

THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

That meeting in 1938 was historic in another respect. Words requiring the German language were stricken from the constitution. We noted earlier that some modest changes in that direction had already taken place during and following World War I. But the constitutional revision of 1938 opened the way for the eventual complete transition to the English language. It was a slow and tedious process, though, for as late as 1944 the congregational meetings were still conducted and the minutes recorded by secretary Gottlieb Hardi in the German language. Then in 1945 the

congregation instructed the secretary, Alfred Albers, to begin recording the minutes in English.

As late as 1946, by action of the congregation, there were still more German services than English. But the trend toward English continued until in 1943, for example, there were 71 English services with an average attendance of 105 as compared to 27 German services with an average attendance of 44. Then in 1955 the program became totally English when a pastor was called (Johnson) who could speak no German at all.

CHURCH WOMEN

Still a third historic event took place in the annual meeting of 1938. Words limiting church membership to males only were stricken from the constitution. Up to this time whenever a man joined the church he did so, like the Philippian jailor, on behalf of his whole family.* Perhaps this custom also derived from the European patriarchal family style.

There were some extra-constitutional developments in this system too, for during the 1920s some widows were voted into membership as the head of the family. Also in 1934 the church voted into membership the first single woman, Lydia Etzel. The congregational action in 1938 gave sanction to a practice already in use and opened the way for women to participate fully in the life of the church in their own right. However, it was not until ten years later, 1948, that a motion carried to invite the women to attend future congregational meetings.

A further move toward women's liberation was made in the meeting on January 10, 1965. The chairman of the Laity group, Willie Guenther, made a recommendation that ladies be considered as candidates for the church council. One year later Eleanora Hardi was nominated and elected as the first woman to serve on that governing body of the congregation, followed by Helen Polzin and Alice Guenther.

In 1942 the old 1895-model parsonage was demolished and the lumber salvaged to be used in the construction of a new one and one-half story building which is home for the pastor today. Mohr and his family lived in a hand house at the cotton gin temporarily while the new building was being constructed. The price tag for the new structure was \$6500. (There is a sketch of the old parsonage on the next page)

*Acts 16:31



During the year 1945 the long-time church president, C. W. Pfluger, died in office. He had been elected for one year back in 1925 followed by A. M. Pfluger and William Henze. Then he was elected again in 1931 and was re-elected each year for 14 consecutive years. At his death his son, Bill, was promoted from deacon to elder to fill the vacancy in that office. Gottlieb Hardi succeeded him as president followed by S. R. Ging, Bill Pfluger, Willie Riedel and Alvin Eiben.

In 1949 Pastor Mohr got the feeling that it was time for him to move on to another field of service. He presented a letter of resignation at a called meeting of the congregation on April 10. But Julius Wittliff moved, and the congregation voted 142 to 21 to reject the resignation. As a result of the vote Mohr consented to remain. Later that same year he had the additional pleasure of hosting the ordination service for his son, Paul, who entered the pastoral ministry.

In 1953 the congregation engaged in an extensive building program to tie the sanctuary to the educational building and add classroom and kitchen space. The building committee included Julius Wittliff, W. F. Riedel, Edwin Goetz, Max Pfluger, G. A. Kneip, Mrs. A. A. Marosko, Mrs. Kermit Kriedel, Gottlieb Hardi, Carl Seggern and Alvin Eiben. Architect Lancaster of Austin drew up the plans, and John Thompson was the contractor.



The project was completed and dedicated on September 27, 1953, with an organ concert by Hilma Pfluger, who had served as music director since 1930, and still does. Speakers were John Mueller, the vice-president of Texas Synod of the E & R Church; Paul Mohr, the pastor's son; Ed Kloppe, a ministerial son of the congregation; and Rev. Richard Kuretsch.