THE SCANDINAVIAN PARISH AT PINE LAKE

Rev. Gustaf Unonius was the first pastor of this the first church at Pine Lake and remained as such until his removal to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Up to this time, or early in the year of 1848, the religious services had been held in the homes of the various members of the congregation, always presided over by Rev. Unonius. A church building was now considered an imminent necessity, a log house had been built for the purpose but was not fully completed. To accomplish this, the following invitation was issued to all of the Scandinavian Colonists at Pine Lake:

INVITATION

To join in the completion of the Church for the Scandinavian Parish at Pine Lake.

As everyone, dwelling in the Scandinavian Settlement at Pine Lake, surely has felt the inconvenience connected with conducting public service in the different farmhouses, and as many have expressed the desire, that the church building already begun, might, if possible, be finished, we would hereby invite all the Swedes, Norwegians and Danes in the settlement and in this vicinity to meet at the home of John Gassman on Next February 12, 1848 at 2:00 o'clock p.m.

Although this invitation has twice been announced from the pulpit by Rev. Unonius, to take place on next Wednesday, we have considered it more advisable to call the meeting for next Saturday.
THE FIRST CHURCH OF THE SETTLEMENT

Originally located in the Churchyard of the Episcopal Cemetery of "Holy Innocents", on Highway C, and later removed to a short distance East of Nashotah on Highway 19. It has been remodeled but the original log walls remain intact.
Since there might be several church members or persons in this neighborhood, who are of the opinion, that we are to form an Episcopal congregation, united with the American Episcopal church, we would hereby call attention to the fact that this is not at all the case. We wish to be a Lutheran congregation and conduct our services according to the ritual of the Lutheran Church.

A document has been prepared, stating that we would continue to be a Lutheran Congregation in union with the American Episcopal church. This document will be read at the meeting, so that everyone may be informed and set at ease. There will also be presented an estimate of the cost of finishing the church, and thereupon we shall reach an agreement as to the best manner, in which this may be done.

Dear Brethren! Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, let us join hands!

We are one people as to race, language and religion, but in this land we are strangers.

We ought first of all to establish our religion and settle the order of our church affairs. If we separate, many of us will, perhaps, be induced to join one or another of the sectarian bodies, of which there are so many in this land. How sad the thought, and dishonorable to us Northmen, who ought to give evidence of a firm conviction and character. We will, however, remain what we are and ought to be, Lutherans, in like manner as this church exists in the land of our fathers, and God will, in due time, lead us on the way that we ought to go.

Come then, and let us, as well as we are able, build a house where we may gather to be edified by worshiping God, as we have been taught.

It will be serviceable and even necessary, that we do this now, just as it also will be to our honor among our American
fellow-citizen, when they see that we are a people, that are zealously interested in religion and enlightenment.

Pine Lake, February 7, 1848
J. G. Gassman.

This invitation was signed by eighteen representatives of the families in the colony, and in due time the log church was completed.

The congregation, having adopted the name of "The Scandinavian Parish at Pine Lake," received the endorsement of Bishop Kemper of the American Episcopal Church at Nashotah and became one of its units, with Rev. Martin Sorensen as rector, succeeding Rev. Unonius.

In the history of the church, now preserved in the archives of St. John's Church at Stone Bank, is found the record of the burials of:

Frederick Israel Unonius, son of Rev. Gustaf Unonius, May 14, 1844.

Bengt Petterson, December 1845.
Christine Södergren Olson, October 19, 1847.

The present custodian of the cemetery, John J. Johnson, a resident of Nashotah for 83 years and a son of Nils Johnson, who was one of the founders of the original Parish, gives the information, that one of the early caretakers in an endeavor to beautify the churchyard, plowed up the entire cemetery, and, there being no markers over the early graves, the record of their location has been forever lost.

The records also show that Rev. Unonius officiated at eleven burials, the last being on November 9, 1847.
The original log church, completed in 1848, stood in the center of the present cemetery of "Holy Innocents" and there still remains an old cedar, which was then, as it is now, gracing its yard.

The Scandinavian Parish at Pine Lake was, however, later divided, and the congregation disbanded. Some members formed the St. John's Parish at Stone Bank, retaining the records of the early mother church.

Other members, retaining the material possessions of the mother church, namely, the log church and the cemetery, organized into the "Holy Innocents" Congregation and built a house of worship in the Village of Nashotah.

St. John's Church is English Lutheran.
Holy Innocent's Church is Episcopalian.

The original log church was moved, about 1864, by John Ellefson, to be used as a dwelling, to one half mile east of Nashotah village. The records do not show how he obtained possession. Later Steve Sommers became the owner and lived in it for many years. Now, 1934, it is owned by Christian Endregard of Madison, and occupied as a dwelling. It is to be noted, that in the division of the original church there was no distinction made between the three Scandinavian peoples, but the families joined whichever of the new-founded congregations, that they thought suitable.

St. Olaf's Church at Ashipun had no special relation to the St. John's at Stone Bank except that the two congregations have in the past been served by the same pastor.

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

The Wisconsin Magazine of History in its brochure on "The Swedish Settlement on Pine Lake" gives a sketch of some very interesting events, which took place later at New Upsala, and which brings, so to speak, the historical thread