

## 1902 COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

8 January (p. 29) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. The business of 1901 was closed and the work of 1902 begun. Christian F. Gennerich was unanimously elected chair, John Jaegeler secretary, and Charles Krumweide treasurer. Pr. Koepchen welcomed the newly elected members and wished them God's blessing in fulfilling their duties. The Young People's Group requested permission to remove the old altar [from their meeting space]. After a long discussion, the council decided to bring the matter to the next meeting. Henry Schmidt announced that the boat trip would take place on June 5. The secretary was asked to notify the voting members that the next congregational meeting would be held on January 20.

20 January (pp. 31-42) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the treasurer presented his annual report for 1901. After the secretary's report, Pr. Koepchen read his annual report (pp. 31-37; also found in *Altes und Neues*, pp 2-4.).

Pr. Koepchen opened with a homiletical section thanking God for bringing the congregation through a difficult year and admonishing all not to seek an earthly fountain but the eternal fountain of Word and Sacrament for spiritual water. He also scolded members for not honoring their obligation to attend voting meetings. It is God's will that Christians assemble together in visible places for the establishment and preservation of the preaching ministry; the administration of the Sacraments; the maintenance of church discipline; the effective working of Christian life; and, the expansion of the church. Properly conducted church meetings are needed to accomplish these goals. They provide great blessings for the church. In God's hands they:

- provide the means for correctly governing and preserving the church;
- strengthen and preserve the unity of the church;
- advocate growth in all aspects of Christian awareness;
- provide help for the implementation of Christian discipline;
- protect the congregation in its freedom and rights; and,
- advocate for works of mercy and awaken the valuable love for God's kingdom.

Koepchen noted that although the Day School was very small—only 14 students—the Sunday School seemed to be thriving. The number of young men and women attending Bible Class had increased to 126. Yet, many confirmed youths ceased coming to church; too many wandered on Sunday afternoon in the ways of the world and seem to have outgrown the church. Some 100 children had enrolled in confirmation classes since September (Mondays and Thursdays 4-5 and 7-8PM). Some 78 would be confirmed on Palm Sunday. The Young People's Group grew unexpectedly fast but included some unfortunate elements who were more concerned about their own personal enjoyment than about the congregation's well-being. However, these had found the group

disappointing and left. The other committees provided excellent service to the church.

Statistics from the pastor's annual report:

- Baptisms: 154
- Marriages: 97 couples
- Burials: 74
- Confirmed: 98
- Communed: 843 persons (1,142 total communions)

The Superintendent of the Sunday School, August Bush, then presented his report about the German (morning) and English (afternoon) classes [pp. 38–40]. The number of children attending was about the same as in 1901. He explained that the curriculum was coordinated with the Church Year, focusing on biblical texts, and that the school had made a great effort to support the mission of the Gospel. The Sunday School needed to get hymnals that were coordinated to the Church Year and the Lutheran Church. At the end of the report, Herr Bush noted that he had been superintendent of the Sunday School for 10 years [sic. Bush actually became superintendent in 1866] and was soon to turn 80. He thought it was time to hand his responsibilities over to someone younger, especially since he was experiencing “the weakness of old age” and had some hearing loss. He had promised the pastor that he would stay on until a successor was found. He recommended that the superintendent and vice superintendent be elected at the meeting, if possible. Bush noted that the Day School had a small enrollment, but he hoped it would increase.

There followed reports from the treasurer of the Missions Fund and the delegates to the Lutheran Hospital in East New York. The chair reported on Bethlehem Orphanage. The meeting then elected delegates to various institutions. The Support Committee presented its new constitution and name: St. Luke's Congregation Support Committee. Then the council seemed to have requested Herr Bush to continue his service because he was still able, and they asked that he not insist on retiring.

5 February (p. 43) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Herr Schmidt read the report of the Day School. Several issues were discussed [not specified], and the council decided to bring these up at the next congregational meeting. The council approved a request from the Young People's Group to donate the old altar and pulpit to a needy congregation and to build a stage in the area. The secretary was tasked with notifying the congregation. To honor Herr Bush on his 80th birthday (March 29), the council decided that the Sunday School should hold a special celebration for him on the evening of the second Easter day. They also agreed that each council member would make a freewill donation to purchase him a gift to be given to him at the April meeting.

26 February (p. 44) - Special meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair announced that there was an offer made on the church property and that he would like the view of the congregation. After a long discussion, the council decided to notify the board of trustees

that they would accept an offer of \$275,000 free and clear. If accepted, the congregation would then move to another acceptable location.

5 March (p. 45) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the Teacher Lübkert requested financial support. The council decided to form a committee to meet with him. They would discuss the English School and report back to the next council meeting.

2 April (p. 46) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. The council resumed the discussion of Herr Lübkert's request for financial support. The council also decided to hold the quarterly congregational meeting on April 21. The pastor would announce the date from the pulpit.

21 April (p. 47) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which Herren Fisher and Neib were accepted as voting members. The chair announced that there had been an offer of \$250,000 for the church property. The church wanted \$275,000, so the offer was declined. The chair also reported that the 42 St. Tunnel Co. had asked permission to build the same, which the congregation denied. The meeting voted to establish a Saturday School starting in the middle of September. Each child would pay a 25¢ fee and provide their own books and supplies. The pastor would periodically report on [unclear]. Herr Schmidt announced that the annual boat trip would take place on June 5. The chair informed the meeting that the cost of the tickets for the excursion to Bethlehem Orphanage on Decoration Day would be 25¢ per person.

7 May (p. 48) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which they made the following decisions:

- Evening services and afternoon Sunday School would be cancelled from the beginning of June to the middle of September.
- There would be confession and the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday in June following the morning service and in the evening. The pastor would make the announcement.
- The congregation should purchase wood and coal for the next winter as soon as possible.
- The congregation should purchase sufficient new hymnals next autumn.

11 June (p. 49) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Frank Fausner, the treasurer of the Sunday School, reported on the boat trip. Other aspects of the trip were discussed as well [no specifics given]. The pastor received permission to be absent for a few weeks in July to visit his parents; he had already secured a substitute.

2 July (p. 50) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. Herr Schmidt noted that, as in the previous year, there was a surplus from the boat trip. The Secretary reported that some young people had requested that the pastor occasionally give an English sermon because they do not understand German well. The council decided to refer this request to the next congregational meeting.

(No Church Council meeting in August, 1902.)

- 3 September (p. 51) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Pr. Koepchen suggested publishing a newsletter. The council decided to bring the request to the next congregational meeting. They set the Reformation Festival for November 1 and the Missions Festival for the second Sunday in October.
- 15 September (p. 52) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which it was decided that, beginning Oct. 1, the pastor would preach in English at the evening service on the first Sunday of the month. He would also preach in English every Saturday at the afternoon Saturday School. The Missions Festival would be on October 12 in the morning and evening. Pr. Schmidt of North Carolina would be invited to preach—his expenses to be paid from the Missions account. The meeting agreed to publish a free newsletter and distribute it to the congregation and its guests. They also decided to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the evening once in the month. Pr. Koepchen reported that so far 80 children had taken part in the German class in the Saturday School. To date, 60 students were involved in confirmation instruction. The congregation accepted Pr. Koepchen's offer to present an illustrated lecture on November 10. They also decided to purchase 50 new hymnals for the Reformation Festival.
- 8 October (pp. 53-54) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. Pr. Koepchen announced that he had ordered 50 hymnals at a cost of \$61.25 to add to the 200 books on hand. He reported that Pr. Schmidt could not come on October 12, but could come on October 26. The council agreed to invite him to come that day and preach in German in the morning and in English at the evening service. His travel expenses would be paid from the collection. The pastor noted that the Saturday School was progressing nicely; about 145 children attend. The first congregational newsletter was complete, and the Ladies Aid Society had donated \$25 to print 2,500 copies for free distribution. The Sunday School asked to hold the Reformation Festival on October 31 at 8PM; the pastor would give an illustrated presentation to make the festival very interesting. The council hoped that a large number of people would attend and decided not to charge an entrance fee but to leave a free-will offering for the benefit of the Sunday School. [The next paragraph is difficult to read; I think it says the following: Herr Schmidt received an offer from the Steamship Co. for a boat trip on the first Thursday in June next year. The council formed a committee of Herren Schmidt and Wittpenn to consult with the Sunday School about this.]
- 5 November (p. 55) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Herr Schmidt reported that the boat trip would be on June 17, 1903. The boat would sail to Locust Grove on Long Island Sound. The council also decided to join with the Sunday School to celebrate Luther's birthday because the pastor has kindly offered to show and explain relevant pictures. No admission fee would be charged, but an offering would be taken at the end to offset the cost. Any excess will defray the cost of the newsletter. [Written on the margin: On the second Sunday in November, there will be confession and the Lord's Supper at the evening worship service. Further, that the teachers for the Saturday School be paid \$8

per month] The council then appointed a committee to meet with the pastor to provide nominations for expiring terms.

3 December (p. 56) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair reported that several real estate agents had inquired about the church property, and one had noted that the church could receive \$275,000 from the sale. After much discussion, this offer was referred to the board of trustees. The election of nominees followed. The council decided to hold the quarterly congregational meeting on the second day of Christmas.

26 December (pp. 57-58) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the chair announced that the primary purposes of the meeting were to elect seven officers for the next three years and to rent pew seats for 1903. Pr. Koepchen welcomed Herr Young from California as a voting member. The congregation decided to donate the entire collection on December 28, including that from the Sunday School, to the Lutheran Hospital in East New York. [The next part is unclear. It seems a so-called pastor want to collect money from the congregation.] Pr. Koepchen reported that some 156 children were receiving instruction in German in the Saturday School. The meeting then decided to publish all the names of people who had donated for the Lord's work in the newsletter so that everyone could see that "all was done honestly and orderly." Election of officers followed. The newly elected were to be installed on the first Sunday in January.