

# IN THE BEGINNING



## IT STARTED HERE NELSON HOME

<p style="text-align: right;">Wirth Road, Box 27 Griffith, Indiana October 6, 1958</p> <p>Dr. Walter M. Wick, D.D. 800 Underwriters Building Indianapolis, Indiana</p> <p>Dear Dr. Wick,</p> <p>On several occasions during the past months my wife and I have spoken to Castor and Mrs. Driscoll on the need for another United Lutheran Church in the Griffith-Highland area. They told us that they had also discussed this need with you. We are very interested in the establishment of a mission church in our area.</p> <p>Highland and Griffith truly need another U.L.C.A. Church. Both towns are at the 8 to 10,000 population level, having grown tremendously during the last few years. This means, of course, that families of all denominations have moved in, a fair number of whom would be inclined toward the u.L.C.A. Church.</p> <p>Several Lutheran families in Highland have continued in the Hammond Church, but have expressed their desire to have a church in this vicinity. Most of those who have moved to Griffith have been members of the Hammond Church in name only and have attended other churches, especially the Methodist Church. It seems that very few U.L.C.A. families desire to join the Missouri Synod Churches. We, ourselves, feel the same way.</p> <p>Mrs. Helson and I have been members of the Hammond Church for twelve years. My wife was choir director for eight years and is presently organist for the Matins service. We are both St. Olaf College graduates. In recent years, as our family of five are growing up, we find it increasingly harder to be active due to the distance from the church.</p> <p>We realize, of course, that the Synod has a large number of mission groups eagerly waiting for help, but we also believe that it is possible to start out relatively simple. Some of the new mission churches have met for a period of time in the Highland dairy hall. Or possibly we could use a local church in the evening for our services to begin with - with a part-time pastor, if need be. There is also a legion building in Griffith, equipped with an organ.</p> <p>In view of the extreme need for another Lutheran Church, we feel that there is no time to waste in getting started. The opportunity is here, and there are many of us who are willing to work. Will you please let us know how the Indiana Synod proceeds to organize a mission congregation, and of how we may be of help to you in this respect?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Very sincerely yours,  Aaron D. S. Nelson (signature)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE INDIANA SYNOD The United Lutheran Church in America</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">January 16, 1959</p> <p>Mrs. Muriel Nelson 120 West Wirth Road Griffith, Indiana</p> <p>Dear Mrs. Nelson,</p> <p>I made a final check with Pastor Bachman of the American Lutheran Church concerning any question on the boundaries of our prospective mission area at Griffith. There is an American Lutheran Church to the west, but its requested boundaries do not interfere with ours; they are coincidental.</p> <p>Since Pastor Byquist has given us Permission to go ahead, I am sending you canvass books. By the way, we have a young lady from our Camden Parish who is a school teacher in the northern part of the state, not too far from you. Her name is Miss Alice Leslie and she has done a number of canvasses for us. Two summers she worked for the Board of American Missions, and so she is well-versed in the procedure of a canvass for the board. There is somewhat of a trick to recording the results of a canvass, and there are several other papers that will have to be filled in. She knows the complete procedure on this. Furthermore, I feel confident that she would be very happy to come over some evening, or on a Saturday, to assist you in setting up the canvass at Griffith. I shall write her immediately and indicate our intention, also sending a copy of the letter to you. She can then get in touch with you concerning a convenient date for you and your canvassers so that she could brief you and instruct you with respect to the canvass. It would be expedient to have this done properly so that the Board would have no question about the final canvass results, should the decision be close on whether your area ought to be approved for mission development or not. A good canvass would be helpful.</p> <p>We shall also send you materials and then await a report from Alice as to your schedules. We would also appreciate a report from you. I am glad you are willing to proceed on your own.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Very sincerely,  Walter M Wick (signature)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE INDIANA SYNOD The United Lutheran Church in America</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">May 29, 1959</p> <p>Mr. Aaron Nelson 120 West Wirth Road Griffith, Indiana</p> <p>Dear Mr. and Mrs. Nelson,</p> <p>I Thank you for your very kind letter of May 24th requesting information on the progress of our mission in your area. I am encouraged each time I hear of your enthusiasm for the work and of your desire to have a church in your neighborhood.</p> <p>You are correct in that the Highland Griffith area has been approved by the Department of Survey and research of the Board of American Missions as one that is ready for occupancy. I can understand your feeling of emptiness when persons ask how soon the mission will be developed when you have no word. I wish I could give you a final word as to the date when a mission developer will be on the field. We do not have that information yet, but you can know and share with your friends the fact that we are under negotiations with two or three pastors, hoping that they will become mission developers, and that one of them will come to Highland-Griffith. If this does go through as we hope it will, we would like very much to have the developer on the field there before school starts, which would mean that he would move to the area some time in the middle or latter part of August. This is our plan and we are working toward this end.</p> <p>If it is impossible to get a man this summer, we will do our utmost to have someone called by the Board of American Missions at their meeting the first week of September, in which case the mission developer would be on the field from 4 to 6 weeks later. In any case, we certainly hope that a pastor will be in your area, ministering to the faithful there and gathering together with them a group of people who will become the new congregation. Until such time as a man does come, keep up your faithful enthusiasm and continue to pray with us for God's answer to this specific need.</p> <p>Personal greetings.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Sincerely,  George H. Hoog (signature)</p>
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