

# I Remember...

Taken from the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



**"Our God, our Help in Ages Past,  
Our Hope for Years to Come"**  
125th Anniversary



## Memories from around the 1910's

I REMEMBER my grandmother, Leah (Bolgos) Steffe, telling me that she was always responsible for getting her sister, Alma, to confirmation class on Saturday morning at our St. John's Church. Because her father and brothers were busy in the dairy and sugarbush business, she had to harness the horse, hitch up to the buggy or cutter, and drive Alma the five miles or so to the church. In the wintertime her dad, William Bolgos, would heat stones and lay them on the floor of the cutter to keep his daughters' feet warm. The girls covered their laps and legs with heavy horse-hair blankets.

While her sister attended confirmation class, my grandma would drive the horse and buggy or cutter down Northfield Church Road to the West from the church to her uncle's place, Emanuel Kapp (Hollis Kapp's father), and visit. Her uncle would always help her put the horse into his barn. They would give it feed, water, and rest before she returned to pick up her sister at the church again for the return trip home.

My grandma and her brother, Alton Bolgos, were confirmed here at St. John's in December 1914, in an adult class at the ages of 21 and 25. Her sister, Alma, was confirmed in May 1916, at the age of 14.

Grandma passed away in 1990 at the age of 97 years! She always considered St. John's church of Northfield to be her home church. -- submitted by Cary Shear

My grandmother, Louise Zahn Zeeb, was confirmed here at St. John's in 1914. Her confirmation picture is hanging above her bed. She told me that Emma Ehnis\*, Selma Fischer, Lucille Gerstler\*, H. Stanley Zeeb, Marie Prochnow, Carrie Schmid, Martha Gerstler\*, Florence Frey, Edith Maulbetsch, Gertrude Danner, Walter Steffe, Art Zeeb, Emma Raddatz\*, Cora Steffe, Erwin Steffe and E. Gerstler\* were in her class. The Reverend George Luetke was her cousin's husband.

This confirmation class was a combination of the German class (6) and the first English class (11). My grandmother was in the German class (along with the ones starred above).

She told how her brother, Clarence, would bring herself and Gertrude Danner by horse and buggy to confirmation class. Sometimes Mr. Danner would bring them. She also told how they carried candles during the Christmas program and one of the girl's hair caught on fire. -- submitted by Martha Zeeb

I REMEMBER coming every Saturday to confirmation class. During the summer months, there was a single train car run by gasoline that was like a streetcar which would stop at every mile. This train was called the "ping-pong." I would ride this "ping-pong" from Whitmore Lake, get off at the crossing, and then walk the mile and a half from the railroad track to the church. Often 1 or 2 other girls from Whitmore Lake (not Lutherans) would come along so they could also ride the "ping-pong." We would have to bring a lunch along, because the "ping-pong would not go back until the afternoon.

During the winter months, my father would bring me on Friday evening, and then I would stay with Pastor Luetke until Sunday, when my parents would come to church.

When Ruth was confirmed, she was the only one in the English class (there was one in the German class), so each of them had to answer all of the questions on examination day.

I REMEMBER that after nearly every Sunday service, someone would invite us to their home for dinner, such as the Maulbetsches, Geigers, Brauns, and so forth. -- submitted by Selma Fischer

This is a good time to remember the little white church that stood where our beautiful church now stands.

It was built by a few Lutheran families who had emigrated from Germany. They wanted to hear God's Word and to teach their children the Gospel.

The windows were clear glass, and it was heated with a stove, the members furnishing the wood. The seats were like benches with a back. For lighting they used kerosene lamps. So we didn't have many services at night.

The only activity then was the "Frau Verein" -- which is called the Ladies Aid now. They met once a month in the member's homes.

It is much like the saying, "From a small acorn grew this mighty oak."

When the church bell rang, we were thrilled and counted our blessing for such a wonderful church to worship in. -- submitted by Carrie Podewil

### **Memories from around the 1920's**

I REMEMBER when our [The Martin Wurster family, consisting of father, mother, and seven children] house burned on January 14, 1922 [The house was to the north of the church where the present white house and barns are on each side of the road.] We moved to another house until March 1, but then we had to move out. We had no place to go, so we were able to live in the basement of the church for a month and a half. Our new home was able to be occupied in April of 1922. In the church basement, we had a cook stove and a wood stove leading into the same chimney pipe. Our beds were all lined up in a row. -- submitted by Elmer & Ralph Wurster

I REMEMBER when I mowed the cemetery for eight years, from 1926-1934. I used a little push hand mower. The cemetery used to have paths around the lots. The normal hand mower would not fit down these paths, so I had to mow across the paths. So I bought a 14" mower which would fit down the paths. I also hand trimmed around the headstones and along the iron fence. On Decoration Day, the cemetery was so covered with flowers that it looked like a flower garden.

I did this for \$100 a summer. I lost the job when it was let out for bids. Someone underbid me by bidding \$50. They found out how much work it was and did not bid that amount again the next year.

My folks boarded the crew which came to rebuild the church after the fire. My mother and sisters had to serve meals in shifts during the time of threshing and silo filling. -- submitted by Elmer Wurster

Our Christmas children's program has been a long established custom. We have always had a Christmas tree with its usual trimmings. Before we had electricity, the old wax candles with the live flame were used. These candles were placed on the tree in similar fashion to the way it is done now.

Four or five young men were seated on the front pew nearest the tree. Each was equipped with a fishing pole. These poles were varying lengths and had a loosely wrapped cloth ball at the end. There would also be two or three buckets of water near the base of the tree. It was the duty of these men to dip the cloth in the water and extinguish a candle as it burned low or flared up. That was the fire safety system. -- submitted by Hollis Kapp

I REMEMBER being a part of the children's Christmas Eve service. We were to go to the church basement to take off our winter coats, and leave them there. When the service was to begin, we would have to go out the side door of the basement, and run around outside in the cold to the front doors of the church. In the old church there was no stairway to get from the basement to the sanctuary. -- submitted by Mildred Braun

I REMEMBER when the church had the old kerosene lamps. But then they replaced them with mantle lamps. [Editor's note: a mantle is a small hood, usually cylindrical, of a meshwork substance which when placed over a

flame becomes white-hot and gives off light.] This provided quite a bit more light than the old kerosene lamps. I recall that if church lasted a long time, these mantle lamps would begin to dim a little.

The final step was when they replaced these mantle lamps with electric lights. I still have one of the old mantle lamps hanging in my house. The electric lights really gave off more light than the mantle lamps. Electricity came through the area in 1925.

The church used to have chicken dinners. The members would bring chickens which they had raised and then prepare them. It was often held at Wiedman's Grove on East Shore Drive, but sometimes it would be held at Gleaner Hall. This was before the new church was built. -- compiled from Mildred Braun & Carrie Podewil

I REMEMBER when I was a young girl living on Dixboro Road and walking to confirmation class. We had classes every other day all summer, and on Saturday mornings after school started. Some days, on the way home, I would go down Earhart Road, and stop at Grandma Braun's for a drink, and she always had home-made cookies. Grandma Braun was LeRoy Braun's mother. In the cold weather, my dad, William Wagonjack, would take me. We had to go for a year to confirmation class with Rev. Alfred Maas. -- submitted by Grace (Wagonjack) Kempf

We always had a Christmas program at the rural school on Whitmore Lake Road that I attended. Being one of the older ones, my part was to read the Christmas story.

Christmas was the last Wednesday of the month, so the Ladies Aid had their meeting a week early. My mother asked Rev. Maas if she could borrow a choir robe for me to wear for the school program. He was a bit reluctant, fearing that she might not get it back for Sunday service. She promised that she would.

The pupils all sat on the stage floor to hear the story. The lights were dimmed, the Bible on a lighted stand. I started to read.

My mother was surrounded by mothers and guests. They started asking who the young minister is? Finally they asked her if she knew. She nodded yes. "Then who is it?" She said, "Leon." "No, we mean the minister with the robe. I think he must be a friend of the teacher." She finally told them that she had borrowed a choir robe.

We had gift giving over and I had the robe in a suit box ready to go home the next morning. My mother was up pressing the robe so that I could take it back when I went for the church program practice. So I haven't forgotten the day that the choir robe went to school and was worn by an unknown preacher. --submitted by Leon Podewil

I REMEMBER the year that we had a Christmas program at St. John's. There were nine of us in the program and we had to make a flag, and each had an initial to put on their flag. The flags spelled out the word, "Christmas," and there was a poem that went with each letter. Some of the other children had poems and also songs to sing. Those were the days. They don't have anything like this anymore. We also had an organ that you had to pump with your feet. I also sang in the church choir. At the end of the program, we were given a bag with candy, orange and a popcorn ball. From the Sunday school teachers, we were given a small gift.

I belonged to St. John's Ev. Church all my life, even after I got married in 1929 to Gottlob Gaiser. After that we joined St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor because we had a gasoline shortage at that time. --submitted by Laura (Wurster) Gaiser

I REMEMBER when our family lived just north of the church. We could see the house, church and cemetery from the house. Carl Prochnow lived just south of the church and he took care of the church. Also, when there was a death, he would ring the bell. Then everyone knew there was a death in the congregation.

I remember our mother had a beautiful flower garden. She would make up about 4 bouquets of flowers and my sister and I took them to the cemetery nearly every week in our little red wagon. Our lot faces the church with a large monument with the name "Wurster" on it. Buried there are Grandma and Grandpa Wurster, Uncle Adam Wurster and son, also our sister, Alma Wurster, and a cousin — don't remember its name (it was a twin of Luella and John Wurster). Then, later, our parents, Caroline and Martin Wurster, were buried there.

--submitted by Mildred (Wurster) Ely Betty (Wurster) Rossiter

I REMEMBER walking from my home on Earhart Road to Sunday School and church when I was just a kid. I was confirmed and joined St. John's Church in 1922 as an adult. My wife, Edith Mae Maulbetsch, was a staunch member of St. John's and through her gentle persuasion, I decided I should join the church. I also remember Carl Prochnow tolling the church bell when someone in the congregation passed away. I also have the sad memory of the church burning. --submitted by Ezra H. Wagner

### **Memories from around the 1930's**

I REMEMBER hearing my mother-in-law, Alta (Kern) Geiger, tell about the time the church and parsonage burned on March 13, 1932. She was a young girl, age 22, living at home with her parents, William and Bertha Kern, in the house immediately to the west of the cemetery, now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Rhode.

Pastor Alfred Maas was minister at the time. Since the parsonage was totally destroyed by the fire, the Maas family (consisting of Pastor & Mrs. Maas, Norman and Arlene) was invited to live with the Kerns until such time that a new parsonage could again be constructed.

Following is an excerpt as appeared in the January 1, 1933, issue of Northwestern Lutheran: "...Plans to rebuild at once were made. The erection of a parsonage was undertaken first. The work progressed so rapidly, that the parsonage could be dedicated on June 12, 1932." So it would seem that for about a three month period of time the Maas family resided with the Kerns.

Building of the new church structure began in July, 1932, with the cornerstone being laid on August 21, 1932. Dedication of the completed sanctuary was the first Sunday in Advent, November 27, 1932.

Mother and Dad Geiger (Alta and Frank) were the first couple to be married in the new church, on June 14, 1933. Arlene Maas was their flower girl and I've always felt probably because of the close relationship she had with Alta during the time they lived there. -- submitted by Rose Ann Geiger

During my lifetime (1916-1994) St. John's has had seven pastors. Both sets of my grandparents, Kern and Zeeb, as well as my mother and father, were members of St. John's.

I REMEMBER Carl Prochnow, who lived to the south of the church where the evergreen tree still is. He was the care taker. He would build the furnace fires, etc. He would also ring the church bell for each member that passed away, doing this the morning after they had died. We would all ask each other, by phone or by mouth, who it was, if we did not know.

The east part of the church grounds was low ground. I remember mowing weeds and grass there as high as the horses. [editor's note: to this day, Merle still mows the ditch and ravine on the church grounds.]

When gas powered shovels came into being, the church engaged one. Dad gave fill from along the old railroad bed bank. Several members with flatbed trucks hauled the dirt. They unloaded it with board scrapers pulled by horses. Edward Ehnis, Bernard's father, opened a gravel pit and gave fill also.

I remember the fire of the church and house. We could see it from home. We helped clean up after the fire. The metal parts of the furnace, the kitchen range, eaves, bell, etc, are buried in an old gravel pit at our place. - submitted by Merle Kern

I REMEMBER I was confirmed in June 1930 in the old church, and in 1932 the church burned. The members all had to work hard to make money to help pay for a new church; so, when it was built, we put on chicken dinners once a year. Tickets were sold for the dinner which cost adults 75¢, and children 35¢. Each family furnished 3 chickens and 3 pies. Everything was made from scratch -- potatoes peeled and mashed, chicken fried, gravy made, and cabbage salad.

The older ladies did the cooking and the younger girls waited tables. The food was served family style, so the waitresses kept the dishes filled on the tables. Some of the outsiders would eat 7 pieces of chicken alone!!

People waited in the sanctuary until called down to the dining room. We had hostesses in the sanctuary and at the door in the dining room. Each year the attendance was greater. The last few years the men put up a tent on the back of the kitchen outside. It was there we kept all of the pies. This was a job just cutting pies!! The attendance was over 300 served.

Fischer's Grocery at Whitmore Lake, Lewis Steffe's and Abraham Steffe's grocery stores delivered ingredients needed for cooking and baking; and many times, they donated the potatoes, etc.

This event involved many days of working, but the cooks and bakers were the best and we had a lot of fun doing it; plus, it was one way to help pay off the debt! St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is beautiful and one to be very proud of! -- submitted by Norma (Steffe) Shear

I REMEMBER June 2, 1937, the day I was married to Arnold Shear. I was married on my father's birthday, Abraham ("Pete") Steffe. The weather was beautiful with just a few afternoon sprinkles, which cleared away by the wedding.

At 2 PM, Rosie, the lady doing the cooking, called and said the homemade chicken broth had soured from the hot weather. We were having biscuits with gravy and chicken. What a worry as I went down the aisle because I didn't know where we would be able to find chicken broth at the last minute. Chicken broth was a new product on the market at this point in time, and just being canned to sell! My father sent Orville Kearney to the wholesale house to buy cases of broth. Orville had to go to three wholesalers to find it. I didn't know until after we were married if our meal would be complete for 200 people!

The next worry was how we were going to get on our honeymoon because our young cousins were out to get us, they said, so we couldn't go! Rev. Alfred Maas was to marry us, so I went to him the week before and asked him if we could stay all night at his house if we couldn't get out after we changed our clothing for our trip. Reverend said, "I would be honored to have you. I can't believe anyone would want to stay with Meta and me."

At 8:30 PM, we left the church dining hall. When our cousins realized we were leaving, they chased us from the church. We told them we had to change our clothes at the parsonage before leaving. They let us go, but they didn't leave, as they did not think we would stay there all night! At midnight, Meta Maas treated us to coffee, a fruit cup and cookies.

When it reached 1:30 AM, I said, "I guess we might as well go to bed as they are not leaving." We got into bed and jumped out quickly as the sheets had rice through them and rolling pins at the end of the bed -- so we had to clean the bed out. Meta Maas asked us not to mention our bed being messed up to Reverend!

We looked at the clock at 2:30 AM and voices were still talking outside! A knock came at the study door, "Reverend, are you sure those kids aren't in there?" asked Hollis Kapp or one of my other cousins. Rev. Maas replied that he hadn't seen us since the wedding as he was busy preparing for the Sunday service in his study. Finally, they must have left. The next morning we were served bacon and eggs by the Maas' -- and it didn't cost us a cent!

We left at 10 AM that morning for Colander, Canada. The fourth day we were in Colander to see the quintuplets. They were five sweet little girls. Two years later we were blessed with our twins, Cary and Gary Shear. We thought five would be too many!! --submitted by Norma (Steffe) Shear

There is a Sunday at St. John's in the mid-thirties that I have never forgotten. My older son had been attending Sunday school at a Lutheran church in Ann Arbor. When we moved to the farm, he transferred to St. John's of which we were members.

One Sunday morning, I took him to Sunday school, planning on staying for church service. I spent the time in the cemetery, as my folks are buried there.

I noticed so few cars were coming for church. My aunt drove up and got out and walked toward me. I said, "Why is there such a small crowd today?" She said, "Oh, today we have the service in German, and German communion. We never have very many." I stood still, not saying anything. She said, "Stay, you can understand German." I was brought up when German was spoken freely, and I had studied some German, so I thought, "No trouble."

The bell rang, the service began. I had the hymnal but couldn't follow the words. So I just did as the others did.

After the service, they all seemed so happy to see each other and even me. They shook my hand and one even embraced me. They spoke German to me, but I couldn't answer, so I just nodded and smiled. Going to the car, the men all said, "Guten Morgan" to me.

When I got home, I put a big "X" on the next German Sunday. I missed the sermon, but thought of vacation visitors — how we stared at them and whispered about who they were. Then I thought about the children getting restless and bored, wanting to go home or something to play with. Then there was a school mate, who went into mission work, only to be killed by the natives after a year. They thought that she was evil.

So I started to count my blessings, but before long, I felt pretty small and ashamed. I learned a lesson that I've never forgotten. Don't criticize! You are not perfect either. Before you remove the moat from some one's eye, first remove it from your own. --submitted by Carrie Podewil

I REMEMBER -- BUT, I DON'T REMEMBER - I was born on October 4, 1930, in Wayne Michigan, and baptized in the old church building here at Northfield on November 2, 1930. The church and parsonage burned to the ground March 13, 1932. Maybe those three happenings aren't all related -- and, on the other hand, maybe they are.

It was always my impression, although I never checked the church records to verify it, that I was the last child to be baptized in the old building. Consequently, I have thought that it was my baptism at which an extra hot measure of the Holy Spirit's fire was left to smolder until that March day in 1932. ... or maybe, it was Bob Wagner or Lewis Maulbetsch! --submitted by Aldred Heyer

Some of the things I remember about St. John's in Northfield, growing up as a kid, and moving away from Michigan at age 37.

Being a student at Sunday school, and having a classmate (David Baker) killed in an auto accident at the age of 5 or 6.

Somewhere in the late 1930's, hearing my folks tell about a bat dive-bombing Rev. Maas during a new Year's Eve service, and probably no one getting any spiritual value from the sermon. Wish I would have been in attendance that night.

The programs that my dad had saved from the dedication of the present building, showing pictures of all the officers of the council and other committees. The order of service was printed in it, with the opening hymn being, "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty." Don't remember who the guest pastor was or if I even was there in attendance. I'm either too old to remember or was too young to stick it in my memory bank then as I am unaware of the dedication year.

Always wondered as a kid why Rev. Maas always mentioned the organist's name every Sunday when he would get on the pulpit and in his greeting say "...and grace be with you" — our organist was Miss Grace Geiger.

Wondered why one Mission Festival Sunday my folks weren't home that morning as they would never miss that service. Well, I found out that afternoon that I had a new baby brother born at high noon on September 17, 1939.

Being a Sunday school teacher, a member of the Young Peoples, Men's Club, and Church Council. Given a farewell party by the Young People before going into the Army. Also getting letters from all the young girls at church, one time five in one day. Embarrassing me when other GI's may not get any mail at all during mail call.

The many banquets we had during the month of May to honor our Mother, Father, and sons & daughters. Always wondering who would be the oldest and youngest present in the four categories.

One of the things that I'll always remember is the day I was at a German service when we had those once a month back in the "Thirties" for the handful of members who spoke German. On this particular Sunday, Rev. Maas stopped in the middle of his German sermon and asked my dad, in English, to get him a glass of water. (It was during those days when all council members would sit in the front two pews on the left side.) Before my dad got back with the water for him, he started to faint in the pulpit with dad getting there in time to break his fall. The part that really stands out is that seeing Pastor Maas being carried out through the aisle on the wicker couch that had been the "cry" room or mother's room in the back of the church. Don't know how many are living today that remember that and how many were actually as young as I was at the time.

Also, we skipped Lenten services during World War II to help save fuel one year.

Also the talents of one, Thad Prochnow, who would offer many poems he would recite from memory at our banquets. (Guess he never did record any on paper, other than one we use to use with a hymn we sang during Harvest festival.) Also his talent on creating a locomotive as the front of a row of cars for the harvest of fruit, vegetables and grain to set on in one of the first, and maybe the first, annual harvest Festival.

Working at the church bees, one in particular, where Pastor Frey and I were piling brush on a fire. We didn't know at the time that it was poison oak and that our face would smart the next day from the smoke that got us. The Sunday school picnics we used to have around some of the lakes and parks in the area.

Being able to take many wedding and confirmation pictures of our members. Working with my dad on a project to get as many, if not all, of the old confirmation pictures from as far back as possible, and putting them on a slide presentation.

Having the pleasure of being softball manager for our church. (BEING A THIEF) ... while playing Scio one game with a sore ankle. Got on 1st base and asked for a courtesy runner. They said, "No," so I stole 2nd base on the next pitch (just to prove them right).

The Christmas recitations on Christmas Eve — my last year I had a recitation which Rev. Maas gave me that had been recited many years before and was for the closing of the program. It was called "AGAIN," and I NEVER LIKED IT, and sure enough, I botched it up when it came my turn to recite it.

The friends that I had who were called home early by God, Lauren and Paul Geiger, and Ron Kapp. Especially Lauren, who I chummed around with.

Getting my first Hymnal, Dad paid Walter Geiger, who was in charge of selling them, for 81 cents. That was the new Lutheran Hymnal, being about 1943. Today the new one is \$17.00.

My confirmation class members were Ken Kaercher, Carl Nonnenmacher and Robert Wagner.

When the address was simply, R.R. #5, Ann Arbor, Mich., and maybe it still is, plus the zip.

I appreciate this time to reflect on my memories of Northfield where I grew up, was given all the correct teachings by my Pastors and parents, so that to raise my own family in the same way. A year ago I wrote down many of the things I remembered and cherished to my mother while growing up and living with my parents. I only wished I had done it about ten years earlier when she would have really appreciated it.

My computer says I have written over 800 words on the memories above. So, having had the pleasure of working 25 years at a newspaper, I will not be disappointed if you find my message long and boring, and edit out most or all of it. I would find it hard for anyone not to have only one memory of something over a period of years. My family and I wish you the Lord's blessing and continued success at Northfield and hope there may be a few left who know us. For those who know us, my older son, Chris, is a high school math teacher, and Jonathan is going to a community college this year, while working part time with an architect. Darlene is still working full time as editor of a trade magazine. I took early social security and am now busy with arts and crafts along with Darlene. --submitted by Duane Scheel

I REMEMBER my confirmation day at St. John's on June 8, 1930. Rev. Alfred Maas was the pastor at that time. It was a very warm day and the service seemed long to me. There were eight of us in the class — there were five girls and two boys. The names were Edward Bakhaus, and his sister, Margaret Bakhaus, Edward Maurer, Stella (Borck) Cort, Norma (Steffe) Shear, and the two sisters, Clara (Kittel) Page and Mae (Kittel) Schwemmin, and myself.

Edward Maurer was killed during the invasion of Normandy during the war. A memorial service was held at the church for him later that year.

Not many years after that day, the church and parsonage burned to the ground. Pastor Maas and family stayed at the Kern's near the burned church.

Services were held at an old, unused church on Five Mile Road near to Pontiac Trail at a place called Worden. That burned to the ground some years later.

That day in my life has continued to be my guide through my marriage, my daughter's birth, and illness and death of my husband in 1978.

I moved to Midland in 1980 to be near my daughter and her family. I had lived in Northville.

I am now a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, here in Midland. Rev. Thomas Fischer is the pastor. May God bless all of the members on this, their 125th anniversary.

--submitted by Jeanette (Mantell) Wendt

I was 11 or 12 years old, and it was a Christmas Eve I'll never forget. The huge Christmas tree was decorated and lit. The sanctuary lights were dim. All the boys and girls were seated. The church bell just finished its last sound — when far off in the distance we heard voices singing "Silent Night." As the sound grew louder and louder, we realized the choir was approaching from the basement, up the stairs and down the center aisle, to their places in the choir loft. It was the most beautiful rendition of "Silent Night" I've ever heard. Unfortunately, the only person I can recall singing was Elizabeth (Kempf) Maier.

My other memory involves a long departed Mr. Bolgos, his first name escapes me. I was only 5, and the triplets arrived at our house during the depression year of 1931. Quickly the number of children leaped to six! Mother had mixed the last cans of evaporated milk for the babies' formula. There was no money and no more milk, but Mr. Bolgos arrived to see "those three babies." He laid a dollar bill on each baby's chest. Enough for a case of evaporated milk which the Kroger store manager let Dad have without the tax money — he did not have it. What a great lesson in how God provides for His own. --submitted by Thelma (Trapp) Kimmel

Sometime in the 1930's, a piece of land was purchased and added to the cemetery. This is the portion that lies west of the west drive.

The hill in the center dropped off sharply toward the road. At that time, the church parking lot on the south side of the road had a hill in the center. (It followed the contour of Merle Kern's field.)

The Maulbetsch Brothers Excavating Company was hired to level the parking lot and move the fill to the cemetery. They also trucked in enough fill to make a more gradual slope to give the land a more pleasing look.

As lots were sold and used, the cemetery board felt that there was a need for a more convenient water supply. At the spring work bee in 1987, an underground water line with frost-proof hydrant was installed and is in use today. --submitted by Hollis Kapp

There are many pleasant memories of my past that will always be remembered when I was growing up and going to St. John's Lutheran Church.

My parents, sisters, brothers — all attending Sunday School and church, etc., and many of the wonderful get-togethers there were.

Rev. Alfred Maas was the minister then. I was baptized, confirmed and married by him. We were married April 29, 1944. Then our oldest son was born March of 1947, and Norman Maas, Rev. Maas's son, baptized our son. So you can see how many years the Maas family was there at St. John's Lutheran Church. I was born September 22, 1921. My parents were Thomas and Rose Kittel.

I also remember going to Bible School on Saturdays as we were getting ready for confirmation. Rev. and Mrs. Maas would invite me to have lunch with them and it was a fine lunch and we would have a nice visit. I would help do the dishes, and then they would see to it I got home safely.

Now many years have passed by and many of our family members have passed away, but there still will be many happy and wonderful memories of my life, family, friends and the many wonderful church services at St. John's Lutheran Church. They will be treasured for many years to come.

Also remember on Christmas Eve the nice program — the children all had a poem to say, songs to sing, and were given a bag of candy, nuts, popcorn ball and an orange. It was a wonderful treat, and it was appreciated.

I will not be attending, but my thoughts, prayers, best wishes will be there with you. God bless all of you. May the Good Lord watch over you at all times. --submitted by Helen (Kittel) Peters

While I don't have any specific incidents to report, I do have very fond memories of being a member of the Sunday School class, confirmation class and Young People's group.

I do remember how saddened we were when the church burned down. I imagine that it is recorded in your church records that Max Scheel, brother-in-law of your current member, Emma Scheel, was instrumental in building your present church. (Max is deceased.) --submitted by Margaret Wiseman

Pastor Maas was the first pastor I remember, as I was baptized, confirmed, and married by him. That confirmation class consisted of Jane (Kaercher) Bulmon, Mayford Kaercher, Thelma Maurer, Delores Christianson, Elmer Wessel, Marvin Trapp, Marjorie (Zeeb) Morrow and myself. Mayford lost his life serving the U.S. Marines in the South Pacific. Four of that class are still active members of St. John's after 55 years. This was a hard time for the 14 year olds. We had school 7 days a week--catechism on Saturday, Sunday School and 5 days public school.

Church business was conducted in the basement with men and women voting on church business. After all, these were mostly farm families and used to working side by side every day. Maintaining a new church was no exception. We saw no wrong in this. However we were later informed that it was man's responsibility to God as he was head of the house as Christ is head of the Church.

I remember the organized euchre tournaments sponsored by our Men's Club. There were six to eight tables, consisting of regular partners. Stats were kept by Bill Scheel. (Bill will always be remembered for the many good things he did for this congregation.) My Dad, Henry, and Frank McCalla were partners, and I joyfully served as their spare when needed. We did not play cards in the church. Most of the tournament was held in the Maccabee's Hall above Kittel's store in Emery, corner of Northfield Church and Earhart Roads.

The Men's Club at that time consisted of church members and their good friends and neighbors. Many of these later became members of St. John's along with their families.

I remember the Harvest Festival sponsored by the Men's Club. All worked to make a success of the annual produce auction which netted a profit for the club and a church full of people that Sunday. The club divided into teams contesting which had the most produce and best display. All these were not members of our church but truly enjoyed our Christian fellowship. The auction was later dropped on advice from higher sources.

Pastor Walther answered our call when Pastor Maas moved to Sodus, MI. God never sent us a man we didn't need. Pastor Walther was a young man and very good at recruiting new members. Our church membership quickly grew as he visited people far and near. He helped set us straight on the women's voting and the healing began. I remember Pastor Walther racing home from his service in South Lyon, jumping upon a Sunday School table and turning the heat to upstairs. This congregation had become so complacent that we let the pastor do everything.

Pastor Raymond Frey answered our next call. Again we got what we needed. He was an organizer. We soon had committees to do things we were accustomed to having the pastor do. We lost a few members, probably due to the stricter sense of operation by our church.

Next we called Pastor Alfred Pinchoff, a very gentle and understanding man. He did an excellent job of healing and holding our church together and was well liked by all.

We called Pastor Floyd Mattek — he and his wife were an older couple. Pastor Mattek was more of a father figure to most of us. He had a great sense of humor and was good for our families. It was during this time that our beloved church was broken into. We felt violated! A west basement window was broken. Our Communion ware was all stolen, along with odds and ends of sterling silver table ware accumulated over the years. Deputies thought it was melted down in the back of a van that very night. There were deep scratches on the back of the Altar Cross showing brass and left behind. Because I happened to be Chairman at the time, the Matteks and G. Paul's drove north to a church supply store and purchased the replacement communion ware. Soon after Charlotte Schauer went to Detroit with us and, using her Mother's memorial money, purchased stainless table ware now in use.

Pastor Weber answered our last call. Once again our parsonage rings with the laughter of small children. Pastor and wife, Karen, are helping the congregation into the computer age as St. John's continues on and on the way God intended.  
--submitted by Guy Paul

We remember: I was in the first confirmation class in the new church — the year I don't remember. The class members were myself, Willard Staebler, Dean Bolgos, Orvil Kearney, Laurence Braun, Viola Naylor, Trudy Steffe. There may be more. (?) Also, we were married in the church in 1943. We are still happily married 51 years later.  
--submitted by Willard and Barbara Staebler

I REMEMBER the summer of 1933 being his first job in his own company. W.L. Couse & Company was to rebuild St. John's Church. While under construction, Walter Couse lived at the Kern farm. The contract to build the church was \$65,000. Walter made \$800 on the job. Walter and I were married in September, 1934.

--submitted by Georgianna Couse Chase

### **Newspaper article from March 13, 1932: Fire Destroys St. John's Church in Northfield**

Fire department not available. Parsonage burns with Church

One of the most spectacular fires seen in this community in years occurred in Northfield Sunday night, when St. John's Lutheran church and parsonage burned to the ground.

Origin of the conflagration is not known, beyond the fact that it started in the wall or basement of the church. Before discovered it had gained such height that nothing could be saved from the edifice. Old records too were destroyed. Furnishings of the parsonage were saved.

All attempts to get a fire department were useless — South Lyon was out on a call to Salem, and another department could not or would not come. The flames made headway so rapidly it was no time at all before attempts to save the parsonage were given up.

St. John's church was as fine a country church as one could find anywhere. Seldom does one see such beautiful memorial windows and a pipe organ in a church located in a rural community.

Loss is partly covered by insurance.

It is expected work will soon start on the erection of new church and parsonage. At present, Rev. Alfred Maas, who is also pastor of Immanuel Lutheran church of South Lyon, his wife and two children are staying at a home

near the church site. We understand services will in the meantime be conducted in the Congregational church at Worden, which has been closed for some time.

### **Memories from around the 1940's**

I REMEMBER Harvest Festivals here at St. John's. The Harvest Festival services were held the Sunday preceding the auction sale. At one time two services were held, morning and evening, and then in later years only one service. The church was always decorated with harvest items. For many years a special harvest display was made in the corner where the baptismal font is located. Thad Prochnow, William Scheel and George Shima were the men I remember making these displays. In later years the entire front of the church was decorated with the bounty of the harvest. Sometimes the outside entrance of the church was decorated with corn stalks, pumpkins, Indian corn, etc. On Harvest Festival Sunday, the basement would be already filled with the harvest items and the Ladies Aid Society would have their displays set up so that people from church could view everything and decide in their mind what they might be interested in buying come Monday evening.

The Ladies Aid Society always set up a Bazaar consisting of handmade items such as quilts, tatted handkerchiefs, aprons, doilies, linen towels, embroidered pillowcases, etc.; a Bake Sale with pies, cakes, cookies, muffins, cupcakes, preserves, and canned goods; a Parcel Post Booth; and a Fish Pond for the children.

The Men's Club at one time chose up teams and competed to see which team could get the most produce and then display it the best. One team would take the west side of the basement and the other team the east side. There would be potatoes, onions, beets, carrots, cabbage, apples, pears, pumpkins, squash, hickory nuts, walnuts, bittersweet, Indian corn, eggs, grain (corn, wheat, oats, etc.) and small animals such as chickens and rabbits.

On Monday evening at 6 PM, the Ladies Aid would serve a supper usually consisting of hot dogs, sloppy joes, scalloped potatoes, coleslaw, pie, and coffee. Each food item had a price and a person could buy whatever they wanted for supper. Also, the Ladies Aid began selling their bazaar and bake sale items at this time.

At 8 PM the auction began. It was a lot of fun watching people bid on the different items. One year my son, Dale Kapp, bought an arrowhead that Thad Prochnow had found on his farm and had brought to sell at the auction. Another time he bought some bantam chickens.

Charles and Ray McCalla (deceased father and deceased brother of Frank McCalla), owners of Washtenaw Farm Bureau store in Ann Arbor (a grain elevator and feed store at that time), always attended the event and usually purchased the grain items.

At the end of the auction, the Ladies Aid would have the auctioneer sell any unsold baked good items. Unsold bazaar items were packed away and kept for another year. This was an enjoyable event and fun for all. Many people attended throughout the whole community. --submitted by Anna Kapp

I REMEMBER my time in confirmation class. Rev. Alfred Maas was the pastor. I was living at home, at 5520 Nollar Road, which is still known as the Kempf homestead. On nice Saturdays I would ride my bike to confirmation class.

Instructions were always held in the parsonage, in the Pastor's Study. There were three of us in my class -- Fritz Honke, Neil Luckhardt and myself. We only met at that time once a week, which was on Saturday, for between an hour to an hour and a half.

The big treat came to me when I was about 14 years of age and, being on the farm, Dad went with me and I got a driver's permit, so I was allowed to drive the car on a restricted basis. So Dad always told me that if I would

study hard and knew my lesson that he would let me drive the car from the house down to the church for the Bible Study. So you better believe that I always tried to have my lesson prepared. Back then confirmation was simply for one year. We covered all the material. And I can remember being confirmed in 1950 with Rev. Maas being the pastor. --submitted by George Kempf

The Trapp family moved from the suburbs of Detroit (Livonia) to Salem Township (Tower Road, to be exact, between Six and Five mile Road). This was a small farm. We were there a short time and moved south on Tower Road, between Brookville and N. Territorial Road (the Seeloff farm, which was bigger). It was there the triplets (three girls) were born. People came from all over to see the girls, including Mr. and Mrs. Bolgos, who brought PET milk (case) for each one, and put money on each one's chest.

We went to church (the old church before it burned) every Sunday in the old Model A Ford. There were two services -- German and English, with Sunday school in between. My mother and Dad spoke and wrote German, but never taught us kids. We couldn't believe it when the church burned. In those days, you were lucky to have a radio -- most news was passed on by word from one house or farm to the next.

Pastor Maas was spending time in Poland and Germany on mission work as Pastor Hoenecke from Plymouth conducted catechism class, which I attended for two years (with Guy Paul, Elmer Wessel, Marjorie Zeeb, Leon Podewil, and myself).

It was a pleasure over the years to work on the St. John's board with many, many good men, such as William Scheel, Ormond Kapp, Hollis Kapp, the Geigers, and more -- and most of all George Shima and Aldred Heyer.

Many of you may not know that George Shima was an American Japanese, and in World War II, he was put behind barbed wire in California because of his nationality. He was a very gifted man. As you look around the church during the course of the year you will see the banners he made, as well as being responsible for your hand railings approaching the altar.

Speaking of the Fall Harvest Festivals, do you recall the little programs put on by the Men's Club before things went up for sale? Thad Prochnow would make these up and some of the men would act them out. One time my Dad was made up as an old bum, including an old cigar. Do you remember they gave him a new cigar -- you guessed it, loaded! This was the good old times at St. John's and across the country. --submitted by Marvin Trapp

I REMEMBER when I was janitor at St. John's church. I went once a week to clean and dust. If there was a wedding on Friday or Saturday night, I always went to check the church before Sunday morning. It was also my job to keep snow and ice off the steps and walk. Lewis and I would do it after Sunday morning milking was done. It was also my job to change the altar cloths.

My worst day was when I left the basement windows open while cleaning upstairs. When I got there to clean, there was a big brown snake on the floor. It was a big problem getting it chased out the back door, but I finally got it out. I was paid for a full year for what the janitor gets every quarter now. -- submitted by Grace (Wagonjack) Kempf

I REMEMBER how I felt when the "committee" asked this young girl to help with the decorations, with the kitchen work and with the serving of refreshments at the Ladies' Aid meetings, and at other functions in the church basement. It was an invitation and a glimpse into the adult world that was such a compliment! I felt proud and very grown-up to be included.

The patience shown and the guidance provided by the adult women at St. John's were important to me then, and have served as an example to me over the years. Thank you for letting me share this memory, and in some small way say "thank you" to those share it with me. -- submitted by Marianne (Wandel) Graybiel

I REMEMBER Angela Maas, the third and youngest child of Pastor and Mrs. Maas. Angela and I were close in age and good friends in our country Sutton School, as well as in our church. We used to get to stay overnight at each other's houses and that always proved to fun. On one occasion I can remember us crawling through the walk-in closet from Angela's bedroom to the adjoining bedroom. The Maas' also had a piano that played rolls and this was the first time I had ever seen one of these work.

I know we are not supposed to envy our neighbor, but I sure did envy Angela because many times she got to wear her long, WHITE stockings to school, whereas I ALWAYS had to wear those ugly CHOCOLATE colored ones! I shed many tears over that, but I didn't get my way, and I could still wear my white stockings only on Sunday or special times. Also, I always had to wear leggings with my snowsuit in the wintertime, and you guessed it, Angela didn't have to wear leggings all the time!

Because the Maas' would be gone for extended periods of time, doing the Lord's work, they would leave Angela in Mrs. Ida Kearney's (the church organist) care. Many times Mrs. Kearney would ask me to join Angela in staying at her house. This was real fun as we could walk the short distance from the Kearney house to Sutton School and after school back to the Kearney house.

Now Mrs. Kearney was the church organist, but she also was THE piano teacher of the whole community. In those days ALL the kids took piano lessons and Angela and I were no exception. She made us practice before we went to school and several times after school!

The Kearney house on Joy Road was a huge place with at least 4 bedrooms upstairs, as I recall, with a long hall, and one downstairs bedroom. It also had two staircases to the second floor. Mrs. Kearney roomed and boarded several young men in her house, and whichever man was away at the time we stayed with her, that was the room we got to sleep in. We had much fun racing up and down the 2 staircases and knocking on the roomer's doors and then disappearing around the corner when the roomer would open his door. We generally tantalized those roomers in any way we could!

One night we had a bad storm with thunder and lightning and the lights suddenly went out! Angela and I were scared silly as we laid in our bed in that huge house. Mrs. Kearney soon came up to our room with a little flashlight and made us get up. She said we had to get up, and stay up, until the storm ended. She made us get dressed because she was worried about the chances of fire. She made us go from room to room with her and peer out the windows keeping a watchful eye on the storm. This happened the same night that David and Elizabeth Maier's barn burned to the ground because of the storm -- lightning had struck it! We could see the fire from a second floor bedroom -- the red blaze in the sky. It was a frightening experience for us, and one I'll never forget!

Angela and I are still good friends today. Angela Married Donald Miller and they raised four children and have lived in Ann Arbor all their lives. Currently they are remodeling their house at Clear Lake and will move there permanently. They have been members at Redeemer Lutheran Church of Ann Arbor since leaving St. John's. -submitted by Dorothy (Kapp) Shear

As I remember back to my childhood days, I can recall many wonderful memories from St. John's Church. The first that comes to mind is the fact that my father, Adolph Trapp, and my mother, Mamie Trapp, gave me and my brother, Marvin Trapp, sisters: Thelma Kimmel, June Brockmiller and Jean Huyck, the opportunity to learn

about and love our Savior, Jesus Christ. It was a beautiful time in my life, even though I may not have realized it then. My confirmation was also a wonderful memory that I hold dear to my heart. I give credit to my parents for this opportunity, not only did they see that we got to church and Sunday School, both of them taught Sunday School. My mother played the piano and my father was Superintendent of the Sunday School. I was so proud of them. This left me with a wonderful example of what a Christian life should be. What wonderful parents we had.

The second memory was that my father loved to sing praises to our Lord, and, on Sunday, he usually sat on the right side of the church, about half-way up, and sang loud enough to lead the congregation in song.

My next memory was of myself and my triplet sisters singing at the Christmas Eve services. We always did "Away in the Manger," and said in unison our pieces. We always sang at the Lutheran Church in South Lyon at Christmas time. The organ there worked only if you pumped the pedals by foot.

So, in closing, some of my most precious memories, even though I no longer am a member of St. John's, will have a special place in my heart because of the opportunity that was given me and has been a most important part of my life.

A tear comes to my eyes when I think of my parents — both laid to rest now — but I can look at it now (through the teachings at St. John's) that they are in heaven and it makes it much easier to accept. Thanks to them, I was shown a Christian life.

I, as well as my family, are members of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Kankakee, Illinois. I sing in the choir, have taught Sunday school for many years, and have been active in the Altar Guild.--submitted by Jane (Trapp) Davis

DO YOU REMEMBER when a wicker clothes basket was brought to church on Sunday mornings and in it lay three tiny babies? I have been told that if one cried, they all started to cry. Well, I am one of those babies, and the fond memories that I have from those long-ago days may not be many, but ones I will never forget.

Oh, those big Christmas trees in church, and, oh, so many beautiful lights. I remember after the Christmas Eve program was over, we came out of church and we all got a brown paper bag twisted at the top. It had an orange in it, nuts, candy, and a popcorn ball.

I can still see Pastor Maas coming down from the front of the church to about the first or second pew and asking my sisters and I to come up and sing for the people. I believe our first hymn was, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

I also can remember the German sermons that we had to sit through, not knowing what was said, but we were able to hum through the songs.

Remember the poems that Thad Prochnow wrote? The men's club that, for so many years, had teams that would make things out of oats, corn, wheat, grains, etc. One year they did a train. Then on a Monday night, I believe, all the things that the farmers brought in, like sacks of grain, potatoes, baskets of cabbage, squash, corn, you name it (and let us not forget the canned goods that the women made, or the aprons or knitted things, etc.) that were auctioned off.

How about the brown, canvass, roll-up dividers that we had in the basement? They never seemed to roll up straight when we pulled on the ropes. Remember the little bell that we rang when it was time for Sunday school to end? And Grace Geiger, who sat on the organ bench for every service and played for all of us to sing?

I remember when Pastor Maas was buried from the church, and how the bell tolled. The church was full -- people even sat in the basement.

When Pastor Frey was here, a group of ladies got together, and Ethel Frey taught us how to make Easter lilies out of paper, and we made the cross out of these flowers. It was just beautiful.

Last, but not least, remember the old out house that was back of the church at the end of the side walk. For some reason, I'm sure none of us miss it. Or do we??? --submitted by June (Trapp) Brockmiller

This will be interesting if all three triplets remember the same thing at St. John's.

I will begin by saying we three girls did a lot of singing and enjoyed every minute. Two songs that meant a lot to me was MY FAITH LOOKS UP TO THEE, and STAR OF THE EAST.

Pastor Maas was a man who loved little children. At Christmas Eve Service, when the Sunday school program was over he would come down and ask if there were any little ones who wanted to wish a Merry Christmas. I can, to this day, see him take their hand and lead them to the top step, turn them around and say, "Now wish them a Merry Christmas." The brown paper bags were always something we looked forward to. In those days hard candy, orange and gum were a big hit. You could not open them in church. Then we would sing at South Lyon and receive another bag. We could hardly wait to get into the car and see what was in them. In those days it was such a treat.

Harvest Festival was always a special time of the year. In front, where the baptism takes place, there was always a display of the fruits the farm families would bring in. The men's club arranged them so beautifully. Then, in the undercroft, there would be so many fruits, vegetables, home made jelly etc. on display. On Monday night they would be sold.

We three girls could never get away from Saturday night Sunday school lesson. Our dad was the Sunday School Superintendent. Our dad would lead his family up front, step aside and his family would go into the pews first. He had a beautiful voice and you could hear his voice above the congregation in the morning hymns. His favorite hymns were, "Just As I Am," and the "Doxology."

There still are other memories. Our confirmation of four in the class. Then my marriage to Eugene. I can only say, "Thank You," to our Mother and Dad, who brought us up in a beautiful faith at St. John's.

I attend Immanuel Lutheran in Delhi, New York, with a membership of one hundred fifty, with ninety attending the Lord's Table. --submitted by Jean (Trapp) Huyck

I REMEMBER the night the Men's Club was organized back in December, 1929. The Ladies Aid Society catered a banquet for the men of the congregation. After the dinner, it decided to form the club with a meeting the next month to organize. It was also decided at that meeting to buy a Neostyle Duplicator and a typewriter for the church. I think that action set the standard as a do-something, get-it-done organization.

When we had a work bee that kept the people all day, the Men's Club would furnish the dinner.

The men had the shuffle board pattern put in the tile floor when it was installed. That led to a lot of games and contests.

The Harvest Festivals were always a highlight of the year. One year the club divided into two groups, one captained by Thad Prochnow, the other by Mike Graser, to decorate and to get the most donations. Mike Graser's team built a semi-truck and trailer, and the other team built a railroad train, complete with engine and flat cars for produce. Both displays were exceptional, and the team of judges from Salem Lutheran Church had a difficult decision to make.

In the winter of 1945-46, the Club sponsored a euchre tournament for our members and friends. Partners were chosen and you kept that partner for the duration of the tournament. I think we met one night a week for ten weeks at the hall above Kittel's store at Emery, MI. The winning team was given a trophy. That was a lot of fun, and we did this for two years.

Another evening I fondly remember was "Red Wings Hockey Night." The Red Wings had won the Stanley Cup Championship that year and were offering a film and speaker for an evening of entertainment. We invited men from Faith of Dexter, Redeemer of Ann Arbor and Immanuel of South Lyon to enjoy the presentation by hockey star, Sid Able. There were more than fifty people present that night.

Our Club has always supported the Bethesda Home, and, in 1957, we sponsored a clothing, and other useful items, drive. We gathered enough goods to fill a four by eight by four foot high trailer. Bill Scheel hitched it behind his car and delivered it to the home. --submitted by Hollis Kapp

I REMEMBER on my confirmation with Pastor Maas that I was asked to recite the Lord's Prayer and I couldn't remember how it started or any part of it. After Saturday confirmation class, Carl Nonnenmacher, Duane Scheel, Ken Kaercher and myself would always go out to the cemetery to drown out gophers that lived in holes under the stones. Another favorite past-time was to catch frogs and snakes in the window wells.

Lucy Maulbetsch took great pride in the cemetery. She would pay Lewis Maulbetsch and myself one penny for every wild carrot or burdock we picked — provided they were pulled out or dug out by the roots.

The highlight of the church year was always the mother, father, son, daughter banquet and the wonderful chicken dinners that were always served. Home-made pies and Ida Kearney's banana cream or prune whip pie will never be forgotten. My mother, Edith Mae, was always in the kitchen working, and Ida Kearney would always save an extra piece in the kitchen for me. This usually resulted in me having to help dry the silverware.

It was a terrible shock for our entire congregation when the silverware was taken by thieves who had broken into the church.

George Wandel, Ralph Wurster, Bill Scheel, Ormond Kapp, and Hollis Kapp were always present during the work bees.

I remember the various vacancies that our congregation has gone through, and I take this opportunity to thank Bill Scheel for helping me to write the call letters to prospective ministers.

In the very early years, I remember Bill Scheel, William Kern, Mr. Rauschenberger, and Francis Maulbetsch sitting up in the second pew on the left hand side in their place as elders of the church. I cherish all the memories of my 64 years at St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church.

I also remember the poems which Thad Prochnow wrote for the Harvest Festivals each year. It is too bad that they were not written down for us. Now we have the poems which Carrie Podewil writes. --submitted by Robert Wagner

### **Memories of St. John's at Northfield (circa 1939 -1960)**

Parking by the steps meant you were really early (or it was a Lenten service) - sitting next to mom listening to her sing - sittin' next to Pa, smelling his cigar breath - Christmas practice starting the first Saturday after Thanksgiving - memorizing my "piece" - decorating the "huge" tree - looking forward to the big bag of treats after the Christmas Eve program - Sunday School, Ice Cream Socials, Banquets, Ladies Aid, Men's Club, Young People's meetings: all the fun you could imagine taking place in a Church basement - Sunday School teachers

(Mrs. Maurer, Lois, Irv) - Sunday School picnics with 2 coupons you could use to spend on anything - Saturday morning confirmation studies in Rev. Maas' study - confirmation class: Gary, Gary, Cary, Gerry, Nancy and Tom (Tom should have been called Tommy - know "why"?) - ushering for the first time with my brother Duane - Walter and Frank Geiger always sitting in the back of the church, falling to sleep sometime during the sermon - Dad always sitting in the front of the church (second row), sometimes dragging me with him when Mom wasn't there - Rev. Maas' forty five minute specials (without commercials) - the church choir, my sister-in-law-to-be was the best singer (and the prettiest) - marathons: midweek Lenten services, mission festivals, harvest festivals - being allowed to sit in the balcony, alone, and learning there was a dedicated "balcony congregation" - discovering the mysterious little places like the bell tower, the back bathroom between the basement and the minister's side entrance - playing in the cemetery with the "gang" while the adults were festivating in the church basement - my first "kiss", in the dark, in the cemetery - the great times at the Sunday night Young People's meetings: discussions, ping pong, pretty girls, shuffleboard, "hot dog" roasts at the Kapp's, pretty girls (I'm getting old - I repeat myself) - people I wish were still here: Ronnie, the greatest musician, humorist, and intellect I knew at that age of my life; Paul and Lauren, memories of a lot of fun; would have liked to talk to Rev. Maas as an "adult"; Dad - remembering the "teacher/preacher": Rev. Walther (who always had time to catch a ball, pass, etc., when visiting - and his darling children who were "ruffians from hell") - all the weddings, baptisms, funerals - the people: always the smiles, the "pats" on the back, seemed like everybody was a relative, the nurturing that one doesn't know is happening until many years later - the beginning of a lifelong walk with our Lord along a path that's strengthened by the people we're walking with - for that I thank the St. John's community - the memories will be forever. --submitted by Gary Scheel

I REMEMBER being in Irv Scheel's Sunday school class. His future bride, Lois Trapp, also taught Sunday school, the next grade younger than mine. The two of them teamed up on a contest. For a certain length of time -- I can't remember how long we did this -- there was a quiz at every class, regarding the lesson from the day. After this time was over, the two students who scored highest were selected from both classes.

In our class, Dorothy (Kapp) Shear and I were the winners. In Ms. Trapp's class the winners were Gary Scheel and I believe Gary Shear (I could be wrong on those two). The prize was, of all things, a trip to Tiger Stadium to see a real ballgame! This was a first for me. I followed the Tigers very closely when I was that age, and if they announced that prize at the beginning of the contest I'm sure I worked all the harder to win!

The big day included stopping somewhere for a picnic which even included freshly cooked sweet corn. AT the stadium, I was amazed at how BIG everything was. During the warmup, one of the batters hit a ball that I was sure would go into the center field bleachers. Instead it fell to the ground just past second base -- what an optical illusion!

It was an exciting day, and was one of the many Sunday School events, albeit not as spiritual as some, that "I remember."

It might be of interest that, whenever we get a chance, my husband and I attend the 9:15 service at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church in Frankenmuth -- it's the German service. --submitted by Elizabeth (Wandel) Kercher

### **Memories from around the 1950's**

I Remember: At the time our church was rebuilt after the fire of 1932, there were no lavatories installed. Two rooms were provided in the blue print plans and the in floor plumbing was installed which led to the outside wall.

Our men's club adopted the project of installing a septic tank and drain field and finishing the bathrooms. We obtained a permit from the Washtenaw County Health Department. This was back in the early fifties. They gave us a plan for installation and said no follow up inspection was necessary. Much different than it is today.

Oscar Hirth had a Ferguson tractor with a trenching machine attached. He agreed to dig the lines. Bill Scheel would construct the tank with cement blocks and plaster the inside walls to make it watertight.

Now it was time to dig the hole. At that time there was not a backhoe to dig with in every farmer's yard. In fact the machine as we know it today had not been invented. So you picked up a hand shovel and went to work.

The digging progressed nicely for about the first three feet, and then we struck a hardpan. We attacked it with pick and spud, but we couldn't make much progress.

Frances Maulbetsch said he had a better idea. He left and returned with a small auger and two sticks of dynamite. We bored four holes and placed one half stick of dynamite in each hole, and attached the fuse. When the explosion occurred, a shower of dirt went higher than the roof of the church. Some chunks were found in the cemetery. The hole was dug!!! I'm sure that God must have been watching over us and held out a protective hand because not a window was broken in the church or house. -- submitted by Hollis Kapp

I REMEMBER when the pastor made his calls on horseback. So there was a barn where the old garage presently stands. The barn was large enough for the horse, for the buggy, and had a loft for a couple of loads of hay. This building was torn down and replaced by the garage that is standing there now.

There was also a hen house to the west of this old barn. This was a large wooden building. Instead of tearing this down, it was sold by sealed bids to Walter Kempf. He had professional building movers move it to his place. It still stands there today (955 E. North Territorial Road).

There was also a round, metal brooder house sitting to the north of the barn. It was sitting on the round cement floor that is still there in the yard. I put in bid for \$5 and got it. The metal had rusted out all around the base of the building, so I raised it and put some wheels under it. I had not gone very far with it when it turned egg-shaped instead of round. I had to work hard to get it round again, and then I set it down in the cement foundation. It is still on my place to this day.

I also remember when John Maulbetsch bought the pastor's little bay horse for his daughter, Edith Mae [she married Ezra Wagner], to use to go back and forth as she taught at the old Wagner school. She would give me a ride to and from school. -- submitted by LeRoy Braun

I REMEMBER when the Ladies Aid Society used to have fifty ladies attending each meeting. For one of our activities, we had a bridal demonstration. There were about 5-6 wedding dresses that were brought for the display. I was privileged to wear Mildred Braun's mother's wedding dress. --submitted by Bertha Wurster

I REMEMBER well the first Men's Club meeting that I attended. It was in the winter of 1955 and my father-in-law, Albert Sell, invited me to go with him. There were approximately 35-40 men in attendance. Being young and new to the congregation, I was in awe at the number of men who were there. After the business portion of the meeting, most of which I didn't understand because of being new to the congregation, the meal was served. You will notice that I said the meal and not the refreshments. Bill Scheel and Frank Geiger were on the eats committee and they served all these men a complete spaghetti dinner, including drink, bread, butter and jelly. -- submitted by Chuck Schauer

I REMEMBER years ago when our congregation would celebrate Harvest Festival. The men of the congregation would bring fruit, vegetables and nuts to be auctioned off. The ladies would bring home-made baked things, sewing and other handcrafted articles, which would also be auctioned off after the Harvest dinner. But most of all I remember the older men of the congregation taking the two baskets of apples to the altar as a thanksgiving for a good harvest. I also remember the altar being decorated with different colors of nuts, gourds and fruits.

-- submitted by Charlotte Schauer

I REMEMBER with fondness the good times we young people enjoyed back in the early fifties. At that time the Youth Group, as it is called today, was called the Young People's Society. I could hardly wait for my confirmation so that I could join that fun group! In those days it seemed like all the young people aged 13-21 or so came to the meetings without fail! We always met on a Sunday evening, and, after the formal meeting and devotional time, we either had a project or just plain fun.

As I recall, one of the most helpful things we ever did was to publish our own little newspaper which we sent to our boys in the Armed Forces and to our own members as well. It was a big project as we had to have an editor, reporters, typists, etc. At different times these young people held the following important jobs for our newspaper: Editor - Ron Kapp; Pastor's Report - Rev. Maas; Congregational News & Young People's News - Ron Kapp; Community News - Evelyn Braun; Reporters - Cary & Gary Shear, Dorothy Kapp; Sports News - Angela Maas, Esther Maulbetsch, Paul Geiger; Jokes - Richard Honke, Ken Zeeb; Typists - Marianne Wandel, George Kempf, Elizabeth Wandel; Printers - Doris Kapp, Elizabeth Wandel, Ron Kapp, Aldred Heyer. The young people did the whole job and it was a success in that it brought the news of our church and community to the lonely guys away from home. At the same time it, also, gave a sense of satisfaction to the young people who had helped the young men of our congregation in the service in one small way.

We also put on ice cream socials inviting other sister congregations to attend. Each month there was a planned event. Sometimes it would be bowling, or swimming, or shuffleboard. One year we met at different homes each month and played euchre. Other times we joined with Young People's groups at sister churches. All in all, I remember it as a time of good, clean fun with a great bunch of young people of whom many remain good friends to this day.

On a historical note, the Young People's Society was organized in June of 1926. The first president was my father, Ormond Kapp. The goals of the group were:

- " 1. To assist in keeping our young people with our church.
2. To furnish an opportunity for education, especially pertaining to the Lutheran church.
3. To foster Christian fellowship and sociability among the young people of the church.
4. To provide wholesome entertainment.
5. To assist in the charitable endeavors of the church."

These goals sound good to me -- how about it YOUNG PEOPLE?

-- submitted by Dorothy (Kapp) Shear

I REMEMBER "Church Acres." This was land donated by Thad Prochnow to the Men's Club to be used for the planting of winter wheat. Most of St. John's members were farmers at that time.

We converged on that land with great numbers of red, green, yellow and orange tractors and plows. The green fields soon melted away into shiny, straight, freshly plowed furrows. The land was tilled all summer by the closest volunteers. In late September another bee made short work of planting the winter wheat, and the next July to harvest it.

Combines were just being used and in their early stages, some of them actually cut a 6 foot swath and all were driven by tractor power take-off. The grain was quickly harvested and sold to local mills.

We had a choice of two mills in Ann Arbor. There was McCalla's on Fourth Avenue owned by Charles McCalla, Frank's dad, and West Side Custom Mill on West Huron and the Ann Arbor Railroad. The mills furnished the bags to hold the wheat. We used bags as bulk equipment was not available then. Each bag held about 2 1/2 bushels or 150 pounds. --submitted by Guy Paul

I REMEMBER that on August 5, 1957, the ladies of St. John's Church, Northfield, made their debut on TV. They had contracted with Greyhound Bus Lines to pick up the entire Ladies Aid at our church. Bob Morrow had been requested as the driver. The outing was so that they could be the guests of Chuck Bergerson's "Ladies Day" show, the WJBK TV (CBS) show between the hour of 12 and 1 PM. After the show, lunch was enjoyed at the Dearborn Inn. At the end of the day, everyone returned to the church happy and tired.

--submitted by Viola Kapp

I REMEMBER during 1957 our Ladies Aid was sponsoring a "Foodless Food Sale," for which we could donate any amount of money that we desired. This was a way of saving much labor, and was enjoyed by all of the members.

Memorable also are the days of the Mother-Daughter, Father-Son banquets. Mothers and daughters supplied the food and social evening for the fathers and sons. Likewise the fathers and sons treated the mothers and daughters to their evening of enjoyment. --submitted by Viola Kapp

I REMEMBER every fall of the year St. John's had an annual Harvest Festival. Many of its members, of course, came from the agricultural or farming community. At this time they would bring produce: grain, apples, potatoes, squash, pumpkins -- even some live poultry: chickens, ducks, geese, rabbits. This was a sign of giving thanks to God for blessing them with a bountiful harvest. This produce was always sold at public auction the following Monday evening. The Harvest Festival, of course, was celebrated on Sunday. I can remember when we would have a couple of services, on that particular Sunday, in celebration.

Mr. Thad Prochnow, who was one of the senior members of the church, always served as the auctioneer for the harvest festival. This one particular evening, when I was a young man probably in junior high school, Mr. Prochnow announced that his age was beginning to get to him, and that he needed help in auctioning off this produce and etc. Surprising to me, he said, George Kempf will help him as auctioneer this evening. After the initial shock, I did come forward and auctioned off various items with Mr. Prochnow. This continued for several years until Mr. Prochnow reached an age where he simply gave it up.

In continuing the tradition, I asked a friend of mine, who was not a member of our church, but in the auctioneering field and who enjoyed doing it, by the name of Mr. Earl Koch, if he would assist me and he gratefully said, "Yes". So Earl and I served as the auctioneers for the annual Harvest Festival.

It was a real fun thing. It was a community thing. As I look back, I think it was a form of outreach for St. John's, for during the auction, not only did members of St. John's come and buy various items, a lot of the general public, and a lot of the, as I would call them, city people from Ann Arbor, would come, looking forward to being able to buy fresh fruit, fresh vegetables.

It was always a laugh because all of the farmers and the members that donated always chose the very finest of their product -- sort of some showmanship, if you will. But it was a great fund raiser for the men's club who sponsored the event. I cannot really recall what year that it came to an end. It was a fun thing, and I would almost like to see it reinstated. --submitted by George Kempf

I REMEMBER Sunday school back in the 1940's and early 1950's when Adolph Trapp, followed by Frank Geiger, was the Sunday School superintendent and Bible Class teacher. Some of the teachers at that time were Alta Geiger, Ruth Kempf, Ida Maurer, Lois Trapp, and Irving Scheel. Each year we were given a lapel pin and a certificate for perfect attendance. One of the last years I was in Sunday School, I remember having Irving Scheel as my teacher. He told my class that if we had perfect attendance and learned our catechism, he would take us to a Detroit Tigers baseball game! Did I ever work hard because I had never had the opportunity to attend a Detroit Tigers game before that time. It was too good an offer to pass up!

At that time, Irving Scheel was engaged to marry Lois Trapp, and she presented the same opportunity to her Sunday School class; so, in the end, kids from the two classes went to the ball game after our Sunday church service. I can remember thinking the sermon would never end that day as I was so excited and anxious to go on that trip.

After I was confirmed, I, too, became a Sunday School teacher, and it was in the early to late fifties that we held our Sunday School picnic at the German Park. We would haul the coffee makers and needed kitchen utensils over to the park after church and have our potluck dinner and games there. There would always be adult games as well as the children's games, and the afternoon usually finished with a baseball game played by parents and children.

I remember, also, making popcorn balls at Edgar and Bessie Gyde's house for our Sunday school children at Christmas time. Annie (Gyde) Wessel was a Sunday school teacher at the time too. I was invited to eat dinner with the Gydes and then everyone would gather to make popcorn balls. We would end the afternoon with loading the candy bags by making several trips around the Gyde's dining room table picking up a different kind of candy with each step we took. We then packed them into grocery bags or boxes and took them to the church for the Christmas Eve service.

A few years later, when Frances (McCalla) Baldus was a Sunday school teacher, the other teachers would be invited, as a group (husbands and wives), to a noon dinner meal at the Baldus', after church on a Sunday in December. After the dinner, the traditional popcorn balls were stirred up in Fran's kitchen. There were a lot of hot, sticky hands forming popcorn balls, and men as well as women helped complete this sticky task with much laughing and fun. Washing up the sticky, gooey utensils and pans was even fun in the company of others!

--submitted by Dorothy (Kapp)

I REMEMBER THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY -- In the early 1950's, before I left for a stint with the Army, we had a very active YPS. A fairly large group showed up regularly for our meetings, eatings and playtime. I can't remember a whole lot of the things we did, but shuffleboard, ping-pong and an occasional swim at the Kapp cottage at Whitmore Lake come to mind. In addition, Walter Trapp had just recently returned from his military duty during the early portion of the Korean War, so we had a worldly-wise, experienced member among us.

--submitted by Aldred Heyer

Belonging to a small church, such as St. John's Lutheran Church, is like living in a small town. You know everyone in the congregation. The members all care about one another because they know everyone personally. (I remember Dorothy Kapp Shear visiting me in the hospital when I had my tonsils out.) I noticed this concept when I moved to "the big church in town" (with over 1,000 members). The big church had three services, so that if you always went to the 11:00 service, you may never meet the worshipers that went to the 8:30 service.

Many minute experiences seem to stick in one's mind with flashbacks from the Sunday school childhood. I remember the fun-filled Sunday school picnics every summer at German Park. Everyone can probably recall

having to anxiously recite their Christmas Bible piece standing, with knees shaking, in front of the filled to capacity little church on Christmas Eve. Although, I could never in my wildest dreams ever imagined that over 40 years later, I would be standing at the dinner table on Christmas Eve before my grown children, reciting the entire Christmas story from Sunday School memory.

One experience, in particular, that I seem to remember, involved one of my very truly dedicated and favorite Sunday school teachers at St. John's Lutheran Church. Everyone in my class went to the same school, and they were in the same class. I was the outcast, going to a different elementary school (Popkins School). Therefore, at that shy, tender and embarrassing age of eleven, it was difficult for me to find anything to talk to any of them about. Therefore, I did not say much to them. One Sunday morning, as I was slowly walking toward the basement door where Sunday school was held, I happened to overhear my teacher, Paul Geiger, saying to all of the other children in my class: "Now remember, everyone think of something to talk to Bonnie about, so that she will feel more comfortable and a part of our group." Well, that really broke the ice for us. Ever since then, I have been able to talk freely with all of them. We all had a good time in confirmation class. When I progressed to the big, new church, I was able to join in on the library committee and teach Sunday school and Vacation Bible School from the wonderful examples set for me at St. John's Church as I was pulled from my shyness.

It seems that the trivial items are the significant ones that are etched into our minds forever. I never did get a chance to thank Paul for the good deed that he did for me, but then I was not supposed to know that he said it. He was one of those good teachers and persons that did not do good things for the credit. God does His good works on this earth through people. --submitted by Bonnie L. (Shear) Branim

I was baptized, confirmed and married at St. John's, and my parents and grandparents are buried in its shadow, so it is the site of some major milestones in my life. But I remember mostly the smaller milestones, the common events, and, of course, the folks who gathered there.

I think I first learned to read when my sister Mari would point to the words of the liturgy and help me follow along. And Liz taught me (in whispered lessons) the basics of reading music and singing harmony from the hymnal. I can just picture Mom trying to muffle the sound of a cellophane wrapper as she opened a hard candy (usually reserved to stifle a cough) to quiet the restless "baby of the family." And I'll always remember Dad leading the way to the pew -- usually on the left side, a third of the way back. I know how much I admired the kids who could control their foot-swinging impulses. I recall, too, the pride Mom and Dad had in the church and how active they were in its maintenance and care.

I loved the organ and the hymns, the congregation's responses in the liturgy, and the ritual of the services, but haven't forgotten how nervous I was when I had to say my "piece" in the Christmas programs and when I took communion the first time. I loved the beautiful designs made of chestnuts and grains and fruits for Harvest Festival, and the way the daylight could change the look of the colorful windows. And I recall the congregation's surprise when newcomer Rev. Walther talked about the Detroit Tigers' latest feats as he greeted us after the service.

Picking adder tongues and blood roots with Linda Kittel across from the Kern farm on the walk home after Sunday school on those rare occasions that we didn't stay for church was also part of attending St. John's, as was comparing homework assignments with Don Danner in the parking lot after church.

But the most cherished memories are related to the people who gathered at St. John's. It was satisfying to see my teacher, Cora Zeeb, predictably in attendance, and to chat after the service with so many friends and neighbors. --submitted by Rose (Wandel) Kelley

AN UNFORGETTABLE CHURCH SERVICE -- It was a hot and sultry Sunday morning, but the faithful, as was their custom, gathered for worship. Before the liturgy was completed, a ferocious storm rolled in. Suddenly, as the wind increased its roaring, the lights went out, the organ stopped, and we were all plunged into darkness. During the interruption, someone remembered where a few candles were stored. After one of these was lighted, and placed on the pulpit, and another one on the altar, the service continued in spite of the storm outside. Not only did the people calmly remain in their pews and listen attentively to the sermon, but they also attended the Lord's Supper by candlelight. Many remarked that this was the most unforgettable and meaningful Communion service they ever attended. I know that I will never forget it. As we left the church, we found that the storm had blown itself out. "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'"

--submitted by Rev. Alfred Walther served at St. John's from 1952-59

EXCITEMENT AT THE PARSONAGE -- It seemed as though it would be a typical Sunday morning. Up soon after dawn I had completed my final preparations for the church services. A hasty inspection of the church property was all that needed to be done before I was to leave for the early service at South Lyon. That's when I noticed that Sparky, our Welsh pony, was not in his corral. It had rained quite hard that Saturday night, and that was just the kind of weather that usually inspired him to crawl over the fence in search of greener pastures. Spotting him in the church cemetery, I raced for the house, roused the children, four to eleven years of age, and instructed them to help with the cleanup detail. Some rushed to the cemetery to pick up Sparky's droppings, another rushed to the garden with the wheel barrow to get soil to cover the deeper hoof prints. Then the ground was carefully groomed. I still wonder how many of the old-timers, as they made their weekly visit to the cemetery after the church service, ever suspected the feverish and dramatic activity that had occurred earlier that morning in the cemetery. On the other hand, realizing what wonderful and understanding people they were, perhaps they only pretended not to have noticed.

--submitted by Rev. Alfred Walther served at St. John's from 1952-59

I REMEMBER when Grace Geiger was the church organist. She and her brother, Walter Geiger, were in church every Sunday, and Walter used to sit in the same spot each Sunday (like many of us do today), on one of the chairs in the back of the church. After Grace Geiger retired from the organ, Ida Kearney took her spot. She played for many years until around 1957 when she began asking my brother, Ron Kapp, and myself to substitute for her. She retired and I began playing organ on a regular basis in June 1958.

Other organists sharing the bench from this time on were: Mrs. Alfred (Alice) Walther, Mrs. Raymond (Ethel) Frey, Mrs. Fred (June Trapp) Brockmiller, Mrs. Aldred (Gerda) Heyer, Karen (Ehnis) Smith, Robin Welshans, Linda Freeman, and Mrs. Floyd (Marcella) Mattek.

In the earlier years, before I began playing organ, the organists did not get paid a regular rate. At the end of the church year, around Christmas season, an envelope was mailed to every home with the words, "Pastor, Organist, Tree," on the envelope. Each family put in money, split up in any way they desired, and that is what the organist got for the year!

When I was a child growing up in the church, I remember the choir being gowned in black robes (the newer blue robes were purchased in March, 1975), and the loft always being filled to the limit with singers. Among those who sang in the choir were the Trapp triplets -- Jean, Jane, and June. They could harmonize so well and they sang many times as a trio, with or without the organ, when the choir, as a whole, did not sing. One of the most memorable times for me was when they sang on a Christmas Eve when I was still in Sunday school. All of a sudden their lovely voices floated down from the west end of the balcony, singing "Star of the East." It truly sent shivers down my spine! It was so beautifully done that I just had to peek around to see them because they always dressed alike and I wondered what they had worn on that particular night!

--submitted by Dorothy (Kapp) Shear

My mother, Emma (Geiger) Prochnow, was an organist at St. John's. I have recently come across one of her old organ books. Other early organists were Grace Geiger, Marie (Prochnow) Zeeb, Ida Kearney. Laura Bolgos may have even played. -- submitted by Mildred Braun

One of the fondest memories I have of St. John's was the Harvest Home festival. I'm not sure who started it or when it began, but it was a part of St. John's that I always looked forward to. Since John's was a small, rural church, and a large part of its members were farmers, it seemed only fitting that we return to God what He had given us. In the fall the members would bring forth from their farms and gardens produce.

They would fill the church basement, and decorate both the outside and inside of the church. Then, during our Sunday morning service, we would sing songs of Thanksgiving and the ushers would bring forth baskets of fruits and vegetables, and then Pastor would offer a thank-you prayer. Displayed up in the front of the church was a picture. It was made out of nuts and wheat and different grains and corn and many other natural things. It was made on a table with dividers and sections, and then the table could be tipped at an angle so anyone sitting in the church could see it. I could hardly wait to get to church to see just what that year's picture would be. One year it was a cornucopia, one year it was a shock of wheat, and another year it was an Indian head made out of chestnuts. Each year it seemed to me only to get more beautiful.

Then, on the following Monday night, everyone would come back to the church for supper provided by the Ladies Aid, and then the fun began. The auction would start. The ladies of the mission society would sell fresh popcorn and goodies while the bidding went on. My Dad got some strawberry popcorn on the cob. I could hardly wait to pop it. I thought it would be red, but to my surprise, it only popped white.

Our auction was held every year until Pastor Frey came and pointed out to us we were like the money changers in the temple. So the tradition of the auction came to an end, but the beautiful picture was still made each year and I always looked forward to it. When I moved from St. John's, that tradition was lost. But when fall comes, I still think of Harvest Home at St. John's with fond memories. --submitted by Donna (Kimmel) Halman

I REMEMBER my mother-in-law, Marie (Prochnow) Zeeb, saying her marriage to Arthur Zeeb was one of the first performed by Pastor Alfred Maas on August 23, 1923. Pastor Maas also united their daughter, Marjorie Zeeb and Robert Morrow, on April 18, 1945, as a second generation of marriages.

Pastor Maas moved to Sodus, MI, in 1952. His daughter, Angie, contacted me to ride to St. Joseph, MI, where we both worked. Her place of employment at Whirlpool was close to where I worked at Auto Specialties. We did not know each other before this but became close friends. At the time, Angie was not married and wanted to come back to Ann Arbor one week-end to see her future husband, Don Miller. She asked me to come along and she arranged a blind date for me with Ken Zeeb. Pastor Maas, although moving clear across the state, performed another Zeeb wedding when Ken and I were married in Sodus on October 27, 1956. Angie is godparent to our daughter, Deb Diuble, and we, to this day, remain close friends.

I also remember when the serving committee of the Ladies Aid cleaned the church each week for the month they served. How nice it is that we now have the Wriska family doing such a fine job of this chore for us. -- submitted by Joann Zeeb

There are so many memories of the seven wonderful years my family spent in St. John's parsonage at 2945 E. Northfield Church Road. My memories could fill several volumes, but since there are likely to be thousands of other people's memories, I will share a few of mine that I most cherish.

Our children's Christmas Eve Services were so beautiful with the carols and recitations that we rehearsed for weeks before. Who could forget those tempting bags of fruits, nuts and candy we received after the services, or the beautiful, big Christmas tree by the baptismal font?

In the 35 years since my family left St. John's, I have never witnessed such a beautiful Harvest Festival as our Church had. The Church was so beautifully decorated with the Lord's bountiful fall harvest. The wonderful supper and auction that would be on the following day were so much fun, topped off with gallons of apple cider.

The only somewhat scary time was in Church the summer of 1956 when we had such a violent thunder and lightning storm, and all the power went out. There was communion that Sunday, and Dad conducted it by candlelight. When Mother came back from receiving communion, my brothers and sister and I really nudged close to her. The Church seemed to shake. We sang with no organ.

Another memory is when my Aunt Doris got married in our Church. She came from Washington, D.C., to get married with family surrounding her. Dad performed the wedding and Mother was matron of honor. The Ladies Aid fixed a most fabulous turkey dinner.

A funny memory is when our horse, Sparky, got out on a rainy Sunday morning and left footprints and calling cards all over the cemetery. Dad had to go to South Lyon to conduct services while Mother, James, Elizabeth, John and myself had swiftly to cover up, haul away and somehow make things look normal, all this in the pouring rain and then get ready for Sunday School and Church. We still laugh about this.

I know it's three and one half to four decades late, but I would like to thank all the wonderful Sunday School teachers, some who have already joined our Lord in heaven, for their patience and guidance: Geraldine Hodgson, Elda Geiger, Ronnie Kapp, Dorothy Kapp, Paul Geiger, Diane Hodgson, Annie Gyde and Duane Scheel.

The people of St. John's are such a wonderful memory of mine. Whenever my Grandma Bein, or Grandma Walther or any of my parent's brothers and sisters and families came, they were made to feel so welcome in our Church. I often feel that my sister Miriam was cheated by being the only one of us that did not get to enjoy Northfield. She was born in Milwaukee the January after we left. I thank God that we were able to at least spend 7 years at St. John's.

In closing, I will add that I now live with my wife, Jane, in West Bend, Wisconsin, and we are the parents of three daughters: Rebecca is sophomore at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota, Jennifer is a Junior at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School in Jackson, Wisconsin, and Rachel is in Sixth Grade at Good Shepherd Lutheran School, West Bend, Wisconsin. My brothers and sisters all have families and we and our parents all reside near each other in Southeastern Wisconsin.

As the Lord has in the last 125 years, may He continue to richly bless St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church of Northfield Township. --submitted by David A. Walther

We came to this area in 1955. The Rev. Alfred Walther was pastor of St. John's. He came to the farm and asked us to join St. John's. At that time the Missouri and Wisconsin Synod were talking of separation. Our present church was the Missouri Synod. We joined St. John's the summer of 1955.

After Rev. Walther left, we had Rev. Raymond Frey, Rev. Edward Pinchoff, Rev. Floyd Mattek, and the existing Rev. Jeffrey Weber. Rev. George Tiefel of South Lyon was vacancy pastor. The Lord has blessed us with wonderful pastors to serve St. John's.

Two large projects of St. John's were the Martin Luther Home in South Lyon and Huron Valley Lutheran High School in Westland. --submitted by Herman & Annie Boike

I REMEMBER once when my brother, Ron Kapp, harnessed up our pony, Betsy, to the sleigh and went to confirmation class. Of course, when I got old enough to do this, she had passed away.

I REMEMBER when my brother, Ron, mowed the cemetery with a walk behind lawn mower. My sister [Dorothy Shear] and I would trim around the stones with grass scissors. As Ron mowed, he became interested in cemetery history. This led to his drawing up of the book we now use for records of burials in the cemetery. Also, I mowed the cemetery for a couple of years in the early sixties. --submitted by Dale Kapp

### Memories from around the 1960's

I REMEMBER when I was working with the Ladies Aid for Ernie Kittel's funeral. While everyone was at the cemetery, I was in the kitchen. The church had a mammoth gas stove, with a huge grill over the oven. Every burner was on, as well as the oven. I opened the oven, and flames suddenly burst forth, burning the veil off of the hat I was wearing. My hair was singed enough that I wore a wig for a while, and I had no eyebrows left. I put my head under the faucet. Grace Geiger wanted me to go to see a doctor, but I just went home. My face did have red streaks on it. What probably happened was that the oven had gone out, and gas built up in it, and was ignited when the oven door was opened.

It was not long after that when this gas oven was replaced with the two electric ovens we have now. Ralph bought them as used from the Edison Company, through Marvin Trapp.

-- submitted by Bertha Wurster

I REMEMBER ONE ITCHY WORK BEE -- One of our outdoor cleanup work bees turned out to be memorable for our Pastor. Never mind that it was the same bee at which I had managed to really dull Hollis Kapp's chain saw, prompting Guy Paul to address me as "The old sod-cutter" for the rest of the day. During the course of the shrubbery and brush clean-out, some — actually much — poison ivy was encountered. We burned the whole pile on the south side of the road across from the church side driveway.

The following Sunday morning Pastor Frey showed me that he had plenty of itches starting from that ivy. He told me that he had a very low tolerance for poison ivy and opined that the smoke had drifted his way Saturday and had deposited some of the toxic stuff on him. Maybe so, because I guess that can happen, but I have to tell you that I had seen him on that Saturday clear up to his shoulders in that ivy infested brush. --submitted by Aldred Heyer

I REMEMBER THE ATOM SMASHER ANNOUNCEMENT -- It was late Spring or early Summer, 1965, when the Ann Arbor News headline said, "Site offered to AEC Described." 3,000 acres, and there sat our church, parsonage, cemetery and a majority of our members' homes and farms smack-dab within the boundaries of that proposed Atomic Energy Commission research laboratory and atomic accelerator. As He always promises to do, the Lord watched over His people during that shaky time also. And because of His watchful eye, here we are nearly thirty years later celebrating another anniversary. By the way, I think I recently drove past the area where the laboratory would up over in Illinois. --submitted by Aldred and Gerda Heyer

CHOIR PRACTICES REMEMBERED - OR BETTER FORGOTTEN -- Back, during the 1960's, we had a fairly large men's section for a small choir. Even today it is not unusual for a choir to have only two male voices, one bass and one reluctant tenor. That was not the case with our group back in the years when Mrs. Frey consented to lead our choir. Poor Ethel! As I recall, we had three basses — loud basses — Marvin Trapp, Walter Trapp and Jack Steiner. We also had two tenors, George Shima and me.

As is normally the case in mixed choirs, these five men sat in the back pew of the choir loft. Unfortunately, their head and necks were constructed so that head could turn right and left just as easily as they could face forward. And you readers all know well that these five fellows would never turn down a chance to talk to his right or left neighbor, or worse yet, to his down-the-row neighbor three or four seats over. Fortunately, the ladies sitting in the front pew knew when enough was enough and turned around to get us back to business.

Despite all the horseplay, talking and Heyer kids crawling under the pews, our little group sang the praises of their gracious Lord reasonably well. Gerda and I still continue to hold this classy little group of singing friends in our memories with great love and fondness. --submitted by Aldred and Gerda Heyer

REVERIE IN A NORTHFIELD CHURCHYARD -- "Sunset and evening star and one clear call for me!" (Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

The peace of Paradise itself seems to descend upon St. John's cemetery in the waning moments of a colorful sunset. One such evening in 1968 as I was waiting for the council to assemble, I decided to roam a bit among the silent headstones. Alone, and yet...

Hallowed relics are here, of saints gone on ahead. I say the names. The ancients left so long ago; for some we still ache: great-grandparents, long-gone kin, mother, father, brother, friend, still one with us in Christ. What visions of tomorrow's glory do they already see, those faithful ones?

A ghostly mist is creeping in, to veil the morning yet to come. We must wait a while longer, these relics and I.

Lord Jesus, set your angel to guard this holy place, while we listen for your calling Voice (Jn 5:28).

--submitted by Pastor George Tiefel

I REMEMBER Uncle Francis Maulbetsch, while working at a church work bee, left a black pair of hand prints on the ceiling in the balcony while looking for bees. These hand prints stayed there until the church was redecorated.

--submitted by Dean Kapp

Pick and shovels were used by Ormond Kapp, Dale Kapp and myself to remove dirt alongside of the stone pillars to make the west cemetery gate wider. We borrowed large house jacks from our neighbor Arthur Burgess to move the stone pillars farther apart. From horse drawn vehicles to limousines, we rectified the cemetery gate.

--submitted by Herman Boike

I REMEMBER ... with gratitude ... the many times I have been welcomed and made to feel at home as I worshiped at St. John's with Ron and his family. I was that gal from Chicago that Ron met in 1957 when he began teaching at Alma College. Although a member of a Swedish Lutheran church in Chicago, when Ron and I were married by Pastor Norman Maas on January 30, 1960 in the Alma College Chapel, I, too, became a member of the Wisconsin Synod. As Ron continued his studies at U of M the first year we were married, we worshiped at St. John's. Our daughter, Lisa, was baptized on January 15, 1961, not long before we moved back to Alma, where I continue to live. We were members of Zion, St. Louis, and then the new congregation of Grace, Alma.

It was at the funeral of Lauren and Paul Geiger in 1984 when I came to fully realize the importance of St. John's congregation, not only in my life, but in the lives of its members and neighbors in the surrounding farm community. There was such an outpouring of love and caring, and on our return trip to Alma after the funeral, Ron and I discussed the unknown numbering of our days and considered where we would be buried when we died. Our conclusion was where else but at St. John's small cemetery. Ron's family's connection with the

congregation date back to his great grandparents who were among the church's founding members. It was then we purchased 4 lots from the Ormond Kapp family plot from his mom, Anna Kapp. We were grateful for the established resting place as Ron faced his death (on March 24, 1990).

On October 4, 1986, the marriage of our daughter, Marda, and her husband, Douglas Mills, was consecrated amongst family and friends at St. John's by Pastor George Tiefel, South Lyon.

Now I am thankful to be able to occasionally worship at St. John's, my other church home, and do have many fond remembrances. --submitted by Phyllis I. (Mrs. Ronald O.) Kapp

I have many, many pleasant memories of St. John's, starting shortly before our wedding in 1964, and continuing through the years. I was baptized, confirmed, and later served as treasurer and as an elder there before our transfer to Faith Lutheran at Dexter after our move to Chelsea in 1973. St. John's still seems more like a church because of its building than Faith does, even though the facility should be unimportant to religion. This was emphasized to us when our son, Jeff, got married two years ago and had his wedding at St. John's.

I particularly remember working on redecorating the church for its centennial celebration 25 years ago. Most of the decorating went smoothly and turned out well, except for the dove painted above the baptismal font, which has always looked more like a dive bomber.

We are looking forward to joining our many friends in helping to celebrate St. John's 125th anniversary. -- submitted by Sam Morgan

I REMEMBER starting the Girl Pioneers at St. John's. Mrs. Shima, Donna Halman and others helped to get this started. I also remember camping at Camp Killarney. We also had the Boy Pioneer program going at the same time. -- submitted by Lynn Wagner

### **Memories from around the 1970's**

I REMEMBER when the church picnic was held at the German Park. Since I am a member of this organization, they would let us use the grounds and facilities for free one Sunday a year. We would begin the picnic following the worship service. There were places for the kids to play on playground equipment, as well as places for adult activities. I do not recall just when we stopped using the park for the church picnic. -- submitted by Otto Hock

I REMEMBER March, 1976, when St. John's helped sponsor a refugee family from Laos. The family consisted of My and Nang Keomany, their 2-year old son Kae, a baby girl, CC, and Mr. K's brother, Pai. Four years ago, Alex was born.

Members from Redeemer, Darlington and St. John's helped them find employment, housing, clothes, furniture, furnishings, medical services, further education and transportation. We had a clothing drive to get some warm clothes for them as they were not accustomed to cold winters. Mom and Dad had them out for dinner and they used to visit on Sunday afternoons. They all liked the country fresh air and Kae and CC liked to ride my pony, Dimples. I couldn't understand them very well, but we had fun playing with the children. We helped them trim their first Christmas tree in their apartment in Ann Arbor!

When I first saw them recently, Nang and I recognized each other at the same time. The family now lives in Ypsilanti and shops at Meijer's where I work. --submitted by Marie Bates

I REMEMBER when the LWMS was first organized and we wanted to earn some money to give to missions. Collecting and selling newspapers was started. As now, everyone was welcome and encouraged to bring their papers to the garage. At that time, we had only one garage, so we had to leave room for the Pastor's car in the middle of the bundles of papers. We sold papers about four times a year.

Another collection point was David Maier's barn, where a paper carrier left all the "extras."

LWMS members and their spouses took turns hauling the papers to Lansky's on N. Main, Nalepka on Platt Road or to Wayne where we found a buyer who paid a better price. BUT we also found out that this buyer did not want any magazines, shiny ads, etc. She opened each bundle and quickly sorted the papers as she put them into the baler. On one occasion, she found some "bad stuff" about half way through our load. Another customer (Lauren and Rose Geiger) was waiting so she stopped us and unloaded their load. Little did she know we were there together.

Over the twenty year period of selling newspapers, the price ranged from 20¢ to \$2.50 a hundred pounds. We waited until we sold the papers before we spent the money.

In 1986, our aching joints told us to give up the strenuous exercise. The Youth Group took over what is now considered an environmental necessity. Thanks, you young folks, and keep up the good work. --submitted by Annie Wessel

I REMEMBER when the ladies of LWMS made quilts. Pieces would be cut from donated materials, taken home and sewed together in a planned pattern and finally assembled into a quilt. On our meeting night we would have a "quilting party" to tie off the quilt or quilts. These were given to various charities.

Shirley Koch once gave us left over drapery materials. It seemed like a tremendous amount at the time. We sorted through it, dividing it by colors and weights and kept sewing until there was very little left. The heavier weights were made into what would be used as sleeping mats or room dividers by World Relief. It was great fun! --submitted by Annie Wessel

I REMEMBER when Pastor Pinchoff approached me about organizing the church library sometime in the mid-seventies. It looked like a mountainous job, but he helped me box up all the books and pamphlets and I brought them home and began sorting. The Dewey Decimal system was too detailed for this type of library, so Pastor gave me the book, The Key to a Successful Church Library. This presented a much simpler way to classify a small library, but is still very workable.

The dining room table was piled high for several months. Books were placed in stacks according to their subject. Adult and Youth books were separated. The adult books were classified according to subject and given a number, and the youth books were arranged according to grade level and given a letter. It was difficult trying to categorize each book and, when in doubt, Pastor would make the decision. Then came the task of typing catalog cards. All books required at least three and some as many as six or seven depending on the number of subjects in the book. A card and pocket was made for each book and the call letters placed on the spine.

When that work was completed, the books were returned to the shelves, directions for checking out the books were posted on the wall near the library shelves in the basement, catalog cards were filed, and the books were ready for use.

More books have been added over the years, and there are now over three hundred in the collection. If you haven't been down to the basement to see what's available, you will be pleasantly surprised. --submitted by Margaret Gyde

I REMEMBER when the Christmas tree was brightly decorated with colored ornaments, tinsel and colored lights.

In 1979, I read an article about a group who had made Chrismons for their church Christmas tree. There was an address to send for information, which I did.

The information was presented to our LWMS group. The idea was favorably received. On April 21st, the church council gave us permission to proceed with the project. And, in September, they voted to pay up to \$100 for lights and materials for the Chrismons.

Perhaps an explanation of the Chrismon symbols is in order. The evergreen tree, which symbolized the eternal life which our Savior Jesus Christ has won for us is a background for tiny white lights and gold and white Chrismons. The lights speak of Him Who is the Light of the world. The Chrismons [Chris(t) + mon(ograms)] proclaim the name, the life, and the saving acts of Jesus Christ. The basic idea is that every Chrismon refers primarily to our Lord and God.

Pastor Pinchoff selected several symbols for us to make. As our Christmas tree is usually a very large tree, over 100 symbols were made. We received considerable help from Clyde in cutting Styrofoam forms and making a form for making the stars, many of which are all pearls. Extreme care was necessary in attaching the gold beads, pearls, braid and various other items to complete a Chrismon, as they are very fragile.

After many hours of completing them, the reward came when the tree was decorated and the lights turned on. These Chrismons are still enjoyed by the whole congregation each Christmas. -- submitted by Gerry Hodgson

I REMEMBER when the Wriska family was the only family that came to church. We had one of our biggest snowstorms and had come by snowmobile. We went into church and Pastor Pinchoff had a short prayer. As we were leaving church we noticed another member skiing down Sutton Road. That member was Paul Hack.

When I was in Sunday school, some of the teachers were Frances Baldus, June Brockmiller, Thelma Kimmel, Donna (Kimmel) Halman, Nancy Geiger, Lucille Wriska, Mary (Rockol) Buege, Janice (Boike) Robertson, Jack Steiner and Aldred Heyer. At the end of the school year I always looked forward to our day at German Park when we would have our class games, our three tokens for pop or candy, and finishing with our family softball game.

After I was confirmed I couldn't wait to join the softball team. At that time I was the only girl that wanted to play. Now it seems we have more women than men. What has happened to all the men?

One day when my dad was asked to help a fellow member get some pigeons off the roof of the church, my brother and I joined him. Dad and Gary had gone up to the bell tower to flip the bell and also scare the pigeons. I was on the ground with the other member and was supposed to throw a rock up on the roof. As I wound up and was letting go of the rock, my dad was echoing from the bell tower, "Deb, don't throw it," but it was already headed for the window instead of the roof. I managed to knock the pane out of one of the east windows. Not only was I in trouble with my dad, but Pastor Pinchoff was in his office in the church and wondered what had happened. Mr. Chuck Gilboe actually saved me because he could find another stained-glass pane to be put in on Monday. So, for Sunday service, it had to be clear glass and wouldn't you know it had to be a communion Sunday and everyone noticed that the pane was different. It was a wonder they still let me play on the team.

One of our other church games held at Virginia Park in Ann Arbor in the summer of 1976 will be a day my brother will never forget. It was the day he made a play in the outfield and threw the ball in to the infield and broke his arm.  
--submitted by Debbie (Wriska) Lyons

I REMEMBER the broken stained glass window incident! The window could not be fixed because there was no stained glass available in Ann Arbor that would come close in matching our windows! There was, however, one choice — we could use one of the stained glass window panes located in the outside door that leads up to the sacristy. There were panes in that window exactly like those in the church window above. So the door window was disassembled and one of those panes was used to fix the broken window. The others were stored away “in safety” in case such an incident might happen again. The open door window was then enclosed with a golden-yellowish colored plexiglass that remains in it today. I was just thinking, though — I wonder, and cannot remember, where did we store “in safety” the extra panes? Did we hide them so well we’ll never find them again? Has anyone seen them? --submitted by Dorothy (Kapp) Shear

I REMEMBER when we held two confirmation reunions in 1970. The first one was held on Wednesday evening, March 11, after the Lenten service. This reunion was specifically held to honor all those confirmed in the early years, up to 1950. Attendance at this service was 136, and 100 attended the reunion. Then, on March 18, a week later, those confirmed from 1950 to 1970 were invited to attend. Refreshments were served after each reunion, and I am not entirely sure, but this may have been the beginning of serving cookies after Lenten services.

At any rate, all the confirmation class pictures had to be found and some re-printed, the confirmands had to be identified on the pictures and labeled. They were then displayed on the upstairs bulletin board, as well as around the walls of the basement on those bulletin boards. It was a big project, but well worth the time and effort as now confirmation pictures from that time until the present have been kept, labeled, and filed each year, making our confirmation history very current and up to date.

I REMEMBER, also, the Sunday School Teachers’ Reunion held on March 1, 1981. All former and present teachers were invited to attend a special service and a potluck dinner in their honor in observance of the 200th anniversary of Sunday school teaching. It was a fun day with many teachers being called upon or volunteering some memorable experiences they had while teaching our little ones. --submitted by Dorothy (Kapp) Shear

I REMEMBER teaching Sunday school while Pastor Pinchoff was our Pastor from July, 1969, to September, 1978. The class sizes varied from 4 - 12. There were usually 4 - 6 teachers and two substitutes, and all were expected to attend the monthly teacher’s meetings.

We were required to fill out a two part form for each story during the month. The first dealt with the story itself, and the second was devoted to additional helps. The first part had five questions: What background information or details need explaining before starting the lesson? What is the central truth and what conclusion or application do I want my students to draw from the central truth? What are the other important truths and applications? How will the story help children know the way of salvation? What approach will I use to begin the lesson with my class?

The second part considered related materials, including Bible verse or sections, catechism, hymns, visual aids, home assignment and memory work that would help teach the lesson.

To be able to complete the form meant a lot of studying. We not only read the stories from the Bible and Sunday school book, but Rupprecht was a much used reference book. The church’s visual aids were used each Sunday

to help the children understand the stories. These included pictures, filmstrips, slides, flannel graph, maps, globe, etc.

During the meeting, Pastor would call on each of us to give what we thought was the answer, and then much discussion followed. By the time we read the reference books, related material, and discussed the story, we had a much better understanding of it and more confidence to teach the lesson.

We had many good discussions and it really taxed our brains to come up with the right answers to his impromptu questions, but I'm sure it taxed Pastor Pinchoff's brain too, to try to straighten us out in our thinking.

--submitted by Margaret Gyde

My grandfather, George Zeeb, helped design and build the old wooden tables we used for many years in the dining room of the church. He also built the kitchen table still in use, as well as the coat rack now used for the choir robes. When the church bought new tables for the dining area in March, 1975, we purchased one of the old wooden ones. We still use the table for picnics, reunions, etc. They were sturdy tables and a good size, seating more people than the present ones. They were pretty heavy, and it was a job to put them up. We are pleased to still have one in our possession.

I remember in 1972 when the Men's Club started a "Winter Fun Party" for all the church members at the Zeeb pond. Pastor Edward Pinchoff and family always came, even though he wasn't fond of cold weather. At that time, snowmobiles were very popular. There would be 12-15 of them. Children brought sleds for sledding down the hills. The pond was cleared for those wanting to skate. There were even some cross country skiers. A fire was there if anyone wanted to cook a hot dog or roast marshmallows. There was hot chocolate to help keep everyone warm. In later years, the snowmobile lost favor and the weather did not cooperate and the "Winter Fun Parties" faded away. -- submitted by Ken Zeeb

My oldest memory from St. John's was quite an embarrassment at the time! I was the oldest of the three girls — Glenda, Elaine, and Debbie (Kristine wasn't thought of yet!) On this particular Sunday, it was my job to collect everyone after Sunday school and meet Mom outside because we weren't going to church that Sunday. Mom said, "Just get the girls, come up the stairs and I'll be waiting for you outside." I was probably 5, Elaine 4 and Debbie 3. I found them, we held hands, and went up the stairs. Boy was I surprised when we walked out the door to see all the people sitting in the pews. It seemed that everyone started laughing at the three girls "up front" where the minister should be! I'm sure someone helped us out to our Mom, but I don't remember who it was that saved us.

The period (1969-1978) that the Pinchoff's were at St. John's also was a very special time for me. Edward Pinchoff was a great teacher for our confirmation class. However, he was pretty tough, too! We had lots of memory work, plus we had to go to church each Sunday and write a page about his sermon for the next week's class. I still keep in touch with the family today in Phoenix, Arizona. They loved the house with the yard and creek, and all the kids (Marnie, Martha, Paul, Sara and David) enjoyed finding little "creatures" and coming in to show their mom, Kathy, all their treasures!

Sunday school and Girl Pioneers were always lots of fun. It was neat to get your tickets at the Sunday school picnic for the "goodies" and playing the games, including softball, at German Park. Christmas practices kept you busy every Saturday in December. The program always made you nervous, but it was worth it afterward because everyone told you what a good job you had done (and you just had to remember you would get a special treat bag at the end.) It is still very special when I get to come back to visit at St. John's with all the great memories! -- submitted by Glenda (Zeeb) Stegenga

Life goes on, all around us, every day. As I stop to think about my memories of St. John's, I find it so intertwined with the key moments of my life. My family, parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents have all worshiped there.

We've celebrated baptisms, when God has claimed us for His own. And the fact that I and my son have shared the same baptismal font is special to me.

We've celebrated confirmations and the fact that I committed myself to God at the same altar as my father did is special to me.

Since I no longer live close by, I find that going to church at St. John's is something that I still get homesick for. The feelings of love, caring and compassion that comes from that small country church are unique and special to me.

We've celebrated joyous occasions of marriage at St. John's — I and my sisters, all in the same spot as our grandparents. And at the other emotional extreme, we've mourned the loss of loved ones there. Through it all has been God's all-encompassing love for us. The continuum of life is centered there, tied to God's Word of forgiveness and eternal life.

St. John's is special to me. My memories of it are strong and many. I pray that I can instill such memories and values for my children with our new church family in Minnesota. -- submitted by Elaine (Zeeb) Beckstrom

As a young girl growing up, I have many fond memories of St. John's -- I liked it when my dad was on to usher because he sometimes let me help him ring the bell after church. As a child I remember hanging on to the thick rope and being lifted up and down off the floor as the bell chimed loudly. I also remember sneaking up along the side and going to watch Dorothy [Shear] play the closing music for the service. Occasionally, she would let me play a few notes, too.

I remember my confirmation verse from May 19, 1974. Assigned by Pastor Pinchoff, it still has special meaning to me. Palm 37:5 "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

On July 7, 1980, I endured the worst experience of my life. The small airplane my friend and I, along with her parents, were on crashed in the mountains of Colorado. My injuries were extensive and I spent three weeks out there in the hospital. The prayers and support my family and I received from friends and neighbors enabled us all to cope with this most difficult situation.

The next time I was able to be at St John's was for my sister Glenda's wedding on August 23, 1980. I was slated to be the maid of honor. On a few hours "leave" from St. Joe's rehab, I can remember being carried up the front stairs of the church in my wheelchair by a couple of strong men.

By God's grace, just three short years later, on September 10, 1983, I was able to celebrate one of the happiest days of my life at St. John's — my own marriage to Jerry Diuble. I remember the church being packed on the hottest September 10th on record — 94°! Pastor Mattek officiated and, once again, Dorothy played the organ.

My family and I now belong to a Lutheran church near our home in Saline, but the memories I have from St. John's will last forever. -- submitted by Debra (Zeeb) Diuble

I REMEMBER many things from my childhood years at St. John's. Some of my most vivid memories though, are from the church parties we would have each winter at my family's pond.

We would set a date for the party each February. The week before that date my dad (Ken Zeeb) would spend lots of time making sure that the snow was removed from the pond and that the ice had a smooth surface for skating. He would also collect wood for a fire and be sure that our snowmobiles were in top condition.

My mom (Joann Zeeb) would spend this time preparing in other ways. She would buy hot chocolate, hot dogs and marshmallows for roasting over the fire. She would also dig out winter clothes and gear for the whole family.

The day of the party was always one of anticipation. Soon, cars and snowmobiles would begin arriving. People would enjoy themselves in a variety of ways: from ice skating, skiing, ice fishing and snowmobiling to sledding and just visiting in general.

I also remember one Christmas Eve when I was about six years old. As now, the Sunday school children would present a program telling the story of Jesus' birth during this service. Everyone had a partner and would tell a piece of the story.

On this particular night, I was not feeling well, but my mom made me go to church anyway. (No doubt, she figured I was "faking" about being sick!) All the children gathered downstairs and were preparing for the service. I told my teacher, Fran Baldus, that I was sick and she gave me a box, just in case.

Sure enough, while we waited in the entry way to proceed down the aisle, I threw-up. Luckily, I had the box and there was little mess! I can remember how upset my partner was that she had to say the whole part all by herself!  
--submitted by Kristine (Zeeb) Dreffs

In 1973, the church was redecorated for the 100th anniversary. Pastor Pinchoff was only with us a short time then, but he inspired us as council members to put in the paintings in the upper front of the church such as the dove, etc. from the Bible passages. We also received help from the painter who, by the way, came from the western part of Illinois.

There were big discussions on the changes to be made in the ceiling over the altar, which previously looked like the ceiling in the church body with the brown beams. There were two Bible scrolls in that ceiling that were taken out. Then the pipe organ pipes and background was another big decision. Detroit Edison advised a change in the lighting for the altar, lectern and pulpit, which you see all in place today.

After this was all done, with much—much discussions, most everyone agreed a very nice job was done by the painters. And changing the ceiling to the dome effect over the altar did do great things for the appearance. It is only a guess on my part, but I believe this was done somewhere for 5 to 6 thousand dollars?  
--submitted by Marvin Trapp

Ralph Wurster and George Shima designed and made the rail going up to Communion. Herman Graf finished the wood. Ralph put it on the iron rail, sometime in the late seventies. Sometime in the late seventies Ralph built the vanity in the ladies room. He made the sliding doors and put the partition between the vanity and stool. Clyde Hodgson installed the sink. About 1984, Ralph cut the hole in the balcony ceiling so they could up in the attic. In 1981, Ralph painted the trim on the house. He has also repaired and painted the back porch several times.  
--submitted by Ralph and Bertha Wurster

St. John's Lutheran Church has always been special to me, and I thank God I was born to Christian parents who attended the church. Many special events happened at St. John's during my life. Sam and I were both baptized,

confirmed and married there. Our children, Jeffrey and Kathryn, were baptized there also. May 2, 1992, our son and daughter-in-law were married at St. John's since our son wanted to be married in the church his parents, grandparents, and great grandparents had attended.

In 1973, we moved to Chelsea and still attended St. John's. I was bringing the sloppy joes to a Pastor's Conference and arrived late. Pastor came downstairs and said the meeting was running late, so dinner should be served later. I was thankful since the sloppy joes had to be warmed up before serving. I knew then we needed to find a church close to where we lived to participate in church functions. We transferred to Faith Lutheran Church, Dexter. I pray God will continue to bless the congregation in the future and have it stand strong in the faith until the Lord comes on the last day and takes us all to heaven. --submitted by Nancy L. (Kempf) Morgan

I REMEMBER October 5, 1974. It was a beautiful, crisp autumn day at St. John's — the kind of Saturday that brings back memories of a friendly football game with neighborhood friends. But, this day was even more special. It was my wedding day.

Pastor Pinchoff conducted the service and what a service it was! How can there be any greater memory than to begin married life with friends who share the same faith? There were no sentimental wedding songs, no elaborate furnishings, no ornate cathedral-like surroundings, just a simple Lutheran church filled with people who enjoyed singing from the hymnal such beloved hymns as "Now Thank We All Our God" and "Oh, Blest the House Whate'er Befall." Just people gathering together to worship God, to thank and praise Him for the gift of marriage and family.

Yes, it was a beautiful day. Mary (Rockol) and I appreciated so much the hospitality of St. John's which allowed us to use the church basement for the wedding reception. Friends and relatives of the two families who came from all over Michigan and various other states appreciated the chance to get to know one another. There was no need for drinking or dancing to break the ice. The only music was the music of laughter and friendly voices as Christians became acquainted with one another. Mary and I will always remember the fellowship in the church basement and the kindness which the members of St. John's showed to us and to our guests on that wonderful day of October 5, 1974.

Some of the people who were there that day in 1974 are gone now. We remember them. For they live not only in our hearts, but with the Lord in heaven. It is there that we will meet again and enjoy perfect fellowship not only with each other, but also with our Lord and Savior. It is in churches like St. John's that we came to know that blessed truth that Jesus who died and rose again for us is the only way to heaven. May all the members of St. John's continue to believe and boldly confess that wonderful truth! --submitted by Tom Buege

One memory I'll never forget is during the Christmas program when I forgot my part. We each had to say them separately back then. I remember looking out and just freezing. Then one of the 7th & 8th graders started me off, and I remembered the rest. After the program, I went downstairs and cried. Pastor Pinchoff came up to me and shared the time when he was leading the church service and forgot the Lord's Prayer. After hearing his story, I felt a little better. I also liked the bags of candy we received on Christmas Eve after the service. I also remember Girl Pioneers and singing to the shut-ins with Mom at Christmas time. --submitted by Janis Wagner

I REMEMBER when dart baseball was the entertainment at Men's Club instead of euchre. We would choose teams and try to advance our players by throwing darts at a board to get hits.

I REMEMBER when the boy and girl pioneers were started and Ken Kaercher, Aldred Heyer, and myself were leaders for the boys. One of our projects was to plant evergreen trees in the back of the church. Each boy planted a tree, and out of all the trees planted, the big evergreen behind the church now is the only survivor.

I REMEMBER when the church was redecorated. They painted the ceiling with three different panel designs. Then you were supposed to cast your vote. The majority vote decided which panel design they went with. What a difference that made to the ceiling.

I REMEMBER one day while I was cleaning the church, I thought something was wrong with my vacuum because it kept starting and stopping. When I went to investigate why my vacuum wasn't working, much to my surprise, I found Pastor Mattek pulling the plug. Since Pastor Mattek has left, our organist (Dorothy Shear) has kept up the tradition by sneaking in and pulling the plug. --submitted by Elmer "Bud" Wriska

I REMEMBER joining the youth group after I was confirmed in 1973. Our leaders were Don and Ruth Danner and Jim and June Bales. One of our outings took us to Danner's cottage at Hi-Land Lake in May of 1973 or 1974. What started out as a fun day of canoeing, games, and a cookout turned out to be a day we never forgot. When we were ready to start the cookout, the sky started to become very dark, like a storm was coming. We all hurried inside the cottage, and then the wind started blowing really hard. The next thing we knew, a tornado was going through the area. Two trees had fallen between the cars, but never touched them. As we started for home, we came across a tree that was in the road, but we were able to get around it. Some of the people I remember being there that day were: the Danners and children, the Bales, Pastor Pinchoff, Kip Kaercher, Jeff Gilboe, Steve McCotter, Glenda and Elaine Zeeb, myself, and others I don't remember.

--submitted by Gary Wriska

### **Memories from around the 1980's**

I REMEMBER when we built the new garage in the fall of 1982. First we needed to remove a large maple tree. We pulled the stump out and it is still lying in the northwest corner of the church property. Then, as we were digging the footings, we ran into all sorts of large rocks which were part of the old parsonage that had burned down in 1932. They must have been pushed away and then buried there. The garage was built in the fall of 1982, but it got too cold to put the brick on that year. So we waited to do that until the spring of 1983. While the garage was being bricked, there was a big snowstorm that hit. -- submitted by Ralph Wurster

I REMEMBER when there were two pine trees on the east side of the church. They were taller than the roof (but not the peak). On Easter Sunday, 1988, a tornado came through the area, and winds blew over the two trees (actually, it just laid them over on each other). There was no damage to the church, except to the corner of one eaves spout. Lester Maulbetsch came in with a boom truck to get the top of the one tree off of the eaves spout. Then Ken and Shirley Koch came with chain saws and cleaned up the mess. -- submitted by Jessica Weber

I REMEMBER teaching Sunday school. One year I had 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders in my class. That was a challenge as the 1st graders couldn't read nearly as well as the others.

One Sunday the lesson talked about the people singing Hymns of Praise to the Lord. To make sure all the children knew what it was talking about, I asked the class, "What is a Hymn?" I was impressed when the youngest child in the class shot up his hand, so I called on him. His response - "It's a He!"

-- submitted by Martha Zeeb

I REMEMBER attending my first annual meeting of the local AAL branch in the fall of 1987. It just so happened that the Detroit Tigers were playing the Minnesota Twins for the AL pennant that fall. Jonathan was an infant, and Karen had dressed him in a little Twins outfit that we had been given by friends in Minnesota.

When the AAL business meeting began, Bob Eisinger immediately made the motion that they "get the pastor's kid some decent clothes." The motion passed.

The following week was the men's club fish fry. Before the meal, Bob Eisinger got everyone's attention and made a special presentation to Jonathan of a little Tigers' jogging suit, which he wanted Jonathan to wear immediately.

Jonathan was too little to care which team's logo he had on. He was more than willing to mess up any outfit which he happened to be wearing.

By the way, the Twins, with their homer hankies, defeated the Tigers that season, and went on to win the World Series. -- submitted by Pastor Jeffrey Weber

I REMEMBER when our church was broken into in 1982. The thieves broke out a window on the west side of the basement and took the communion ware and all of the silver table service. They simply took the drawers and all. Ralph built new drawers for the silverware to replace the ones which were taken. But later, one of the drawers was found in a ditch. It is still stored in the furnace room of the church.

In 1982, St. John's was celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the church building, so the Schauer's purchased new stainless steel table service in memory of Mrs. Albert Sell to replace that which was stolen. This table service was brought in and put right on the tables for the celebration meal.

I also remember that during the harvest festival, George Shima would create pictures made out of various grains, with their colors and textures. It must have taken him many hours to design and prepare this beautiful picture. This picture would then be placed in the church where the Baptismal font is.

I also remember that in 1960, Paul Luckhardt, George Wandel, and Ralph Wurster constructed the built-in cabinets in the southwest room of the basement. In 1978 Fred Nonnenmacher built the cabinet in which the altar cloths are still stored. --submitted by Ralph and Bertha Wurster

I REMEMBER receiving a telephone call one morning back in 1982. It was Pastor Mattek asking that I come to church right away. There had been a break-in. The State Trooper had arrived and was dusting for fingerprints on the candelabras which were lying on the floor. The desk drawers and closet had been ransacked. The communion ware was gone. The mirror on the "baptism" door was broken. Someone got cut as there were blood spots on the carpet and papers. The worst mess was the file at the top of the back stairs. The file folders had been removed and thrown on the floor scattering contents all over. We didn't start cleaning up until more investigation was completed.

When checking downstairs, (I wondered if the mimeo machine was OK), we saw that the flatware was also gone. There were many lovely sterling silver pieces that had been donated over the years. We found that the screen on the window over the kitchen sink had been tampered with. Further checking found the burglar's entry spot. A pane in the south window on the west side was broken, permitting a hand to come in and unlock the window -- more fingerprints. --submitted by Annie Wessel

I REMEMBER driving down Sutton Road for the first time. I was scanning the countryside, searching for what was to be our new home. As I was driving along, I started to see little glimpses of a little country church & brick house tucked away among the trees. As I made the turn at Northfield Church Road, I was pleasantly surprised! For there, standing ready and waiting, were at least 20 gentlemen who welcomed us to our new home. Many names were given that night, but much to my dismay, I couldn't remember all of them. But right away I knew that this was where we belonged and that we were among a bunch of very friendly people--a group of whom we would grow very fond.

We were given a quick tour of the house and then I was posted at the front door to direct where all the boxes were to be put. Two of the men, Richard Cort and Dean Kapp, threatened to put the washer and dryer up in our bedroom. (Now after 7 years of carrying all the laundry up and down two flights of stairs - that may have not been such a bad idea!) Another man, Clyde Hodgson, was told time after time that the box he was carrying belonged in the study. After numerous trips to the study, he came with something that was quite obviously not to go in the study and I said, "study!" anyway! Those couple of conversations were the first of our many laughs here.

After the truck was all unloaded, we were all taken over to the church basement for a wonderful supper prepared by many of the ladies. The men, the ladies, & our family (Mom & Dad Schwarz were also with us) all sat down together and began getting to know one another. The good feeling I had just kept on getting better.

By the time that everyone left that evening, each one of our beds had been set up, the washer and dryer had been hooked up, the doors on the refrigerator had been changed for its new location, a cable was brought to hook up the TV, etc. Ken & Joann Zeeb even brought eggs & bacon for the next morning's breakfast. What a heartfelt welcome we received that day!

-- submitted by Karen Weber

I REMEMBER that 1983 was the same calendar as this year, including when Lent and Easter fell. On the second Wednesday of Lent (February 23) our Kevin was born, and less than 12 hours later Pastor Mattek was saying a prayer for mother and son.

With the grandparents away on vacation until Easter, we decided to hold off on baptism until April 17. There were two reasons for this: 1) the 18th is Richard's birthday, and 2) it is usually beautiful weather for his birthday, so we thought the kids could play outside.

April 17 dawns not warm and sunny, but with 7" of snow and thick ice. Dean Kapp called and wanted to know if we would mind canceling church. "No, you can't do that, I've got too much food prepared." So all invited arrived but one, plus a few hardy souls who always come, were there for Kevin's baptism.

Oh, Paul Geiger was so excited about being Kevin's god-father — they managed to get stuck (on Five Mile), sent Dave to get the tractor (I guess that makes two that weren't there) and still made it to church before we did!

--submitted by Diana Cort

My most memorable moment during my ministry at St. John's took place on Tuesday, October 2, 1984. I was making some visits at the Martin Luther Home in South Lyon when I got a call that something tragic had happened at the Geiger farm. It seems that Lauren and Paul were in the silo and were overcome with poison gas. I rushed to the farm, and when I got there, they were being extricated from the outside entrance to the silo on stretchers. When they reached the ground, the paramedics worked on them with little or no results. They were taken to the hospital, only to be pronounced dead. It was indeed a sad day, not only for the Geiger family, but for the entire congregation.

On Friday, October 5, the funeral was held in the church in the afternoon. Not only was the church packed upstairs and downstairs, but hundreds of others were listening on loudspeakers that we had set up outside. Cars were parked in the field across the street.

A sad day, and yet we rejoiced in the Lord because He had taken two of His faithful workers to their eternal home. That's my remembrance, what comes to my mind when I think of St. John's.

--submitted by Rev. Floyd Mattek served St. John's from 1978-86

I REMEMBER the time when I ran into the church sign — not with a vehicle, but with my head. It was the day of the Sunday school picnic. The sun was shining, the sky was blue, and the children were running around like shrieking maniacs — my hoodlum cousin and I included.

We had been issued squirt guns after the meal and we were tearing around the church grounds like miniature whirlwinds. I remember my cousin pursuing me in what seemed like a five mile foot race. I came up to the hedge on the east side of the church and tore through it. I ran up the hill and looked around to see where Jeff was at — right behind me, as I recall. And then, WHAM! down on the ground I went.

I didn't feel any pain, just a trickling down my forehead that I thought was water from a squirt gun. I staggered to the landing, ready to continue the good fight, but Jeff's father, Dean, came rushing from the parking lot and up the steps of the church. He told me to sit down. By this time, quite a crowd had gathered. My parents took me to St. Joe's where I ended up with stitches and a headache. I never got another squirt gun at a Sunday school picnic again.

--submitted by Christian J. Kapp

I REMEMBER in the early 1980's my father, Herb Kapp, working hard on making the communion card and pencil holders on all the pews in our church. My mother, Gladys, sanded them. Ralph Wurster installed them. This was an extremely big project for my father and the last that he was able to do. He enjoyed working with wood. He repaired and made the spindles on the altar. In front of the balcony railing, he made a ledge to stop a hymnal from sliding over the edge. --submitted by Dean Kapp

I REMEMBER all the fun times at the Men's Club Winter parties at the Ken Zeeb farm. One particular party on Sunday, February 10, 1985, it snowed huge, big snowflakes and by Wednesday, Feb. 13, 1985, schools were closed throughout the state.

My parents, Elmer and Mae Schwemmin, came out in the afternoon (even with the roads bad) to enjoy the bonfire, see the people and enjoy the fun.

My children (Janice, Jeffrey, and Julie) and the other children liked tobogganing down the hills onto the ice after the snowmobiles would make a path. It was GREAT tobogganing, ice skating and wonderful snowmobiling. Even my dad went at the age of 79. Through the woods, fields, and up and down some super steep hills that still take my breath away. Then we roasted hot dogs and marshmallows. A fun time for all. --submitted by Sally (Schwemmin) Kapp

I REMEMBER the euchre party at the Danner's home when it was snowing and we couldn't get up the hill of their driveway. Another time there was not any sign of snow, but when we left the Danner's, the ground and cars were all covered with snow. It was a good turnout for euchre and fun times at the Danner's.

--submitted by Sally (Schwemmin) Kapp

I REMEMBER when my wife, Sharon, almost received more for communion than spiritual fulfillment. It was during early spring, a time when the flies were still sluggish. We had gone up to communion and were standing

at the altar, waiting our turn. Sharon was at my right and I watched Pastor Weber removed a wafer from the goblet. As he raised it to my wife's lips we (Sharon and I) noticed an added bonus attached to the wafer, out of sight of the pastor. I wish I could have had a video camera to collect the expressions of Sharon's closed mouthed face as she silently shook her head side to side and making 'mmmmm-mmmmm' sounds. Also of the pastor as he tried to figure out why she refused to open her mouth. It was hard for all to keep from laughing out loud when the sleepish fly decided to buzz off to find a safer place to rest. --submitted by Andrew T. Smith

I REMEMBER about a year and a half ago (1993) how Christopher stopped Pastor Weber dead in his tracks during a sermon. During Bible class, Christopher always went through the front of the church to go down stairs to use the bathroom (he could not go through the basement because of Sunday school classes). Well, one Sunday he needed to use the bathroom during the sermon, so he proceeded right down the center aisle to the front of the church. He stopped and looked at Pastor Weber, and then went right around the pulpit and continued down to the basement — just where he was going.

I also remember the last two years of Bible School were really fun ones for the kids. They really enjoyed the craft projects we did. I think one of the nicest ones was when they all made t-shirts and then wore them to church on Sunday when they sang. --submitted by Cindy Fischer

I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER the wonderful, caring people of St. John's. They always look out for me and my family. As an example, one summer while we were on vacation, a major storm took out electricity for the entire area. So that we would not lose our frozen items and the meat, etc. that was in our freezers, Harriette Kern and Ralph Wurster emptied out the refrigerator in the house, and put it in the chest freezer in the garage. Then, for as long as power was out, Ralph Wurster brought over his portable generator for several hours each day to keep that freezer cold. The Lord uses wonderful people such as these to watch over His own.

-- submitted by Pastor Jeffrey Weber

I REMEMBER when we went Christmas tree hunting for the church. We would go with Richard Cort to the Nonnenmacher's Christmas tree farm. We looked at the trees and jumped and played in the snow every once in a while.

Once, when Richard and Dad were cutting it down, Mom said, "Let's move, so we don't get hit when the tree falls." Then Dad said, "Oh, it won't fall for a while." Just as Mom and Jonathan were beginning to move away, the tree fell on top of them. Mom had the branches around her, but had huddled over Jonathan, protecting him. No one was injured at all.

-- submitted by Jessica Weber

I do not believe this booklet would be complete without a note about how diligently the Anniversary Committee worked to bring everything together for the celebration of the 125th anniversary of St. John's.

The committee consisted of: Guy and Ethel Paul, David and Frances Baldus, Cary and Dorothy Shear, Hollis and Viola Kapp, and George Kempf. In addition to these people, many other members were tapped to help out with various projects throughout the year.

The committee decided a pictorial church directory would be nice. Much of the work for this was done by various volunteers. The commemorative item selected was a glass Christmas ornament. The committee chose the design and colors. These were then sold at cost. The suggestion of compiling a booklet of things people remembered about St. John's was implemented, and everything received up to the anniversary is included in this booklet. A history booklet was produced using Pastor Weber's computer, and then photocopied.

The ladies on the committee took upon themselves the work of planning and organizing the meal which would be served between the two services. They sought to involve as many families in the congregation as possible, without taxing anyone at all.

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard in so many different ways in helping to bring about a successful anniversary day.  
-- submitted by Pastor Jeffrey Weber

I REMEMBER I was ten or twelve years old, when Francis Maulbetsch and his wife got married (I forget the year). But my sister, Mae (Kittel) Schwemmin and I were living on Sutton Road. Well, Francis had come up to our place and needed some help to get about 100 chairs from the church. We helped him load them into his truck and he could take them to his house on Northfield Church Road for his wedding. We helped him for about one hour. He had given us each fifty cents. So we were pleased to be able to do that for him. So I still remember that. I think the wedding was in the month of June or July.

I hope this can be put into your other book. We certainly have enjoyed your book of things that happened many years ago.  
12-18-94 --submitted by Clara Rosina (Kittel) Page

I REMEMBER being in Irv Scheel's Sunday school class. His future bride, Lois Trapp, also taught Sunday school, the next grade younger than mine. The two of them teamed up on a contest. For a certain length of time -- I can't remember how long we did this -- there was a quiz at every class, regarding the lesson from the day. After this time was over, the two students who scored highest were selected from both classes.

In our class, Dorothy (Kapp) Shear and I were the winners. In Ms. Trapp's class the winners were Gary Scheel and I believe Gary Shear (I could be wrong on those two). The prize was, of all things, a trip to Tiger Stadium to see a real ballgame! This was a first for me. I followed the Tigers very closely when I was that age, and if they announced that prize at the beginning of the contest I'm sure I worked all the harder to win!

The big day included stopping somewhere for a picnic which even included freshly cooked sweet car. At the stadium, I was amazed at how BIG everything was. During the warmup, one of the batters hit a ball that I was sure would go into the center field bleachers. Instead it fell to the ground just past second base -- what an optical illusion!

It was an exciting day, and was one of the many Sunday school events, albeit not as spiritual as some, that "I remember."

It might be of interest that, whenever we get a chance, my husband and I attend the 9:15 service at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church in Frankenmuth -- it's the German service.

10-2-94 --submitted by Elizabeth (Wandel) Kercher

