

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

1892-1967

TRINITY

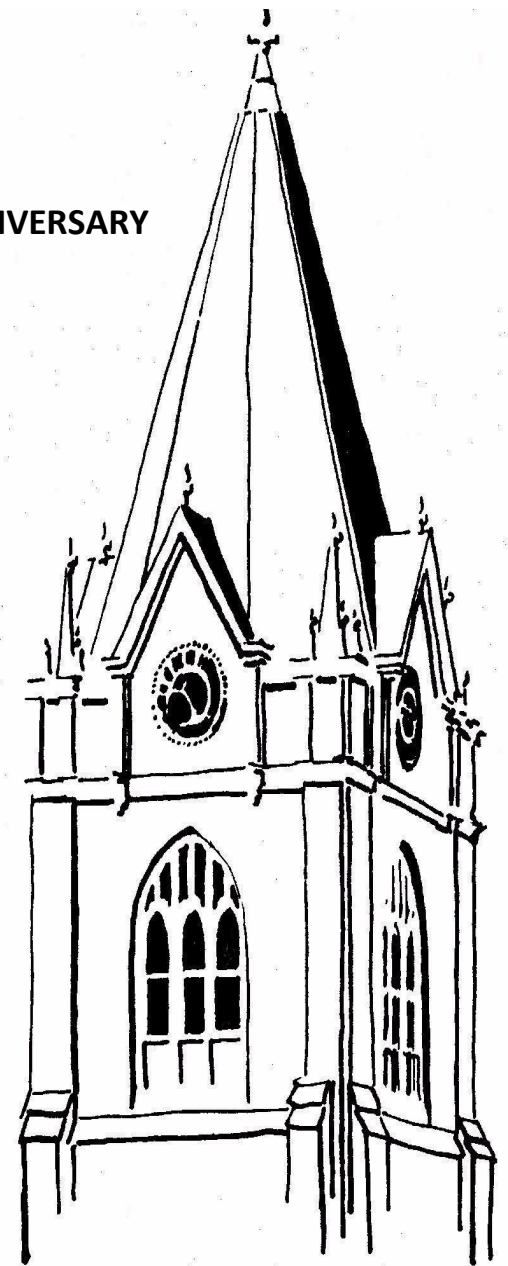
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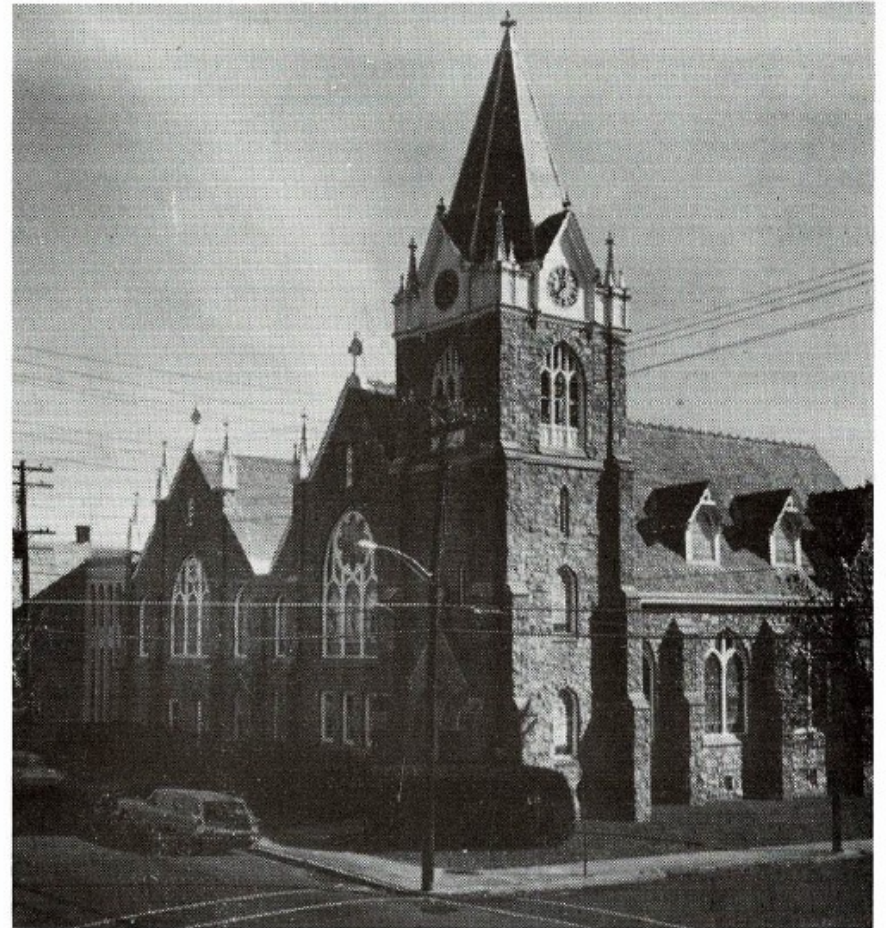
PERKASIE

PENNSYLVANIA



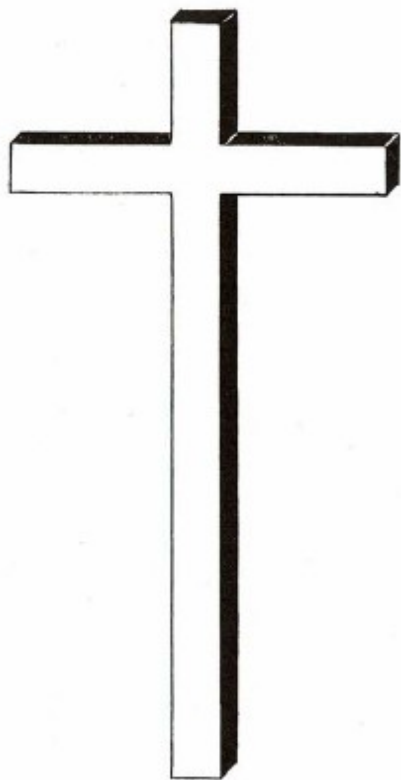
Seventy-fifth Anniversary

1892 — 1967



Trinity Lutheran Church

PERKASIE, PENNSYLVANIA



*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.*

Anniversary Program

Sunday, November 12

8:00 and 10:30 A.M.

Guest Preacher – The Rev. Fred S. Blank, Assistant to
the President of the Eastern Pennsylvania Synod.

6:00 P.M.

Congregational Buffet Supper, followed by “The Life
of Trinity” in pageantry in the Fellowship Hall.

Honored Guests – The Sons of the Congregation:

The Revs. Charles C. Schlitzer, William A. Fluck,
Richard W. Horn, Steven J. Myers, and Walton R.
Horn; and also The Revs. H. Peter Unks and Clifford
E. Hays.

Wednesday, November 15

8:00 P.M. – Community Night and Reunion of Confirmation
Classes.

Guest Preacher – The Rev. Laurence G. Horn, Pastor of
St. Michael’s Church, Sellersville. Other Participants –
Pastors of Neighboring Churches

Sunday, November 19

8:00 and 10:30 A.M.

Guest Preacher – The Rev. Donald D. Pritz, former
Pastor and presently Pastor of Our Saviour’s Lutheran
Church, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Coffee fellowship after 10:30 service to greet Pastor Pritz.

TO GOD BE ALL HONOR, GLORY, AND PRAISE

Trinity Lutheran Church

The First Seventy-Five Years

The year was 1891; it was fall. A group of women had banded themselves into a Ladies Aid Society. One of their chief interests was the establishment of a Lutheran Church in Perkasio. The Rev. John H. Waidelich, pastor of St. Michael's Church in Sellersville, learned of their interest and in the Spring of 1892, appointed a committee for the purpose of furthering this objective.

How they met and solved their many problems was to a large extent left unrecorded except, perhaps, in their hearts. Nevertheless, the decision was made – all that remained was the work and dedication required to see the venture through.

On the Sunday afternoon of July 17, 1892, the cornerstone, which we see today as we enter the center door of the church, was laid with established Lutheran tradition and ceremony.

Four months and much stewardship later, on November 14, 1892, a congregation was organized, and the charter adopted.

A dream became a reality when on Sunday, March 19, 1893, the doors of the new church were swung open to welcome to the first service those dedicated men and women who faithfully had shown their loyalty to Trinity.

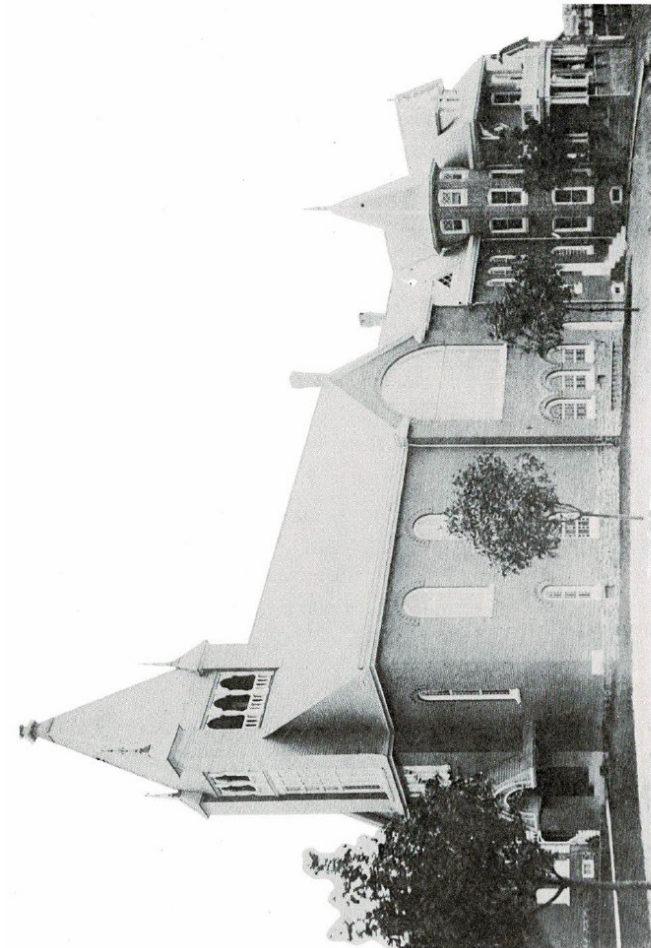
Pastor Waidelich conducted the first service in Trinity Church and installed our first Church Council: J. H. Daub, Levinus Maurer, Wm. Pflieger, Samuel Schuler, A. A. Baum, and Frank Weber. The dedication of the church was delayed until August 11, 1895. Why, we do not know; but, the first recorded communion took place on October 29, 1893, with 56 persons communing.

A Sunday School was organized on October 8, 1893, with Charles W. Baum as superintendent, and an attendance of 123. The venture was now assured and both Church and Sunday School began a phenomenal growth.

Many problems confronted the congregation in these formative years. For some time Pastor Waidelich brought his choir with him from Sellersville, to render the service, but by December of 1893 Trinity organized a choir of its own. The Ladies Aid Society purchased the clerical robe which Pastor Waidelich wore for the first time at the Good Friday service on April 8, 1898. This new innovation had to be approved at a special congregational meeting, and it is interesting to note that one vote was cast in opposition.

The rapid growth of Trinity, and the desire for more services, caused the congregation to vote unanimously on October 24, 1898,

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Original Church at Fifth and Chestnut Streets – Completed in 1893. Annex and Parsonage were added in 1907.

to unite with Jerusalem Church, Almont, to form a parish. The Rev. Preston A. Laury of Marietta, Pa., was called to serve this new parish and was installed on November 12, 1899.

1900 saw the rection of the parsonage, Sunday School membership exceeded 350, and, as the fifth anniversary of the consecration of the church arrived, reports indicated that since the organization of the church, contributions from the Ladies Aid

Trinity Lutheran Church

Society totaled more than \$1000 while the Luther League contributed \$600. The congregation had expended \$11,000, and the valuation of the property was set at \$13,000.

As the fifteenth milestone was reached in 1907, the congregation numbered 529. At a congregational meeting it was resolved that "Trinity church constitute a parish by itself, subject to the approval of the Norristown Conference." On June 23 of the same year, the cornerstone we now see at the foot of the present bell tower was laid for a new and greater Trinity. One year later on June 14, 1908, the new church was consecrated. The clock which now graces the bell tower was not placed until 1912, and was provided for by various donors of the community at a cost of \$693.

Under the untiring labor of Rev. Laury, the new church continued to grow — the membership reaching 753 in 1912, of whom 636 communed. On October 1, 1914, Rev. Laury answered a call to the presidency of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, and severed his pastorate at Trinity.

The Rev. Norman Y. Ritter, then serving as pastor of St. Matthew's, Kellers Church, accepted the call to Trinity. He was installed on January 24, 1915, to begin a long and fruitful ministry which was to last 38 years. Under the spiritual guidance of Pastor Ritter, and the continued zeal and cooperation of the congregation, alterations were made and facilities were expanded for the church building which continually seemed to be growing smaller.

By 1942, just 50 years after the first recorded communion, Trinity showed on its rolls 1117 members. The records indicate that during this period of time 971 children had been baptized, 460 marriages had been consummated, and 619 burials had taken place. Sunday School, keeping pace with the church, reached a total enrollment of approximately 500.

As the clouds of World War II darkened the skies, increasing numbers of Trinity's members were called into the service. By 1943, 59 men and 1 woman had left family and friends. The annual report of 1945, states that 150 church members were serving in the armed forces.

1946 found us returning to peacetime living with plans for the future. We started anew by having the church building repointed. Church membership in 1947 stood at 1094.

Church regalia, like church property, deteriorates and must be replaced. The original choir gowns purchased in 1930 had become years old and the pastor's robe 19 years old. The church purchased the new choir gowns while the ever active Ladies Aid Society, true to tradition, purchased new clerical robes for Pastor Ritter.

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1948 also saw the Luther League revived after several years of inactivity.

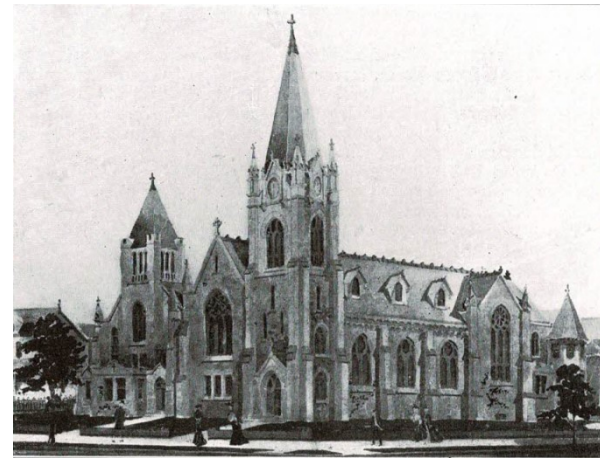
On April 15, 1953, Pastor Ritter submitted a letter of resignation due to ill health. The resignation was to become effective June 30, 1953. A special service was held on June 28 to honor Pastor Ritter for his 38 years of service, the longest in Trinity's history.

On August 30, 1953, Pastor Donald D. Pritz, the Pastor of the Spinnerstown congregation, accepted Trinity's call and began his ministry with us on October 4, 1953. The church continued to move forward with its plans to keep abreast of the changing times and an eye to the future.

The by-laws were changed in 1954 to permit all active members to vote on Church affairs. Previously only those who were 18 years of age or older held this privilege.

In January of 1955 the charter was amended to permit women to serve on the church council — something new and a sign of the times. A few weeks later the by-laws were again amended to increase the size of the church council from 12 to 15 members.

The year 1955 was much like 1891 in that "a decision had been made — all that remained was the work and dedication required to see the venture through." 1955 saw the start of the building fund and the beginning of the Stewardship Sector Project. As far as we know this was the first time the entire church membership was solicited for stewardship pledges. In August 1955 the members voted to purchase the Godshall property adjacent to the church.



Trinity Church as it appeared in 1907-1923.

Trinity Lutheran Church

January 29, 1956 saw the inauguration of our 8 A.M. service with the Youth Choir to render the musical portion of the service.

Projected plans began to take on more meaning when a special congregational meeting held on May 12, 1957 unanimously approved a written Building Program.

Pastor H. Peter Unks was installed as Trinity's assistant Pastor on June 30, 1957. He resigned on June 30, 1958 to accept a call as pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church, North Bergen, New Jersey.

Also in June of 1957, Miss Patricia A. Wenhold accepted the position of church secretary. Her duties include being the secretary to the Pastor, keeping parish statistics, preparing the weekly Church bulletins, editing and publishing "Trinity Chimes," serving as Church Council secretary, and assisting with the Sunday School administration. Miss Wenhold has recently completed ten years of service.

At the Sunday Service of June 15, 1958 the new revised Service Book and Hymnal was used for the first time with mixed emotions on the part of the congregation.

Authorization was given on March 8, 1959 to secure bids for a new Sunday School building and the renovation of the existing Sunday School. A few months later on July 12 the congregation voted (only 3 negative votes) to proceed with construction. The new building was on its way! The cornerstone was laid on June 19, 1960 and the completed building was dedicated December 4, 1960.

Pastor Pritz submitted a letter of resignation on May 4, 1961 to accept a call from Faith Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Missouri.

On October 15, 1961 Pastor Charles H. Ruloff of St. John's Lutheran Church, Stroudsburg, Pa. accepted Trinity's call and became Trinity's pastor and spiritual leader at an installation service held December 10, 1961.

Improvements and progress seemed to have become a by-word at Trinity.

A church library was started in 1962 as well as an organ fund.

A new curriculum was introduced into the Sunday School in September of 1964.

Miss Betty Lynn Bowman became Trinity's first full time Parish Worker in October of 1965. She resigned in June 1967 to accept a position as a teacher in the Pennridge School District.

As of the seventy-fifth year, Trinity has a baptized membership of 1572, a confirmed membership of 1056, and an active membership (confirmed

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members in good standing) of 937. Twenty members are presently serving in the armed forces.

75 years! What changes! What joys! What sorrows! What triumphs and defeats! What stewardship!

How grateful we can be that the members of Trinity were and are such loyal men and women!

It all began in the fall of 1891!

Seventy-Five Years in Brick and Mortar

The official minutes and parochial reports which have been passed down to us over the past 75 years provide us with a rather complete account of Trinity's organizational and corporate history. However, the records with respect to the physical development of the church facilities are somewhat cryptic and vague. Where can we find in the church records, for example, that the church once had two spires instead of one, or that the floor of the present church parlor was once depressed several feet below its present level, or that the folding doors presently dividing the nave from the church parlor were once located up the side of the wall some eight or ten feet above their Present location?

Of course, one can hardly expect written minutes to contain any detailed accounts of structural changes, first, because such matters do not particularly lend themselves to verbal description, and, second, because it hardly seems necessary, at the time of writing, to describe verbally that which the eye can so readily see. Therefore, we learn relatively little of the physical development of the church from the church records.

There are no longer very many members whose memories reach back to the changes and renovations which took place in the early part of this century. Therefore, since the church records with respect to these matters are so incomplete, it is our purpose here, while recollection still remains, to record and thus preserve the history of Trinity's physical development for future generations. The task must be undertaken now; the data will no longer be available for the 100th Anniversary.

The congregation was conceived, we are told, at a meeting of the church council of St. Michael's, Sellersville, in 1892, at which time the necessity of holding services in Perkasio was discussed. A committee of six men was appointed by the Rev. John H. Waidelich, pastor of the Sellersville charge, for the purpose of furthering this objective. This committee held its first

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recorded meeting on February 24, 1892. At the very next meeting, held on March 9, 1892, it was "agreed to build on Charles Bissey's lot opposite William Unfried's lot." This is the present location of Trinity. However, according to old maps, Chestnut Street (then Main Street) ended at Fifth Street (then Sellersville Road) instead of crossing over as it now does. Therefore, the church property did not actually constitute a corner lot at the time.

The minutes of the March 9, 1892 meeting did not record any discussion of plans or specifications for the first building, but there was discussion relative to the securing of a temporary meeting place for the conducting of services pending completion of the building. It was reported that the Reformed Church had offered the 'use of its facilities for a charge of \$5.00 per service but that the Lutherans would be required to furnish their own light, fuel and janitor. The Evangelicals were more generous and offered their facilities at a cost of \$2.50 per service plus an additional 50c when heat would be required. However, at the next meeting it was decided that no services would be conducted until the Lutherans had a church of their own.

At various meetings held during March and April of 1892, it was agreed that the new structure should be built of brick and that it should have dimensions of 40 feet by 60 feet. The minutes further indicate that the "trustees were instructed to follow the plan of [the Trinity] Quakertown building and changes or improvements if thought advisable." It was also decided "to contract the building piece meal."

For some reason there are no minutes between April 11, 1892 and February 15, 1893. However, we learn from other sources that the cornerstone was laid on July 17, 1892 and that a charter was secured on November 14, 1892. When the minutes resumed on February 15, 1893, the congregation was referred to for the first time as "Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church." Several weeks later, as the building neared completion, a member of council was authorized to buy an organ from Jacob Bissey "not to exceed \$15.00 or \$20.00." As it turned out, the organ cost \$30.00. At the same meeting, it was determined that the first service should be held on the evening of March 19, 18913, and one of the members of council was asked to buy four lamps and to borrow two more from Daub's Store.

The cost of the building was \$7,000.00, but this did not include furniture and equipment. Therefore, the committee found it necessary to urge each of the church members to "buy his own chair." Many people bought several chairs, and Tobias Bissey, although not then a member, contributed two dozen chairs. Incidentally, although the first service was

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contributed two dozen chairs. Incidentally, although the first service was held on March 19, 1893, formal consecration did not take place until August 11, 1895. The reason for the delay is unknown.

The church building as originally constructed constituted that part of the present edifice which contains the church parlor and choir rehearsal room. However, it was built initially not in its present location but instead closer to the present Chestnut Street where the church proper now stands. As stated previously, it was a 40 feet by 60 feet brick building. In the front was a square bell tower. The interior consisted of a basement, a main floor and a balcony. On June 27, 1893 the "secretary was instructed to notify the 'building committee to construct a double water closet." One of our members still recalls that this humble structure was located at the present site of the garage behind the old parsonage.

The bell was a later acquisition. At Christmas time in 1895, the Sunday School children were given their Christmas candy in tin boxes. When the boxes were empty, they were to be used for contributions toward the purchase of a bell. By Christmas of 1896, the children had collected \$230.63. The bell was to cost 151,4c per



Primary Department as it appeared 1923-1960

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pound, and it was to weigh 1500 pounds. From this we gather that the actual cost was \$232.50. We have no idea who made up the difference between the \$230.63 and the \$232.50, but we do know that the bell arrived on December 30, 1896 and that it was consecrated on New Year's Day 1897. To this day, the bell bears an inscription acknowledging the gifts of the children.

By 1900, the congregation had grown substantially, and more Sunday School space was needed. Also, Trinity had called its own pastor the year previous, and a parsonage was required. Plans for a parsonage were submitted by two architects, Messrs. Martin and Neff, and the plan prepared by the latter was selected. On April 4, 1900, the construction of a parsonage and "annex" was authorized. This annex was a two story addition extending the full width of the church and 15 feet in depth, built on the end of the church nearest to Fourth Street. The parsonage was erected next to the annex. The approximate cost of this improvement was \$5,000.00. The annex, though much altered, is now that part of the present edifice containing the rest rooms and ladies' choir room on the first floor, and the "quilting room" on the second floor. Of course, the parsonage still remains at its original location.

The minutes contain several interesting entries at about this time. In 1900 council authorized the purchase of electric lights for the church. In the early days, the electric bills averaged less than \$1.00 per month. In 1901 an iron fence and gate were erected between the rear of the church and the alley, hitching posts were installed on Fifth Street, and an umbrella stand was purchased. It is believed that this is the same umbrella stand which was rebuilt several years ago and which now stands in the lobby of the new education building. A privet hedge was planted around the parsonage in 1903, and council authorized the installation of a telephone in the parsonage in 1905. The minutes of December 12, 1905 indicate receipt of an insurance check in the sum of \$3.28 for lightning damage, but the nature of the damage is not revealed.

The congregation soon outgrew its facilities again, and at the annual meeting held on January 9, 1906, council was instructed to study expansion possibilities. Surprisingly enough, serious consideration was given to abandoning the present site and starting anew elsewhere. On May 3, 1906, the building committee reported that it had taken a 60 day option on the purchase of the Joseph Detweiler property at Fifth and Market Streets and recommended that the church, bell and organ be offered for sale at \$13,500.00. Whether the parsonage was to be included in this bargain is

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not clear. We are not certain which of the four corners at Fifth and Market Streets was the subject of the above option, but from an old Perkasio map, it appears that only the east corner was vacant at that time, so it is assumed that this was the property in question. The matter of relocation was reconsidered, however, and on June 26, 1906 Mr. Detweiler was released of the option, and on October 8, 1906, a bid was accepted for the construction of a new church; work was not to commence, however, until April 1, 1907.

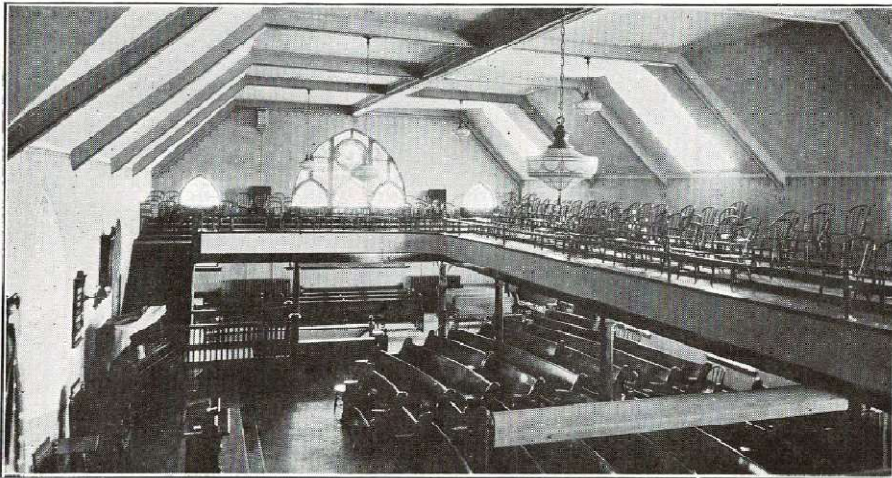
The new building was to be built at the corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets at the site of the first building, so arrangements had to be made to move the original building, including the 1900 annex, back from Chestnut Street to its present location. The building was moved on rollers, and we are told that it progressed at the rate of only about one foot per day. Apparently services were conducted despite the mobile nature of the building, because Mrs. Norman Y. Ritter advises that her late husband preached at Trinity as a supply for Pastor Laury in April 1907 just prior to Pastor Ritter's graduation from Seminary. The building was on rollers on that occasion, and Mrs. Laury, the wife of the then Pastor, was said to have remarked that some of the parishioners were reluctant to enter the building because of its uncertain foundations. Pastor Ritter later recalled that when preaching that sermon he little anticipated that within the next eight years, he, himself, would be the congregation's pastor.

The cornerstone of the new church proper was laid on June 23, 1907. However, even with its 15 foot annex, the original building was about 18 feet shorter than the new building. To compensate for this, a one story extension (somewhat like a porch) was added to the front of the relocated old building so as to create a uniform building line. This extension now contains the front cloak room and the center entrance hallway. It is interesting to note that the original front wall of the old building is still marked by a slight offset in the floor between the cloak room and the hallway leading to the new education building.

The new church was constructed of granite quarried at Port Deposit, Maryland, and the front of the old building was refaced with the same material. However, the original brick of the old building can still be seen in the courtyard adjacent to the new education building. The steeple of the old building was retained, but the bell was removed to the handsome tower on the new building. At this point in history, Trinity had two steeples. Provision was also made in the new tower for a clock, but the clock itself was not actually secured until 1912.

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No effort was spared in beautifying the interior of the new sanctuary. Of special interest was a symbol of the Trinity which was painted above the altar and which has survived all renovations. Pastor Ritter was particularly fond of this painting and frequently referred to it in illustrating the Trinity to his Catechetical classes. Fine stained glass windows also contributed much to the elegance of the interior.



Second Floor Sunday School Auditorium, 1923-1960

Following the construction of the new church, both the first floor (formerly the basement) and the second floor (formerly the main floor) of the old building were used for Sunday School classes. However, the first floor of the old building was several feet lower than the floor of the new construction. This is not

surprising when it is borne in mind that this floor had been used as a basement at the old location.

The second floor of the old building, in addition to providing Sunday School facilities, also served as a sort of balcony to the nave. There was an opening in the wall between the upper part of the nave and the second floor of the old building, and when the nave was filled to capacity, chairs were drawn up on the old second floor to the opening in this wall. When not thus used, folding doors with stained glass lites were used to close this aperture.

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It should be noted that the second floor of the old building also had a balcony of its own.

Meanwhile, in 1906 the church council agreed to provide space for a pipe organ if the choir members would raise the funds for the purchase of the organ itself. The choir accepted the challenge, and in 1908 a Moller organ was installed. At that time the steps in front of the pulpit extended the entire width of the nave, and the choir was seated near its present location but on these steps facing the congregation. The console of the organ was installed against the wall behind the choir, and the organist sat with her back to the congregation.

In 1912 community funds were combined with those of the congregation to purchase a Seth Thomas clock at a cost of \$693.00. This clock, with four faces, was installed in the bell tower and was known as the community clock. It had, and still has, an eight day movement, and it is wound once a week by the sexton.

Extensive renovations costing \$23,000.00 took place in 1923. The depressed first floor of the original building was raised to the level of the church nave. This made it possible to use the first floor of the original building for overflow crowds instead of the second, and, accordingly, the opening in the upper wall was closed and a new opening was made in the lower wall between the nave and the present church parlor. The very same folding doors which were used above were moved down and placed in this new opening. We still see them there today, although the opening was somewhat reduced in size in 1960.

Further, the 1923 renovations saw the addition of a second floor and large stained glass window over the cloak room or "porch" which had been added to the front of the old building in 1907. This substantially increased the capacity of the Sunday School room on the second floor of the old building. As a part of this project, the old steeple was removed and the facade of the old building took on the appearance which it still bears today. Painstaking care was taken to match the granite so that no scars of the alteration would be apparent, and today a visual inspection from outside will not reveal any indication of the change.

Finally, the 1923 renovations saw the construction of the present choir loft, and thereafter, the choir faced Chestnut Street instead of the congregation. However, it was not until 1930, when the organ was rebuilt, that the console was moved to its present location and the permanent type seating for the choir installed. The rebuilt organ, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Horace E. Snyder, was dedicated on May 31, 1931.

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In 1936 the congregation purchased the building known as "The Parish House" for \$2500.00. This three story structure, once used as an undertaking establishment, was located directly across the street from the parsonage. It was renovated at a cost of \$10,000.00 and ultimately housed the nursery, junior and senior departments of the Sunday School as well as providing meeting places for the various church auxiliaries. Following the erection of the new education building in 1960, the parish house was disposed of at a price of \$12,000.00 — \$500.00 less than its original cost plus renovations.

In 1938, and again in 1952, interior renovations were made. The 1952 improvements included the removal of the organ pipes from the front of the nave, new carpeting, the installation of a dossal over the altar and the refinishing of the altar, pulpit and lectern.

The next project of major proportions occurred in 1959-60 when the Godshall property next to the original building was purchased for expansion. A new education building was erected thereon; also the Sunday School facilities in the original building were completely renovated. The first floor of the original building was converted into a church parlor, library and choir rehearsal room and the second floor was converted into classrooms. However, the 1900 annex at the rear of the original building was altered only slightly. The new education building erected adjacent to the original building contains a fellowship hall, kitchen, church office and many classrooms.

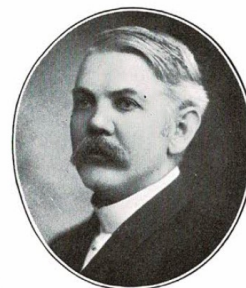
The most recent real estate acquisition was the purchase in 1964 of a new parsonage at 1109 Old Post Road in Perkasio. This modern and attractive home, ideally situated in a quiet neighborhood, was built several years before its purchase by Trinity and was occupied by one prior owner. It presently serves as the home of the pastor and his family.

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Ministers Serving the Congregation

The Rev. John H. Waidelich was born in Steinsville, Lehigh County, on March 17, 1860. He attended Kutztown State Normal School and in 1882 was admitted to Muhlenberg College. Graduating from Muhlenberg in 1886, he was enrolled at the Lutheran Seminary at Mt. Airy, from which he graduated in 1889.

Pastor Waidelich was ordained at Salem Church, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, on June 17, 1889 and that same year accepted a call to the



Sellersville parish consisting of St. John's, Ridge Valley and St. Michael's, Sellersville, serving the latter congregation throughout his entire ministry of 52 years. During this term of service he was instrumental in founding Trinity, Perkasio, in 1892. In 1893, under the leadership of Pastor Waidelich, Trinity and Jerusalem, Almont, were

The Reverend John H. Waidelich, D.D. formed into a separate parish which he supplied until the Perkasio-Almont parish secured a pastor of its own, the Rev. Preston A. Laury, in 1899.

Pastor Waidelich was one of the founders of the Norristown Conference and was also one of the delegates to the convention held in 1918 at which three Lutheran bodies merged to form what was later known as the United Lutheran Church in America.

Among Pastor Waidelich's civic contributions was his service for 18 years as a member of the local school board. He also served for a time as president of the Bucks County School Directors' Association and as vice president of the Pennsylvania School Directors' Association. It was Pastor Waidelich who initiated the suggestion that Perkasio and Sellersville form a consolidated high school, and he lived to see the consolidation become a reality.

St. Michael's Church celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Pastor Waidelich's ordination and of his pastorate at St. Michael's on June 18, 1939. He died on September 23, 1941.

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The Rev. Preston A. Laury was born in Hellertown, Pennsylvania, on December 28, 1865. He graduated from Muhlenberg College in 1899 with second honors. Following his graduation from college, he entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mt. Airy, graduating in 1892.

Pastor Laury was ordained at Trinity Lutheran Church, Reading, and immediately thereafter, on July 3, 1892, he became pastor of the Lutheran Church at Marietta, Pennsylvania. While at Marietta, he pursued post-graduate studies in theology.



The Reverend Preston A. Laury, D.D.

Pastor Laury resigned his charge at Marietta and was installed as pastor at Trinity on November 12, 1899. The November 16, 1899 issue of the Central News tells us that Pastor Laury and his family moved into the Tobias Bissey house on Arch Street pending completion of the new parsonage. We are further told that on the Thursday evening following his ordination, a reception was given for Pastor Laury at which time Charles W. Baum acted as Master of Ceremonies. The newspaper account relates that 200 members of Trinity were in attendance and "delightful music was furnished by the Iona Mandolin Club."

In September of 1900 the new parsonage was completed, and the pastor and his family took up residence. It was during Mr. Laury's pastorate that Trinity severed its union with Almont and became an independent parish, this being in 1907.

On October 1, 1914, Pastor Laury closed his pastorate to become president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Waterloo, Ontario. A Doctor of Divinity degree was conferred upon him in 1915. In 1919 Dr. Laury became pastor of St. Matthew's in Bethlehem from which pastorate he retired in 1936, at which time he was elected pastor emeritus. On June 7, 1941 special services were held at St. Matthew's in honor of the 50th anniversary of Dr. Laury's ordination. The following day he died.

Throughout his ministry Dr. Laury traveled widely. He did graduate work both in this country and abroad, and he was much in demand as a writer for various Lutheran publications.

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The Reverend Norman Y. Ritter

"Never in its history has Trinity Lutheran congregation celebrated such an auspicious New Year." Thus begins a two column account in an issue of the Central News recounting the events of a four and one-half hour New Year's Eve service ushering in the year 1915. "There was an estimated attendance of ten hundred people all eager and anxious for the welcome of the new pastor and" No less auspicious was that New Year in 1915 for the Rev. Norman Y. Ritter, for it marked the beginning of a pastorate destined to span more than half of the congregation's present history.

Pastor Ritter was a native of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Born in Boyertown in 1882, he moved to Pottstown early in his childhood and there completed his public school education in 1900. Thence he enrolled at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, and finished his course as salutatorian of the class of 1904. Three years later he was graduated from the Mt. Airy Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia. Ordained into the ministry at St. James Lutheran Church, Reading, Pa., on May 27, 1907, he began his pastoral work at Redeemer Lutheran Church, South Langhorne in June of the same year. On January 1, 1909 he moved to Quakertown to assume the

Trinity Lutheran Church

pastorate of Kellers Parish, consisting then of St. Matthew's, Kellers Church, St. Paul's, Applebachsville, and Zion's, Zion Hill. It was six years later to the day that he became pastor of Trinity where he served 38 1/2 years for the balance of his ministry. Special services on Sunday evening January 24, 1915, marked his installation here with appropriate sermons by the Rev. Warren Nickel, Souderton, and the Rev. Dr. I. B. Kurtz, Pottstown.

Trinity continued to build upon its sound foundation, but soon felt some effects of the trying times experienced throughout the nation. The pastor was quick to set the example of deferring his personal interests in favor of the well-being of the congregation. World War I took its toll of young members. The sentiment — not unanimous — of the times required the discontinuation of the monthly German preaching services. Coal was delivered in 1/4, and 1/2 ton loads often on Friday or Saturday, and hasty decisions had to be made about heating even a portion of the church building. The subsequent depression pinched everybody's pocketbook, and salaries sometimes had to be deferred. With yet another war, perhaps it can well be said — "These be the times that try men's souls."

On the other hand, there was the thrill at the steady progress in spiritual growth, evident in the support of a missionary, an increasing membership, as well as the extensive physical alterations and improvements from time to time.

Early in his ministry Pastor Ritter was Secretary of the Norristown Conference, and from 1916-18 its President. He took part in the historic convention in New York City, at which the ULCA was established. In addition to serving on several synod and conference committees, he was signally honored by being elected a director of the Germantown Orphanage and Old Folks Home for seven successive three-year terms. For this faithful service he was given a testimonial dinner when he declined reelection in 1947.

While statistics do not tell the story of a ministry, they show membership grew from 773 to 1119 members. In pastoral acts he confirmed 933, baptized 935, performed 422 wedding ceremonies, and officiated at 698 funerals.

He was a charter member of the Perkasio Rotary Club and served as its second President. Frequent demands were made upon him as a speaker at community affairs. He was an avid reader and enjoyed solving puzzles. Perhaps less known was his ability as a chess player, a diversion in which he indulged on rare occasions when time and another player were simultaneously available.

Seventy-fifth Anniversary

Pastor Ritter was married to Miss Bessie Romich of Pottstown on June 25, 1908. She was a constant helpmate to him in many church activities, and continues to be an active member of Trinity. They had two children, Ruth and Esther, the former Mrs. Willard U. Baum of Allentown and the latter Mrs. Esther James, Albany, Georgia.

A special service conducted by Emil Fischer, President of the Pa. Ministerium was held on Sunday Morning, June 28, 1953, the last Sunday of Pastor Ritter's pastorate. Because of ill health he resigned the parish, effective June 30, 1953. The congregation accepted his resignation with deep regret, and in recognition of his long, faithful and constructive service conferred on him the title and rank of Pastor Emeritus for life. Vacating the parsonage soon thereafter, the litters bought a home in Perkasio where together they resided until his death on March 15, 1954.

There could be no more fitting conclusion to this biography of a man of simple manner than his own chosen verse upon observing his thirty-fifth year at Trinity :—

"The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places;
Yea, we have a goodly heritage. Psalm 16.6



Chancel before 1930.

Trinity Lutheran Church



The Reverend Donald D. Pritz

A native of Mahanoy City, the Rev. Donald D. Pritz received his public school education there and graduated from Mahanoy City High School in 1938. He graduated from Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania; the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mt. Airy in May, 1951; and the Graduate School of the Seminary at Mt. Airy. He was ordained with his class at Reading, Pennsylvania, May 25, 1951.

Having served as supply pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church, Spinnerstown, Pennsylvania, during the last six months of his senior year at the Seminary, he began his ministry there following his ordination.

In October, 1953, Pastor Pritz accepted the call to become Trinity's fourth pastor. As Trinity's membership increased, the need for more adequate facilities became evident. It was with the guidance and encouragement of Pastor Pritz that Trinity undertook the Parish Development Program. As a result of the venture, the construction of a new educational building became a reality in 1960.

In June, 1961, the challenge of a new congregation presented itself and Pastor Pritz accepted the pastorate of Faith Lutheran Church of St. Louis, Missouri.

Again, in July, 1964, a call to our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Arlington Heights, Illinois, was accepted by Pastor Pritz. Here his work has expanded to include many community and synodical activities, among which was his appointment as chairman of the Illinois Synod Committee on camping.

Pastor Pritz is married to the former Lois Kramer. Their family consists of David, Karen, and Alan.

Seventy-fifth Anniversary

Our present pastor was born on September 5, 1912 in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and spent his early years in that city. He received his secondary education in Allentown High School and enrolled in Muhlenberg College. Following his graduation from Muhlenberg in 1931, Pastor Ruloff entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mt. Airy and was graduated in 1935.

He began his ministry as an Assistant Pastor at the Alsace Lutheran Church in Reading. He served there until 1936 when he was called to the pastorate of the Howertown parish, which consisted of two congregations in Northampton County. His ordination was held at the Zion (Stone) Church, Kreidersville, on November 6, 1936. His ministry was concluded at the Howertown parish in 1949 when he was called to serve at the Good Shepherd-Leesport parish in Berks County. His service there was marked by the construction of a new educational building at Good Shepherd Church in 1955. Pastor Ruloff was elected president of the Reading Conference of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, and served for two terms.

In 1958 he accepted a call to become Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. While there he led successfully a capital funds campaign which resulted in a new educational building and a renovated sanctuary. He served there until November 15, 1961 when he began his ministry here as Pastor of Trinity Church. During this time he was elected by the Synod to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Good Shepherd home, Allentown.

Pastor Ruloff is married to the former Grace M. Sterner, a native of Egypt, Pennsylvania. They have two daughters, Mrs. Bairy T. Bates of Blairstown, New Jersey; and Mrs. G. Scott Smith of Raleigh, North Carolina, and one grandchild.



The Reverend Charles A. Ruloff

The Sunday School

The Sunday School was organized in 1893 and first met on October 8th with 123 persons in attendance. Charles W. Ballm was named the first superintendent, continuing in that capacity for 27 years. The school grew rapidly, and by 1913 the membership had grown to 773. From the time of its organization, the Sunday School has supported and contributed toward the work of the congregation and of the church at large. For example, the church bell was purchased by offerings of the children, and a concert grand piano was purchased in 1927 with Sunday School funds. Also, since 1949, the School has been contributing \$1,800 annually toward the support of the Rev. and Mrs. Paul E. Hansen, missionaries in Guyana, and in 1959 \$10,000 was donated to the church toward the cost of the new education building.

The old minutes reveal some interesting sidelights. The first reference to the Sunday School picnic was found in the minutes of 1907. Some of the picnics in years past were held jointly with other local congregations and occasionally even with churches from other communities. Other picnics were held independently. Not all of the picnics took place in Perkasio, some having been held in such places as Willow Grove Park, Funk's Park in Chalfont, and Central Park and Dorney Park in Allentown. In the early days the Sunday School members were transported to the picnics in wagons, and later buses were used for this same purpose.

The minutes also tell us that on August 27, 1916, the superintendent suspended Sunday School until further notice due to an epidemic of infantile paralysis. Another interesting entry is found in 1932 when Wm. M. High, the present Sunday School treasurer, first took office. In 1934 reference is made to the resignation of Mrs. Tilghman Angeny as superintendent of the Primary Department after having served for 41 years in that capacity. Mrs. AnTeny was succeeded by Mrs. Claude H. Pluck who has held the post since that time.

Through the years, nine Sunday School superintendents have held office. They were: Charles W. Baum, 1893-1920; Franklin Kramer, 1921-1939; Phares Bader, 1940-1945; Edward Hubbert, 1946-1947; Alfred D. Myers, 1948-1955; John C. Sollday, Jr., 1956-1960; Robert M. Mountenay, 1961-1963; Paul Hontz, 1964-1965; Harold O. Gross, Jr. 1966 to date.

The Sunday School is presently using the new curriculum material produced by the Board of Parish Education.

The Ministry of Music

Under the leadership of Charles W. Baum, the choir was organized late in 1893. The original members were Misses Carrie Cressman, Alice Bean, Addie Baum and Birdie Unfried, and Messrs. William K. Kramer, T. A. Bissey and Dalton Pflieger. Mr. Baum was name chorister and Miss Lorena Keller became the first organist. Upon the death of Miss Keller in 1898, Miss Unfried, who later became Mrs. Charles W. Baum, succeeded as organist.

In 1906, church council suggested that it would provide space for a pipe organ if the choir would assume responsibility for soliciting funds for the purchase of the organ. The choir members, eager to have a pipe organ, responded with enthusiasm and by 1908 a new Moller organ was installed.

The choir rendered its first cantata "The Angelic Choir," by Lorenz, in 1906 and continued to perform cantatas or oratorios at least annually for many years thereafter. In 1909 the choir performed Gaul's "Holy City" in the Perkasio fire house. O. B. Sellers' orchestra provided the instrumental accompaniment. The program was repeated at Perkasio and again in Sellersville. In all, more than 3000 persons enjoyed the oratorio. Another highlight in history of the choir occurred in the early 1930's when the Strand Theatre on the boardwalk at Ocean City, New Jersey, invited the choir to sing several anthems at one of the weekly Sunday evening services sponsored by the Lutheran Churches of Philadelphia.

1930 and 1931 saw several innovations. The first robes were purchased for the choir, and cabinets were built in which to hang them. At about the same time the present permanent seating was installed as a gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. Melvin Freed. Finally, the organ was enlarged and completely rebuilt and an echo organ installed in the balcony, the funds for the organ project having been furnished by Mr. and Mrs. Horace E. Snyder.

In 1927, Mr. Baum's son, Willard, assumed responsibility for conducting the choir, but the actual direction of the organization remained with the elder Mr. Baum. For the first half of the 20th century, the history of the choir was inseparable from that of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Baum. However, in 1948, after more than 50 years of service as chorister and as organist, Mr. and Mrs. Baum retired. They were succeeded in their respective positions by Willard U. Baum and Frank E. Koder who continued the fine traditions of the choir. During this period of time a Junior Choir was organized and was directed at various times by several members of the Senior Choir, among

Trinity Lutheran Church

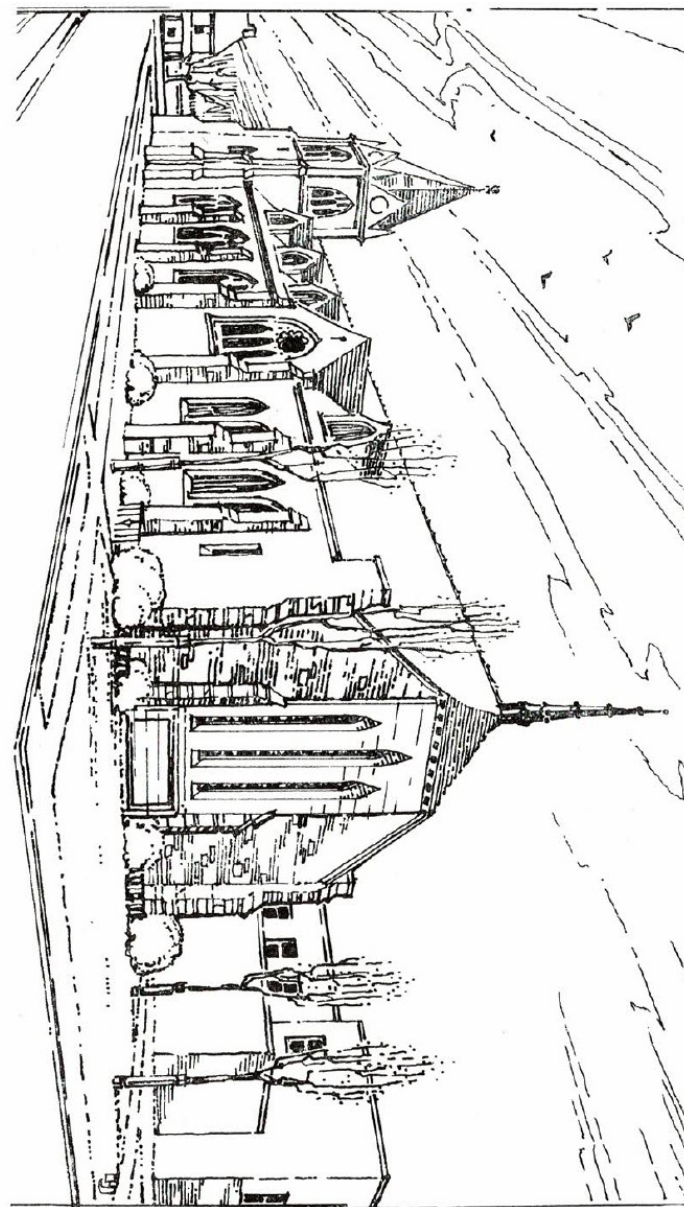
them Mrs. Walter Snyder, Mrs. Alice Taillon, Mrs. David L. Mann, and Mrs. Paul Meas . A Youth Choir comprised of high school students was organized for use at the newly instituted 8:00 A.M. service under the direction of Martin L. Miller, Jr., in 1956.

Mrs. David A. Fisher became the director of music in 1958 and assumed responsibility for the entire musical program of the church. Mrs. Fisher organized a cherub choir for small children, a bell choir and also a choir school which meets on Saturday mornings during the school term. The bell choir augments many of the Church Services and also serves outside of the congregation, presenting their music in other churches and community organizations in a two-county area. Mrs. Fisher is a graduate of St. Olaf College, having a music major, and is recognized throughout the Church for her authorship of The Worship Series, published by the Choir School Guild. She still serves as Director of Music at Trinity.



View of Interior after proposed alterations.

Seventy-fifth Anniversary



Architect's Conception of Proposed Addition.

Trinity Lutheran Church

The Ministry of Music

The Rev. Charles H. Ruloff, Pastor
The Rev. and Mrs. Paul G. Hansen, Missionaries
Miss Patricia A. Wenhold, Parish Secretary
Mrs. David A. Fisher, Director of Music
Mr. Marvin L. Steeley, Custodian

CHURCH COUNCIL

Mr. Alfred H. Barndt	Mr. Carl C. Hobart
Mrs. Carlton U. Baum	Mr. Thomas L. Hollenbach
Mr. Montford Benner	Mr. Henry F. Nungesser
Mr. Albert G. Bruzas	Mr. John C. Solliday, Jr.
Mrs. Claude H. Fluck	Mr. W. Ernest Struble
Mr. Woodrow W. Groff	Mr. Richard Van Ommeren
Mrs. Harold O. Gross, Jr.	Mr. Robert B. Wenhold

OFFICERS

The Rev. Charles H. Ruloff, President
Mr. Richard Van Ommeren, Vice President
Miss Patricia A. Wenhold, Secretary
Mrs. Kenneth R. Holzerman, Financial Secretary
Mr. Abraham R. Mann, Jr., Treasurer

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Mr. Harold O. Gross, Jr., Superintendent
Mr. James W. Moyer, Assistant Superintendent
Miss Sara Ruth Funk, Secretary
Mr. William M. High, Treasurer

LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

Mrs. Russell H. Crouthamel, President
Mrs. Alice D. Taillon, Vice President
Mrs. Frank R. Kulp, Secretary
Mrs. Abraham R. Mann, Jr., Treasurer

LUTHERAN CHURCH MEN

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Mr. Hiram B. Wenhold, Secretary
Mr. Marvin L. Steeley, Treasurer

LUTHER LEAGUE

Miss Anne Gross, President
Mr. William Street, Jr., Vice President
Miss Gail Slotter, Secretary
Miss Nancy Snyder, Treasurer

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