

**Spring Garden Church  
1858 – 2008**

***Pioneers in Faith  
History of 150 Years***

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**Spring Garden Church 150<sup>th</sup> History  
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Dear Friends,

1858—2008 150 Years of Making Jesus Christ Known! Our pioneer forebears claimed that mission through the daily toil of labor, family and community. They hinged their lives and hopes on the belief that God was with them. As they lived their lives out in the shadow of God’s mission, they prepared the seedbed for us—for faith to take root and bloom in a new generation.

It is true that history is made up of the dates, facts and records of our congregation’s life. But history is also made in the stories written between the lines of the official record. We hope we have captured some of those stories from the last 50 years. In these stories you can see Christ at work in the lives of real people, the forbears of our faith.

Even as history reminds us of the past, it also helps us lay claim to the future. Spring Garden will break much new ground in the next 150 years. We will lean forward into that future, knowing the place from which we have come. We have a “goodly heritage” (Psalm 16:6) and we walk by faith into the future God has in store for us. Let it be said 150 years from now that we pioneers from 2008 were faithful in preparing Spring Garden’s seedbed for a people yet unborn.

Let it be said of our time that Christ was made know through our church and our people. With the Holy Spirit leading us, a new history is about to begin. We are privileged to be a part of the opening chapters. As God has blessed our history, may God continue to bless Christ’s mission through Spring Garden’s future!

Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin 2008

## SOURCES OF BLESSINGS THAT HAVE COME TO SPRING GARDEN



These blessings have had their source in Sweden long before Spring Garden began. Swedish Lutheran settlements in America like the pioneers of Spring Garden came bearing their treasures of faith and courage from the homeland of Sweden to become a part of a great American people—a nation of nations. They came to “a land the lies open.” These early settlers of Spring Garden belong to the second great colonization period of Swedes in America. Swedish Lutherans had first come to America and established churches on the Delaware River in 1638. Some of these buildings still stand. This early church life was taken over by the Episcopal Church, and today this Swedish Lutheran settlement is a history that ended. Without a seminary and training of pastors the first Swedish Lutheran church declines and disappeared.

No so with the second great colonization period. It was in 1845 a group of five families came from Sweden and settled at New Sweden, Iowa. Soon letters were going back with an urgent appeal for other to come to this land of opportunity. This settlement grew and after three years on of their own men, a layman, was chosen to be pastor, that they might have the Word of God and the Sacraments in their midst, and so the first Swedish Lutheran Church was born. This was destined to live. Letters containing statements like this: “None need worry about circumstances in America because I am living on God’s noble and free land”; “There are no heavy taxes, no large estates. The hired man and the hired girl can eat at the husbandmans table”; “There are lakes, woods, long white winters, but more elbow room”; “There are fish in the lakes, deer, prairie chickens and wild fruit”; “There is separation of church and state.” Increasingly each year more emigrants packed their belongings to come to this land of promise. They came first to Chicago, St. Charles, Ill., Yorktown, Ind., Andover, Ill., and Genesee Ill., and as early as 1850 some went by boat up the Mississippi to Minnesota, to Chisago City and Marine on the St. Croix.

They came with hope in their hearts to a land of promise, with their chests and bundles filled with tools, clothing, furniture and food. Most precious of all was their Bible, Psalmbook, Postilla, Devotional Books and Luther’s Catechism. They had a faith deeply engrained in their hearts by the Holy Spirit’s work, a blessing from the church in Sweden, a treasured spiritual heritage. Added to that were also the blessings of the “spiritual awakening movements” in Sweden at this time.

## THE LAND LIES OPEN IN NEW FRONTIERS OF MINNSOTA TERRITORY

In 1850 there were 12 Scandinavians in Minnesota territory. Before this no one could come here to take claims except Chisago Lake and Stillwater, which was territory given us by the Indians 1837, lying east of the Mississippi River. However, in 1858 about 10,000 Scandinavians had arrived in Minnesota. This was tremendous influx in a short time. How could they all find claims, build homes, and be taken car of spiritually?

The Minnesota territory west of the Mississippi had been opened to settlers by the Treaty of Traverse de Sioux at St. Peter in 1851. Before this no claims could be taken here west of Mississippi in Indian lands. Thousands of acres of land were made available to settlers who came from the east, from New England and New York, as well as for immigrants who came from Europe. Travel was difficult and hazardous. It was only during the summer months before the rivers and lakes froze up that this great movement of people could take place to Minnesota. Travel from Europe was made by sailboat (segelfartyg); a journey that took seven to eight weeks over the Atlantic, which was considered a fast trip. The Edstrom, Haggstrom and Wanberg families were among the first to travel this hazardous trip from Sweden by sailboat and were forced to spend sixteen weeks on the water. But come they must. Europe was on the stir and Sweden was on the move.

When we think of this emigration to America we may ask the questions, “Why did they come?” “What made people leave Europe in such great numbers?” Dr. Norelius says that the reign of Napoleon and the French Revolution in the beginning of the Nineteenth Century tumbled the old ways of thinking. One would think the whole world would go under in the struggle for freedom, shays Dr. Norelius. This was a reaction, which had great meaning. Sweden had lost Finland to Russia and gained Norway from Denmark when the Bernadatee dynasty in the person of King Charles the Fourteenth reigned, 1818-1844. Sweden was a country of large estates, powerful nobility, and a poverty-stricken

peasantry under a king who was adverse to reforms, a Frenchman who couldn't speak the Swedish language. In common with the emigrants from other lands the Swedes came seeking for a so-called paradise. America loomed up for the people as a land where the dignity of the human soul would be recognized, where work was honorable and where class distinctions were leveled. The future beckoned to a status of economic independence and the desire for religious freedom gave them a serious longing for this land of their dreams.

By 1890 one in every six had left Sweden. Pastors even warned people not to leave Sweden. In 1850 an author, Fredrika Bremer, in Sweden wrote after her visit to America and Minnesota, "But this Minnesota is a glorious country, just the country for northern emigrants, just the country for a new Scandinavia—what a glorious new Scandinavia might not Minnesota become!" during the 1850's they arrived, averaging 1,690 each year. During the 1860's the average was 12,000 a year and by 1887, 46,000. They were poor, the least favored, restless but exceptional in initiative and courage. They were pushed and pulled—pushed by circumstances in Sweden and pulled by the promise of a better life in America.

## **WIFE DIES AT SEA—THE FIRST TO LEAVE SWEDEN**

The first forebearers of Spring Garden set sail in a "segel-fartyg" in 1852 from Torpa, Jonkoping, Smaland, Sweden, were Mr. and Mrs. Anders Wilhelm Johnson and daughter Louise Albetina, 14 years old. Mr. Johnson was 39 years of age. His wife died and was buried at sea. In one sense we can say that this was the first grave in the Spring Garden family. Sad at heart and lonely, the husband and daughter arrived at Red Wing where he became a charter member of the First Lutheran of Red Wing on September 3, 1885 and came here to Spring Garden in 1857 to become a charter member of Spring Garden on July 19, 1858. His daughter became Mrs. Eric Pehrson, the mother of Andrew Pehrson and the great grandmother of Melroy Thompson, who lives on the Johnson claim now. Mr. Jacob Johnson (Jacob i dalen) also left Sweden in 1852, also Mrs. Ludwig Miller, nee Mary Johnson, whose whole family died of cholera, except her sister. They lived with the Rev. Erland Carlson's in Chicago. Also Peter and Magnus Lundell left Olmstad, Sweden, in 1852. Settled first at Black Hawk, Iowa and then came to Spring Garden.

Other folks of Spring Garden, who left Sweden in 1852, included Lewis Larson, (nephew of Pastor Beckman) and Anders Larson, who came to Marine. Carl Safe from Grenna, Sweden, who came to Lafayette, Ind., arrived at Spring Garden in 1860. Others of the earliest to leave Sweden for Spring Garden in 1853 included Mr. and Mrs. Loran Loranson and son John, and Mr. and Mrs. Andreas Peterson and daughter Christine, all of Finnekumla, Sweden. Mrs. Loranson's husband was beheaded by the Indians at New London in 1861.

Others leaving Sweden in 1853 were S. J. Mallberg, John and Carl Lagerstom of Eljhult, Sweden, and Andrew Holm from Habo, Sweden, who came to Geneseo, Ill., then to Spring Garden later. These were the earliest Spring Gardenites to leave Sweden. A larger group left Sweden in 1854, which included Magnus Edstrom, 42 and wife Maja Lisa, 31, and two sons John, 6 and Carl, 4, and a daughter Christine, 2; Carl Anders Johnson Haggstrom, 28, and wife Marta Stina, 27 from Waxtorp, Jonkoping, Smaland, Sweden; Peter Johan Johnson, 49, also of Waxtorp; Peter Johnson, 38, (Peter I tvaan) and Wife Marta, 29 from Thorskinngge, Jonkoping Lan, Smaland, Sweden (grandparents of Robert Lindell). They had a child, Maria, 2 and Christine was born on the way, at Quebec Canada. (Clarence Johnson's mother) Bengt Anderson (Banks) from Varo, Kronobergs Lan, Smaland, Sweden, and his wife Anna Brita, sons John Bernt, 15, and Henry, 9, also from Varo, became charter members of First Lutheran Church in Red Wing on September 1855 before coming to Spring Garden in 1857 to be charter members here.

Those coming from Skaraborgs Lan, Habo Forsamling, Bankeryd, Vastergotland in 1854 include John Holm, 58 father of the 10 Holms. Andrew, 30, had come the year before, August, 13, Peter, 20, Isak Holm, 35, and wife Henrika, 20, Mrs. Johanna Wolf, 26, Carl John Holm, 22, and wife Christine, 20, Gust Holm, 23, Mr. and Mrs. John Miller, Mr. and Mrs. J.P. Gustafson and Mrs. Jacob Johnson. Ludwig Miller, who later married Mary Johnson at the Rev. Erland Carlson home in Chicago, also came that year.

Others leaving Sweden in 1854 include Swante Anderson Ljungquist, 28, of Winksas, Skaraborgs Lan; Johannes Johnsson Wanberg, 28, of Hagshult, and wife Johanna Jonsdotter, of Jonkoping; Nils Kallberg, 34, and wife Lena and son John, 2, from Kronebergs Lan; and Anders Enberg, 31, from Wittsjo Skane, and wife Ingri Johanna from Laholm, Halland, all left Sweden in 1855. Anna Holm from Bergsjo Halsingland, and Christine Holm left Sweden in 1856.

These above constituted the early part of the Spring Garden settlement. These have been mentioned in detail because even now after 150 years, many direct descendants of them are active members of the Spring Garden church and community. This larger group, who left in 1854, tell of an incident at Liverpool, England, how as they were to go aboard a ship, found it to be the sailboat, Esmeralda, with a total of 400 Swedes in a party, many from Skane, Blekinge, Habo, and Bankeryd. Here in transferring their cargo of baggage from the railroad station to the ship, the drayman, having made an agreement as to his chargers, loaded a double load on his dray wagon, and expected double pay. The

Swedes refused to pay any more than they had agreed for each load. Then the drayman refused to unload; they themselves proceeded to unload their own baggage. The driver used his whip on them and the drayman yelled and thundered at them. The Swedes, unable to argue or say anything in English, became bold and a man from Skane, jumped up on the load and threw the driver down on the street. Two men from Habo grabbed the drayman and help him while the rest unloaded the baggage. A whole row of policemen, meanwhile, had gathered and stood watching the episode and laughed at the affair and said, "Those Swedes are not so easy to get into grips with."

**HIRED MAN AT ANDOVER DIRECTS EMIGRANTS TO GOODHUE COUNTY**

These early emigrants from various parts of Sweden came to Chicago, St. Charles, Geneseo and Andover. In Andover the first Augustana pastor, Lars P. Esbjorn, had established a congregation and built the Jenny Lind church which was dedicated December 3, 1854. Here the emigrants had a temporary place in the basement until they found a home with other emigrants. On the way to Andover Mr. Haggstrom found a gold dollar at Geneseo, which must have seemed like a fortune at that time. At Andover the cholera plaque took so many lives that the lumber to be used for the building of the church steeple had to be used for coffins. The steeple was never built. In Andover they met a hired man, Anders Westerlund, who had been in Goodhue County, Minn. He told the Haggstrom's and Edstrom's to go to Goodhue County where there was fine land to be had. In the spring of May, 1855, after having spent the winter in Andover, they made plans to leave Illinois for the new territory of Minnesota. Magnus Edstrom, John Wanberg and Carl Haggstrom together with their wives and four children boarded a steamboat. This was very likely at Rock Island. They traveled up the Mississippi River to Red Wing. Haggstrom had bought two steers and a heifer at Andover, which he took along. They landed in Red Wing and set up tents where they lived for several weeks. Here at Red Wing they found a hustling, growing frontier city in the wilderness. Indians were camping on the levee hill above the present depot.

**THEY FOLLOW BUFFALO TRAILS**

The men in the company left the women and children in Red wing. They followed what had been the buffalo trails. The buffalo trails were as a hand of God preparing a way before them. They always led to places of drinking water, as well as around the steep hills and ravines. Later these buffalo trails became Indian trails and were ready for the guiding help to the pioneer settlers. Now these historic trails have become county roads.



**THE FIRST CLAIMS**

These three men staked their pre-emption claims. This was to become the first settlement of Spring Garden. Edstrom's claim was where Joan (Mrs. Elroy) Hernke lives now on County Road 1. Haggstrom's claim was where Mark Sauter now lives and Wanberg's claim where Steve Haggstrom now lives. They set about at once in building a log cabin for a cost \$2.50. The walls were of logs, the roof of sod and for lack of a lock a pole was used against the door.

**THE FIRST FAMILIES ARRIVE**



C.A. Haggstrom & Family

In the fall of 1855 the men brought their families by what maybe was an oxcart to their cabins in the new claimed wilderness. The oxcart was made in a crude way. It was called a skrikkarra "a screech cart," because of the noise it made, being they had no grease or oil with which to lubricate the wheels. They crossed Belle Creek, near White Rock. From then on there was no trail. As they wound their way through the brush we hear the following conversation: Mrs. Haggstrom questioned, "how



Mr. and Mrs. M.A. Edstrom

far are we going to travel like this?" "Ja," said Edstrom, "we have to keep going until we find some little koja (log cabin)." There was only theirs to be found. What pride and satisfaction must have filled the hearts of the men as they presented the "koja" to their wives. This was the result of their striving and their labor. Now they had their own home

and their own land. Not only had they claimed the beginnings of the Spring Garden settlement but what was to become the planting of the Spring Garden church. All three of these families became charter founders of the church and future generations, who are among the faithful worshippers in Spring Garden Sunday mornings today.

## **THE INDIANS VISIT SETTLERS**

In the winter 200 Sioux Indians camped near the settlement, near what is now the crossroads of Highway 52 and County Road No. 1. Although carefully watched, the Indians helped themselves to seed corn, hay and provisions, which the settlers hid and hoarded for spring planting. It must also be mentioned that the visits by the Indians helped save the lives of the settlers when they were in severe shortage of food, for they brought game in exchange for other supplies.

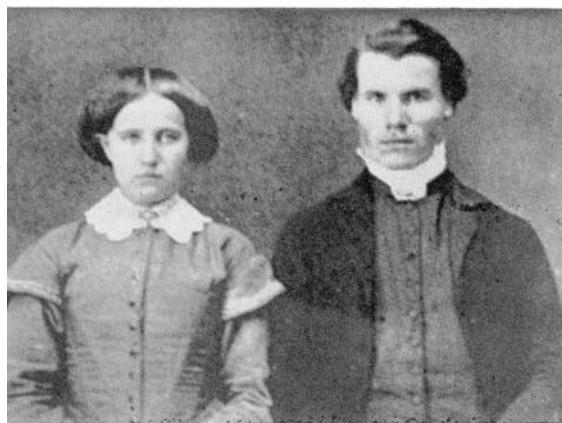
## **THE BARREL OF FLOUR**

The flour gave out and Haggstrom walked to Red Wing in the spring of 1856. A barrel of flour was purchased for \$12.00 and was hauled to Chandler's place in Belle Creek. From there the flour was carried on foot to the settlement five or six miles.

## **THE NEED FOR A CHURCH**

Two boys were born in the settlement in the spring of 1856. That was to the Edstrom's and Haggstrom's. Word had reached them that a young pastor, Eric Norelius, 22 years of age, and his wife had come to the Vasa settlement. Plans were made to make every effort possible to seek him to baptize the two children. It was on Sunday, July 6, 1856, that Norelius' records the following: "just as I was ready to go to the services held at the schoolhouse an oxcart came over the prairie from the south. It was full of people. Two families had each a little one, which they wished to have baptized. The one family was Magnus Edstrom, the other was John Johnson Wanberg. The children received the name August Edstrom, born April 2, 1856, and Frank Wanberg, born May 2, 1856, and died in September 1856. These are likely the first children born in Spring Garden and in Leon Township. From these folks I first learned about the "settlement" and they besought me strongly to come as soon as possible to visit them. They didn't know where Vasa was, but they had driven many crooked paths through brush and over hill and dale, as they had heard a pastor should have come to Vasa."

## **REV. NORELIUS' FIRST VISIT TO SPRING GARDEN**



from my clothes and there was a pool of water by my feet. It was possible to do this before my health broke down completely."

"On July 17, 1856, I made my first visit to Spring Garden," says Norelius. "It was no easy task to find the place. I walked about 9 miles on foot. From the present White Rock to Carl Haggstrom's old place by the stone schoolhouse, west of the woods. It was an unknown, unbroken wilderness and one had to make ones way piecemeal through thorny brush and thickets, wherein one was lucky if one chanced to get though with whole clothes, which was not always the case. I especially remember one time my clothes were so miserably torn that it required a heap of pins to fasten the rags together before I could present myself before people. This way or path I walked many times during the summer and even the following year, but it was worse in rainy weather when I was soaked to the skin, when going through the thickets and long grass. It happened one time I stood preaching that water dripped

## **THE FIRST CABIN OF WORSHIP**

The first house of worship was Carl Haggstrom's little log cabin, which had cost \$2.50 to build. Later Carl Haggstrom built another log house. This was much larger and here services continued to be held, together with other homes in the settlement. The first little log house became the home for Per Jonson and years later was used for a barn. This was destroyed, but it is a real historic treasure to know the Haggstrom's larger house built over 150 years ago and used for worship services for the settlement is still standing after being moved to a new location near the church and restored. It is a historic memorial landmark for us at Spring Garden today.

## **A MEMORABLE COMMUNION SERVICE**

Rev. Norelius says, "One episode which characterizes the pioneer life, even from the point of view of the church, I want to tell: One Sunday afternoon, a very warm day, I had pressed through the brush and thickets to conduct services and communion in Spring Garden. In each end of the house was a little window, which was removed to let in air. Buy the one window a board had been laid to serve as a communion table, on which was placed a plate of pieces of ordinary bread and a bottle of communion wine. When I had begun to give my communion address, a hen flew in through the window and spread the bread on the floor with a miserable cackling as if possessed by the evil one. How disturbing it was one can only imagine. When the hen had been thrown out and all was in order again, I continued giving my address and the same spectacle was repeated. But this time it was so much worse in that the wine bottle too fell on the floor, but didn't break. This made for caution and a man was stationed by the window to stand guard at the window opening (gluggen). If something like that had happened in a church, at a later time, it would be considered sacrilegious, but then one thought nothing of it, as it could easily happen under such circumstances. A conference meeting was held in this very house August 26-27, 1859, when the whole Minnesota Conference delegation was brought to the meeting in a wagon box from Red Wing.

## **THE BEAUTIFUL NAME—"SPRING GARDEN"**

Spring Garden was referred to and was designated the Swedish language by two very descriptive words. "Kallornas Lustgard." How true and meaningful this was to the early settlers as they moved about in the beauty of the countryside, with the many springs and good soil and verdant and fine fields of abundant growth and woodlands. These springs well up from below the surface of the earth and flow away in streams throughout the area. It is also recorded in the Goodhue County History of 1909 that "Spring Garden derives the name from the many springs in the area. It is said to have been named by a Swedish lady who became the wife of one of the Yankee settlers, a Mrs. Eugene Stone. She was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nels Johnson, who had come from Elgin, Ill." We also know from the records that the Stone family, before moving here, had lived at Warren County, Pennsylvania.

In Pennsylvania is a district in Philadelphia and another one in Pittsburgh, which is, called "Spring Garden" a name given in 1813. In the city of Philadelphia there is a street, running past the U.S. Federal Mint, that carries the name "Spring Garden". Also in Pittsburgh is a "Spring Garden" street. Mr. Stone had his education in Pennsylvania and New York and is given the credit of giving Leon Township its name from a place with a similar name "Leon" in Cattaraugus County, New York. He came to Spring Garden and pre-empted a farm in Leon Township in 1856. He was married to Ellen Johnson in 1860. Mrs. Stone's name is recorded in the membership records of Spring Garden church in 1867. A more fitting and beautiful name could not be given this rural church located in the midst of this rich farm land and surrounded by the many springs and creeks found in every direction from the church.

## **LIFE IN SPRING GARDEN**

People were very poor when they came. They came empty handed. Conditions in Sweden had driven them to seek economic improvement. Some even in the present generation tells of the poverty and how their forebears had ground bark with their flour in Sweden in order to have sufficient to make a loaf of bread. People lived frugally for many years and may even today be characterized as a thrifty hard working energetic frugal community. Spring Garden is a family of happy God fearing people who value the blessings God so richly bestows. Most people walked during pioneer times. Those more well to do drove oxen and broke the sod with the same. The sound of the "skrik-karra" sounded loudly through the air when one approached. The wheels had been cut from ends of oak logs, which had a hole in the middle for the oak axle. There was little grease for lubrication to be had. The screeching voice of dry wheels broke the silence of the forest and prairie, as did also the sound of the ax in the timber and woods. The settlers of spring Garden first broke the sod that had been idle for thousands of years. The Spring Garden prairie was cleared and planted into corn and wheat as well as into potatoes and rutabagas.

The dress of the pioneer people was simple. Here and there wooden shoes were made. One wood-carver was "Svarvare Peter," who lived back of School district 42. He make spinning wheels, spoons, wooden balls and crude furniture. Dannielson was the shoemaker, who lived on the Beckman place. Lyddare Peter was the tinsmith, who came from Vasa, but spent much of his time and work in this community.

The women wielded the how in the new cleared plots of ground for gardens and flowerbeds. They used big coffee grinders to grind grain and corn for flour and mush. They were satisfied with the simplicities of life. If one had a cow to milk and a yoke of oxen to drive, that was the height of good fortune. People carried their shoes in going to visit neighbors or to church services to save on the shoe leather. At times there came difficult periods of trials. There was the panic of 1857, when money had no value, the hard times after the Civil War, and the chinchbug year, which destroyed



the wheat. However, no great calamity of the grasshopper plague or severe times of drought had every struck this area. God's word worked powerfully on individual souls. People were orderly and many were found who never used any form of liquor, says pastor Norelius. Many evidences of love and loyalty to Christ and to the church have characterized the community and the congregation down through the years. Spring Garden has maintained the services of their own pastor all these years providing parsonage and sacrificing to keep the property in good order.

The land in this Spring Garden area was possessed by others before us, the native Indians. These Indians, who occupied it, were pushed off by the Indian Treaties made with the U.S. Government. They moved westward and the Europeans and Yankees for the East occupied it. A typical example of this is the interesting deed to the George Banks farm, which says, "according to an act granting Bounty Lands to certain Officers and Soldiers in the Military Service of the U.S., there has been deposited in the general land office of the U.S. A warranty for 160 acres in favor of Nancy, a minor child of the deceased Chief, Warrior Captain Rain Crow's company, Cherokee Volunteers, War of 1812, located S.W. ¼ Sec.10 Township no. 11 N. W. of Range 17 (land office at Henderson, Minn.) The said warranty has been assigned by the guardian of Nancy to Bengt Anderson (grandfather of George Banks) in whose favor said tract has been located."

"In testimony whereof, I Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made patent."

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH**

The organization meeting of the church was held in the Peter Johnson log house, located where Arthur Haggstrom lives now. This house had been built by Carl Haggstrom when he arrived in 1855 and was one of the first log cabins of the settlement.

The complete minutes taken at this meeting are as follows:

Minutes taken at the gathering in Spring Garden July 19, 1858.

In Conformity with a previous announcement, members of the congregation gathered for the purpose of considering the organization of a congregation in accordance with the laws of the state, etc.

The following motions were passed:

1. That the legal name of this congregation shall be "The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Spring Garden, Leon Township, Goodhue County, State of Minnesota."
2. That the printed constitution formulated by the United Conferences of Chicago and Mississippi shall without change, be the constitution of this congregation.
3. That all present should be enrolled: Mr. M.A. Edstrom, wife, four children; Mr. John J. Vanberg, wife, three children; Mr. C.A. Haggstrom, wife, two children; Mr. Jacob Johanson, wife; Mr. John Peter Johanson, wife; Foster-daughter Ingrid Jonson; Mr. A.W. Johnson, one child; Mr. Paul Nilson; Mr. Johan Holm, one child; Mr. Isack Holm, wife, two children; Mr. Gustav Holm; Mrs. Carl Holm; Mr. Peter A. Holm; Mr. John Edvall; Mr. Peter Johnson, wife, three children; Mr. Nils Kallberg, wife, three children; Mr. Peter Lundell, wife, one child; Mr. Bengt Anderson, wife, two children; Mr. Anders Enberg, wife, one child; Mr. S.A. Ljungquist; Mr. John Lagerstrom.
4. To elect congregational administrators, with result as follows:  
Deacons—Mr. M. A. Edstrom, to serve one year; Mr. John Peter Johnson, serve two years; Mr. Peter Johnson, to serve three years. Trustees—Mr. Jacob Johnson, to serve one year; Mr. Nils Kallberg, to serve two years; Mr. S.A. Youngquist to serve three years.
5. That the pastor shall conduct services in Spring Garden every other Sunday, the services to begin at 10 A.M. In the pastor's absence, the deacons shall conduct the services and conduct the devotional meetings.
6. That A. Enberg donate one acre of land for church burial place, located at the south line west of the state road.
7. That all the members of this congregation (except M.A. Edstrom and J.J. Vanberg) shall assist in constructing a road in the sectionline between No. 10 and 15, so that folks may drive and walk without hindrance. Mr. N. Kallberg was elected to superintend the work on this road, and has authority at a suitable time to issue summons for the work. The road shall be ready by winter. The summons shall be made the week previous.
8. That the annual meeting of the congregation shall be held henceforth in the month of May.

With a short prayer to God that He might bless our undertaking, the meeting was adjourned.

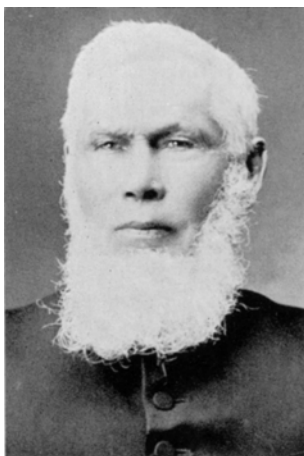
Ut Supra Infidem,  
P.A. Beckman, Chairman

Read and approved at the close of services August 1.

Attest: G. Holm, Jacob Johnson, C. Holm

Pastor Eric Norelius who had taken care of the spiritual needs of the settlement since 1856 had arranged that Pastor Peter Beckman come here from Stockholm, Wisconsin. He came to Cannon Falls and walked to Spring Garden for services on July 19, 1858. Minnesota had become a state May 11, 1858 and Leon Township had also been organized and held its first election on July 5, 1858, with 50 votes polled. The organization of the Spring Garden church stands out with other great events, and in a real sense is the greatest event that has ever taken place here. Ever since that day, the church has stood as God's lighthouse on a hill, sending forth the gospel light into hearts of men and through them out into the four corners of the world.

## GOD'S FIRST SHEPHERD IN THE SPRING GARDEN CHURCH



Peter Beckman was called to be the first resident pastor of Spring Garden. God, in His goodness, had prepared a man to shepherd this folk. Pastors were not available and the many new settlements of Swedish Lutheran people stood for long periods of time praying and longing for a pastor to come. Beckman was a schoolteacher in Sweden, who had come to Red Wing in 1856 where he heard Dr. Norelius preach. He joined the First Lutheran Church at Red Wing and it became evident that the hand of God was leading him into the Holy ministry. Norelius found good use for him and secured for him a "license to preach." He first went to preach at Sabylund in Stockholm, Wisconsin, which had been organized a few months later in 1856. Here he stayed two years. His call to Spring Garden as its first pastor and to serve the Cannon River church, which had been organized in 1857, was accepted at once.

When God has a great task to be done He has his man ready and prepared for the task, when that man is willing to seek and obey God's guidance. Beckman was such a man of God. Here he and his family came in June, 1858, and lived a while with Jon Jonson's at

Cannon Falls, whose wife drowned while they were crossing the Cannon River when Pastor Beckman was to preach his first sermon there. Beckman walked to Spring Garden and Cannon River. He said, "horses were not to be found among our people and no roads because everything was new." However, in Spring Garden there was a family who were fortunate enough to own a team of horses and a wagon even this early, another had a team of oxen and a wagon, two others had oxen but no wagons. One of the first things Beckman did was to announce a meeting to organize the Spring Garden Church, which took place the next month. The first pastor of Spring Garden church was born Dec. 16, 1822, in Enanger, Helsingland, Sweden, in the same province as his co-worker Eric Norelius. His father was a fisherman. He received his education from an old lady who tutored him. At the age of 13 he was apprentice with a tailor. At the age of 18 the Enanger congregation got a new minister, spoken of as a "lasare prast" who had great influence on Beckman. Beckman tells how in confirmation he experienced deep spiritual heart-searching. Later it troubled him as to what would happen should he die. He continued to experience many heart searchings and at the age of 24, when he was reading the "Rosenii Pietist" on an Easter eve, he read an Easter hymn, "Hemlandsang 99," "Arisen is Christ" and he came to experience peace in his heart and soul with all his sins rolled away and laid on Jesus.

This marked the turning point of his life. He became a parish schoolteacher and also a prospect for the Christian ministry. He taught at Hudiksvall and Bergsjö, the place where Mrs. Gust Holm and Mrs. Christine Holm came from, and was married to his Karin in 1854. He had read Hemlandet, an American paper written by pastor Lars Esbjörn, first Augustana pastor, and read letters written by Norelius about the Lutheran Church in America. He left Sweden by sailboat July 27, 1856 and landed in New York on St. Michael's Day, Sept. 29, and arrived at Red Wing Oct. 13. He says, "Coming here, we heard the noisy townspeople and feared the Indians would burn the town. It was the eve before the presidential election, when James Buchanan was elected. He had pictured a different America". Norelius was in Dixon, Ill., at a meeting of the early pastors. That first Sunday evening they gathered with some Christian folks in a little house in Red Wing and read God's Word in Norborg's Postilla. Some songs were sung that were not to Beckman's liking. The next Sunday they heard Pastor Norelius preach as if he were the old Luther himself. How we received this sermon is beyond description. My wife and I looked at each other with tears of joy streaming down our cheeks. We talked with pastor Norelius and a great confidence rose between us. We resolved to join the First Lutheran Church the next Sunday when there was service and communion. I was asked to preach that evening, my first attempt at preaching in America." In November he went to Stockholm, Wis., where he preached the Word of God with such heart-searching power that the worldly people resented it. His accepting the call to Spring Garden became Spring Garden's gain and Stockholm's loss. Beckman was ordained into the Holy ministry at Chicago in the fall of 1859 together with J. P. C. Boren of Vasa, and Peter Carlson of Carver, by Prof. Lars Esbjörn. Beckman says, "We received new courage to take ahold of the Lord's work as Christian warriors to fight unbelief and sins of all kinds.

## Spring Garden One of the 13 Congregations to Organize the Minnesota Conference

Beckman walked to Chisago City, Minn., for the organization of the Lutheran Minnesota Conference, Oct. 4-8, 1858. The next year, the conference meeting was held at Spring Garden Aug. 26-27, 1859, at the little log cabin of Haggstrom's. The whole conference delegation rode in a wagon box from Red Wing.

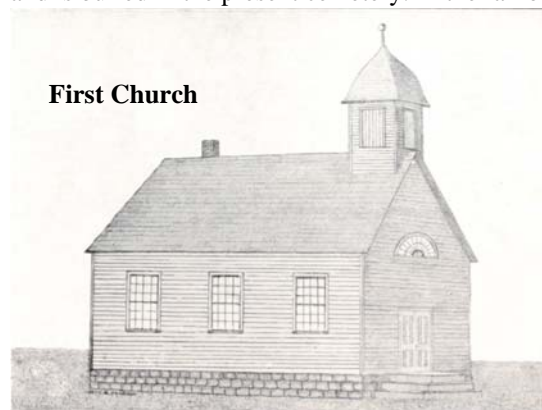
### PLANS TO BUILD A SPRING GARDEN CHURCH

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, the day after the organization of the spring Garden congregation, the men came together to cut logs for a parsonage on the first preacher land, the 40 acre N.C. ¼ of N.E. ¼ Sec.10, located where Norman Anderson now lives. The congregation paid \$56 for these 40 acres. In the historical account given at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Spring Garden the following is recorded: "On October 18, the men were again assembled to begin the erection of the first building owned by the congregation. The material used was logs, sod and hay. Some years later the sod and hay were replaced by a plank roof. The cost of the structure was \$7.95, which cum was expended for a door, windows, lumber for ceiling and floor, lath and lime for inside plastering. This structure was intended for a parsonage, but was used for worship services as well. Other homes were also used, chiefly those of C.A. Haggstrom, Peter Jonson, Gustaf Holm and Magnus Edstrom, as a place where the congregation could meet every other Sunday for worship."

It was in the fall of 1858 that the Beckman family moved into the first parsonage. Here services were also held, but the little log house was soon found to be too small for services. This was true also of other homes in the settlement. Beckman says, "Our homes became too small for services. It seems as if we would get into each others hair as we couldn't agree on the location for building a church." Land had been donated by Enberg, where the church now stands and the location of the church site had been chosen and accepted to be located here when the congregation was organized July 19, 1858.

Dissension developed later as to location. Land was donated for a church site farther west by Peter Johnson, where Arthur Haggstrom now lives. A third location, namely that of Haggstrom's still farther west, and a fourth location, namely that of Jacob Johnson's, to the north were also offered. A

meeting was held Feb. 7, 1860, and those who were of the opinion that the site established should be changed, threatened to build a church of their own. As an agreement could not be reached, those urging the location farther west, left the meeting. Ten men remained until the close of the meeting. These decided to build a church and a subscription of money and labor (dagsverk) by these ten was taken, a total of \$40 and 20 days labor. The size of the church was to be 30 x 20 ft. Ten cords of stone to be cut and hauled to the location at \$2.50 per cord and the work to be done by the lowest bidder. Four barrels of lime should be purchased and Jacob should hire someone to haul it home at the lowest price. The subscriptions were to be paid by May 1. Those failing to do so should pay 50 cents each. Jacob Johnson was chosen to superintend the building operations and Gustaf Holm to inspect the 10 cords of stone. However, the dissension halted building operations for several years. Services continued in the homes during the years of 1860, 1861, and 1862. Some sad events transpired—The Charter Member Johannes Wanberg died, accidentally, in a well in 1860 and is buried in the present cemetery. In the fall of 1861 a call went out for 75,000 volunteers by President Lincoln to



defend the Union of the United States in the Civil War. Peter Holm left for the service in answer to the call of the President Oct. 19, 1861, and died before being mustered out on March 17, 1863. He had taken leave of his father and family and a month later his father, Johannes J. Holm, a highly respected pioneer and Charter member, died suddenly and was buried in the present cemetery. It is claimed that this caused folds out west to reconsider their intentions to build a church of their own, and to join hands with the rest of the congregation in the erection of a church on the chosen present site. That they wholeheartedly joined in the undertaking is evidenced by the fact that the annual meeting of January 6, 1862, was held on the west side, at which meeting a resolution was passed, "that in the name of the Lord, a church be built as soon as possible, on the location already chosen and that the church be built

action. As early as June 22, the same year at an extra meeting, a resolution was passed to paint the exterior of the building, provided that oil and paint could be purchased on credit. To pay for the paint, 50 cents was levied on each voting member, to be paid in three months. In November the same year, a special meeting was called to consider the church debt, \$200 per member being levied to be paid before Christmas. At the annual meeting, in January 1863, it was decided to complete the interior of the church. A sum of \$157.50 was subscribed for this purpose. Meetings were held in the new church building until about the first of December each year, when the meetings were again moved to the various homes. In the fall of 1863, however, the first stove was bought and installed. How happy the congregation must have been to be able to use their new church building throughout the year! In 1864 the annual meeting ordered a hymn-board made, to be ready for the meeting of the Conference Feb. 3-7, 1864. Two chairs and a small table were also to be purchased. This was the second conference meeting held in this congregation. At the next annual meeting, Jan. 2, 1865, the building committee reported that the church was completed, the work accepted, and the carpenter paid in full.

## **CONFERENCE MEETINGS**

Spring Garden has been host to the Lutheran Minnesota Conference five times:

- August 26-27, 1859—In Haggstrom's home
- February 3-7, 1864—In the first church
- June 10-14, 1869—In the first church
- May 23-28, 1877—In the present church
- February 15-22, 1887—In the present church

There was great concern that the church be ready for the Minnesota Conference meeting February 3-7, 1864, when 7 pastors were present. One item of business was the purchase of land for the present G.A. College at Carver. Pastor Andrew Jackson was authorized to purchase 50 textbooks from Sweden and one Webster dictionary. It was then called the Minnesota Elementary School, which should accept no students under 10 years of age. The use of liquors, except for medicinal purposes were considered sin and use of such should by all means be discouraged by members of the conference. The conference minutes state that the little well kept Spring Garden church could hardly old the listeners who came from every direction for the services. The lord Bless His Zion among us! Of not is the purchase of two chairs and a table for this event. Spring Garden was interested in and intimately connected with the early history of the Augustana Church and the Minnesota Conference. Represented at the organization of the Minnesota Conference at Chisago Lake, Oct. 8, 1858, Spring Garden was very active and faithful in sending delegates to these conference meetings, as well as to the Synodical Meetings. We note with interest that Pastor Beckman was present at the organization meeting of the Augustana Church at Jefferson Prairie, Clinton, Wis., June 5-8, 1860, when 27 pastors and 13 laymen were present, together with Mr. Jonas Engberg of Cannon Falls, who later became an owner of the Engberg Printery in Chisago. He was the most educated man present from Hassela, Sweden. Pastor T.N. Hasselquist was elected president. Norelius suggested the name "Augustana." A constitution was presented by Esbjorn and Paul Anderson, following that of the Synod of Northern Illinois.

## **THE CIVIL WAR AND INDIAN UPRISING**

The Spring Garden men who served in the Civil War were: Peter Holm, 21, Co.B-3 Minn. Volunteers, Oct. 19, 1861: and died Mar. 17, 1863; John Peter Johnson, Chas. J. Anderson, 21, Co. C-3 Minn. Vol., Oct. 3, 1861; Charles Johnson, 18; John Johnson, 34, Oct. 12, 1861; John Banks, 19, Aug. 21, 1862. Two other men, John Nelson 18, Aug. 18, 1862, and F. I. Johnson, 21, Oct., 1862, who joined Spring Garden later, came from Chisago City and Marine. C. A. Haggstrom was called to the army, but since he was the only one to care for his family, he chose to get a substitute if sufficient funds could be raised. He needed \$300, which he succeeded in borrowing at 30% interest to be paid in the fall with wheat. But he had to sell the wheat to the loan company at \$1.25 per bushel when market price was \$1.75 and go to report in St. Paul with the war tax, he therefore had to pay \$500 that year for a substitute. Ludwig Miller, who had come and joined the church in 1863, also was called into the Civil War service, but paid the required amount for a substitute to take his place.

## **THE INDIAN MASSACRE**

Refugees from the Indian Massacre at Eagle Lake and Nest Lake, New London, in 1862 came here for help and refuge. The Sioux Indians lived in this area up to 1862. They lived in tents in the woods in the winter and on the open and flat lands during the summer, hunting and fishing. They were frequent visitors of the settlers. The Chief of the group led the procession and his children and children's' children followed. They would come in, unannounced, in moccasined feet. They were given food as the supply of the household held out. Then the peace pipe was smoked, even by the white settlers who didn't dare do otherwise. Friendly relations with no incidents of war occurred here. Often the game brought by the Indians helped the settlers in their food shortage. However, it was Aug. 20, 1862, that the congregation at Eagle

Lake, New London, was attacked by Indians. Many were killed or wounded while assembled in church services. Three families who escaped came to Spring Garden for refuge and remained here as members. They were Mrs. Eva Peterson Loranson and John, 6, whose husband was massacred, and Andreas Peterson and wife, Marie, and daughter, Christine.

Mrs. Loranson's husband was beheaded by the Indians in 1861 at Nest Lake, New London, who cut off his head and put it on a pole. They cut off his hand and put it on another pole placing a box of snuff in the hand to hold.

Mrs. Gustaf Holm, one time was visiting at the old Safe home when Indians came up to the window. In photography fashion they held a blanket over and above their heads so as to see more clearly everything inside. Grandpa Safe didn't like to deal with the Indians or trade with them because white people had treated them so unfairly, which in turn made them angry. He was always afraid that they might start trouble. Some white people had put white sand into the flour they traded. In Safe's granary there was a rope and tackle used for elevating feed sacks. One little Indian of the Spring Garden settlement whose name was "Little Fish" thought it great fun when Safe pulled him up just like a sack of grain.

John Nelson of Spring Garden, a soldier in the Army during the Civil War and Indian Wars, was present when 38 Indians were hanged on the gallows at Mankato Dec. 26, 1862. One had been pardoned by the President. The pardoned Indian, however, is said to have been hanged with 37 others and by mistake one of the condemned was let free in his place. Julia and Emily Nelson related that their father, John Nelson, spoke of the gruesome event with deep feeling. He, with his Company stood guard over the 350 who had been sentenced to die but President Lincoln pleaded for them until only 38 were condemned.

Hon. F. I. Johnson, who became a Minnesota State Senator, was in the regiment that took part in Sherman's march to the sea, and at the time of Lincoln's assassination was ordered into service there shortly before being mustered out in 1865.

## **PREACHER LANDS AND PARSONAGE**

Pastor Beckman lived on the First Preacher Land of 40 acres in the small log cabin. In 1866 the congregation was ready to sell its first forty of land. A resolution was passed as follows: "The land must be sold to a member of the congregation or to one who promises to join the congregation." This resolution became an unwritten law, which has been faithfully adhered to up to the present time. The land was sold to Carl Erick Danielson for \$250.00, of which \$100.00 was paid in cash at the meeting and set aside as a fund for the purpose of building a suitable house for the pastor. A resolution was passed that this money could be borrowed by the congregation or by individuals at an interest rate of 10%. The congregation at once borrowed the money and purchased a melodian for the sum of \$99.35. Pastor Beckman had some years previously purchased 40 acres of land, S.E. ¼ of S. E. ¼ section 2 of Leon Township, belonging now to the Alfred Benson farm. Here he lived with his large family of six children in a stone cellar 12 x 14. The congregation bought this 40 from Pastor Beckman in 1867 for \$600. This became the second Preacher Land of the congregation.

## **PASTOR BECKMAN MOVES TO WESTERN MINNESOTA**

In November, 1887, a special meeting was held to build a new parsonage on this land. Nothing was done and Pastor Beckman continued to live in the stone cellar. At the annual meeting Jan. 6, 1868, the building question was again postponed. The trustees offered to sell the land to the highest bidder. Pastor Beckman resigned as a result of these decisions. He stayed on, until in the summer of 1869, leaving Spring Garden and going to the new frontier of Central and Western Minnesota. From the Minnesota Conference History by Emil Lund, we quote the following: "I thought that the congregations which now had become larger, and the work somewhat advanced, needed a better qualified man than I, and I would therefore not wish to stand in the way of anything which might be in the interest of the congregations. My family was becoming large, and the house altogether too small, as we lived eight persons in a cellar 12 x 14 feet, and when the congregation declined to build an addition, I thought it was time to think of a change.

From Spring Garden he went to Tripolis and Kandiyohi where he founded a new congregation as he had done here. He organized churches at Atwater, grove City, Pennock, Beckville, Svea, Sacred Heart, Strombeck, Bethesda, Murdock, Benson, Starbuck and later moved on into founding congregations in Alexandria District, now a part of the Red River Valley Conference. He had as his helper, Rev. Louis Johnson, whom he had helped to become established in the Christina faith and had guided him to find his calling in the Holy Ministry, became the pastor at Fergus Falls and it was he who baptized Pastor Chell in 1902, the present pastor of Spring Garden. It is interesting also that Pastor Alphonse Almen, who served here, remembers as a boy pastor Beckman's visits to his home in New London. It is also interesting to note that Mrs. Almen tells how Pastor Beckman, as an aged pastor, continuing ministering and serving as a

missionary at Troy, Idaho, until his death, visited her childhood home and baptized her. Who, incidentally, became a pastor's wife and served here in Spring Garden 1944 to 1949.

Pastor Beckman still lives in the memory of many people, for he was a pioneer Minnesota Conference home missionary and organized many congregations after leaving Spring Garden. He preached the Gospel and administered the Sacraments wherever he found settlements of Swedish Lutheran emigrants, always seeking to bring the Work of God to his countrymen. A lady, Mrs. C. Ryberg, who is still living and is now over 101 years old, says of Beckman, "He was tall and dark and wore a high hat. He lived not far from John Miller's on his 40 acres. He always rode a little red pony. Several English families lived west of my home, so when Beckman came by from a visit to his people, he would say he had been up to the settlement" referring to the Swedes over in the Haggstrom area. One day when he had come from there he had some seed peas given to him by Mrs. Haggstrom. He offered to give me some, so I got a dishpan. When the peas rattled into the pan, his horse got frightened and ran away, but he managed to catch his wild horse again."

Pastor Cavallin wrote about Beckman, "Brother Beckman with his unsteady and mean horse, was nevertheless always happy. He was cheerful and good-natured, however badly things seemed to go, and always thanked God that it didn't go worse. He was never at a loss as to what to do and seemed always to think it is better to be breadless than to be at a loss as to what to do (better to be "brodlos" than radlos). His presence was always cheering and pleasant. Preaching God's Word was his uppermost desire and seeking to find our countrymen and gather them around God's Word was his constant task." Pastor Beckman said, "As long as the Lord gives me health and strength, I have no place to be at ease but I must move on, to find my countrymen and bring them the Word of God." Among hardships he endured and sad experiences, the deepest was no doubt the sorrow that came to his home when four of his six children died while young adults, among them a son, who had well nigh completed his studies for the Holy Ministry. Beckman also mentions of physical sufferings he endured as one time walking home to Spring Garden from the Cannon River Church, having preached there in the morning, Easter Sunday. The river was flooded, there was no bridge, so he had to leave his horse on the other side and walk through the ice water. His clothes froze to his body as still as a horn. God protected his health, so he preached second day Easter at Spring Garden. Pastor and Mrs. Beckman retired in Troy, Idaho, after having lived his life as a missionary pastor on the Mission files of the Augustana Church. He is buried at Troy, Idaho. This brought to an end the first ten years of the history of the church. In spite of struggles and trials both for shepherd and flock, all could surely join in saying, "The Lord has heard the prayer we offered at the first meeting, that He let His blessing rest upon our undertaking."

## **THE PASTORS CAVALLIN, PALMSTROM, NORELIUS AND RYDING PERIOD 1868-1890**

Four pastors served the congregation the next 22 years. There was a vacancy of two years following Pastor Beckman. The responsibility of leadership those two years fell largely upon J.P. Gustafson. Pastor Sanstead says, "The congregation has had no layman in its history whose work can be compared with that of J.P. Gustafson." He came in 1859, the year after Spring Garden was organized. He was elected deacon in 1860 and served continuously as a deacon for a period of about 70 years until his death on Jan. 10, 1929. Pastor Cavallin says about him, "J.P. Gustafson served in a fine manner with great blessing in the pastor's absence and led the services. Fortunate is the congregation who has such a man. Permit me to give my thanks, dear brother, for what you were to me under my first years in the ministry." He taught in parochial schools of the congregation many summers, was Sunday School superintendent for many years, and it is said of him, that in his daily walk and living he went before his fellowmen with a sincere Christian example in word and deed. C.O. Cavallin served here as a theological student two summers before his ordination and this was his first pastorate serving here from 1870-1880.



Pastor John Olson Cavallin was born in Svenskop, Skane, Nov. 25, 1844. He came to America at the age of 18 where he enrolled at St. Ansgar's Academy at Carver, studied at Augustana College at Paxton, Ill. He was ordained at Andover, Ill., in 1870 when he came to Spring Garden. During this time the second parsonage was built on land purchased from Gust Holm and A. Engberg for \$50 in 1871. "It was both beautiful and comfortable," pastor Cavallin stated at the 60th anniversary in 1918. It was 18 x 26 with an addition 14 x 16 at the cost of \$645.97. This was on the present parsonage location and may be called the Third Preacher Land.



Plans to build a new church were begun in 1873, as the first church was too small, but more delays until 1876 when building operations were to begin on May 1 and completed by Oct. 1, the same year. The building committee consisted of A. Engberg, C.A. Haggstrom, John Mallberg and C.P. Safe. At the 1877 annual meeting it was reported the church

was built at a cost of \$7,512.32 with a debt of \$1,778.10. This debt was paid in 1877. Pastor Cavallin was given a leave of absence for eight months that year when he went to work in the home mission field at Austin, Texas. The trustees at the time of the building of the church were C.P. Sale, August Holm, F.I. Johnson, Lewis Larson, S.E. Eastlund, Peter Lundell and Ludvig Miller. The building committee was instructed not to go in debt over \$100. The trustees were authorized to put up lightning rods, dig a cistern, put up eave-spouts and complete the school room in the basement using materials from the old church and to enclose the church cemetery with a lumber fence. Among the earliest records to be found in the files at the Red Wing Iron works is an order for a complete heating plant for Spring Garden Church. This included all the piping and boilers and is dated 1872.

Mrs. Fritz Anderson recalls walking with her father to see the new church, walking in on planks as the steps had not been erected. Mrs. Phoebe Lindell recalls in 1958 when the tower of the old church was torn down. Mrs. Augusta Nord of Goodhue, who died in 1958 at age 96, was present at the dedication services. There was a large tent used for the dinner served. Pastor Cavallin writes in the first recorded pastoral report Jan. 8, 1877, "I have been in home mission fields in Texas for eight months. My pastoral duties have been many and tiring but under it has been encouragement and joy. All has been peaceful, no strifes have arisen, and almost all have in an admirable willingness contributed to the completion of the project. Means have come in for what is needed. The Lord has called home several of the first members. Twenty-nine have been confirmed. May the holy cause of missions be laid deep on the hearts of us all." The same year the church was built in 1876, \$2,000 was gathered in Spring Garden for the main building of Gustavus Adolphus College at St. Peter. It was in 1879 that the Sunday School became "lordags" or Saturday school. The same year a "subscription" was to be begun for a bell and should sufficient funds come in it should be purchased. It shall be of good metal, about the same size as the Vasa church bell. The committee to John a. Edstrom, John Mallberg, C.P. Safe, Ludvig Miller and Frank I. Johnson.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF SPRING GARDEN



Pastor & Mrs.  
Norelius at  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Rev. Cavallin left for the North Dakota mission fields in 1880. Rev. A. Palmstrom served for a year 1881-1882, pastor Norelius served for two years. In 1883 the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation had been observed. We read in the Cannon Falls Beacon, "The new church is one of the finest, perhaps in the country, the edifice is a beautiful piece of architecture. The congregation took great pains to make it pleasant for all who might attend. Delegations were present from every part of the country and many from a distance. They came on foot, on horseback, in wagons and carriages until the throng reached into the thousands. The Vasa Brass Band and Choir were present. Dr. O. Olson of Rock Island, spoke and also Rev. Beckman."

## THE SPRING GARDEN CHURCH BELL

It was in 1882 that the church bell was secured. It was to be as large as the Vasa bell selected by the Klockare of the church, John Lagerstrom. Ludvig Miller and F.I Johnson brought it home from Red Wing striking it as they drove by the homes down the road. Richard Miller recalls that he was 9 years old at the time and he could go along to see it raised if he worked hard in the field that morning. Cost of the bell was \$688.45 and weighed 1800 pounds.

The church bell has called men and women to worship down through the years. It has rung to announce the death of parishioners. It has sounded the victory at the close of two World Wars.

"How sweet on the calm Sabbath morning  
To hear the great bell give its call,  
For its message is rev'rent and pleading,  
To church it would summon us all."

—Hj E. Fredrickson

A COPY OF THE ORDER FOR THE CHURCH BELL

NO ALLOWANCE FOR EXCHANGE. MONEY SENT BY EXPRESS MUST BE PRE-PAID.

Swedish Ev. Luth. Church - Maitedo, Minn  
 To Clinton H. Meneely Bell Company, Dr.  
 TERMS - CASH.

For 6112 Bell, 1880 lbs. at 32"	585 60
" Castings, 290 lbs at 20%	72 50
	657 60
Less freight to your A.C. depot (2700 lbs)	32 40
	625 20

The above mentioned Bell is warranted to be of good composition and perfect tone (the purchaser to decide in this matter), and is also warranted not to level, while being used in the proper manner, for the term of two years from this date. In case of failure in either of these respects, and immediate notification of the fact to be furnished us, our agreement is to recast the bell or provide another which will be satisfactory, free of charge; the purchaser to bear the expense of transportation.

Clinton H. Meneely Bell Company.  
 May 19, Aug 19 1882 Clinton H. Meneely, Pres't.

The following inscription is engraved on the bell:  
 Unto the church  
 I do you call.

## THE RINGING OF THE BELL

Ringling the church bell has normally been the task of the Church sexton or custodian as we call them now. The bell is rung on Sunday morning to announce the beginning of the worship service and it tolls the age of parishioners who have died at the close of their funeral service. Shown at left is Raymond Anderson, who along with his wife, Eunice, took care of the church for many years.



At right is Doris Anderson, who with her husband Norman, took exceptional care of the church for over 21 years as church custodians.

Doris has the distinction of receiving the only “Bug Patrol” certificate ever presented at Spring Garden. The certificate and a cake were presented to Doris on Mother’s Day for all her hard work cleaning up after a recent plague of box elder bugs.

Marie & Daryl McLean and Ruth and Dave Sjoblom also served as custodians for several years. Present custodian in 2008 is Sue Safe

## Hanging Giant Bell in Spring Garden Church 76 Years Ago Recalled

Daily Republican Eagle, Red Wing, Minnesota  
Saturday, August 2, 1958

**WANAMINGO**—The last living witness of the hanging of the huge bell in the tower of Spring Garden Lutheran church near White Rock is Richard Miller, former Spring Garden resident now living in Wanamingo. As a small boy Miller watched his father and a crew of volunteers from the church congregation use block and tackle to raise the 1,850-pound bell into the church tower.

The arrival of the massive cast iron bell was a big event for the newly formed Spring Garden church in 1882. A tower had been built to house the bell, and all was made ready for its arrival. One day in the spring of 1882, word arrived that the bell was in Red Wing.

Roads in those days were not as good as they are today; a crew of men headed by miller’s father, Ludvig Miller, and F.I. Johnson left early in order to be in Red Wing in time to load the bell on an open wagon, and be back to Spring Garden by nightfall.



**THE RETURN TRIP** from Red Wing to Spring Garden was a ceremonious event. From White Rock on into Spring Garden, Johnson rode on the wagon with the bell. As the wagon passed every house in which a Spring Garden church member lived, Johnson would strike the bell with a hammer, arousing the home's occupants.

When the bell arrived at Spring Garden Church, a "hanging bee" was quickly arranged for the following afternoon. Miller's father was to be one of those in charge of raising the bell into the church tower.

The following morning, the day of the big event, young Richard Miller (who was then only nine years old) was assigned the job of plowing in his father's fields. As would any small boy, young Miller complained bitterly; he wanted to watch the men raise the bell into the church tower.

To soothe his injured spirits, Miller's father agreed that if his son finished the plowing chores by noon, he could come and watch as the bell was raised and installed. No plow ever went faster!

**MILLER DOES NOT** remember too much of the actual details of the bell raising. He knows that the bell was manhandled inside the church through the front doors, and was then raised through a hole in the ceiling to the third floor level. Of further details, Miller is uncertain.

"I couldn't see too good. I'm not sure how many men the job took" Miller states. "We kids were chased out. I guess they didn't want us underfoot."

"I remember it so plain, though" he continues. "Father said I could watch if I finished the plowing in time. I got there early, but they made us stay across the road. After the bell was installed, they used to ring it every Sunday morning. It sounded so clear."

"I lived eight miles away," Miller's wife, also a former Spring Garden resident, added. "On a calm, still Sunday morning, we could hear that big bell just as plain."

Although the Millers now live in Wanamingo, they still retain membership in the Spring Garden Lutheran Church, which celebrates its centennial this month. For convenience sake, though the Millers have taken associate memberships in the Trinity Lutheran church in Wanamingo, which is located across the street from their home.



## **PASTOR RYDING'S PERIOD 1885-1889**



Pastor Ryding came here from Watertown in 1885. He showed great zeal for young and old in a period of inward growth. Emphasis was placed on prayer meetings and the Christian training of the children. There was Sunday school in Wastedo and in the north unit under Borgeson, A. Holm, C.P. Safe and John Lorens with three months of Swedish school. The following excerpts are taken from Rev. Ryding's pastoral reports:

1886—"The services have as a rule been well attended, still there are not a few whose attendance depends on wind and weather. Prayer meetings have been held here and there in the congregation. These have been well attended. We have the faithful promise of God as a foundation for our assurance that these gathering bring a blessing." 1887—"We fulfill our obligations as members of the Christian church, only when we

receive God's benefits in a right spirit, and out of a thankful heart make an offering on the Lord's altar of what we have received of God. 'Give and it shall be given unto you,' says our Saviour." 1888—"Think what loss that soul suffers for time and eternity, which stays away from the Lord's house the day on which God has purposed to visit it with his Grace."—"With reference to the willingness to sacrifice, it can be said to the credit of many, that in spite of the hard times, they have given abundantly and in all humility. But then again there are many who never do anything for the cause of God's kingdom. They which take care that not a penny strays from their pockets for benevolence, will one day stand without, unless they surrender heart and purse to God." Three English services were held during the year 1887.

This no doubt marks the introduction of the English language into the church services. Rev. Ryding was a stern man and a forceful speaker. It is reported that on a Judgement Sunday, while speaking on Matthew 25: 31-36, the situation became so tense, so that when he thundered forth words "Depart from me ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels," a woman in the audience fainted.

Pastor Ryding was born in Larfs parish, Skaraborgs Lan, Sweden, June 3, 1853. He came to America at the age of 8 to East Union, Carver, Minn. Before the age of 10 he got up at night to read his Bible and before his confirmation he had read through his Bible several times. It was during his confirmation that he experienced assurance of salvation. He studied at St. Ansgar's Academy, Carver, and Augustan College and Seminary at Paxton, Ill. He taught at G.A. College one year. He was ordained at Lindsborg, Kansas, 1881, having served the Dassel and Watertown parishes before coming to Spring Garden from whence he moved to Cloquet, Red River Valley area, Texas and Tustin, Michigan, where he passed away on June 11, 1912, and is buried at that place. "Pastor Ryding was a man of order, his sermons spoke to mind and heart. He didn't spare the salt of the law when the question of sin was concerned. He was a man of deep humility. He experienced sorrow in that his first wife died in 1882, having been married but a year. He married Betsy Sture in 1883. His son of the first marriage died at the age of 12." -J.P. Leaf, biographer.

## THE PASTOR FRODEEN PERIOD 1890-1908



Pastor and Mrs. J.J. Frodeen and family, Henry, Agnes, Paul, Gerda, Arthur and Leonard, moved to Spring Garden in 1890 from Chisago City where they had lived since 1875. Spring Garden was their home until 1908. Pastor Frodeen was born Nov. 18, 1848, in Froderyd Smaland. He came to Geneseo, Ill., in 1857. He attended the college and seminary at Paxton, Ill. He was "rector" president of St. Ansgar's Academy, Carver, 1873-1874. He was ordained June 27, 1875. He was married to Anna Paulson, a sister of Pastor Ola Paulson, a Norwegian pastor. Mrs. Frodeen was one of the first eleven students enrolled at G.A. college at Red wing, spring of 1862-1863. She died June 11, 1907, and is

buried in the Spring Garden cemetery. Pastor Frodeen moved with his family to Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada. "Pastor Frodeen was a trustworthy man, his heart burned with zeal for the welfare of his fellowmen, as a result he had a warm love for missions at home and abroad. He was friendly, an encouraging pietist, churchly. A man of order and wanted a true expression of the faith life in word and deed in his congregation. He was severe with others and more severe with himself. A man of humor and seriousness at the same time. He accepted trials and successes with the same even temperament. "Thus saith the Lord," was for him binding. His sermons were colored with a personal faith and prayer life. His concern was that only the gospel of the cross can bring victory for the truth and lasting success for time and eternity."—Johannes Teleen, biographer.

The above characterization is reflected in the activity that went on in the work of the congregation in organizing the young people and the women of the church, as noted elsewhere in this book. It is said that Pastor Frodeen was a good horseman. He had a horse named "Mons." This horse was so well trained that in making visits and sick calls he didn't have to tie him, as he stood still on the spot until the pastor came. Mrs. Frodeen worked untiringly with the children preparing them for the "barnfest" in teaching them to sing "Hosianna" and other "Hemlandsager." Dr. Norelius says about Mrs. Frodeen, "her spiritual gifts were not small, but her stewardship of these gifts was in a humble spirit and she used them for spiritual blessings."

## PASTOR NORLIN PERIOD 1908-1928

Pastor John Norlin was called as pastor from Tustin, Mich., for a salary of \$900. A building committee consisting of George B. Gustafson, Emil Martinson and August Haggstrom was elected to arrange for the building of a new parsonage. Ten cords of stone were to be quarried that winter for the foundation. It was February 1909, when Pastor and

Mrs. John Norlin and their five children, Edith, Esther, Ruth, Carl and Mildred arrived on the Chicago Great Western at Randolph. They had to wait four hours for a train to Cannon Falls. Pastor Norlin went out to buy crackers, cheese and cookies and get a gallon of drinking water. "Never have crackers and cookies tasted so good since," says Esther Norlin Sauer. "F.I. Johnsons met us with bobsleighs bedded with straw and foot warmers and fur coats for all. We spent a week at F.I. Johnson's and were treated most royally; we even had coffee and sweets in bed in the morning, "kaffee pa sangen." Going to the church service the horses were put in the church barn during the service. We did not move into the old parsonage as it was to be torn down and a new



parsonage be built in the spring. We lived in five rooms in the Emil Anderson home, where we spent a most pleasant summer. We were a very happy family that moved into the new house. Father thought it was far too elegant for a poor preacher." She stated. The cost of the new parsonage was \$4,318.48. The 40 acres of land, the Second Preacher Land, was traded for the five acres of land at the parsonage plus \$1,500. This trade was made with Walter Holm in 1913. In 1910

land was purchased from Mons Swanson for the building of church barns which were razed in 1946. That same year, 1910, Oscar Clauson taught parochial school for eight weeks.

The burden of every pastoral report of Rev. J.A. Norlin (1909-1928 seems best summed up in the words, "Take heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is."

## THE CONGREGATION'S 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY—1918

Pastor Cavallin writes concerning his visit to Pastor Norelius and the Spring Garden 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival, "Men and women who were born, baptized and confirmed had come home to rejoice with the congregation. It was touching to see this church festival because it was a real re-union of the big Spring Garden family. There is hardly a home or a place where there aren't some of the descendants of the first settlers. Swedish is spoken by the young folks, but English is used in daily conversation. None of the pastors who have served the congregation are living, except myself and the present pastor. The festival was very pleasant and at the festive day, June 26, the church was over-crowded until late in the evening. One counted over 100 cars at the church that day." He also stated, "We were guests in the parsonage where the pastor's wife, Mrs. Norlin, was confined by illness, but their good, five daughters, too care of the home and their mother." Mrs. Norlin died Oct. 24, 1919, and is buried at Grand Rapids, Mich. Mrs. Norlin was talented as a singer, endeared to the entire community.

In the biography of Pastor Norlin we note the following facts: pastor John A. Norlin was born in Ryda, Skarborg, Vastergottand, Sweden, Dec. 12, 1856. He came to St. Paul in 1870. He was a graduate of Augustana College and was ordained on June 27, 1886, upon call to Kent City, Mich. He was married to Hulda Victoria Wennerstrom Dec. 11, 1890, at Grand Rapids, Mich. He served Campello, Mass., and at Sparta and Tustin, Mich., before coming to Spring Garden in 1909. He preached his farewell sermon at Spring Garden on Feb. 19, 1928. He died of a stroke April 14, 1928. Dr. Norelius says of him, "his sermons were "Karnfriska,' evangelical, from the heart," and adds, "Farval du Trogne Jonathan."—"This expresses well the feeling and regard other pastors had towards Pastor Norlin. He confirmed many classes and performed many pastoral acts during his long ministry here and is remembered for the impact of his ministry by many in the church today. He served longer than any other pastor here.

## THE SANSTEAD, SANDAHL AND ALMEN PERIOD 1928-1949

**Pastor Gustav W. Sanstead** and wife, Judith, and children, Ardis, Mary, Lois and John, arrived in Spring Garden from Bemidji, Minn., March 1, 1928. Ruth and Eva were born at Spring Garden. This was their home for five years until 1922. It was in 1933 that the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was observed in the congregation. Mrs. Eva Engberg Swanson was present, one of the last three charter members living at that time. Charter member children not present were Christiana Larson, child of M.A. Edstrom, and Lotta Christiana Johnson, daughter of Isaac Holm, at Nezperse, Idaho. Rev. G.W.

Sanstead left in July, 1933, and moved to the Tripolis-Kandiyohi parish in Minnesota. Notable improvements on the parsonage property included a water system, a new barn, garage, woodshed, a hydraulic ram was installed at the spring located south the parsonage and was piped into the house. During 1930 a cemetery association was organized and the cemetery was resurveyed and permanently marked.

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church, June 4-6, 1933, with appropriate festivities was held and a historical book was published which is of great historic value in keeping the history of the church intact.

The Swedish language was used at the worship service every other Sunday as late a 1932.



Gustav S. Sanstead was born at Garfield, Minn., graduated from Alexandria high school in 1914 and Gustavus Adolphus College in 1919. He attended Augustana Seminary at Rock Island, Ill., and was ordained into the Holy Ministry upon a call to Sillerud and Balaton. He was married to Judith Peterson of Alvarado, Minn., a Gustavus Adolphus College graduate of 1918, on June 28, 1922. Pastor Sanstead served the following parishes: Bemidji, Spring Garden, Tripolis and Kandiyohi, Lengby, Valley City, N.Dak., and Marine on the St. Croix. The children are: Ardis, Mary, Lois, John, Ruth Eva, and Carolyn.

**Rev. Oscar Sandahl**, arrived February 4, 1934, to take up the ministry here which continued to may 10, 1944, when he retired and moved to Cannon Falls where he lived until his death Feb. 6, 1950. Quoting from the minutes of the annual meeting of the Spring Garden church we read in Pastor Almen's report Dec. 4, 1944, about Pastor Sandahl's ministry: "His ten years as the leader in this congregation is recognized by our members as bringing spiritual light and guidance to all who have hearkened to his guiding counsel. His work, by God's grace, has born fruit in the lives



quickenened and strengthened for the life that is eternal." A new altar and baptism font were installed during this period in 1936. A Young People's Mission League was organized in 1937. The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary was observed June 11, 1938, when the church interior was redecorated for this festivity. Electricity was installed in the church and parsonage in 1938. A new cross replaced the old one on the steeple in 1939. A Junior Mission Society was organized in 1939. The "New Pip Organ Fund" was started by the Luther League and authorized by the congregation in 1939. It was not until 1940 that the English language was used entirely at all worship services. Many young men left for the Second World War—a total of 43 in the armed services. A subscription of \$4,890 was made to the Augustana Synod Centennial Thankoffering in gathering.

Oscar Emanuel Sandahl was born April 30, 1874, at Moheda Parish, Smaland Sweden. He came to Stillwater where he was confirmed may 30, 1889 by Rev. John Huff "whose saintly character left an indelible impression upon Oscar," says Mrs. Sandahl. He was graduated from G.A. College in 1905. He attended the Augustana Seminary at Rock Island, Ill. He was ordained June 14, 1908 at Trinity Church, Chicago Ill., by Dr. Eric Norelius, the president of the Synod. He served parishes at Marquette, Mich., 1908-1913; Bethlehem, Wahoo, Nebr., 1913-1917; Chisago lake, Center City, 1917-1927; Bethel, Minneapolis, 1927-1934; Spring Garden, 1934-1944. He was a charter member of the Board of Christian Service for 23 years. He retired in 1944 at the age of 70. He was married to Anna Hilda Hedberg June 24, 1908. Mrs. Sandahl says about moving to Spring Garden. "There was no electricity so we had purchased kerosene lamps. They were hard to find. We found some in Minneapolis. Clerks said, "where are you going to where there is no electricity.' We had to have a lamp in the kitchen in the stairway, upstairs, etc." "Da gick bra" continues Mrs. Sandahl; "everything went beautifully, people cam to help unload the two vans that brought our household goods. They had dinner for us at noon. You can be sure Fritz Anderson was there as he had been so many times before to help welcome the pastor and family upon their arrival—God make use of me in some small way." Mrs. Sandahl concludes in her autobiography.

## SPRING GARDEN CHURCH ESTABLISHED 85 YEARS—JULY 1943

On July 19, 1858, eighty-five years ago next Monday, the Spring Garden Lutheran church was organized at the home of Peter Johnson.

Next Sunday, the Pastor, Rev. Oscar Sandahl, will preach an anniversary sermon commemorating the event. All members and friends of the congregation are invited to attend.

Those who attended that first meeting and became charter members of the church are listed as follows: M.A. Edstrom wife and four children; John J. Vanberg, wife and three children; C.A. Haggstrom, wife and two children; Jacob Johanson, wife and two children; John Peter Johanson, wife and foster daughter, Ingrid Jonson; A.W. Johnson and one child; Paul Nilson; Johan Holm and one child; Isaac Holm, wife and two children; G. Holm; C. Holm; P.A. Holm; John Edvall; Peter Johnson, wife and three children; Nils Kallberg, wife and three children; Peter Lundell, wife and one child; Bengt Anderson, wife and two children; A. Enberg, wife and one child; S.A. Ljungquist; John Lagerstrom.

The first deacons were M.A. Edstrom, John Peter Johnson and Peter Johnson. Trustees were Jacob Johnson, Nils Kallberg and S. A. Younquist.

Services were held at first in the homes of the members until 1862 when a small church was built. In 1876 this was replaced by the present edifice with the building committee consisting of A. Enberg, C.A. Haggstrom, John Edstrom, John Mallberg and C.P. Safe.

### Rev. Alphonse P. Almen Begins His Ministry in Spring Garden

Rev. Alphonse P. Almen arrived July 1, 1944, and moved to Carthage, S. Dak., Sept. 1, 1949. His five-year ministry here is still fresh in the memory of the members. We quote from the minutes of 1949 from his report for the last year: "My work was a pleasant five years and with God's help I trust that the Word proclaimed and the testimony given will bear fruit for eternity." He urged, "Pray for your church and hold fast your profession of Jesus Christ to the end."

During this time the church barns were removed. A new heating system was installed in the church in 1946. A sound projector was procured. Fine gatherings for Lutheran World Action were made. A \$3,000 subscription for the Gustavus Adolphus College Appeal was made. The 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary was observed June 25-27, 1948. Prior to this anniversary the church interior was redecorated at a cost of \$1,000. Choir robes were procured and a new rug was laid in the main aisle. The Brotherhood was organized in 1948. A well was drilled at the church and modern facilities installed. Art glass windows were installed in 1949 costing \$2,986.50 and were memorial gifts in memory of the pioneers by families and individuals.



The basement was remodeled and redecorated. Rev. Birger Nelson, Pastor of St. Ansgar's Church at Cannon Falls, served as vice-pastor and student John Midtling of Luther Seminary St. Paul, conducts the services from September 1949, to July 1950.

Pastor Alphonse P. Almen was born at Balaton, Minn., on Dec. 25, 1895, the son of the pioneer pastor and wife L.G. Amen. He attended Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, and finished his college work simultaneously at Augustana while pursuing study at Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Ill. He was ordained in 1927 at

Omaha, Nebr. He was married to Ruth Johnson in 1925 at Yakima, Wash. They have four children: Louise, Mrs. Robert Swenson, of Los Angeles, Calif, Anthony, Ruth, Mrs. Reuben Littare, and Clara.

He has served parishes at Shaunavan, Sask., Canada, Amery-Clayton, Wis., Salem, Omaha and Swaburg, Nebraska, Spring Garden, Carthage, S. Dak., and Spring Lake, North branch, Minn.

### THE SPRING GARDEN CHURCH BARN

By Idella Clauson

Little has been known about the Spring Garden church barns. Many of us remembered them, but nothing was known about when they were built or when they were taken down.

In translating some of Swedish letters that Victor Magnuson had written to his father in South Dakota, I found some valuable information.



On July 5<sup>th</sup> 1910 Victor wrote that he hauled home a load of lumber for the Spring Garden church barns. In another letter on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1910 Victor wrote that he had worked on the church barns. They were now finished. There were two barns—one was 114 feet long and the other 80 feet long. There was room for 48 teams. Each member was to work three days for which they received \$2.00 a day. They each paid \$30.75 for a stall. They drew lots to see which stall was theirs.

On November 10<sup>th</sup> 1910, Victor wrote that he had been in church and had used the

new barns. He had been there one day to help take down the old barn (there evidently had been a barn before these new barns). They used the lumber from the old barn to fix the inside of the new barns. They used up all the old lumber, even a west side door. This gives us the information about the building of the barns. Now when were they torn down?

I asked many of the older members of our church. They remembered the barns but not when they were taken down. On speaking to Donald Benson about this, he remembered they were taken down when Pastor Almen was pastor in Spring Garden 1945-1949. Donald also remembered that his uncle, John Holm, had bought some of the lumber from the barns. He thought they maybe were taken down in 1946.



When Darrell Anderson, who lives in Buffalo MN, recently visited Spring Garden, he had heard about this problem. He grew up in Spring Garden. He said he was confirmed in 1946 and he knew the barns were taken down that year.

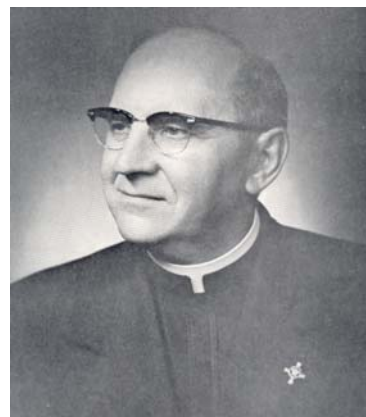
So that's the story of the Spring Garden church barns.

## **PASTOR CHELL PERIOD 1950-1964**

It was on Aug. 3, 1950, that Pastor and Mrs. Arthur L. Chell and children, Faith, James, Theodore and Jonathan arrived in Spring Garden, from Salem Lutheran Church at St. Cloud, Minn. The board members and their wives were at the parsonage to meet them and help to get them settled in their home. They had prepared the evening meal to make them feel welcome.

Pastor Arthur L. Chell was born June 11, 1902, at Fergus Falls, Minn. His parents are John and Emelia Chell. He was confirmed by pastors James Moody and Carl Solmonson.

He graduated from Northwestern College, Fergus Falls in 1923, and from Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, in 1927 and Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Ill., in 1930 on a call to the Benson, Burdock, and Starbuck parishes where Pastor Beckman had founded these churches after leaving Spring Garden in 1868. He served at Buffalo, Minn., and at Salem in St. Cloud before coming to Spring Garden Aug. 3, 1950.



He was married to Evelyn Anderson June 18, 1930, at the Scandia Grove Church, St. Peter, where she had grown up. The children are: Faith, James, Theodore and Jonathan. Pastor Chell went on to be the Chaplain at Augustana Lutheran Hospital in Chicago IL.

The church had undergone several improvements in the vacancy. New art glass windows had been installed which were dedicated after Pastor Chell's arrival on Nov. 12, 1950. The ladies made new seasonal paraments. The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the erection of the present church building was observed on Nov. 11, 1951, when Dr. Paul Andreen, Vice President of the Lutheran Minnesota Conference, was the guest speaker. In 1952 the church exterior was painted at a cost of \$1,000. That fall the Brotherhood entertained the Minnesota Conference Brotherhood at their state convention when Dr. Oscar Benson, President of the Augustana Church, was banquet speaker.

## Thousands Participate in Centennial Celebration of Spring Garden Church

From the Red Wing Republican Eagle 1958



**SPRING GARDEN**—Thousands of persons participated in the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Spring Garden Lutheran Church, which was climaxed with special anniversary services Sunday.

The celebration had been under way since July 19 when Founders Day was observed.

Other highlighting events since that time were the historical pageant last Friday, Aug. 8, presented by a cast of 170 persons and attended by a throng of 2,000 people; the worship service in the Swedish language, the pioneer historical memorial program, the Sunday School program and the anniversary jubilee and confirmation reunion on Sunday.

Former confirmands of the congregation, present members and visitors thronged to the church during the feature anniversary events

to worship and receive communion and to hear the word of God which has been proclaimed in the congregation for 100 years.

**THE PASTOR**, The Rev. A. L. Chell, and congregation paused to thank God for His blessings and to look to God for His blessings and help in days to come.

The music by the choir and special messages by former pastors, A.P. Almen, G.W. Daustead, sons of the congregation, Maurice Swenson and D.E. Clauson and the visiting pastors, Rev. Gosta Soderberg of Hassela, Sweden, Dr. Emil Swenson, president

emeritus of the Lutheran Minnesota Conference, and members of the Goodhue District all made up a program which will long be remembered by the congregation members and friends.

The women of the congregation have been praised for the splendid job of serving dinner last Sunday noon to more than a thousand people in a half-hour's time.

One of the features of the Sunday evening service was a sermon by Re. M. Swenson. His expression of gratefulness to the Spring Garden Church and Pastor Chell for staging a splendid program also expressed the feelings of many who attended this memorable event, truly the biggest in the annals of the church.

His "Hallo, Hallo, Tack, Tack," which he had heard in a railroad station at Vasteras in Sweden seemed to express his feelings. Those words are used by the announcer in railroad stations in Sweden, the pastor explained.

**THE MORNING** service on Sunday in Swedish also attracted a large crowd. Those attending joined in singing of Swedish choral numbers. The liturgists were Pastors Axel Bjorkman and Josef Mattson while the sermon was delivered by Rev. Gosta Soderberg of Sweden.

Rev. Soderberg stated that "it is sad that those who can take part in the Swedish language service are all older and that the younger folks are unable to understand or speak the Swedish language." He added, "the heartiness and fervor of this group will not be forgotten soon."

"The Garden of the Lord" was the topic by Rev. Almen at the afternoon program Sunday. Ref. Evald Olsenius gave the memorial sermon, during which it was noted that 700 burials have been made in the Spring Garden cemetery. Wives of members of the board administrators served the noon meal to visitors and the fellowship at the parsonage followed the afternoon service Sunday. The pageant last Friday evening was truly an outstanding spectacle and depicted the 100 years of history of the Spring Garden Church.

**THE EVENT** was held on the church grounds which were donated at the organization meeting of the congregation by Anders Enberg, who was represented at the event by his great grandson, Virgil Swanson, who now lives on the Enberg farm located near the church.

The pageant was presented in a stage setting comprising a log cabin on one side and Indian teepees on the other; a fire place, spinning wheel, an ox-drawn wagon, a team of horses and lumber wagon, a horse-drawn carriage. The sound system was provided by Grote TV service.

The cast of nearly 200 presented a story of the Spring Garden Church and sought to portray the meaning of the church, the word of God and of the Sacraments, and the homes of the people living in the area.

At least 37 members of the cast were direct descendants of the characters they depicted.

The first scene was in the Haggstrom home in Waxtrop, Smaland, Sweden in 1854 where the prized possessions of a Lutheran emigrant family was the Bible.

THE SCENE SHOWS the old father of the family reading Psalm 23 and leading the family in the devotions on the last evening that Carl and Marta Haggstrom are home. Those parts were taken by Arthur Haggstrom and Mrs. Harold Ward. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Clauson portrayed the parts of Far and Mor in Waxtrop.

The Norelius song of 1859 was used as the theme song to weave the story together several times during the pageant.

The Indian scene at Red Wing and the arrival of the Haggstrom, Edstrom and Vanberg families with their emigrant luggage made a colorful scene, as did the baptism scene, in which an oxcart was shown, bringing the Vanbergs and Edstroms to Vasa for the baptism of G. Vanberg and August Edstrom by Rev. Eric Norelius.

Milton Swenson took the part of John Vanberg, Mrs. Josef Lee that part of Mrs. Vanberg, Gordon Lindell the part of M. Edstrom and Mrs. Irvin Kvitem the part of Mrs. Edstrom. Dean Anderson portrayed the part of Pastor Norelius and Eva Martinson took the part of Mrs. Norelius.

Taking parts portraying the arrival of the Holm family were Isaac Holm by Wendell Swenson and Gust Holm by Donald Benson.



INDIANS PLAYED an important part in the history of the Spring Garden Church and this will be portrayed in the colorful pageant to be held on the church grounds tonight in conjunction with the centennial of the church, which is being observed this weekend. Shown above are the members of the congregation who will be

cast in the roles of Indians. First row from left to right, Gary Hultman, Dennis Benson; second row, Luverne Harmon, Elroy Anderson, Charles Blastervold, Dennis Johnson, Curtis Callstrom; third row, Gingy Swanson, Carol Herbert, Susie Herbert; fourth row, LuAnn Harmon, Charlene Seigert, Chief Ed Kleiber, Dianne Callstrom, Doris Shoblom and Margaret Swenson.

THE PAGEANT also showed the arrival of the Lundell family in a covered wagon. The part of Peter Lundell was taken by Norman Clauson. Bert Lundell served as M. Lundell. Taking the part of the wives were Ebba and Verna Lundell.

Willis Swenson took the part of Pastor Beckman at the organization meeting of the congregation. The story during this scene revealed that 32 adults and 26 children were enrolled in the church record.

The loneliness, privations and beauty of a home in a pioneer settlement were portrayed by Miss Beatrice Johnson, who took the part of Mrs. Peter Beckman. Donald Anderson was shown as little John Beckman.

The scene showed Indians peering into the home as the family prays for the safety of the father, who had walked to the organization meeting of the Lutheran Minnesota conference at Chisago City October 8, 1859.

Conference scenes were portrayed by Harold Sjoquist, Alden Sjoblom,

Merton Swenson, Burnell Bodelson, Wendell Swenson, Vernon Young, and Melvin Sjoblom.

LARRY OLSON served as the drummer for the eight Civil War soldiers—Allen Callstrom, Melfred Schultz, Conrad Lindell, Bernard Mallody, Charles Erickson, David Harmon and Donald Sjoquist.

The scene, showing David Olson, in the part of Peter Holm, taking leave of his father, John Holm, portrayed by Fred Larson, was touching to spectators.

Twelve young housewives, attired in bonnets, aprons and dresses of 1871 were shown in another scene, during which the principal parts were taken by Clarence Larson and Mrs. Clarence Haggstrom.

Mrs. Walter Martinson served as the teacher in the Swedish school scene and little Michael Kvamme was the one who won applause as he sang "Children of the Heavenly Father" in the Swedish language.

At the conclusion of the pageant the "golden years" of the church were depicted featuring the Young People's Society, the Ladies' Sewing Circle, a spinning scene, a wedding of 1900, the 50 member jubilee choir, Christmas Eve in the new parsonage, the visit to Spring Garden of Mr. E. Evald of Chicago preceding the Women's Missionary Society organization with Mrs. James Henderson as Mrs. Evald and Mrs. Victor Blastervold as her grandmother shown riding a horse-drawn carriage.

In the harvest of the years scene the part of the last charter member, Mrs. Eva Enberg Swanson, was portrayed by her daughter, Mrs. George Banks. Norman Anderson took the part of Rev. Almen and servicemen were represented by Merle Clauson, Leo Berg, John Ekstrom, Harold Mark, Melvin Trelstad, Charles Samuelson and Merle Mattson.

When Pastor Chell gave the epilogue the men who took parts of pastors moved to the stage, followed by the pageant cast. As this was taking place the Norelius song was sung and the church bell tolled to ring in the second century of the church.

Taking the parts of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Johnson, whose home the organization meeting of the church was held, were Harold Sjoquist and Mrs. B. Fox.



The pageant was written and edited by Mrs. A.L. Chell, wife of the pastor, who expressed her appreciation to all whom aided in making the celebration a distinct success.

## 170 to Present Pageant At Spring Garden Church

**SPRING GARDEN** – “Spring Garden Under God’s Blessings, 1858-1958” is the title of the centennial pageant to be presented on the Spring Garden church grounds at 8:30 p.m. Friday by a cast of 170 people, 37 per cent of whom are direct descendants of the persons they portray in the five episodes which will tell the story of the founding of Spring Garden church on July 19, 1858.

The story of the pioneer settlers who came to Spring Garden area of Leon township in 1858 will be depicted in scenes of the preparations for departure from Sweden by the Carl Haggstrom family in 1854; the arrival at Red Wing by river boat in 1855; the journey to Spring Garden by oxcart and the journey to the Norelius home in Vasa in 1856 for the first baptisms.

**THE CHURCH** organizational meeting on July 19, 1858 will be presented by descendants of the charter members who were at the original meeting. Life in the

community will be pictured in the “Osta for Prasten” scene, as well as by the Swedish school scene in 1885. The young people of the church will depict the organization of the Luther League in 1892, when, as part of the scene, a debate will occur on “Drinking is worse than war.” Also to be presented will be a group of ten persons whose roles are those of the ten pastors who have served the congregation during the century.

Members of the congregation have been busy finding costumes in the attics of their homes to wear in the colorful pageant. Included in those costumes resurrected from mothballs are a stovepipe hat, a Civil War uniform, and uniforms from world Wars I and II.

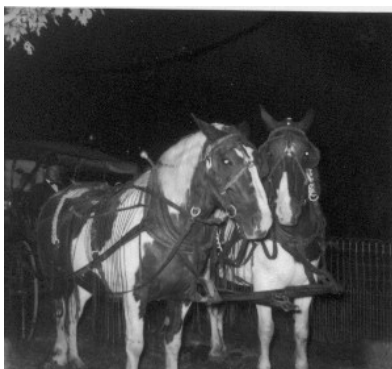
**INCLUDED** in the properties to be used in the pageant are a food box brought by the Vanberg family in 1854, now in possession of Mrs. Anton Bodelson; a food basket and herring jar from 1854 now owned by Mrs. Jennings Miller; an immigrant truck brought to his country by the

Haggstrom family and now owned by Anton Haggstrom; Swedish sleighbells owned by Fred Clauson; a coffee grinder, spinning wheel and other items to be used for the spinning scene and other articles. Anton Haggstrom will wear his grandfather’s leather boots.

The pageant will be held on church property, donated by a charter member, Anders Enberg, at the organizational meeting a century ago. Virgil Swanson, a grandson of Enberg, will portray his grandfather at the pageant. Music will be furnished by the Swedish singers under the direction of Mrs. Fred Larson.

The central pageant committee consists of Mrs. A.L. Chell, chairman; Mrs. Vernon young, secretary; Mrs. Clarence Larson; Mrs. Merle Clauson; Miss Faith Chell and Mrs. Lucille Swenson.

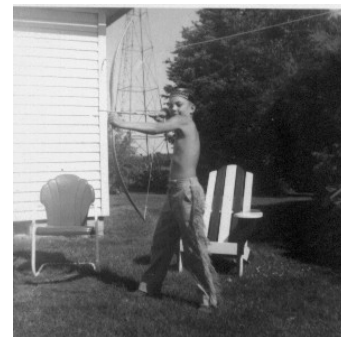
Spring Garden church has a special significance in the Lutheran faith. The Minnesota conference of the church met at Spring Garden five times when it was first organized.



Tom & Jerry, the Oxen



100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pageant Cast



Dennis Benson practicing being an Indian for the 1958 Pageant

## PHOTOS AND NEWS ARTICLES FROM THE 1958 PAGEANT



SOME OF THE FIRST settlers of Spring Garden are shown above in a scene from a pageant presented Friday evening on the church lawn by the members of the congregation. Spring Garden Church is observing its 100th anniversary this weekend and the colorful pageant was

one of the highlights of the event. From left to right are Mrs. Joseph Lee as Mrs. John Vanberg; Gordon Lindell as Magnus Edstrom; Miles Kvittum as Carl Edstrom; Milton Swenson as John Vanberg; Eva Martinson as Mrs. Eric Norelius and Dean Anderson as Dr. Eric Norelius.

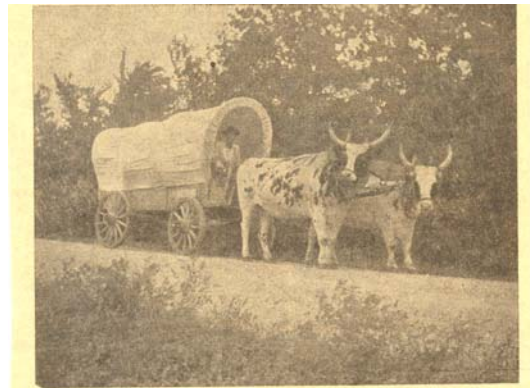


THE THIRD ANNUAL concert of the combined choir of St. August's, Van, Spring Garden and First English Lutheran churches and the Congregational church, all of the Cannon Falls area, was presented Sunday evening, May 4 in Cannon Falls. The chorists' robes are different, because each group wore the costume of their own church. Director of the 120 voice choir is Arvid Swenson. All members of the group are from grades five through eight in the various Cannon Falls area schools. (By B.S. Cannon Falls Correspondent.)



SCHOOLS DURING the first years of Spring Garden were much more crude and primitive than they are now. Shown above are a few of the children who took part in the Swedish School scene, part of the Spring Garden pageant held Friday evening in conjunction with the centennial observance of the church. Shown above in front of a log cabin are, first row, left to right,

Micahel Kvamme, Dianne Freeberg, Dorothy Clauson; second row, Donna Peterson, Rodney Anderson and Michael Banks. The committee in charge of the pageant that had a cast of over 150 people was composed of Mrs. Arthur L. Chell, Mrs. Ralph Magnuson, Mrs. Lucille Swenson, Mrs. Clarence Larson, Mrs. Merle Clauson, Faith Chell and Mrs. Vernon Young.



JERRY'S ESCAPADE—The oxen, Jerry and Tom, who took a colorful part in the Spring Garden pageant Friday evening, will long be remembered here, for it was Jerry that captured the concern of many Saturday morning when he was not to be found in the Spring Garden parsonage pasture. Tom was alone—Jerry had disappeared during the night.

A search was begun which lasted until 8 o'clock in the evening. His tracks could be found and then they disappeared. Men took off in searching parties through the corn fields. Victor Blastervold took to the air with Fred Grote in his private plane and searched the area.

Then about 8 o'clock, Jonathan Chell answered the telephone and received the message "Jerry has been found", from Merle Clauson. He reported that when Norman Clauson's helper went to the swine house to feed the heifers and opened the door, what did he behold but Jerry, the lost oxen! So much excitement had been caused by Jerry's disappearance that it can not all be told here but maybe some day a book will be written about it.

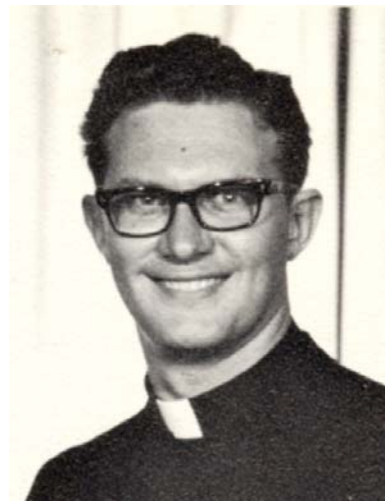
### Rev. Henry Noordzy 1965-1970

The Rev. Henry D. Noordzy accepted the call and assumed his duties as of May 24, 1965. Pastor Noordzy is a native of Billings, Montana. He attended the public schools in Billings. He received his B.A. degree from Rocky Mountain College in Billings and his B.D. degree from Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary in Minneapolis.

Upon ordination by the Minnesota Synod (LCA) in June 1964, Pastor Noordzy accepted the call as an associate pastor of Holy Nativity Lutheran Church, New Hope, Crystal, suburbs of Minneapolis, where he served until coming to Spring Garden.

Pastor Noordzy and his wife, Nancy have two children, Sheila Jo and David.

Pastor Noordzy and family moved from Cannon Falls to Duluth where he became the pastor of Bethany Church.

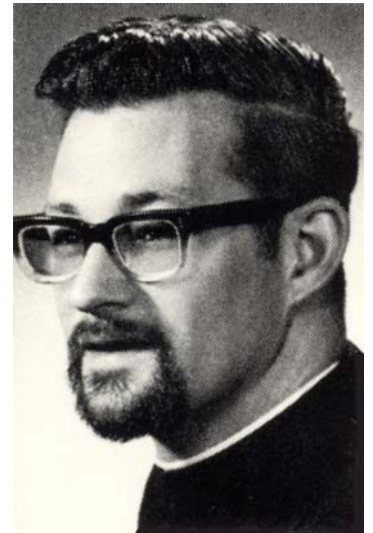


## Rev. Ken Kilheffer 1970-1981

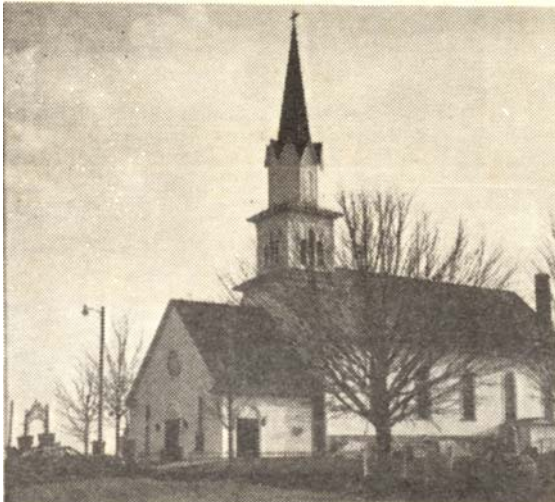
Pastor Kenneth L. Kilheffer and family moved from Walnut Grove, MN to Spring Garden on December 1, 1970. Before assuming his duties at Spring Garden Church, Pastor Kilheffer, following his ordination from the Gettysburg Seminary in Pennsylvania in 1963, served two years as an assistant in Baltimore, MD, two years as associate assistant pastor in Cloquet and nearly four years in Walnut Grove. His wife, Sari was a first grade teacher in Maryland. They are now living in Smithsburg, Maryland.

Pastor Kilheffer and Sari have four children, Mark, Kari, Heather and Holly.

During his years at Spring Garden, the church added a new entrance way and office for the pastor, along with other areas. The first women were elected to serve on council and the church celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church building in 1976 with a heritage celebration.



## 1976 – Spring Garden Church Building is 100 Years Old



(From the Red Wing Republican Eagle)

The Spring Garden Lutheran Church is celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its church building on Sunday, October 3 beginning at the morning worship service at 10:45 a.m. with communion and special music. At 12 noon a potluck dinner will be held with everyone invited, especially all former members. Guest are asked to bring a dish to pass, their own dishes and sandwiches.

At 2 p.m. an afternoon program and rededication of the church will be held outdoors. Dress accordingly and bring lawn chairs if you have them. Several scenes from the history of the church will be portrayed.

The present building is the second building of this 118-year old congregation. The settlers, coming from Sweden, first met

in the Carl a. Haggstrom log cabin in July of 1856 with the congregation being officially organized in July of 1858. They built a house of logs, sod and hay to be used at the parsonage for the first pastor, Peter Beckman. A small church was built in 1862, but in eight years the congregation had grown so rapidly that in 18765 they voted to build a new church and the building committee was admonished not to go in debt over \$100. The congregation in 1875 numbered 279 communicant members with 252 children, a total of 531. As of December 31, 1976, the membership is 546, 137 children and 409 confirmed members

From January 1876 on, the farmers were busy hauling grain by sleigh into Red Wing and bringing lumber home for the church. Stone for the foundation was gotten from the quarry in Edgewood behind the Raymond Ohnstad home. They commenced building May 1 and by October 1 of the same year it was completed with a cost of \$7,512.32, with a debt of \$1,778.10. The same year the congregation also raised \$2,000 toward the building of Gustavus Adolphus College.

Down through the century many improvements have been made to this beautiful “church by the side of the road” both inside and out, with the latest being the entry dedicated last year and the building painted this year.

One of the Bible passages used at the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building, November 11, 1951, was from Psalms 4: “Enter into His gates with Thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; Give thanks unto Him and bless His name.”

## Antique Tree For Candles Found At Spring Garden

From Newspaper Archives 1976



The antique tree used in the social hall of the basement was first discovered in the bell tower of Spring Garden church by Pastor Killeffer. On Sunday, November 29, the first Sunday of Advent, at the family Advent decoration meeting, Pastor Killeffer, Carl Callstrom, Milton Swenson, Ralph Magnuson and Charles Drometer brought it down, cleaned and repaired it.

The tree is in five parts. The central section is over six feet tall and has four arms which hold four squares containing candle holders. These squares are in graduated sized with the smallest at the top. The central post also contains a candleholder at the top. The tree is made of wood and painted green.

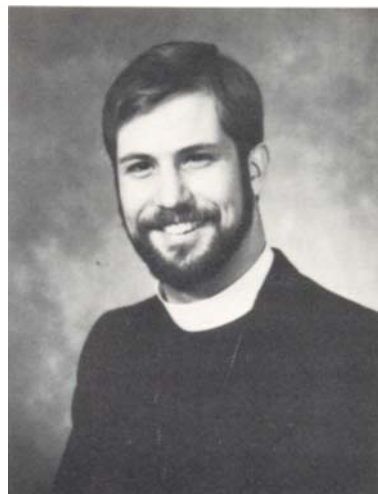
Mrs. Leonard Anderson (Ida) remembers it was used in the front of the church many years ago. As yet she is the only one who remembers it. At the concert at Gustavus Adolphus College in the chapel, they had decorated posts with similar squares holding votive lights. It is believed this is an old Swedish decoration. If anyone knows any more about this please let pastor Killeffer know.

As a footnote to this article—the antique tree was again discovered in 2007 when the parsonage was sold and the attic cleaned out. The tree was decked out with candles and lit once again during the Sunday School Christmas program in December.

## Rev. Joel Borchelt 1982-1987

Pastor Joel Borchelt, Cambridge, and wife Debi began their ministry here January 1, 1982. He was born in Maryland, a suburb of Washington, DC. His father, Ben, was patent examiner, with a degree in law and engineering. employed by the federal government. His mother, Sarah, went to night school, received her high school diploma, and continued until she got a master's degree in social work. She was employed by the Washington DC Welfare department. Pastor Joel has two brothers, Ben and Paul, and one sister, Margaret. When his parents retired, they moved back to their hometown of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, where they now reside.

“Almost all my schooling has been in Lutheran schools,” said pastor, “Except three years of public high school, beginning at parochial Lutheran Day school and continuing through seminary; Christ Seminex at St. Louis, Missouri.” I always knew I wanted to be a pastor and my mentor and advisor was my pastor, William H. Kohn, Bishop of the AELC, who was very active in Lutheran Unity circles.”



After graduating from the seminary in 1978, pastor worked as a layman at the Cambridge Lutheran Church with the Rev. Robert Engstrom. He was ordained at the Lutheran Church in America, Minnesota Synod Convention at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, May 1979, and continued at Cambridge as the assistant pastor until he received the call to Spring Garden. Both Joel and Debi are interested in music. Debi will direct the Spring Garden Choir. They have two Children, Ruth and Peter.

## Church Celebrates 125<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Sunday July 10

From the Cannon Falls Beacon, July 1983

**LEON**—Spring Garden Evangelical Lutheran Church overflowed Sunday with people who had been baptized, confirmed or married there or simply wanted to join in the church's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Many also came to hear Bishop Herbert Chilstrom, leader of the Minnesota Synod, Lutheran Church in America.

The celebration will continue this Sunday, at 9:30 a.m., the “Sounds of Praise,” a men's quartet from Kasson, Minn., will present the service. At 12:30 P.M., The Youth Ministry will sponsor an old fashioned picnic with games at Wastedo School. Each family is to bring a dish to pass, table service and lawn chairs or a blanket. Ice cream, coffee and nectar will be furnished.

**The major anniversary event** began with a procession of acolytes, past and present choir members, Re. Joel Borchelt and Chilstrom. A banner made by Debi Borchelt, Pauline and Lyla Swanson proclaimed the theme, "Cherish the Past, Pray for the Future."

Rev. Henry Noordzy of Bethany Church, Duluth, and Rev. Rodney Anderson of St. Andrew's Church, Eden Prairie, sang with the choir. In the audience were Rev. and Mrs. Maurice Swenson, retired in St. Peter, Minn., Rev. Kenneth Kilheffer and Sari, Kari, Heather and Holly of Faith Church, Avoca, Minn., and Rev. Noordzy's wife, Nancy, with Sheila and David.

Patty Zimmerman, who chaired the event, read greetings from former pastors and members of the congregation unable to attend and from area churches.

Chilstrom spoke of two-way streets, or arrows. Man first is pierced by the love of God sent from the Holy Spirit in the guise of a friend, he said, such as a Sunday school teacher or church member. The next arrow begins with the individual responding to God daily. A third arrow begins when a person reaches out to others.

"We are here by grace alone," he said, "and as we respond in faith, God will give us a vision of the work for us to minister to." Chilstrom reminded listeners of the needs of the hungry, tired, sorrowing, sick and poor.

The morning worship service ended with a traditional Swedish anthem, "Kom Lotam Oss."

Ost kaka, a cheesecake, highlighted a Swedish dinner served on picnic tables. It was 94 degrees outdoors.

The afternoon meeting took place on a stage in the parking lot. A sunrise amid clouds was painted on the

backdrop. Borchelt offered opening and closing prayers and Swenson, Kilheffer and Noordzy brought congratulations.

A nine-member group sang four songs in Swedish, after which there was presentation of the church's history, written and directed by Debra Knudson. Readers were three men and three women representing the older generation, middle age and youth: Tim Anderson, Chuck Drometer, Milton Swenson, Kim Olson, Carol Fandry and Betty Sjoquist.

They told of the first three Swedish settlers, Johannes Vanberg, Carl Haggstrom and Magnus Edstrom, who brought their families here in 1855. From the writings of former pastors Norelius, Beckman and Cavallin they read about the beginnings of different organizations.

Speaking of the present, readers told about the goals and hopes of the congregation and Spring Garden's support of Norman Bakken, a missionary to South America. Two poems ended the presentation, one written by H.J. Fredrickson for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and a new one written by Patty Zimmerman.

Antiques representing the church and its members were displayed in three cases. New altar paraments given in memory of Esther Miller were dedicated. Those attending also made note of improvements made inside and outside the Church.

Activities continued Thursday, when the Lutheran Church women honored men and women of the congregation 70 and over. Delores Callstrom, Red Wing, talked about treasures of the past. Members brought old handwork and clothing for display.

## 100-Year-Old Bell to Be Replaced

*From the Cannon Falls Beacon, July 1983 with a correction the following week saying the bell will not be replaced, but that a 5" ceramic bell commemorating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary had arrived and was available as a memento of the anniversary.*

The ceramic bell commemorating the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Spring Garden Church is here. Memories of the bell at Spring Garden came flooding back. Norman and Doris Anderson ring it for worship services and toll it for funeral services today.

Raymond Anderson, now deceased, rang it for 25 years and for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Raymond's son Donald, now a high school teacher in St. Charles, recalls these memories.

As a boy, about 6 or 7, he remembers watching his dad ring the bell using the wheel, which is about 7 feet in diameter. "He would put his foot on a rung and stand on it to start the wheel which tolled the bell. In order to stop the bell so there was no after tone he would have to use his whole body and he was not a very big man. "The only time the bell was rung by a rope was for a funeral. Then each ring faded out until the next ring. The bell kept ringing while the coffin was carried from the church to the gravesite and then the ringing stopped suddenly. Don said, "It was my job to stand at the window of the bell tower and let him know when they had reached the grave site. If I couldn't see the grave site from the tower, I'd stand out by the fence and wave to Dad."

The bell sounded at the victory of the close of two world wars. At a resolution recorded in 1889, the bell was to be used as a fire alarm in the following manner: one toll for east, two for south, three for west and four for north, but there is no record that it was used as such.

The resolution of 1880 decided that the church should secure a bell and that "the bell shall be of good metal and about as large as the Vasa church bell." In 1882 the bell was brought from Red Wing having been made in Troy, New York. As Ludwig Miller and F.I Johnson were hauling it to the church by a team of horses from Red Wing, they were striking it as they drove by the homes. It weighed 1800 pounds and cost \$688.45. These words are inscribed on the bell: "Unto the church I do you call, Death to the grave summons all."

## Tent blows down at Spring Garden 125<sup>th</sup>

By Ruby Magnuson in the Cannon Falls Beacon, July 1983

The winds blew and the tent came down, but no one was seriously hurt at the second Sunday 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Spring Garden Lutheran Church.

The celebration began with the 9:30 a.m. worship served July 17 conducted the "Sounds of Praise", a male quartet. Besides singing, the quartet led the congregation in the singing of songs and also told of their Christian faith. Following this most enjoyable service a church group served bars and coffee amidst much fellowship.

At 12:30 p.m. the congregation met at the Wastedo School for an "old fashioned" picnic sponsored by the youth ministry. A large tent and many picnic tables greeted the group. The potluck dinner served under the covered east entry was delicious and ended with ice cream, pop and coffee as a treat from the young people. Then the group divided with some playing or watching softball and some singing in a sing-along of old hymns led by Ruby Magnuson, in this large tent rented from the Cannon Falls Jaycees.

Halfway through the sing-a-long, it began to rain and it trickled in on the north side so some had to move in toward the center. Next the curtains on that side were

dropped as it continued to pour, with lightening and thunder.

When the singing ended we began to play bingo led by Marie McLean with the anniversary buttons give as prizes. Now the group on the opposite side had to move toward the center as the wind had shifted to the south side. The rain came down in torrents and as the curtains were starting to be taken down on that side, the wind took the tent.

Men immediately tried to hold up the supporting poles but the wind was stronger and we all ran for the school the picnic has turned into a "splash party". I don't know what had happened with the softball group, but they too came in and water just dripped off all of us. Edith Martinson laughingly said to me, "Your hair sure looks a mess" and I retorted "Yours doesn't look any better."

As we looked out on the continuing storm, the tent lay flat on the ground blown clear of the picnic tables.

Inside we were enjoying pop and chocolate ice cream cones, happy and thankful we were all safe.

Indus Haggstrom said, "This was so much fun we should do this again" but Jan Olson wondered "How are they ever going to portray this picnic at the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary?"

## Songfest ends week of Bible School

From the Cannon Falls Beacon, June 1987

LEON—Spring Garden Vacation Bible School held at the Wastedo School finished their week's study with the grades performing a songfest at the morning worship service at Spring Garden on June 21. Pat Forehand, accompanied on the piano by Rachelle Hanson led the service. They were in charge of the music for the week.

The theme for the week June 15-19 was "Serve the Lord" under the directorship of Jan Larson and Ruth Sjoblom.

Teachers were Laurie Johnson, Joan Clauson, Val Haggstrom, Betty Sjoquist, Carol Hanson, and Debi Borchelt. Cindy Sjoquist took care of the Kitchen and Tiffany Larson the babysitting.

All the children wore T-shirts they had designed with the logo "Serve the Lord" and each child made an alphabet pillow with their initial. These were displayed in a tub labeled "Alphabet Soup" at the worship service.

## Farewell Coffee hour give for Borchelts

From the Cannon Falls Beacon, August 1987

A farewell coffee hour was held following the August 9 worship service, to wish Pastor Joel and Debi Borchelt, Ruth and Peter, their well wishes. They will be leaving for Augusta, Georgia to serve the Advent Lutheran Church. Debi will be working as a nurse in an Augusta hospital. They were presented with many gifts, among them an etching of the church by Marilyn McQuarry, two souvenir bells picturing the church to Ruth and Peter to remind them of their baptism here in Spring Garden, and a quilt from the LCW. These were presented by Patty Zimmerman, church council president, Beau Larson and Lyla Swanson, president of the LCW. Pastor Joel's mother, Sarah (Ben) Borchelt, Cape Girardeau, Mo., is also here helping them move.

Pastor Borchelt presented Kelly Grothe, Wanamingo, a gift of farewell also during the service. She has served as organist for the past 8 months and is leaving the last of August to attend Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Mr. and Mrs. Anthony (Marilyn) Almen, Byron and Susan, Minnetonka, and Mrs. Alphonse (Ruth) Almen attended worship service at the Spring Garden Church on August 9. Mrs. Ruth Almen, Minneapolis is the wife of former Pastor

Almen who served the Spring Garden church from 1944-49. He died in 1976. Now their grandson, Byron will serve as organist for Spring Garden. He is a sophomore at St. Olaf, Northfield and will commute.

## **Revs. Heidi and Lon Kvanli 1988-1992**

When Revs. Lon and Heidi Kvanli turned in the driveway at the Spring Garden parsonage after a long drive from Palisade, Minnesota, and realized many helping hands were ready to help them unload their belongings, they had a good feeling about the joint call they and accepted here.

It took just an hour to unload two trucks, then the Kvanlis, including preschoolers Rachel and Kara, were invited to a potluck dinner at the church. The parsonage refrigerator was stocked with breakfast necessities.

“We have received a warm welcome,” said Rev. Lon Kvanli. He and his wife Heidi, also an ordained pastor, accepted joint 125 percent call to the parish and will be sharing duties at Spring Garden, which has 480 baptized members and attendance of around 180.

The couple was the first in the Minnesota Synod of the former LCA to share a call, and now are among about 250 clergy couples nationwide in the ELCA.

They previously served a two-point parish at Palisade and McGregor in Aitkin County. He is a native of Montevideo in Western Minnesota while she grew up in Crystal.

They decided they wanted to serve together after their seminary internships at two different churches in Little Falls. They met at Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota when Lon transferred there from Willmar Community College.

The couple will share Sunday worship service duties, and will divide other duties based on interest and expertise. They are expecting twins in late April

The Kvanlis are enthused about Spring Garden Lutheran Church. “It has a lot going for it, including Bible studies and other programs.” Said Rev. Lon.

Rev. Lon was a wrestler in high school and college, placing third in the nation in his weight class in 1979. Heidi enjoys playing the piano and guitar, and taught piano in Palisade, an activity she doesn't plan to resume until the children are older. They are also trained to lead Marriage Enrichment seminars, which they hope to do in the Cannon Falls area.



## **June, 1992**

A “send-off” program and potluck to honor Pastor Lon was held at Spring Garden Church following the 10:30 a.m. worship service on June 28. He has been called as Pastor of the Urland/Wangen Prairie Parish. Pastor George Thompson is not retiring, but just slowing down. He will be the visitation pastor. Lon begins his pastorate there July 1. At the beginning of the worship service Merle Larson called him to the front of the church and Pam Davis, president of the council, presented pastor Lon with a wild-life print from the congregation. Following the potluck Merle Larson introduced the numbers. A video was shown entitled, “Pastor Lon’s Trek.” It showed the trip from the Spring Garden parsonage to the Urland and Wangen Prairie churches. Highway 52 was called the Neutral Zone in the video, now as in the past, it divided the Swedish congregation of Spring Garden from the Norwegian congregation of Urland and Wangen Prairie. Songs of “fun” were presented by the Hosiannas, Toni Reiter, a trio of Toni, Ann Siverling and Ruth Sjoblom, and by the youth with the choir ending the program singing the “Irish Blessing.” The highlight of the program was a visit from “Hannah of Lutefisk Lake” portrayed by Debbie Knudson. It was a fun time for all, making it a little easier to say good-bye. The planning committee was Toni Rieter, Ann Siverling and Ruth Sjoblom, namely the Pips.

Pastor Lon said he is “looking forward to new challenges” in his new position, and said this opportunity is unique because he’ll have a new job without having to move. “Most pastors who take a new call have to uproot their family and leave their friends,” he said. “My children can stay in the same school.” And, he said it will be a new experience to have, at age 35, his first full-time job!

## Heidi Kvanli 1992-1995



Spring Garden is the place of childhood memories of our four children. Rachel was four and Kara was two when we arrived in February of 1988, and our twins, Daniel and Michael, were born two months later. The beautiful parsonage, the large yard with its spectacular views of the countryside, the silhouette of Spring Garden Church against a colorful sunset—these are the pictures that are forever imprinted in our minds and in our hearts. Spring Garden was “home” in a way that has not been matched wither before or since our seven-and-a half years in rural Cannon Falls.

The memories of the people, the worship services, and the events of Spring Garden remain vivid for us, and the sheer volume of these memories would require several pages—so, here is the condensed version...

### **The people**

Yes, we remember most of your names, but we’re not going to list them all here. You know who you are!

### **Worship Services**

Christmas Even Candlelight and Easter Sunday—and everything in between (by the way, the “hallelujah sticks” introduced by Heidi at Spring garden have been a part of every Easter service at her churches ever since!), confirmations baptisms, weddings, funerals, children’s sermons, dramas, midweek Lenten serviced, holy Week serviced, healing serviced, prayer vigils, outdoor services at Shades of Sherwood, Sunday mornings, and Saturday evenings.

### **Music**

Organ, piano, guitar, drums, senior choir, junior choir, youth choir, cherub choir, Christmas cantatas, Hosanna (both the song and the women’s singing group), Crimson River, Wellspring, talent nights and special programs.

### **Youth**

Vacation Bible School youth nights, lock-ins, retreats, confirmation instruction, piano lessons and recitals, awful waffle parties, biblical ice cream festivals, parking lot drive-ins, Halloween parties in the barn, barn dances, pizza Bible Studies, junk food Bible studies, mission trip to Mexico, youth serviced and breakfast at the Country Kitchen with high school graduates.

### **Sunday School Christmas Programs**

*Getting Ready for the Miracle, Joy to the World, Run to the Stable, The greatest Gift, What if Jesus Was Born today, and An Old-Fashioned Christmas Pageant.*

### **Adult Classes and Bible Studies**

Living Discipleship, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, Job, Hosea, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> john, Baptism, Prayer Study, Lutheran Liturgy, Women’s Bible Studies, Mission 90, Witness, ELCA Sexuality Study, Twelve Keys to an Effective church.

### **Other Events**

Advent Festivals, Country Club events, Midsummer Smorgasbord, Hosanna Retreats at park Lake, marriage Enrichment Retreats in Owatonna at Assisi Height, Church Council Retreat at Assisi Heights, Special Programs: *Celebrate God’s Gifts, Kids Tellin’ Kids, That’s Where the Joy Comes From, Storytelling’ Man*

The years were full and time quickly flew. In the summer of 1992, Lon was called to Urand and Wangen Prairie, and Heidi remained as solo pastor at Spring Garden. With the church council, and with much prayer, a vision statement was developed for Spring Garden: To be an evangelizing community of faith, seeking creative ways to reach beyond our membership with the Living Water of Jesus Christ. This mission vision was inspired by our church name and two related Bible texts: Isaiah 58:11b, “and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whos waters never fail.” And Ezekiel 47:1-12, Ezekiel’s vision of the spring of water flowing from the sanctuary and out into the barren countryside, bring life, healing, and fruitfulness where it flows.



To Me (Heidi), these will always be Spring Garden texts. I can't read them without picturing the white church with the tall steeple and the lush spring-fed countryside around it. There was a time when I grieved the apparent death of this vision. Yet, even now, all these years later, the image of life-giving water flowing from the temple still resonated in my heart, renews me in purpose, gives me hope, and inspires me in mission and ministry. My pastoral identity, my leadership, and spiritual life, are all shaped by truth and the power of this vision and its compelling call to bring the life-giving gospel to a thirsty and barren world.



Our years at Spring Garden were filled with family milestones and memories, friendships and music, laughter and tears, great joy and deep heartache. The parting was painful, yet our thankfulness abounds at the privilege of having served God in our midst. Your and forever will dear to our hearts.

Grace, peace, and hope be with you on this occasion of your 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the years to come.

Pastors Heidi and Lon Kvanli  
Rachael, Kara, Daniel, Michael

**Rev. Bruce D. Anderson**  
**Interim 1995-1996**  
**Pastor 1996**

Pastor Bruce Anderson was installed as Pastor at Spring Garden on September 22, 1996. He served here until his resignation effective January 1, 1997.



**Revs. Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin**  
**1997 – Present**

Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin began as co-pastors at Spring Garden Lutheran Church on August 16, 1997. They came from Northfield where Nick had been the associate pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran Church for 5 ½ years and she was studying at Luther Seminary in St. Paul

She grew up near Bombay and is the daughter of Lowell and Judy Broin. She graduated from Wartburg College in 1985 and Luther Seminary in 1997.

Nick grew up in Quakertown, Pennsylvania and graduated for St. Olaf in 1984 and Luther Seminary in 1988. His first call was at United Lutheran Church in Walters, Minnesota

“We've met many wonderful people in Spring Garden and look forward to working with them and developing a sense of mission,” Pastor Nick said. “We especially look forward to working with children and youth. That was a large part of my work in Northfield.” Pastor Nick said they have a strong background in church camping and youth ministry. “We enjoy folk music and blue grass music – we both play guitar and banjo.

Nick and Cindy have three sons, Josiah, Noah, Jonah and a daughter, Emma.



Dear Friends,

150 Years of Making Jesus Christ Known! Our pioneer forebears claimed that mission through the daily toil of labor, family and community. They hinged their lives and hopes on the belief that God was with them. As they lived their lives out in the shadow of God's mission, they prepared the seedbed for us—for faith to take root and bloom in a new generation. It is true that history is made up of the dates, facts and records of our congregation's life. But history is also made in the stories written between the lines of the official record. We hope we have captured some of those stories from the last 50 years. In these stories you can see Christ at work in the lives of real people, the forbears of our faith.

Even as history reminds us of the past, it also helps us lay claim to the future. Spring Garden will break much new ground in the next 150 years. We will lean forward into that future, knowing the place from which we have come. We have a "goodly heritage" (Psalm 16:6) and we walk by faith into the future God has in store for us. Let it be said 150 years from now that we pioneers from 2008 were faithful in preparing Spring Garden's seedbed for a people yet unborn. Let it be said of our time that Christ was made know through our church and our people. With the Holy Spirit leading us, a new history is about to begin. We are privileged to be a part of the opening chapters. As God has blessed our history, may God continue to bless Christ's mission through Spring Garden's future!

Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin 2008

## MUSIC AND SERVICE OF SONG

"Music—made to give thanks unto the Lord." Psalms. The psalmbook, the pioneers loved so much, is part of the rich spiritual heritage brought to us from Sweden by the first settlers of Spring Garden.

The first Cantor, klockare, was John Lagerstrom, a charter member of the church, who served as organist from 1864-79, 1883-86 & 1887-96. We read in the minutes of 1896, "The congregation's faithful organist, John Lagerstrom, who has served many years, resigned at Easter and it was touching moment both for him and for the congregation which he had served so faithfully for such a long time, as long as he was able to do so. He died Feb. 16, 1916.

His son, Reinhold, organist from 1879-1883, born in Spring Garden 1861, was given music lessons by his mother at the age of 4. He studied at Carlton College, Gustavus Adolphus and the Music Academy in Stockholm, where he played in the church where the Swedish royalty worshiped, after which he became a music director at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, from 1888-1907. He was an organist in St. Peter for 43 years. He was a composer. He was given the Doctory of Music degree from the Grand Conservatory of Music in New York for his composition "Aeolsharpan."

Emma Anderson served as organist from 1886-1887.



J. Alfred Gustafson

J. Alfred Gustafson succeeded John Lagerstrom as organist for a period of 36 years and had been with the choir for more than 40 years. He had studied under Dr. Reinhold Lagerstrom. Thus the influence of the musical gifts were passed on from one to another in Spring Garden. Gladys Anderson succeeded her uncle, J. Alfred Gustafson, as organist from 1931-1932, whom in turn Archie Swenson 1934-1944 succeeded.

Miss Esther Norlin, daughter of pastor Norlin, was music instructor for many young people in the church, an influence including Gladys Anderson, Archie Swenson and the present organists Mrs. Fred Larson, who has served since 1944.



Mrs. Francis Larson



Ralph & Gladys Magnuson



Byron Almen



Ann Siverling

### ORGANISTS THROUGH THE YEARS

John Lagerstrom	1864-1879
Reinhold Lagerstrom	1879-1888
John Lagerstrom	1883-1886
Emma Anderson	1886-1887
John Lagerstrom	1887-1896
Alfred Gustafson	1896-1931
Gladys Anderson	1931-1933
Archie Swenson	1934-1944
Francis Larson	1944-1968
Gladys Magnuson	1969-1984
Cindy Benitt	1984-1986
Kelly Grothe	1986-Aug. 1987
Byron Almen	1987-Aug. 1990
Alan Christianson	1990
Ann Siverling	1991-1993
Helen Nerison	1994-Present



Helen Nerison, Present Organist

A Melodeon was the first musical instrument purchased for the first church in 1866 when the congregation borrowed money from the first preacherland fund at 10% interest. This was given in trade to John Lagerstrom and \$80.00 for an organ. The Melodeon is today in the possession of Mrs. Carl Sorenson, a granddaughter of Mr. Lagerstrom.



The first pipe organ was purchased in 1893 for \$1,000 by the Youth Group. It was placed in the balcony where it was in use until 1953, when the present Reuter organ, built at Lawrence, Kan., was installed for the cost of \$7,295.71. Trumpet tunes, by Purcell, was played by Dr. Reinhold Lagerstrom at the dedication service of the first pipe organ as well as by Dr. Paul Alwardt of Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, at the dedication of the present organ May 10, 1953.

## Antique Organ Donated to Spring Garden Church



John August Holm purchased an organ Number 1013 on June 19, 1885 for \$100. At the time of purchase from the Moline Cabinet Organ Company, Moline, Illinois, John August and wife Sarah had three daughters, Emma age seventeen, Selma age twelve and Alma age seven. They lived at Leon Township, Section Eleven, Goodhue County, Minnesota.

The organ was in the possession of Selma and her husband Andrew Larson for many years. It was passed on to their daughter and the granddaughter of John August Holm, Esther Larson Miller and then to great granddaughter Mary Miller Urevig. It was then decided to present it to the Spring Garden Church in December 2007.

John August Holm was born November 28, 1841 in Habo Formsanling, Sweden. He came to America in 1854 at the age of thirteen with his father, brothers and sisters. They lived in Illinois for two years and then came to Minnesota and to Spring Garden. He was confirmed at the Spring Garden church in 1858. He

married Sarah (Sara) Sofia (Sophia) Frid (Freed) on May 18, 1867 at Spring Garden by Pastor Beckman. Witnesses at the wedding were John Malberg and C. Anderson. John August farmed and was also a fireman at the Spring Garden church.

Sarah was born on November 29, 1848 at Grenna, Jonkippings Ian, Sweden. Her family farm home name was (and still is) Frid. She came at age sixteen with her sister in 1866.

John August died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of fifty-eight years, four months and twenty-six days on April 24, 1900. Sarah died on October 16, 1906 at the age of fifty-seven years, ten months and 18 days. She was bedridden with Rheumatism for some years. They are buried in the Spring Garden Cemetery. Many of the descendants of John August and Sarah Holm were baptized, confirmed, and married in this church and many are also buried here. The family felt this was a meaningful place for the organ, where all can enjoy this historical item.

**CHOIR** - The choir has sung at services and special occasions through the years. The members of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary choir, shown below were: Carl Magnuson, Ward mark, Fred Larson, Elmer Anderson, Jonathan Chell, Conrad Lindell, Dean Anderson, David Harmon, Ernest Swenson, Pastor Chell, Mrs. Ernest Swenson, Mrs. Elmer



Anderson, Mrs. Carl Magnuson, Mrs. Ralph Magnuson, Mrs. Gordon Lindell, Mrs. Clarence Larson, Mrs. Vernon Young, Mrs. Paul Erickson, Mrs. Fred Larson, Mrs. Arthur Chell, Faith Chell, Annette Magnuson, Jeraldine Anderson, Sandra young and Barbara Swanson.

It is interesting to note that Ernest T. Swenson, who sang in the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee choir, sang in the Centennial Choir of 1958.

The settlers brought the Psalmbook from Sweden which was used for the worship services. The singing of the familiar hymns and psalms no doubt knit the folks in the congregation together and made Spring Garden feel at home in a new homeland.

Song books used through the years are: The Swedish "Psalm Book," Barn vannen, Lyra, Hemlandsager, Sondogskolans Song Bok, Luther-For bundets Sangbok, Devotional Songs, "Youths Favorite Songs," "The Hymnal," which is replaced by the new "Service Book and Hymnal," published by eight Lutheran church bodies in America was used in Spring Garden June 29, 1953, for the first time.

Music and song have been an essential part of Spring Garden from its very beginnings. There have been Senior Choir, Junior Choir and Cherub Choir for much of the past 50 years. There have also been individual groups and many soloists who have blessed us with their music. The following are just a sampling of various groups from the past 50 years.



The Junior Choir pictured here in 1958 was organized here in 1952. Francis Larson was the accompanist and Mrs. Vernon Young the Director



The Ice Cubes—the Early Years



And a few years later. . .



Swedish Singers

Florence Erickson, Idella Clauson, Betty Sjoquist, Marjorie Pagel, Ruby Magnuson, Lucille Swenson, Milton Swenson and Carl Magnuson



Hosianna



Crimson River



Junior Choir



Orchestra Ensemble started by Dean Safe as a service project and directed by Pastor Nick Fisher-Broin. The Ensemble is comprised of members of all ages.



Senior Choir



Cherub Choir



## ADMINISTRATION



Men have served faithfully in the first century and part of the second on the church boards from the first day. In the early days, women served the church through their own organizations, but not as administrators.

The first woman was elected to the church council during Pastor Kilheffer's pastorship and was either Idella Clauson or Betty Sjoquist. Since then many women have faithfully served as council members.



The first female president of Spring Garden Church was Patty Zimmerman, elected in 1987. Patty, shown at left between Lucille Swenson, another councilwoman, and Pastor Borchelt. She also chaired the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee in 1983. According to Patty, 1987 became a year of personal growth in her life with the responsibility of running the day to day functions of the church after Pastor Borchelt left mid-year, attending the many meetings and taking care of her family. She was also chairman of the call committee to search for a new minister.

She states, "I felt like a pioneer in a way, since I feel the acceptance of me as a leader in the church paved the way for calling Spring

Garden's first female Pastor." The Reverends Heidi and Lon Kvanli were called to Spring Garden in 1988.

### CHURCH SECRETARIES THROUGH THE YEARS

Correne Clauson	1966-1974
Carole Lindell	1975-1988
Patty Zimmerman	1988-1994
Rhonda Penn	1994
Donna Anderson	1995-1996
Martha Eng/Dawn Erickson	1996-1997
Bobbie Martens	1997-2000
Arlene Stein	2001
Robyn Berg	2002-2006
Kim Sjoquist	2006-Present

### FINANCIAL SECRETARIES THOUGH THE YEARS

Fred Swenson	1937-1958
Carl Magnuson	1958-1984
Sharon Nelson	1984-2003
Pam Davis	2003-Present

### TREASUERERS THROUGH THE YEARS

Rev. Peter Beckman	1858-1861
Carl J. Holm	1862-1870
Frank I. Johnson	1871-1881
Lewis Larson	1882-1884
John Nelson	1885-1888
Carl Edstrom	1889-1889
Carl B. Enberg	1890-1893
August Haggstrom	1893-1898
George B. Gustafson	1899-1903
Albert Miller	1904-1906
John A. Holm	1906-1912
George B. Gustafson	1913-1936
Fred Swenson	1937-1952

Clarence Haggstrom	1952-1953
Ward Mark	1954-1958
Dean Sauter	1959-1960
Harold Sjoquist	1960-1964
Eldon Anderson	1964-1965
Gladys Magnuson	1966-1974
Kay Erickson	1974-1976
Faye Swenson	1976-1978
Marlene Groenke	1978-1980
Sandy Erickson	1980-1986
Bobbi Anderson	1986-1990
Pat Olson	1990-1994
Ken Volness	1995-1999
Bobbi Anderson	1999-2005
Rob Lorentz	2006-Present



## PARISH EDUCATION

One of the important organizations of the church is the teaching arm. Spring Garden has always been blessed with a faithful corps of workers in the Sunday School and parochial school. The earliest instruction was in the confirmation class. The first meeting of a school was the Wednesday School, onsdags skola, Oct. 5, 1864, with 20 children enrolled. Early teachers were Pastor Beckman, John Lagerstrom and J. P. Gustafson. This was followed by names of 36 children in Sunday School. It was arranged to have three months of parochial school in 1867 with A.M. Lundin as teacher for \$105. The members of the congregation helped pay the salary and if any were unable, the deacons were to take up a subscription. Pastor Cavallin was parochial school teacher here for two summers while a student at Paxton, Ill., Seminary before he was called to be the pastor at his ordination in 1870.

Teaching in the Sunday School is a challenge to all mature Christians. Nowhere else is such a challenge focused, teaching God's Work...Bible Study...Teaching Christian life is the important life of the Sunday School.

By 1958, more than 1,161 boys and girls had given their vows at the Spring Garden church after having had instruction by the pastor of the congregation. The first class of 1860 included C.P. Safe and John Banks.



They have made public confession of their faith and promised faithfully to fulfill their duties as church members whereupon the congregation has prayed for God's blessing upon them and they have been admitted to the Lord's Supper.

In 1958 there were 154 students enrolled in Sunday School with 28 teachers and officers. Students begin attending at 4 years of age in the primary program. These students use denim bags made by the women

of the church to proudly take home their Sunday School projects. In third grade students are given bibles and Faith Boxes to support them in their Christian education. Sunday School classes continue until students have completed ninth grade. Often students begin teaching Sunday School classes or work as teacher assistants after they are confirmed.



Vacation Bible School is another Spring Garden activity available to children and youth since 1867. Called parochial school in its beginning Pastor Cavallin worked as the parochial school teacher during summers as a seminary student before he was called to be Spring Garden Pastor in the year 1870. In the 1920's students from Lutheran Bible Institute were hired to teach the three-week all day classes that were held in the local one-room schools. Vacation Bible school classes were held at Wastedo School until 1986. Today Vacation Bible School is held at Spring Garden Church in conjunction with Good Earth Lutheran Bible Camp personnel. Students use study, art, music and singing to continue learning about God and faith.

# SUNDAY SCHOOL THROUGH THE YEARS...



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL THROUGH THE YEARS...



## **HISTORY OF THE LUTHER LEAGUE/YOUTH MINISTRY**

The Young People's Society, "Ungdom's Foreningen," was organized Jan. 18, 1891. This organization bought and installed an organ in the church for the sum of \$1,000 in 1893. The Young People's Society was changed to the Luther League on Feb. 1, 1924.

During the 1920's and 1930's the Luther League was composed of the whole church membership and was characterized by very large attendance and interesting and varied programs. In 1941 it was changed to an organization of young people but anyone being welcome to attend.

Members of the Luther League have attended the International youth Conventions that have been held in California in 1947, Duluth in 1949, Denver in 1951, Boston in 1953, Canada in 1955, and Chicago in 1957.

Some of the first members of the Luther League were: Alfred Johnson, Victor Larson, Richard Miller, Mrs. August Lundell and Mrs. Fritz Anderson.

The custom of the League sponsoring the observance of New Year's Eve with special programs began in 1925. A yearly project is "Paper Work." The first officers presiding over the meeting were Pastor Frodeen, president; George Gustafson, secretary; Walter Holms, treasurer. Officers in 1958 for the centennial were Jonathan Chell, president; Bernie Mattson, vice president; Ebba Lundell, secretary; and Verna Lundell, treasurer.

The present organ, which was purchased in 1953, was a project of the League. Other projects included the Easter breakfast following sunrise Service, Bible Camp, Leadership School at Gustavus Adolphus, social, youth Sunday, exchange programs with other leagues and District League events.

A special project this year was the sponsorship of the Augustana youth Caravaners to our league. The Caravaners were here June 29-July 2, 1958. The youth in the group came from Texas, Arizona and Kansas.

### **1958—2008 Youth History at Spring Garden**

In the last 50 years, as American culture has changed and faced challenges, young people especially experience these challenges in a very present way. In the midst of all of these changes, Spring Garden has sought to be a steadying influence in the lives of our youth by helping them grow in their relationship with God and in fellowship with one another.

Youth ministry at Spring Garden has always been about relationships. From the experiences of Sunday School and Confirmation classes, the Luther League and LYO (Lutheran Youth Organization), our youth have built relationships with other youth, the pastors and adult leaders from the church.

Many people now in their 50's and 60's recall the days when confirmation was from 9 to noon every Saturday for a year. The youth would meet Pastor Arthur Chell or Pastor Henry Noordzy and a Deacon behind a curtain for questioning in order to be approved by vote for confirmation. There was much memorizing and reading and everyone knew confirmation was serious business! Some people recall the great end of Sunday School and Vacation Bible School picnics where there were hot dogs and s'mores over a campfire, down the gravel road by the spring. Kids ran in bare feet and played in the spring, getting covered in mud from head to toe.

The youth have also been deeply involved in church life during the seasons of Christmas and Easter. What would Easter morning look like if there were no Easter Breakfast? The youth have served the congregation Easter Breakfasts of Hard Boiled Eggs and Pastries, Pancakes and Sausage, and Egg Bake, muffins and fresh fruits. At Christmas, children and youth have shared the Christmas story by acting out various stories with the traditional Nativity at the center of the production. The programs have often been elaborate—one year it was so large that the play written by Pastor Heidi Kvanli was moved up to the Wastedo School so the stage could be used. As recently as 2007, the program created by Jodi Sjoblom became a Sancta Lucia Festival in honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. Both boys and girls dressed in traditional Swedish outfits, served cheese and gingerbread cookies and sang several Swedish songs and carols. No Christmas Eve would be complete without the singing of "Hosianna" and the children and youth continue to learn this song in honor of the Swedish heritage of Spring Garden. A tradition that began a long time ago continues to this day—following a Christmas program, children and youth receive a brown paper bag with salted shell peanuts and a bright red apple. In earlier years, some hard rock ribbon candies were included, though in later times, other kinds of candies or small gifts were added.

Over the years, Spring Garden youth began to develop relationships with outdoor ministries of the church. In earlier years, some youth attended Luther Point in Grantsburg, Wisconsin. In more recent years, Good Earth Village Bible Camp of Spring Valley, Minnesota has become the camp home to our youth program. Children and youth who have gone to camp have often brought back skits, songs and games that have become part of the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and Confirmation experiences. Our youth have often become leaders in these programs because of the impact Bible Camp has had in their lives. In recent years, several youth-- Dean Safe, Lauren Windhorst and Zach Malecha-- have participated in the Good Earth Village Youth Servant Leader Institute (YSLI) program and have begun special projects at church: a 22 member instrumental ensemble, an adopt a grandparent program, and a Wednesday night worship service. Several of our youth have worked as counselors at Good Earth Village—Ms. Arianna Anderson Wright and Ms. Cassie Sauter. Cassie is currently a student at Luther Seminary as she prepares to join a new generation of ordained pastors for the church. Many years ago, some land on the Cannon River was being considered for development as a new church camp. At the time, church member Rod Anderson lived and worked at the site in hopes of developing it. In time, the property was not developed-- but imagine how interesting it could have been for Spring Garden to be involved at the ground level of a new outdoor ministry. Rod Anderson also went on to become an ordained pastor of the church.



Over the years, common activities included: hayrides, sledding and tubing, monthly meetings with devotions and Bible study, lock-ins, ice cream socials, Christmas Caroling, bowling, collecting donations for the food shelf and helping senior citizens. Pastor Ken and Sari Kilheffer enjoyed hosting Halloween parties in the parsonage barn for area youth. Occasionally, youth could attend Luther League Conventions in Minneapolis over Christmas break. In recent years, several youth trips have been taken to Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin's family cabin in northern Minnesota for canoeing, biking and swimming in the lake. For many years the youth have provided leadership for a "Youth Sunday" which saw the youth leading the

entire worship service. At times, the youth would take various parts of the traditional liturgical service with a particularly brave young person giving the sermon. Youth have also been quite creative, doing Christian clowning skits on the life of Christ, creating game-show styled skits on characters from the Bible and even building a small framed structure for the message when they were preparing to work for Habitat for Humanity on a summer Servant Trip.

One of the changes in youth ministry over the years was the movement beyond the confines of the church building and Luther League. Pastor Ken Kilheffer is remembered for the trips he took canoeing in the Boundary Waters with Spring Garden's Youth. Such trip experiences are helpful in forming friendship and community among the youth. In wilderness camping kinds of experiences like the Boundary Waters, backpacking and other High Adventure experiences in the Black Hills of South Dakota, the youth grew as they overcame physical challenges and they grew in appreciation of God's creation. Other kinds of experiences that were important to the youth were Youth Conventions and National Youth Gatherings. People who attended these events in various cities around the country remember traveling by train, bus or plane, hearing interesting speakers, having youth-oriented worship services and being amazed to see youth from all around the country having a great time expressing their faith.



Over the years, a new kind of trip experience began to grow in popularity throughout the wider church. Called "Mission or Servant Trips," these experiences invited youth to put their faith into action by helping people in need. These trips have been notable because the youth often realize that they receive more than they give. Making a difference in the lives of other people turns around to make a difference in the lives of those who serve. During Pastors Lon and Heidi Kvanli's ministry, a number of youth traveled to Mexico where they worked with villagers in digging latrines. They literally worked down in a hole, digging the dirt into buckets which had to be hauled up from the hole by a rope to be dumped out. It was hard and difficult work, but improved the public health of the people with whom they worked. Since that

time, our youth have ventured out into the world with Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin to work for Habitat for Humanity in eastern shore Maryland, worked in the Yakama Indian Reservation in Washington, inner city Milwaukee, and rural Vermont. During the summer of 2004, Spring Garden youth Amanda Pagel, Maggie Sjoquist, and Candice Price traveled to Kiomboi, Tanzania Africa with other Southeastern Minnesota Synod Youth and adult leaders Nina Pagel and Pastor Nick Fisher-Broin. The Synod Mission Trip worked at Iambi Hospital and the Lutheran Institute, Kiomboi on a land restoration project. The youth worked with local people to build fences to protect their gardens, orchards and crops from wandering cattle.

These many kinds of experiences along with attending church camp require the youth to raise funds to pay for travel and programs. Spring Garden members have always been generous in supporting the various youth fundraisers. Over the years, youth have raised funds with the Easter Breakfast, a Spaghetti Supper, a Drive In, a Sub Sandwich Sale, a Coffee House and Talent Show, Lenten Soup Suppers, silent auctions, Service Projects, Car Washes, and garage sales. The youth of 2008 raise funds, which go into individual accounts that they can use to pay for program and travel costs. The system encourages youth to participate in the various fundraising events because each youth receives a share of the income for working the fundraisers.

Spring Garden youth have been active in worship over the years. During Pastor Ken Kilheffer's and Pastor Joel Borchelt's time, youth participated actively in worship leadership as lay assistants. Youth have helped serve Holy Communion since 1979, as well as acolyting, ushering and reading the scripture lessons. As a seventh grader, Josiah Fisher began running the church sound system for worship services and trained in many other adult and youth volunteers. Many youth have served as Sunday School Teachers and VBS leaders. Youth have also contributed their musical talents in worship, through Jr. and Youth Choirs, instrumental and vocal solos and ensembles. In the early to mid 1970's, Ruthie Clauson Sjoblom and Val Lindell Haggstrom frequently sang duets, especially the songs "Into My Heart" and "Beautiful Savior." Many children of the time will remember sitting by the piano in the corner of the church basement with Gladys Magnuson leading them in Sunday School songs from a hardcover, blue songbook. Many will remember piano solos by Kristin Volness in the 1990's.



In the late 1990's into the 2000's, Bekki Haggstrom sang for worship and weddings with Ken Brown on guitar; There



were countless instrumental solos and duets for the Christmas Eve Story Service, guitar class students leading congregational songs, Beau Larson drumming for Wellspring at Saturday Evening Worship, and the all girls group called the "Ice Cubz" singing for worship under the direction of Lois Swanson Shades. These girls—Kalli Shades, Carrie Sauter, Renee Anderson, Thyra Biermann, Robin Magalis, and Jill Lorentz joined the elderly Swedish Singers—Ruby Magnuson, Betty Sjoquist, Marjorie Pagel, Lucille Swenson, Idella Clauson, and Florence Erickson as they sang a Swedish hymn together. It was a poignant moment as all in attendance could imagine these elderly women in the bloom of their youth, when they began singing together. Now, after a lifetime, they pass these great

traditions onto a new generation of young people who make the faith their own.

It is often said that the youth are important because they are "the church of tomorrow." But as we have seen in the history of Spring Garden's youth, in each generation they are also "the church of today." Their enthusiasm, their energy and their active participation in the life of our church inspires the rest of us do all we can to help the church be an enduring sign that the living God is among us.

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES THROUGH THE YEARS...



## HISTORY OF THE WILLING WORKERS

The first women's organization of the Spring Garden Lutheran Church was the Young Ladies' Sewing Society, organized at Rev. Frodeen's home on February 21, 1893. Twenty-five young women joined the society the first year. They met in the homes every other Tuesday afternoon at one o'clock. They had to walk to the homes where the meetings were held. The first officers were Hattie Miller, president, and Thilda Young, secretary, who were elected to serve for two months. The afternoon was spent planning and sewing articles such as aprons, doilies, pot holders, and pillow cases, which were sold at an auction on Midsummer Day. The proceeds were used to support missions and charities. Each member paid \$1.00 and the officers had charge of the money and bought most of the materials. The second and third year sales were held at Midsummer and in December. The ambitious young women worked hard for three years until December 3, 1895, when the society met for the last time. The charter members included Mrs. Ida Gustafson Anderson, Mrs. Phoebe Holm Lundell and Mrs. Hilda Holmer Peterson.

Let's take a look at their life at home. They served three large meals a day, besides two lunches. They baked their own bread, cake and cookies in a wood stove that constantly had to be fed. They gardened to provide vegetables and fruit for the table and canned them for the winter. The meat too was raised on the farm so it had to be butchered and canned. Generally several generations were living in the same home. Clothing had to be made and there wasn't much light from the kerosene lamps. This was a farming community so many fed the chickens and or helped with the milking. All the water used had to be brought into the house and the dirty water carried out. The toilets were all outside. Have you ever tried to iron clothes with cast irons that first had to be heated on the wood stove and then wiped off so soot wasn't left to soil the garments. Everything was made of cotton, rayon, or wool and it wrinkled! This was prevalent for all women those 50 years before electricity came and lightened the women's burden.

In 1893 the women bought 14 yards of cheesecloth and three of cotton for making a quilt. They asked the Young People's Society for \$10 to help them purchase supplies. They bought goods for three aprons, three white ones and embroidery silk for a cushion. By March 21 they had eight gingham aprons, 4 wisk broom holders, four laundry bags, four stocking bags and two paper holders ready for the sale. The April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting was postponed due to bad weather and only six had come April 11 due to the bad road conditions. The prices of their supplies were: sateen; 20 cents a yard; outing flannel, 12 ½ cents a yard; yarn, 4 cents a skein; a spool of thread, 4 cents; one dozen pearl buttons, 10 cents; three balls of fishline, 25 cents; ¼ yard of velvet, 12 cents; one yard ribbon, 5 cents; one yard silk, 50 cents. In 1894 the auction netted them \$80.75. In 1895 they had two auctions. Their receipts were \$28.25 for the midsummer sale and at their last auction December 12, they received \$51.60. They served coffee for 5 cents a cup with cake.



The second society was organized at the home of J.P. Gustafson in 1901. Only a few women attended the first meeting but the membership grew as the years passed. This society was called the Willing Workers and continued in much the same manner as the first one. An annual auction was held in the late fall. They worked for missions, charities and the improvement in the church and parsonage. The first dishes were purchased in 1906 and five dozen chairs in 1907. Roll call was taken and each member paid ten cents whether present or not.

Members getting together for a group photo in 1902 were Emily Nelson, Selma Lindell, Ophelia Gustafson (Mrs. Alfred Johnson), Ida Gustafson (Mrs. Fritz Anderson), Mrs. Charley Lewis,

Euphemia Gustafson (Mrs. Alec Anderson), Selma Swanson (Mrs. Victor Young), Emma Anderson (Mrs. Willis Freeberg), Minnie Swenson (Mrs. Fred Freeberg), Alfhild Swenson (Mrs. Albert Clauson), Alice (Mrs. Robert Johnson Carver), Ellen Clauson (Mrs. Ernest Swenson), and Ollie Clauson (Mrs. Sandburg).

In 1907 officers were elected to serve for three months and not until 1915 did they serve for one year. In 1916 it was decided that each member donate one or more articles at home rather than at the meetings. One dollar was paid for membership. This method of donating articles proved to be more practical and was used until 1934 when the auction was discontinued and a Thank Offering was taken.

In 1921 the society was divided into three divisions: East, North and West. A financial secretary was elected for each division. Each division had four or more meetings and members by invitation attended meeting in other divisions.



In 1928 marked the introduction of short programs at the meetings. In 1929 it was decided that the entire society meet on the second Thursday every month with divisions taking turns serving. At first each division had two extra meetings and later one. After 1935 each division gave a social. A new kitchen in the church basement was built in 1935.

In 1939 the divisions were abolished and members served in groups of six in alphabetical order. This method was still being used in 1958.

During the short existence, the first society raised \$307. The second society has contributed to the various branches of church work a sum totaling \$19,939.73.

In its early history the Willing Workers mainly supported missions. The society has continued giving to missions and charities, but has donated a large part of its income to needed improvements of the church property.

For the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church in 1958, the WW had a cookbook published and sold over 5,500 copies. Also a plate and note cards with a picture of the church were sold. Roll call of attendance was taken at each meeting and annual reports during the 50's showed typical memberships of 115 members with average attendance of 90.

During these sixty-five years the Lord has richly blessed the women of Spring Garden. May we go forward trustingly and joyfully with assurance of victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY**

The interest and giving to missions has been a part of the Spring Garden church through the years. A notable event in the community was a visit of the national Women's Missionary Society's President in 1911 to the Midsummer festival, Dr. Emmy Evald, from Chicago Ill., the daughter of the pastor who had welcomed to many Spring Garden folds as they came through Chicago going west.

The Spring Garden Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Society was organized at a Midsummer Festival June 24, 1921, under the leadership of Mrs. S.A. Peterson of Minneapolis. Fifty-eight ladies signed the roll as charter members. The first officers were: President Mrs. F.F. Edstrom; Vice President, Miss Emily Nelson; Secretary, Miss Elsie Lundell; Treasure, Mrs. V.M. Swanson; membership Secretary, Miss Frances Martinson; Mission Tidings Secretary, Mrs. F.A. Anderson; and Junior Leader, Rev. J.A. Norlin.

The first society held four recorded meetings and many years six were held. In 1951 they decided to meet each month, with alternate afternoon and evening meetings.

Many projects have been conducted by the society through the years. Midsummer Festivals continued to be held for about 10 years, with the last one in 1938. Exchange programs with other churches, Birthday parties, Easter Egg Offerings, Mother's Day Programs, Lawn Socials, Sunday evening visits of home and foreign missionaries, clothing drives, food for the Bethesda Invalid home and at present establishing a Bible Camp.

In 1939 the two groups merged with the Willing Workers meeting monthly and the Missionary Society four meetings a year. The Willing Workers had a membership of 115. The Goodhue district W.M.S. has been entertained in 1927, 1935, 1942, 1951 and 1959.

Eight Sewing Circles that met 6 times a year were organized in 1952 with the following names: Miriam, Deborah, Esther, Dorcas, Naomi, Ruth, Mary and Lydia. These circles have made many bandages, quilts, baby and adult garments, which have been sent at home and abroad. In

In checking the treasurer's books, the receipts were the lowest in 1923, with \$77.43 and the highest in 1955 with \$610.42. Through the years over \$10,000 has been given.

Our society in connection with the W.M.S. of the Augustana Lutheran Church supports missionaries in Tanganyika Territory, British East Africa, Hong Kong, southern India, Japan, Uruguay, South America, Taiwan, North Borneo, and 12 on the home field. Through our offerings and the missionaries we publish the good tidings that Jesus came to save all if we believe in Him, that they might have eternal life.

In 1958 the church celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A pageant depicting the church's history was given in the church parking lot complete with a team of oxen making it realistic. About 1,000 people attended the pageant. The churchwomen also published a cookbook, which was very successful, publishing 2,500 copies. At that time the treasury was divided into a general fund and a project fund. One half of the offerings at the monthly meeting were sent to

headquarters, the rest kept for local needs. The project Fund was used for larger projects at home—refrigerator for the parsonage or carpeting for the church basement, a grand piano. The Project Fund supported an adopted child in Korea or sometimes India for over 50 years. In 1967 the name of the church at large was changed to LCW (Lutheran Church Women) of Spring Garden church. At that time members joined by choice. In the 1960's the average attendance at a meeting was 80.

In 1988 there was another merger and the LCA became the ELCA. In that same year our local organization changed its name back to the Willing Workers. In the later years ten regular meetings were held plus a Midsummer Festival which was resumed in 1959, and a World Mission Festival. At this time all women of the church were members. A Ways and Means committee regulated the serving at meetings by all members, funerals, Mother's Day Banquets, bake sales, and any other event. Two clothing drives were held each year—one in may the other in November. Seniors were honored in August, Cradle Roll in September. The Willing Workers also gave a monetary gift to those attending Bible Camps. The Willing Workers for many years at their annual meeting in October donated to about 10 worthy causes with a monetary contribution. Over the year's attendance dwindled as more and more women worked outside the home and it became more and more difficult to get officers. In Oct 2006 the Willing Workers had come to an end. It had been a strong support of the church contributing in many ways as well as monetary contributions.

Each Midsummer Day it is the custom of the Spring Garden congregation to hold a festival in God's great out-of-doors. The celebration, along with the smorgasbord supper was sponsored by the Willing Workers. Every member of the church contributed food, time and talents for a celebration attended by many in the community and beyond.



**Scenes of Midsummer**





Built in 1858 by the early Swedish settlers, the Spring Garden Lutheran Church stands amidst cornfields and rolling hills just outside of Cannon Falls, Minnesota.

At left, Lu Ann Sauter, Cannon Falls, waits for the "go ahead" before dipping into the potato salad. Checking last minute touches on a frosted sweetbread and homemade baked beans are 15-year-old twins, Lynette and Lynnea Sjoquist, Goodhue, Minnesota. A typical menu for this annual smorgasbord includes sil salad, ostakaka, fruit soup, cabbage slaw, scalloped potatoes, baked beans, platters of relishes, cheeses and breads, Swedish meatballs, and fancy butter cookies, sweetbreads, and tortes.

Val Rae Lindell, 11, Cannon Falls, admires an old wooden chest and other antiques displayed.



Singing a medley of songs in Swedish is the junior choir composed of nine to 12-year-olds, directed by Mrs. Ralph Magnuson and Mrs. Merle Clauson.



Photographs: Hopkins

Some of the other activities sponsored by the Willing Workers were Mother and Daughter themed banquets.



Photos from the 50's were more formal than the candid pictures of today.



### Quilting at Spring Garden



Six meetings per year were expected of the Spring Garden women's sewing circles from the 1950s through the 1980s. The circles, groups of 6 to 8 women, made baby and children's clothing for mission projects in the early years. Later the groups began making quilts and in the 1990s at Women's Sundays displayed the

beautiful colorful quilts on the backs of the church pews. For over 25 years the groups have made Wedding Quilts. Any



*Stephanie McRae & Marjorie Fogel*

couple married at Spring Garden Church is given a quilt made by the sewing circles. Today one large group of women gathers periodically to make the quilts.

“It is a fun day,” says Pauline Swanson who began sewing at Spring Garden Church in 1950 and continues to the present. The group meets for a daylong session at tables that are put side by side and up on blocks to accommodate the height needed to comfortably quilt. Friendship abounds with plenty of food and good humor.

Quilts are also made for a mission

project in Texas coordinated by Pastor Gene Hasselquist, the Red Wing Women’s Shelter, Vasa Children’s Home, and the Red Cross for victims of fires.

Many women over the years have worked with Spring Garden sewing projects and two prolific quilters are Eleanor Hultman and Florence Callstrom pictured below.



*Ruth Berdelt Betty Sjogquist  
Kerri & Stephanie Miskew  
Marjorie Fogel Ruby Magnuson*



## Women's Gathering

After the Willing Workers disbanded in 2006, a less formal gathering of women began. Appropriately named the "Women's Gathering" a group started meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday evening of the month. All women from Spring Garden and the surrounding community are invited to attend. At the meetings, prayer shawls are crocheted or knitted, greeting cards are designed and made and there is a book of the month discussion. Once a year there is a retreat in the early spring at Good Earth Village.



**Women of the Church** have always been called upon to serve at funerals, baby showers, anniversaries and other special events. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, men are willing to pitch in and help with various kitchen duties also. It is interesting to note that when the Lutheran Churchmen's group was active, that their wives were called upon to serve the lunch at the larger conference meetings.

## SPRING GARDEN CHURCHMEN

A meeting was called on March 5, 1948, for the purpose of organizing a Brotherhood. This meeting was held in the church parlors with Pastor Almen opening the meetings with scripture reading and prayer.

All members present voted in favor of such an organization with the following officers chosen: Robert Lindell, president; Milton Swenson, vice president; Edgar Anderson, secretary; and Ward Mark, treasurer.

Raymond Anderson and Fred Larson were in charge of refreshments and a collection of \$3.80 taken and dues amounting to \$4.00. Twenty-three men were present. It was the intention of the Brotherhood to enlist all the men of the church with a program to include some timely topics.

Motions were made that the dues be \$1.00 per year and that the meeting be held on the first Monday of each month.

The men who served as presidents were: Robert Lindell, 1948-50; Fred Larson, 1950-51; Milton Swenson, 1951-52-53; Clifton Anderson, 1953-54; Harold Sjoquist, 1954-55; Victor Blastervold, 1955-56; Norman Clauson, 1957-58.

Richard Miller and A.L. Swenson, two Brotherhood members, donated an electric heater installed by Althoff Hardware in Cannon Falls. Among other gifts was a gift of \$100 to the Ladies Aid Nov. 7, 1949, towards expenses in basement and kitchen. Another gift of \$100 on Dec. 4, 1950, to finish paying for the well at the parsonage. A phone was installed in the church to be paid by the Brotherhood. Other gifts included the purchase of 50 small hymnals with texts in 1952, a gift of \$200 to Centennial Fund, \$25 gift to Vasa Children's Home, \$25 gift to Child Placement Society, \$25 gift to Centennial Committee, \$108.60 made by auction, \$40 gift to Red Wing Training School for an organ, and \$100 from treasury to Centennial fund in 1957.

The name of Spring Garden Brotherhood has been changed to the "Churchmen of Spring Garden." According to the minutes. Mrs. Carl Magnuson serves as organist and a collection is given to her each year. Good programs of both home and outside talent are given. The membership has increased to an average of 45-50 members present at the meetings.

### **From the LCM (Minnesota Synod Lutheran Churchmen) News June – 1975, Spring Garden Lutheran hosts LCM Synod Convention**

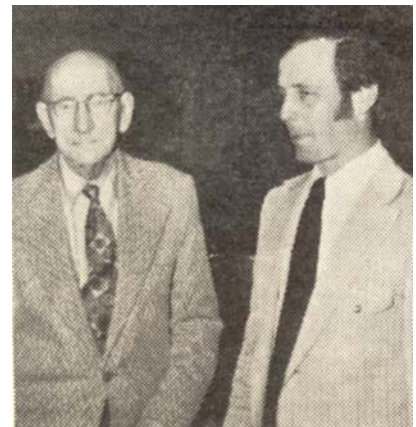
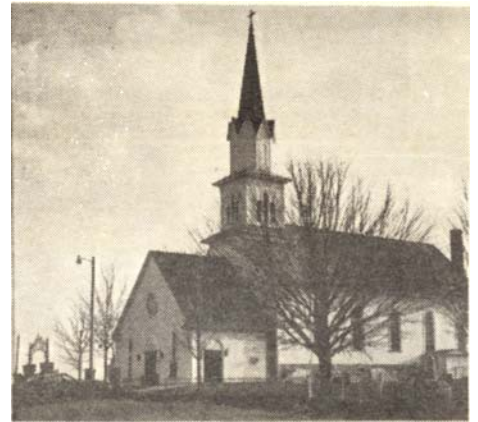
The sign above the door says, "Sw.Ev.Luth. Kyarkan, Spring Garden, 1876" and it's a few miles south of Cannon Falls among dairy farms and fine cropland. The pastor is Ken Kilheffer and Allen Erickson is president of their LCM unit. Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> is the date with afternoon and evening programs from 1:00p.m.

Pictured is the church with its new front, which added a new pastor's study and much other useable space.

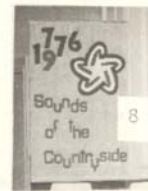
The fellows in the picture below are the leaders of the Spring Garden LCM. Left to right are: Victor Blastervold, Russell Hultman, Walter Callstrom, Allen Erickson, and Pastor Ken Kilheffer. Wendell Swenson is also from Spring Garden and is a member of the Synod LCM Executive Committee.



Robert Lindell, right, is the grand old fellow of the Spring Garden group. He has been active in Church Men affairs at both synod and local unit level for more years than most can remember. Pictured with him is the present unit president, Allen Erickson.



'75 LCM CONVENTION  
AT SPRING GARDEN LUTHERAN



The camera reviews LCM Convention  
 1 - Officers of Spring Garden LCM manned the registration table.  
 2 - Coffee break was a pleasant time in the church's new entrance addition.  
 3 - Axel Anderson, left, well known churchman from Swedlanda Lutheran and Alfred Schulte, the newly elected LCM committeeman, from G.A. Lutheran North Minneapolis.  
 4 - The very popular "Swedish Singers" from the Cannon Falls area.  
 5 - Visitors were the Clifford Thornblooms. Mr. Thornbloom is the President of Illinois Synod LCM.  
 6 - The M.C., Curtis Peterson, scores with one of his many jokes. To Mr. Peterson's left is Representative Carl M. Johnson, the guest speaker.  
 7 - Former officers of LCM and always on hand are Art Anderson and Bill English  
 8 - The church's banner with the Convention theme.  
 9 - the symposium, l.to r., Ralph Godin, Karen Humphrey, Rev. W. B. Benson, Eldon Anderson, and Rev. Dr. Thomas Wersell.

**Spring Garden Lutheran Church Education Scholarships**



In 1994 the Spring Garden Scholarship Committee met for the first time to design criteria for the Spring Garden Education Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to graduating Spring Garden high school seniors who plan to pursue higher education. Point awarded for involvement in the Spring Garden, academic achievement, and other volunteer activities determine who receives scholarships. Generally as many scholarships as possible in the amount of \$500.00 are awarded.

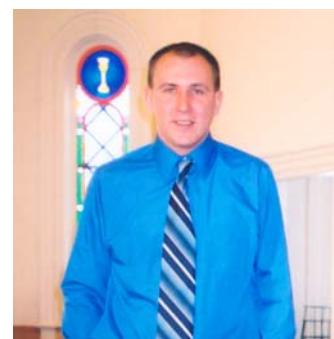
Thirty-one scholarships have been awarded from 1995 through 2007. The Committee Members are Bobbie Anderson, Allen Erickson and Willis Swenson, pictured at left.

**Scholarships Awarded**

Alyssa Lundell	94-95	Naomi Christiansen	99-00	Christopher Sjoblom	01-02
Brooke Knudson	95-96	Katie Haggstrom	99-00	Alicia Davis	02-03
Deanna Lundell	95-96	Megan Nerison	99-00	Cassandra Sauter	02-03
Casey Haggstrom	96-97	Erin Melhouse	99-00	Molly Sjoquist	02-03
Ariana Anderson	96-97	Taylor Pagel	00-01	Isaac Davis	04-05
Angela Lindell	97-98	Eric Eng	01-02	Amanda Pagel	04-05
Heidi Lindell	98-99	David Brown	01-02	Jenae Pagel	04-05
Bjorn Olson	98-99	Josh Sauter	01-02	Levi Price	04-05



Corin Safe	04-05	Matthew Lindell	06-07	Kalli Shades	07-08
Ian Olson	05-06	Ryan Lee	06-07	Dean Safe	07-08
Candice Price	05-06	Rena Anderson	07-08	Carrie Sauter	07-08
Maggie Sjoquist	05-06	Thyra Bierman	07-08		
Sarah Anderson	06-07	Robin Magalis	07-08		



**Congratulations to all our past and future Scholarship winners.**

**It should be noted that Cassie Sauter is currently studying at Seminary to become a minister. She will join the other sons and daughters of Spring Garden who chose the ministry as a vocation: Pastor O.E. Clauson ordained in 1919, Pastor Maurice Swenson ordained in 1938, Pastor Howard Swenson ordained in 1945, Pastor John W. Anderson, Missionary to Liberia ordained in 1954 and Pastor Rodney Anderson who is Pastor of St. Andrews in Eden Prairie**

## Youth Leadership Project



Three Spring Garden youth participated in a project that has given Spring Garden Church some wonderful experiences. Lauren Windhorst, Dean Safe, and Zach Malecha each designed and carried out a leadership project in 2007 and 2008. The program, sponsored by the Southeastern Lutheran Synod and Good Earth Village, asks Lutheran youth to examine their faith life and service to their churches.

Lauren Windhorst designed an Adopt-A-Grandparent project. Older members of the congregation who wanted to be part of the project were paired with families. The families visit them in their homes to spend social time or assist with whatever is needed. Connecting generations is the project theme and the purpose of the project is to give congregation members an opportunity to share a common bond through Spring Garden

Church as well as to give companionship and experience something new. Well received both the families and senior members of Spring Garden reported pleasant meaningful experiences.

Dean Safe believed that Spring Garden could use a musical ensemble to enrich the activities of the church and formed the Spring Garden Instrumental Ensemble. He gathered an intergenerational group of Spring Garden members who played musical instruments and were ages 8 through 71. This group performed at both Christmas and Easter church services during 2007 and 2008 with great positive congregational response.

Zachery Malecha formed the theatrical group Worship on Wednesday or W.O.W. and the group began with performances at Wednesday Lenten services in 2008. Zach planned to continue with Wednesday Worship service performances thereafter. The talented short presentations of the group were welcomed by Spring Garden members as giving added drama to the important story of lent.

Three talented Spring Garden youth added meaningful intergenerational experiences to the life of Spring Garden Church and learned important lessons about leadership and faith.

## A Conversation with Spring Garden Women

What was it like raising a family in Spring Garden Church? What are some of your favorite memories of Spring Garden? What were some of the important events that you remember? These were some of the questions asked of a group of senior members of the Spring Garden congregation.

The most repeated refrain was “community.” The women of the congregation gathered twice a month at Women’s Missionary Society and Ladies Aid meetings from the 1920s throughout the 1960’s as a social group that studied the word of God, carried out church projects and missionary work. The women remembered bringing their young children to the meetings where they played with one another and made friendships that lasted into adult years. The women enjoyed the meetings as social events. They remember too quilting, handcrafting articles, supporting the efforts of the church in any way that would be helpful. Idella Clauson remembers in her own childhood coming to church with her mother when the women pinned many handcrafted items to curtains to auction them for support of mission work.



Some of the group remembered in their youth hitching horses to sleighs, traveling to church and putting the horses in the Spring Garden horse barns. Marjorie Pagel especially remembered the sound of sleigh bells and Lyla Swanson said it was a tradition of the Swanson family to step outdoors on Christmas Eve to listen to the sleigh bells of those heading to church for the Christmas Eve service.



Directing the junior choir is an important memory of Ruby Magnuson. She remembers the dedication of the young members of the choir and their enjoyment of singing and continues to be proud of what the choir added to Spring Garden Sunday services with their singing...

Glorian Anderson remembered the challenge of getting her young family ready for Sunday School but delighted in teaching Sunday School and helping with Christmas programs. Idella Clauson and Betty Sjoquist remember being the first women on the Spring Garden Church Council.

These Spring Garden women value all that Spring Garden has given them over their own years as children of Spring Garden, as mothers of their own families, and as members of Spring Garden Church today.

## **Mission Work at Spring Garden Church**

Mission work has been very important to Spring Garden since the early years of the church to the present. The recurring theme of mission began when church members became missionaries to each other during times of crisis. Many of the ladies told stories of how the entire Spring Garden church community would come to the rescue of members during illness, birth, death, injury, and periods of poverty. Help was provided in the form of milk, eggs, garden produce, and chickens as well as helping with various chores including field work, child care, food preparation, and homemaking chores. All done on a very regular basis many current church women have memories of these events.

Mission help spread beyond the walls of the church as needs were recognized. In 1921 the Women's Home and Foreign Mission Society started and targeted needs beyond Spring Garden Church. Idella Clauson remembers attending auctions in the church basement that continued until 1934 with funds raised used for mission projects. The immediate church needs were overseen by the Willing Workers group.

In 1967 the Women's Home and Foreign Mission Society and the Willing Workers joined to form the Lutheran Church Women (LCW). The focus of this group helped with all needs local and foreign and included:

- Maintenance of the church kitchen, the hallmarks were embroidered on the tablecloths and kitchen towels.
- Clothing drives were held in the spring and the fall with clothing being sent to various areas.
- Goodhue County Christmas Project, which continues today, when information regarding families with needs are given for Spring Garden members to donate needed clothing items.
- Support of a foster child, many have been supported by the LCW over the years. This may be started by Pastor Chell's wife. Marlene Mattson maintains contact with the current foster child.
- Before the beginning of the current scholarship program the LCW gave scholarship support to Spring Garden youth.
- Support of Spring Garden children attending summer camps.
- Making and distributing quilts.
- Response to major disasters across the country with clothing and blankets.

Many church projects have moved outside LCW and for the past five years food drives for the local Food Shelf Project and been ongoing due to the efforts of Pam Pagel, Nina Pagel, and Ann Hardy. Spring Garden Church has been noted as a consistent supporter of the food shelf by giving close to the #1000 pounds of food..

A partnership between Kiomboi, Africa and Spring Garden Church began in 1994. This relationship was made real to the Spring Garden membership with the visit of Pastor Gideon Maghina, who later became bishop of the Lutheran Church in Kiomboi. Nina Pagel visited Kiomboi in 2004 and saw the desperate need for books. On Nina's return she headed a successful book drive with many needed books shipped to Kiomboi.

Many Servant Mission Trips have occurred in the past years and include:

- A trip to Mexico in 1995, the purpose of the trip was to dig a latrine for a new church. Fifteen youth went with Pastor Nick Fisher-Broin.
- In 2000 a youth trip sponsored by Youth Works traveled to Yakima, Washington to help clean on an Indian reservation. Pastor Nick Fisher-Broin took a number of youth ages 14-16.
- In 2004 a group of youth traveled to Kiomboi with a goal to build fences around a church and school campus.
- Habitat for Humanities, this congregation has worked on a number of homes in the local area both by giving money and by building.
- Newborn mission Birth Packs sent to Tanzania, Biloxi, Sri Lanka.
- In 2006 a servant trip to Biloxi, Mississippi 14 adults from Spring Garden and surrounding churches helped with clean up and assistant in the rebuilding of damages properties.

The mission work of Spring Garden has been varied and numerous over the years. It continues today at our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the spirit that Jesus teaches us, we are to care for neighbors.

## Arica Project

In memory of Arica Ann Pagel a mission project was started in 2004 by her parents Nina and David Pagel. After visiting Tanzania, Africa Nina, seeing the situations poverty caused the children of Tanzania, came home to Spring Garden to collect clothing, books, and toys for the children of Tanzania.

In 2007 the Arica Project began the sponsorship of the building of the Arica Primary School near the Iambi Hospital Campus in TanZania. The school will provide a building large enough to accommodate 35 children between the ages of 5 and 7. Spring Garden Church will continue to support the Arica Primary School with funding and school supplies and plans are to supply 60 school desks.

A trip to Tanzania is planned for 2008 to deliver all the items gathered since the beginning of the Arica Project and may involve the dedication of the Arica Primary School.



## CHRISTMAS IN SPRING GARDEN



Christmas in Spring Garden has been a festive season through the years when the pastor spoke on the Christmas texts and the choir had prepared special music. The hymn, "Var halsad skona margonstud," is deeply ingrained in the memory of the people. One of the highlights of the year was the annual children's festival held at Christmas.

Spring Garden young people of fifty or sixty years ago traveled many miles in sleighs to attend festivals in other churches, and young people of those churches returned the visit. The children looked forward to the Saturday practices several weeks before Christmas. Recitations and songs were



generally in Swedish until the 1920's. The church was always decorated for Christmas. A large evergreen tree held an honored place at the left front of the church. Two men were appointed to light the candles on the tree from candles fastened to long poles and stood watching until the lights were snuffed out. About the year 1924 a near catastrophe was averted. The needles caught fire near a candle and the blaze spread rapidly. Philip Johnson, who was seated near the side aisle, ran forward and clapped his hands on the burning twigs, extinguishing the fire before there was any commotion in the crowded church. The men of the church declared that candles should no longer be used on the tree, and the following year battery-operated lights were purchased.

### **Christmas Eve (*Julafton*)**

In Sweden, Christmas Eve (December 24) is the day on which the majority of Christmas celebrations take place. A large meal is prepared and eaten, which often consists of lutfisk (dried cod that has been soaked in lye, then boiled and served with a white sauce), meatballs, *Jannsons frestelse* (also called Jansson's Temptation, which is a potato casserole made with anchovies, onions, and cream), and several other dishes of fish, sausage, and cold meat. Rice pudding, which contains a hidden almond, is also served at this meal. The person to find the almond in the pudding will have good luck throughout the next year. Another Swedish dish, *ostkaka*, is often considered a Christmas dish by Swedish-Americans who make the thick cheesecake-like dish especially for the occasion.

After the Christmas Eve meal, the family is visited by *Tomte*, the Swedish Santa Claus. Tomte is thought to be a little gnome with a red cap and white beard who lives in the family barn or under the floorboards of the family's home. Tomte keeps watch over the family, and, on Christmas Eve, he leaves presents for the children. In many families, someone dresses up as Tomte and disperses the gifts. The children show their gratitude by leaving a bowl rice pudding for the little gnome.



Spring Garden has long held the tradition of celebrating Christmas through the years. From the Sunday School pageants to the Lucia Festivals.

The youth have also been deeply involved in church life during the seasons of Christmas and Easter. What would Easter morning look like if there were no Easter Breakfast? The youth have served the congregation Easter Breakfasts of Hard Boiled Eggs and Pastries, Pancakes and Sausage, and Egg Bake, muffins and fresh fruits. At Christmas, children and youth have shared the Christmas story by acting out various stories with the traditional Nativity at the center of the production.

The programs have often been elaborate—one year it was so large that the play written by Pastor Heidi Kvanli was moved up to the Wastedo School so the stage could be used.

As recently as 2007, the program created by Jodi Sjoblom became a Sancta Lucia Festival in honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. Both boys and girls dressed in traditional

Swedish outfits, served cheese and gingerbread cookies and sang several Swedish songs and carols. No Christmas Eve would be complete without the singing of “Hosianna” and the children and youth continue to learn this song in honor of the Swedish heritage of Spring Garden.



A tradition that began a long time ago continues to this day—following a Christmas program, children and youth receive a brown paper bag with salted shell peanuts and a bright red apple. In earlier years, some hard rock ribbon candies were included, though in later times, other kinds of candies or small gifts were added.



## The 1908 Parsonage



In 1908 a new parsonage was built on the corner of Goodhue County Road 1 and County Road 25 at a cost of \$4,318.48. The first family to live in the parsonage was the Pastor John Norlin family who were very happy to move into the house after spending three months at the home of Emil Anderson. Pastor Norlin was quoted by his daughter as saying that the new parsonage was “too elegant for a poor preacher.”

Over the years the parsonage housed 11 pastoral families and many children grew up in the house. The families enjoyed the country surroundings and had a small barn as an outbuilding with a garage built when automobiles became the transportation of the day. In the

1970’s and 1980’s a yearly Halloween party was held in the parsonage barn with games and treats for Spring Garden children. The last family to live in the parsonage was the Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin family, with children Josiah, Noah, Jonah and Emma.

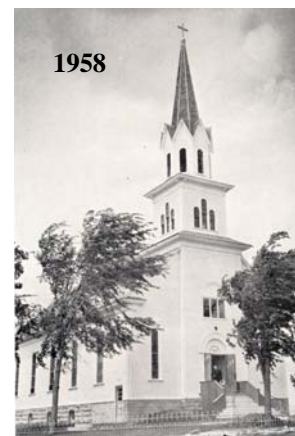


Spring Garden Church supplied a home for all clergy from the first Pastor Peter Beckman in 1858 until fall 2007, 149 years. Pastors Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin were the last clergy family to live in the 1908 parsonage when it was sold to Spring Garden member Elmer Pagel who was baptized and confirmed at Spring Garden Church.

## Spring Garden Church Building 1858-2008



Construction of the current Spring Garden Church began in May of 1876 and was completed that same fall. The earliest known photograph of the Church shows it on the open prairie, covered with siding designed to look like brick and cut stone with faux stone quoins at the corners and surrounded by a decorative wooden fence and newly planted saplings. Over time the church has been resided and remodeled several times. A remodeling project was completed in



1958 during the pastorate of Reverend Arthur L. Chell in celebration of the one-hundredth anniversary of Spring Garden Church. At that time the areas on both sides of the bell tower were in-filled and the sanctuary redecored.

In 1975 during the pastorate of Reverend Ken Kilheffer a new entrance area and church office were added. The church celebrated one hundred years of operation of the current church building the following year.



Pastor Heidi Kvanli’s pastorate oversaw the 1993 addition of an elevator and elevator room to the south side of the church to update the church for handicap accessibility from the entry area to the lower social hall and the upper sanctuary level of the church.

Current Pastors, Nick and Cindy Fisher-Broin, have overseen an active building program to house expanded youth and adult education programs, with the addition of park and park shelter and park improvements for the purpose of providing space for outdoor activities and worship services at the church site.



The years 2004-2005 saw groundbreaking and construction of a major addition to the north side of the church to add a new church office, pastoral offices and counseling space, classrooms, choir practice space and an expanded social hall area on the lower level among other things. Florence Erickson, the oldest congregation member, removed the first shovelful of earth to begin the project. The remodeling includes handicap accessible restrooms on upper and lower levels and additional space dedicated for youth group activities and remodeled entry areas to the church. Norman Anderson and Anderson Construction provided general building and contracting services with the generous assistance of church members where possible. The church roof



and steeple were re-shingled and the cross atop the steeple refurbished. Recent landscaping and the relocation of and rebuilding in the church park of the original log cabin which housed early church services, completes the current remodel and coincides with the one hundred fiftieth year celebration of the founding of Spring Garden Church.

Members of Spring Garden Church and their representative councils and committees have provided forward looking support to the mission of “Growing a Rural Family in Christ” by providing for such beautiful, well maintained and updated facilities.

### Spring Garden Church – Then and Now



In early June of 2007 members of Spring Garden met at the farmstead of Mark and Roxanne Sauter to disassemble the log cabin originally built by Carl Haggstrom in 1855. The structure was used as a home and for early church services of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation as the church was then known. This structure had also housed the organizational meeting of the church in the new land and hosted the 1859 conference meeting of the Lutheran Minnesota Conference which has been organized the previous fall in Chisago City, Minnesota. The structure was converted to use as a chicken shed and granary at various times in its history. Its ownership passed

to Ephriam Haggstrom (uncle to Ralph Haggstrom who lived on the farm until age nine) and then to John Sauter. It had been covered with siding and a metal roof at some time in its history which served to protect it from total disintegration.

Prior to disassembly logs were marked with metal tags to identify their location in the structure with the help of Angela Haack, owner of Pioneer Log Creations, who provided expert help in preservation and restoration. Pastor Nick Fisher-Broin had met Angela at conference at Good Earth Village during his years in his first parish. The old roof and siding which had protected the original log structure were removed and the logs, pegged with timber pins, were removed one at a time by hand, power washed, treated with a borate solution to prevent further deterioration of the logs and stacked to dry on hay wagons for eventual transport to the prepared site at Spring Garden Church. It is remarkable that once the grime accumulated from one hundred



and fifty years was washed away, many of the original adze marks of the makers could still be seen as though the intervening time had been erased and that it was only yesterday these logs in their pristine condition had been prepared. Articles and pictures relating to the rebuilding have been published in the Cannon Falls Beacon newspaper of Thursday, October 7, 2007. Roof boards and gable ends were salvaged from an old barn on the farm of Herb and Pauline Nerison on 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue across from the Spring Garden Quarry. Thanks to the hard work of Glen Lundell, Ralph Haggstrom, Stan Lundell, members of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee and many others who contributed so generously in time and money, the cabin now stands on a newly prepared foundation at Spring Garden Church.

As we look at the rebuilt structure what we come to realize is how much we are in debt to these pioneers of faith. Although burdened by immigrant hardships in the new land and with hard work to overcome impoverishment, language, and cultural barriers, they still had the vision and energy to create lasting institutions on which we today are very much dependent for our well-being. What we also realize is that we are working today also, side by side with those who came before, for that promised future which is yet to be fully revealed.



**We hope you have enjoyed this brief look back on the past 150 years of Spring Garden's history.  
Thank you to all those who furnished photographs, articles and information.**

**...The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History Committee, 2008**