

A History of Christ the King Lutheran Church, Cary, North Carolina - 1964-2004

The first step toward the development of Christ the King Lutheran Church came in 1960 when the North Carolina Synod requested from the Piedmont Regional Missions Committee a field including Cary and the southwest area of Raleigh. The request for assignment of this field to the Lutheran Church in America was granted, and in 1961 the Board of American Missions approved the field for development.

The board began making plans and late in 1962, a parsonage, located at 219 East Dowell Drive, in the Meadowmont section of Cary, was purchased by the board at a cost of \$17,500. At about the same time, the board was able to secure a 5.3 acre tract of land for use as a church building site. This site, located at 600 Walnut Street, between the Cary Senior High School and the town's recreation park, was purchased for \$20,000.

Through the efforts of synod president F.L. Conrad and the urging of the Rev. John W. Cobb, pastor of Holy Trinity, Raleigh, in July of 1963, the Rev. Henry R. Sink was called as mission developer. Pastor Sink and his family moved into the new parsonage in mid-August.

The first step in developing the mission was a house-to-house survey of the entire field. The survey was begun on September 1, 1963, and continued through the end of the year. There were about 3600 people living in Cary. The survey revealed an excellent potential for the development of a new congregation. As the survey neared completion, the developer appointed a steering committee to assist in planning and directing the work of this emerging congregation. The following were initially appointed to this committee: W.O. Crawford, P.O. Hammer, L.H. Huerth, N.L. Rosebrock, G.L. Skaar, and JD Wilson. This committee met for the first time on Thursday, December 5, 1963, with Pastor Sink and Pastor David F. Johnson, Regional Secretary for the Board of American Missions to begin laying plans for the new mission. The committee was soon enlarged to include H.L. Bowers and E.E. Dawson.

An "interest meeting" was held on Sunday, December 15, at 3:00 PM in the fellowship hall of the Cary First Methodist Church. A total of 42 people attended this meeting at which the name Christ the King was selected for the temporary mission.

On January 5, 1964, at 11:00 AM, the first worship service was held in the Cary Senior High School cafeteria. A total of 47 people attended this first service which was conducted by Pastor Sink. The following Sunday, January 12, 1964, at 10:00 AM, the first session of a Sunday School was held in the high school. During the succeeding months, in addition to the regular Sunday morning worship services and Sunday School, the new mission became involved in a number of significant activities. One of the high points in the first year of its life was the conducting of Sunday evening Lenten services in the homes of the mission group. These services were conducted by the laymen.

On Palm Sunday, March 22, 1964, the charter roll was opened at the close of the 11:00 AM service. Following the reading of the charter roll pledge, individuals were given the opportunity to sign the roll as indication of their intention to become members of the congregation at the time of its organization. The original document, now framed, is hung in the present narthex. Eighteen adults and 12 children transferred their membership from Holy Trinity, Raleigh.

On Easter Sunday morning, at 5:45 AM, 43 people attended the Easter sunrise service on the church building site. Following the service, the congregational breakfast was held at the Swift Creek community building.

During the spring of 1964, the young people of the mission began meeting together on Sunday evenings in anticipation of the time when they could officially form a Luther League. From the beginning, the group was extremely active, assuming a number of projects with which to assist the mission. The most notable of these projects was the gift of a set of red altar paraments. Following the organization of the congregation, the group

was officially organized as a local unit of Luther League. The League elected Allen Hammer as its first president, and Mr. and Mrs. Gene Dawson and Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Weant as advisers.

During the summer of 1964, the women of the mission began holding regular monthly meetings. Following the organization of the congregation, the group was officially organized into a unit of Lutheran Church Women, with Mrs. Harlie Miller elected as the first president. On the first Sunday in Lent 1965, the group presented a new set of violet paraments to the congregation.

The first baptismal service for the mission was held on Sunday, August 23, 1964, at which time 8 infants and 2 adults were baptized. The Sacrament of Holy Communion was administered for the first time on Sunday, September 13.

In the late fall of 1964, the steering committee set December 13, 1964, for the date of the organization for the congregation, one year from the date of the first interest meeting. A business meeting for those on the charter roll was held on Friday, December 11, in the Cary High School auditorium. The following were elected to the first church council: H.L. Bowers, W.O. Crawford, E.E. Dawson, J.F. Drake, P.O. Hammer, L.H. Huerth, N.L. Rosebrock, Mrs. C.S. Rudisill and JD Wilson. A constitution for the congregation was adopted including the official adoption of the name Christ the King Lutheran Church. The newly-elected church council was authorized to make application for reception into the North Carolina Synod, and to meet with the president of the synod or his representative with regard to calling the first pastor.

On Sunday, December 13, at 3:00 PM in the Cary Senior High School, the mission was officially organized as a congregation of the Lutheran Church in America, by the Rev. George R. Whittecar, president of the North Carolina Synod. There were 62 confirmed members and 41 child members on the charter roll. During the service, the first church council was installed by Pastor Sink. The service concluded with the administration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

A special Christmas program was presented by the congregation on Sunday evening, December 20. The program of music and meditation was followed by the lighting of the chrismon tree on the church building site. The ornaments for the tree had been made by the Luther League.

A congregational meeting was held on Sunday, January 24, 1965, for the purpose of requesting the transfer of title to the parsonage and church building site from the Board of American Missions to the congregation, and for the purpose of calling the first pastor of the congregation. The congregation adopted the resolutions and also voted to extend a call to the Rev. Henry R. Sink, who had served as the mission developer, to become the first called pastor of the congregation. The call was accepted by Pastor Sink, effective February 1, 1965.

The first Every Member Visit was conducted on Sunday, January 31. At a called meeting on Sunday, February 28, the congregation adopted its first budget for current expense and benevolence, totaling \$6454.56 for the year 1965. At another meeting of the congregation on Sunday, March 14, the congregation approved a recommendation from the church council that the Lutheran Laymen's Movement Fundraising Counseling Service be employed to conduct a capital funds campaign, in preparation for the construction of the first unit.

On Tuesday, May 4, 1965, the congregation was officially received into the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church in America at the opening business session of the convention, and Gene Dawson was seated as the first delegate. In June of 1965, Mr. Allan Innes directed the capital funds campaign, which resulted in pledges totaling \$9780 for a two-year period. Shortly after the completion of the campaign, a written building program was adopted by the church council and the building committee was appointed—William Young, chairman, Stanley Barger, John Evenson, Mrs. Jean Huerth, and Paul Hammer.

In August of 1965, the congregation approved the recommendation of the Building Committee and the church council to commission Mr. George M. Smart, AIA, to prepare building plans. The architect began preparation

of the master site plan which was approved by the building committee in November 1965, and forwarded to the Board of American Missions for review.

A new building was constructed and was dedicated in October 1967. That first building was marked by a highly-unusual (for then) roof style of sloping nature. The building consisted of one large room for worship, with a movable wall that could sub-divide the back of the room into two smaller rooms. Those two classrooms and the one large room on the west side (which could be divided into four spaces) allowed six rooms for Sunday Church School. In addition, there was a pastor's study, a nursery, and two rest rooms. The altar and lectern which had been handcrafted by Paul hammer and used at the high school was brought into the new building—and continue in use in 2005.

Late in 1968, Pastor Sink received a call to serve as pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Burlington, NC. His resignation was effective on December 31, 1968. During the months of pastoral vacancy, the Rev. Floyd Sides of Durham, NC, acted as vice-pastor. Working with the president of the synod, a pulpit committee chaired by Louis Butler interviewed several candidates and recommended to the church council that John R. Nagle, a senior at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, PA, be called as pastor. That recommendation to the congregation was approved in March 1969. Newly-ordained Pastor Nagle and his wife moved to Cary in mid-June and he officially began work on July 1, 1969. There were about 6500 people in Cary. In the congregation, there were about 230 members on the rolls.

At his first Christmas, Pastor Nagle procured some votive candles from St. Michael's Catholic Church, bought some white paper bags from Ashworth's Drug Store, and used contractors' sand to line the church's walks with luminaria. Soon, some homeowners in Greenwood Forest and church members in Morrisville took up the project. In the early 1970's, Boy Scout Troop #208, based at Christ the King, led the effort to make Christmas luminara a town-wide project that continues in 2004.

In the early 1970's, as the growth of Cary continued and as the size of the congregation increased, pressure on the existing building also increased. In 1970, a second worship service was begun. Soon, Sunday Church School classes began to fill the allotted rooms. One class moved to a private home, and others soon followed. By 1975, three of the four adult classes and all young people from 7th grade through high school met in private homes. The situation was not pleasant.

An architect, Milton Small, was hired and groundbreaking for a second unit was held on April 27, 1975. Dedicated in September 1976, the building includes a nave that (then) seated 350 people, a parlor for meetings and classes, and a connector building which housed four rooms and an office complex, a kindergarten area, and a multi-purpose space which (by use of portable dividers) could be broken down into many smaller spaces. Like the previous building, the new unit was centrally air-conditioned. The total cost of over \$800,000 was financed through the sale of church bonds. That sale, conducted in 1975, brought receipts of some \$400,000 over a debt period scheduled to end in August 1989. There were 485 adult members and 239 child members.

A pre-school was begun, with Sarah Richardson as the first director. Many of the youngsters enrolled were members of Christ the King. Over the years, the school would expand so that, in 2004, there were 15 staff members and an enrollment of over 100 children.

Through the years, beginning in 1976, the congregation was active in re-settling political refugees from southeast Asia. Single men from Vietnam and families from Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia were welcomed, fed and housed, and established in jobs in the community. Some of these families continue to reside in the area, although most have moved away. Social ministry was also carried out through the newly-established Pan-Lutheran Ministries, an organization of Wake County Lutherans that dealt with homelessness and the problems associated with it. Christ the King gave people and money to buy a house on East Jones Street in Raleigh, soon named Agape Place. Christ the King also was instrumental in originating and maintaining the Samaritan's Inn,

an apartment located near Wake Medical Center which was opened to offer housing for families who wanted to be close to their patients, but who lived too far from home to make daily trips.

In 1977, at the request of Pastor and Mrs. Nagle, the parsonage was sold to them for approximately \$35,000, and the church no longer had the responsibility of providing and maintaining housing for the pastor.

By the fifteenth anniversary of the congregation in 1979, 1093 people had been members at one time or another. At the end of that year, there were 829 baptized members. In the years since 1964, 16 adults and 153 children had received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. The Rite of Confirmation had been administered to 121 young people. There had been 53 weddings and five funerals. A total of 71 men and women had served as members of the church council which, over the years, has increased in size from nine to eighteen members.

For a period of four years, Christ the King hosted seminary interns who assisted in the life and work of the congregation. In 1977 and 1978, Scott Olbert served here while his wife Laura was an intern at Holy Trinity Church in Raleigh. He was followed by Keith McDaniel, Beverly Alexander and the late Rob Martz. During Mr. Olbert's tenure, the first youth beach retreat was held. Over the next 25+ years, most of those annual retreats were held at the NC Synod's facility at Kure Beach, although retreats were also held at Camp Agape and at a retreat center in Atlantic Beach. Young people from seventh through twelfth grade attended the early retreats; attendance in later years was limited to young people in grades nine through twelve. In recent years, 60 young people have attended, in addition to 14-16 adult advisors and workers.

In 1978, the green-cover Lutheran Book of Worship was published by the national church, replacing the red-cover Service Book and Hymnal which had been in use. It took Christ the King over two years to adopt the new resource, partly because of the financial cost of buying new books when the "old" books were still in good shape. At the same time, there was a call for a more contemporary style, so that the congregation increasingly used the Chicago Folk Mass.

The early 1980's saw the congregation struggle with growth and the establishment of new and more programs—educational, social and need-based. It was a busy time for members and staff.

At Christmas in 1982, the congregation tried to move into a new phase of technology and evangelism. The later Christmas Eve service was videotaped (in two parts) with the first tape being rushed to the television studio in Apex while the second half of the service was being recorded. Although a large number of people viewed the service that night, there were numerous technical problems, and the bright lights that flooded the sanctuary surely affected the usual mood of the service, in an unpleasant way.

In 1983, a new Allen organ was purchased and installed, replacing the home-model organ that the charter-member Goodman family had provided years before. (That organ was donated to the ministry at Agape Camp.) The new organ cost over \$25,000 and was financed through notes held by Christ the King members. The organ was still in use in 2004.

Some things never change. During a large part of the 1980's, discussion was held about the need for roof renovations, who and what groups should be allowed to use the building and for what purposes and at what cost, the small amount of money sent to the synod and national church for benevolence, and the insufficient number of pledges to completely balance the budget.

Throughout the 1980's, the congregation was heavily involved with prison ministry, including visits to Central Prison, Polk Youth Center and the correctional Center for Women. Meals were provided for inmates working with the Freedom's Journey / Adventures in Attitudes program conducted by Don Custer.

The congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary in late 1989, realizing the dwindling number of charter members still living in the area.

With the increase in congregational needs and the programs required to meet them, the congregation secured the service of L. Eileen McClain who began her work here in 1986. Connected with the Central Pennsylvania Synod, she had recently moved to NC and acted in CTK as a parish worker with responsibility for Christian education and youth ministry. Later, she earned her Associate in Ministry designation through the church. At the time of her retirement in 2003, she was serving as the congregation's Director of Adult Ministries, with special focus on Stephen Ministry, small groups, and adult education.

In 1987, the congregation's membership rolls indicated 1000 baptized members.

In 1988, after several years of researching what new machinery might make the church office more efficient, what would eventually become the Technology Committee recommended the purchase of two personal computers for the church. It was a difficult learning curve for some of the staff! That same year, Pastor Nagle finished his advanced study and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Ministry by Drew University in Madison, NJ. Also in 1988, the congregation decided to call the Rev. Thomas E. Nelson to part-time work as a visitation pastor. Earlier in his ministry, he had been a missionary in Argentina and the Lutheran campus pastor at NCSU in Raleigh.

Faced with still more growth, the congregation investigated the calling of another full-time ordained pastor to assist Pastor Nagle. After numerous interviews, the call committee settled on the Rev. Terry M. Dorsey, recently ordained after a successful career in advertising and charitable work. He began his work in 1990, at about the same time as the church embarked on another building campaign. In 1991, Pastor Dorsey gathered a group of Christ the King members and led an informal mission trip to the Lutheran Center in Mexico City. Pastor Dorsey was also instrumental in organizing a contemporary worship service called "Affirm, Become and Celebrate." Originally, it met in Luther Chapel only at 11:00 on Sunday mornings, but as the worship form became more popular, an additional service was added at 8:30 AM. The ABC service would continue meeting in increasingly-cramped quarters in Luther Chapel until the dedication of Nagle Hall in September 2002. At times, it seemed as if the congregation had divided itself into two camps, at least because of the physical distance between the groups worshipping in the nave and in the chapel, but also because of the two very different worship styles.

But there continued a number of congregational activities that attracted people, regardless of their worship preference. The Christ the King Bowling League begun in the 1970's continued in existence for over 20 years. A Couple's Club had regular gatherings for social purposes—with scavenger hunts, holiday meals, road rallies, and crazy Olympics. Suggestions were made for ministries with single people, but the several attempts that were made usually did not last very long. Church picnics were held each summer, at first at Reedy Creek State Park and later at Agape Camp. In the 1990's, many families traveled to Myrtle Beach each Labor Day for a family event and worship. The Stewardship Committee conducted numerous art shows which highlighted the talents of our members. Talent shows were regularly-held. The Senior Choir annually conducts a light-hearted madrigal dinner.

Beginning in 1988, members of the youth group traveled to different parts of the county to participate in gatherings sponsored by the ELCA. Events were held in Atlanta, St. Louis, San Antonio, New Orleans, Dallas, and again in Atlanta.

In 1989, it was determined that there was a need for a handbell choir, if sufficient funding could be found. A memorial fund gift given at the death of a friend of the congregation generated other contributions, and a two-octave set of bells was purchased. In addition, hand-chimes were purchased for a young people's ringing choir.

By the end of 1990, the congregation had reduced its indebtedness, noted 953 adults on the membership rolls along with 357 children, and the proposed annual budget had grown to \$275,000. But rarely were the pledges and offerings enough to underwrite it. Each year, by early spring, committees were mandated to use no more

than 80% of their budget allotment. In December, extra offerings usually made up the short-fall, but the benevolence request from the NC Synod and the ELCA was never met, save in 1970, and in some years only barely subscribed.

The staff continued to grow. In the year of Pastor Dorsey's arrival, there was a new organist, a new choir director, a new afternoon secretary/bookkeeper and a new director of our kindergarten program.

Ground-breaking for a new facility occurred in 1991. Plans were begun to implement the lay care-giving Stephen Ministry. The Bethel Bible series, long a staple of adult education in other congregations, was also proposed this year—though funding kept it from being implemented. The congregation's first healing service was conducted. And the capital funds appeal came to a successful conclusion.

Pastor Nagle's report to the congregation in 1991 looked to the future, on the verge of our building's construction and renovation. There was excitement and uncertainty and even some confusion. And the question raised was, "How will things be a year from now?" One answer is, "We survived." He wrote, "We weathered the long days of working with the general contractor and the sub-contractors. We shoe-horned ourselves into the west building worship space. We maintained programs that benefited ourselves and the community. But this past year was more than mere survival, for we grew too. In the past twelve months, we welcomed a large number of new members (126 of them!), even as we happily sent three dozen of our members to the newly-forming Abiding Presence Church in Fuquay-Varina and many others to the far reaches of our country. Our financial response was excellent at a time when people worried about the state of the economy. Christ the King was at the forefront of social ministry, especially in the Caring Place proposal. The Stephen Ministry began its work of caring. And this fall found us with record attendance figures that will soon put a strain on the building which was designed for the year 2010!"

1992 saw the completion of the building program. Two two-story units were added on the Walnut Street side of the property. The western wing included room for the pre-school and children's Sunday School on the top floor and rooms for middle school and high school ministries downstairs. The eastern wing housed offices, a new lecture room and choir room on the top floor, and classrooms downstairs. A hallway was enclosed outside the office and pre-school. The narthex was expanded and the long-awaited balcony was constructed, in addition to some renovation to the nave. The cost of the construction was almost \$900,000.

In 1992, a number of Christ the King members moved their membership to the newly-organized Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in Fuquay-Varina. For two years, Pastor Nagle had been conducting one service each month at the Episcopal church in Fuquay-Varina for those Christ the King members who lived there and in Holly Springs.

Also in 1992, the congregation embarked on two significant outreach ministries. As part of a group of congregations aligned with the Cary Ministerial Association, Christ the King supported an effort to turn a downtown Cary motel into a facility for the increasing number of homeless people in Cary. After intense lobbying from both sides in a bitter dispute, the proposal was rejected by the Town of Cary—though the ministry continued without a building. The Caring Place still values the support it received from the members of the congregation.

In 1995, Pastor Dorsey submitted his resignation in order to become the mission developer of Circle of Grace, a ministry-start in western Wake County. Some eighty Christ the King members joined with him in this venture, at first meeting in Davis Drive Middle School.

Later in 1995, a call committee recommended that the Rev. Kenneth L. Ray become the new associate pastor. Formerly an executive in the bottling industry, Pastor Ray was graduated from Duke Divinity School, having also studied at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. Emmett Windham became the new choir director and Hank Barnes was named sexton.

On September 5, 1996, Hurricane Fran wreaked havoc on the Triangle area, as well as other parts of North Carolina. Sewer water backed up into our building's lower level, causing the cessation of all church activities for almost two weeks. The repair cost was \$25,000. On the Sunday after the hurricane, the congregation worshipped outdoors in the driveway and posted lists of people with needs and people with resources, and a long period of recovery—and ministry—began.

Another casualty of the hurricane was Faith Lutheran School which had been organized by Christ the King and other Wake County congregations almost five years earlier. The school had just entered its renovated facility on Capital Boulevard when floodwaters destroyed the interior of the building and ruined everything that the school owned. Pastor Ray was the leader in getting the school re-established. In the years since, Christ the King has been a faithful supporter of the school and has sent numerous students to be enrolled there.

In 1997, a columbarium was built in the corner of the narthex closest to the parlor. Sixty-six niches were constructed, and within a few months, over forty of them were reserved for the ashes of members and former members who had been cremated.

Christ the King has always hosted community organizations. In 1997, that group included Alcoholics Anonymous, two groups of Al-Anon, Al-a-Teen, Overeaters Anonymous, Transplant Recipients, Domestic Offenders, five different scout groups, an Early Childhood Center, therapy groups, a new AIDS task force, and others.

In the late 1990's, the congregation's relationship with St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church bloomed again. Several joint worship services occurred, and a popular polka party was held in the fall each year.

In 1998, Pastor Nagle spent three months on sabbatical, representing the NC Synod in its sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea, visiting biblical sites in Asia Minor, and doing advanced study. He also published two books of his sermons, Carp in Your Trout Stream and Happy Birthday, Jesus. His first book, published in 1994, was The Story I Love to Tell.

The need for still more programs and the time required to produce them necessitated the 2000 hiring of Jay T. Thompson as the congregation's Director of Children and Youth Ministries. Formerly the head of Lutherock, he was to be responsible for all youth activities, educational opportunities for children through 18 years of age, coordinating with committees and ministries dealing with adults.

In 2001, the congregation greatly increased its global mission focus. Many thousands of dollars was raised to address the issue of world hunger through ELCA Disaster Relief and CROP. Over a thousand needed textbooks were shipped to Papua New Guinea and clothing, blankets, glasses and other supplies were shared with those in greatest need. The Nagles twice reported on their experiences in Papua New Guinea. Missionaries Lou and Susan Bauer spoke of their work in Namibia, and were offered mission support through our budget. After the Bauers' return from Africa, support was transferred to an ELCA missionary in Papua New Guinea. The Social Ministry Committee sent generous grants to a ministry to street children in Brazil and to a Lutheran ministry in Haiti, Village of Hope.

In 2001, Pastor Ray finished his advanced study and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Ministry by Drew University in Madison, NJ.

Also in 2001, the adult choir traveled to Germany, Austria, and Slovakia, singing in Bach's church in Leipzig, Dachau, Salzburg, Melk abbey and Vienna.

An important part of congregational life has been the coming together of men and women in smaller groups. Lutheran Church Women (later Women of the ELCA) have met as the Esther, Mary, Martha (twice!), Joy,

Lydia, Rachel, Grace, and Tabitha circles. The men's group that was so active in the congregation's early days ceased to exist for many years. A unit of Promise Keeper's has met with Christ the King men, and the men from Circle of Grace have continued monthly meetings.

The fall of 2002 saw the completion of still another building program. At the east end of the property, a large space was constructed which would house contemporary worship, act as a fellowship room, include a large kitchen, with extra storage space, tied to a new and bright narthex where members from different worship forms could gather. At the end of the western wing extending toward Walnut Street, four classrooms were added—two upstairs and two down. And the elevator, first proposed in 1976, was finally installed in the shaft. The total cost of the construction and renovation was \$2.7 million.

The continued numerical growth of the congregation and the need to address crowding issues is shown in the Christmas Eve worship schedule that was adopted in 2002. A total of five worship services were held: a contemporary-form service, two traditional-form services, and two services of Lessons and Carols, meeting in the nave, in Nagle Hall and in Luther Chapel. The changing nature of those attending worship is shown in the Lenten schedule begun in 2003, with a mid-morning midweek service being offered in addition to the early evening service on Wednesdays.

A new ministry allowed by the 2003 expansion was the beginning of a Wednesday evening food and worship time. Led by Pastor Nelson, the brief worship service, often with assistance from children's choirs, concluded with a hot dinner, and Bible study courses afterward.

In August 2003, Associate in Ministry McClain finished her service at Christ the King and retired. Near the end of her work, she had organized and led numerous small groups dealing with personal and congregational needs—grief, divorce, parenting and aging.

In the latter half of 2003, conversation was begun which eventually caused the consolidation of ministries of Circle of Grace and Christ the King. For some of the Christ the King members who had participated in CoG's organization, rejoining CTK was a full circle. The contemporary worship style that was a hallmark of Circle of Grace became Christ the King's fifth Sunday morning worship service, named Quest, meeting in Luther Chapel. In addition to the people and financial assets that the people of CoG brought to CTK, a large tract of land on Davis Drive also came under CTK's control.

In 2004, full approval was given to the consolidation of CoG and CTK ministries. A business manager was hired to allow the pastors to concentrate more on people than on things. New lighting was added to the nave. During Lent, a morning worship service was added to the Wednesday schedule. The Chicago Folk Mass worship form was used again on a more regular basis, and the senior choir enjoyed a concert tour of the British Isles. The financial health continued, so that the ministries of the state/national church were fully supported, more than by any other NC congregation. In addition, many thousands of special-offering dollars were given to people suffering from storms and hunger. The fall stewardship drive raised more than \$725,000 in pledges for the \$1.1+ million 2005 ministry plan. "Breakfast at Epiphany," sponsored by the Stewardship Committee, brought in loads of food for the hungry of our community. The congregation's indebtedness was reduced by over \$200,000. The Director of Adult Ministry position remained unfilled, but the Rev. Judith Helm, a retired ELCA pastor recently from Pennsylvania, served as interim DAM and began a new Book Club and met with various small need-based groups. Phyllis Fuller began work as director of the Early Childhood Center, replacing Jean Schilawski. The first Early Childhood Center summer camp was a success. Barbara Olson became the new principal of Faith Lutheran School, replacing Jane Knox. The number of baptized members surpassed 1900. The council recommended major changes to make our constitution and by-laws more current, and the congregation studied the question of ordaining homosexuals as pastors in the ELCA.

Through the years, the church was blessed by the work of Larry Huerth, Dick Bloom, Pastor Nagle, Tom Hegele, Barbara Olson, Tony Jackson, Diane Amidon, Emmett Windham, Petie Huffman and Sally Molyneux

who directed our senior choir. Organists who have served include Yvonne (Wilson) Mason, Mary Chunn, Barbara Olson, Wanda Orsett, Karen Miller, Tim Johnson, Randall Darnell and Michael Harris. The church office was staffed by Faye Cherry, Clara Nissen, Dora Kastleberg, Karen Williams, Mona Rodgers, Rita Sears, Kim MacIlroy, Kay Struffolino, Lisa Teichmann and Rosemary Bielejeski. Dana Mallory has been our sole ABC music director. Sextons have included JD Wilson, Rong Nay, Hank Barnes, Martin Browning and Jeff McClain. Directors of the Early Childhood Center have included Sarah Richardson, Sandy Miller and Jean Huerth, Patti Neptun, Debbie Dupree, Kathy Boling, Lori Wolvin, Jean Schilawski and Phyllis Fuller.

And finally, the congregation celebrated the 40th anniversary of its organization, prompting the publication of this history. The anniversary was noted with special worship and fellowship activities on January 9, 2005. May God continue his blessings on the people of Christ the King through all the years ahead.