

Anniversary Thank Offering Designated for Chapel Organ

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GOD WILLING, WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY will celebrate the 125th anniversary of its founding in 1988. Although plans for the anniversary observance have not been finalized, the seminary board has approved an anniversary thank offering for a new pipe organ for the seminary chapel.

The present chapel organ, which has been the only one in the seminary's history, is a Wicks instrument of ten ranks. It was built in 1949 with monies given in memory of Prof. August Pieper and a special gift from Mrs. Charlotte K. Sperling of Watertown, South Dakota. It was designed in a style which was popular at that time. The pipes of the three divisions (great, swell and pedal) are housed in chambers on either side of the chancel. Its romantic voicing and wide-scaled principal pipes are also typical of that era. Ever since the chapel was enlarged to increase its seating capacity from 150 to 230, the organ has lacked the optimum capability to lead chapel hymn singing. These factors, together with the deterioration of the organ's electrical contacts and console, led the seminary board to agree with the faculty's recommendation that a new pipe organ would be a wise and practical purpose for an anniversary offering.

Since the chapel organ is used both for worship and for the training of worship leaders, the board deemed it vital that a new instrument have the capability both to lead the singing of 200 male voices and to serve as a teaching tool for men who must have some knowledge of the Lutheran use of the organ and of its classical and contemporary literature. The organ must be able to be played by students who are not music majors and to overcome the acoustical problems which are inherent in a long, narrow room with a low-

pitched ceiling. While designs and specifications have not yet been drawn, it seems likely that a mechanical action organ of some 15-20 classically voiced ranks, encased against the back wall of the chapel, will well satisfy the requirements the board has established.

During his long tenure as Director of Music, Professor Martin Albrecht was able to set aside approximately \$32,000 in a chapel organ fund. The board is confident that this fund together with the planned anniversary thank offering will cover what is likely to be a \$125,000 project. Especially those friends of the seminary who have followed with interest the plans to build a new chapel organ will be happy to hear that the goal is now at hand.

After the board approved the recommendation and received permission from the synod's Conference of Presidents to conduct an anniversary thank offering, it appointed an organ committee. The committee consists of Professor James Tiefel (chairman), Professor David Valleskey and board member Pastor Paul Manthey. President Panning is a member ex officio. The committee's first order of business was to secure an organ consultant. Dr. Edward C. Meyer of Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, has been engaged. Thus the project is officially under way! After the design and specifications are approved, a builder will be chosen and a contract signed. God willing, the new organ will be installed in the seminary chapel during the 1988-89 anniversary year.