

## **Pastor Jack Hill**

### **1967 - 1989**

The Rev. John “Jack” Herman Hill of First Lutheran Church in Lead, South Dakota, began serving Immanuel in June of 1967 on a temporary basis. The congregation voted to call Pastor Hill as pastor of Immanuel on June 23, 1968.

Pastor Hill was a graduate of Suomi Theological Seminary in Hancock, Michigan. He was ordained in 1951 by the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (commonly known as the Suomi Synod). He married Carol Norma Karjala in 1942. Pastor Hill served congregations in Waukegan, Illinois, and Wing, North Dakota, before being called to serve First Lutheran Church in Lead and Cave Hills Evangelical Lutheran Church, north of Buffalo, South Dakota, in 1959.

He began leading worship at Immanuel on a weekly basis in June of 1967. Bulletins for the following year listed Pastor Hill as “officiant” rather than “pastor.” The congregation voted to call Pastor Hill as pastor of Immanuel in June of 1968. Bulletins did not refer to Pastor Hill as pastor of Immanuel until after his formal installation as pastor on July 21, 1968.

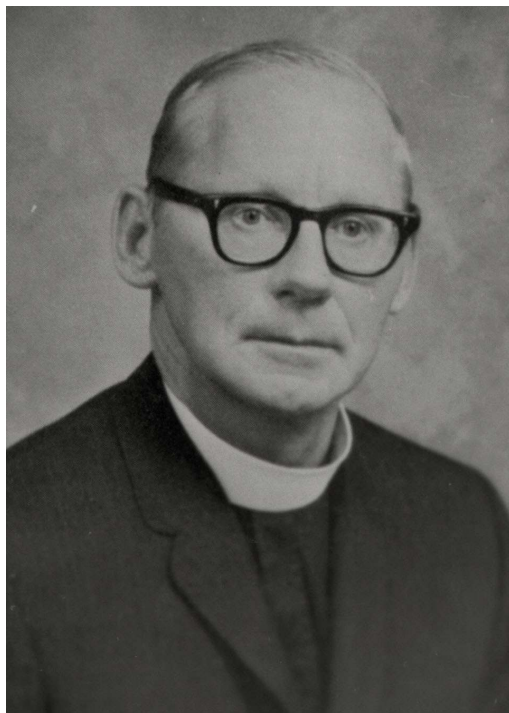
Working with Pastor Hill began a relationship with the congregations he served — First Lutheran Church in Lead and Cave Hills Evangelical Lutheran Church north of Buffalo, South Dakota. It also meant leaving The American Lutheran Church and joining the Lutheran Church in America.

A joint meeting of the Church Councils from Immanuel and First Lutheran Church in Lead was held on Sunday, June 18, 1967, to discuss joining together as a parish. The minutes report:

*The Whitewood Council met with the Lead Church Council at Whitewood.*

*The Lead Congregation approved a 90-day trial period and gave the council its approval to act as it sees fit in sharing their minister with us.*

*Pastor Hill will spend one day a week in the congregation and special services such as funerals, weddings, etc.*



***Pastor Jack Hill***  
***1924-2006***

*In the event Whitewood agrees to share Lead's minister after the 90-day trial period, the Lead Congregation would consider a time change for services. ...*

*Lead uses a three-part envelope — one for church, one for benevolence, one for building fund — and never raids the treasury of another fund. It has worked quite well.*

*The salary Pastor Hill would receive with the additional revenue from Whitewood would be above the average of the Synod and would have a much better chance of getting a minister if the need arose.*

A special meeting of the Immanuel congregation was held on Sunday, June 25, "to discuss the parish association with First Lutheran Church of Lead," the worship bulletins for June 11 and June 18 reported.

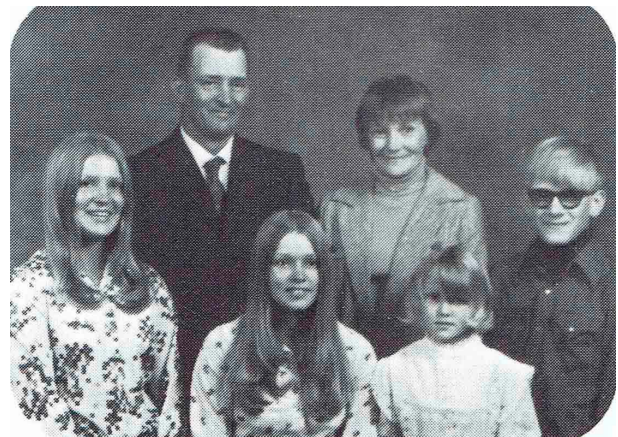
The congregation voted unanimously to continue the relationship with Lead at the June 25, 1967, meeting. The congregation also gave the "council approval to act as they see fit in making this a two-parish congregation." The congregation also "discussed the differences of the ALC and the LCA and the possibility of joining the LCA."

"The need of a bell tower was again brought up and the possibility of using the memorial fund to finance it was suggested" at the meeting.

The council asked John Grimsbo and Lloyd Loughlin to build cabinets in the church at a July 6, 1967, meeting. The cabinets were built by the September meeting. "Cost of material was about \$24, cost of labor about \$75, both material and labor were donated to the church. A very fine piece of work and donation on their part," the minutes reported.



*Merlyn Aker (1935-1992) and Darlene Aker, Deb, Cindy, Alan and Scott. Merlyn served as president in 1974 and 1985. He served on Church Council for 10 years between 1974 and 1986. Darlene was Ladies Aid treasurer 1986-1987.*



*Guy Balo (1932-2020) and Ilene Balo (1937-1992), Katherine, Kyla, Lonuld and Sherri. Guy served as president for five years 1975, 1977-1979, 1986. He served on Church Council for nine years from 1973 to 1986. Ilene was president of the Ladies Aid 1984-1987 and treasurer 1976-1983 and 1989-1992. Ilene also taught Sunday School and was Sunday School Superintendent in 1978.*



The council also asked John Sogge to get an estimate on a bell tower. The bell tower would continue to be a topic of discussion at meetings of the council and congregation until it was finally built in 1975.

The congregation celebrated the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in 1967. Pastor Hill was authorized to use some material from the LCA honoring the anniversary and “a special collection would be taken up and given to some mission or charity of the council’s choice.”

The two Church Councils met together again on Tuesday, September 12, 1967, with the Rev. Dr. E. O. Gilbertson, president of the South Dakota District of The American Lutheran Church, and the Rev. Dr. Walter E. Carlson, president of the Red River Valley Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. “The purpose of the meeting was to acquaint the two congregations with the legal steps necessary to become a two parish congregation with the LCA,” the minutes reported and listed these steps:

*The first step is to frame a letter asking to be released from the ALC before their executive meeting in November, then it could be brought up for consideration at their annual meeting of the ALC in May.*

- 2. Draft a letter asking for admission into the LCA.*
- 3. Draw the proposed change in amendments to conform with the LCA.*
- 4. Charter change.*



***Martha Rapp (1920-1997) served as Ladies Aid President 1980-1983 and Vice President 1976-1979.***



***Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rotenberger. Richard served on Church Council 1971-1973.***

5. *Proposal with Lead to call minister.*

6. *Benevolence support to mission.*

7. *Agreements with Lead Parish.*

*The Whitewood Congregation will continue to send their benevolence to the ALC mission board until the end of the fiscal year which ends Jan. 31, 1968, and then send their benevolence to the LCA whose fiscal year ends Dec. 31.*

*The LCA has their annual meeting in April so we cannot be accepted by them until the ALC releases us in May. Our admission to the LCA cannot be finalized until May of 1968.*

The special congregational meeting on September 24, 1967, authorized the sending of a letter asking that Immanuel be dismissed from The American Lutheran Church.

Immanuel was received into the Red River Valley Synod of the Lutheran Church in America at the synod's convention in April of 1968.

A filmstrip projector was purchased in 1967. Film strips were a popular way of teaching at the time and many Bible story filmstrips were available.

Attempts were made in 1968 to try to construct a record book of pastoral acts such as baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals. The January 4, 1968, minutes record that "the secretary is to contact Pastor Gilbertson and Pastor Ziebarth and ask for the ministerial acts performed in the church and also check to see what ministerial acts Pastor Grote performed in Whitewood." Immanuel's records of ministerial acts appear to have been constructed about this time. All of the pastoral acts prior to 1965 appear to be in the same handwriting. It appears that the lists of pastoral acts were obtained from the records at Grace Lutheran Church in Sturgis. The earliest recorded baptisms are from 1928 when Immanuel and Grace became a parish.



***John LaVoy Jr. (1927-2020) and Ida "Lois" LaVoy (1930-2008) and family. John served as treasurer 1970-1975. He also served on Church Council 1968-1977.***



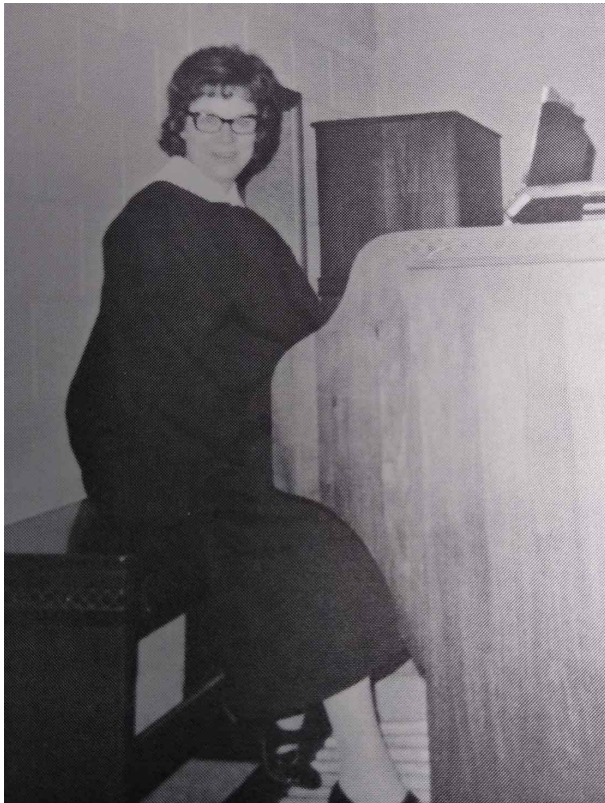
***Becky and Jim Waterson and family. Becky served as congregational secretary 1979-1980. Jim served on Church Council 1974-1976 and 1979-1981. He was president in 1976.***



Unfortunately, all of the pastoral acts from 1928 to 1933 are mistakenly attributed to Pastor Orlando M. Skindrud who came in 1933 rather than Pastor Irvin A. Suby who served Immanuel 1928-1933. None of the pastoral acts from 1921 to 1927 when Immanuel was served by pastors from Lead are included in Immanuel's record book. A new record book of pastoral acts was created in 1991 by Pastor Bill Behrend. The typed reports from Pastor Ziebarth are still a part of the records as separate pages and included in the record book.

A special meeting of the congregation was held following worship on Sunday, June 23, 1968, and voted to call Pastor Hill as pastor of Immanuel. Immanuel agreed to pay him \$1,800 per year plus a \$600 car allowance. The congregation also agreed to pay 12 percent of base pay toward Pastor Hill's pension and to allow three weeks of vacation. First Lutheran Church agreed to an annual salary of \$4,460 plus \$300 as a car allowance. First Lutheran agreed to furnish a parsonage and pay all utilities on the parsonage and to pay 8 percent of salary into the LCA pension fund.

Pastor Hill was installed as pastor of Immanuel on Sunday, July 21, 1968, by the Rev. Dr. Walter E. Carlson, president of the Red River Valley Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. 105 people attended the worship service that day.



*Angela Sedig (1918-2009) was organist and choir director for many years. Angie began playing the organ at Immanuel in 1966 and served as an organist for the congregation until 2000.*

The worship schedule for Immanuel was set at 9 a.m. September through May and at 10:30 a.m. June through August. First Lutheran had the early service in summer and the later service during the school year. That same schedule continued for many years.

In 1970, the congregation considered building a cry room in the sanctuary. A special meeting of the congregation was called to



*Stanley Sedig (1918-1975) and Angela Sedig (1918-2009), Norman and Timothy.*



***Confirmation 1968. Front row, from left: Roxie Lehi, Alan Blomberg, Dianne Lenerville, Wanda Ridley, Donna Carlson. Back row: Pastor Hill, Rose Lee, Carolyn Loughlin, Jeff Westberg, Andy Ridley.***

consider the possibility. The cry room proved controversial. Those bringing the plans for the cry room reported that all of the cost of materials and labor would be donated. The congregational meeting voted 25-13 in favor of the cry room “provided no money is taken from the congregation’s general fund ... or memorial fund.” The materials were purchased and donated, but the cry room was never built. A cry room was included in the plans for the addition a decade later.

A joint pictorial directory was produced in 1970 for Immanuel and First Lutheran Church.

Immanuel celebrated its 50th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of the new church building in 1971. A history booklet was published for the anniversary celebration. Many of the photos on the next pages are from the centennial booklet.

A new organ was purchased in 1973 at a cost of \$2,496. \$700 of the cost was financed.



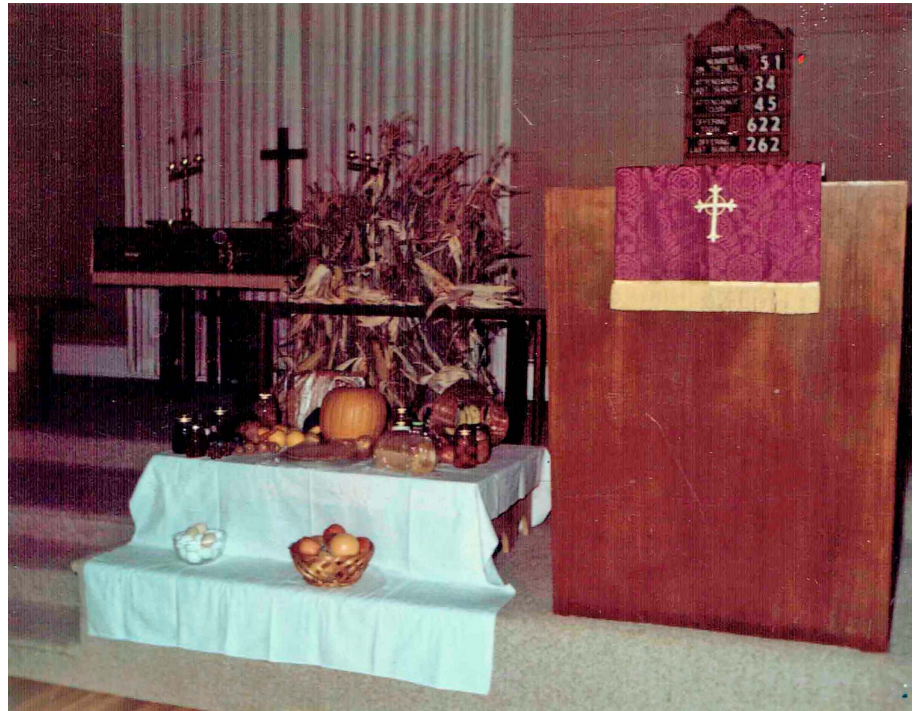


*Youth led a Tenebrae service during Holy Week of 1970.*



## Thanksgiving

*Thanksgiving displays were created by Betty Kymala starting in 1971. Congregational members were encouraged to bring items for the display that were then given as a gift to Pastor Hill. The tradition of a Thanksgiving display has continued since then.*







*Junior Choir in 1971, front row, from left: Gregory Schoon, Diane Hendrickson, Pamela Bertch, Veronica Schoon. Second row: Corinne Hannah, Cheryl Hetland, Holly Zwingelberg, Cathy Heinrich, Heidi Zwingelberg, Julie Heinrich. Back row: Andy Hetland, Josh Britton, Brenda Loughlin, LaVera O'Dea, Charlene Ingraham, Pamela Richter, Jolene Hannah.*



*Youth Choir in 1970, front row, from left: Charlotte Wanhanen, Peggy LaVoy, Laura Sogge, Jim Ingraham. Back row: Tracy Britton, Angie Sedig, Sandy Barnett, Dorothy Hendrickson, Tim Sedig, Renee Loughlin, Janice Wanhanen, Kyla Balo.*





*Ladies Aid in 1971. Front row, from left: Elizabeth Loughlin, Lela Rittberger, Angie Sedig, Lois LaVoy, Pat Cottrill, Millie Westberg. Second row: Mrs. Getty, Alona Westberg, Alice Wanhanen, Doris Richter, Katrina Jensen, Helen Fager, Betty Kymala, Maime Hannah, Myrtle Loughlin, Martha Rapp.*



*Members of the 1970 Church Council, from left, Waino Wanhanen, Millie Westberg, Ralph Lane, John LaVoy Jr., Wendelyn Richter, Sally O'Dea and Tony Westberg.*





*Sunday School class in 1971, front row, from left: Lenny Cottrill, Perry Westberg, Matthew O'Dea. Second row: Agnes Sogge, Veronica Schoon. Third row: Gregory Schoon, Keith Sogge, Lee Ann Cottrill, Neil Sogge. Back row: Martha Rapp, Alice Wanhanen.*



*Sunday School class in 1971, front row, from left: Vera Waterson, Holly Zwingelberg, Pamela Richter, Pamela Bertsch. Second row: Mike Richter, Rick Cottrill, Richard LaVoy, Brenda Loughlin.*





*Sunday School class in 1971, front row, from left: Rick Zwingelberg, Charlotte Wanhanen, Diane Boe, Jim Ingraham. Second row: Delbert Loughlin, Tim Sedig, Scott Littleton. Back row: Larry Wanhanen.*



*Luther League in 1971. Front row, from left: Rick Heinrich, Jim Ingraham, Rick Zwingelberg. Second row: Tracy Britton, Dorothy Hendrickson, Wanda Loughlin, Laura Sogge, Charlotte Wanhanen, Pam Hale, Peggy LaVoy. Third row: Carolyn Loughlin, Becky Britton, Janice Wanhanen, Barbara Lee, Julie Zwingelberg, Donna Hendrickson, Renee Loughlin, Randy O'Dea, Janelle Zwingelberg. Back row: David Zwingelberg, Tim Sedig, Marty O'Dea, Bud Hannah, Delbert Loughlin.*





*Worship on Easter Sunday 1971*



*Donald Ryther (1929-2007) and Evelyn Ryther and family. Don served on Church Council 1976-1978. Evelyn was Ladies Aid secretary and treasurer, Sunday School Superintendent and a regular Sunday School teacher.*

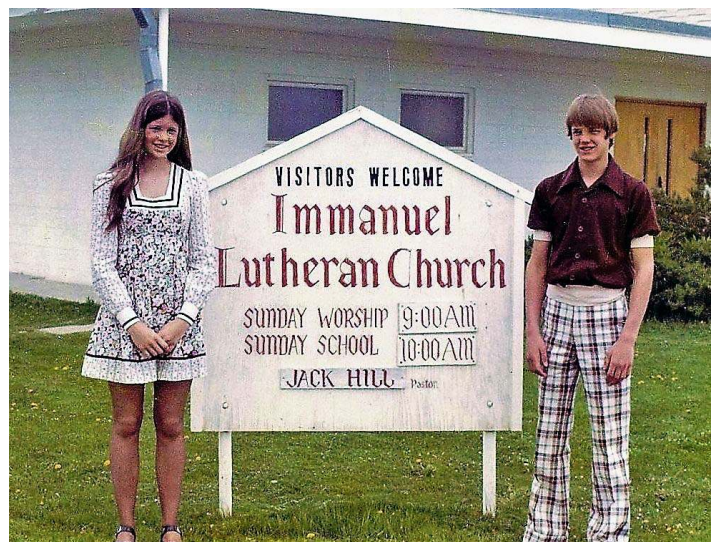


*Ron and Barb Pierce and family. Ron served on Church Council 1981-1983. Barb was a regular Sunday School teacher.*





*Confirmation 1974. Front row, from left: Brenda Loughlin, Mary Quail, Linda Molstad, Pastor Hill. Back row: Donald Cottrill, Ricky Cottrill, Allen Heinrich, Richard LaVoy, Daniel Quail.*



*Mary Quail and Daniel Quail pose with church sign in 1974.*





***Burning of church mortgage on October 5, 1975. Pictured are, from left, John LaVoy, John Trohkimoinen, Guy Balo, Pastor Hill, and Pastor Lloyd Zaudtke, assistant to the bishop of the Red River Valley Synod of the LCA.***

A church newsletter in April 1973 had these significant announcements:

*The church has bought a new Baldwin Church Organ, according to a decision of the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. The instrument was purchased from the Plummer Piano & Organ Company in Rapid City. Indebtedness on the organ is \$1,700.00, and everyone is invited to help out with this obligation!*

*Special Thanks to the Whitewood Post & Pole Co. (the Glen Westberg, Gerald Westberg and Tony Westberg families) for obtaining the lots east of the church and presenting them as a gift to the congregation!*

*Special Thanks to Albert Grimsbo, for the gift to the church of a \$1,000.00 Whitewood Bank debenture to come due in 1979, together with interest.*

The deed shows that “All of Lot #2 and the west 50 ft. of Lot #3, Block #, in the Fillmore Addition to the City of Whitewood” were purchased for \$1,000 on February 22, 1973, from Millard and Muriel Fillmore. As noted above, the lots were a gift from the Westberg families.



*Congregation gathers outside following worship in 1975.*

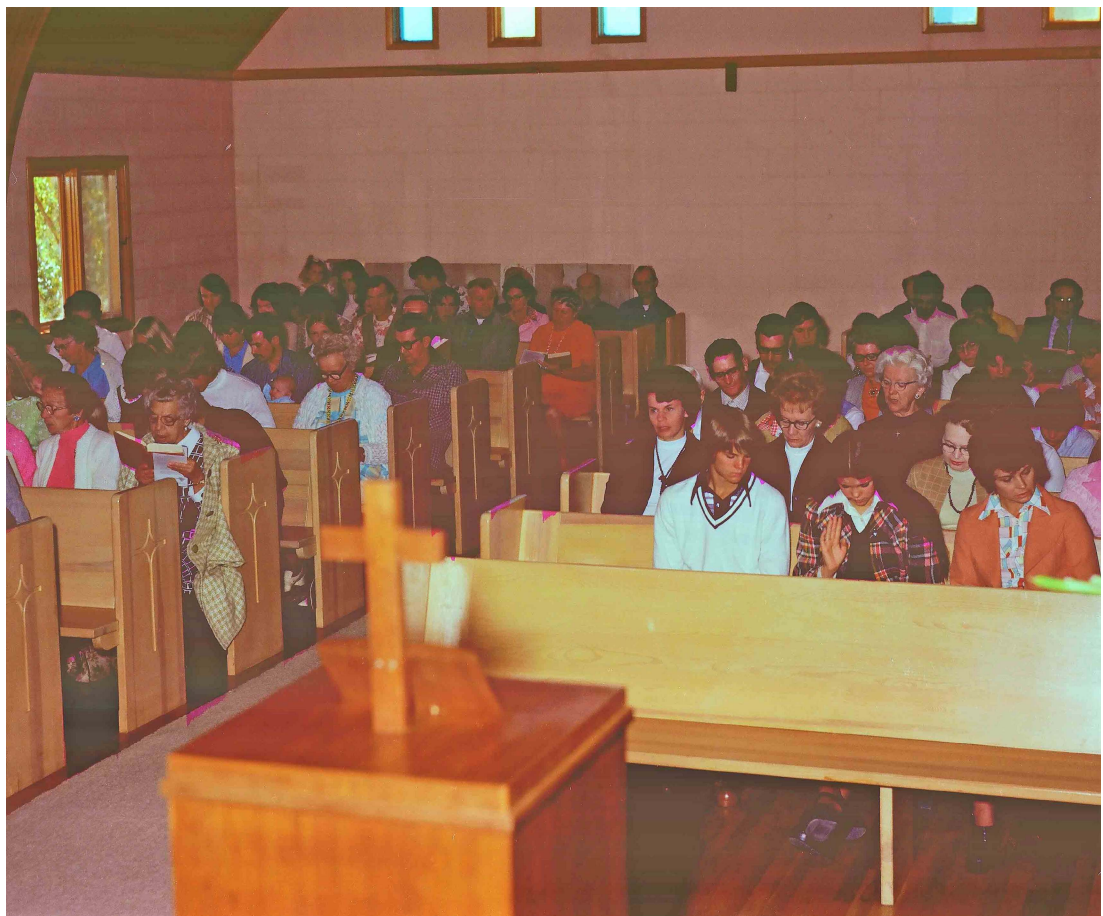


*Pastor Hill greeting the congregation after worship in 1975. Notice the Star of David in the brickwork and that the cross has not yet been installed on the bell tower.*





*Worship on Sunday, October 5, 1975, celebrating the burning of the church mortgage.*



*The congregation at worship in 1975*



A new constitution reflecting membership in the Lutheran Church in America was adopted at the January 13, 1974, annual meeting.

The last payment on the church mortgage from 1960 was made in August of 1975. The burning of the mortgage was celebrated with a special service on October 5, 1975. Pastor Lloyd Zaudtke, assistant to the bishop of the Red River Valley Synod of the LCA, was the guest speaker.

September 28, 1975, the seventh and eighth grade Sunday School class put out a “newspaper” they called, *Immanuel Lutheran Post*. It included this story by Agnus Sogge (now Agnus Baumann) entitled, “Church Builds Bell Tower” about the newly installed bell tower on the church building:

*The Immanuel Lutheran Church was built in 1960. In almost every congregational meeting the bell tower was talked about. Finally in one meeting they voted to decide on wood or steel. Wood won.*

*On April 13, 1975, the people had a meeting on the bell tower. The congregation decided to build the bell with a member’s pictures. Another member of the congregation volunteered to buy the cement. Others volunteered to pay for the bell tower.*



***Wendy and Doris Richter, Mike, Pamela and Suzanne. Wendy served as congregational president 1970-1973 and secretary 1967-1968. Doris served as congregational president 2006-2009 and on Church Council 1975-1977 and 2004-2009. Doris was involved in Ladies Aid, serving as president, secretary and treasurer. She was also involved in teaching Sunday School and was superintendent for three years.***



***Waino and Alice Wanhanen. Waino (1915-2009) served as a trustee 1970-1972). Alice (1921-2006) was involved in Ladies Aid and was president for four years and secretary for eight years. She also was involved in teaching Sunday School and served as superintendent for one year.***





*Exterior of church building in 1975*



*Fellowship hall in 1975.*



*Many people worked on the bell tower. Before they started working they had to get a tree out of the way. The base for the tower is a red brick planter. The tower is made of redwood and has a white cross on it.*

*The bell tower was dedicated on August 10 and the bell was rung officially for the first time in the new church.*

A parish pictorial directory was produced in 1975 featuring Immanuel, First Lutheran Church, and Cave Hills Lutheran Church.

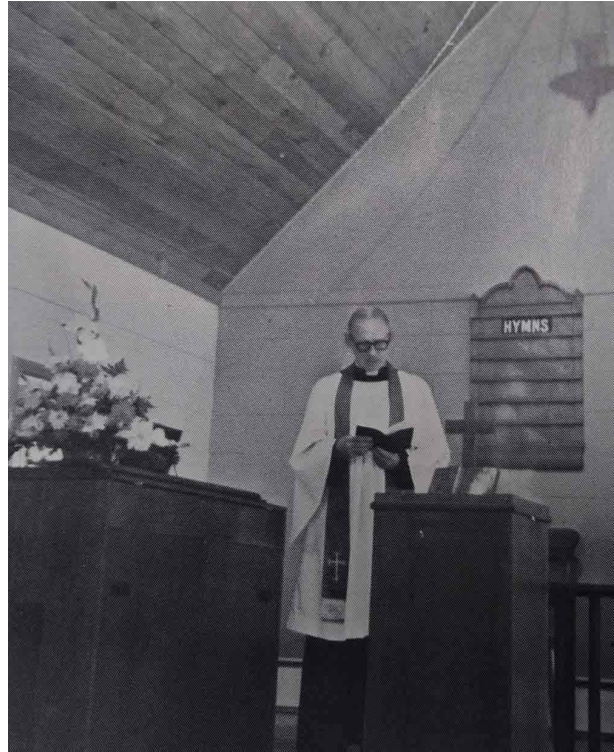
The red sanctuary lamp was given to the church in 1975 in memory of Stanley Sedig.

George and Betty Kymala presented the church with American and Christian flags on Thanksgiving Day 1975. Pastor Hill read a letter to the congregation from the Kymalas which was later published in a local newspaper:

*We would like to express our feelings in regard to the flags, though we are pretty inadequate in putting feelings into words. Anyway, we hope and pray that our Stars and*



**Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Lane. Ralph served as a trustee 1970-1971.**

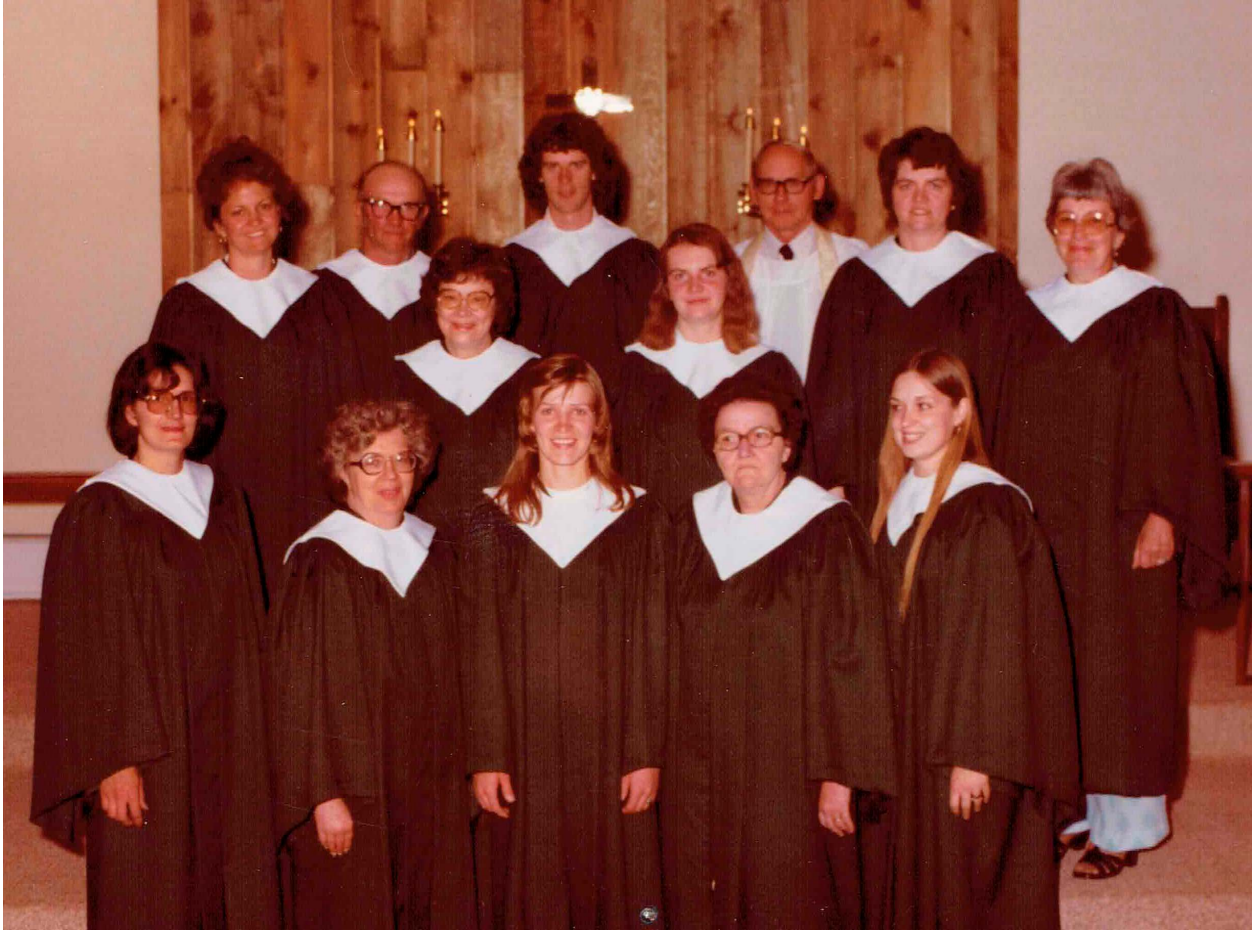


**Pastor Hill presiding at the dedication of the new sanctuary light on October 25, 1975. This was on the same Sunday as the burning of the mortgage.**



**George Kymala (1903-1989) and Olga Elizabeth "Betty" Kymala (1912-2004). George served as treasurer 1968-1969. Betty was active in the Ladies Aid.**





***Choir in 1979. Front row, from left, Alona Westberg, Evelyn Ryther, Kyla Balo, Alice Wanhanen, Becky Waterson. Second row: Angie Sedig, Deb Schmidt. Back row: Kim Ridley, John Sogge, Tim Sedig, Pastor Hill, Darlene Aker, Bernice Kauk.***

*Stripes will always wave in the breezes of a free country and that our Christian flag will always be a reminder to us of how fortunate we are to live in a country where we have freedom of religion and where we can fully worship in the church of our choice.*

*I doubt if very many of us realize or stop to think how terrible a thing it would be if all of a sudden we were denied these privileges. So let us stand on guard today as our forefathers have stood through the years, honoring our flag and being forever vigilant to the dangers that threaten our country's freedom and maybe for our country's sake we had better pray harder, work more diligently and thank God and ask Him to teach us to be more grateful for all the many blessings and privileges we enjoy every day and mostly take for granted.*

In 1979, *The Lamplighter* newsletter began to be regularly produced and edited by Alona Westberg.





*Ladies Aid in 1977, from left, Alona Westberg, Maime Hannah, Martha Rapp, Alice Wanhanen, Evelyn Ryther, Ilene Balo.*



*Church Council in 1977, from left, David Wanhanen, Pastor Hill, Deb Schmidt, Guy Balo, Merlyn Aker, Don Ryther.*





*Sunday School in 1977*







*Sunday School in 1977, front row, from left: Zach Westberg, Jody Westberg, Ginger Arehart, Uriah Arehart, Carrie Waterson, Jeff Tucker, Chad Tucker. Second row: Wayne Ryther, Andrew Westberg, Tammy Westberg, Kathy Zwingelberg, Kathy Balo, Kim Waterson, Perry Westberg, Ronnie Balo. Back row: Cindy Aker, Alona Westberg, Kyla Balo, Deb Aker, Ilene Balo, Evelyn Ryther, Holly Zwingelberg, Jennifer Zwingelberg.*



*Sunday School in 1977*



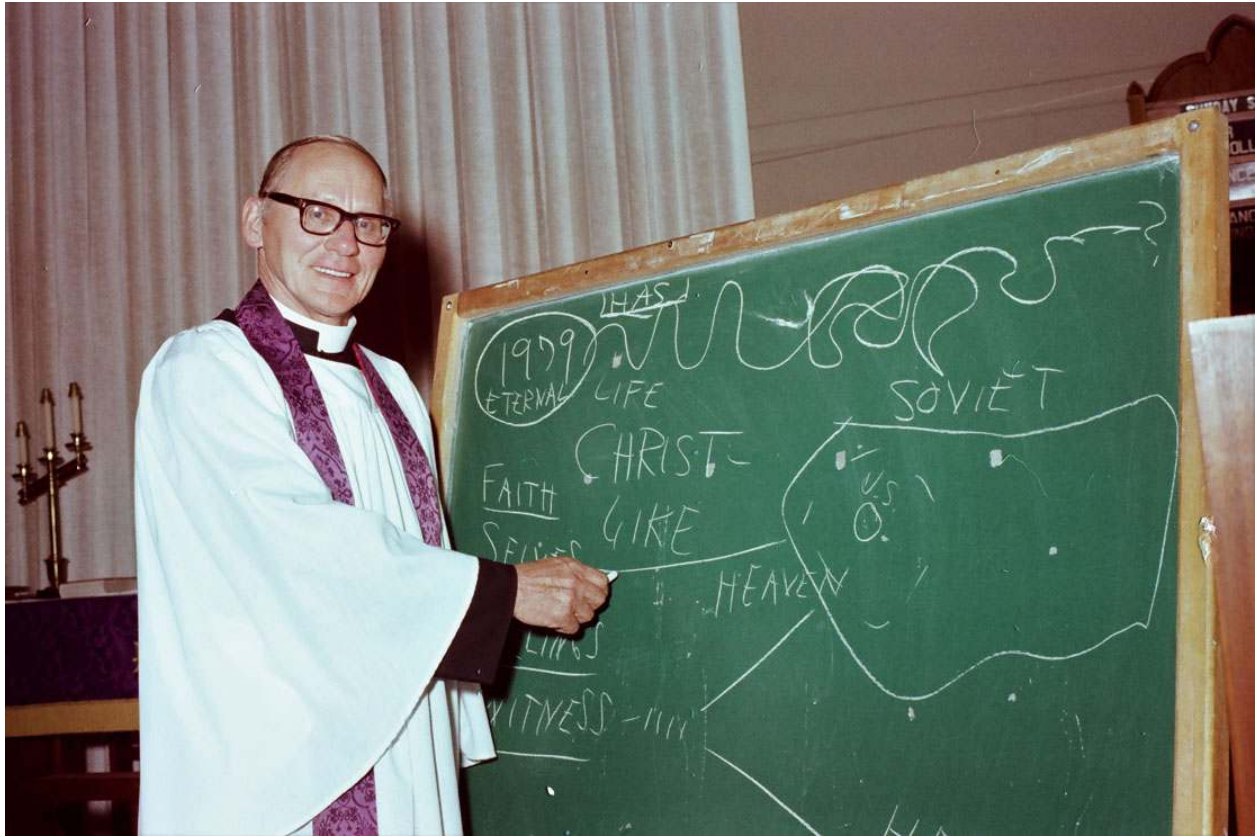


*Vacation Bible School in 1977*



*Vacation Bible School in 1977*





*Pastor Hill often gave “chalk talk” messages at Lenten services. This photo is from 1979.*



*Kitchen counter in original fellowship hall. Photo taken during Vacation Bible School 1983.*





*1979 Church Council, front row, from left: Joe Opien, Pastor Hill, Jim Waterson. Second row: Guy Balo, Duane Quail, John Sogge, Becky Waterson.*



*Easter breakfast in 1979.*





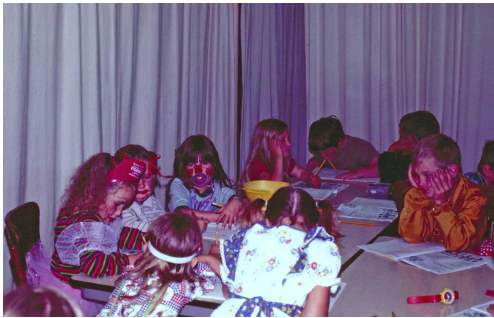
*Confirmation 1980, from left, Wayne Ryther, Scott Zwingelberg, Ken Heinrich, Scott Aker, Mike Leaver, Ronnie Balo, Perry Westberg.*



*Altar in 1979*



**Vacation  
Bible  
School  
1981**







**Vacation Bible School  
1983**







## Vacation Bible School 1985

