
The Story of Lindsborg

by

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THE LUTHER LEAGUES OF THE
BETHANY CHURCH



"And he (Joshua) spoke unto the children of Israel saying: When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know what Jehovah, your God did. . . . That all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of Jehovah that it is mighty; that ye may fear Jehovah, your God, for ever.
—Joshua 4:21-24.

THE history of our own community as well as that of the Swedes in Kansas is quite well preserved. In the two volumes, one published at our Fourth Anniversary and another at our Fiftieth Anniversary as well as the presentation in volume XI of Kansas Historical Collections our story has been truthfully told. It shall be our endeavor at this time only to call attention to these publications and to kindly ask our people to preserve them for days to come, as neither can be easily reprinted and all three are virtually sold out.

We do hope that posterity will appreciate the information that these volumes contain about the people who founded the Swedish Settlements in Central Kansas and for the sake of whom Kansas and Lindsborg has become well known and famous.

At the organization of The First Swedish Agricultural Company in Chicago, 190 Superior street, Friday, April 14, 1868 some one intimated that it would be dangerous to locate in Kansas, then called The Great American Desert, as it never rained there. The chairman, John Ferm, answered: "If God is going to let us settle in Kansas, he will give us rain." No further fears were voiced and the 61 years that have passed since then speak plainly to all of us, that, if we look to God for guidance and help, he can be trusted.

The Bethany Church and Lindsborg are synonyms. You cannot describe the one without referring to the other. The Bethany Church apart from the rest of Lindsborg is not conceivable. They must be spoken of together or rather as one. Their story is in the same class as The Odyssey, The Iliad and The Kalevala—only it is as yet unsung. They are the result of prevalent religious social and political influences in the Scandinavian countries half a century or more ago. The viking nature of our people, the lean years of the later sixties in the homeland and the spiritual awakening in the middle of the last century all co-operated.

Lady Süderbloom considerably speaks of Swedish-America as the greatest achievement of old Sweden, and consul von Dardel kindly, in his address here some years ago, compared our story with that of the classic sagas of the heroic North.

Our founders were not the elite of the homeland, but they had a good education, had learned to obey the law of the land and feared the Lord. Julius Lincoln spoke the truth when he said, that the leader of our colony, pastor Olof Olson, educated in Sweden and Germany, brought a whole university with him in his own personality, when he cast his lot with the sturdy settlers on the wilds of the middle West.

Many influences cooperated in the

forming of this settlement. Let us call to mind some: Lindell's dreams and discussions on the way across the Atlantic in August, 1866 and his later conferences with friends in Chicago: the organization of The First Swedish Agricultural Company in Chicago, go, Friday evening, April 17, 1868; the calling of the settlers out here of Dr. Olsson as pastor for the settlement, at Christmas time, 1868 and his arrival at midsummer time the following year; the organization of our church August 19, 1869 outside the old Colony building; the organization of McPherson County March 24, 1870 at Sweedal and the adoption by our church of the synods constitution for churches April 15th of the same year.

Of very great significance was also the formation of the Galesburg land company by Dahlsten, Thorstenberg and Strömquist at Galesburg, Illinois in the fall of 1868, which populated this valley north, west and south of Lindsborg by people who had been for some time members of our churches in Illinois. Whether for weal or woe it is undoubtedly true that our settlement has been an appendix to Chicago and much influenced by this burg, although it is equally true that we have in some instances surpassed it.

Dr. Olsson's leave of absence 1877, which was renewed also the following year and eventually culminated in his

resignation, was of a very great significance unto his colony out here. However, he continued to exert a strong influence over it for a long time afterwards, and even as late as 1889 we find him here, doing his very best to lift off the heavy debt that benumbed the college, and he was so much thought of by our people even then, that they built him a home back of the church on Olson street and presented it to him as a gift.

It is to Dr. Olsson's credit that Dr. Swenson, then a student at Augustana, was selected as the future pastor of the church and was received with the same confidence and open arms that his predecessor had enjoyed. In these two men, our synod's and the nationality's very best, this colony has had leadership unequalled by any settlement anywhere. To the credit of our people it should also be said that they had the good sense to follow them and accord them the necessary support for true advancement and progress. However able a general may be, he will not gain many victories, if his army is not loyal and effective.

The generation of the founders is gone. Their children and their grandchildren are at the helm at the present time. The fear of the fathers that the children might fall in stewardship, has proven groundless. We are fast becoming a very active

community in a land which is the homeland of our children.

While the love and veneration for the land of the far famed North is alive in the hearts and minds of us who hail from there, we are earning the respect and love of those among whom we live, and are fast becoming a living and active part of the noblest nation in the world. Our people have assisted in making and enforcing its laws, to break and to cultivate its soil, and when the cruel trumpet blasts called us to war they mingled blood with a loyal citizenry—as faithful to the stars and stripes as their forbears were to the flag and the nation under The Midnight Sun.

Olsson's days are days of beginnings. Lindsborg's township is on the 1st page of our county records. Olsson was the first county Superintendent of Schools and as a member of the state Legislature he helped to place some of our fundamental laws on our statute books. Drought, grasshopper pests and Texas herds were a serious annoyance to the colony, poor as all were, and the burdens of pioneer life rested here as elsewhere heavily on the shoulders of the otherwise optimistic community.

The settlers were, according to Ernst Skarstedt, "awfully religious and very stubborn." The Bible laid on the desks in the stores and was carried in the pockets while the people were at work. Religious discus-

sions were indulged in everywhere day and night. Even Olsson himself claimed that these broke his otherwise good health and made many of his days sad and unhappy. They were so particular as to who should be admitted into full membership of the church, that doubts were raised as to whether it were right to admit to full membership the meek, kind-hearted, pious pastor's wife.

According to the constitution of The Agricultural Company, none but a true Christian Swedish Lutheran could become a member of the same. They were determined to found a community, where as far as possible strife and feud should be avoided and where people should live an ideal life as far as existence here below would allow. Often did Olsson say: "Yes, indeed, I did organize a perfect church at Lindsborg but after all it was no so very pure." So utterly careful were they that pastor Monten says that they met for three whole days in serious discussion before they were able to agree on a name for their church.

The first organization within the church was the Ladies Mission Society, where the women sewed and stayed all day at the place where they were invited, as a rule bringing the whole family. Parochial school and Sunday-school came next. A regularly called schoolmaster served for years, and the deacons were re-

sponsible for the Sunday-school. Even a midwife was called at one annual meeting with this interesting stipulation added, that "the old men, boys and girls that did not think they needed her assistance could be, if they so wished, excused from contributing to her salary".

Olsson very early began to train his people in choirwork and at the first service in the first church New Years Matins, 1870, a choir sang. Olsson served as choir leader and organist all the while he was here. He used his own reed organ in the old church, but for the church in the city a good Moine organ was secured.

He also started a paper: "Nytt och Gammalt", which came out in only a few monthly issues, as he was asked to help in editing Augustana and later when he became a professor at the seminary his abilities were made use of there and he could not attend to matters of that sort out here. The signature "O. O." was very much liked by our people who looked for it first of all, as long as he lived and was able to wield his fluent and popular pen.

The most significant happening during Olsson's time was undoubtedly the strife concerning atonement. It ended by some of his most intimate friends leaving the church and starting the Mission Church in 1874. It was on Good Friday that a considerable number of persons, some 16

persons, left the church. The number was not large, but it was Olsson's best friends that separated and he took it sorely to heart. He was encouraged very considerably by the large number that stood ready to join, so that the membership was not lessened by the withdrawal. All were as yet poor, and the pastor shared the experience. Most of the homes were sodiums, and exorbitant interest made it very difficult for the people to pay debts. The crops were poor and wages low. Yet abnormal prices had to be paid for the necessities of life. There was no railroad nearer than Saina before 1879 when the first Union Pacific train came into Lindsborg. Some of the fathers were not very enthusiastic over the event, and one of them, as he watched the first train arrive, turned away from the enthusiastic crowd with broken heart and tearful eyes saying: "O, You miserable Lindsborg". He feared that all the misery of the wicked world now would come to disturb the happy and peaceful lives of these poor denizens of the plains.

During the interim between Dr. Olsson's entering upon his duties as professor at Augustana and Dr. Swenson's arrival, the church was served by pastors Dahlsten, Seleen, Sannqvist, Professor Lagermann and students Haterius and Wahlstrom. Swenson was himself here a few months after he was called. He ar-

received as pastor after ordination, 22 years old, in June 1879. When Olsson came, he was only 28 years old. So both were young, indeed, when entering upon their pastoral charges.

When Swenson arrived Lindsborg had some 500 inhabitants. The Bethany church had 323 communicants and 622 baptized members. The last annual financial report had a total disbursement of \$1510. and there was no debt. The church in the village had supplanted the one on the hill northwest, but was too small. The other churches at this place were The Rose Hill, built in '74, the Swedish Methodist, built in '75, and the Mission Church in the village built in '77.

The congregation gathered confidently around the young pastor who most certainly dreamed of a bright future for both church and community. During Dr. Swenson's pastorate which lasted from 1879 until 1904, a period of little less than 25 years, this community as well as Kansas advanced with leaps and bounds. It was the time of the populists, of Carrie Nation and of Ingalls. It was the time of the opening up of the vast plains of the Southwest, the building of transcontinental railroad lines and the offering to humanity opportunities the like of which had never previously been heard. Our people did their best to keep pace

with the rest of the territory of which they were a part.

At the first annual meeting at which Swenson was present, it was decided to sell a part of the land that had been granted the church from the very start by the railroad company, and "for half of it build an addition to the church and lay half of it apart for a fund for an eventual Lutheran educational institution at this place." Even prior to his arrival a parsonage had been built in the village. (Dr. Olsson lived on his farm all the while he was pastor here) The church building was added to in 1880, Bethany Academy begun October 15, 1881 and the Messiah Chorus started in January, 1882. Swenson was a worker himself and understood that for the welfare of all concerned, it was well that they be put to work. The increased church gave the needed room for the congregation at worship, the school gave the young people a chance to prepare themselves for useful lives and the Messiah chorus offered entertainment and occupation of the right kind for the community out here in the Wilds.

The increased church room served our people for all Swenssons time. It is the same building we have today with additions found needed at the close of Swenson's ministry, but whose completion it was not his fortune to see, as he was in eternity

already when the additions were built in 1904. In this church building the Bethany College was started and the Messiah, under the leadership of Mrs. Swenson, first sung. The first instrument provided was a Moine organ and only later a simple pipe organ was put in. This organ is now in Salt Lake City, and our present organ was bought at the same time the last additions to the church building were made. A new parsonage was also built in 1901, which in turn has been sold to The Bethany Home for the Aged and where it now is made good use of.

Bethany College had undoubtedly its inception in the minds of the founders from the very beginning, but it was not until Swenson's arrival that these ideas materialized. Bethany College began its work October 15, 1881 in the sacristy of the church, and no student. Conditions changed with Dr. August Udden as faculty and a little for the better as time went on, and at the close of the school year there had been enrolled 27 students and when expenses of \$279. were paid, there was twenty dollars in the treasury. At Swenson's death the condition of the college appears as follows: There was found only the old Main, the Ladies Dormitory, The auditorium and the first little house in the park. The number of students was given as 954 from which the Messiah Chorus is deducted, the ex-

penses for the year as \$71,000, the value of the property as \$167,000 and the debts about \$32,000.

Swenson came here in 1879 and died February 16, 1904 at Los Angeles. Between these two dates lies a history of troubles and worries, of work and of victories the like of which no other place within our synod has experienced, and which undoubtedly to a great extent went with Dr. Swenson into the grave and oblivion. Lindsborg and Carl Swenson had however become known all through this land and even on the other side of the sea. Better known and more universally admired than Swenson was none of our people in these days, nor has anyone since then attained such an eminence within our church.

The Messiah Chorus sang for the first time in our church in the spring of '82. The same year it appeared also in some of the neighboring churches and the whole affair, band, orchestra and singers were transported in a few lumberwagon boxes. At the death of Dr. Swenson it had won national reputation and singers, musicians and artists, the most renowned in the world, had visited the little city of Lindsborg. Orators like Ingalls, Bryan and Roosevelt had spoken at our festivals and leaders in church and state had graced our gatherings. Trains of as many as nineteen cars filled with visitors

would come to listen to the wonderful singing, and many seemed to fear that the reputation of Lindsborg had gone farther than the realities would guarantee. Our people kept on singing year after year. As many as three generations would be found singing at the same time. It was something very much to be proud of, to have been a member of the Messiah Chorus from the start of the very earliest days. For a good many years the auditorium had served as the place for the singing as the church and the college chapel had become too small. In 1904 the chorus numbered 532 persons, and the orchestra some 54 pieces. Respectable sums had already been sung together for the good of the school treasury.

A considerable amount of publicity has marked this settlement. In the minutes of the company's meeting at Chicago September 27, 1870, paragraph 4, we read: "After a long discussion for and against the usefulness of the paper it was unanimously resolved, to grant the house in Lindsborg for a political paper with the proviso that it shall be a weekly, work for the prosperity and the welfare of the city and the settlement by facts and unflinching faithfulness and not drive with lies and jokes as do nearly all the little news sheets hereabouts." At a meeting held October 3, we further read that "since our workers in Lindsborg now make

their third request for a Kansas paper, let it be decided to give them one with the provision that it shall be read". This is the law for publicity in Lindsborg. How faithfully it has been observed is perhaps not so easy to say.

Olsson issued a monthly, "Nytt och Gammalt", but only a few issues appeared. His interest was drawn to Augustana, where he early became a contributor and co-editor. Ernst Skarsstedt started Kansas Stats Tidning in 1879, Lindsborgs Posten was started by Swenson and was at first issued as circumstances demanded sporadically, but has since 1897 come regularly every week. In all, over twenty different periodical publications have appeared during the past years. Several books have also been published by our people. These have appeared not only in this country but also in Europe.

Swenson's interest in politics was not always to the liking of all his people. Both he and others, however have been members of the state legislature. Frank Nelson held the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction of our State, and others have been members of divers commissions. One of our students, Dr. Alfred Pearson, is at present U. S. ambassador to the republic of Finland.

Swenson as well as Olsson visited Europe twice and many of our mem-

bers have travelled extensively. Dr. Luther Anderson has traveled around the world twice, and was even decorated by Li Hung Chang for his services to the Chinese government.

During the time that Swenson was here, Swedish was used in the church work exclusively. Even in the Sunday-school no other language entered. The children's play language on the schoolground was Swedish, and the teachers had no little difficulty in making them speak English in the school room.

The need of using the language of the land appeared sporadically at first. It has come to us from the College. The first mention of preaching in English dates from 1886. From the report for 1895 we learn that there had been an effort made to preach in English the previous year, but, as it encroached upon the ordinary program of the church, the services were moved to the college. The first communion service in English was held 1902. No one was confirmed in English during Swenson's day. Services were held every Sunday evening at the college for the students for some time prior to Swenson's death, and it is undoubtedly for that reason Swenson mentioned that English services hindered the regular church life and had to be moved to the college.

Parochial school was held in every school district during the summer

months, but Swedish was used exclusively. The time lasted at most two months but was often less, and the closing exercises were important events. The teachers were paid a certain sum for each child that attended.

Several attempts were made to organize the young people for work within the church, but with meager results. The first society was organized 1880, but after some time moved to the college. The Luther League on the East Side was organized 1898, the one on the west Side in 1899, and the City League not before 1905. The Swedesborg League came to in 1905 and a Literary Society was organized in the Smoky Hill School house in 1907 which lived for a few years.

During 1888 a spiritual awakening was evident in the valley and also in our church. During prayer week the church was filled to overflowing and services were continued for weeks. Many found their personal Savior and praised the Lord for having become his. Work was also carried on in the outlying districts. In Swedesborg, at Pewe Creek, at Mount Hope and in Johnstown preaching places were established and students and spiritually active men of the church held services there on weekdays and Sunday afternoons and evenings. There was also as early as 1882 a congregation organized at Mount Hope by the

name of Elmsborg, which called Rev. Northing as pastor, but when the parsonage some time later burned down the congregation disbanded. Services were held on Sunday afternoons in the different districts and such housemeetings were very much valued by the people, even so, some say, priced above those of the church.

The church has always been interested in missions. Foreign missions has been closer to the hearts of our people, however, than home missions. From the very earliest days of our church we have the custom of giving from five to twenty-five cents to home missions every communion Sunday. This custom needed only a treasurer in order to function and never had another. It was called the Old Mission Society. As the fees were brought in Swenson used to stand by the treasurer and that helped to increase the amounts considerably.

The Ladies' Mission Society, a product from Oisson's day, lived all through the days of Swenson. From the old sewing society, which sewed and met in the different homes, it changed into the present Ladies Mission Society that met in the church for devotions, refreshments and offering. A reason given for the change was that they could not find profitable markets for the large productions of fancy work. In our church also the Ladies Mission So-

ciety of the Synod was organized. It wielded at present a most wonderful influence within, not only our Synod, but the Lutheran church.

In order to support the model school at the college an annual bazaar was planned, and it became a great success. The main object was to gather money for the institution, and respectable sums were brought in. It also became a place for friendly visits and especially the young people longed for the coming of the bazaar. It lasted usually a week and was held at the auditorium in the fall about Thanksgiving time. Not only the Lindsborg community was interested in the affair, but the whole settlement, and even distant parts of the state.

As Swenson was away from home very much for school, social and political purposes he was in need of help both at the school and in the church and so assistant pastors were called. Julius Lincoln served in this capacity during '98-'95, and E. F. Pihlblad during '95-'04. He also made frequent use of such students as were more mature in age and studies.

During all his day Swenson was the leader everywhere. Like Olsson in his day, he was looked up to at all occasions and what he desired was usually attempted. Lindsborg and Bethany became in fact one, and more and more there grew up a feel-

ing of common responsibility. Even though our people differed in many ways, Bethany was theirs and its welfare interested all. Yes, even though views often differed widely and there was lack of agreement, the school united them.

At the sudden death of Dr. Swenson there was a general fear locally and everywhere that the end of Lindsborg had come. The impression was general that the school as well as the community depended to such an extent on him personally that when he was no more, there would be nothing left but an unpleasant crash that would bring only disappointment and sadness to all concerned. There were even those, who when the crash did not come, were dissatisfied, as the ability for the community to live on in some way belittled their significance as prophets. There were others, who in the hour of distress looked to God for help, as they thought that the work indeed was of the Lord and that he would own himself to it. Many were too bewildered to pray, but others more considerate did place the matter before God in sincere supplication, and so Lindsborg and Bethany church, and so Lindsborg and Bethany Old Peoples Home are living on. The Messiah had been so deeply sung into the hearts of our little community, that there also arose a church by the same beloved name, and we are just

as much on the map today as at any other time.

This is Jehovah's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. Ps. 118:23.

Hardly aware of what it did, bewildered because of sorrow and fear for Bethany and Lindsborg, the conference at the convention at Salsborg 1904 in the spring, entrusted the school to Pastor Pihlblad, and the church, sure of never being able to give any pastor a unanimous call, asked me unannounced in the same year, June 21, to come here and be her pastor. I think that brother Pihlblad felt just as worried as I did, concerning what to do. Many interested themselves in our calls. I have preserved over a hundred letters, sent to me by persons interested in my call to Bethany Church. Some argued for acceptance — others against. After laying the matter before God as best I could, the call was accepted and I have been here now as long as either of the two former pastors. I have tried to be faithful and to do my best, and Eternity only will reveal the real result. As I look back over the so quickly flitted twenty-five years, I cannot but join with the patriarch of old, who said in Genesis 32:10, "Lord, I am not worthy of the least of all the loving kindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant".

Dr. Pihlblad, as well as myself,

has had enough to do. Had even Swenson lived a few more years, (he was only 46 at his death), he would have had to get some help, and even at the time, as he had charge of both the school and the church, he had to get help in the two assistant pastors, Lincoln and Pihlbad. Conditions have even developed in such a way that The Messiah and her pastor has enough to do and we all feel that under prevailing conditions and such as may be in the making in our restless days, we may even have to get more workers on our field to care properly for what must be attended to.

Have you really seriously considered, dear friends, that even though we have had our different interests and opinions, we, of dear old Lindsborg, have agreed and stood by each other most faithfully. We have discussed matters in our church councils and in the Bethany Board, as well as the City Council, but nevertheless stood by each other in a most wonderful way, and therefore God has been able to bless us even more than any other single place in our church in this land. He has certainly proven himself true to the promise in Ephesians 3:20 that "he will do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think".

Let us take a brief survey over what has taken place during the past twenty-five years: Twenty-five

Campus beautified, added the Swedish building, a new library and a new auditorium. All debts are paid. A fund of \$400,000 is on hand with a present worth of about \$900,000 and the institution brings in to the community at least a quarter million dollars a year. The college has quadrupled in number of students the last 25 years. Of the 2843 graduates from the different departments, \$50 are our own Lindsborg children.

The Messiah church has a membership of over 350 communicants making with dear old Bethany church a Lutheran communicant membership of close to 1600 and a baptized membership of about 2200.

The Bethany Home for the Aged, although not sponsored by the church alone, is housing in a most convenient way some forty members, and has no debt, but has property valued at about \$75,000.

During the quarter century of its existence our Young Peoples Bible Class has had 1800 members.

Our young people have for a number of years been in charge of the Sunday-school and have carried on the work with a spirit of devotion and seriousness, that has been of great encouragement to the church. The Talita has done much good to our little girls and even the boys. Dorcas has endeavored to be of service to our young ladies. The Lather Leagues have tried to help

years ago our city had hardly a decent street. No road, either in or out of town, was in good shape. Sidewalks were very poor. No street lights, no sewers, no waterworks existed. School buildings were very poor, churches not in the best repair, even Main Street was not in good shape, and here was found only one automobile. There were hardly any telephones in town, none in the country, and no rural delivery. The college suffered under a heavy debt. The town property was valued at about \$700,000 and Smoky Hill township about \$1,500,000. The population of McPherson county was about 21,000 which was the same as over ten years before. The population of Lindsborg was about 1400. The Bethany church had about 1005 communicant members. The Mission church 200. The Methodist 51, and the Baptist 90.

Now our streets are in good shape. Our roads splendid, sidewalks among the best, a splendid light and water system and sewer system, splendid school buildings, new and creditable churches, telephones and radios in many homes, rural delivery and even an ice plant, an airport, and natural gas. With a population in the county about the same as 25 years ago, Lindsborg has some over 2,000 people and property is valued at four and a half million dollars, and Smoky Hill Township three and three-fourth million. Bethany College has had the

our young people and an important service has been done. The Ladies Mission societies have always been willing to serve and help along in whatever way that has been possible, especially has the Flower Committee endeared itself to many because of its kindness to and care for our shut-ins.

At our many meetings, festivals and conventions large numbers of our people have gladly given a helping hand with a unanimity that has been admirable and even at our meetings of our board of administration, trustees and church council as well as the congregational meetings we have conferred in a peaceful, serious and Christian way. Even when we have served as hosts to conference and synod conventions we have been able to do it in a way that has brought praise to us from abroad and that has welded us together in forbearance and love at home. Even in our language transition troubles, God has helped us to have patience with one another and we are coming through with less friction than at many other places within our synod.

Our church property is in better shape than ever before and few if any congregations within our synod have more suitable parsonages than ours. Our people make use of the Means of Grace with veneration although in a church as large as ours there is a tendency to depend on that even if I do not do my duty and make

use of my opportunity the work will go on just the same. We are undoubtedly as a church more self-conscious, more loyal to conference and synod and more at peace with our surroundings than at any other time in our history.

No one can deny but what this evidences progress and we have reason to say that God has done with us far above what we have dared to pray for. But, if with all this outward prosperity, there is no inward spiritual correspondence, woe unto us!! This is therefore the time for heartsearchings for us all. Have we not grown in grace, not developed spiritually, not become stronger in faith? Does our church today more perfectly reflect the mind of Christ than formerly, or has her first love abated?

Most assuredly do we need to confess our sins before God and our fellowmen. There is certainly much trimmed down before we are fit stones in the temple of God and active healthy limbs in the body for which Christ is the head, but we are assured that the Lord has us in his vineyard and that we are among the branches that he does purge.

We have since the foundation of our church stood at nearly a thousand deathbeds where we have had the assurance from many of those that left us that they have gone to the

better home above. Many hundreds have been laid into the arms of the Savior and the bosom of the church through holy baptism and as many or more have before the altar of our dear church promised God eternal faithfulness at the time of confirmation. Attentive audiences have hitherto come to hear the Gospel message as it is yet proclaimed in demonstration of the spirit and of power. Even today, we dare to believe, that in the worry and flurry of our modern peculiar world there are many among our own, who have not bowed their knee to baal, but by word and deed bear testimony of the wonderful love of him who died that we may live.

Certainly hitherto hath Jehovah helped us. It is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. To Him alone be The Glory!