

REVEREND E. LEHMAN - Trinity Lutheran Church

INTERVIEWED:

April 10, 1975

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Reverend Lehman came to the Richmond Trinity Lutheran Church on November 22, 1967 from Red Deer, Alberta.

The church was located at 712 Granville Road, being composed of the buildings as they are standing today.

Origin of Congregation

It was organized as a congregation in 1954, having met since the previous year, 1953, in homes. The congregation had been attending Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Vancouver and Pastor Fred Gabert encouraged the start. A student, Daniel Johnson, ministered to the new group.

Initially, the name was Brighthouse Trinity Lutheran Church, but in 1963 was changed to Trinity Lutheran Church.

1955 - Dedication of new church.

- Application of congregation to District for long term loan.
- Bought approximately 1.4 acres for \$3,900. on Granville. Later bought extra in 1963 to make up to 1.7 acres for \$1,000.

Architect - Mr. A. W. Gray.

Contractor

- Mr. A. Kelly and Mr. J. Adolf served as builders, plus much volunteer labour.

Plan (see front of folder of Dedication Service)

Consisted of church with pews and altar, six classrooms, small kitchen, washrooms and furnace room and pastor's office.

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Parsonage

Built on same time on lot.

Building

- On concrete slab of brick and stucco and some cedar siding.
- 2 forced-air gas furnaces.
- Fluorescent and incandescent.

Addition

1964 enlarged facility was added.

- Six more classrooms on east side and at back.
- Enlargement of kitchen.
- Walkway removed and large church was built there.
- Original church made into hall.
- Rev. Clarence Eifert was minister at time. He came in 1954 until 1967.

Architect

- J. M. Schmidt & Associates

Contractors

- J. C. Lang, North Vancouver.

Cost

- \$101,000. but very much volunteer labour of congregation.

Financing

When second extension to be built, original loan not paid off so Synod combined two and left an indebtedness of \$120,000. on shoulders of about 150 confirmed members.

1967 - Arrival of Pastor Lehman

- Size of approximately 183 confirmed members (over 14 years of age).

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Background of Congregation

About 15 families coming from Ladner - Tsawwassen. These families grew to about 20 families, so in 1963 started services for them in rented premises.

Very mixed - traditionally of German or Scandinavian origin, but in fact congregation is really quite cosmopolitan - some Oriental children in Sunday School.

Upkeep

By free-will offerings and tithes.

Organizations

- In 1967 were two Ladies' Groups
- Mission group and church aid
 - Sunday School, Bible groups
 - Richmond Health Unit for pre-school clinic.

Parsonage

Up to February, 1975, minister used parsonage but now rented out and minister buying own home.

Growth

Growth to approximately 256 confirmed members.

Major shift to youth groups, making great use of facilities.

Had a kindergarten from 1969 until discontinued when that age taken into school system.

Have two other groups - Employment Opportunities for Women and Alcoholics Anonymous, as well as Girl Guides.

Affiliation

There are approximately 10 groups or Synods in Lutheranism,

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Affiliation ...continued

of which 3 are very large in Canada:

1. Lutheran Church in America
2. Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
3. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Trinity Lutheran is part of number 2. In Canada, church is known as Lutheran Church - Canada being divided into districts - this one being the Alberta-British Columbia District.

In many churches, there is much congregational autonomy yet, also a close relationship voluntarily with the Synod on doctrine.

Conventions

District conventions every 2 years and entire Synod meets every two years.

Role of Women

Not a uniform policy in the Synod. Limitations set up through scriptures do not have ordination of women pastors, but they are on committees and boards. Some congregations permit them to vote, others do not - Trinity Lutheran extends to men and women and teenagers.

Outreach to Youth

Many programs for youth. Softball League - plays, other recreational and bible study groups.

(Description of O.A.F.S.)

Special Events

- Pastor Lehman missed 10th Anniversary, but they are preparing for the 25th.
- Division of congregation to Ladner group becoming off-shoot group.
- Introduction of Director of Christian Education full-time worker, Mr. Mark Lobitz in summer 1973.
- Undertaking the purchase of new pipe organ - about \$26,000.

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Memorials

Some small memorials donated at time of building of church - communion vessels, candelabras, vases - no windows.

Future Plans

Concentration of congregation on Evangelism and outreach to continue growth. Replacing Ladner group.

M.Noble