

00:00:00 - 00:01:25 Introduction

Well today on this tape we'll talk a little bit about some observations of presidents of PLU. They say, there's an expression that says "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown." And that has certainly proved to be the case at PLU. When it comes to presidents, several of them have had to leave under a cloud. PLU has had a lot of wonderful presidents who have given great leadership.

That's one reason why PLU is where it is today, because of the courage, the vision, dedication, Christian faith of men who have been at their head. But these men also were human and they made some mistakes and as a result they had some troubles and problems and several of them had to leave by request. So we'll go back to the beginning.

00:01:25 - 00:02:34 Bjug Harstad, 1890-1895

The first president, Bjug Harstad, was a man of vision and courage. He came out here from Iowa in 1890 and was told to get a school started and that's just what he did. And he had a lot of vision. Harstad Hall was a huge building to erect and he had a huge task before him. And Harstad was a man who was not afraid to tackle this type of thing. Then after he'd been at the school a couple years after it opened, why, he felt the school needed some money. In fact, he knew the school needed money. And so he decided he was going to go up to Alaska in the Gold Rush and so he took off, left his family, and went up there. He was gone for some time and while he was up there he had quite an adventure, but he didn't find any gold. Some people struck it rich and brought it back, but he didn't have anything to bring back with him. When he came back he was broke. The church castigated him and the people were upset; there were a lot of problems.

00:02:34 - 00:03:08 Ole Grønsberg, 1895-1897

While he was gone Grønsberg was president of the school. Grønsberg was a man who we know very little about. He disappeared in the woodwork after he left PLU. We know he went back down to San Francisco I guess and that's all we know about him. Harstad was around the school for a couple more years until he stepped down and a fellow by the name of Nils Hong took over.

00:03:08 - 00:04:40 Nils Hong, 1898-1918

Nils Hong ran the school from 1900 to 1918 as the head of the high school department and he ran it well. Things seem to go along okay, but the school was a place where a lot of newcomers and young people came from Norway and learned to speak English and it was a place where a number of high school students attended. And there was a great school for the Parkland area, but the school just wasn't getting any place.

In 1918 they closed it down and went up to Columbia College in Everett and the two schools operated together for a year, from 1918 to 1919. But this didn't work out either. Some of the faculty members went up there with it. Nils N. Hageness was one of those who went up there. He was a bookkeeper, business teacher. I don't know if Hong was up there or not. Anyway, they operated for a year up there in Everett and even with working unitedly like that they weren't able to break even. So, in the fall of 1919, the Columbia College was closed down and Parkland sat there empty.

00:04:40 - 00:06:25 Johan Xavier, 1920-1921

Well, in 1920, PLU, Pacific Lutheran, opened up again as a two year normal school with J.U. Xavier as acting president. Columbia College became a children's home later on, and was called Parkland Children's Home. There'd been a children's home in Parkland up on the hill there, up near where the Methodist, just south of where the Methodist Church is today, up on A Street there. That children's home was closed around 1924 I think it was, somewhere in there, and moved up to Everett into the Columbia College and existed there as Parkland Children's Home for many, many years until the role of children's homes changed and it became a treatment center for disturbed children. And then they tore down the building, razed the building, and in its place they've erected a series of newer buildings.

Well back to PLU. Our friend Xavier, J.U. Xavier, who was a very versatile man, he taught Latin, he was librarian, he taught a number of other courses there at school. He was acting president from '20 to '21, but he wasn't the man for president, to take over the role.

00:06:25 - 00:08:44 Ola Ordal, 1921-1928

So they drafted a man by the name of Ole Ordal who was a pastor of Our Saviors Lutheran Church there in Tacoma at that time. He was a very outgoing, enthusiastic, vibrant personality who had a lot of drive and pep. And in the fall of '21 when he came, Pacific Lutheran was a two-year normal school and also started a two-year junior college department, and still had the high school.

Now, the school was run by the Board of Trustees, and I remember Olaf Gulbransen was on the Board at that time. He was graduate of Pacific Lutheran back there in the 1890s and he was a businessman up in Bellingham, just north of Bellingham there in Whatcom county and he used to come down once a week, he told me, to go over the books and pay the bills and see that things were being handled all right when it comes to the financial end of things with the school.

Ordal was running the academic and trying to raise funds and all this sort of thing. Ordal, though a very fine person, just wasn't the man for this particular position. This became apparent after you've been there for a few years and it was arranged to move him out of there. He didn't want to leave, but in 1927 they arranged with a District President to get him a call, and he was called to our Savior's Lutheran Church in Fairhaven, in Bellingham, and that's where he was until he died

in the '30s and his wife was there until she died here back in 1974; she was over 90 years of age.

There are members of the Ordal family, a couple sons up in Bellingham, and a son over in Seattle, over in Kirkland.

00:08:44 - 00:12:21 Oscar Tingelstad, 1928-1943

In 1927, a fellow by the name of Oscar Adolf Tingelstad, who had his doctor's degree from University of Chicago and was a fine scholar, quite a leader. He attended Pacific Lutheran and was a native of the Pacific Northwest, from Silverton, Oregon. He came from Luther College as the President of Pacific Lutheran and he remained as president until 1943. He was a very colorful individual. He and his wife had no children. They were a very dedicated couple who loved the students and the faculty and worked very hard, but when it came to administrative matters, he had some problems. Especially when it came to fundraising. This was proved to kind of be his downfall in a sense because those in those days he brought with him, there in the '30s, he had several

fundraisers: Paul Preus, Nick Elveston followed by Mikkel Lono later, and also by his brother Edmund Tingelstad. Edmond was on the faculty as a teacher of psychology, but he also was used to summon fundraising. People doubled in class and did a lot of extra things there through the years.

Well Tingelstad did a lot for the academic life of the school. He was a real academician and a real scholar. He built the place up academically, and got a good program going that way. He was a deep, devout Christian, a man who went around and visited the churches and kept close ties with the school and church. He was a man who was not afraid to work. He spent long hours at his work, but he was also a very, very interesting person who had a lot of imaginary illnesses. He'd get up and talk in chapel about his illnesses, and when we'd come back from chapel, well, the kids would say, "Well we heard another organ recital today by Tingelstad."

In the late '30s there, well, during the Depression, things were really rough at PLU. It was a tough time to be president. Enrollment was down, costs were ... I mean there just wasn't much line of support for the school. Faculty members weren't getting their checks, and they just hang on for their life, but the school survived. Then came the war and then the enrollment really went down. In 1943 the church was wondering what in the world to do with the school. They asked Tingelstad to resign, and so he resigned. He went to work in the shipyards.

00:12:21 - 00:49:03 Seth Eastvold, 1943-1962

They asked J.A. Osgard, who was the president of the American Lutheran church at that time, it was called the Evangelical Lutheran Church. He got a hold of Seth Clarence Eastvold, who was pastor of First Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and asked him to come out and be president of the school. He said, "They're \$60,000 in debt. I'll give you \$40,000 to go out there and settle it." And he said, "If the place goes, why, fine. If it doesn't," he said, "there's no disgrace because the place is ready to fold."

Well this was kind of a challenge that a man like Eastvold wanted. So he resigned as pastor of the church in Eau Claire, he and his wife Enga headed westward, came out summer of 1943. He waded in with both feet. He was a driver of a man, just unlimited, unbounded energy, just kept go go go go go all the time. He was a man who had a good opinion of himself, and this didn't hurt him in this particular work. He was a loner, a man he was of the old school. He patterned himself after Lars Boe, wanted to be like him. He's what we call a Jesuit, he was a person who believed that the ends justified the means. And that was quite evident during his years at the school.

When he came there, the first thing he did was to go out and see the creditors, and he tried to settle for so much on the dollar. Some places they settled, other places they threw him out, told him pay the whole amount or nothing. So he went to the banks and tried to get some money. He went to Puget Sound National Bank, Reno Audlen and Company down there in Tacoma and they just turned him down flat. The only bank where they'd look at him was the National Bank of Washington, now called Pacific National Bank of Washington. Because they treated him okay, that's been the bank for the university ever since.

Well Eastvold was a prolific writer. He wrote a lot of letters and so forth to the churches asking for assistance and support even when they were right and left making all kinds of changes at the school. He was a man who was very opinionated when it comes to what he felt was right and what was wrong, so there were some divorced people around and he saw to it that they weren't on the staff.

There were others that didn't agree with him and the way he did things and if they didn't agree with him, why, they had to leave. So there were a lot of hard feelings the first year or two when he was there and a lot of changes took place. That's always the way it is when someone new comes in, not always, but usually is. Especially if the man is one who wants to get things done and that's the way Eastvold was. So there was a lot of strife and carrying on there to begin with, internally.

But Eastvold waded in, he put on overalls, and he worked in the buildings himself, cleaning up Old Main. Old Main was a shambles. Rats were running all over the building and the place just hadn't been cleaned up. Eastvold got some people to clean it up and he worked at cleaning it up. He went out and got money there so that they could fix up the rooms and the offices and so forth, get new furniture, and all the things he needed. One thing he insisted on was seeing that the people got paid. He ran a balanced budget, he didn't have a budget as such, he'd always control it himself. He controlled the finances of the school all the years he was there. No one was allocated so much for their work, whatever it cost to run a department, that's the way it was. But nobody knew how much money they had to spend. He just would allow them enough to run their operation. I mean he was very clever that way, with the result that he was able to do a lot of building. Through the money that came in for tuition and room and board, whatever was left over from that went over into the building funds of the school.

Well, morale picked up at the school under Eastvold. The place started to roll, '44, '45, '46, the people of the churches banded behind him, and the war ceased, and the students started to come.

PLU has always been a school that meant a lot to the church in the Pacific Northwest so they rallied behind Eastvold and they rallied to build up this institution. And so things began to really move and churches would contribute, individuals contributed, they'd give money to furnish a room in the dormitory. That cost \$500, to furnish a room, and they could get their name put in a plate on the door if that was done, or they could refurbish another room in one of their offices or a lounge and so forth. These gimmicks, call them gimmicks or whatever you want to, but they worked out real well, were most effective in raising funds.

Eastvold didn't raise any big money, but he raised a lot of money in that he got a lot of gifts and a lot of people involved. He went all over the place, he got congregations to put the school on their budget. And so began an era when the school operated in the black, and it did all the time Eastvold was there. I'll say that for him, that he ran a tight ship, but he also kept that thing on an even keel and kept things going. At the same time, he built up the faculty and built up the Physical Plant, all these things came along.

He was an interesting person when it came to his leadership in chapel each day. When he was in town he always presided at chapel. Chapel was four days, Monday - and Tuesday was student body day - and then Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and he'd preside. He'd always had a lot of interesting things to say at announcement times. He'd have his commentaries, he was very much like Dr. Lars Boe, who was president of St. Olaf. He always presided at chapel there and he'd talk and talk and talk. Eastvold patterned himself after Lars Boe because he'd been on the Board when Boe was there and he watched him and he admired him. So, he in his chapel was very interesting. On Fridays he'd invariably say, "Well, it's been a good week," regardless of what kind of week it had been. It had always been a good week, and then he'd go on to talk about what had happened during the week. If something had happened the day before or the night before that he wasn't very happy about, why, he'd go to work on that.

I remember one time we - before the first popular singing group (he couldn't stand jazz and things like that that was of the devil), but finally the students sold him on bringing in the Four Freshmen. Now the Four Freshmen are pretty tame when it comes to the type of music they sing. So they came and they appeared in Eastvold Chapel in the 1950s, late '50s. And the next morning in chapel he got up and he says, "The devil walked on stage last night, on this stage last night. Nothing like that's going to happen again as long as I'm president of this institution." And he went on and on and on, and ranted and raved about this.

He called me into his office afterwards and he says, "Nesvig, what did you think of that concert?" and I said "Well it was all right. I kind of enjoyed some of the music." He says, "Nesvig, that's terrible. I saw you clap last night at that concert. Just think of it. You clap for that terrible music of the devil. Don't you ever do a thing like that again." He just couldn't stand anything of that nature.

Still, on the other hand, I remember when it came to popular music that was being played by the university band at basketball games, nothing wrong with that. That didn't bother him at all. The thing that bothered him was the fact that it was in the chapel, that jazz had been sung on the stage in the chapel and that kind of desecrated the place. To him that place was sacred. He saw to it that we got compulsory chapel as soon as we moved into the chapel in '52, that's one of the things he wanted. He felt it was vital that all students attend chapel. The religion faculty battled him at the time, but he insisted on it and got them to change their views. He was a man who when he wanted his way, he would work and work and work and work and work, and he'd never give up. And so everybody threw in the towel rather than fight, they'd get tired of fighting him.

I remember Stuen one time, he was arguing with him about something having to do with the Saga, and Stuen wouldn't give up. And finally he had to give up. Eastvold told him in no uncertain terms what he had to do, and Stuen wasn't about to do it. And they were at loggerheads for a long, long time. Students and faculty members were at the meeting, I remember that very vividly, and finally Stuen just had to throw in the towel. The next day he came into Eastvold privately and said, "OK you have your way. I'm wrong." Stuen knew he wasn't wrong, and the rest of us knew that Stuen was right, but Eastvold had to have his way. That's just the way he was. He was that way in so many things.

I remember other occasions. One of them has to do with the founding of the student congregation. Now when that was started, he called Bob Lutnes to be the first pastor. He wanted the student congregation, it was his idea (or he picked it up somewhere) and he worked and worked and worked on this thing. Well he ran into a lot of opposition. And I mean that. When he finally got it through the Religious Activities Committee, or whatever committee it was at that time. And then he announced in chapel the next morning that they're going to establish a student congregation, that this was a unanimous decision by the faculty and students. Well, it was no more unanimous than the man in the moon. And I remember how mad Nodvedt was because he had opposed it, Dr. Magnus Nodvedt of the History Department. He'd opposed it, he just refused. Eastvold was just of the type he just said no. And I think if a few people said yes he didn't even hear the nos because he was so, so desirous of having these things take place.

He pushed for the ministry, he worked hard to get young men interested in going out into the ministry. He'd have those who were pre-sems, he'd have him over his home, and he'd talk to the

students and encourage them to go into the ministry. He had a real mania there, a real drive to get people interested in the ministry. There's nothing wrong with that. He was a real influence there, there were a lot of young men at that day who went to the ministry because of Eastvold.

I've talked to some of these men who are pastors now in various parts of the world, of our country, and the world, and they assume that Eastvold was a big influence on them, in making a decision to attend seminary and become ministers of the gospel. So he was a man who was very much interested in the work of the Kingdom of God and had a deep concern there.

He also had this driving desire for position. He wanted to become president of the American Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church. That was his goal. I know he wanted that. When Schiotz was elected he wanted to have that job. And he got a fellow by the name of Alf Carlbow, who was pastor at that time of Our Savior's in Minneapolis to give the nominating speech at the convention, but Eastvold didn't make it. He was bitterly disappointed. He came home. He was very disappointed about that. I remember there were some things said about him at that convention by speakers who were upholding Schiotz and they weren't too complimentary, didn't mention him by name, but just by inference. They were true, but it still was a pretty rough going. Well. Eastvold wanted that position, didn't get it. That's the one thing he wanted that he didn't get. He worked hard by indirection to get it, but was not successful.

He got a lot of other things. He got a trip around the world from the university, they gave him that, they gave him a good pension, they also took care of him and his wife. He saw to it that he was taken care of when it comes to material things and he always got plenty there. Money meant a lot to him and he had a way of using money to attain his ends. I remember one professor that disagreed with him and he wanted him to stay there at the school but the fellow said, "No, I said I don't work here anymore under you." He just didn't care for him. And Eastvold offered him some money under the table for the following year so they could get his support. And the fellow turned him down, he was aghast, and Eastvold said, "I've discovered that 90% of the people can be bought. I tried and I missed. So," he says, "OK, you're on your way." So the man left. There were several of us around that that wouldn't be bought, but I'm not going to go into that in any detail, no, that's a story alone by itself.

Eastvold was a man who in his latter years, I believe, was sick. He died of a massive blood tumor, blood clot.

[TAPE ENDS]

Now we were discussing PLU presidents. On the other side of the tape I mentioned I thought Dr. Eastvold was ill, and I still feel that way, that in his latter years he was just not the same person he was because he changed in so many different ways. When it came to his attitude towards others. And he would make a decision one way and then change it and go some other way. And this just wasn't like him.

Well, to get back to some of the other things during Eastvold's time. I remember he used to talk about petitions. He hated petitions. But Eastvold announced that he never had a petition on his desk. I'm in his office one day and he says, "Young fellow just brought a petition in to me. I took it in my hand and held it here and talked about it with him. And then I thanked him for it. When he left I threw it in the wastebasket. You've heard me

say that I've never had a petition on my desk and that's true. They never do get to my desk. They get to my hands and then they go from there in the wastebasket.”

Eastvold was quite a man when it came to chapel. His speeches were at times very inspiring and wholesome in their Christian emphasis. He was a man who thought a great deal about the hereafter, and one of his pet phrases was to talk about when this earth will have gone through its last shaking fit and he'd shake his fist in the air. Another thing, he used to speak about the Lord as the one who was the owner of the cattle on a thousand hillsides.

When the time came for us to get going on an appeal in 1958, we brought in the American City Bureau and Walter Darling. Eastvold got up and told the faculty what he expected of him, and Darling was quite put out about all this. He said, “Eastvold, in all the years I've been around I've never heard anybody dress down a faculty like you did today.” Because we had the faculty meeting that afternoon and he had told us in no uncertain terms we had to come through with sizable gifts, every one of us, or else this thing just wouldn't go any place. Well, that was true, but the way in which he did it, the way in which he laid it on the line was really rugged. Of course, that's the way he operated.

I remember he used to, if he felt that someone was spending a little bit too much money in their area, he'd let it be known. And he did that when it came to Athletics. That's one reason why Marv Tommervik left, and also why Cliff Olson left, because they just couldn't agree with it. And they couldn't take the public chastising which they'd receive at faculty meetings, for the fact that Athletics was costing so much, that it was taking food out of the mouths of the faculty members. Well, to those of us who knew Eastvold just ran off, that just ran off our backs like water because we just go ahead and do our job and we know we'd get the money when we needed it. And so we just ignore this type of thing, but everybody didn't have that thick of skin. But the faculty was a whipping boy, and that's the way she went.

I remember he was an inveterate Republican. He just couldn't stand the democrats, he hated them with a passion. He wouldn't let a democrat on the campus to speak. I remember in 19-, I wasn't around, but one fellow who was running against Don for Attorney General and he came on the campus to speak and Eastvold ran him off. And a fellow by the name of Harold Running, who was a member of our faculty, was campaigning for some Democrat who was running for office and he'd been up to Stanwood and spoken about it. And somebody up in Stanwood called up the university and said, “What's this man doing up here campaigning for a Democrat?” and so forth. Well, upshot of it was that Eastvold called Running into his office and told him that he had to stop this business of campaigning. I think it was for Smith Troy who was running against Don, or maybe somebody else. But anyway, regardless, he was a Democrat and he told Harold, he said, “You knock that off or else you're through here at PLU.” And Harold Running says, “Oh don't take the food away from my children, my wife and my children.” And Eastvold said, “Well I will if you don't desist from this campaigning.” So Harold gave in. It wasn't so much as Harold as it was if he'd been campaigning for Republican it probably would have been all right. He just couldn't stand the Democrats.

Eastvold was a man of vision, and one thing he wanted, one thing he envisioned for PLU was it to become a university. He remembered that it was founded as a university. So, in the late 1950s, this got to him and finally he said, “We've got to have the name ‘University’ return to PLU.” And so it came about. He had a study made and he talked to the faculty about it, and finally got it voted through the faculty and the Regents that we

establish a university with two schools: a College of Arts and Sciences and a College of Professional Studies. And this later was expanded to other schools. Oh yeah, and of course the College of Education. We had three schools to begin. This came to pass in 1960. A lot of people in the faculty made fun of him. The liberal arts people were violently opposed to this thing. And the faculty was kind of split down the middle on this whole affair. There was a lot of debating going back and forth in faculty meetings and campus retreats, you know faculty retreats, and so forth. But nevertheless it went through and it was, in my opinion, one of the best things that ever happened at PLU, and we've got to give Eastvold credit for this. He was a man of vision there. He was not a scholar, he was not an academician, but he was used of God to bring about some things for PLU that have meant a great deal to the future of the institution. I doubt if PLU would be the school it is today if it wasn't for this forward step in making it a university and setting up professional schools.

Then we set up a School of Education, set up the university, we had to have deans and heads of these various schools. There had to be a Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. To begin with he was thinking in terms of Dr. Bill Strunk, who was head of the Biology Department. In fact he'd made up his mind that this is the way it was going to be, but Bill Strunk was having a lot of health problems that year and had not been attending to his classes and his labs and the work was being handled by Leraas and by student assistants. Strunk was in no shape to take over that position. Eastvold finally saw this and appointed Dr. Erich C. Knorr as the head of the College of Arts and Sciences.

And then when it comes to the School of Education, Ms. Neilsen was the head of the Department of Education, but she didn't have a doctor's degree. Eastvold said that we've got to have someone with a doctor's degree at the head of that. So he discussed this matter with Hauge and Anna Marn and others and the result was that a fellow by the name of Dr. John Amand, who was a superintendent of schools at the Highline School District, came over and took the position in 1960.

And they got the university started and things going along fairly well, but this was the beginning of the end as far as Eastvold was concerned and his tenure at PLU. A lot of things had transpired which caused problems between him and the faculty, and also some of the Regents. And this situation bubbled over when Eastvold got the Regents on the Executive Committee to go along with him in investing Ford Foundation funds, a quarter of a million dollars, into real estate development at Ocean Shores, Washington. That's a story all in itself and I'll get into that some other time, but the result was that Eastvold just about had to resign.

Sid Ram came out from church headquarters, he was a head of Higher Education, talked to Eastvold, and Walter Darling talked to him, and said "Eastvold, you just gotta, the best thing for you to do is resign. It's gonna come up at the Board meeting tomorrow." That was in 1961. Well, he did resign to the Committee, which came in to see him. Earl Eckstrom, Harold Witstein, and Gus Neiman were on that committee, and I think Einer Knudson. They all went to talk to him. They'd been on a Finance Committee which had gone into the finances of the university. Now, as I said I'll discuss all this later at another time.

They asked Eastvold to resign. He knew it was coming, so he hauled out a piece of paper from his desk and he had a list of things that he wanted as conditions for his resignation. As my memory recalls it, amongst the things that he asked for were a new Ford up to \$4,500 in value, a pension for him and for his wife, and of course this has been set up before so that Mrs. Eastvold to this very day receives \$4,800 a year from PLU. He wanted some

debts canceled, a note, he asked that the Chapel-Music-Speech Building be named Eastvold Chapel. And there were a few other things that he asked for, a list of about 10 or 12 items.

After they discussed it with him they said they'd go back and talk over with the Board. When they got out of there, Gus Neiman says, "Give him the solid gold Cadillac and let's get on with the show." So they accepted his resignation with the conditions attached to it and that was the beginning of the end. That was in the fall of '61. That winter, why, Eastvold was still rankled and that's why I say he just must have been ill because he did a lot of things.

He called a lot of his cronies together and held meetings. By cronies I mean those that were allied with him, on his side, fellows like Kelly Roe, Phil Hauge, Paul Vigness, Knut Lee, Anna Marn Neilsen, John Amend, Ted Karl, and a few others. They'd hold meetings. One time they called Earl Eckstrom in and said that they wanted the resignation, they wanted him to fire seven of us from the faculty and demanded that we not be given contracts, and Eastvold refused to grant us contracts. The seven of us include Frank Haley, Gunnar Malmin, Cecil Vance, Roy Olson, Walt Schnackenberg, Milt Nesvig, that's six. I forget who the seventh one is just now, it'll come to me later. They had a whole bunch of trumped up charges that they leveled at us. Earl Eckstrom says, "I'm not even going to dignify this by letting the people know what the charges are against them because they're all trumped up and they're a bunch of hogwash." So we don't know to this day what the charges were, and the people that are involved, maybe they don't. Most of them are no longer with us.

This group also, oh yes, Strunk was a part of that group, too, this group also met in the spring and Eastvold urged his followers to reconsider his resignation. And they said they'd go to the factory and get a petition up to ask, demanding that Eastvold be retained. And so one fine morning, on a Monday morning, they swoop down at eight o'clock in the morning to the various offices around the campus hitting faculty members right and left, asking them to sign this petition. About half, a lot of them got caught off guard, and signed this petition. About half of them didn't. The thing that had held it was a Miss Wagner, Doris Wagner over in the Department of Nursing at that time, she told Bill Strunk when he came in, "Well, I don't want to do anything about this. I'm not going to sign this and have you go around until I have a chance to think about it. Also, didn't Dr. Eastvold say that his resignation was final, didn't want it reconsidered?" Bill said, "No, that's different now. We want him to stay," and so forth and so on. Well she kept him from seeing all the nurses and that was a sizable number of signatures. And there were others that held firm so this thing really didn't get off the ground, except that there was a meeting held a couple days later and Eastvold announced that the petition was in his favor and he said that in political terms, this would have been, would be considered a landslide for him. Well, the Board of Regents got the petition and they said nothing doing, that they were still holding to the resignation, it would go through as is. There was a lot of stuff going back and forth. So Eastvold did leave on July 31, 1962 and he was succeeded by Dr. Robert Mortvedt. So Eastvold was another fellow who left under a cloud, unfortunately.

00:49:03 - 01:01:10 Robert Mortvedt, 1962-1969

Mortvedt came as president in 1962. Up until that time he had been Director of Higher Education, wearing two hats, for both the United Lutheran Church in America and the former Augustana Lutheran Church and then he got the position when these two churches merged, was offered the position when these two churches merged. But he wanted to get out into institutional work again, I feel. So he came to PLU, a man with a wonderful background, fine Christian training, and deep dedication to the cause of Christian higher education. This is the beginning of a new era in PLU history.

Eastvold had his contributions, now Mortvedt comes with a different type of contribution. He came bringing what I like to call academic solidarity to the institution. He was a man who was a scholar, and who knew how, with his experience with institutions all over the country and in Europe, knew how an institution should be set up. And so he went to work doing just that thing. He strengthened his faculty, he set up a President's Council, set up a higher echelon of Vice Presidents and Deans in this council. So, after a couple years there, he looked over the people who were in various leadership positions at the university, he picked those he felt would fit on his team, and then he filled in the other positions that he felt were necessary. The result was that we got a Vice President for Student Affairs, a Vice president for Business and Finance, a Vice President for University Relations, a Vice President for Development, and there was an Academic Vice President. That position has been changed, it's called Provost now. But we had an Academic Vice President and we had the Deans of the various colleges, schools, so that's the way the setup was.

This was a time of growth in the institution, of continued growth, enrollment-wise which meant that we had to get more and more facilities, and under Mortvedt's leadership, and with especially Dean Buchanan, who was Vice President for Business and Finance, tremendous strides were made.

Quenton Engineers, a Los Angeles firm, were called in to set up the program of the expansion as far as the Physical Plant was concerned. Walter Darling Corporation was engaged to come in and help us in direction as far as our academic program was concerned, and development. So, buildings went up and schools were added to the university, and the whole thing was cooking on all burners. This to me was a golden era in PLU history, from 1960, the era from 1962 to 1969.

Dr. Mortvedt was very well received everywhere: by the church he was respected, he was respected by the community. He became president of the Independent Colleges of Washington, a fundraising organization. He gave leadership and direction there. He was constantly in demand as a public speaker. He's a man who wrote his own speeches and delivered them exceedingly well. He worked hard and arduously all the time he was there. And towards the end of his years at PLU, he was beginning to get pretty tired.

The first crisis that came to him was after he'd been for a year or so, the School of Education wanted certain concessions and the faculty voted them down. John Amend and Anna Marn Neilsen went into Mortvedt and told him that they had to have their way in this particular thing. Mortvedt says, "I can't overturn what the faculty has already done. That's their business. If you want to bring this up to the faculty again, you can do that, but I can't do it." They said, "Either you do it or else there's going to be trouble." And he said, "Well, I would refuse to do it." Because these people have been strong supporters of Eastvold and they've opposed Mortvedt from the very beginning. I'm being very frank about this, but it's true. And they said, "Inside two years, we'll get rid of him." Well, when Mortvedt wouldn't go along with them there in '64, why, they (Amend and Anna Marn Neilsen and June Broeckel), said "We're going to resign." So they resigned. They thought that this would cause so much consternation at the school that they'd get their way. The result: Mortvedt held firm, asked them to reconsider, accepted their resignations, but said that they should reconsider if they so desired. But they refused to reconsider, said they're adamant, they said "either or" and Mortvedt would not budge. So they left.

The school kept on going, and they're the ones who've been suffering ever since. It was unfortunate for those involved, especially for Anna Marn, she's the one who had been around the school for many, many years and it

was tough on her, I think. My own personal opinion is that she was misguided by the other two and she never should have done it. I think if she would admit privately, she'd admit that she'd made a mistake. But, she'd set her mind to this thing and so she felt she had to stick with it.

Well, now to get back to Mortvedt. He was a man of principle who stuck to his guns and that's why he was able to accomplish so much. To be sure, he didn't always agree with the faculty, the faculty didn't agree with him, they felt he was kind of aloof, that he didn't come around and visit them as often as he should, that he this, he that, and the other thing. But he was a busy man and he had an awful lot to do. Sure, he made some mistakes. All great men make mistakes. And he began to see that he was having problems so especially when it came to little things they started to get to him. You know how it was in the latter '60s. This was the time of the Vietnam War revolt and student revolt. We had compulsory chapel and the chapel had expanded, I mean enrollment expanded so the chapel was being held in two different places. For the freshmen and sophomores in Eastvold and then for the juniors and seniors across the street in Trinity Church.

And there in the spring of '68, it became apparent that the students were going to cause a king-sized revolt over going to chapel, over compulsory chapel, that is. And so Mortvedt finally gave in and went over to voluntary chapel for the rest of that year and from then on. And another thing that troubled him was the fact that students were getting pretty mouthy, pretty independent, and this troubled him. He just did not, just couldn't get along with a student of his era, in the latter part of the 1960s, and he saw this coming.

He saw that he was getting impatient, he saw he was getting nervous and getting tired, and his health was failing. He had a heart attack a couple years before, back in '67 I think it was, '66, '67. And he recovered from that, but began to tell on him, so he put in his resignation effective in 1969, July 31st. And so a search was begun for in the spring of '69, the winter of '68, '69, a search committee was set up and began to look for a new president.

Now we can't say that Mortvedt had left under a cloud because he didn't. He could have stayed on, there was nobody asking for him to quit, but he felt it was that his the work that he came to do was - not everything that he wanted to do had been accomplished - but that the main things had been accomplished and the thing for him to do was to to move on. So Mortvedt resigned and he was made president emeritus and he lives over in Gig Harbor, Washington. And now six years later he's hale and hearty, he's clear and his mind is clear and he's in good health. In fact he's much better off today physically and mentally, by mentally I mean his general attitude, much better because all these pressures have been relieved. He's a loyal supporter of the institution and should be looked upon through the years as a man who made a great contribution to the growth and history of PLU.

OK, I see this tape is just about over so we'll get started on the next tape.