

## Calvary History, 1960-69 Decade 5

The Married Couples got “hitched” again, the church ladies whipped up a cookbook as a successful fundraiser, and Calvary Lutheran Church held its very first Yard Sale, netting \$315 and creating a tradition that would continue for decades.

It was the era of the 1960’s, which began with a pastoral vacancy and ended with a momentous 50th Anniversary Celebration for the congregation.

Perhaps most notably, this period was marked by an historic merger that created the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). In 1960, four Lutheran church bodies agreed to come together to work more effectively in service to God: The Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church (to which Calvary belonged); the American Evangelical Lutheran Church; the United Lutheran Church in America; and the Suomi (Finnish) Lutheran Church. It would take two years to fully implement the changes, including establishing a church hierarchy, ratifying new church constitutions prepared for congregations, and developing new LCA educational materials for Sunday Schools. At its inception, the LCA was the largest Lutheran church body in the U.S. With the merger, Calvary became part of the newly created Illinois Synod (Rock Island-Galesburg District) of the LCA. And the Calvary Board of Administration, our church’s governing entity, would thereafter be known as the Calvary Church Council.



Rev. Paul Hegstrom

It was the Rev. Paul L. Hegstrom who would lead the church into this new era. He joined Calvary in August of 1960, and in his very first annual report to the congregation, chose to focus on the need for greater support for the Synod and its various missions. Truth be told, Calvary did not have a

good track record when it came to paying its fair share to fund the work of the greater Church and its outreach. The Rev. Hegstrom found that both embarrassing and troubling, especially since Calvary’s members were very mission-minded in the early years. He blamed this lack of support on two factors: the church’s considerable debt load and the “low level of giving” among some parishioners.

“‘Token giving’ of quarters and half-dollars to the Lord’s work, will never make us a great church in the sight of either God or men,” Hegstrom wrote. “Eleven cents per member per week was all we could scrape together for missions and benevolences in 1961,” he stated, adding that the members should be giving three times that amount in order to meet the suggested benevolence figure.

Apparently little had improved by the following year, as Hegstrom hit on this again in his 1962 annual report (and each subsequent year during his short tenure): “The day is long since past, when Calvary was a little mission, which had to ask for help,” he wrote. “We are now a congregation of such size and stability, that there can be no excuse for defaulting on our rightful obligations for the Lord’s work, in our own country and overseas.”

Things started to turn around a bit by 1964, as the congregation made a concerted effort to retire its debt. After owing \$9,000 just a few years earlier, Calvary was able to eliminate its debt on the parsonage, according to Hegstrom’s report. And the church made its largest ever contribution to mission work—some \$5,000, but still considerably short of the goal.

In addition to his strong rhetoric on tithing, Hegstrom also had a few things to say about those who “steal sheep” from mainline congregations to start other ministries. In the October 1964 newsletter, Hegstrom wrote: “... infiltrators or spies from such groups will join a church for a few years to make friends whom they then try to take with them into their cult!” He goes on to say: “Sheep-stealing and cattle-rustling were considered a serious offense, worthy of death, in the Old West. How much more serious is it not, when someone plays with immortal souls, and tries to get them to renounce the confirmation vows made before the Altar of God?”

But not all was gloom and doom in that day. For instance, the decade saw several improvements to the church property. The annex, which had housed Sunday School classes, was removed in 1962 (its condition had been deteriorating and it was no longer deemed safe). The church accommodated the students in the main structure by dividing the Sunday School by age, with some groups meeting at 9:30 and others at 10:45 (they later changed it to 9:30 Sunday School only, with a 10:45 service). With the annex gone, the congregation set about beautifying the grounds on the south side of the church. Members put in a new parking area, fencing, sidewalks and a

garden. The following year, two additional lots to the south were purchased for more parking. "Art glass" windows were also added to the sanctuary, primarily through memorial gifts.

In 1965, a record flood hit the Quad-City area. One Calvary family displaced by the Mississippi's



Picture shows Campbells Island (lower left) and Watertown during 1965 flood. The small white specks are roof tops

raging waters accepted the Church Council's invitation to stay at the church as long as needed. Mr. and Mrs. Marion Walker and their three children, whose house on Campbell's Island suffered flood damage that May, took the room off the kitchen as their temporary home. In addition, it was reported that many young people of the church helped with sandbagging efforts along the river.

Participation in church organizations during the 1960s remained strong. When the Calvary Lutheran Church Women were accepted into membership in the LCA's Lutheran Church Women, there were 120 members participating in seven established "units." To raise money, the Church Women created and sold 500 cookbooks in 1965, and set a goal of getting a new piano with King Korn stamps. (Grocery stores and other businesses would give away these "trading stamps" with each sale, and consumers then glued them into special books and redeemed the stamps for everything from sporting goods to furniture.) It was music to their ears when the Calvary ladies were able to reach their goal in just three months (no mention of how many books it took).

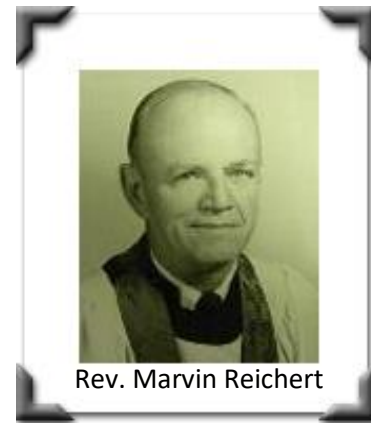


Mrs. Gerald Hunt, son Ricky, Scoutmaster, Charles Warner and father

The church's Boy Scout Troop #164 fledged its first two Eagle Scout Award winners in 1966, soon to be joined by four more. The Married Couples renewed their vows at a

special ceremony, and held a "modern" square dance, a box social, and a program on Sleep Teaching," to name a few. And the Luther Leaguers danced at a Hootenanny, held "Kidnapping Breakfast," and set up their own coffee houses. They also formed the Luther League Choir, practicing before meetings.

Calvary would have the Rev. Hegstrom at the helm for only six years. In June of 1966 he accepted a call to Chicago, and that September, the Rev. Marvin C. Reichert became pastor. The Reichert's moved into a parsonage at 2709 16<sup>th</sup> Ave., Moline, that was remodeled during the vacancy at a cost of over \$8,000. At that point, Calvary's membership stood at 747, with average attendance around 282.



Rev. Marvin Reichert

A good sermonizer, Reichert would, unfortunately, be plagued by health problems during his tenure here. In his 1968 report, he expressed "deep appreciation" for the kindnesses and prayers offered to him while he was hospitalized and recuperating from surgery. He thanked Pastor Bohman, who had served the congregation in his absence, and shared his regret that for "the first time in 30 years" he had missed Easter services.

Reichert kept his annual reports short, focusing primarily on the wonderful way the congregation had embraced him and his family. But in newsletters (his section was dubbed "Parson to Person"), he would touch on the need to attend worship faithfully and give generously to the church. The March 15, 1966 "Messenger" states: "Even above our concern for the precarious financial condition of the church, is our concern for members who perpetually starve their souls, and rob the church of their fellowship, by their absence (which is also indicated by the blank spaces in the Financial Secretary's records). Come and worship with us regularly! The CH-RCH needs 'U' and you need the church."

Calvary still carried a debt of around \$23,000 when it concluded its fifth decade. But there were plenty of reasons to celebrate the congregation's 50 years in mission in the Highland area, and the church members went all out.

Reichert was optimistic that Calvary would continue in service to God's people for many years to come. In his 1969 report, he wrote: "As we begin the second half of our first century let us evidence the same spirit of confidence and an increased zeal for the work to which our Blessed Lord and Savior has called us."

Various Tidbits from the Newsletters of the 60's

From June 1961 .....

Our best wishes follow Mr. and Mrs. Don Carlson, as they on July 1 take over the operation of Flowerland on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, which they recently purchased. In addition to providing floral arrangements for weddings, funerals, banquets, etc., house plants and cut flowers for every occasion, ceramic and metal flower holders, they will have a complete line of greeting cards.

From October 1961 ....

The softball team finished the season with 3<sup>rd</sup> place in tournament play and 5<sup>th</sup> place in league play. Total record: won 6 and lost 7. Co-managers Warren Strandlund and Dale Winter and the entire team wish to thank everyone who attended the games and especially the ALCW, who sewed the letters on our team shirts, and the Churchmen, who sponsored the team.

From March 1963.....

"Amazing" is the only word for it! We refer to the fine cooperation shown the first two days of this week. A simple announcement by the pastor brought a horde of people to the chancel on Sunday after the services; they removed the sacred vessels from the altar, as well as the paraments from the lectern, altar and pulpit, the altar rail and the altar itself, in preparation for this week's big painting job. It was all done so quietly and with such dispatch, that we stood with mouth agape at this practical demonstration of "togetherness" in action.

The second evidence of cooperation involved the members of the Church Council and their families, who willingly gave up other plans for Sunday afternoon, thus enabling almost all members of the board to attend a very special meeting of about 300 Church Councilmen in Galesburg.

On Monday, the scaffolding was erected, as a prelude to the week-long painting task. A "bee-hive of activity" would be an apt description of the chancel area by 7 o'clock on Monday evening. At least three men were on each of four staging levels, painting, so it was possible to apply two coats over an extensive area that night. On Tuesday evening there was again a large group of men on hand to continue the painting project.

From March 1964....

About \$60 is needed for each window in the nave, those in the balcony will cost a bit more, but the windows in the narthex will be considerably less. A new design has been created by our artist, David Lund, using smaller panes of glass, eliminating symbols, and utilizing a more pleasing combination of colors than those tried experimentally on the east side of the church. (The final cost was \$65/window)

From October 20, 1965....

Mrs. Norman Mudd, a new neighbor, who communed with us on World Communion Sunday, was last week blessed with twins; she is a member of First Lutheran Church in Rock Island.

From January 12, 1966....

The ladies of our church, decided to something about meeting the need for at least one good piano. They discovered that it would take less than 300 King Korn Stamp books to get a new Kimball piano, and they said "WE WILL DO IT!" Someone from the LCW will be in the narthex, on Sunday mornings between the services, to receive your contributions of filled King Korn books, for the new piano at church.

From February 15, 1966....

YOU Don't have to be a member of Calvary's Lutheran Church Women, to contribute toward the new church piano. We know that many men, who trade at Tom Kongerslev's Standard Station, would have some King Korn stamps in the glove compartment of their cars. Bring them to the lady in the Narthex next Sunday, who will welcome your contribution for the cause. Keep the stamps and filled books coming!

From May 3, 1966....

The New Piano has been ordered and should be delivered within a couple of week. A few more filled King Korn stamp books are still needed to complete the "payment".

Calvary church Ladies must have LOVED King Korn Stamps, as you will see from the next snippet from 1967....

From the Annual Report of 1967....

Our projects for the coming year are to buy choir robes for the Senior Choir and collect King Korn stamps for chairs for the pastor's study. A box has been placed in the narthex of the church where you may leave the stamp books and donations for choir robes can be given to the pastor, any officer of the LCW, or left at the church office. (There is no further mention whether he ladies met their goal for chairs but can only assume they did.)

From September 1968....

#### YOU THINK YOU GOT TROUBLES.

How Would You Like to Have GOD's Problems?

1. Severe shortage of help.
2. High rate of absenteeism.
3. Poorly trained workers.
4. Failure of workers to report for instruction and schooling.
5. Failure of workers to follow the instruction and advice they receive.
6. Many who could do better are indifferent and refuse to do so.
7. Poor company loyalty. When someone knocks the company few will defend it. Some of the workers spend part of their time promoting the competitor's products.
8. Refusal on the part of many of the workers to talk to the owner unless they want something, and after he gives it to them, they don't even say thanks.
9. Many feel they are entitled to all the fringe benefits even though they seldom report for work.
10. The entire community wants to get in on the retirement plan even though many have contributed little or nothing to it.

To top it all off, you couldn't work for a nicer person and business is going to the devil.

From November 1969... 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Luther League hosted the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House on November 23. The girls baked cookies to serve for refreshments.

The Church Board met on November 11, 1969 at the church. Dr. Richard Gilson reported for the Anniversary committee that all plans are nearly completed, and passed out anniversary booklets to members. (Cost \$1.00 each.) Mrs. Larry Ruud reported she has approx. 191 reservations for the banquet.