

Brief History of the North Carolina Synod

Congregations formed by German emigrants organized the North Carolina Lutheran Synod in 1803. These pioneers settled in the late 1600's and 1700's primarily into the area of North Carolina that became known as the "Piedmont."

Some of the earliest congregations had been worshipping groups for years before they were officially organized in 1745. The two earliest resident pastors, Adolph Nussman and Johann Gottfried Arndt (a school teacher who was later ordained as a pastor in 1775) arrived from Germany in 1773 to serve congregations primarily in what is now Cabarrus, Davidson and Rowan counties. Arndt (also known as Arends) moved to Lincoln County in 1785 and ministered there until his death in 1807.

Education has always been important to Lutherans. Local elementary schools, high schools, academies and colleges were established in several locations. Among them were North Carolina College (renamed Mount Pleasant Collegiate Institute) which was established in 1855 as a school for men in Mount Pleasant. A school for women, Mount Pleasant Female Seminary (later called Mont Amoena Seminary) was established there in 1859. Conover High School (known later as Conover College) was established to serve the Catawba Valley area.

Other early Lutheran Schools were Elizabeth College in Charlotte, Dallas Academy near Gastonia (later changed to Gaston College), and Holy Grove Academy near Lexington. Most are no longer in existence. In 1891, Lenoir College, now known as Lenoir-Rhyne University, was established in Hickory.

In order to fill the pulpits of the rapidly forming congregations in the Carolinas, the **Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary** was organized in cooperation with the South Carolina Synod in 1830. After operating in several locations, it settled into Columbia, South Carolina, in 1911 and still trains ministers today. It is currently owned and supported by North Carolina and other southern Lutheran synods.

Our synod has also been involved in helping ministries throughout the years. These specialized ministries with the aged, infirm, children and youth at risk, and families are now directed through Lutheran Family Services of the Carolinas and Lutheran Services for the Aging.

Congregations are located from Andrews in the western mountains to Atlantic Beach, Mt. Airy to Monroe, and Wilkesboro to Wilmington.

As you read these words, mission congregations are knocking on doors and inviting their neighbors to join them in making Lutheran history.