

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

A N N U A L R E P O R T

1956

THE CHURCH STAFF

Albert L. Neibacher	Pastor
Daniel Reinheimer	Vicar
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
Carl H. Sievers	Secretary
J. Louis Schaefer	Assistant Treasurer
Henry J. Koester	Assistant Secretary

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Herman Von Hinken  
Fred A. Wolklin

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Karl A. Koepchen  
Anton W. Koester  
Henry J. Koester  
Fred Nagel  
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J. Louis Schaefer  
Carl H. Sievers  
Henry Wisch

DEACONS

Quentin Baltera  
Walter Gausman  
Jay Guren  
Paul A. Koepchen  
Eugene Langhans  
Herman Reichert  
Henry Seng  
Ernest Ullrich  
Gary Vater

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Although the world is still living in a time of tension and crisis, yet the year 1956, as one looks back upon it, has not been entirely one of frustrations and failures. The Russian dictatorship, which opposes every principle of freedom for which our country stands, is having its troubles. And here in the U.S.A. President Eisenhower was reelected for another term of four years. With him go all our prayers for continued peace and prosperity.

St. Luke's shared in the general prosperity which our country enjoyed. Receipts from all sources again touched a new high of over \$34,000.00. The envelope collection surpassed all expectations by reaching the sum of \$15,000.00 - a tribute to the loyalty and generosity of our members.

As has been too frequently the case in recent years, our expenses have also reached new highs passing \$37,000.00. As a result, we have again ended the year with a deficit amounting to \$3,000.00..

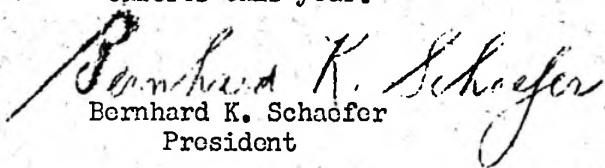
Attention has been directed in previous reports to this unhealthy condition and we face each year with the hope that it will be corrected in the current one. Your Church Council and your Board of Trustees are constantly aware of the problem facing them but if St. Luke's is to provide the services demanded of it, there seems to be no solution other than to seek larger contributions from our members. No independent Church today can hope for an independent future unless those who have benefited most directly from its existence - its members - are aware that this existence is in jeopardy and that theirs is the first responsibility. There can be little incentive for others to help if the beneficiaries themselves are not actively interested. Each generation at St. Luke's bears a moral responsibility to pass on to the next a strong and vigorous Church. Recognition of that responsibility calls inevitably for sacrifice on the part of all to meet it squarely in time, effort and money.

In June, our young Vicar - Mr. Melvin Woseloh - returned to the Seminary to complete his studies and was replaced in September by Mr. Dan Reinheimer.

At the end of the year we were fortunate in obtaining the services of an experienced Deaconess - Miss Martha Eber - as Parish Worker of St. Luke's and she will be installed early in January, 1957.

Deaths and resignations reduced our Church Council to its smallest numbers in many years but newly elected voting members filled the vacancies at the end of the year and we look forward to their active participation in the deliberations of the Church Council.

My thanks are extended again to every member of our Congregation, the Church Council, the Board of Trustees and, particularly, our Pastor, who contributed so much to the success of our efforts this year..

  
Bernhard K. Schaefer  
President

THE PASTOR'S REPORT

February 13, 1957

Dear Friends,

To give strength, encouragement and direction to the disciples, as they were about to undertake the spread of the gospel, Christ declared, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." How wonderful to think that Christ has chosen you and me to do church work at Times Square, New York. It is a singular privilege, and at the same time a tremendous responsibility, which we at no time can ever underestimate.

Though Christ has chosen us to be His co-workers and instructed us to bring forth fruit, telling us that our labours will never be in vain, He has assured us of no easy road to success. At no time is church work a simple matter; certainly not in an inner city church like St. Luke's with the many complex housing, ethnic, cultural, social and economic problems we find in a community which is in a constant state of flux. There are few churches anywhere that are as unique as St. Luke's, situated at the cross-roads of the world, serving more than twenty nationality groups and compelled to carry on an institutional type of program with a limited budget and a limited staff. Ours is a highly specialized work, complicated by the fact that our membership lives at great distances from the church, and calls for an ever-increasing staff of trained workers to take up the slack of volunteer workers which are so vital a force in the average church.

Without question our greatest problem in 1956 was staff. Your pastor and church officers gave more time and concern to this problem than to any other issue at St. Luke's. Right after Easter Miss Elsa Herreillers, our Parish Worker, resigned to take a position with the National Council of Churches. We were unable to obtain a trained and an experienced Parish Worker until the end of the year. On May 31st our contract for a field worker from Union Seminary ended, and through some clerical error was not renewed in the Fall, as had been anticipated. To replace our vicar, Mr. Melvin Weseloh, who left us in June to return to the Seminary, we were fortunate enough to have Mr. Daniel Reinheimer assigned to us; he took up his work in our midst on September 1st. In order to have a smooth, functioning operation, taking care of our own full program of activities and at the same time serving the many organizations using our facilities, the building superintendent is of utmost importance. During 1956 we had seven different temporary, part-time or full-time superintendents, complicating no end the work of our limited staff and frequently taking them from productive work to do either the work of a superintendent or to help break in a new one. No one, unless he was a member of the staff or directly connected with the multiplicity of the attendant problems, can fully appreciate the handicaps under which we worked during 1956.

However, in spite of all these problems, the Lord blessed us and enabled us to carry on a full program of activities without any curtailment whatsoever in our organizational life. The sixteen different groups in our family of organizations continued to meet regularly either on a weekly or a monthly basis, thus meeting many of the needs of all interest and age groups within the congregation. Among the more active of these groups, that is, outside of the Church Council, were the Ladies' Aid Society, the Dorcas Guild and the Senior Young People's Guild, the latter of which deserves special commendation because it played such a vital role in serving the many young people who each year come to the city to either attend school or to work, and who make St. Luke's their church home while in New York. The Senior Guild continued to be one of the strongest missionary and service groups in the congregation, not only supplying volunteers for the choir, the Sunday School staff and the Youth Program, but also setting the pace for the entire congregation in greeting the visitor and absorbing the newcomer in our church life.

The program of religious education at St. Luke's made real advances during 1956. On the adult level three series of mid-week Bible classes were held - a Winter, a Spring, and a Fall series - in addition to the regular Sunday morning Adult Bible Class which meets in conjunction with the Sunday School. On the youth level, a well-integrated program of religious instruction was given in the confirmation classes, the Released-Time School, and the Sunday School. During the year, over 250 different boys and girls received religious instruction at St. Luke's. As is shown elsewhere in this Annual Report, there was a drop of enrollment in the Sunday School during 1956 due largely to many removals from our community, which had a drop in population of several thousand people. The continued trend to tear down old tenement houses or to convert them for commercial purposes, thus displacing many residents, is a cause of much concern to the leaders of the community. Your pastor meets regularly with a group of these people who are endeavoring to solve this housing problem and preserve the West side for residential purposes.

Again, much stress has been placed upon our youth program and in our little way we are endeavoring to meet a critical need in our particular area. During the year our Boy Scout and Cub Scout programs were completely re-organized under leadership obtained within the congregation and are both smooth, functioning groups. The Girl Scout group, which has always had St. Luke's leadership, is continuing to meet a real need. In order to continue our program of gym activities the Group Work Department of the Lutheran Inner Mission Society of Brooklyn has assigned two workers to us. The boys' program is especially successful, having more than fifty individuals enrolled and serving on the average of thirty boys each week. In a blighted area such as ours, which has such limited recreational facilities for children, it is a tragedy that our gymnasium cannot be open each afternoon and evening of the week. There is a great need for our type of facility, but the staff, either trained or volunteer, is not available.

1956 saw a slight drop in our church attendance figures, an average of eight per Sunday, with a total drop of about 400. Though we no longer have men from the Armed Service Center, which closed in January of this past year, and though the weather was either rainy or threatening on 26 Sundays, still the real cause for this decrease in attendance was the irregularity of many of our members, some of whom still think that the third commandment, "Sanctify the holy day", is one of the optional commandments of the decalogue. This attendance problem could well solve itself, and our attendance could practically double itself if each of us would ask himself, "How many times did I attend the services of my church during 1956? Did I always have a Christ-acceptable excuse for staying away?"

Though the financial report shows a paper deficit of \$3,400, our financial structure is nevertheless becoming stronger and healthier each year because more individuals are sharing in the responsibility of meeting an ever-increasing budget. It is only as we realize our God-given responsibility and bring our giving up to the level of our blessings that we will begin to meet the opportunities Christ places before us in Times Square, New York. That is not only the case in regard to our current expense budget, but also in regard to contributions to missions and benevolences. For years St. Luke's has done nobly in its welfare contributions, but that is not the case when it comes to our gifts to missions. Though we are not a member of any synod, we still have definite obligations to the church at large, and to the commission of Christ, "Go ye and teach all nations". Our mission obligations and opportunities are not confined to our parochial boundaries; they are global as Christ has outlined them; and it is only through our generous gifts to missions that we can meet these Christ-given responsibilities. They are a definite part of our total obligation to the Church.

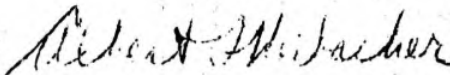
A report such as this cannot begin to list the many hours spent in personal counseling either to members of the church or to the innumerable souls, who have no spiritual home, but who come to us because of our geographic location, or because of the position we occupy in the community. Neither can this report include the number of hours spent week after week meeting with leaders of the community and members of such organizations as the Clinton-LaSalle Community Center, the West Side Association of Community Agencies, or the Housing Committee of the Health and Welfare Council of New York City, all of which are vitally interested in solving the many problems facing our community and making the West side a better place in which to live. Though very time consuming they are all part of the responsibilities St. Luke's has to the community.

Associated with me in the work of St. Luke's during the past year either on a part-time or a full-time basis have been: Miss Mildred Holmer, our organist and choir director, Miss Elsa Herreillers, Parish Worker, Miss Alma Loftness, part-time secretary, Mr. Melvin Weseloh and Mr. Daniel Reinheimer, our vicars, Mr. Paul Jensen, field-worker from Union Seminary, and Mrs. Esther Richardson, director of the children's choir. Behind the scenes, but continually at my side to help and encourage and inspire has been my wife, without whom life at times would have been well nigh impossible. To each of these, along with the innumerable volunteers who have shared in the glorious work of Christ at St. Luke's, a sincere thanks. May God bless them all for the assistance they have given me personally and for the service they have rendered to the Saviour.

During the past year the following official acts were performed:

Baptisms (Infant)	12
(Adult)	4
Confirmations (Adult)	25
New Members	43
Weddings	14
Funerals	29
People Communed	2,357
Total Attendance	14,257 -
Average Sunday Attendance	215

Faithfully your pastor,



Albert L. Neibacher

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 REPORT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES  
 YEAR 1956

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<u>Income</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1955</u>
Envelopes	15,043.52	12,618.35
Plate Collection	4,132.23	4,474.64
Pew Rent	715.10	706.50
Christmas	1,154.70	809.60
Easter	2,233.44	1,886.22
Lenten Services	311.02	332.02
Thanksgiving	557.50	460.50
Birthday (106th)	555.50	791.80
Income from Securities	7,535.10	7,567.52
Special Donations	1,434.00	2,109.00
Special For Music	776.00	1,000.00
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Total Income	34,448.11	32,756.15
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 <u>Expenses</u>		
Salaries	19,181.18	18,287.08
Travel Allowance	750.00	750.00
Retirement & Medical Payments	721.98	968.37
Printing & Stationery	1,396.85	1,343.69
Insurance	1,217.41	1,625.92
Heating	2,655.31	2,275.73
Gas & Electricity	548.51	567.70
Social Security Tax	233.63	99.12
Repairs & Replacements *	6,941.99	4,658.74
Organ & Piano Tuning	104.00	134.00
Real Estate & Water Taxes	425.60	421.60
Expense of Envelopes	43.34 Credit	30.37 Credit
Telephone	688.84	568.95
Postage	449.00	402.13
Advertising	1,431.15	1,499.82
Devotional Books	31.61 Credit	8.84 Credit
Flowers	22.50 Credit	40.15
Sunday School	150.00	150.00
Miscellaneous	1,080.44	930.61
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Total Expenses	37,878.44	34,684.40
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Deficit	3,430.33	1,928.25

\* Includes \$2000. covering Purchase of Furniture.



COLLECTIONS FOR OTHERS

	<u>1956</u>
Missions	2,713.30
Christmas Seals	137.36
Lutheran Child Welfare Assn.	710.20
Wartburg Home for the Aged	367.47
Lutheran Hospital of Brooklyn	227.57
Metropolitan Inner Mission	340.82
Association for Works of Mercy	182.82
Lutheran Friends of the Deaf	452.32
Lutheran Welfare Council	741.45
Boy Scouts	25.00
Girl Scouts	25.00
Building for Christ	1.00
Lutheran Hour	100.00
Thank Offering Atlantic District - Concordia	386.50
Hungarian Relief	271.00
Concordia - Bronxville	2,850.00
Valparaiso University	200.00
Wartburg Orphan Farm School, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.	25.00
Women of Lutheran Education Society (Infirmity Project)	<u>50.00</u>
	<u>9,806.81</u>

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Balance on Hand January 1, 1956	4,288.83
<u>Income</u>	
Interest on Investments	170.00
Donations	75.48
Interest Franklin Savings Bank	<u>113.29</u>
Total Income	<u>358.77</u>
	4,647.60
<u>Expenses</u>	
Food and Clothing	100.00
Financial Aid	100.00
Christmas	<u>150.00</u>
Total Expenses	<u>350.00</u>
Balance on Hand December 31, 1956	<u>4,297.60</u>

During the Year 1956, 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

<u>Year</u> <u>Established</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Income To</u>
1900 *	Benevolent Society	1,500.	The Poor
1920 *	Gerhardt Fund	200.	Ladies Aid Society
1920 *	Hochhalter-Hellenschmidt	3,700.	Benevolent Society
1923	Catherine Karsch	1,000.	Ladies Aid Society
1925 *	Katherine Wendell	200.	Ladies Aid Society
1927	J. Louis Schaefer	5,000.	Part to Pew Rent Bal. to Benevolent Soc.
1932	Bernhard Karsch	3,000.	Part to Pew Rent Bal. to Benevolent Soc.
1942	Adele Henning	2,000.	Pew Rent
1946	Sebastian & Margaretha Dorfmuller	3,000.	Pew Rent
1946	In Memory of J. Louis Schaefer	1,000.	Pew Rent
1951	Annie L. Hohns	1,000.	Pew Rent
1952	Mr. & Mrs. Henry Puckhaber	300.	Pew Rent
1953	John Dettmer	200.	Pew Rent
1954	In Memory of Alfred M. Grizzle	500.	Pew Rent
1955	Louisa M. Nusskern	2,000.	Pew Rent
1955	In Memory of J. Louis & Susan K. Schaefer	10,000.	Music Program
1956	In Memory of Anton & Marie Koester	2,000.	Pew Rent
	Total	<u>36,600.</u>	

\* Exact date unknown.

Memorials Given in 1956  
in Memory of

Mrs. Marie Koester  
Miss Grace Schroeder  
Mrs. Carl Retzlaff  
Mr. Irwin von Schlichten



SUNDAY SCHOOL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The following is a digest of our attendance records for 1956:

Total enrollment, Dec. 31, 1956	135
Average Sunday attendance	93
Highest Sunday attendance	118
Lowest Sunday attendance	57
New pupils since Jan. 1, 1956	33
Reinstated pupils during the year	4
Dropped from the records	76
Adult Staff serving the Sunday School	31

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on Hand January 1, 1956		656.17
<u>Income</u>		
Envelopes	546.33	
Plate	288.57	
Easter	90.00	
Christmas	216.00	
Donations	<u>285.00</u>	
Total Income		1,425.90
		<u>2,082.07</u>
<u>Expenses</u>		
Lesson Material	277.87	
Films and Visual Aid	142.78	
Attendance Awards	14.43	
Collection Material	47.93	
Postage	26.00	
Parent-Teachers' Meeting	5.84	
Sunday School Picnic	227.20	
Christmas	255.65	
Misc. Supplies	<u>60.82</u>	
Total Expenses		1,058.52
Balance on Hand December 31, 1956		<u>1,023.55</u>

MISSION FUND

Balance on Hand January 1, 1956		237.12
Income - Envelopes		262.31
		<u>499.43</u>
Expenses - Support of India Mission		<u>201.25</u>
Balance on Hand December 31, 1956		298.18