

SAINT LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
308 West 46th Street
New York 36, N.Y.
Circle 6-4866

ANNUAL REPORT

1955

THE CHURCH STAFF

Albert L. Neibacher	Pastor
Melvin Weseloh	Vicar
Elsa Herreilers	Parish Worker
Mildred Holmer, M.S.M.	Organist and Choir Director

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Bernhard K. Schaefer	President
Anton W. Koester	Vice-President
Frank J. Burger	Treasurer
Reinhold Miessler	Secretary
J. Louis Schaefer	Assistant Treasurer
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Walter Gausman
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Herman Reichert
George F. Schroeder
Ernest Ullrich
Gary Vater

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Following the practice of former years, you will find in the following pages a summary of your Church's operations for the year 1955.

The year just ended was in all probability the most prosperous in the history of our country. It was also one in which the prayers of all mankind for peace appeared to be answered when President Eisenhower met with the leaders of the other great nations at Geneva to lay the groundwork for the elimination of war as an instrument of national policy.

Saint Luke's benefitted from our country's material prosperity. Income from all sources reached a new peak of over \$32,000.00. Our envelope collection which again passed the \$12,000.00 mark was also a new high and surpassed by several hundred dollars our entire income of the year 1945.

Unfortunately, our expenses kept pace with this increase in income and also touched a new high of almost \$35,000.00. As a result, the year ended with a deficit of nearly \$2,000.00 in contrast with a small surplus just a year ago.

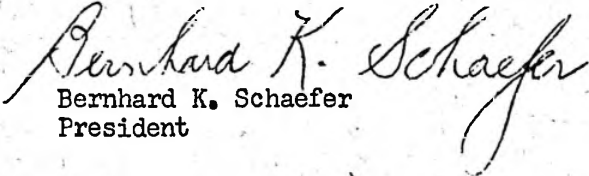
These mounting expenses with their consequent deficits are a matter of great concern to your Church Council. In spite of our best efforts, it is difficult to hold expenses down to the level of only a few years ago. The high costs of repairs and maintenance of our building alone compel us to pay out sums of money that in other years would have been considered fantastic. In addition, the needs of our staff have had to be met and it is inconceivable that these items will ever be reduced. Your Church, therefore, looks forward to your further generous and loyal support.

Although unable to secure an Assistant Pastor to replace the Rev. David E. Krampitz, we were fortunate in obtaining the services of a young Vicar - Mr. Melvin Weseloh - who has rendered loyal and effective service to Saint Luke's during the short time he has been with us.

Halfway through the year, our Parish Worker - Miss Martha Hoffmann - accepted a Call to the True Light Church in lower Manhattan. It was with real regret that we released her from Saint Luke's. She has been replaced by Miss Elsa Herreilers, a long-time member of our Congregation, who has assumed her new duties with energy and devotion.

The Committee considering a new Constitution is actively at work. The task is a long and important one however, and another year may pass before their report can be submitted to you for your consideration.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to my fellow-members of the Board of Trustees, the Church Council and every member of our Congregation who have contributed so splendidly to another successful year in the work of the Kingdom.


Bernhard K. Schaefer
President

THE PASTOR'S REPORT

February 9, 1956

Dear Friends:

When Saint Paul wrote to Timothy, "The foundations of God standeth sure", he must have thought of a church like Saint Luke's. Built on the solid rock foundation of Jesus Christ and for 105 years loyal to the doctrinal principles of the Lutheran Confessions, Saint Luke's has withstood the onslaughts of time, adjusted herself to a changing community and a changing social order, and still held high the banner of the Cross. The promise of Christ, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it", has certainly been fulfilled in the life of this congregation; and as long as Saint Luke's shall proclaim the Gospel message of salvation, as it is revealed to us in Holy Scripture, the mission of this church is clear and her future certain.

Church work at Saint Luke's during 1955 has not been simple because the sands of time and circumstance shift rapidly in a city like New York and present a series of continued problems. Perhaps the most acute and frustrating of our many problems during the past year was the almost complete turn-over of our staff. Right after the first of the year the Rev. David Krampitz, Assistant Pastor since September 1, 1953, accepted a Call to Hanover, N.H. On June 30, 1955 Miss Martha Hoffmann, who had been our Parish Worker since August 1, 1949, resigned to accept a similar position at our True Light Lutheran Church in Chinatown. Then on October 1, 1955 Mr. and Mrs. Gustav Weiman, building superintendents, resigned to enter retirement. In turn each resignation left a gap in our staff and created its own individual problems which complicated and hampered our entire program of work, forcing us for longer or shorter periods of time to use stop-gap measures rather than forward-reaching actions of advancement and expansion.

In these days of critical ministerial shortage - the Missouri Synod alone having approximately 350 congregations without a pastor - the Church Council resolved last Spring to endeavor to solve our staff problem through the use of the vicar program. Consequently in September Mr. Melvin Weseloh, third-year student at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, was assigned to us for the school year of 1955-56. He has been active primarily in the Sunday School and the youth work of the church, assisting in other areas of activity where possible. Though only a temporary assignment, we at Saint Luke's are fortunate to have such a consecrated and faithful worker as Mr. Weseloh. In solving our Parish Worker problem, we were more fortunate in that we were able to obtain as a regular member of our staff, Miss Elsa Herreillers, a lifetime member of Saint Luke's, who is familiar with our work and its many problems and who is able to accept the many challenges of our multiple mission in Times Square. Not only has she ably taken over the office routine of the church, but she has also been very effective in the organizational life and in the area of calling on the sick, the shut-ins and prospective members.

The organizational life of the congregation has again functioned very smoothly with a good spiritual and fellowship program of activities, which have had service as one of its basic features. During the course of the year the Ladies' Aid Society lost its president of many years, Mrs. Susan Karsch Schaefer, who not only gave a lifetime of service to that group but who also gave herself completely to the work of the church at large. Her memory will continue to be an inspiration to all who were privileged to know her and work with her. Both the Ladies' Aid Society and the Dorcas Guild met a real need in the congregation and together served approximately 75 different women.

Perhaps the most effective group in the church during the past year was the Senior Young People's Society, which functioned in the young adult area. Meeting each Sunday evening and having a planned spiritual, cultural and fellowship program, this group was able to serve a large number of young people, who are in the City for longer

or shorter periods of time. Not only did this group provide a large portion of our Sunday School staff and volunteer members for our choir, but it also was the most effective mission arm of the church, winning new members for Saint Luke's and then doing an effective job of assimilating them. In church work this is one of the more difficult, yet necessary functions of any group, absorbing the new-comer and making him part of the group.

The most difficult, yet most challenging and stimulating, group in our family of organizations was our teen-age group, the Junior Christians, which met each Friday evening for a program of varied activities. In the Fall of the year this group joined the Walther League, an International Lutheran youth group, and is now enjoying the inspiration and fellowship of belonging to something far greater than their own little group. This fact, together with the able leadership of Mr. Weseloh, has stimulated the interest and activities of our teen-agers and is giving them perhaps the most successful season of work they have ever had.

Work among the children of the church continues to be complex because 90% of our children come from homes outside of the church and our adult membership lives at such distances from the church that it is not able to supply the necessary time, manpower and leadership to do a completely satisfactory piece of work. In our Sunday School we cared for 234 different children during the course of the year with a staff of 27 people. Our highest enrollment at any one time was 188. Though 56 new pupils were added to the rolls and 8 reinstated, we took 60 children off the rolls leaving the net gain practically nil. In our Released-Time School approximately 125 different boys and girls were served during 1955 by a very limited staff of either the Pastor or the Vicar, plus the Parish Worker, a pianist and one or two volunteers. This created disciplinary problems which at times were practically insurmountable.

Our after-school and evening program of recreation consisted of a Boy Scout, a Cub Scout, a Girl Scout Troop, plus an intermediate boys' and girls' gym group. These latter two groups were under the supervision of our Field Workers from Union Seminary, first Mr. Harry Yeide and then Mr. Paul Jensen, and met a real need because they concentrated in the area of group work, where more personal attention was given to the needs and development of the individual. Theirs was a varied program consisting of gym activities, handcrafts, discussions and devotions.

Another group that functioned very effectively was the Family Bible Hour, which held three series of meetings in the Winter, the Spring and the Fall. This is a new group which meets under its own leadership and provides an excellent opportunity for personal Bible study and discussion. It is hoped that many more people will participate in this project and derive the benefits of becoming more familiar with their Bibles.

During the past year the following official acts were performed:

Baptisms (infant)	18	Weddings	7
" (adult)	4	Funerals	26
Confirmations (children)	9	People communed	2,414
" (adults)	16	Total attendance	14,649
New Members	37	Av. Sunday attendance	223

In view of the many problems facing an inner-city church, located in a blighted area, with almost a constant turnover of membership, and geographical distances making it difficult to get adequate volunteer participation, I have frequently been asked, "Pastor, don't you ever get discouraged?" Yes, I do, but in such moments of discouragement, I endeavor to look above the immediate problem to my Lord and Savior and to the Divine commission to preach the Gospel which He has given us at Saint Luke's.

Harkening to that commission I see not the problems - I take them for granted - but the many opportunities and challenges which await us on all sides. With my sights set on these I cannot but see a continued and glorious future for a strong metropolitan church with an active and ever expanding institutional program, which will make Saint Luke's an even greater and more influential center of Lutheranism than it now is.

However, if we are to establish that future and make it a reality, we must not only set our sights high, but we must also rethink our status quo and consider the course we must take. At no time can we stand still or slip back into the quagmire of self-complacency or defeatism. Saint Luke's has a brilliant future, but that future depends largely upon what you and I do in the present. As I see it, there are certain basic needs which the present membership must provide. Those needs are:

1. more active lay participation in the overall program of the church; we need fewer spectators and more workers;
2. an active personal evangelism program of witnessing; we need people to call on prospective and inactive members;
3. greater participation in community affairs; Saint Luke's must be a stronger voice in solving the problems of our community and in redeveloping the entire area;
4. a real study of the Puerto Rican situation in this particular area and a determination of our responsibility and future course of action; Christ has commanded us to "preach the Gospel to all creatures"; should we at this time expand to include a Puerto Rican program? How?
5. increased group work program among the children of the community; they are the future of our nation and they have the greatest problems in an over-crowded, blighted area;
6. greater financial stability to provide larger staff where adequate and sufficient volunteers are not forthcoming; if we cannot do the work ourselves, we must provide our substitutes.

If during 1956 we start providing some of these basic needs, I am certain the Lord will continue to bless us and in turn make us a blessing to many.

This report is not complete without special commendation to our able organist and choir director, Miss Mildred Holmer, and to the members of our choir, who gave unselfishly of their time and talent to add to the beauty and inspiration of our services, also to Mrs. Esther Richardson for her direction of the Children's Choir. To the many volunteers, who helped in so many ways to make our program possible, to Miss Martha Hoffmann and Miss Elsa Herreilers, who spared me many petty and detailed annoyances, to Mr. Melvin Weseloh for his cooperation and enthusiasm, to Mrs. Neibacher for her constant patience, solicitude and encouragement, I want to say, "Thank you and God bless you for all you have done to make my work possible and pleasant".

Yours in Christ,



Albert L. Neibacher, Pastor

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 REPORT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES
 YEAR 1955

<u>Income</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1954</u>
Envelopes	12,618.35	12,176.50
Plate Collection	4,474.64	3,877.23
Pew Rent	706.50	772.90
Christmas	809.60	1,272.12
Easter	1,886.22	1,765.65
Lenten Services	332.02	314.92
Thanksgiving	460.50	417.80
105th Birthday	791.80	584.70
Income from Securities	7,567.52	7,004.84
Special Donations	2,109.00	1,958.00
Special for Music	<u>1,000.00</u>	<u>1,660.00</u>
Total Income	<u>32,756.15</u>	<u>31,804.66</u>
<u>Expenses</u>		
Salaries	18,287.08	17,840.74
Travel Allowance	750.00	750.00
Retirement & Medical Payments	968.37	1,432.00
Printing & Stationery	1,343.69	1,331.18
Insurance	1,625.92	1,508.39
Heating	2,275.73	2,079.31
Gas & Electricity	567.70	537.22
Social Security Tax	99.12	80.58
Repairs & Replacements	4,658.74	1,886.83
Organ & Piano Tuning	134.00	90.00
Real Estate & Water Taxes	421.60	402.80
Expense of Envelopes	30.37	5.35
Telephone	568.95	452.58
Postage	402.13	624.90
Advertising	1,499.82	1,018.30
Devotional Books	8.84	7.90
Flowers	40.15	6.00
Sunday School	150.00	150.00
Miscellaneous	<u>930.61</u>	<u>903.96</u>
Total Expense	<u>34,684.40</u>	<u>31,153.50</u>
Deficit	1,928.25	
Surplus		651.16

COLLECTIONS FOR OTHERS

	<u>1955</u>
Missions	2,280.12
Christmas Seals	570.50
Lutheran Child Welfare Assn.	726.45
Wartburg Home for Aged	308.49
Lutheran Hospital of Brooklyn	164.73
Metropolitan Inner Mission	336.77
Association for Works of Mercy	166.48
Lutheran Friends of Deaf	401.07
Lutheran Welfare Council	741.73
American Lutheran Publicity Bureau	2.00
Boy Scouts	46.16
Girl Scouts	25.00
Building for Christ	1,407.50
Flood Relief	250.00
Conquest for Christ	60.00
Lutheran Hour	5.00
Lutheran Leper Colony	<u>5.00</u>
	<u>7,497.00</u>

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Balance on Hand January 1, 1955		3,745.53
<u>Income</u>		
Interest on Investments	142.50	
Held in Trust	200.00	
Donations	200.07	
Interest -		
Franklin Savings Bank	<u>100.73</u>	
	<u>Total Income</u>	<u>643.30</u>
		4,388.83
<u>Expenses</u>		
Christmas	<u>100.00</u>	
	<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>100.00</u>
Balance on Hand - December 31, 1955		<u>4,288.83</u>

During the Year 1955, the Society gave financial aid, also clothing and food. The balance of the funds will be kept on hand for future need.

SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS
AND MEMORIALS

December 31, 1955

<u>Year</u> <u>Established</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Income To</u>
1900 *	Ladies Aid Society	1,500.	Themselves
1900 *	Benevolent Society	1,500.	The poor
1920 *	Gerhardt Fund	200.	Ladies Aid
1920 *	Hochhalter-Hellenschmidt	3,700.	Benevolent Soc.
1923	Catherine Karsch	1,000.	Ladies Aid
1925 *	Katherine Wendell	200.	Ladies Aid
1927	J. Louis Schaefer	5,000.	Part to Pew Rent Bal. Benevolent Soc.
1932	Bernhard Karsch	3,000.	Part to Pew Rent Bal. Benevolent Soc.
1942	Adele Hennings	2,000.	Pew Rent
1946	Sebastian and Margaretha Dorfmueller	3,000.	Pew Rent
1946	In Memory J. Louis Schaefer	1,000.	Pew Rent
1951	Annie L. Hohns	1,000.	Pew Rent
1952	Mr. & Mrs. Henry Puckhaber	300.	Pew Rent
1953	Mrs. Fred Wolklin and Mrs. Frieda Monroe in Memory John Dettmer	200.	Pew Rent
1954	In Memory Alfred M. Grizzle	500.	Pew Rent
1955	Louisa Nusskern	2,000.	Pew Rent
1955	Susan K. Schaefer	<u>10,000.</u>	For Music
	Total	36,100.	

* Exact date not known.

Memorials given in 1955 in memory of

Robert Filter
Susan K. Schaefer
Grace Schroeder
Alfred M. Grizzle

SUNDAY SCHOOL
SECRETARY'S REPORT

The following is a digest of our attendance records for 1955:

Total enrollment, Dec. 31, 1955	174
Average Sunday attendance	102
Highest Sunday attendance	124 (Jan. 9)
Lowest Sunday attendance	55 (Christmas Day)
New pupils since Jan. 1, 1955	56
Reinstated pupils during the year	8
Dropped from the records	60
Adult Staff serving the Sunday School	27

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on Hand January 1, 1955	916.33
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Income

Envelopes	481.39
Plate	269.73
Easter	96.00
Christmas	237.00
Donations	203.25

Total Income

1,287.37
2,203.70

Expenses

Lesson Material	277.53
Films and Visual Aid	211.30
Attendance Awards	75.43
Collection Material	51.00
Parent-Teachers' Meeting	13.81
Easter	42.25
Sunday School Picnic	193.74
Christmas	247.85
Equipment	339.52
Miscellaneous	95.10

Total Expenses

1,547.53

Balance on Hand December 31, 1955	<u><u>656.17</u></u>
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MISSION FUND

Balance on Hand January 1, 1955	213.37
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Income - Envelopes	221.75
Donation	2.00

Total Income

223.75
437.12

Expenses - Support of India Mission

200.00

Balance on Hand December 31, 1955	237.12
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