

Irving Park Lutheran Church

Continuing The Journey

Part III: 1954-1978



Joshua Odén
1908-69



Gerald Johnson
1955-59



Kenneth Farb
1959-71



David Peterson
1963-67



Ross Larson
1971-86



John Larson
1973-75

THE THIRD QUARTER CENTURY

Thanks to the foresight and commitment of its founders 50 years earlier, Irving Park Lutheran Church remained a vibrant member of the Irving Park community. The third 25-year period included the last years of Dr. Joshua Odén's 61 years of ministry at IPLC. Other pastors and assistant pastors who guided IPLC during the third quarter-century were Gerald K. Johnson, Kenneth E. Farb,

J. David Peterson, Ross H. Larson and John D. Larson. IPLC and its members successfully navigated many turbulent times. The period began right after the end of the Korean War. In the 1960s and early 1970s, U.S. troops were fighting in Vietnam. Times were changing, but IPLC members remained steadfast in their commitment to serve all members of the community.

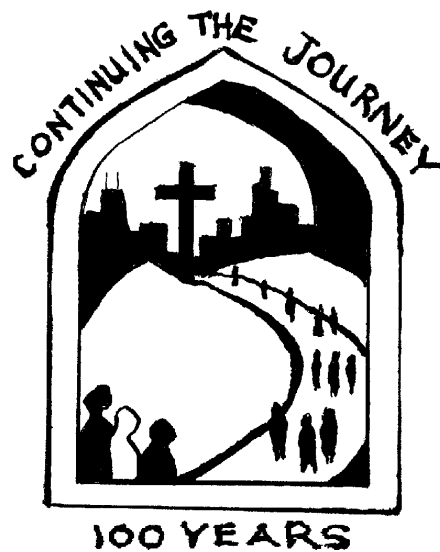
THE WOMEN OF IPLC

It would take at least 100 pages to adequately salute the women of our church. Unfortunately, we can only hit a few highlights, with first things first.

First Ladies Society meeting: March 17, 1904. First mention of serving coffee at all meetings: March 17, 1904. First Ladies Society chairman: Emelia Carlson. First dues: 25 cents a month. First purchase: 100 teaspoons. First social: On grounds surrounding the L.M. Nelson home at 4048 N. Harding.

Perhaps the most significant early contribution by the Ladies Society came in 1905 when the group paid \$420 to purchase the lot on which our church presently stands.

The Ladies Society also purchased the pews and kitchen equipment for the current church building, which opened in 1917. Some original circles were called the Marias, Ruth,



Fancy Circle, Plain Sewing Circle and Rummage Circle. And we shouldn't forget Circles A, B, C and D. Zoom ahead to 1963, and these were the active circles: Rachel, Claudia, Esther, Faith, Priscilla, Eva, Hope, Alpha, Miriam, Ruth and Martha-Maria.

IPLC women have been the

driving force behind 99 percent of the social gatherings at church. They've cooked, cleaned and kept the coffee industry in business. They've raised funds, supported missions and taught Christianity by example.

In IPLC's third quarter century, the Lutheran Church Women helped furnish the new kitchen, supported (among other things) the Bethphage Mission in Axtell, Neb., the Augustana Nursery and Children's Home and our overseas missionaries.

It all began with Kvinnoforeningen.

That's what the Swedes called the Ladies Society when it was organized by a group of seven women on March 17, 1904. The group's stated mission was "to work for the welfare of the congregation." Almost 100 years later, it's easy to say, "Mission Accomplished!"

LIFE NEAR THE FAST LANES

The look of the Irving Park neighborhood and the makeup of IPLC were forever changed late in the 1950s when houses were demolished to make room for the Northwest Expressway.

The new expressway, which opened Nov. 5, 1960, was called “a great blessing to our church” because it made it easier to travel to church from greater distances. But it also uprooted several IPLC families.

The Northwest was renamed the Kennedy Expressway on Nov. 29, 1963, exactly one week after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

A TERRIFIC SNOW JOB

Custodians at IPLC have always done the dirty work, including back-breaking snow-shoveling. The winter of 1963 was especially hard, with heavy snow falling almost every Saturday night. Custodian Vince Cosgrove worked many long nights and mornings to be sure the walkways were clear for Sunday morning services.

One afternoon in November 1964, Cosgrove and Pastor Farb walked to the Ace Hardware store at 3935 W. Irving Park “just to look” and dream about a new gadget—a mechanical snow plow.

With a smile on his face, store manager Ray Lundin said, “I will send over the best one.”

When it arrived with no billing statement, Pastor Farb and Cosgrove realized that the snow plow was Lundin’s gift to his church. Pastor Farb noted how much Lundin’s generosity was appreciated, especially “the simple, direct and unobtrusive way he gave it.”



The chorus and (center, from left) Delores Speaker, Robert Lindsay, Dorothy Sturgis and Bob Lipp perform in "H.M.S. Pinafore" on June 1-2, 1962, in the Educational Building.

FOOTLIGHTERS BRIGHTEN THE NIGHTS

The Educational Building has hosted hundreds of memorable events since it opened in 1936. But few have been more well-received than the annual theatrical performances staged by the “Footlighters” in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Footlighters’ roots were planted May 19, 1961, when the Miriam and SOL circles produced “The Mikado,” with Pastor Farb in the title role. They followed that success in 1962 with “H.M.S. Pinafore.” In 1963, the “Irving Park Players,” sponsored by the Couples

Club, staged “Arsenic and Old Lace.”

On Oct. 29, 1963, a meeting was held in Victory Hall to form a Drama Club featuring “stars” from the congregation. Club members decided to call the group the Footlighters.

Other performances included: Oh Susanna, The More the Merrier, The Man Who Came to Dinner, The Mouse That Roared, Sight Unseen, Bachelor’s Baby, Rosalie Runs Riot, Never Too Late, Such Things Happen, Late Love, Anything Goes, Diversity (an original musical-

comedy written by Pastor Ross Larson), and No, No, Nanette. In 1978, the production of “Finnian’s Rainbow” was postponed because of the poor condition of the gym floor. Instead, the Footlighters presented “Oldies With Goodies” Oct. 27-28, 1978, to honor IPLC’s 75th anniversary with a turn-of-the-century music hall program and ice cream treats.



Pastor Ross Larson turned into a thespian with the Footlighters, along with (from left) Nancy Johnson, Lori Johnson and Marilyn (Moe) Cholewin.

IPLC TRIVIA

* June 20, 1954: Pastor Gerald K. Johnson of First Lutheran Church in Monmouth, Ill., served as guest pastor on Father’s Day.

* June 26-27, 1954: The Swedish Choral Club, under the direction of Harry T. Carlson, performed in the band shell at Grant Park.

* Summer 1954: Pastor Johnson accepted the call to be IPLC pastor. He preached his first “official” sermon here on Jan. 9, 1955.

* November 1954: To make room for Pastor Johnson, Pastor Emeritus Odén and his family moved from the parsonage, where they lived for 46 years, to 6855 N. Mendota.

* Sept. 18, 1955: The first edition of “The Challenger” was distributed. It replaced the “Weekly Bulletin” that served as a combination Tidings/ Bulletin. The Challenger lasted until September 1959, when “The Tidings” returned.



Irving Park Lutheran Church in 1956, when Belle Plaine was a two-way street.

The Junior Choir in 1967 with choir director Muriel Pierson. Can you pick out a familiar looking head usher?



* Dec. 1, 1955: The Men's Club hosted a Fathers and Sons Night, with Bears coach George Halas the speaker.

* Christmas Day, 1956: The Advent Wreath was quickly removed—and extinguished—after it caught on fire.

* Oct. 6, 1957: Debut of the "Inchoirer," a publication for the choir.

* December 1958: The new kitchen opened in Victory Hall.

* January 1959: Work began on the Memorial Chapel. Previously, the chapel was the location of offices for the pastor and secretary.

* March 1959: A congregational meeting was called for Sunday, April 5, 1959, to receive Pastor Johnson's resignation.

* June 1959: Pastor Kenneth Farb accepted the call to return as pastor, effective July 1, 1959.

* July 12, 1959: The Memorial Chapel was dedicated at a ceremony that also marked the end of Pastor Johnson's work at IPLC. During his tenure, IPLC underwent extensive remodeling, including the offices, chapel, kitchen and Victory Hall.

COMMUNITY FRIENDS

After IPLC celebrated its 70th anniversary, a program was created to help the senior citizens of our church and surrounding community. On May 21, 1974, "Community Friends" held its charter meeting in Victory Hall. Smelt was on the menu.

The group quickly expanded and had 213 members by 1977. At their once-a-month programs, the members enjoyed musicals, travel films, talent shows, singers, dancers, book reviews, bingo, card games and—most of all—fellowship. The group even had five strippers (who removed the old finish from the woodwork and baseboards in the church during the restoration of 1976).

Community Friends, which published a monthly newsletter, also made substantial contributions to IPLC for the use of the Educational Building and Victory Hall.

MAGIC MUSHROOM

For years, IPLC hosted a Vacation Bible School. In the middle of the 1970s, it was decided to rename and expand the summer program with the hopes of attracting even more children.

The first session for the "Magic Mushroom" ran from June 23 to July 31, 1975, with Holly and Larry Lundquist serving as program coordinators. The Magic Mushroom quickly expanded. By the fourth summer session, which began June 26, 1978, the average attendance was 80 children. That session culminated with 190 people attending a pot-luck supper.

The early days of the Magic Mushroom set the stage for a continuous community celebration that is flourishing today.



Douglas Allen Boe



Richard Ray Machut

THE CLASS OF 1960

Every Confirmation class has had its share of memorable moments and colorful characters. In that regard, the Class of 1960 was typical. Under the direction of Pastor Farb, Assistant Pastor Martin W. Gustafson and student assistant Philip O. Laurin Jr., the 17 boys and 6 girls went on to high school and wondered about the different paths they would take in their lives. Tragically, the paths for classmates Douglas Allen Boe and Richard Ray Machut were far too short.

Doug Boe was almost too good to be true. He was the youngest child of Oliver and Marcella Boe. Doug had an older brother, Ron, and an older sister, Myrna. Doug would go on to become a star athlete, a top scholar, an Explorer Scout and a devoted church member who did whatever was needed at IPLC. Even before he was confirmed, the well-spoken Doug, 13, was called on to give the sermon at the 9:30 a.m. service on Youth Sunday, Jan. 31, 1960. The class was confirmed on Palm Sunday, April 10, 1960.

Doug, who sported a crew-cut, was the vice president of



Doug Boe at Princeton University photo day. Doug, a sophomore, was injured later that day and died after 14 months in a coma.

his senior class at Lane Tech, played quarterback on the football team and guided the Indians to second place in the Public League in 1964. His athletic ability, coupled with his outstanding grades, earned him the Knute Rockne Award from the Notre Dame Club of Chicago and a scholarship to Princeton University. Doug also had been offered scholarships by Navy and Stanford.

In the fall of 1966, on the same day that Doug posed for photographers in his Princeton football uniform, he suffered a brain injury after being tackled during practice. He remained in a coma for 14 months and died at age 21



Marine Cpl. Richard Machut was killed in Vietnam in 1968. He was a member of the 1960 Confirmation class.

on Jan. 14, 1968.

Doug was everybody's favorite. The younger people in the church looked up to Doug. He was a straight-shooter, but he also knew how to make people smile. One of Doug's last contributions to IPLC was when he helped refinish the gym floor.

Loyalty was one of Dick Machut's strongest traits. The oldest son of Ray and LaVaun Machut, Dick was 14 when his brother, Roger, was born. After Confirmation, Dick became a Hi-League officer, taught Sunday School, was active in Scouts, graduated from Roosevelt High School and studied at Roosevelt Junior College.

Dick had an infectious laugh, a great sense of humor—and he could play a mean game of cribbage. While working at Continental Can Co. in 1966, Dick's draft number came up and he decided to join the Marines to serve his country.

On June 17, 1968, Dick had less than one month left in his tour of duty when he was killed by a grenade in Thua Thien, South Vietnam. Cpl. Richard Machut was 21 and would have turned 22 on July 3, 1968.

In less than five months, Doug and Dick's lives ended, but their memories live brightly in those who loved them.

On Aug. 17, 1969, Pastor Farb conducted a memorial

A TRIBUTE TO HIS BROTHER

Roger Machut, who was 7 when Dick died, later joined the Marines to serve his country and honor his brother. Roger, who married 1974 Confirmation classmate Linda Sturgis and has been blessed with children Dan and Lindsay, is a Lieutenant Colonel. He was Commander of the 6th Engineer Support Battalion and in charge of 1,600 Marines in the war in Iraq in 2003. Roger, an IPLC Eagle Scout who was named Scout of the Year in 1974, returned safely from his duty in Iraq. The Machuts, who live in Schaumburg, attended many of the IPLC Centennial celebrations.



Marine Lt. Col. Roger Machut. Illustration made in Iraq on April 4, 2003, by Richard Johnson, Detroit Free Press. Reprinted with permission.

service for Doug and Dick at Camp Cayuga in Elcho, Wis. A flag pole was dedicated in Dick's memory, and the flag that was on his casket remains in use today during the summers at Camp Cayuga. The new Explorer cabin was named in memory of Doug. Every summer, Scouts are told the stories of Doug and Dick.

At IPLC, a plaque honoring Doug is in the Educational Building, and a picture of Doug is in the entry-way trophy case. The green parament that still is used today on the altar during Pentecost was dedicated to Dick's memory.

MORE IPLC TRIVIA

* Christmas Eve, 1959: Pastor Odén preached at his 53rd traditional midnight “Julotta” service.

* The 1960s: Early risers could catch a glimpse of Pastor Farb delivering the not-so-good news in the Sun-Times and Tribune on his paper route before delivering the Good News from the pulpit.

* More 1960s: Bible verses were painted high on the walls in the front of the church. On the left, behind the pulpit: “Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” On the right, above the organ chamber: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”

* Summer 1962: A new gymnasium floor was installed.

* Dec. 30, 1962: Premise Committee members used a Geiger counter on the gym floor to locate water pipes.

* April 21, 1963: Ella Kracke announced the opening of the IPLC Circulating Library, located in the south wall of Victory Hall. The library contained 400 books.

* April 26, 1963: Ernie Banks of the Cubs and sportswriter Jerome Holtzman of the Sun-Times were featured speakers at the Father and Son Banquet. In 1964, quarterback Bill Wade of the 1963 NFL champion Bears was the speaker.

* May 23, 1963: Assistant pastor J. David Peterson was installed at IPLC on Father’s Day, June 16.

* Oct. 18, 1963: An IPLC 60th anniversary banquet was held at the Luther North gymnasium.

* Feb. 9, 1964: In step with the times, the Hi-League presented its own “Hootenanny.” The family night folk music fest began with a dinner in Victory Hall and was followed by a sing-along in the Educational Building.

* Feb. 29, 1964: The undefeated IPLC Pre-Prep basketball team made it a Leap Year Day night to remember as it rallied from a 10-point deficit to defeat the league All-Stars 43-42.

* April 25, 1964: The church was saddened by the death of Stanley Anderson, the 10-year-old son of Erling and Arletta Anderson who died from spinal meningitis. Stanley also



The 1963-64 Pre-Prep basketball team. Back row from left: Paul Greenslade, Dave Brink, Steve Peterson, Bob Maina and Jim Williams. Front row from left: Chris Brink, Ralph Greenslade and Ed Williams.

was survived by his sister, Shirley, and brothers Marty and Bruce.

* May 28, 1964: The Cub Scouts duked it out during their annual Boxing Night. A boxing ring was installed in the middle of the gym.

* Summer 1964: Private First Class Kenric Farb, a son of Pastor and Runa Farb, was selected to guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

* Sept. 20, 1964: The Swedish service was televised by the Swedish TV company of Stockholm. Pastor Odén, 84, conducted the service, coordinated by Per-Hugo Kristensson.

* Feb. 7, 1965: Boy Scout Sunday honored the 18th year of Explorer Post 2863, 27th year of Cub Scout Pack 3863 and 45th year of Boy Scout Troop 863. Jack Knowles was cited as the “Busiest Scouter” for serving as assistant Scoutmaster, associate Post Advisor, Sunday School teacher, Hi-League counselor, Junior Luther League counselor and Confirmation class teacher.

* June 20, 1965: IPLC member Robert Lipp received the Lamb Award, the highest honor of the national Lutheran Church for scouting.

* Dec. 19, 1965: The carillon was dedicated to the memory of Hjalmar Andrews.

* October 1966: The Slot Car Racing Club was formed. A track was built in the basement of the Educational Building.

* January 1967: Pastor Peterson resigned to become pastor at Christus

Victor Lutheran in Elk Grove Village.

* Jan. 15, 1967: The start of the assistant-pastor shuffle. Daniel Ramm joined IPLC as student assistant. In May 1968, Ramm left for a one-year internship at a church in Dubois, Pa. Ramm was replaced for one year by seminary student James Pohl. Ramm returned as a student pastor on Sept. 7, 1969, and stayed until May 24, 1970. Pohl returned Sept. 20, 1970, and stayed until Aug. 22, 1971.

* June 18, 1967: IPLC hosted the “Folkkungkoren,” a chorus of 40 singers from Sweden.

* Summer 1967: New lockers were installed in the gym.

* Feb. 18, 1968: Dave Brink led the undefeated IPLC junior basketball team to the Junior Division championship at Luther North. Brink was awarded five trophies: MVP, Top Scorer, Best Foul Shooter, All-Star and Championship Team member.

* July 20, 1968: About 35 Hi-League members and parents spent a day as guests of IPLC members Bob and Dorothy VanDerHorst at their home on Brown’s Lake in Burlington, Wis. The Vans regularly hosted members of the youth group, scouts, choirs and other church organizations at their lakeside home.

* September 1968: The church board approved the purchase of an electronic eternal light.

* Nov. 30, 1968: The gym was packed for the annual Scouter’s Square Dance, a fund-raiser for Camp Cayuga.

* Sept. 22, 1969: The death of Pastor Odén, 89. Among his highlights: Graduated from Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kan.; taught public school for two years before attending Lutheran School of Theology in Rock Island, where he graduated in 1908. Ordained at Trinity in Chicago, June 14, 1908. Called to IPLC July 1, 1908, Chaplain, U.S. Army, 1917. President National Luther League. President Chicago Church Federation, 1933. President Religion Committee for 1933 World’s Fair. Knighted by King of Sweden. Doctor of Divinity, Bethany College. Delegate to United Nations, San Francisco, 1945. Conducted 2,900 baptisms, 3,000 weddings, 2,700 funerals and confirmed 2,600.

* June 21, 1970: The Memorial Chapel is re-dedicated as the Odén Memorial Chapel.

* Aug. 9, 1970: Shirley Anderson and Kathy Duff represented the IPLC Girls Softball Team in an All-Star game in Horner Park.

* Jan. 24, 1971: Pastor Farb preached his last sermon at IPLC. He was replaced on an interim basis by Vice Pastor Eric Hagg, the former pastor at neighboring Nebo Lutheran.

* March 10, 1971: The congregation extended a call to the Rev. Earl Carlson of Kewanee, Ill., to become the new pastor. The call was rejected.

* May 1971: The original parsonage was demolished.

* May 12, 1971: Pastor Ross Larson visited IPLC for the first time. A call was issued May 30 and it was accepted. In the Tidings, Pastor Hagg noted that the Larsons remained silent regarding their input on a new parsonage. "Remember," Hagg wrote. "It will always be a parsonage, never a Larsonage."

* Oct. 15, 1971: Terry Dufur, 26, began his duties as student assistant.

* Nov. 20, 1971: IPLC's junior basketball team played against Grace Lutheran Church of Elmwood Park at the Chicago Stadium in the first part of a doubleheader. The nightcap featured the Bulls against the Boston Celtics. An IPLC-Grace rematch was held at the Stadium on Dec. 9, 1972, before the Bulls played the Buffalo Braves. Tickets cost \$3, the same as today!!!

* Jan. 25, 1972: Custodian Vince Cosgrove died after serving since the summer of 1962. He was replaced by Richard Plambeck, who is in his 31st year with IPLC.

* March 5, 1972: IPLC began a daily recorded inspirational telephone message, "The Good News," at 267-1766. In 1974, it was noted that the phone line received more than 6,000 calls in its first two years.

* Sept. 15-16, 1972: Thousands attend a neighborhood Fall Festival hosted by IPLC.

* Dec. 31, 1972: Membership was 1,222 baptized and 866 confirmed.

* Jan. 6, 1973: IPLC began a yearly tradition of celebrating the 12 days of Christmas at an Epiphany Party.

* March 11, 1973: A Girl Scout



Carl Sandell congratulates Lillian Carlson at her retirement party in the Educational Building on March 27, 1976. Mrs. Carlson was the IPLC organist from 1939-76. Mr. Sandell sang in the choir for 60 years and taught Sunday School for 40 years.

anniversary dinner honored the 25th year of Cadette Troop 824 and 10th year of Junior Troop 80.

* May 20, 1973: At a special meeting of the congregation, the destruction of IPLC's property at 4103 N. Pulaski was approved. The site became the current parking lot.

* Aug. 26, 1973: John D. Larson, a graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology, preached the sermon. He agreed to become assistant pastor and was ordained Nov. 4.

* Feb. 15, 1974: Music director Chuck Olson organized "The Rising Sun," a group that would sing and play instruments for the contemporary service. Contemporary communion services were sponsored by a group of college-age church members who, for some reason, wanted to be called "The Pickle People."

* Jan. 12, 1975: IPLC began a new ministry by holding a traditional and an informal service at the same time, with Pastor Ross and Pastor John alternating through the year.

* May 15, 1975: Pastor John announced his resignation when it was realized that the assistant pastor position might have to be eliminated because of budget considerations.

* Sept. 30, 1975: Pastor Johnson resigned as Illinois Synod president.

* Jan. 12, 1976: After 37 years, Lillian Carlson's letter of resignation as church organist was submitted to the Church Council. She was replaced by Martha Schurke.

* Feb. 8, 1976: Ken VanDerHorst and Christine Wallstrom unite to revive the Hi-League program. Twenty-six years later, in 2002, they are united in marriage at IPLC, with fellow 1965 Confirmation classmate Robert Oudin officiating.

* July 18, 1976: The last worship service was held in the church before redecoration was to begin. Services were held in the gym until the project was completed on Dec. 12, 1976.

* Sept. 1, 1976: The death of former Pastor Gerald K. Johnson.

* January 1978: IPLC was on a roll. It had three teams, with 17 men competing, in a church bowling league.

* March 5, 1978: The Boys Choir of the Gothenburg Cathedral performed at IPLC.

* March 17, 1978: The Hi-League came down with Friday night fever and went to the Axle Roller Rink in Norridge for Disco Roller Skating.

* March 26, 1978: Carl and Bernice Sandell moved to Florida and were presented with plaques. Carl sang in the choir for 60 years, taught Sunday School for 40 years and was a Parish Visitor for 10 years, averaging 150 to 200 visits per year. Bernice was in the choir for 40 years and taught Sunday School for 25 years.

* April 1978: Bruce Anderson and Roger Machut were named Illinois State Scholars.

* April 14, 1978: IPLC hosted a neighborhood Health Fair, with hundreds in attendance. Thanks were extended to 16 IPLC volunteers, including Lloyd and Marie DaMask, who coordinated the event.

* April 19, 1978: Volleyball team won the Chicago Championship.

TIDINGS

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Third 100th Anniversary Issue

Irving Park Lutheran Church



TIDINGS

From **Irving Park Lutheran Church**

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