

# Golden Anniversary

The Lutheran Church of The Messiah

1932-1982



Theme: "Fifty and Going Forward"

*PARTICIPANTS:*

The Rev. Cecil W. Carpenter, *Pastor 1954-1978*

The Rev. Dermon A. Sox, *Pastor 1944-1953*

The Rev. Dr. Robert E. Lee, *Interim Pastor 1980-1982*

Mrs. Joyce Staven, *Organist and Choir Director*

DECATUR, GEORGIA



# SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING

## *50th Anniversary*

January 17, 1982

### THE SERVICE

3:30 P.M.      Paster Carpenter, Liturgist

The Prelude: "Alleluia" Mrs. Denice Smith, Soloist .....	<i>Mozart</i>
The Processional Hymn 152, "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" ..	<i>Austrian Hymn</i>
The Order of Service	
Confession of Sins .....	<i>Page 41</i>
Introit	
Psalm: "How Lovely Are Thy Mansions (Schuetz) .....	<i>Choir</i>
The Gloria Patri .....	<i>Page 43</i>
The Kyrie .....	<i>Page 44</i>
The Gloria in Excelsis .....	<i>Page 49</i>
The Collect	
The First Lesson .....	<i>Ephesians 2:13-22</i>
The Second Lesson .....	<i>Hebrews 10:19-25</i>
The Alleluia .....	<i>Page 52</i>
The Holy Gospel .....	<i>John: 15:5-17</i>
The Nicene Creed .....	<i>Page 4</i>
Greetings from the Southeastern Synod	
The Sermon Hymn 443, "Now Thank We All Our God" .	<i>Nun Danket Alle Gott</i>
The Sermon .....	<i>Pastor Dermon Sox</i>
The Offering	
The Anthem: "Alleluia" .....	<i>Harris</i>
The Offertory .....	<i>Page 56</i>
The Prayer of the Church	
The Lord's Prayer	
The Benediction .....	<i>Pastor Robert E. Lee</i>
Threefold Amen .....	<i>Page 70</i>
The Recessional Hymn 149, "The Church's One Foundation" .....	<i>Aurelia</i>
The Postlude: "Variations on A Mighty Fortress"	



The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Messiah began when seventeen individuals met in the Sunday School rooms of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer on Sunday, January 17, 1932, and decided to establish a second Lutheran church in Atlanta. The following Sunday the congregation was formally organized at the home of Mrs. Laura Cook with 19 charter members.

The first place of worship was St. Timothy's Episcopal Chapel on Boulevard Drive, N.E., in the Kirkwood section of Atlanta. Mr. Charles H. Stieglitz, a layman with great faith, guided the mission through the organizational phase. Through his leadership the Church of the Messiah was incorporated under the laws of Georgia on May 13, 1932. In 1933, Messiah was admitted to the Georgia-Alabama Synod in March and on May 28th the congregation purchased a house at 1969 Boulevard Drive for \$1800 with \$200 down and \$20 per month. This was later sold for \$2500 in January 1934.

On May 21, 1933, the Rev. James A. Rikard became the first regular pastor, supply pastors having served the congregation until then. Worship was still being held in St. Timothy's Episcopal Chapel when the Rev. George F. Hart was installed as the second pastor September 1, 1935. On November 10th of that year two lots with a two-story house on one of them were purchased for \$4400. Services were held in the rooms on the first floor of the house until July 1st when the small colonial chapel built on the vacant lot was dedicated. The purchase and the building were financed by a loan of \$3500 from the Board of American Missions and a loan from Mrs. Bookhoop of Savannah.

The Rev. J. Milton Frick served from January 15, 1940 as the third pastor of Messiah. Under his leadership a parsonage was purchased for \$7000 at 541 Whitefoord Avenue. Though convinced that the Howard Street location was disadvantageous, Pastor Frick was unable to persuade the congregation to move.

His successor the Rev. Dermon A. Sox who was installed August 1, 1944 had greater success. On August 20, 1946 the mortgage on the Howard Street property was burned. That very month the congregation voted to move to Decatur with the prospect of greater service to its people and because of the feeling of a need of greater opportunity to serve the unchurched.

The greater portion of the present property on Clairmont Avenue was purchased for \$25,000 which was financed by \$23,750 borrowed from the Board of American Missions. The Howard Street property was sold for \$15,000 in December and the first service in Decatur was



held in the Clairmont School on Erie Avenue. The facilities were rented for fifteen dollars a month and included the services of the colored janitor, who with his wife, attended the Lutheran services.

From February 4, 1946 through July 16, 1949 the petition of the congregation to have the property rezoned for church purposes was continually opposed on the grounds, or rather the fears, of nearby residents that the small size of the congregation coupled with the legal fact that the only zoning change under the law at that time would have been for business. There was no zoning for church purposes only. Hence it was possible that the corner might be leased as the site of a gasoline station. Lack of understanding of the financial backing given Lutheran missions by the national board was undoubtedly the cause of much hostility. By court order the petition was granted in 1949.

Meanwhile the parsonage on Whitefoord Avenue was sold for \$9750 at the pastor's suggestion, and he and his family moved to the second floor of the large house then on the property.

August 15, 1949 when ground was broken for the present chapel was a great day for the congregation. On February 19, 1950 the structure faced with Stone Mountain granite was dedicated. Three years later a parsonage at 2939 North Decatur Road was bought for \$14,500 again through aid from the Board of Missions. The Rev. Cecil W. Carpenter was installed on January 1, 1954 as fourth pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Messiah. Under his leadership the congregation in the summer of 1955 embarked on a successful campaign to raise funds to eliminate the building fund debt and to erect a parish and education building. The mortgage on the church building was burned September 6, 1957 and the longed for parish education building became possible. Work on it was begun following the ground breaking November 9, 1958 and the completed building dedicated December 13, 1959.

The church continued to grow both in numbers and physically. In July, 1966 a new organ was dedicated and the next year Parcel #1 of the Slack property was purchased for use as a parking lot. In was during the negotiations for this lot that the Congregation entered into an agreement to purchase the adjoining Slack property in three parcels. That labeled Parcel 2 has been purchased and is the area behind the Slack residence. As long as Mrs. Slack lives Parcel 3 of the property remains hers and the Congregation has an option to buy it at her death.

Under Pastor Carpenter's leadership the Messiah served as instructional ground for Seminarians first of Gettysburg and then of



Southern between their junior and senior year. Ten Seminarians served their internship at the Messiah 1965-71 and 1974-78. All are now ordained Lutheran ministers: William Diamond, Fred Krautwurst, Donald Main, Donald Lindman, John Grill, Kenneth Schott, Sam Moore, Richard Fritz, Gary Schimmer and Friedrich Hahler who was from Germany.

In August, 1960, the present parsonage at 2430 Tanglewood Road was purchased for \$28,500 with the aid of the Mission Board. Following Pastor Carpenter's resignation in April the Rev. George W. Fisher became the fifth pastor of Messiah on September 10, 1978. Meanwhile the Congregation voted to build the Office Building Addition connecting the two existing buildings. On June 17, 1979 this was dedicated, having been built with a \$90,000 loan from Aid Association for Lutherans.

Pastor Fisher resigned the charge and preached for the last time on September 7, 1980. After several months the Rev. Dr. Robert E. Lee, Pastor Emeritus of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, became the Interim Pastor of the Congregation an office which he has filled with love and devotion. Because of his guidance and persistence, the Congregation now awaits the coming of a full-time pastor.

No more fitting conclusion to this brief history can be written than a paraphrase of that which was used at the Silver Anniversary, of Messiah. As the first fifty years have brought realities far beyond the dreams of those 17 dedicated Lutherans who met on January 17, 1932 so may our dreams for the second half of a century in the work of the Lutheran Church of the Messiah be realized and exceeded through a faith and through prayers equal to those of the charter members.

CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH  
WHO ARE STILL MEMBERS

Mrs. Alice J. deNobriga

Mrs. Cleo Johnson

Mr. Henry L. Jones, Sr.

Miss Sarah Mae Rikard

9/14/83 The Decatur News/Sun

Lutheran  
Church of  
Messiah



Former Emory Hospital Chaplain Richard L. Schaper To Intern At Messiah

## Schaper To Train As Minister At Lutheran Church Of The Messiah <sup>713</sup>

A former Emory University Hospital chaplain has assumed duties as vicar at the Lutheran Church of the Messiah in Decatur.

Richard L. Schaper, a Rhodes Scholar and former Benedictine monk, was in Emory University Hospital's clinical pastoral education program for two years before joining the Clairemont Avenue congregation as their intern minister-in-training.

In offering the position to Mr. Schaper, the church reactivated a long tradition

of serving as a final training ground for advanced seminarians seeking ordination in the Lutheran Church of America. Although Messiah has not had an intern in recent years, nearly a dozen pastors now serving other congregations received their practical ministerial experience prior to ordination by working alongside of the pastor of the Decatur church.

According to the church's pastor, the Rev. Haco W. von Hacke, the vicar's duties will involve full im-

mersion in the life of the parish, including home and hospital visiting, leading Bible studies and assisting in Sunday worship services.

Mr. Schaper received his education at Colgate University, Oxford University, University of Chicago and Yale University. He also has spent eight years in a Benedictine Monastery. Upon completion of his internship, he hopes to be ordained a pastor in the Southeastern Synod of the Lutheran Church of America.

## Lutheran Church Plans German Christmas Service

Lutheran Church of the Messiah, 465 Clairmont Road, Decatur, will hold its seventh annual German Christmas service on Sunday, December 18, at 7:30 p. m.

The service will feature liturgy and a special Christmas sermon, all spoken in German. The Metro Atlanta Liederkreis Singers, a German choral group, will sing carols and hymns in German.

Following the service, to which the public is invited, the church will host a fellowship hour, complete with German Christmas cookies, baked goods and friendship and conversation.

A nursery is being provided free of charge during the service and fellowship hour.

For more information or directions to the church, phone 373-

1682. *The Decatur News/Star*  
12/14/88

# German Christmas Service Planned At Decatur Church

A Christmas service conducted entirely in German will be featured at the Lutheran Church of the Messiah, Clairemont Avenue and Erie Streets, Decatur, Sunday, December 17, at 8 p.m.

The service will be followed by a fellowship hour and singalong of German carols. Holiday bakers are encouraged to bring their German specialties to share, along with favorite song choices.

During the church service, an Atlanta-based German singing group, the Leiderkreis, will lead the singing of traditional German Christmas hymns such as *Still Nacht*, *Heilige Nacht* and *Von Himmel Hoch*.

**MORE THAN 10** percent of metro-Atlanta's population is of German descent. Many, working for the hundreds of German companies affiliated here, won't have the chance to travel to their homeland to celebrate the birth of Christ or some of the new freedoms being

enjoyed by their friends and relatives in East Germany.

Messiah's pastor, Haco W. von Hacke, decided to give transplanted Germans a taste of their homeland for the holidays and the service has been popular each year.

Von Hacke, himself of German descent, got the idea to host a German Christmas service at his first church assignment in Virginia in 1970. With his mother's assistance, he started a tradition which has moved with him to churches in Richmond, Norfolk and Decatur.

The public is invited to attend the German Christmas service whether they are German or are friends of the language and culture. A free nursery will be provided. Lutheran Church of the Messiah will conduct regular Christmas Eve candlelight services December 24 at 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.

12/16/89 sekalt news/ser



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## Minister Sees Red Over Handouts

*Desk News Saw 8/15/90*

"I have a certain amount of compassion," says the Rev. Haco W. Vonhackle, pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Messiah on Clairemont Avenue in Decatur, "but I began to see red!"

He was referring to the visit early this week of Carol Walston, a self-described homeless woman who makes a habit of borrowing money from local churches. She persuaded the Rev. Vonhackle to pay for a motel room and also asked him for \$75 for a pair of shoes.

"I don't have enough money to buy myself a pair of shoes, much less any that cost \$75," he said. He put the woman up in the Hampton Inn on Buford Highway and the desk clerks there recognized her, he said. He added that another local motel won't allow her to come back.

She drove up to the church on Monday in a taxi and tried to get the church secretary to pay for the taxi fare, a volunteer, working in the church at the time, observed. When the secretary refused, Ms. Walston got very angry. She insisted that the secretary call the minister at home and that he promise to "be good for" the taxi fare. The taxi driver, after waiting for some time, drove off in disgust, the volunteer noted.

Apparently Ms. Walston had be-

(See HANDOUTS, Page 10A)

## Handouts

(Continued From Page 1A)

come ill in the night while at the Hampton Inn and had gone to "one of these (emergency) health places," the Rev. Vonhackle said. The trash can in the church office was full of wrappers from antihistamine medications, he said.

Ms. Walston's parents live in Decatur but she doesn't have anything to do with them, he said. Instead, she considers herself homeless but seeks out a plush motel room rather than one of the homeless shelters, he said.

"She has nowhere to go," he said. She stayed in his church office for about two hours on Monday, he said.

"She doesn't look like a street person," he said. "She's clean, extremely well-spoken. She's not stupid. I would say that she's had some college. But she is anti-church and she believes that instead of buying new red carpet the church should give the money to her."

"She is down on the system," he said, noting that she did attend services at his church on Sunday. "She knew that she had to get back into my good graces," he said, adding that she has come to him for help several times before. *8/15/90*

"We have, counting women and children, a congregation of about 250," he said, explaining that the church just does not have the resources to handle such people in need. Two other people had also stopped by the church that day seeking handouts, he said.

DeKalb News/Star

12/12/90

## German Yule Service Sunday

The popularity of one particular Christmas church service causes a happy dilemma for Pastor Haco von Hacke of Lutheran Church of the Messiah. Messiah's annual German Christmas service, or Deutscher Weihnachtsgottesdienst, has drawn a standing-room only crowd for the last several years.

The German Christmas service, now in its eighth year, will be held on Sunday evening, Dec. 12, beginning at 7:20 p.m. at Messiah, which is located at the corner of Clairemont and Erie Avenues near downtown Decatur. The service will be followed by a fellowship hour and singing of German carols. Holiday bakers will be bringing their German specialties to share, and a nursery will be provided.

During the service, an Atlanta-based German singing group, the Leiderkreis, will lead the singing of traditional German Christmas hymns, such as "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht" and "Von Himmel Hoch."

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Atlanta's population is of German descent. Many, working for the hundreds of German companies with offices here, won't have the chance to travel to their homeland to celebrate the birth of Christ or the new freedoms of the newly unified Germany. Messiah's Pastor von Hacke decided to give transplanted Germans a taste of their homeland for the holidays and the service has grown more popular each year.

Pastor Von Hacke, himself of German descent, got the idea to host a German Christmas service during his first church assignment in Virginia in 1970. With his mother's assistance, he started a tradition which has moved with him to churches in Richmond, Norfolk and Decatur.

The public is invited to attend the German Christmas service, whether they are German or friends of the language and culture. Lutheran Church of the Messiah also invites worshippers to its regular Christmas Eve candlelight service Dec. 24 at 7 and 11 p.m.



CELEBRATE DEKALB 175!

Contact : Haco W. von Hacke

Church: The Lutheran Church of the Messiah

Address: 465 Clairemont Avenue

Decatur, GA 30030

Phone: area code and # 404-373-1682 Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Founding of this church: January 19, 1932

Always in DeKalb: Yes

If possible would you provide a listing of the ministers, pastors, priests or appropriate leaders during the church's history.

Any other interesting historical background:

Return to:  
Sue Ellen Owens  
Old Courthouse On the Square  
Decatur, Georgia 30030  
404 373-3076

James A. Rikard	1933-1935
George F. Hart	1935-1940
J. Milton Frick	1940-1944
Dermon A. Sox	1944-1954
Cecil W. Carpenter	1954-1978
George W. Fisher	1978-1980
Haco W. von Hacke	1982-

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MADE  
DATE 5-9-97