Besides creditably performing the other duties of his ministry, Rev. Green deserves special mention for his marked leadership in the erection and equipment of our magnificent church which will be prized even more as the years roll on, and which we hope will stand as a monument to the piety and devoutness of its builders long after many of them have entered the Eternal Portals, to which it shall help show us the way.

CHAPTER XIX.

Our Church, 1915.

A ladies’ waiting room has always been a pressing need in Perry church. Various meetings for the last twenty years have proposed different plans for such a room only to be rejected at the next meeting. When we add to this the necessity of a new roof on our church and finally the approaching Sixty-year Fest we have the nucleus around which Rev. Green won the public
sentiment, so that a special meeting on April 28th, 1911, a committee was appointed to investigate and lay plans for the remodeling of our church. The preliminary committee was composed of A. K. Grimstad, P. P. Syftestad, H. V. Jenson, O. K. Stenseth, and C. O. Ruste, who employed Architect T. H. Kempf of Beloit, Wisconsin, whose plans have been followed with a few modifications.

Building Committee

When this committee made its report on November 28th of that year the congregation appointed Rev. Green as a committee of one, with authority to select one helper in each school district to solicit a trial subscription, to see if the means could be procured to build according to the proposed plans. This committee besides the chairman consisted of Erick F. Goli, Ole T. Kompelin, Hans Valstad, Knudt Retrum, Knut H. Stolen,
L. M. Kittleson, David Davidson, and John Fjelstad. This soliciting committee made a favorable report at a special meeting held on August 21st, 1912, and the congregation decided to proceed with the remodeling of the church according to the plans. A. K. Grimstad was elected building inspector, and a building committee with full power to act for the congregation was chosen. The committee consisted of J. M. Green, O. K. Stenseth, H. V. Jensen, Knut H. Stolen, and Henry Knudson. Theodore Grinder was later elected treasurer of the building and equipment funds.

Hon. T. G. Cretney of Ridgeway was given the contract to do the work and furnish the material, which was hauled from Blue Mounds eight miles away, this being the nearest railroad. The rocks were taken from Mr. Erickson's farm about a mile away. It is a well known fact that Mr. Erickson, who is a skilled mason, has performed more work on our church than any other man, having labored there for more than four hundred days. Edward Grinder was also one of the chief masons on the new addition as well as men from Ridgeway and other places. Many other local men, old and young, have also rendered valuable service.

Mr. Cretney employed Mr. Hendrickson of Ridgeway as foreman of the carpenter work; Mr. Swiggum of Blanchardville and Mr. Baker of New Glarus did the plastering.

The finishing of the church basement was not included in the original plan, but the matter was taken up and accomplished by the women of the congregation. Mr. Erickson had a contract for and performed most of this work.
Furniture.

When the church was nearing completion the prevailing feeling among the members of the congregation was indicated at a special meeting, when it was decided to buy and install new furniture of such a quality as would be suitable to the interior of the church, provided the funds would be available, when asked for.

The following composed the soliciting committee: J. M. Green, Henry Berg, J. J. Hegland, Albert Kittleson, Ole T. Kompelin, C. O. Ruste, Edward Goli, P. P. Syftestad, and Theodore Grinder. After a favorable report was made to the congregation assembled, the building committee was authorized to proceed with the purchase of the same. The new equipment was installed and used for the first time Easter Sunday, 1915.

Many pretty and valuable articles have been donated in memory of deceased members by their families. Among these are artistically painted windows in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Knudt O. Grimstvedt, Mr. and Mrs. O. B. Dahle, Mr. and Mrs. Hans Valstad, Valquar Jensen, Hans O. Grinde, and Ole A. Ruste. A Christ statue in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Erick Helland, a chancel in memory of Gulbran Jensvold, and likewise one in memory of Martin Grinde, an altar-desk in memory of Martin Goli and a baptismal font in memory of Mrs. Ole Huser. One hymn board has been presented by Mr. and Mrs. Gulbrand Rundhaug, and the other by Ole Paulson.

The Pige-förenings and women of the congregation have provided the matting and carpet for the church as well as other things. The Mission Band has given a set of brass collection plates, and the “Little Helpers” has presented a pair of beautiful
brass candlesticks.

Perry Church, Interior
The Pipe Organ.

The same meeting that decided to buy furniture for the church authorized the Luther League to take the initiative in the securing of a pipe organ. The subscription lists which were circulated for the furniture had also a space set aside for the pipe organ donations, which brought in $1,400.00; the balance of $600.00 has been provided by the members of the league. The committee of the league having the selecting and buying of the organ in charge consisted of the following members: Edward Goli, Henry Berg, Wm. Grimstad, Mrs. Amanda Goli, and Miss Clara Holden.

Our Cemetery.

We have long known that the cemetery has not presented as attractive an appearance as it should, but it was not until September, 1912 that the congregation seriously undertook any step toward its improvement. A special committee consisting of J. M. Green, P. P. Syftestad, and Theodore Grinder was elected to formulate plans and place them before the annual meeting in the November following. These plans were adopted and a temporary committee was elected to make improvements along certain described lines. The work was accomplished through 1913-14, and was directed by a committee consisting of Juul Nelson, B. T. Daley, and P. P. Syftestad, who also had in charge the financial side of the undertaking. The means to defray the expenses were obtained thru voluntary donations. This work is being continued in 1915 by a permanent board of directors. About one hundred monuments have been moved, straightened, or given new foundations. Several graves have been moved, the old iron frames removed, and the whole ground replaced.
The annual meeting in November, 1914 adopted permanent rules and regulations which are being executed by a board of five members — three men and two women — chosen by the congregation. This board has full charge of the cemetery, most of the executive duties are laid upon the chairman who is elected by the Congregation, while their treasurer is elected by the committee.

The means for maintaining the cemetery in the future is provided for by an assessment of one dollar annually on each family in the congregation and others who have moved away but have dear ones buried there.


The directors in charge for the year 1915 are as follows: B. T. Daley, chairman; P. P. Syftestad, Erik F. Goli, Mrs. Ellen Goli, and Mrs. O. K. Stenseth.

Expenses.

The various money expenditures for improvements made during the past three years, as mentioned in this chapter, may be innumerated as follows:

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The new addition, cross, chancel, sacristy
and waiting room, and the remodeling
of the old part of the church.................. $10,031.75
The church parlors (basement)..................... 955.00
Pews and chancel furnishings .................. 3,206.35
Pipe organ ............................................. 2,000.00
Memorial gifts (about)............................ 1,000.00
Cemetery fund......................................... 268.90
Adding to this considerable local labor that has been
gratuitously done, the amount expended would reach about
eighteen thousand dollars; and it is a source of great satisfaction
to know that these improvements have been paid for before the
dedication and festival June 20th, 1915.

CHAPTER XX.
List of Officers 1854-1915.

We submit herewith a list of the officers with their terms of
service as we find them on the church records.

Kirkesanger.

The first name we find on the records to hold the office of
"Kirkesanger" is Knudt Olson Grimstvedt, who performed those
duties in 1855 and 1856, as well as furnished as "Brød og Vin" for
the Communion.

In 1857 Ole Jørgenson was elected as Klokkar and school
teacher. He held this office for at least four years. Tharald
Larson is mentioned next as resigning in August, 1864, but at
what time he took teacher Jørgenson's place we are not certain.
Gulbran Jensvold will be remembered as serving the longest