longer needed and were dropped by 1954.

The two- lane bowling alley that stood along the northeast side of the property was razed in 1954. We had a friendly rivalry for many years with our sister congregation, St. Matthews in Niles which also had a bowling alley.

A shaded picnic grove covered the entire eastern half of the church property. It was the site of many church picnics and social gatherings. It was replaced by a gravel parking lot in 1957. The parking lot was paved with blacktop later in the sixties. The parking lot also serves as a playground during school hours.



*Two Lane Bowling Alley*



*Picnic Grove*



## Pastor Heidtke Retires

The Lord has richly blessed us with good and faithful servants. Pastor Otto Heidtke, having been blessed with good health and an active ministry, served our congregation for 49 years before retiring on April 17, 1955 (1906-1955). His ministry was blessed with growth in the membership of the church and the Christian Day School. Upon retirement, Pastor Heidtke moved out of the parsonage and into a house across the street that he had purchased. Blessed with good health, he continued to assist with communion until the age of 91. Although he remained in the congregation, he always made a point of letting the members know that the work of the pastorate was the "new man's job".



*Pastor George W. Boldt*

## Pastor George W. Boldt is Installed

The congregation needed a new pastor. They called George W. Boldt who was serving a parish in Roscoe, SD. He accepted the call and moved into the parsonage with his wife Anita and their four children, Gretchen, Annette, Rachel, and Paul. Pastor Boldt was installed on April 17, 1955 by Pastor Heidtke.

## Wisconsin and Missouri Synods Split

The departure of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod from the firm scriptural position it had once held would also effect our Christian Day School. The consolidated school could no longer exist. St. Paul's of Skokie left the consolidation in 1957 and St. John's of Niles left in 1959. Each of the congregations was able to run their own schools after the division of the synods. The dissolution of the merger was accomplished peacefully and without bitterness.

## Time to Expand

The population of Morton Grove increased from 3,926 in 1950 to 20,253 in 1960. Many new subdivisions were built and people from Chicago were discovering "suburbia". Capulina Avenue had been an oiled gravel street. Now the Edens Expressway was extended to meet Dempster Street. The business center of Morton Grove shifted from the area around the church (Lincoln & Ferris) to Dempster Street and areas west of the river. As Morton Grove grew – our congregation grew.

In 1957 the congregation adopted a new constitution. The name of the church was changed to Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church of Morton Grove, IL. Church membership and attendance increased to the point that we needed to expand our facilities. As the first step in our expansion program, the old parsonage was demolished in 1957 and the present parsonage erected. It was placed on the property in such a way as to accommodate a new church structure which was in the planning stages. While it was under construction, the Boldt family was able to live in the Bolin's home on Georgiana Ave. across the street from the church parking lot.

In 1963, the decision was made to demolish the old church and ground was broken for the new building on May 23, 1963. The cornerstone for the new church, etched with Luther's symbol, was laid on October 27, 1963. A box containing various church items was sealed in it. During the construction of the new church, services were held in the auditorium/stage areas of the school. When the basement/auditorium of the new church was completed, services were moved to the new facility. The old auditorium/stage area was then converted into two classrooms. The school building was rejoined to the new church structure. The total cost was \$251,000. God opened the hearts of the members and the debt was paid in 9 years. During this time the congregation also purchased a teacherage for \$25,000 in 1967.



*Groundbreaking : Al Guenther, Les Butzow, Reverend Boldt,  
Reverend Heidtke & Grandson David*



*Laying Cornerstone, Cliff Mayer,  
Les Butzow and Reverend Boldt*



*Dedication of new church*

The new church was dedicated on June 7, 1964. Rev. Roman Biesman, a son of the congregation, preached at the morning service and Dr. Siegbert Becker, Professor of Religion at Milwaukee Lutheran Teachers College, preached in the afternoon. The stained glass windows from the original church were preserved and installed in the new church. The statue of Christ that was on the altar of the old church was saved and stands in the window at the back of the new sanctuary. The church bell was also preserved and continues to invite people to our services.



Did you know — in the early years, to inform the congregation that someone had died, the church bell would be rung. It would be rung as many times as the age of the person who died. Today, it is rung at the funeral.



Did you know — It was the janitor's job to ring the church bells every Saturday night. Frank Lehman, our janitor for many years, would take his daughters, Janice (Hennig) and Joan (Riha), with him so they could have a "ride on the bell rope". They also helped him clean the classrooms and knew exactly how far to move the desks so the floor could be swept.

Volunteers were filling the need for a church secretary until 1969. As the church grew and Pastor Boldt became busier with synod work, the congregation decided to make it a paid position. Mrs. Ruth Heidtke and Mrs. Louise Hutchinson became the first paid secretaries. Later, the position became full-time and Mrs. Heidtke held that position for 30 years until she retired. After Ruth retired, the position became part-time again. Patty Hennig served as the church secretary 1995- 2001. The present secretary is Laura Ferral.

### Our Ministry Changes in the 1970's

By the late sixties and early seventies, the number of new residents moving to Morton Grove had decreased. The population had reached its peak. Residents liked the village and stayed. Morton Grove is ideally located with convenient access to the expressways and railroad. As a result of the strong demand and short supply of houses, buying a home became too expensive for young families starting out. People migrating from Chicago and the children of the Jerusalem members were moving farther out to other suburbs that were more affordable.

The young people of Jerusalem married and moved to more distant suburbs. These former members became "church planters". As a result, many new congregations were started in the suburbs of Chicago. Jerusalem's "loss" became a gain for the Kingdom of God.

- o Christ the King in Palatine (1969)
- o Abiding Peace in Elgin (1973)
- o Lord and Savior in Crystal Lake (1974)
- o New Life in Lake Zurich (1987)
- o Heritage Lutheran in Lindenhurst (1990)



Did you know — for many years, the boys' basketball teams were invited to participate in a tournament at Northwestern Prep School in Watertown, WI. In 1976 we had about 100 parents and students spend the weekend cheering for the team. We lost the first game by one point to a much larger school.

This put us in the consolation round which we went on to win - a good time was had by all.

This trend resulted in a decline in the enrollment of our elementary school. Jerusalem has always placed a high value on Christian education. The congregation also has a love for missions. In an effort to increase our enrollment and do some mission work, we joined with St. Paul's Lutheran, an Evangelical Lutheran Synod church located in a poor area of Chicago. In 1967 and 1968 we sponsored Vacation Bible School at St. Paul's. Children from St. Paul's and mission prospects were transported to Jerusalem at our expense. We continued this mission effort until 1969, when a change in the pastorate at St. Paul's and transportation problems brought the effort to a close.

The congregation purchased a station wagon in 1977 to provide transportation for members that lived in more distant suburbs. This effort continued until 1980 when the families became too spread out to make transportation time feasible. In 1977, we also added a preschool in an effort to increase enrollment and serve as a mission outreach.

## Pastor Boldt Elected to Synod Positions

In 1972, our Pastor Boldt was elected president of the Southeastern Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Pastor Boldt continued to be re-elected as District President. In addition, in 1974, he was elected second vice-president of the synod and in 1980 was elected first vice-president. As this greatly increased his work load, a need for some assistance was obvious.

## Vicars Become Part of our Ministry

The synod assigned a vicar to assist in the work at Jerusalem. A vicar is a third year seminary student who is called to serve for one year and then returns to the seminary to complete his preparation for the pastoral ministry. Our congregation was blessed to have twelve vicars serve us. They were a great assistance to Pastor Boldt. At the same time, with pastor's guidance, they were able to enhance their studies by experiencing the duties of serving a congregation. Pastor Boldt encouraged them to become active in the congregation and they did. Many members have favorite "vicar stories" to share.



Mark Krueger 1972-73

Twelve Apostles— Twelve Vicars — interesting coincidence...

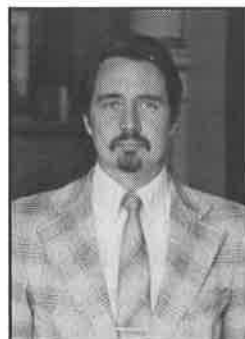
- do you know which vicar set off the fire alarm at the public school while playing basketball?
- do you know the vicar that always said "trust me"?
- do you know the vicar that showed up in cowboy boots on his first day?
- do you know which vicars have served as missionaries in other countries?



Gene Jahnke 1973-74



Joel Schroeder 1974-75



Nathan Pope 1975-76



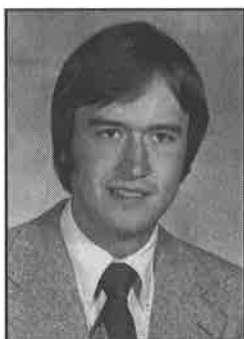
Dennis Kleist 1976-77



Robert Siirila 1977-78



Mark Zarling 1978-79



Michael Woldt 1979-80



Paul Janke 1980-81



David Voss 1981-82



Greg Otterstatter 1982-83



Mark Kolander 1983-84

## Pastor Boldt Is Called to his Heavenly Home

Pastor Boldt was stricken by a heart attack on June 3, 1983 while on church business in Flint, Michigan. Our Heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom, called his servant home on June 10, 1983. A memorial service for Pastor George W. Boldt was held on June 12, 1983 at our church. His death was a tremendous loss to the congregation. Jerusalem had been blessed with his pastorate and family for 28 years. Vicar Greg Otterstatter remained to serve the congregation during this difficult and trying time. Vicar Mark Kolander was assigned to replace Vicar Otterstatter prior to the death of Pastor Boldt. He arrived in September 1983 and served the congregation in absence of a pastor until the new pastor arrived.

## Former Vicar, Dennis Kleist, Accepts The Divine Call

*"For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"(Heb.13:5 )*

After the congregation had extended several calls, Pastor Dennis A. Kleist, of Ft. Myers, Florida, a former vicar at Jerusalem, accepted the call. He was installed as the congregation's fourth resident pastor on January 22, 1984. Pastor Kleist and his wife Rhonda arrived with their three daughters Carrie, Kathryn and Angela and were expecting their fourth child, a son Daniel. After a period of mourning and transition, the congregation was again ready to carry out the Lord's work. Vicar Kolander remained to assist Pastor Kleist until spring when his vicar year was completed.

## Our Membership Has Many Changes

In the early years, Morton Grove and our congregation consisted mostly of people of the German/European ancestry. During the late 1970's and early 1980's our congregation experienced a decline in membership. In 1975, Jerusalem numbered 739 souls and 575 communicants. By 1980, we numbered 590 souls and 495 communicants, a 20% decline. Many of the younger members were moving to other more affordable suburbs. At the same time, many of our long-time members were called to their heavenly home. By 1982, Jerusalem reached its lowest communicant membership since 1956. In 1983, it reached its lowest soul membership since 1955, the first year records are available for this figure. By 1985, the congregation numbered 611 souls and 509 communicants.

In the early 1980's, a new wave of migration from Chicago was beginning. The homes were being purchased by people of non-European ancestry (30%-50%). Our community saw an influx of Japanese, Indian, Korean and Filipino residents. Morton Grove was becoming a multi-national community. We needed to reach out to these souls.

In 1986, the congregation decided to make a special effort to expand it's ministry. The effort was called "Reaching In". It provided funds for redecorating the classrooms (1987) and playground equipment (1988). It also provided for a stronger media ministry to inform the community where we are located and what our church and school are about.

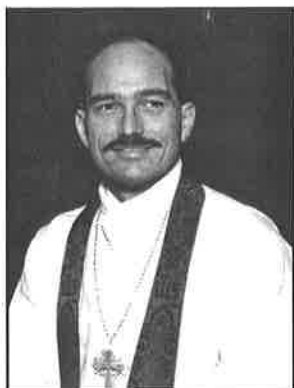
In 1987, the congregation revised its constitution, adding a mission statement. A Board of Stewardship, a Board of Evangelism and a Long Range Planning Committee were also added.

The school also addressed the changing needs of the community by adding an after school care ministry available to all the children attending Jerusalem Lutheran School. The congregation issued a one-year call to Pastor Timothy Mutterer as a "shared time pastor" to lay the ground work for a new mission in Chicago.

As we approached the 90's, our "new" facilities were almost 30 years old. The organ needed to be rebuilt at a cost of \$40,000 +. A new roof was put on the church and parsonage. The

parking lot was repaved. In 1990, a careful review was done of the membership and accurate figures showed a membership of 572 souls and 452 communicants.

## Pastor Radunzel is Called to Serve



*Reverend Steven J Radunzel*

In January 1991, St. James Lutheran Church of Evanston, a very small WELS congregation of under 20 souls worshipping on the Northwestern University campus, announced the retirement of its pastor. After consulting with Jerusalem church, a call was extended to Pastor Steven Radunzel who would spend approximately one half of his time serving St. James congregation. He would spend the other half of his time serving Jerusalem as Pastor of Nurture focusing on family ministry and nurture. Pastor Kleist would continue to serve as senior pastor concentrating on Inreach and Outreach. Pastor Radunzel continued his service to us until accepting a call to Immanuel Lutheran in Waukegan, Il. in the fall of 1996.

By the end of the year, Bible studies were held regularly in homes and at church and plans were made to improve our ministry to inactive members. Before Christmas of 1991, Jerusalem made its greatest outreach effort to date. In conjunction with a synod effort, over 4,000 souls were reached via door hangers and many more by local billboards, cable and network TV publicity. Christmas Eve attendance was the highest in 14 years.

## Jerusalem Continues to Serve the Synod

In keeping with its love for missions, our congregation continued to serve our synod's mission work through Pastor Kleist. With the congregation's blessing, Pastor Kleist served on our Southeastern Wisconsin District Mission Board from 1985-1998, serving as its chairman for the final two years. In this way, the congregation helped to start missions in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Kentucky. In 1996, the congregation also permitted Pastor Kleist to travel to India for three weeks to assist in training national pastors in this new mission field. The members of Jerusalem assisted their fellow Christians at Heritage Lutheran in Lindenhurst in a personal way when they offered a gift of \$10,000 to their building fund, and an additional gift of \$5,000 as part of the congregation's 100th anniversary celebration.

## Early Learning Center Opens



In an effort to "reach out" to our community, in August 1992, the congregation opened the Precious Child Early Learning Center and Extended Care for 3 and 4 year old children. Miss Vicki (Johnson) Pfursich was called as the director. A new play area was constructed on the former Lippstruer property just north of the parking lot. The property and the playground equipment were generous gifts from members of the congregation. The combined enrollment of the learning center and school approached 70.



Did you know – "Candy Lady Park" is named after Shirley Guenther who has been handing out candy after church to the children of the congregation for many years.

## Pastor Kleist is Vacancy Pastor for St. Matthews

In 1999, the pastor of our sister church in Niles, St. Matthews, accepted a call leaving the congregation without a pastor. Pastor Kleist was asked to serve as vacancy pastor. The vacancy lasted for over a year. Needless to say, our pastor was very busy. We were blessed to have many guest preachers on Sundays to help ease the load for pastor. Pastor Larry Ellenberger of Wisconsin, was a frequent visitor on Sunday mornings. By the grace of God, Pastor Nathan Cordes accepted the call from St. Matthews in the spring of 2001. This is just one example of the spirit of cooperation and support which exists between the two congregations since Jerusalem's founding.

## The New Millennium

Just about the time pastor thought he would have time on his hands, our principal and 7th and 8th grade teacher and our 1st and 2nd grade teacher received and accepted calls to other congregations. The congregation called Mrs. Dina Naumann, wife of our 3rd thru 5th grade teacher, to fill the position of 1st and 2nd grade teacher. She accepted the call. We called several teachers from the field for the principal's position but all were declined. We received a temporary teacher, Miss Lynn Bigelow, for one year from the graduating class at New Ulm. Mr. Michael Naumann, our 3rd and 4th grade teacher, accepted the call to serve as principal.

Our close relationship with our sister congregation St. Matthews in Niles continues. The pastors frequently exchange pulpits especially during the Advent and Lenten seasons. Our schools combine students to make up teams for school sports. The teams then compete with other Lutheran schools in the area. The pastors and students of both schools also participate in the Good Friday services held at Jerusalem.

As more and more families have two working parents, we see a need to expand our school again. We have had many requests for all day kindergarten. The congregation has approved establishing a full time Kindergarten teaching position for the year 2002-2003.

As we enter the new millennium, our congregation continues to reach out to our changing community. At the time of this writing, the population of Morton Grove is almost 30% Asians, with many being recent immigrants. Through personal Bible study with Pastor Kleist, a Korean pastor, Pastor Young Ha Kim, decided to enter the seminary of our sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and became the first Korean ELS/WELS pastor.

The entire section of Morton Grove in the vicinity of Lehigh Ave. and Ferris Ave. is slated for significant redevelopment. Whoever our new neighbors will be and wherever they come from, we will be "spreading the Word" and inviting the "new folks in town" to our church.



Currently our congregation consists of 470 souls and 381 communicant members. The school has an enrollment of 57 (PreK- 8th grade). Our Sunday School, which has been a part of our ministry since the congregation was organized, averages 36 children each week. Our church is the oldest church in Morton Grove. Our day school is currently the only Christian Day School serving the community.

What the future holds for our congregation - only our Lord knows. We do know that He wants us to continue to spread His Word. After 100 years, we give thanks and praise for our past and have faith in the future. With faith in God's promise "My Word will not return to Me empty"(Isaiah 55:11), our congregation moves forward to increase it's ministry. May the Lord continue to richly bless our work.



"To God Be The Glory"

## Pictures of Old Church, School & Parsonage



*Old Parsonage*



*Altar of old Church*



*Interior of Old Church Stained Glass Windows and Curved Pews*



*Old auditorium also used as the lunchroom for the school*



*Classroom in the basement of the old church*

## Recent Pictures of Church, School, Parsonage & Teacherage



*Teacherage at 8641 Fernald*



*Interior of the church at Christmas*



*Parsonage*



*Classroom*



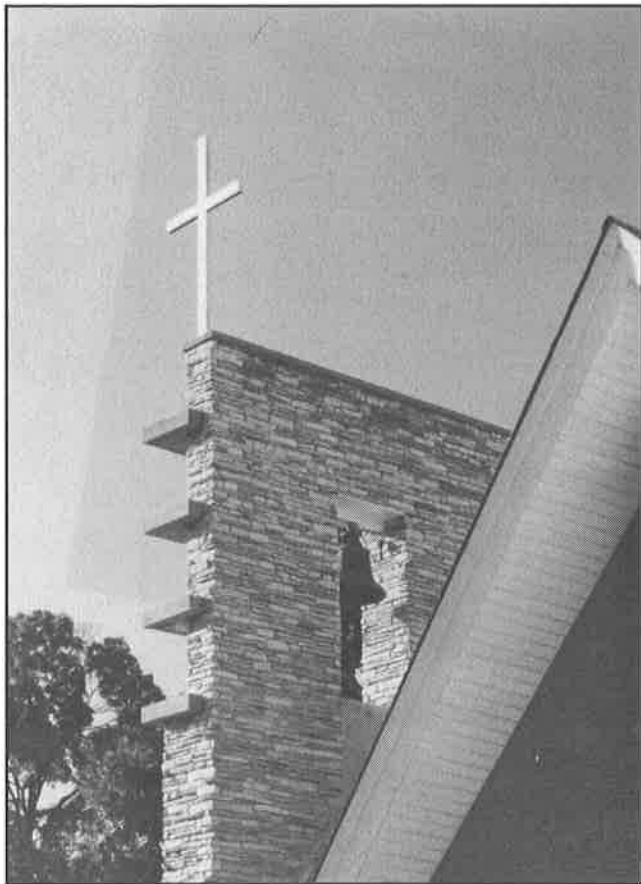
*Teacherage at 8700 Fernald*



*Anniversary Banner*



*Church and School Building*



*Belltower - the bell was preserved from the old church*



*New Church Sign*

STATE OF ILLINOIS, )  
COUNTY OF COOK. ) SS.

I, Julius H. Geweke, do solemnly swear that at an organization meeting of and for the organization of an Evangelical Lutheran church, held at the Village hall of the Village of Morton Grove, in the County of Cook and State of Illinois, on the 5th day of July, 1902, for that purpose, the following persons were elected Trustees: Ludwig Freier, Henry Budde and Fred Dilg, according to the rules and usages of the churches of the "Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States." And there adopted the corporate name of said church, "Evangelical Lutheran Jerusalem Church (Gemeinde) of Morton Grove, Illinois. And at this meeting this affiant was ~~elected and~~ <sup>consecrated</sup> as Secretary.

Subscribed and sworn to  
before me, this 12th day  
of July, A. D. 1902.



*Wade Garfield*  
Notary Public

Gegründet  
in der  
**Village Halle**  
zu  
**Morton Grove**  
am 5. Juli A. D. 1902.

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**Gemeinde-Ordnung**  
der  
Evangelisch-Lutherischen  
**Jerusalem Gemeinde**  
zu  
Morton Grove, Cook Co., Ill.  
angenommen  
am 27. Juli A. D. 1902.

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I. Einleitung.

Wir — dankbar zu unserem lieben, allmächtigen Gott für alle geistlichen und leiblichen Gaben, die Er uns verliehen, und alle Thaten, die Er an uns gethan, — um auch in und vor der Welt ein besseres Bündnis zu haben, ordnen diese Ordnung für unsere Gemeinde, die den Namen: Evangelisch-Lutherische Jerusalem Gemeinde in Morton Grove, Cook Co., Ill. haben soll.