

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PARK AND THE CHURCH

Of all the interests and needs of man, his religious drives cause him to try to channelize his religious needs in almost all places and in all ages. The same is true of those people who came to the area which was to become St. Louis Park. While the earliest settlers were struggling with the soil trying to make a living, they must have felt their lack of a church but were too impoverished to support a full time minister. And still, at a very early date they did have church services and one must note that of all institutions the church is one of the oldest, being younger only than the school which was established near the corner of Wooddale and Excelsior.

#### CLARKE CHAPEL

Before 1870 the residents in the southern part of what was to become St. Louis Park had occasional services in Pratt School but they were so irregular that one could hardly say that a church had been established. About 1870, one Mr. Hartwell suggested to the Reverend Henry Albert Stimson of the Plymouth Church of Minneapolis [\*Henry Albert Stimson, born in New York City, September 28, 1842, graduated from Yale College in 1865 and Andover Theological Seminary in 1869. He was pastor of Plymouth Church in Minneapolis from 1869-1880, Worcester, Massachusetts from 1880-1886, St. Louis 1886-1895, and of Manhattan Church of New York City 1896. He wrote several religious books.] that there was a need for religious service in western Minneapolis Township and that divine responded and gave afternoon sermons once monthly at Pratt School and in various homes. On the remaining three Sundays of the month, Mr. Hartwell read sermons. Meanwhile a Sunday School was organized by Mr. George Conant of the Plymouth Church. [\*George Conant was a merchant who, came from Maine to Minneapolis and built one of the first brick buildings on Hennepin Avenue. His grocery store occupied part of the building. His son, Edward M. Conant, was secretary of the Minneapolis Land and Investment Company. George Conant died in 1885.] Shortly after the inception of the Sunday School, a Mr. Tucker became the supervisor, and after him Edward Clarke, who died in 1874. George B Shepherd carried on the work from November 1875 until about the time that the congregation was organized. There were many other teachers who also assisted, among them General Charles M. Reeves, Minnie Reeves, Andrew Craik of Edina, and George H. Rust of Minneapolis.

Meanwhile a number of local residents had made plans for a church and in 1878 a chapel, size thirty-by-forty-eight feet, was built which was named Clarke Chapel in honor of a former Sunday School teacher. Margaret Scott [\*a widow, sister of Joseph Hamilton, and mother of five sons, some whom attained prominence.] gave the lot on which it was to stand, and five hundred dollars was secured by subscription which bought the materials. [\*One account says the building cost \$1,400.] Located near Wooddale and Excelsior, the Sunday School classes were transferred to the chapel. No regular minister served the congregation until 1881 when the Reverend B. F. Shuart was called but he

remained only one year after which the church had no minister until April 1883 when the Reverend H. F. Tyler was called.

## UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Union Congregational Church of Minneapolis [\*The name Minneapolis in the title refers to the township.] was organized by the same group which had been instrumental in building Clarke Chapel. On Wednesday March 14, 1883, seventeen persons met at Clarke Chapel and formed the new congregation. The charter members were: John J. Baston, Dora Baston, John Craik, Andrew Craik, Flora A. Craik, Charles H. Hanke, Anna C. Hanke Patch, Benjamin Spencer Bonney, Leonard C. Newcomb, Sarah E. Newcomb, Richard Settle, Robert Settle, Herman Lucas, Pamela Lucas, Lovena Edna Newhall, Mrs. C. B. Waddell and Mrs. Emily Baston Rixon. Of the seventeen, eight were from Plymouth Church, three were received from other churches, and six were accepted on confession of faith. At the same time the name Clarke Chapel was changed to Union Congregational Church. The Reverend George Hood was called to the ministry of the church in the spring of 1884 and remained until 1886. Under his pastorate the parsonage was built in 1885 on land donated by C. G. Goodrich and Christopher Hanke. Each gave one acre while the congregation provided the \$2,500 needed for construction of the building. The Reverend Hood was succeeded by perhaps the best educated man of the cloth near to Minneapolis, Reverend William M. Jones, Ph.D., who was chosen December 1, 1886 and was installed May 17, 1887. He was a notable writer and had historical interests having written a short account of the development of St. Louis Park for the Atwater-Stevens History of Minneapolis and Hennepin County. He left the congregation on October 25, 1891 after ministering to them for five years and was succeeded by the Reverend John W. Ferner who was elected January 1, 1892. The Union Church was at that time operating three Sunday Schools, one in West Minneapolis which later became Mizpah Congregational Church, one in Edina, and another west of the marsh in the school.

There had been some sentiment to move the church northward toward the center of population of the newly established village which was enjoying its first boom with the Minneapolis Land and Investment Company. On the other hand, there were the old charter members who had established the church to serve a community in the southern end of the village. In 1893 the proponents of moving the church to the center were successful and the structure was torn down and rebuilt on a site across from Lincoln School (the present village hall). It was about this time that the trustees of the church gave two notes to the Minneapolis Land and Investment Company, one for \$500 to run three years, and another for the same amount to run five years. Perhaps these notes were payments on the building site. During the depression, in 1896, both notes were stamped "paid in full" for a consideration of \$400.

The successive ministers were J. Lee Uott who served 1894 to 1895, and William Hardcastle who served during 1896, followed by Daniel D. Davis who served two years from 1897-1899. George F. Swinnerton, a Methodist pastor, served the congregation from 1902 to 1905 and in the interim he married one of the local girls. Rowland S. Cross

served from 1905 to 1910, followed by L.F. McDonald 1911-12; William J. Warner, 1913-16; William C. A. Wallar, 1917; Earle A Munger 1919-20 while Richford D. Orton served three months during 1920. Reverend Orton was succeeded in 1921 by Reverend Frank L. Erlougher who remained one year. In 1923 Reverend Paul Bremicker became pastor and remained until 1926 when Reverend Warren L. Bunger became pastor. Reverend Bunger died suddenly while officiating at a funeral in March of 1929 and was succeeded by reverend Charles Moore. In 1929 R. L. Cramer became minister remaining two years after which Reverend T.B. Madsen became pastor. His thirteen year pastorate is the longest in the history of the local church, Reverend Madsen resigning the position in 1944. Reverend Einar Martinson, the incumbent was appointed to the pastorate in 1946, after having resigned from the public school system in 1937 to enter the ministry.

The Union Congregational Church which began in 1883 with but seventeen charter members was destined to become the largest Protestant Church in the village for a considerable, period of time. By 1890 it had about one hundred members and no doubt the number increased greatly when the industrial peoples moved to the village during the following decade. By 1941, the membership was over two hundred and with the influx of people in the period after World War II the number had risen to between eight and nine hundred souls and reached 963 in 1952.

Likewise, the increase of membership required an expansion of church facilities. The old church which had been built on Excelsior Avenue and which had been moved to the present site, was becoming too small to give adequate service. In 1941, a new sanctuary costing \$35,000 was built to serve the congregation but there still existed a need for a church school building. By 1950 there were 667 Sunday School pupils and plans were made to build a structure, 132 by 93 feet, which would cost about \$175,000. The new building, which is a wing of the church, was dedicated February 24, 1952.

In addition to the above services, the women's organizations have been active in support of the church and its activities. As early as 1885, a Ladies Aid was formed, Mrs. Baston and Mrs. Rixon being charter members. The Junior Club was formed in 1935 with thirteen charter members to provide for building funds, furnishings, scholarship and other needful things, the church also has choirs. Sunday Schools with superintendents and teachers, a Christian Endeavor Society, and various other fellowship and service activities, the oldest church continues to be a tower of Christian strength in the village and in many ways is still a young church despite the seventy years during which it has served.

## BROWNLOW METHODIST CHURCH

The second oldest church in St. Louis Park was of Methodist connections. Sometime about 1893 there was constructed, west of the brick block on Brownlow a Methodist Church which continued to serve for many years through the vicissitudes of storm and fires. The only known charter member is Mrs. Nelson Rice. The earliest minister of which there is record was S. F. Kerfoot who was born in Canada in 1865 and entered the ministry in 1892. [\*later President of Hamline University] He served in

1893 being followed by Franklin M. Rule who was serving in 1895. [\*Died at age 90 on July 4, 1935, having been a minister for 39 years.] The Methodist minister was also the pastor of the Hopkins Methodist Church. Floyd A. Lawson was a supply minister in 1896 serving congregations in St. Louis Park and Anoka. John L. Parmeter was sent to the congregation as minister in 1898 and like his predecessors, had to serve the Hopkins church as well. The small number of records available show the church started modestly with but eighty-one members in both congregations in 1895. The two Sunday Schools were training some ninety scholars and both congregations owned a church which together were valued at \$5,000 with a small debt of \$1,200. The total collection in the years of depression were very small and apparently the churches had difficulty in surviving. Either records are inaccurate or a severe decline in membership took place within a few years because later reports show but fifteen to eighteen members in the two churches. After the Dwight Martin family came after the turn of the century the church found an active and ardent supporter. But with the decline of the industrial center, the membership apparently also declined despite heroic efforts to maintain the church. By 1924 there were about seventeen members. During the 1920's a fire caused severe damage at one time and after the cyclone damaged, the church it was decided to cease operations.

#### BROOKSIDE METHODIST CHURCH

Meanwhile, Methodism was gaining adherents in the southern part of the village. In 1915 a Sunday School was formed which eventuated in the formation of the Brookside Methodist Church on March 15, 1915, some of the founding families being Abrams, Howard, Beach and Kircher. Beginning with a small cottage located at 4241 Brookside, the church soon found it necessary to build, and a structure, twenty four by forty feet was erected. In 1927, and again in 1934 under Dr. Frank Day, the building was enlarged. For the first ten years of existence the Brookside Church did not have a resident minister but was served by various visiting ministers whom the church calls "supply." By 1925, Reverend G. A. Morrison became the first minister but he was followed in the next year by E. W. Munson, the first regular minister, who remained until 1928, and it was during his pastorate the church was enlarged for the first time. Dr. Frank E. Day served from 1928-35; Francis W. Hayes, 1935-37; Donald H. Walker, 1938-42; Thomas B. Shorts, 1942-43 [\*died in 1951]; and Leland Cooper – was later a professor at Hamline] 1943-45. Membership had increased with the times and the decline of the church on Brownlow with its eventual cessation caused Brookside to assume the main burden of expounding the Methodist doctrine in the village. By 1945 the congregation had grown to about two hundred members

#### METHODIST MEETING HOUSE

A third Methodist group came to St. Louis Park in 1942 with the organization of the Meeting House which was located at 2940 Salem. The Reverend John W. Knoble; came to form the congregation which located in a structure built with certain financial aid from the T. B. Walker Foundation. While the church for some time was dependent on outside financial aid, it was hoped that in 1943 it would be self-supporting. After

Reverend Knoble left, Marlen W. Johnson became pastor of the Meeting House in June and remained for one year. It was reported in February of 1944, the total membership of Meeting House was sixty-eight. The group had purchased a lot on Minnetonka and Toledo and was planning to build. Dr. Merle P. Culver [\*once district superintendent, later a college president] became pastor of the flock in 1944 and continued until it was decided, to merge with Brookside to form Aldersgate Methodist Church.

#### ALDERSGATE METHODIST CHURCH

The merger, in June of 1946, of Brookside and Meeting House resulted in the extinction of the two old names when the name Aldersgate was adopted. [It was in a small church on Aldersgate Street, London, that John Wesley had a religious experience on May 24, 1738 which "strangely warmed" his heart.] It was an auspicious time for merging and planning an expansion program because the village was in the process of one of the greatest population booms that it had experienced and the church had to stand ready to serve the enlarged population. Ground was broken for a new church building on April 30, 1950. The new structure was to cost about \$165,000 and was located on Wooddale Avenue near to where Excelsior Boulevard and Highway 100 crossed. It had a seating capacity of 450 and had social halls, classrooms, offices, and studies in addition to the church part. Various dignitaries of the church as well as numerous local people who were responsible for the building of the structure were present for the dedication week which was held September 23 to 30, 1951. [\*The old bell which was used in the Brownlow Church until the storm destroyed the church was moved to Brookside and now rings people to church in Aldersgate.]

Meanwhile, there had been changes in the ministry. The Reverend Donald J. Lathrop was the pastor of Aldersgate from 1945 to 1947 when he was succeeded by Reverend Bennett. G. Brudevold, the present minister. The church has shown remarkable growth in membership as well as in auxiliary activities. The 1951 Conference Report lists the church as having 343 active full members. The church schools have 205 members. In addition, to worship and educational functions the church provides choirs, Methodist Youth Fellowship, and Family Nights. The church is growing and serving the new population, as well as the old, and can be said to be well on the road promoting "Methodism on the March in St. Louis Park."

#### OAK HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Among the other older churches in St. Louis Park was one built in the 1890's in the Oak Hill area by T. B. Walker. It was built to serve the people who lived west of the marsh and it must be presumed that Walker had discovered that most of them were of Presbyterian proclivities, though Mr. Walker was of Methodist conviction personally. But the Presbyterian congregation seemingly failed to develop and a resident minister was never provided. However, there were services at times in the church, and at other times Sunday Schools were in operation within its walls. Traveling and visiting ministers filled the pulpit at times, and programs and services were held at various times such as Christmas and other holidays. In April of 1924 a grass fire in the area got out of control

and the church was burned and never rebuilt. The Presbyterians who reside in the village today generally attend the Grace Presbyterian Church on 28th St. in Minneapolis.

#### FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

There were several attempts to introduce Lutheranism into St. Louis Park in the early part of the village history but none prospered until the English Lutheran Church was formally organized in the 1920's. The earliest record of a Lutheran denomination is given in the minutes of the Board of Education which in 1892 allowed a German Lutheran Society to use a room in Oak Hill School if their services did not interfere with the program of the Union Congregational Sunday School. Twelve years later Our Savior's Church was allowed to use Oak Hill School. This church is supposedly a Norwegian Lutheran Church, and it is thought that the work of this body was turned over to the German Missouri Synod which maintained a church in Hopkins. The United Norwegian Lutheran Church also made a start in the Oak Hill area. About the same time the German Iowa Synod began work in the village, renting the Union Congregational Church. The Swedish Augustana Synod began work in the Oak Hill School but like the other churches did not seem able to organize a congregation. The work of these church groups seems to have come to nothing but at least they indicated that there was some sentiment for organization of Lutheran Church in the village.

In May of 1915, T. B. Walker offered a site for a Norwegian, Swedish, Danish Lutheran Church and a meeting was held May 6th when a ladies group was formed. The known names of participants are Mrs. H. Nye, Mrs. E. Johnson, Mrs. C. J. Berdahl and Mrs. J. J. Moldestad. It is thought that this group was affiliated with the Hauge Synod and met in the Fern Hill School. Reverend Edward Johnson seems to have been one of the prime movers in the creation of this group. Other pastors who served this group before the church was formally organized were: A. L. Lawrence, Tenner Thompson, W. J. Aamoth, Gabriel Gabrielson and O. B. Endreson.

The first Lutheran Church in St. Louis Park which has survived and prospered was organized October 7, 1924 in the home of Gilbert A. Larson and was named the First English Lutheran Church. A week later a formal meeting was held in the home of Ludwig Jensen and the church was incorporated. Pastoral leadership was given by Reverend Wilhelm Pettersen. There were eight-five members in the incorporating group. Among the incorporators were several who were associated with the earlier church which was connected with the Hauge Synod which became part of another synod in 1917. A basement was built in November of 1924 in which services were held until 1928 when the superstructure of the church building was completed, which was dedicated November 14, 1928. Meanwhile, Reverend J. Lyle Halvorsen was called as pastor and has continued to this day - the longest pastorate in the history of churches in St. Louis Park. The church has grown significantly since its inception - and can now count over six hundred baptized souls. Likewise the building has been enlarged and made more convenient. The associations connected with the church include Sunday Schools, choirs, Luther League, Ladies Aids and a Lutheran Brotherhood. The church which is located at Xenwood and

West Lake Street has dropped the word English from the name, a word which indicated only that services were given in English rather than having any synodical connection.

#### WOODDALE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

In May of 1929 a group which was to become the Wooddale Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Northwest Synod of the United Lutheran Church of America began worshiping in the home of Mrs. Frances Perry on Utica Avenue. Later, forty-seven people under the leadership of Dwight Shellhart organized a congregation. Their first church was built in 1937 but required additions in 1939 and again in 1942. Dorrance N. Jensen became the first regular minister, serving from April 1931 to November 1937 when he left to be succeeded by Herbert J. Motz-kus who served the congregation for eleven years. Nine months after his resignation to go to St. Marks in Jefferson, he was succeeded by Paul F. Obenauf who is the present pastor. From the small beginnings in 1929 the membership of the church has grown to about six hundred active adults while the Sunday School, which was organized in 1930, has about four hundred fifty pupils. The church also has four choirs and various other organizations such as Guilds, Brotherhoods, Luther League, Missionary Society, Mother's Club, Altar Care Groups, Scouts, Dorcas and Parents Club. Half of their organizations have been formed since 1950 .

#### PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Another Lutheran church In St. Louis Park is the Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church which dates its origin to April of 1948 when a group began to worship together in the lunchroom of the Oak Hill School. The seventy-two members who chartered this church were led by Reverend George L. Lundquist, who remains as minister. In November of 1950 a house was purchased and remodeled into a church and in December the new structure was dedicated. Meanwhile the name of the church was changed from The Church of the Good Shepherd to the present name to avoid confusion with other churches of the same name. The church made substantial growth in its short life, having risen from 125 baptized members in 1950 to 450 by 1952. The Sunday School which was founded in September of 1948 now numbers 210. The church prides itself upon its contributions to benevolent and missionary causes of the synod, in 1951 having the highest per capital contribution in the synod. In 1952, building plans are being discussed.

#### ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Another Lutheran group is the St. Luke's Lutheran Church which is affiliated with the Missouri Synod. Beginning In 1926 with a few families from Hopkins and about four families from St. Louis Park, the congregation was served by the pastor from Hopkins until 1937 when Reverend Herbert F. Bohlman was called. Within a year a church was built at 41<sup>st</sup> and Webster but it was found to be too small and was enlarged in 1950. Membership has grown to about six hundred while the Sunday School has 250 enrolled. Other organizations within the church include five Ladies Circles, a Men's Club and two

choirs. After Reverend Bohlman left in 1945 to take a charge at Kanakee, Illinois, Reverend Oscar A. Dressel was called and has served since that date.

#### TIMOTHY LUTHERAN CHURCH

A relatively new Lutheran church in the village is the Timothy Lutheran Church, which began as a mission under the name Park Lutheran. The first service in the mission was held September 9, 1951 and the services were led by ministers sent here weekly from Martin Luther College of New Ulm. Reverend Robert Schumann was called as a regular minister on October 17, 1951 and was installed by his father, Professor Walter Schumann, and a Minneapolis pastor, on December 2, 1951. The church, which has been remodeled from a house, is located at 3010 Texas. The constitution and the name change were made on May 25, 1951. From a small voting group of eight members the congregation has grown to about thirty in a year. The first confirmation was made in June of 1952 with others being confirmed a month later. The Sunday School which began with about fifteen pupils has doubled in size in a year.

#### WESTWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Westwood Lutheran Church is the result of the church activities of people in the northern part of St. Louis Park who organized a Sunday School in 1920 under, the direction of Reverend Staph. Mrs. Roy Pullman was the earliest director but was succeeded in 1924 by Mrs. M. E. Niles who in turn was followed by Mrs. W. H. Burd in 1935. Meanwhile, in June of 1926 the North Side Union Ladies Aid was formed to promote Sunday Schools and religious activities. By November of 1934 the first regular minister was called, Reverend Morris Eversz, who remained for five years. Meanwhile, the Ladies Aid purchased three lots in 1936, and in 1935 the first officers of the congregation were elected. On September 28, 1936, an incorporation meeting was held and about a month later the articles were ratified by the congregation. Excavation and construction of the basement church was begun in 1937. The second minister was Reverend R. W. Owens who came in November of 1939, four months after the second constitution of the church was written. Reverend Owens remained but seven months and was succeeded by Reverend Milton Wolters who remained three years. Substitute ministers filled the pulpit for a time until A. T. Nelson was called but he was forced to resign because of ill health. In November of 1943, the congregation was surveyed to discover if the members wished to join a denomination and finding that about 36 percent preferred Lutheran affiliation.

Thus in 1944 the Evangelical Lutheran Church group took over the work of this older group and North Side Lutheran Church was formed. Reverend Albert Lehman Jr. was called as pastor and remained about a year when he was followed by Richard Ellingson who stayed from 1946 to 1948. Reverend Norman L. Nielsen came in 1948 and continues the work. The church, which was renamed Westwood Lutheran, was moved to Cedar Lake and Hampshire Avenue in this year. The Sunday School, which was organized with the founding of the church, now numbers five hundred while the membership of the church is about one thousand. Women's groups are named Guild,

Rebecca, Ruth, Priscilla, Naomi, Esther, Martha, Mary and Dorcas. This year the congregation voted to relocate and build a new sanctuary and youth educational building which will cost about \$400,000 and will be completed by 1956.

#### CROSS OF CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Cross of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church is a newcomer to the village, having come only in 1951 after student Pastor Robert Daw had surveyed some three hundred homes to determine need the need for the church. A garage at 9445 Minnetonka Boulevard was rented and remodeled, in which services were held, the first service being held on August 12, 1951 when sixty-seven persons attended. A week later the Sunday School was held for some twenty students. At first a mission church, the congregation was organized April 27, 1952. There were eighty baptized members of which fifty-three were confirmed. Thirty-six are now enrolled in the Sunday School. Student Pastor Milo Gerbering now cares for the congregation, which is affiliated with the Northwest Synod of the United Lutheran Church.

#### PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

The Baptist denomination is represented in St. Louis Park with two congregations. The older of the two began to meet together to worship in October of 1943 in an old tavern at the corner of Natchez and Excelsior. Twenty-one members founded the congregation in early April of 1944. The name originally was the St. Louis Park Baptist Church but the group later deleted the St. Louis part of the name. The first minister to serve the group was Reverend Dale Bjork who was succeeded by the Reverends Ernest Rockstad and Victor Ernest. Dr. Anton Pearson served in the interim until the present minister, Lloyd M. Nordstrom, came in 1950. The old building became too small for the congregation and early in 1948 a new building was begun at 41st and Highway 100. The membership has grown from the original twenty-one to over one hundred. The Sunday School which was formed in 1942 has about 165 scholars today. In addition, the church has three societies for missionary purposes, the Junior and Senior Girls, and the Women's Missionary Union. The substructure of the church was used as a church for a number of years and in 1952 a building permit was issued to complete the superstructure.

#### OAK HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

The second Baptist church is located at 3639 Quebec and is named the Oak Hill Baptist Church. This group of sixty began to worship together in 1950 and called as their first minister Reverend Samuel P. Bell. The building formerly belonged to the Oak Hill Evangelical Church but was purchased by a Baptist group which belongs to the conservative faction. In 1952 the congregation has grown to about eighty-five adult members. The Sunday School which was formed about the time the church was organized now has about 110 pupils. Likewise, the church has Youth and Men's Fellowship Groups and a Women's Missionary Society. In September of 1952 the

Reverend Orval W. Peterson was called to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Reverend Bell in May.

#### ST. LOUIS PARK EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

The St. Louis Park Evangelical Free Church is one of the more recently established churches in the village. In May of 1945, Reverend Lester E. Nelson was sent to the area by the Evangelical Free Church of America to begin a survey of the needs of the community and within a short time was holding services in a tent near Hampshire and Minnetonka. About the same time a Sunday School was started in the basement of a member's home. In March of 1946 a basement chapel was completed and first used, and in October the congregation was organized with seventeen charter members. In September of 1945 the Sunday School was formally organized and has grown to about 330 by 1952. The \$50,000 superstructure of the church building, which seats about three hundred and has twenty classrooms, was completed and dedicated on May 27, 1951. The membership of the church has grown from the seventeen founders to over one hundred. The church has a Marytha Fellowship Women's Group and gives support to missionary workers In Venezuela, Japan and Belgian Congo

#### ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. George's Episcopal Church found its beginnings when a group of families met together in the village hall and asked Bishop Keeler for instructions on how to organize a parish. Services were held in the band room at the high school and a lay reader, Milton Kuhlman, led the prayers. A somewhat larger group met and organized the parish on May 4, 1947, and on June 2, 1947 the body was formally incorporated. Meanwhile services were held in the Legion Hall. The church building which was built shortly after the organization of the parish burned partially before it was ready for occupancy and was rebuilt. The church has the usual accompaniment of organizations: ten circles. Men's Club and Sunday School. The Reverend Roger Schmuck is the first and only rector of the parish.

#### HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Roman Catholics of St. Louis Park were without a parish or church until the mid-twenties when the Holy Family church was built. Previous to that time most Catholics went to Hopkins or elsewhere for mass and services, but later services were held in the brick block. The Holy Family parish was organized at the request of local Catholics and the church which seated about 200 was built. Father William Driscoll came about a year later and was the first resident minister of the congregation. After serving a number of years he was succeeded by Father M. A. Condon who remained until Father Francis Wilkins came after World War II. The great influx of people into the village caused the need for a new church, the old one having suffered in the various storms which struck the village, and was also becoming too small for the number of parishioners. Consequently, a new structure was erected which is doing service as a school with a chapel in which religious services are held. About the same time the village was divided

into two parishes, and another was added in 1950. The church, which serves about nine hundred families, has the usual accompanying organizations, Altar Society, Men's clubs, etc.

#### MOST HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Most Holy Trinity, the second parish established in the village, dates back to May of 1945 when the first mass was celebrated in a bowling alley in the Lilac Lane area. The area of the parish consists of those families who reside in the southeastern part of the village. The Sisters of St. Joseph gave religious instructions during the first days in a restaurant in the neighborhood of the bowling alley. In 1944, mass being said in the Legion Hall where Sunday School was also taught. That same year work was begun on the school-church when the government allowed steel to be diverted to civilian construction. In the new building, the first mass was celebrated at midnight on Christmas. Also in the new building the school program was begun and the Sisters of St. Benedict were the teachers. Father J. Wilson Brady was the first pastor and has continued to this day. The work required more pastoral assistance and in 1951 Father Robert Thurner was sent to the parish as an assistant. The building program continued after the war and in 1952 the superstructure of the church-school was completed

#### ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

In 1950 another parish was established in southwestern St. Louis Park by the archbishop which was named St. John the Evangelist. It connects an area in the village plus some territory in the Hopkins area and was the 286th parish in the diocese of St. Paul. Father Joseph P. Vacek of Savage, Minn. was sent to be the first pastor. Though the church, which is located in the school, is outside the village limits of St. Louis Park, the parish serves a number of families within the village.

#### CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

In the northeastern part of the village is another group of Catholics who attend a church denominated the Church of the Good Shepherd. Established in April of 1946, the parishioners heard their first masses in a nearby cafe before the temporary church building was constructed at Wayzata and Beltline. The first and only priest of the parish is Father Thomas J. McNamara.

#### OTHER RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

There are in St. Louis Park several other religious organizations which serve segments of the population. The Christian Science Society of St. Louis Park has an organization which is located at 4241 Brookside Avenue. The B'nai B'rith, a service organization of Jewish men, are currently making a survey of the community to discover whether the area needs a synagogue, community center, and Talmud Torah.

With seventeen or more churches in St. Louis Park, the village seems to be well supplied with outlets for religious drives, whatever directions these proclivities take. Membership seems to include almost all persons though figures reveal little because of varying criteria of membership.