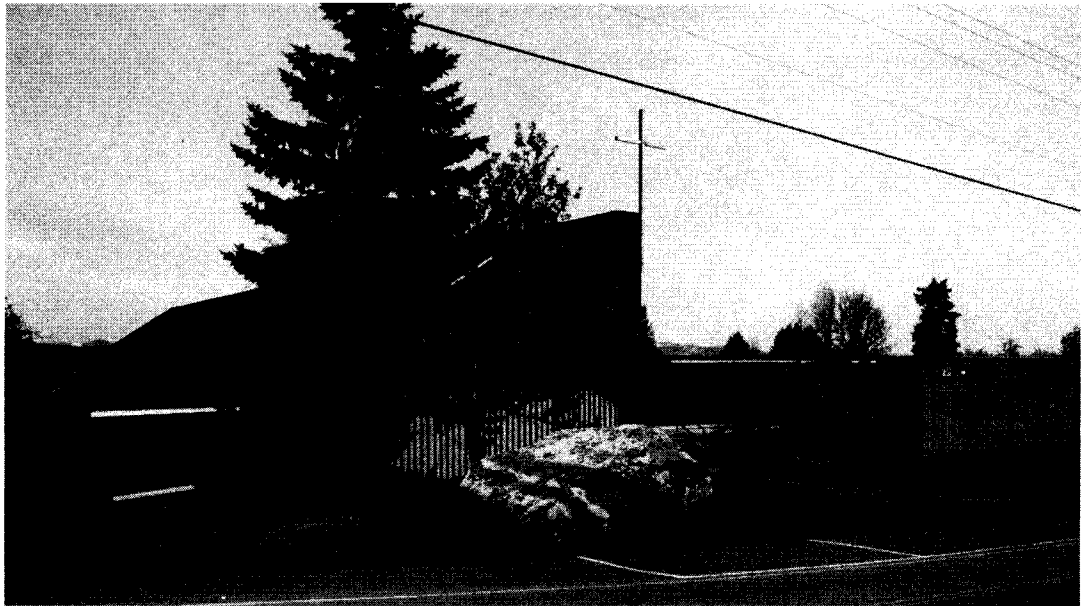


Swede Town Stories
of
The People and Their Church



...Upon This Rock . . . Matthew 16:18

Ninety Years of Service: 1910 - 2000

Ebenezer Lutheran Church, ELCA

Lake Stevens, Washington

MAY 03 2000

Preface

This is a brief history rooted in the forests around Lake Stevens, of a small group of immigrants from the American upper mid-west, Sweden and Finland determined to maintain and nurture their Lutheran faith and Augustana traditions in the face of cultural isolation, community hostility and economic adversity. Even more, it is a testament to their ultimate success.

They came to a dynamic frontier of lumber and shingle mills, small farms and businesses struggling with difficult transportation, periodic shortages of jobs and woefully inadequate fire protection, eventually to define the character of the Lake Stevens that we know today.

They have left some stories of their times. Most of them are probably true.

* * * *

Acknowledgement

This chronicle of the history of Ebenezer Lutheran church could not have been written without the generous help of Brian Holmes, current historian of the church, the Lloyd Andersons, the Bill Lunds, the Bill Taylors, and many descendents of the original Ebenezer families such as Frances McGee, Emmett Loth, Harry Whitford, Helen Hendrickson, Pat Freerks, Lillian Malmsted, and many others.

Additional special thanks are due Pat Jackson and the 90th Anniversary Committee, Jim and Nancy Mitchell and Anne Whitsell and the Lake Stevens Historical Society.

Material on the early years of Ebenezer was drawn freely from the booklet "Behold His Glory", the record of the fiftieth anniversary of the congregation.

The First Years . . .

During the first decade of the 20th century, Everett and its harbor were teeming with activity, competing with Seattle to become the dominant northwest U.S. seaport. James J. Hill was building railroads, and men with names like Rockefeller, Wetmore, and Rucker were demanding logs and lumber. Huge stands of timber were available around Lake Stevens, just a few miles east.

As they had been all along the western frontier for the past 20 years, railroads were being punched through to the forests and mines. The northern Pacific reached Hartford in 1889, followed by the Hartford and Eastern in 1893 to tap the mines around Monte Cristo. Meanwhile, homesteads were reached only by narrow, rutted horse and wagon roads. In 1892, a contract was awarded for a planked road to East Everett, and a bridge across Ebey Slough was built for \$7300.

Lumber and shingle mills sprung up immediately along the railroad, and by late 1900 the entire perimeter of the lake had been logged. The huge Rucker Brothers mill was built along the east side of the lake in 1905, and its saw carriage first rolled on March 4, 1906.

Word of jobs was telegraphed across the country, triggering a wave of immigrants. There were timber cruisers, log scalers, shingle weavers, timber fallers, buckers, choke setters, grease monkeys and horse loggers and steam donkey men, millwrights, sawyers, and mill hands of every description. Many worked six 10-hour shifts a week, and descended upon Hartford and Machias on Saturday nights looking for all types of entertainment. They found them.

It was into this raw mill town environment that immigrants from Wisconsin and the upper Midwest, Finland and Sweden came during the following few years. Their numbers and clearly Scandinavian origin gave rise to the somewhat inaccurate name "Swede Town" for the Hartford area. Some came from the area of Finland around Jeppo inhabited by both Swedish war refugee and Finnish families, and spoke a "Swede-Finn" dialect, neither pure Swedish or Finnish, but understandable by those speaking either. Others came from Vaasa, farther up the Finnish west coast. These families were old-country Lutherans, determined to keep and nurture their faith. This is a small portion of their story.

* * * *

Charter Members of Ebenezer Lutheran Church

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Forsman
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hendrickson
Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Scott
Mr. Alfred Norman
Mrs. Bertha Loth
Mr. C. R. Zingmark
Mr. C.F. Anderson

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Abrahamson
Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel Worlund
Mr. Carl Granfors
Mr. Charles Johnson
Mrs. Emma Lundberg
Mr. Oscar Zingmark
Mr. Alfred Benson

1900 – 1910

A decade of near-explosive growth in the area around Hartford followed the turn of the century. “Five Acre Tracts” had been platted in 1891, and the “Lake Stevens Garden Tracts” were laid out in 1906. Dimension lumber and shiplap were readily available at around five dollars a thousand board feet, and skilled Swedish carpenters could be hired for about two dollars a day.



Downtown Hartford in About 1908

Construction of homes on the slope north of the lake is shown in this picture, taken in 1908. The home circled is the original family home of the parents of Frances McGee, a present member of Ebenezer.

Most of the charter members of Ebenezer arrived in Hartford between 1905 and 1908. All had grown up in the Lutheran faith, had

come originally from Finland and Sweden, many by way of Wisconsin or Minnesota. They met originally in homes, then in facilities such as the old Hartford School or the Yeoman Hall, a lodge shared with other groups, where the visiting pastor, his message and the Lutheran beliefs in baptism and confirmation were often ridiculed by hecklers. By 1909 the families realized that they could not continue to worship God in such circumstances and began to search for a church home. A group bought out other interests in the Yeoman Hall, re-named it the Swedish-Finnish Zion Hall, and Lutheran families began to schedule regular visits by traveling clergy.

1910-1920



Pastor John Gullans
1910 - 1911

The first year of the new decade was a momentous one for the Lutheran Church in Swede Town. Nineteen people representing fourteen families had met several times previously to plan a Lutheran congregation, and had called Pastor John Gullans of Seattle to meet with them periodically to conduct worship services and help in the planning. Then, on May 23, 1910 they met at the home of Jacob and Ida Abrahamson and heard Pastor Gullans read from Ephesians 4: 1-16 the words that an altar named Ebenezer would be erected and that "Hitherto the Lord Has Helped Us". After the Pastor's message each man and woman present came forward to sign their names to become charter members of the Evangelical Lutheran Ebenezer Congregation of Hartford, Washington.

After the charter ceremony, the group retired to the dining room of the Abrahamson home for a smorgasbord dinner, a practice which remains to this day.

The Reverend John Gullans of Seattle had accepted the invitation and responsibility of becoming the first pastor of Ebenezer.

Committed to coming to Hartford on every other Sunday and one evening a month if possible, he was paid a salary of ten dollars a month.

The Ladies Aid Society, organized even before the congregation was chartered, bought a foot treadle-pumped organ, the church's first, with money they themselves had raised. To meet all other expenses of the church, a monthly membership fee of fifty cents per family and twenty-five cents per single member, was assessed.

In 1911 the Ebenezer congregation applied for affiliation with the Columbia Conference; it was accepted in 1913.

General feeling in the congregation was that the Zion Hall was not the ideal place for worship. Committees were formed, a lot was purchased, then sold, but not until a gift of property in 1946 did an opportunity arise for the construction of a new church.

Pastor Gullans continued to serve Ebenezer until late in 1911.



The Abrahamson Home in About 1913

The First Confirmation

Sunday, July 23, 1910. Summer had finally come to Swede Town, and for once on a Sunday morning, Edith Benson's dress and long brunette hair, freshly waved and gathered at the back with a large white ribbon, was dry and neat. She squinted, protecting her brown eyes from the bright sun, and her cheeks were slightly flushed from the walk from her home. Of moderate build like her sisters, she herself had made her white ankle-length dress from a McCall pattern and trimmed it with white rick-rack her mother had bought from Eggerts' General Store.

She had become an expert on her mother's White treadle sewing machine. Now 18, she wondered about her future in Hartford, and had begun to admit to herself that the boy from across town, whose father operated a livery stable, was really rather handsome. Her older sister Emma agreed, and that could be a problem.

But today was special, and her thoughts turned to the coming events.

Several other families were making their way to the Swedish-Finnish Zion Hall, where services were to be held this morning, the third Sunday of the month. Pastor John Gullans was due for his monthly visit to the now-formally organized Ebenezer Lutheran Church.

Some parishioners remembered meeting years ago in the Yeoman Hall, often with hecklers present. That building had burned down in 1901, and the small congregation then met somewhat more peacefully at the Hartford School.

About a year earlier they had changed their meeting place to the Zion Hall, their destination this morning. A few families were arriving on horse-drawn buckboards or carriages but most, supported only by the mill wages of about a dollar a day, were walking. Among them were the church charter members: Edith's brother Alfred, the Charles Forsmans, the Carl Granfors, the Henry Hendricksons, the C.F. Scotts, and the Emanuel Worlunds, as well as Mrs. Bertha Loth and Mrs. Emma Lundberg and several young gentlemen, Alfred Norman, C.R. Zingmark, C.F. Anderson and Charles Johnson.

Also among the arriving families, a couple of blocks away, were two boys and three girls and their parents. The youngest of the girls, Ida Cecilia, only about a year old, was being carried alternately by her mother Ida and her older sisters Agda Amelia and Anna Sophia.

Jacob and Ida Abrahamson were mainstays of the church, and the children were devoted to their stern but loving father and their hard-working and devoted mother. Agda and Anna were with their parents, but her two brothers lagged behind by about fifty yards. Agda called back for them to hurry up.

Boys had it so easy; getting ready for church meant only putting on a shirt, getting into pants and suspenders, shoes and socks, and a few strokes with a pig's bristle hair brush. If they remembered, they brushed their teeth with a mixture of salt and baking soda and often-shared tooth brushes. Oh, and just perhaps a little Ivory or Fels-Naptha soap, a splash or two of cold water, and a couple of quick wipes with flour-sack towels. And still they were behind!

In spite of that, she had noticed recently that the boys, John Olaf, 16, and Jacob Robert, 12, were heating water and taking baths a little more often; she had even overheard them talking about girls in addition to their usual talk about bicycles, locomotives, stump blasting and those new-fangled automobiles. And she often sadly remembered the death of her oldest brother Uno, drowned in the Little Pilchuck rescuing his best friend Arvid Worlund.

As was often the case with the families with several children, many of the domestic responsibilities fell upon the oldest daughter, in this case 11-year old Agda. Lighter duties were assigned to Anna, seven.

Agda and her mother were close; often when they were together, alone in the kitchen of their new house, mother Ida would share stories of her life as a girl. Many of them Agda would never forget, and would later pass on to Anna and Celia.

* * * *

An "Auction Girl" and a Two-dollar Trunk Complete with Husband

Ida Sofia Roatsala was born in Jeppo, Finland in 1875, the first of two sisters. They lost their mother in 1879 to tuberculosis and saw their seafaring father for the first and only time two years later.

Finnish law at the time required that orphaned girls be sold at auction into virtual indentured servitude; the lowest bidder would receive the child and the State would pay the bid.

A family named Nilson acquired four year-old Ida; family records make no further mention of her sister. Resented as an intruder by their daughter Sophia, Ida was assigned chores for her "keep": mittens to be knitted, wood to be gathered from the forest, cows to be grazed. Her father did visit her in 1881, handsome, glib and charming. Ida was immediately taken with him. He left many promises of future visits and gifts, but was never seen again.

Ida had little opportunity for a normal childhood. Foster-mother ruled the household without abuse but with total regimentation. Ida never mentioned a foster-father.

Being denied formal schooling because she was an "auction child" served only to develop her self-reliance and perseverance. These traits would serve her well. She taught herself to read and write, and to write with such clarity and style that for forty years she wrote a weekly column for the Swedish newspaper *Norden*, published in New York City.

As a child she also developed a fine singing voice and a prodigious memory, so that she was often asked to sing "visor", a Swedish term for folk tales of sadness and tragedy. These are still sung at "fests" throughout Scandinavia.

As years went by, Ida became more beautiful and vivacious, and the object of admiration of the young men of Jeppo. Avoiding the eyes and ears of Foster-mother, she would steal off to the village dances to escape from her dreary daily life. Sophia, seeing the accomplished young lady that Ida had become, eventually asked her forgiveness. It was freely given, and the two became virtual siblings.

Ida and Sophia became determined to emigrate to America, and at their parting and with tears in her eyes, Foster-mother gave Ida her best headscarf.

Joining a group of Swedish emigrants, Ida and Sophia arrived in Commonwealth, Wisconsin in 1893. Soon working for very little pay for a German family operating a boarding house, Ida was free at last!

A young man, seeming to Ida the most handsome and best groomed in Commonwealth, caught her eye. She hoped she might meet him at the village dances, but it was not to be. Jacob Abrahamson was not given to frivolity, and never came.

How then to meet him? An opportunity came quickly and unexpectedly. She saw an advertisement: "For Sale: Trunk. \$2.00. Jacob Abrahamson."

A most opportune development! Without a doubt taking great care with her dress and appearance, and coyly displaying her considerable charm, she appeared at his door. She had already contrived her plan: "I need the trunk, but I'll not pay two dollars for it. Instead, I will marry him and get the trunk too." So well did Ida carry out her plan that Jacob was totally enthralled. And Ida, even after failing to teach Jacob to dance, accepted his courtship and soon his proposal.

And so it was that on July 27, 1895 in Commonwealth, Wisconsin, with Foster-sister Sophia as the Maid of Honor, Ida, Jacob and the two-dollar trunk were united in holy matrimony.

There followed years in the Minnesota mines for Jacob, births of the first four of their children, the saving of money for travel west, and their eventual arrival in Everett, Washington, in 1907. But that is another story.

* * * *

This was to be a special Sunday: the first-ever Confirmation Class for Ebenezer. Edith Benson would be joined by her older sisters Alma and Emma, Carl Granfors, Winla Hendrickson, Anne Loth, Arthur Worlund, and Axel and Carl Zingmark. She knew them all very well; their common Swedish language and their difficulties learning English, their family backgrounds, the aspirations shared among the boys and the girls, as well of course as the teen-age small talk about all sorts of things.

Each had gone through nearly two years of instruction in the Luther Catechisms and had prepared their Statements of Faith for reading before the congregation this morning. Edith Benson would be glad when that was over.

Pastor Gullans met many of the arriving parishioners at the door. Edith guessed that he was in his early fifties. He was slightly stooped, with a kindly smile framed by a round face, reading glasses and a receding hairline. His mild manner masked a strong physical presence; if the two-hour train ride from Seattle up to Everett followed by another two-hour bicycle ride out from Everett over the new planked road to Hartford tired him, it did not show.

In more inclement weather, he would continue by train from Everett, transferring on to Snohomish and Machias, then ride his bicycle from Machias to Hartford. On this bright summer morning, his black vestment and starched white collar were clean and fresh, having been carried with his altar cloth, candle, and Swedish Bible, Book of Liturgy and Hymnal in a small suitcase on his bicycle luggage rack.

He had early in the year accepted a call to serve as pastor of Ebenezer, and had guided the small congregation through its formal organization and charter.



Pastor John Gullans
1910 - 1911

Pastor Gullans asked that the Confirmation class take the front pews.

He led the opening hymn of the service, Number 160 in the *Sondagsskolbok*, "Hvilken van vi h i Jesus", and continued from the *Liturgi For Sondagsskolan*. Because this Service of the Word was also something of a celebration, the Cherub Choir sang "Tryggare Kan Ingen Vars, and the Junior Choir "Nar Juldags Morgon Glimmer". Following the scriptural readings and his message, Pastor Gullans presented the seven girls and five boys, and asked each to read their statements of faith.

Edith could feel her knees weaken and shake a bit as she read hers, a reference to her parents' trust in God in leaving family and roots in Sweden, coming to America, the stay in Minnesota and the long trip west, and her hope that she would inherit the strength of her parents' faith.

The Smorgasbord gave all the confirmands an opportunity to relax, engage in some lively conversation among themselves, and to receive the congratulations of the congregation. And the food was very good.



**Pastor A. V. Anderson
1911 - 1917**

In 1911, Pastor Gullans was succeeded by Pastor A.V. Anderson. He was called to conduct worship services on the third Sunday of each month at a salary of ten dollars a month plus the Christmas offering, and the organist, 12-year old Vera Abrahamson, was paid for the first time in 1916, at the rate of ten dollars a year. Ebenezer was admitted to the Columbia Conference in 1913, two years after the application.

Charles Forsman was elected Sunday School Superintendent in 1912, a position he was to hold for twenty years. The Sunday School children typically presented three programs each year: Christmas, Easter and the 4th of July.

Ida Abrahamson was stricken with cancer in 1912. Radical surgery and her own gritty determination over several painful years led to her seemingly miraculous recovery.

Economic times were difficult, and the Ladies Aid, with lutesfisk suppers and other projects supplemented the dues to the church and became the financial lifeline of the congregation. A Young Peoples Society, predecessor to the Luther League established later, was organized and joined the work of the congregation. Ebenezer celebrated its fifth anniversary in 1915, with the theme "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, Today and Forever".

The last half of the decade were highly eventful, bringing local, national and even world issues bearing down upon Ebenezer and the Hartford/Everett area.

Five Years That Shook Swede Town

- 1914-1917. Several young men from Ebenezer went to war. Five from the area were killed, and others suffered grievous wounds. The war was accompanied by a wave of patriotism and the sometimes coerced sale of Liberty Bonds. Non-English speaking "foreigners" including many members of the Ebenezer congregation were regarded with suspicion, and a German-speaking jeweler was tarred and feathered by prominent Hartford citizens.
- 1916. Snowfall reached a depth of more than three feet on the level.
- 1916. Inflationary pressures during World War I had eroded the purchasing power of the meager wages paid by the mills of the area.

- Discontent was being voiced by workers and organizers of the Industrial Workers of the World, the I.W.W. or “Wobblies” in Everett, and increasingly was being put down by police under control of the mill owners. Tensions and tempers were rising.
- 1916, Bloody Sunday, November 16. The ferry Verona, docking in Everett with about 250 IWW members, was met by more than 200 sheriff’s deputies, many of them armed. Shots were fired, and two sheriff’s deputies and five Wobblies were killed. Each of the IWW members was charged with murder. Witnesses were contradictory, and the episode left a deep scar on labor-industry relations across the entire area.
- 1917 – 1918. A severe influenza epidemic swept the nation, causing more than a million deaths. Few people ventured out, and then only while wearing primitive surgical masks. No church services were held at Ebenezer during last six months of 1918.
- 1917 – 1919. A wave of prohibition fervor was promoted by the Anti Saloon League. The Volstead Act, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, prohibited serving beverages containing more than 0.5 percent alcohol. It was poorly enforced and had little effect upon Ebenezer, but led to a moonshine cottage industry around lake Stevens. (The 18th Amendment was repealed by the 21st Amendment in 1930.)

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Cousin Priscilla’s Donkey

Note: The incident described herein, although reasonable in its particulars, cannot be attested to in its entirety by reference to any written records. The reader must therefore assess its authenticity, but even the title rings true in its utter lack of creativity.

The characters involved in the incident were Cousin Priscilla, though to whom she was a cousin is not precisely known, her father, Ezra, a stern man known to often insist upon having his way, and a non-descript donkey purchased in the fall of 1915 for two dollars from a farmer up north for Cousin Priscilla for both her riding pleasure and errands into Lake Stevens. The very reasonable price was negotiated apparently on the basis of “occasional fits” of stubbornness admitted by the seller, but not at all evident in the good-natured demeanor of the animal that day.

Because she had never been around a donkey and no name came with this one, Cousin Priscilla immediately christened him Long Ears. An affectionate bond between them was immediately established.

Long Ears loved the sliced apples Priscilla provided him daily, at least from early September deep into the winter when locally-grown varieties were plentifully available. Long Ears' long ears rocked contentedly as he savored and crunched the apple segments.

Silas over at the livery stable fitted Long Ears with a simple "semi-western" saddle and stirrups, cinch and bridle and saddle bags, so that Priscilla could ride Long Ears down to the lake for fun, or into Lake Stevens on errands for her mother. Silas also noticed a faint scar on Long Ears' forehead, and allowed that it appeared to be the shape of a two by four and could account for Long Ears' occasional stubbornness.

Long Ears' manner toward Silas was the exact opposite of his behavior with Priscilla. He had been bought as saddle-broke, and this he appeared to be, except for Ezra, who made a sincere effort to like him and possibly would have succeeded but for a most annoying habit exhibited by Long Ears. Whenever Ezra attempted to saddle him and tighten the cinch, Long Ears would take a deep breath and grunt, expanding his girth by several inches. In spite of Ezra's best efforts, by the time he attempted to mount Long Ears, the donkey would relax his mid-section, leaving his hide loose and the saddle and cinch fitted like trousers several sizes too large. Worse, Long Ears timed his shrinkage so that when Ezra got his foot and weight into the left hand stirrup, the saddle would rotate to his belly, and Ezra would be deposited on the ground. After several such episodes, Ezra vowed that he would find a way to train this animal.

An uneasy truce between Ezra and Long Ears went on for several months.

During the last half of February of 1916, the entire central and north Puget Sound area was subjected to a closely-spaced series of heavy snowfalls, resulting in the accumulation of more than three feet of snow in the open areas of Hartford and Lake Stevens, and local drifts more than four feet deep. Only the most heavily traveled roads were passable, and although snowplows were brought in to maintain a limited railroad schedule, Ezra's home and many others were effectively marooned by the snow. This continued for two weeks, by which time the need for basic food supplies for Ezra's family and a quantity of rolled barley for Long Ears had become severe. An exhausting one and one-half mile walk through the drifts and partially broken trail to Eggerts' Mercantile store lay ahead of any effort to obtain the needed flour, yeast, soap, cereal, milk and barley.

But Priscilla and Long Ears could make it, if the donkey would.

This Wednesday afternoon was Ezra's third attempt to get Long Ears out and to the store. Saddled and bridled, with Priscilla and the saddle bags mounted, Long Ears refused to move more than about 20 feet outside his shed in the small pasture area. With Long Ears standing nearly up to his withers in snow, neither Priscilla's gentle pleading nor Ezra's shouted threats resulted in the slightest movement of a single muscle. The forecast of more snow that evening and the following day made the situation desperate. It was today or never.

Ezra had reached end of his patience, which had never been far away. Taking some comfort in his belief that Long Ears would not be injured by it, Ezra contrived and began to carry out a plan equal to the situation. He told Priscilla to return to the house, and from a sturdy wooden box in the back corner of the shed he retrieved a small, heavily paper-wrapped and wax-dipped cylindrical object about an inch in diameter and ten inches long. If Long Ears had seen it and been able to read, he would quickly have become worried about what was soon to take place. The words "20 Percent Stumping" were barely legible through the wax coating.

From another box, Ezra cut off about two feet from a roll of black cord about the diameter of a pencil, and after carefully removing a small bright brass cylinder from a tiny third box, he inserted the freshly cut end of the cord into the cylinder, taking care to make gentle but firm contact with the material at the base of the cylinder. The fit between the cord and the cylinder was snug, and he crimped the open end of the cylinder around the cord and sealed the crimped end with axle grease. Then he opened one end of the one by ten-inch waxed cylinder with a small awl, and burrowed a round opening about three inches down into it. He slowly inserted the brass cylinder and cord down that opening, and closed and tied the opened end around the black cord and heavily coated the area with axle grease.

Long Ears had not moved. Ezra ordered his family away from the windows and wall of the house facing the pasture, and approached Long Ears. They exchanged disdainful glances, but still Long Ears did not move.

Ezra burrowed down under the snow under Long Ears' middle section and placed the waxed cylinder and black cord about a foot to one side, then made a fresh cut at the end of the two-foot cord and lighted it with a match. The length of the black cord was calculated to give him 20 seconds to move away from the immediate area. Long Ears studiously ignored all this and Ezra moved as quickly as he could to the far side of the shed.

Ezra slowly counted toward twenty. At seventeen, he shouted "Long Ears, Ho!" Long Ears did not move.

There followed what seemed to be several seconds of silence, followed by a deafening blast, louder than if all four tires of one of Bud Page and Axel Lundeen's new Mack buses had blown out at once, accompanied by loud rattling of windows in the house and a huge, thick cloud of snow. Some unintelligible sounds followed, apparently muffled by the snow.

Ezra, Priscilla and the rest of the family came out to see what had happened. Where Long Ears had been standing, there was nothing. Nothing! A circle of snow about thirty feet in diameter had been blown clear, exposing only bare ground. The shed had not been damaged, and no windows had been broken. Such was the apparent shock-absorbing effect of the deep snow. There was no sign that Long Ears had ever been there; Priscilla was sure that he had been either atomized or transported bodily to some distant place.

Then, as the cloud of blown snow settled, a third possibility became evident. The pasture gate was completely unhinged, and was laying flat on the ground. Faint hoof tracks became visible near the gate, only to disappear into the edge of a snow drift. Any trail beyond that was being covered by rapidly drifting snow.

No one in the neighborhood remembered seeing Long Ears go by, in spite of having been alerted to some strange occurrence by the blast. Later, a co-worker at the mill who had been working up north that day told Ezra that he had seen a rapidly moving apparition shrouded in flying snow about an hour after the blast, up near the Skagit county line.



Long Ears

The necessary family supplies were otherwise obtained from the general store; of the rolled barley there was no further need. Cousin Priscilla made an entry in her diary: "Daddy set off a stick of dynamite near Long Ears. Long Ears disappeared. Long Ears was stubborn, but Daddy was even more stubborn. Long Ears lost a home, but I lost a friend."

* * * *



**Pastor M. L. Swanson
1918 - 1921**

Arriving shortly after the end of World War I, Pastor Swanson introduced several new practices into Ebenezer. Of the two services a month, one was in English. Frequency of Holy Communion services was increased from twice to four times a year. In 1919 the Willing Workers (later the Dorcas Society) was organized under Mrs. Carl Clementson, and the old system of dues was replaced by the envelope system, with each member giving as they wished as God had prospered them. In the same year, the Young Peoples Society became the Luther League, and began holding their meetings in English, and Agda Abrahamson died at 19 years of age.

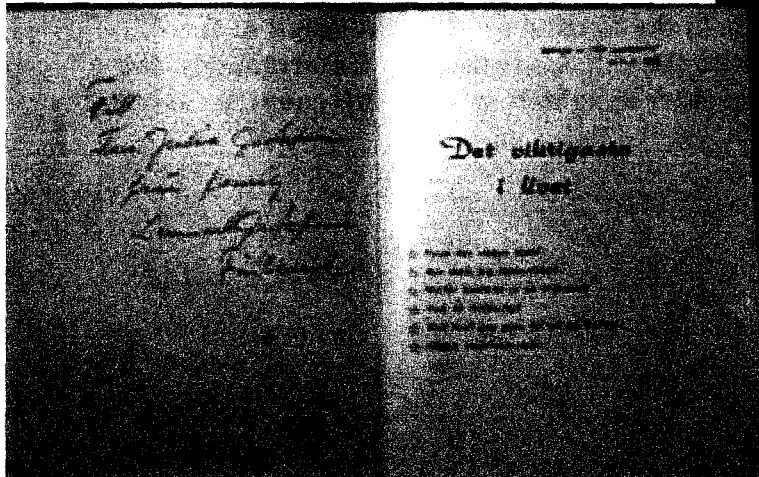
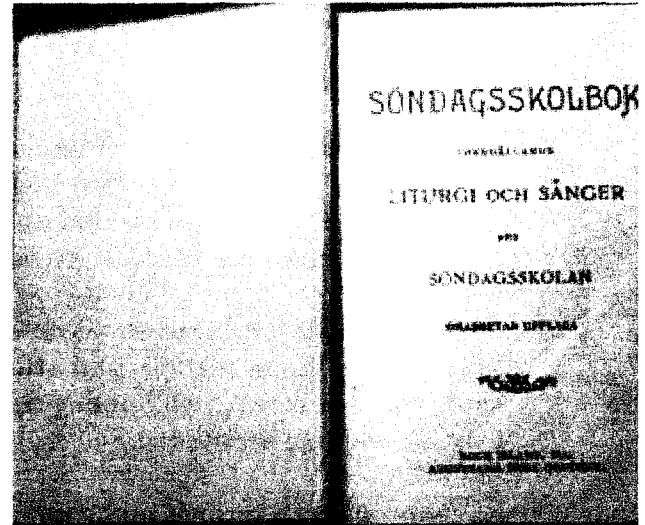
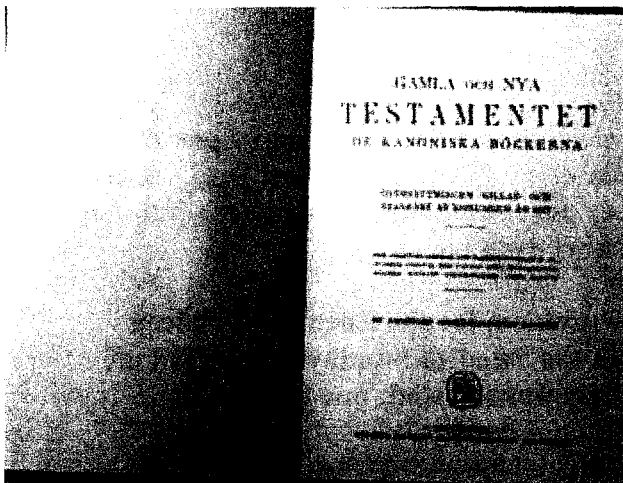
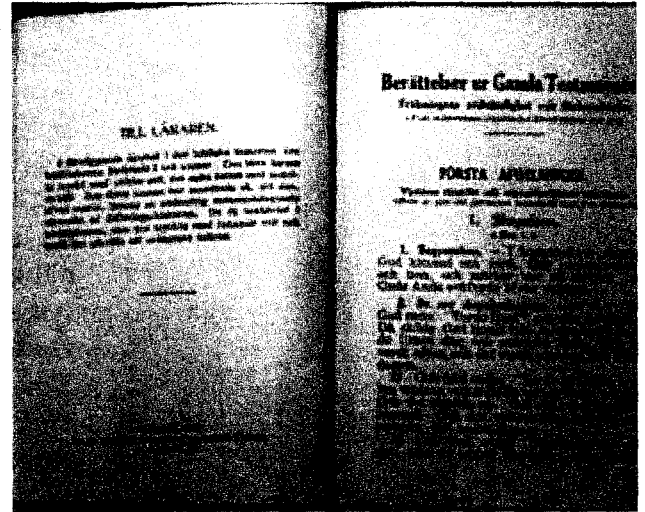
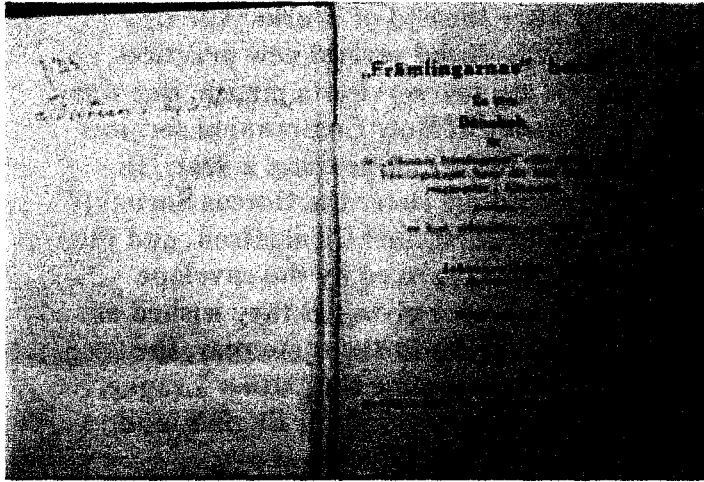
The Rucker Brothers mill burned in 1919, and was partially re-built.

1920 – 1930

By the time of Ebenezer's 10th anniversary celebration with the theme "Forward in Jesus' Name", the congregation had accumulated \$4,500 in a building fund. A Building Committee was formed and a lot was purchased for a new church building to the west across the railroad tracks and a short distance north.

Use of Swedish continued to become a larger problem for the Ebenezer children learning English in schools, and attendance in the Swedish Sunday schools fell off sharply. As a result, two Sunday School leaders were elected; one to teach in English and one in Swedish.

Ebenezer church records make no mention of a revolutionary change in American society – the right of women to vote in the election of 1920, the result of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Unfortunately, the privilege applied mostly only to the older daughters born in this country.



Early Finnish Guides to Worship from the Collection of Pat Freerks.



**Pr. C. G. H. Ahnquist
1922 - 1927**

The early twenties were difficult years for Ebenezer, both spiritually and economically. Pseudo-religious sects began again to stir up unrest, as they had in 1910. Pastor Ahnquist provided strong leadership, stressing the importance of Baptism in the Church, with Godparents who were Christians and church members. Although the increased use of English brought higher attendance at services, the hard times meant that often the pastor did not receive his salary. The Luther League was active, and fielded a very good Hartford Ebenezer Luther League Basketball Team.

The financial downturn spread throughout the area. Nearby timber had been depleted, and Jack Abrahamson and other loggers had to ride the railroad out as far as the Rucker Brothers' Big Four resort at Monte Cristo to work. The mines had also played out, and many workers simply left the area. Hartford had begun to look like a ghost town, and much of its skeletal remains burned in the early twenties.

Lake Stevens, however, began to flourish. Puget Sound Telephone service was now becoming more widespread and reliable. In 1924, the first radio in the community drew many neighbors to the Abrahamson house to listen to the only station in the area, the Fisher Flouring Mills' KJR. But at night, due to a strange phenomenon called "skip", the Abrahamsons could hear Salt Lake City, St. Louis, or Minneapolis.

Then, in 1926, another miracle: residential electricity came to Swede Town. Twenty-five watt bulbs were placed into each room of the Abrahamson house, and the children delighted in turning them off and on. Kids got free ice cream cones on their birthdays from Ben Mitchell's Pharmacy, and when Ben was fire chief boys at the high school were released to assist in fire fighting, helping to move the hand-drawn pumper to the scene or to set up a bucket brigade. Automobiles had also begun to appear in Lake Stevens: Model T Fords, Buicks, Oldsmobiles, Chevrolets, Durants, Essexes and smaller numbers of others.

Though the prosperity seemed not to reach the loggers and mill workers in Swede Town, there were some diversions. Davies Resort had been established on the south side of the lake in 1908, and there was Price's Park, later known as Purple Pennant. Williams Park including a dance pavilion and picnic shelter had been in use for several years. Even the Abrahamson girls were known to be able to get to some dances, entirely due to the influence of their mother over their stern father. The "Sunshine Theater" was in operation, and several resorts around the lake offered water sports and space for community celebrations. And there was a Lake Stevens semi-professional baseball team.

The Last Quarter

Axel Lundeen and Bud Page operated a twice-daily bus service between Everett and Lake Stevens during most of the 1920s. His 14-passenger Mack buses were enclosed and reasonably comfortable, and his reliable service drew many commuters and business people.

Among his "regulars", making the round trip at least three times a week, was Wyatt J. Rucker, one of the Rucker brothers owning the mill. "W.J." and Axel had become close friends and the mill owner always sat up front next to the driver. During the trips they talked about what was happening around the mill, and politics. Axel could not bring himself to vote for that Catholic Al Smith, and W.J. was a Hoover man. Hoover had been elected and was doing well, riding a wave of high optimism in a strong bull stock market. The mill, partially re-built with more modern equipment after a fire in 1919, was being adequately supplied with logs brought in by railroad, and things were looking good. When getting off the bus, W.J. always left a tip of a quarter for Axel.

The mill was a largely self-contained operation, generating its own electricity and steam power. In many ways it was worker-friendly, offering an on-site drug store and emergency medical service, and even limited meal service and housing. Its boilers were wood-fired, but utilized only a fraction of the wood waste generated at the mill. The remainder was burned in a large sawdust and waste burner topped with a coarse screen designed to catch fly ash and embers.

There was a succession of dry, hot days in the summer of 1925 and crews had been pulled out of the woods. But this morning had dawned cooler; the barometric pressure was down and a fresh southwest wind had come up. No one knew exactly what happened at the lumber mill. A small fire started, some thought from an overheated planing mill. Heavy smoke and the fire itself rapidly spread north. The long steady fire alarm whistle sounded, and the few readily available hand pumpers were brought to bear, only to be quickly overwhelmed. The central area of the mill was evacuated first, then the entire area. The fire could not be contained and the mill was gutted.

W.J. Rucker boarded Axel Lundeen's bus as usual later that afternoon for his return to Everett. He sat in front, but said nothing. Axel could see tears in his eyes. As he got off in Everett, he finally turned to Axel and said "you've been a good friend, Axel, but I'm not going to give you a quarter today. I am never going back to Lake Stevens".

It was the end of Swede Town.

* * * *

By Whom the Bell Tolled

Stories had long circulated around Lake Stevens that in about 1926 a steam locomotive had somehow lost its brakes, careened along the log-dumping trestle serving the Rucker mill and dropped into the lake. Any witnesses have long since passed away, and no first-hand written accounts or photographs are known to exist. For many years, the local population seemed equally divided between confident believers and confirmed skeptics that there is a locomotive in the lake.

However, Ebenezer Church member Bill Hawkins maintained throughout his life that as a thirteen-year old he dived many times to ring the bell of the locomotive. Evidently the skilled young swimmer and diver whose solid character helped him become Lake Stevens' first mayor had no companions in his dives. Even his twin brother Mick could offer no further proof, and the town remained divided in the matter for 69 years.

The issue seems to have been resolved in 1995, when a team of U.S. Navy Seals, invited by Gayle Whitsell and others to carry out a sonar survey of the lake bottom as a training exercise, developed a sonogram which appeared to show the outline of a locomotive lying on its side under many feet of silt and sand. Ebenezer and pioneer family member Emmett Loth and others familiar with the logging train off-loading operation along the mill trestle remain skeptical.

Divers, sonar, satellites reveal locomotive

By Darrell M. Gray
Journal managing editor

U.S. Navy divers, with the assistance of sonar and eight satellites positioned 25,000 miles above earth, have found what Bill Hawkins, 82, has always said has rested on the bottom of Lake Stevens for the past seven decades.

Last Saturday, they found "Bill's locomotive."

A team of 23 personnel, on a training exer-



Navy sonar photo clearly shows locomotive resting on its side on the bottom of Lake Stevens. The cab is at top left of the image, wheels at the bottom.

Compiled from the January 19, 1995 issue of the Lake Stevens Journal

The question will be finally answered if and when the locomotive can be raised from the lake bottom. Applications for necessary permits and grants are being prepared by the Lake Stevens Historical Society.

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Pastor Ahnquist left late in 1927. The Ebenezer congregation was served during 1928 by a student pastor, Harry Lindblad.

1930 – 1940



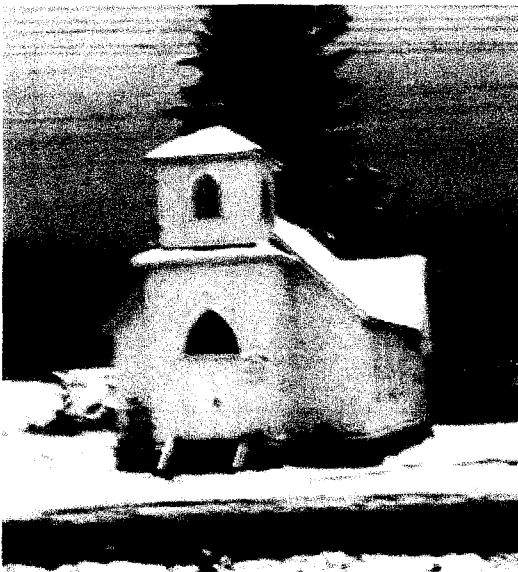
**Pastor John Bildt
1929 - 1938**

The first formal pastor's installation at Ebenezer occurred on October 31, 1929, with the installation of Pastor John Bildt. Several pastors in the District took part. The same year saw the first formal budget prepared and presented to the congregation.

The total: \$415.00.

Since its founding in 1920, Ebenezer did not have a church building it could call its own. In 1930 the congregation decided to lease the Finnish-Swedish Zion Hall and re-build it into a church. It was leased for 99 years and re-built in three months with Pastor Bildt working with the laymen of the church, and was dedicated on September 14, 1930 by Conference President Pastor G. K. Andeen.

During this period, English became the language in common usage. All Sunday School classers were taught in English, and English Hymnals were purchased by the Luther League.



**Ebenezer's First Church Building
In Use from 1930 until 1953**

Sunday School was re-organized to use the new teaching materials, graded classes were initiated, and monthly teachers' meetings were held.

The Great Depression placed a heavy physical and spiritual burden on the congregation and its pastor. As his ministry drew to a close, many members were lost to the temptations of despair and material concern. Those who remained faithful found anew the meaning of Ebenezer: "Hitherto the Lord has Helped Us".

1940 - 1950

Ebenezer depended upon the availability of visiting pastors during this period. In 1939 worship services were held every Sunday afternoon at 2:00 pm, but by 1941 could be held on Sunday mornings at 9:30. Also in 1941 a boys' choir was started by Ed Abrahamson, the first in the history of Ebenezer.

World War II impacted Ebenezer heavily in several ways: because many young people were in the service, the Luther League was disbanded for the duration and attendance at church services decreased because of gas rationing. However, because of the availability of more and better jobs, the congregation was able to bring all its financial responsibilities up to date. The Lake Stevens community lost seventeen dead and many wounded during World War II.

The painting, "The Good Shepherd" by Ed Abrahamson was presented to the church in honor of his parents, charter members Jacob and Ida Abrahamson, in 1943 and is hanging in the church to this day (April 2000).

Between 1944 and 1951, Ebenezer was also served by visiting Pastor Merton L. Lundquist. As the war wound down, Pastor Lundquist cited Luther's "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" in his 1944 Report, concluding that "Ours is a Kingdom wars cannot remove".

A survey by the Board of Home Missions of the Columbia Conference led to discussion of the possibility of securing the services of an intern from Augustana Seminary for one year. Results would be seen later.

After the war was over, both Sunday School attendance and Ebenezer congregation membership grew along with the growth of the community. In 1946 as a gift from Mr. Sam Espeseth Ebenezer obtained a small lot, to which was added an adjacent lot, purchased for two hundred fifty dollars.

The combined properties were sold to the Lake Stevens School District, and with the proceeds the congregation purchased the property upon which the church now stands. Stirred by the leadership of Pastor Lundquist: "There are two kinds of people – those hitched to the past and those intrigued by the future", the congregation decided to relocate to the new site.

This was the most important decision ever made by Ebenezer. However, the church had difficulty disposing of the Zion Hall property, inasmuch as it was not owned by anyone in the United States. The owner, Mr. Andrew Stjohom, had returned to Finland and it was impossible to reach him. In a remarkable journey, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Lund traveled to Finland and to the small island where he then lived and secured his signature on a document that made it possible to obtain a clear deed to the hall property.

Guided by Pastor Lundquist, the Board in 1949 made these recommendations to the congregation:

- **That Ebenezer Lutheran Church undertake an expansion program having as its goal the establishment of an independent parish.**
- **As the first step in this program we secure the services of a resident pastor.**
- **That the Board be authorized to launch a building fund.**
- **That the Board be authorized to petition the Board of American Missions for the support necessary to inaugurate this program.**

This was the plan that would change the life of Ebenezer and open a path toward becoming an independent parish serving the community. Ebenezer owed a debt of gratitude to Pastor Lundquist for the confidence he instilled in the congregation. The Holy Spirit was clearly at work at Ebenezer.

Sadly, we must record Pastor Lundquist' passing on the day he received an invitation to attend our 90th Anniversary observance. He always regarded Ebenezer as his first "real parish". His widow and family remain in Omaha, Nebraska, where he was a former medical chaplain at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

1950 - 1960

Mr. Earl Anderson, an intern from Augustana Seminary, arrived in June 1951 to spend one year at Ebenezer. Under his leadership the congregation membership and Sunday School attendance grew swiftly, leading to the need for two services each Sunday. An Annual Youth Sunday was established, as well as a one-week Vacation Bible School. The congregation decided to call its first resident pastor from the Seminary class of 1952, and set up a Building Fund so that funds would be available to relocate the church when the pastor arrived. The first parsonage was also purchased, and was made ready for the arrival of the pastor's family. The Board of American Missions provided aid in the amount of \$1740.00, which made it possible to secure a resident pastor.



**Pastor Sidney Jones
1951 - 1955**

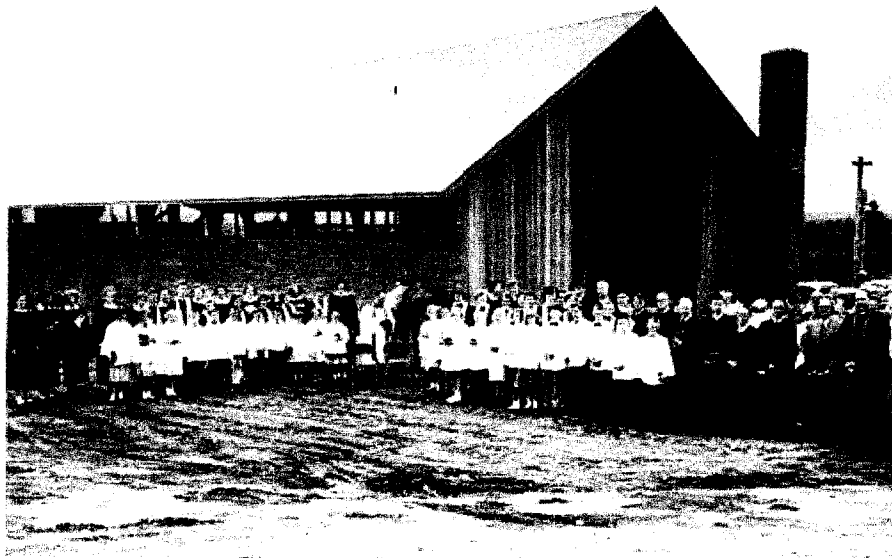
Pastor Sydney Jones was that pastor, and under his guidance the congregation membership and influence in the community continued to grow.

Mr. Oliver Olsen of Seattle was engaged to draw up the plans for the new church building, and construction began in July 1953. The basement of the church was ready by Christmas of 1953, and the congregation moved from its home of 43 years to the new location.

Construction continued through much of 1954. The task was not an easy one, and much of the work was performed by congregation members without pay. A loan of ten thousand dollars was obtained from the Church Extension Fund of the Augustana Lutheran Church to finance the new construction.

The loan was augmented by proceeds from turkey dinners, cake and bake sales and self-work projects by the Ladies Aid, Women's Mission Society and the newly formed Ebenezer Guild. The choirs gave substantial assistance toward the purchase of an organ for the sanctuary.

In addition to his pastoral guidance, Pastor Jones joined with the men of the congregation in the physical work of the construction. The culmination of all the work by the entire congregation came upon dedication of the new church building.



**Dedication of New Home of Ebenezer Lutheran Church
October 24, 1954**

Pastor Jones resigned in 1955 to serve a parish in Escanaba, Michigan.

Recalling the inspirational leadership of Augustana intern Earl Anderson in 1951, the congregation voted to call now Augustana graduate and ordained Pastor Earl Anderson. He accepted the call and began his ministry here November 1, 1955.



**Pastor Earl Anderson
1951 - 1964**

Under his guidance, Ebenezer grew rapidly. Several progressive measures were initiated:

- **Church Board membership was increased from five to six, then to twelve.**
- **The new "Red Book" Service Book and Hymnal was adopted.**
- **A full communion service was added to the regular service of the first Sunday of each month.**
- **A Family Service of Worship and Instruction was added as a second service, in which parents and children worshipped and received instruction together.**
- **A Cherub Choir was added to the Junior Choir to alternate at the Family Service.**

The organization "Women of Ebenezer" was formed and was one of the first in the nation to adopt the new constitution of the Augustana Lutheran Church Women in America. The Women of Ebenezer also sponsored a girls' group "Little Women of Ebenezer", to include girls from the third grade up. The Luther League provided a well-rounded program of work, play, study and prayer, including training at Conference Leadership Schools for Ebenezer Youth, making it one of the most active League groups in the District.

In 1957 the Church undertook to sponsor a Boy Scout Troop and Explorer Post. The church basement was finished and signs were put up. A key decision was to sell the parsonage, giving the pastor freedom to rent or purchase a home of his own.

Pastor Anderson was given an opportunity to attend a three and a half-month exchange scholarship in Germany, sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation. One result was that an East German refugee family whom Pastor Anderson met in Lubeck was sponsored by Ebenezer as immigrants into this country.

Pastor Anderson went on to serve congregations in Johannesburg, South Africa, Seattle, Longview, Boise and others. He retired in 1989 and now lives in Waldport, Oregon. He is planning to participate in our 90th Anniversary Observance.



**Pr. Jerald Furgurson
1964 - 1974**

The growth of Ebenezer under Pastor Earl Anderson continued under the leadership of another dynamic young Pastor, Jerald Furgurson.

Ebenezer was now a member of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), its Pacific Northwest Synod (161 churches in Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon), and its Mt. Baker District of 13 churches from the King County line to the Canadian border. The LCA in turn was a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ, the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation, and supported Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California and Pacific Lutheran University in Parkland, Washington.

Mission support was extended through the LCA American and World Missions. Lutheran World

Relief provided help in both domestic and foreign disasters.

Sunday morning worship included two services, a 9:00 a.m. Family Service, followed by Church School for the whole family at 9:45, and a main service with senior choir at 11:00. Communion was offered on the first Sunday of each month and on festival days. Nursery care was provided at all services.

An active music program included a Cherub Choir for children in grades 1 to 3, a Junior Choir for grades 4 to Junior High School, Christian Folksingers for boys in Grade 4 to Senior High and girls in Junior and Senior High, and the Senior Choir for High School students and older.

The women of Ebenezer were organized into Martha, Leah, Ruth and Naomi Units, a pattern remaining to this day.

Youth activities included drama, discussion, and service groups and camping activities at Camp Lutherwood for students from grade 4 and up.

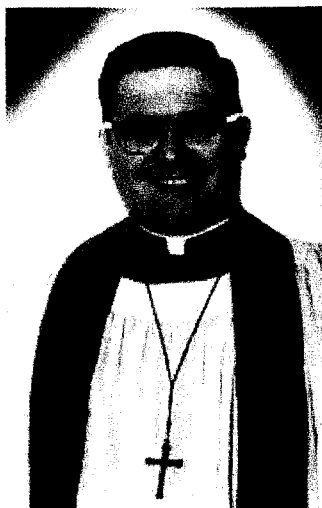
Confirmation classes for students of grades 7 to 9 met on Wednesday evenings.

A Vacation Church School was held each year after school was out.

At the end of 1966 there were 435 confirmed members of the church, led by a Church Council of 24 members acting as the governing body of the church between the January congregational meetings.

Pastor Furgurson went on to serve Trinity Lutheran Church in Gresham, Oregon, for twenty years, leading its growth to 1400-plus members. He served as a Lutheran World Federation scholar to India during the summer of 1977, and furthered his education with summer studies abroad and with the Doctorate of Ministry program at Pacific Lutheran Seminary in Berkeley. He is retired, lives in Ocean Park, WA, and plans to participate in our 90th Anniversary celebration.

1960 – 1970



**Pr. Arthur M. McGee
Thirty years in Lutheran
Pastoral Ministry.
1934 - 1991**

This is a brief biographical sketch of the life of Pastor Art McGee, the only son of Ebenezer to have been ordained into the ministry any of the Lutheran Church bodies of which Ebenezer has been a member.

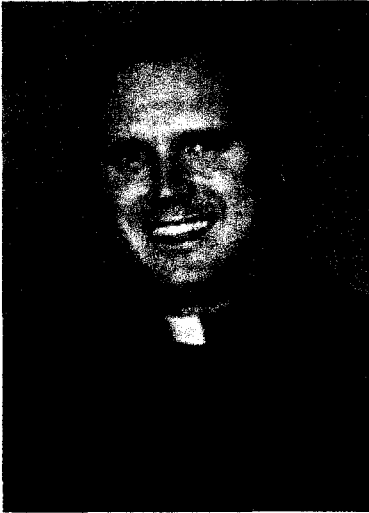
Art McGee received his Confirmation instruction under Pastor M. L. Lundquist, and graduated from Lake Stevens High School.

Art went on to attend Pacific Lutheran College in Tacoma, Washington, and was graduated from Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island, IL in 1961. He was ordained in Seattle at the June 1961 Synodical meeting of the Augustana Synod Lutheran Church, with Pastor Earl Anderson joining the ceremony as his sponsor. Pastor Art began his

ministry in Troy, Idaho, serving Troy Lutheran from 1961 to 1964. In 1962, the Augustana Church became part of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), which in turn was merged into the ELCA in 1988. Pastor Art next served Central Lutheran in Morton, Washington for the following three years. He was Pastor at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Kelso, Washington for the next eighteen years (1967 to 1985). He then returned to this area closer to home and his family, and spent his remaining years as Pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sedro Wooley, Washington from 1985 to 1991. Art made it his practice to serve both his congregations and their communities, serving as a member of committees and as a participant in community projects. He believed that it was important to be part of God's work in the community and was always interested in making a better life for everyone.

Although Art is no longer with us, his ministry continues through the countless lives he touched in his service to the Lord. Before he passed away, he arranged to have his theological library presented to his home church. His reference books are today in the Ebenezer church library.

We hope that through prayer and pastoral guidance more sons and daughters of Ebenezer may hear the invitation of the Lord to come and follow Him into His ministry.



Pastor Paul Eriks
1975 - 1980

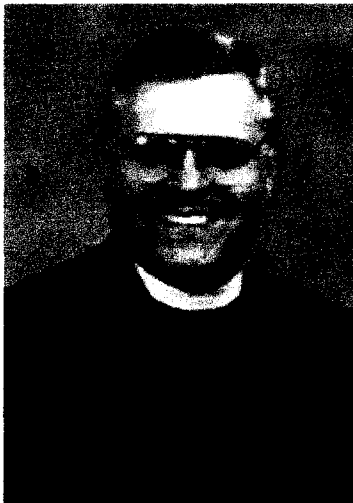
Under Pastor Eriks' guidance, the period during the last half of the 1970s was one of relatively stable congregational membership brightened by significant improvements to our church home and increased service to the Lake Stevens community:

- Glass doors with etched figures of Christ as friend and shepherd were installed.
- The Church Center, including the Pastor's and Secretary's offices and Sunday School classrooms, was refurbished and enlarged.
- The nave and chancel area were totally re-modeled and the new pipe organ installed.

The pattern of choir music, women's organizations and youth activities established by Pastors Anderson and Ferguson were generally continued. As pastor of the only "non-fundamentalist" church

in the area who would marry non-members, Pastor Eriks officiated at 42 weddings one year. He viewed this activity as evangelistic fund-raising. During 1979 and 1980, Pastor Eriks was assisted by Pastor Richard E. Edmonds. Pastor Eriks in 1981 accepted a call to serve as pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Seattle, a position he held for ten years. He then served as Pastor at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Arlington, Washington from 1991 to 1992, after which he retired from the ministry. He lives in Seattle, and will visit Ebenezer during our 90th Anniversary observance.

1980 to the Present



Pr. Richard E. Edmonds
1981 - 1999

After the departure of Pastor Eriks, Ebenezer re-called Pastor Richard Edmonds to lead the congregation, and to begin a pastoral relationship which was to last for 18 years. Having served as a part-time assistant to Pastor Eriks, Pastor Edmonds was by experience and educational background eminently qualified for his new position.

Born in North Dakota, the second of six children of a Lutheran pastor and his organist wife, he grew up in eastern Montana where his father served three widely-separated congregations. The family later moved to Bothell, Washington, where his father had been called to be pastor of First Lutheran Church. There he met the girl who would become his wife, Judy Asbury, whose father was the choir director.

He attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, and graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in history in 1964. After four years of study at Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, he was ordained at his home church, First Lutheran in Bothell in June 1969. Four years as Pastor of First Lutheran Church in Port Orchard, Washington followed, after which he returned to the University of Washington to earn his credentials in education. Two years work as a Curriculum Specialist in the Snohomish School District included part-time work as Assistant Pastor at Christ the King parish in Snohomish and then at Ebenezer. He was called to be pastor at Ebenezer in 1981, a position he held until his retirement in August of 1999.

Several significant events occurred during Pastor's Edmonds extended tenure, some affecting the national church.

- 1980. The Lake Stevens Community Food Bank, sponsored and housed by Ebenezer, was founded.
- 1988. Merger of the ALC (American Lutheran Church), the AELC (Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) and the LCA (Lutheran Church in America), to form the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). The LCMS (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod), the Wisconsin Synod and other Lutheran church groups remained as separate bodies. Pastor Edmonds, ordained into the LCA, became a member of the clergy of the ELCA.
- 1997. The ELCA Churchwide Assembly passes the "Formula of Agreement" for Full Communion with Three Reformed Churches, including "Pulpit and Altar Fellowship" of the ELCA with Presbyterian and Reformed (United Church of Christ) Churches.
- 1998. After many years of discussion and debate, acceptance by the Churchwide Assembly of "Called to Common Mission", or Concordat of Agreement, with the Episcopal Church of the USA. Several issues, especially the role of the Historic Episcopacy as constituted within the Episcopal Church, remain not fully accepted within the ELCA.
- 1998 – 1999. Joint lifting of 16th century mutual condemnations by Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church, and general agreement on justification by faith. Signed by Bishop Anderson for the ELCA.

Several resident Assistant Pastors and a recently-added Director of Christian Education worked with Pastor Edmonds during the later years of his pastorate:

- 1986 – 1988 Pastor Sheryl Biegert. Pr. Biegert worked with the Ebenezer youth. She is now Pastor of Peace Lutheran church in West Seattle.

- 1989 – 1993 Pastor Wm. Humphries. Pr. Humphries worked to develop youth programs and contemporary Sunday morning first services. He resigned from the Ministry in 1996.
- 1994 – 1997 Pastor Tor Berg. Pr. Berg was heavily involved with congregation organization, youth and Christian Education programs, and initiated the popular WATCH (Wednesday at the Church) program. He accepted a call and is now Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Pullman, Washington.



Kay Solvik

1999 - Kay Solvik was added to the Ebenezer staff as a part-time Director of Christian Education. Mrs. Solvik grew up in Lynnwood, earned an associate degree in Biblical Studies from Lutheran Bible College, went on to study psychology and English at Seattle Pacific College and graduated with a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. Her husband is a retired career army helicopter pilot working with B.F. Goodrich Aerospace. After 19 years as a highly mobile army wife, working with women's and children's groups in several churches, four universities and Compassion International, she is now responsible for all Christian Education activities at Ebenezer.

1999 - Organist Dennis Margheim and Choir Director Kimberly Markham were retained to complete the present Ebenezer professional staff.

Other key events of Pastor Edmonds' ministry include the re-organization of church lay government into guiding boards and working committees, reflecting the programmatic rather than the pastoral model appropriate to smaller churches that Ebenezer had used.

The church center underwent a major enlargement and re-design in 1990 and 1991 with the addition of an elevator and other facilities for the handicapped, a new second floor accommodating additional pastors' offices, Sunday School classrooms and nursery. Kitchen and pre-school facilities were improved, and a third rank of organ pipes was installed.

These improvements brought the church facility to the form seen today. Pastor Edmonds plans to participate in the 90th Anniversary observance on April 30, as the first of three visiting former pastors to conduct Sunday morning worship services.



**Pastor Larry Olson
Interim 1999 -**

In August 1999, Pastor Larry Olson was named by Bishop Donald Maier to serve as Ebenezer's Interim Pastor during the transition time marked by the departure of Pastor Edmonds and the Calling of a new pastor. Pastor Olson will continue to guide us in ministry while we as a congregation do a self-evaluation of our ministry, and consider our needs to continue doing effective ministry in the new century.

Pastor Olsen's relaxed leadership style has been well received, especially as he has introduced new alternatives to our traditional Lutheran liturgical practices.

When asked in the past, "What are your greatest joys and challenges in your work?" Pastor Larry has responded that he loves all aspects of parish ministry, and the greatest challenge in all of this is maintaining some balance between his two calls – the Call to serve our Lord in parish ministry and the call to be "Dad" to his two daughters, Tessa and Grace.

The congregation is now involved in the pastoral transition process, coordinated by the Transition Team and Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Dr. Jim Moi, and will move into the Call process, which will involve the evaluation of those candidates suggested by the Bishop. The Call Committee will be nominated this fall and their decision will be referred to the Council and the Congregation for approval.

We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the selection and support of our next pastor.

Fading Memories

The reader will notice that these Swede Town Stories are of the first thirty years of the life and times of Ebenezer and the Hartford/Lake Stevens community. Swede Town is gone. First-hand memories of those times are fading and their voices are few; it is important to record a glimpse of that period while it is still possible to do so. It will fall upon another writer to record the more recent years still fresh in our memory as we look forward in this new millennium to our 100th Anniversary.

* * * *

A View Ahead

Ebenezer serves a rapidly growing community. We wrestle with serious issues such as overcrowding, overtaxed services and alternatives for local government. Over the years we have reached out into that community with a Christian sense of service and sensitivity with regular worship services, Sunday School, Vacation Bible Schools, community suppers, the Lake Stevens Food Bank, Ebenezer Pre-School, offering meeting facilities for special needs service organizations, even periodic Norwegian pancake breakfasts.

But there is more to be done. We are called to extend the invitation of Our Lord to come and follow Him. As a congregation of Christian faith, we recognize our human failures and continue to trust in God's promise of forgiveness which flows from that faith. Asking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, let us accept the Call, secure in the love of God and one another.

* * * *

Hitherto the Lord has Helped Us

... 1 Samuel 7:12