

**Grace Lutheran Church**  
Houma, Louisiana

**1982 DIRECTORY OF  
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
HOLLYWOOD ROAD  
P. O. BOX 1246  
HOUMA, LOUISIANA 70361  
PASTOR: CRAIG W. RINKER  
CHURCH: (504) 879-1865**

## THE HISTORY OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

On September 13, 1956, a group of Christians met with the purpose of starting a Lutheran Church in Houma, Louisiana. Initial plans were made to petition the Board of Directors of the Southern District to recognize the new church.

The first church service was held on October 25, 1956, at the Shady Oak Recreation Center in Houma and was led by Rev. Julius Bush of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in New Orleans. Under Rev. Bush's leadership, services continued every Sunday evening at the Recreation Center.

On November 5, 1956, the first business meeting was held. A church, yet unnamed, was organized. Members present were asked to sign a "scroll" as charter members of the Lutheran Church of Houma. They were the following:

Mr. & Mrs. Olden Dupre	Mrs. Thorton Cofield, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. J. V. Hawkins, Jr.	Mrs. Hildegarde Gautreaux
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schenkelberg	Mr. S. E. Normington
Mr. & Mrs. Harry S. Weigmann	Miss Clara Haupt
Mr. & Mrs. Oliver H. Crain, Jr.	Mr. F. N. Wyatt

Temporary officers were elected to serve until a charter could be drawn up and a permanent organization established.

Chairman: Mr. J. V. Hawkins, Jr.

Secretary: Mr. F. N. Wyatt

Treasurer: Mrs. J. V. Hawkins, Jr.

Financial Secretary: Mr. Harry Weigmann

The church's first baptism was performed on February 4, 1957 and the first communion service was held on February 17, 1957. The church was finally given a name, Grace, on March 11, 1957.

Rev. Bush continued to serve as a temporary pastor for the congregation throughout the summer of 1957. On August 25, 1957, Rev. Richard E. Kuehnert, Jr. was ordained and installed as the first resident Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. Under his direction, Sunday services were moved to the music room of Terrebonne High School.

On April 6, 1958, a special Easter Sunrise Service was sponsored by the church at the Houma Drive-In Theatre. The service gave the community an opportunity to worship the Risen Christ in the outdoors on Easter morning. In recent years, this service is celebrated on the church grounds on Easter Sunday.

Property was acquired for a church site on Hollywood Road and construction began on the new chapel in February, 1960. The cornerstone was laid on June 19, 1960. Rev. Kuehnert led the congregation in dedicating the new chapel on August 14, 1960.

The congregation continued to grow under Rev. Kuehnert. His enthusiasm and concern was a constant source of inspiration.

On January 27, 1963, Rev. J. C. Henning was installed as the second resident Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. Under his guidance, the congregation grew and took an active part in the community. A special mission emphasis was undertaken.

Rev. Roger H. Grummer was installed as the third resident Pastor of Grace on December 12, 1965. He led the Lenten Services and Easter Sunrise Services and initiated worship services in the Golden Meadow - Larose area. In observance of the congregation's 10th Anniversary, a special service was held on October 30, 1966. On this occasion, Rev. Grummer noted: "The purpose of this observance is not only to thank our Heavenly Father for the many blessings He has afforded us in past years, but also to broaden, renew, and intensify our efforts in the community for the future. For the church to continue toward greatness, it must be Christ's servant to the community's spiritual needs."

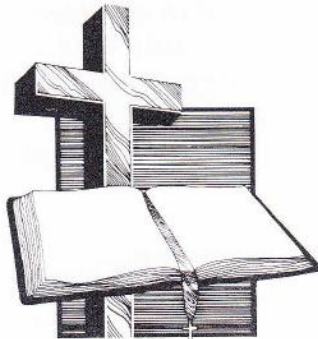
During Rev. Grummer's pastorate, Bible studies were initiated at Nicholls State University, at the Maranatha Nursing Home and in the Larose area. Also, during this time, the first pastor from out of the congregation, Rev. John Warnken, was ordained at Grace on August 25, 1974.

In March, 1978, Rev. Craig W. Rinker was installed as the fourth Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. Circuit counselor Edwin Coyner of New Orleans installed Pastor Rinker, and the first Pastor of Grace, the Rev. Richard Kuehnert, served as the organist. Pastor Rinker had formerly served as an associate Pastor at Good Shepherd Church, Hayward, California and had received a Masters of Divinity degree from Concordia Seminary and a Masters of Sacred Theology degree from the Lutheran School of Theology. While here, he completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Speech Communication from the University of Oklahoma.

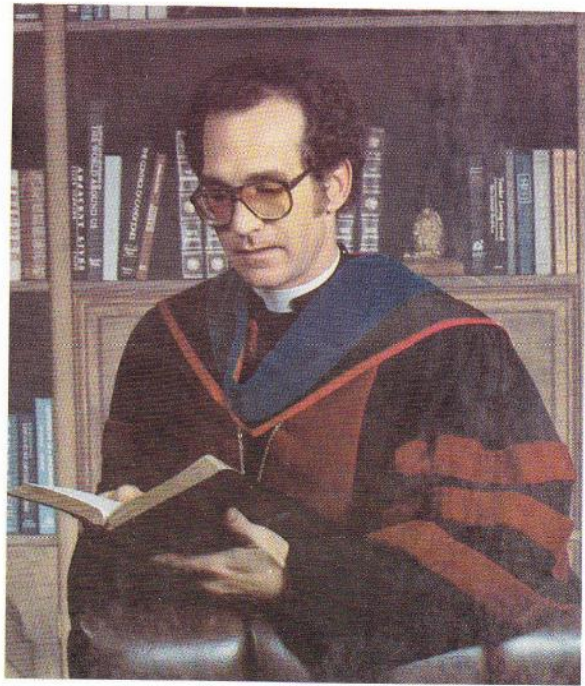
Through Pastor Rinker's work, Grace continues to grow and extend its influence farther into the community. He was elected to serve as Vice-President and President of the Terrebonne Association of Ministers and has been active with the local Rotary Club. Pastor Rinker also serves as Circuit Counselor. On June 8, 1980, two new Sunday School classrooms were dedicated. The Easter Sunrise Service continues as in the past. A special Open House was held at the church in the fall of 1981 to inform the community about Lutheran teachings and also about our church.

The 25th Anniversary of Grace has brought a special blessing in the form of a full time Parish Assistant, Miss Raelene Freitag, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She has led in the formation of youth and adult choirs, group outings, and Bible studies. Her ideas and talents have greatly enhanced the congregation's worship experience.

From the initial ten charter members, the congregation has grown to 378 baptized souls in this 25th Anniversary year. With God's grace, the congregation will continue to grow in size and faith.



**A MESSAGE  
FROM  
OUR PASTOR . . .**



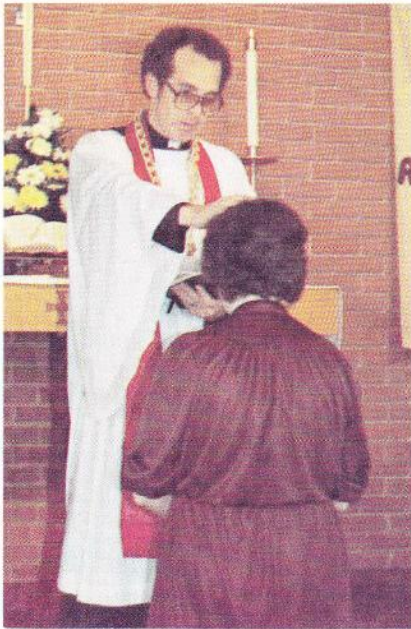
Twenty-five years ago in October, our congregation held its first worship service in Houma. Twenty-two years ago in August, the congregation began worshipping at this location in this building. Today we look forward to a whole new era for our church as we prepare once more to build a brand new worship and educational center for now and for the future.

The physical plant of course, is not the church. The people pictured on the following pages are the church. As Scriptures say, "For we are the temple of the Living God. As God has said, 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people'" (II Cor. 6:16). And, again, the Scriptures report, "As you come to Him, the living stone . . . you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:4,5).

We have been sustained and have grown these past 25 years because of God's sheer grace. We exist today in His love by His total free grace. And we stand supremely confident about the future, because His mercy is new every morning. All this is so that in the future God might show the incomparable riches of this Grace, in Christ Jesus. And this is why we are here, pictured on these pages, "for we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph. 2:10).

Pastor Craig W. Rinker  
August, 1982

# PEOPLE & EVENTS AT GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH



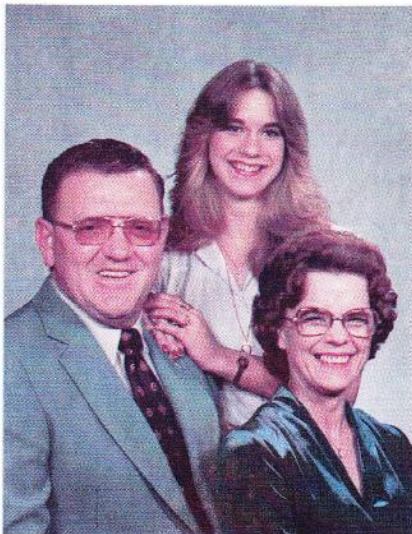
Installation of Parish Assistant  
Raelene Freitag



1982 Board of Directors



The Easter Sunrise Service



Organist  
Wynona Sauder,  
husband Dan, and  
daughter Lisa.

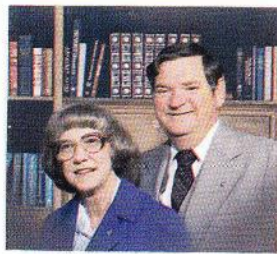


Mission Guild





Bert & Bobela Addy



Dick & Myrtle Armstrong



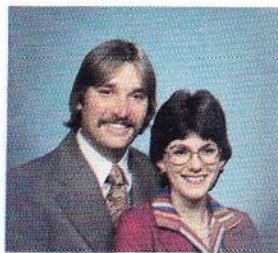
Jeff & DeLaine Barchinger



Karl & Frieda Billgren,  
Sheila & Matt



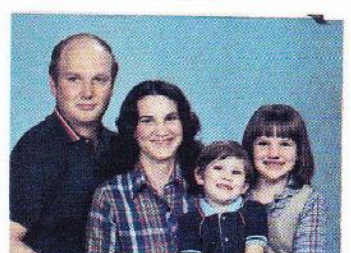
Richard & Karen Billgren,  
Carlton & Erika



Dale & Donna Boger



Bill & Mary Bourgeois,  
Nicole, Michele & Andrea



William & Ruth Braden,  
Bernadette & David



Jerry & Elaine Caldwell



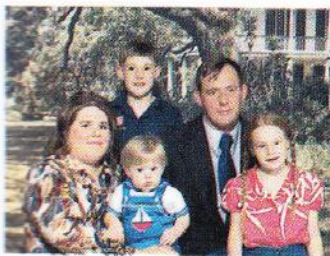
Bert & Tanya Chauvin  
& Jameson



Ski & Chris Chelpanoff



Thornton & Elaine Cofield



Clayton & Hilda Crawford,  
Devin, Allyson & Derek



Joyce Ditto,  
Dan & Laura



John & Shirley Fister



Raelene Freitag



Jesse & Judith Gibson,  
Eve, Ann & Andy



Earl & Gayla Guidry,  
Eric & Kely



Mary Harding,  
Aaron & Alyce



Max & Beverly Harding,  
McKinley & Ann



Clara Haupt



Tommy & Lucile Hesselgrave,  
Laura & Chandell



Tom & Jennie Hiers,  
Kelly & Becky





Lana Johnson



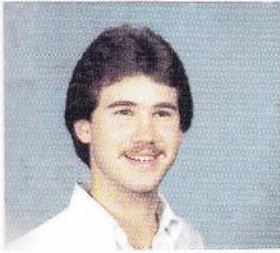
Jerald & Mary Johnston,  
Bradley & Carmen



Gene & Cyndy Junker,  
David & Charlene



Preston & Linda King,  
Jason & Daniel



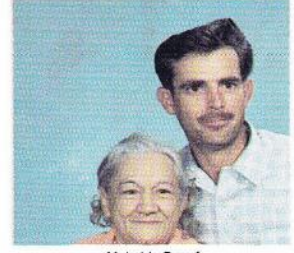
Barry Korinek



Andrew & Joy Kraus



Wally & Virginia Landeck



Mabel LeBouef  
& Walter



Lola Ledet



David & Anna Lewis  
& Matthew & Mrs. Geraldine Lewis



Gene & Mary Lewis



Carl & Linda Morgan,  
Emily & Jason



Lynn & Diana Navarre,  
Ian & Jason



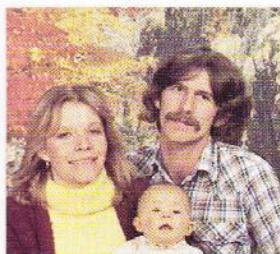
Jack & Carol Pellegrin,  
Dawn, Libby, Jonathan & Christen



Ed & Diane Portier,  
Cheryl, Peggy, John, Eric & Cartier



Joyce Price,  
Chanda, Edell & Lee



Thomas & Patricia Rabun  
& Jessica



Phil & Annika Range  
& Kristopher



Richard & Denise Reaves,  
Robin, Richard & Rebekah



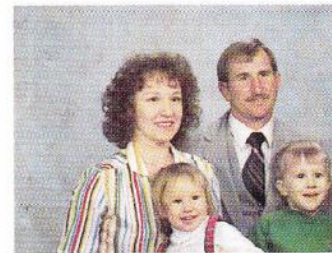
Lisa Reid



Craig & Kathy Rinker,  
Sheri, Amy & Craig, II



Dan & Wynona Sauder  
& Lisa



Michael & Charlene Shroyer,  
Michael, Jr. & Katrina



Leonard & Monica Sikora



Alfred & Sharon Smith



Esperance Smith



Henry & Sue Titzer  
& David

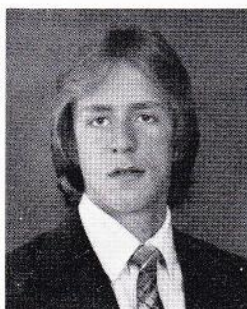


Doug & Hope Wright,  
Brian & John

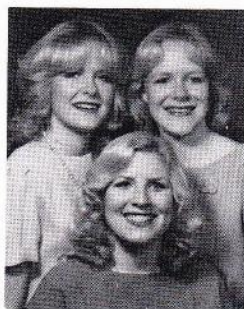
## THOSE NOT AVAILABLE FOR PICTURES



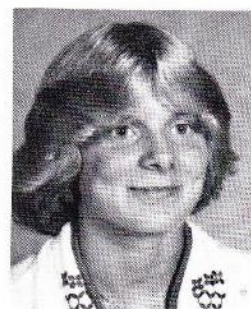
Georgia L. Coy



Mark Landeck



Jan, Jeanne & Lizbeth Ledet



Becky Portier



Robert Portier