

## 1901 COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

16 January (pp. 1–2) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL. In his quarterly report, the treasurer informed the council that all debts from 1900 had been satisfied. The business for 1900 was adjourned, and the council organized for 1901. Christian F. Gennerich was re-elected chair. The chair reported that the board of trustees had met the previous evening and had selected John Jaegeler as secretary and Charles Krumweide as treasurer. As usual, Herr Gennerich and Herman H. Landwehr put up the \$2,000 bond for the treasurer. Pr. Koepchen welcomed the new members to the council. The council scheduled the quarterly congregational meeting for January 21, with the secretary inviting the voting members by postcard. They then elected Henry Schmidt to the Day School council. The council scheduled the examination of confirmands for Judica Sunday [the Sunday before Palm Sunday]. Confirmation would be on Palm Sunday [in German (morning) and English (evening)]. They also accepted Pr. Koepchen's suggestion to hold a lecture before Lent for the benefit of the Sunday School (entrance fee 10¢ for children and 25¢ for adults). Finally, they agreed to have the Lord's Supper, preceded by confession, on two Sunday evenings during the year so that no one had an excuse for not receiving the Sacrament.

21 January (pp. 3–10) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the chair read his annual report [no specifics given]. Pastor Koepchen's annual report [included pp. 3–9] followed:

The opening section is basically a homily in which he assured the congregation that he would carry on Pr. Busse's ministry. The first year went better than expected, he asserted; flock and shepherd (*Herde und Hirt*) grew accustomed to each other. He praised the church council for competently steering the congregation following the untimely death of Pr. Busse at the end of 1899 and for satisfying all debts. The high point of the year was the celebration of the congregation's 50th Anniversary Jubilee. He noted that worship services continued regularly during a period of repair and beautification of the church. Koepchen then complained that many members did not attend worship regularly or punctually, lamenting that poor attendance would keep them from the light of eternal life. Soon the office of preaching would become disposable. Nevertheless, there were a significant number of members who attended Word and Sacrament services.

He then turned his attention to the struggling Day School. (The school had 18 children.) Since God had given the congregation the responsibility to provide a school for their children, parents had a responsibility to send their children there.

Koepchen reported that the number of children in the Sunday School was low, notwithstanding the dedicated service of the superintendent and the teachers. Despite holding Bible classes in German and English, attendance (about 74) was falling. The Confirmation Class had 112 students, 106 of whom would be confirmed on Palm Sunday. He observed that, although the students listen well in class, most have limited knowledge.

On August 27 [1900] the long-desired Youth Group had been founded, allowing young people to get acquainted and enjoy themselves “in a Christian manner.” While the group would not instill faith, he admitted, it will bring young people back to the Word and Jesus, and protect them from the temptations of the world.

Finally, he reported that other committees (Ladies Aid, Support) worked hard to prevent want in the congregation. The Missionary Committee asked to use some of the profits from the Jubilee for its work. He also complimented the choir for its beautiful contributions to worship.

Statistics from the pastor’s annual report:

- Baptized: 147
- Confirmed: 59
- Married: 83 couples
- Buried: 61
- Communed: 753 people (total communions: 1,035)

Koepchen noted that the numbers seemed low because he had only begun his ministry on March 11, 1900.

Reports from the Sunday School superintendent, Andrew Bush, [included on p. 9] followed, as did those from the Day School, the Support Committee, and the Missions Committee [no details]. The meeting then elected officers for 1901 as well as delegates to various organizations. The chair reported that there were fewer pew seats rented than in the previous year and encouraged members to rent them. He then informed the voters of what had been discussed at the Jan. 21 council meeting [examination of the confirmands, etc.] and that Frau Bush had given \$900: \$500 for a new bell, with the remainder going to the Bethlehem Orphanage and the *Altenheim* [old people’s home] in East New York. The congregation accepted the pastor’s offer to give a slide presentation benefitting the Sunday School. Koepchen notified the voters that 50 hymnals would need to be purchased before Easter. The voters also gave the pastor permission to hold a conference with pastors and officeholders at St. Luke’s. Finally, the Ladies Aid Society invited the congregation to an evening with cake at the church.

6 February (p. 11) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair announced that the church’s insurance for February and March had expired. The council recommended that the church refer the matter to the board of trustees and purchase \$2,000 more insurance for the year. The Support Committee wanted a new constitution and would work with the pastor to develop it.

13 March (p. 12) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair reported that the church had purchased the insurance. The council gave the pastor permission to purchase 50 new hymnals. Pr. Koepchen reported that 73 people had attended the Lord’s Supper on the previous Sunday evening, and so the council decided to continue this worship service several times a year. The chair announced that their beloved Pr. Busse had left

\$500 for the poor of the church; the council directed these funds to the Support Committee.

- 3 April (p.13) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. The council instructed the treasurer to pay a bill from Pilgrim Press Aid as soon as possible. Herr Schmidt reported that the Sunday School would end for the summer on June 20. [The rest is unclear.]
- 15 April (p. 14) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the congregation approved Pr. Koepchen's request to hold the pastoral conference at St. Luke's on October 7. The pastor announced that the Ladies Aid Society had purchased two lovely altar coverings, and the meeting instructed the secretary to write a thank you letter to the group. Teacher Lübkert reported that the number of children enrolled in the Day School had declined and asked that the Sunday School continue during the summer to prepare children for Confirmation Class [unclear]. Herr Schmidt announced that the annual boat trip would take place in June. Herr Gennerich informed the council that the Bethlehem Orphanage Festival would be on May 30, tickets costing 25¢.
- 1 May (p. 15) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Herr Schmidt reported that the preparations for next June's boat trip were going well. The Ladies Aid Society would provide the necessary utensils; Herren Friedrich Maute, J. H. Wittpenn, and Johann Jaegerler would provide cigars. Henry Luehrs offered to provide other drinks and Herr Schmidt to provide ice cream. The treasurer was instructed to pay the \$275 cost of the boat. Following a report that the doors in the church were not well secured, William Fajen offered to supply and install new springs. The council thanked him. Finally, the council decided to charge the Sunday School \$75 instead of \$150 for cleaning. The chair reminded the members to purchase tickets for the Orphanage Festival.
- 19 May (pp.16–17) - Special meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair reported the sudden death of John Bahrenburg [who served as elder at the time] on the previous day. The funeral was to take place at St. Luke's at 10AM the following Wednesday. The council decided to assemble at 9:30AM at the funeral home (C.F. Gennerich and Sons) in black clothing. The pastor and secretary were instructed to express the congregation's condolences to the family and to notify the congregation. [The text of the letter of condolence is on p. 17.]
- 5 June (p. 18) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair asked the council to rise for a moment of silence to remember their late brother, John Bahrenburg. The council decided to cancel the evening service and afternoon Sunday School in June, July, and August. They agreed to bring the report of the Hospital Committee [the Lutheran Hospital in East New York] to the next congregational meeting. It was reported that the tableware for the boat trip would cost \$75; the Ladies Aid Society would contribute \$20 and the Young People's Group \$25. The remainder would be paid for by the congregation. Herr Loewer would donate 12 cases of beer for the event. Pr. Koepchen reported that he had received requests from Pr. Dallman, who wished to build a church

in Grant Park, NJ, and from Pr. Thomas in Whitestone. The council endorsed the petitions and requested the pastor to announce the decision on the following Sunday. Finally, the meeting gave permission for the Young People's Group to have an evening's entertainment in the basement of the church the following Saturday. The pastor also invited all the council members and their wives to his home.

1 July (p. 19) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. The council decided to cancel its August meeting. Herr Schmidt reported on the boat trip and the secretary was asked to send a thank you letter to Herr Loewer for the beer.

[No Church Council meeting in August, 1901.]

11 September (p. 20) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Pr. Koepchen discussed the pastoral conference to take place at St. Luke's the following month. The chair reported that the new construction at Bethlehem Orphanage should be completed by the fall. The congregation was asked to contribute to the \$16,000 cost, and the council decided to give members collection books, asking them to donate as much as possible. The books would contain the seal of the church and the pastor's signature. It was further determined that this year's confirmands would sit in the gallery on the east side of the church. The quarterly congregational meeting was scheduled for September 30—all voting members to be notified by post. Herr Bush was given permission to hold a Reformation Festival in the church, with the collection from that event going to the Sunday School.

15 September (p. 21) - Special meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the council received word of the sudden death of the choirmaster. The church would be in mourning for 30 days, and funeral arrangements were delegated to C.F. Gennerich and Sons.

30 September (pp. 21–22) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which Johann H. Tietjen was appointed chair *pro tem*. The delegates to the hospital presented an extensive report about the need to support that institution; council members then pledged annual support of \$72. The report from the boat trip revealed that the excursion had yielded a \$526 surplus. The council's decision to distribute collection books to support the new construction at the orphanage was announced. Pr. Koepchen reported that between 80–90 pastors would attend the conference to be held at St. Luke's in October. He requested that members house the pastors who traveled from far distances for one to two days, to which many agreed. The congregation then decided to cover the cost of lunch and dinner for the pastors by means of a special collection. Herren Schmidt and Wittpenn would serve as a coordinating committee. The meeting decided to hold the Missions Festival on the third Sunday in October and to have the Lord's Supper on the fourth Sunday in the evening, with confession on the prior evening. The Reformation Festival would be held on the first Sunday in November. Herr Bush asked more older men to participate in the Sunday School.

- 2 October (p. 23) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Herr Tietjen served as chair *pro tem*. The treasurer presented his quarterly report. Pr. Koepchen reminded the meeting that the church would host the pastors' conference in a few days. He had made arrangements to charge 50¢ per person for meals. The council voted to deposit the collection from the Missions Festival into the Missions account. They also accepted the pastor's offer to present an illustrated lecture and asked him to make the arrangements.
- 6 November (pp. 24–25) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Pr. Koepchen expressed the gratitude of the conference attendees and read a letter of thanks. The council asked him to read that letter to the congregation the coming Sunday. Herr Tietjen reported that Sunday morning worship was being disrupted by too much talking in the narthex. The pastor would ask people to be quiet while there. The chair noted that the terms of officers would expire at the end of the year and appointed a nominating committee for upcoming vacancies. The chair also asked members to bring their collection books for the construction at the Bethlehem Orphanage to the next meeting. Herr Schmidt reported several items from the Support Committee [no specifics]. These matters were to be brought up at the congregational meeting on December 26.
- 11 December (pp.25–26) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which all members present submitted their collection books. Some \$1,400–\$1,500 was collected. There was a request to seek further collections if possible. The nominating election for candidates to upcoming vacancies followed. The council also decided that the candidate with the second highest majority would fill out the two years of Herr Bahrenburg's unexpired term. Pr. Koepchen reported that Herr Gieger had left \$1,000 to the church to fund a memorial [unclear].
- 26 December (pp.27-28) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the chair announced that the main purposes of the meeting were to rent pew seats and elect officers for 1902 (seven vacancies and the unexpired term of Herr Bahrenburg). Before the election, the chair gave all those present an opportunity to propose something for the well-being of the congregation. Herr Schmidt announced that the Support Committee would like to disband and establish a new constitution and name. The congregation decided to defer any discussion on this request until the next meeting and suggested that the officers of committee meet with the pastor to develop a new constitution and select candidates for membership. The meeting approved a boat trip for the Sunday School as was done the previous summer. The chair encouraged the members to continue to contribute to the needs of the orphanage. Herr Wittpenn reported that the congregation had contributed some \$450 to the hospital in East New York. There followed the election of officers, who were to be installed at the worship service on the first Sunday in January 1902.