

# *The Redemption Window*

*Donated in Memory of  
Chaplain Markus E Lohrmann  
Dedicated in 1950*



**The Symbols**  
**of the**  
**Chancel Lancel Window Entitled**  
**“REDEMPTION”**

**As they relate to our Savior’s Passion**

(The Symbols are described from the top of the window and downward)

**WHEAT** – Christ is the Bread of Life

**THE CROSS** – Christ gave His life as a ransom on the cross.

**THE CROWN OF THORNS** – A cruel crown for the King of kings

**THE NAILS** driven into Christ’s hands and feet

**THE WOUND** where the spear was thrust in Christ’s side

**TWO ANGELS TURNED AWAY** - Christ is forsaken by His Father in heaven

**TWO ANGELS MINISTERING** to Christ – He could command His angels if he Wished

**THE CUP** overflowing with His Love for all sinners

**THE WHIPPING POST AND WHIP** – by His stripes we are healed

**THE BROKEN CHAIN** surrounding the entire window  
Christ has broken our bonds of sin and death.

**REDEMPTION WINDOW**  
**In Memory of Chaplain Markus E. Lohrmann**  
**Dedicated in 1950**  
**St. John's Lutheran Church – Effingham, Illinois**  
**Written by Marcia Luecke**

As the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the addition to St. John's Lutheran Church is fast approaching, I have been asked to record my memories of the circumstances surrounding, and the person in whose memory the Redemption Window was given.

My father, Markus Ewald Lohrmann, was born exactly 100 years ago, in 1910, to the Rev. Justus and Clara (Vogel) Lohrmann, the third of 10 children. He graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and became the pastor of the Lutheran Church in Blue Point, Illinois. He met a member of St. John's, Effingham, -my mother, -Gertrude Wenthe, daughter of William and Mathilda (Wenthe) Wenthe in 1938, at a Zone Walther League Rally where my mother had given a speech in her role as one of the Zone Officers. It was apparently "love at first sight" because after only three dates, they became engaged. They decided, however, to delay their wedding because these were still Depression years, and my father's parents and 3 or 4 of his youngest siblings had moved into the parsonage at Blue Point with my father, as my grandfather was temporarily without a parish of his own, and there was little room for a young bride in the crowded quarters.

In 1940, as global hostilities grew, leading up to WWII, my father enlisted in the Army as a Chaplain, and my parents were married on Memorial Day, 1940. They lived on an Army base in Fort Meade, South Dakota, until March of 1942, when my father was deployed to the South Pacific, and my mother returned home to live with her parents and sisters, (Lydia, Minnie, and Ella Wenthe) in Effingham. I was born in August of that year.

On March 6, 1944, my father and a number of other officers and soldiers were out in a small ship in the South Pacific, off of Good Enough Island, when the power on the craft failed, leaving them without the ability to steer the craft, or even to communicate their position to the base on land. Concerned that they might drift farther and farther away toward Japanese waters, my father stated that he would try to swim the long distance back to the Island, to summon help. Two others volunteered to swim with him.

When the other two men finally reached shore, my father was not with them. Swimming back, they found his body, pulled it to shore, and tried to resuscitate him on the beach, all to no avail. It was later determined that he had not drowned, but suffered a heart attack in the water.

On the same day, my mother was attending a church service at St. John's Lutheran Church in Effingham. She told me that suddenly, during the service, she felt as though she were going to black out. Having heard that one should put one's head down if one felt faint, she did, but as she struggled to remain conscious, she had a clear vision of a tropical beach, with sand and palm trees, beside the ocean, and she saw men frantically bent over my father, trying to breathe life back into his prone body.

The next day, Reverend H.E. Zimmerman, who had just recently arrived as the new pastor at St. John's, and who had been contacted by the Army chaplaincy Service, came to the Wentz home to give her the news of my father's death. But she already knew. She had seen it happen.

Six months later, in October of 1944, my mother's sister, Ella (Wentz) Loy, received a similar visit. My uncle Garrett Loy, a pilot, had been shot down over Germany. It was my understanding that the Redemption window that was placed in the chancel of St. John's in 1950, was also partially in memory of Uncle Garrett Loy.

How often I wished that I might have known my father. But I always thought of him as I sat in church and looked at that window, depicting Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for our sins. I thought about how my father had followed Jesus' example – had laid down his life for his brothers, so that others might live.

My grandfather, then the pastor of Blue Point, said that he believed that my father had been called out of that boat, and out of the water, by Jesus, like Peter, on the Sea of Galilee – and that my father had answered His call, and Jesus had reached out and drawn him up, to His side, in Heaven.

## **-St. John's Lutheran Church - A History of The 1950 Addition**

It is always important to know the history of and the ways in which people who have gone before us dedicated their time, talent and energies for the furthering of the Kingdom of God. This document is an attempt to preserve and record some of the highlights of the 1950 addition to original brick church that was built in 1935. Additionally, a specific history and story of the "blue" window that graces the chancel of the church has been recorded.

The present church building that is located on Jefferson Avenue in Effingham, Illinois was constructed in 1935 with the exception of an addition that was dedicated in July of 1950. In January of 1935, the congregation appointed a building committee with authority to obtain plans and specifications for a new Church. On Easter Sunday, April 21, 1935, the last service was held in the old Church which was a traditional white wooden structure with a steeple. Ground breaking ceremonies were held that day for the building of the new Church. The cornerstone was laid on Sunday, June 16. You can see that cornerstone today which is located on the north east side of the present bell tower. The new brick building, erected at a cost of \$22,000, was dedicated to the glory of God and the services of His Kingdom on Reformation Sunday, October 27, 1935. It was at this time that all use of the German language for services was discontinued.

If one stands in the aisle at the back of the church and count four windows forward that is where the back of the 1935 church ended before the 1950 addition.

The congregation was affected, as was the whole nation, by the United States involvement in World War II. More than 40 young men of the congregation participated and three gave their lives for their country. In 1945 the congregation appointed a Post-War Planning Committee to consider ways and means to provide adequate accommodations for the congregation. It was apparent that the Church, erected in 1935, would not be adequate for the growing congregation.

It was not until 1947 that the congregation adopted plans for the enlarging of the Church. After considerable delay it was finally resolved to proceed with the enlarging of the Church by an addition to the nave, and the addition of transepts and chancel, doubling the seating capacity of the building.

Ground breaking ceremonies were held on July 10, 1949. The building was completed and ready for dedication on July 16, 1950. The project, including new furnishings and a new organ, 15 ranks of pipes and chimes, cost approximately \$80,000. The debt was retired by October 1952.

On July 16, 1950, the sixth Sunday After Trinity, the new church addition was dedicated with three services. The Dedicatory Service at 10:00 a.m. with Dedication Sermon given by Rev. H.E. Zimmerman, pastor. The Organ Dedication Service at 2:30 p.m. with Dedication Sermon given by Rev. K. Frankenstein and the Evening Service at 7:00 p.m. with Dedication Service by Rev. P.F. Plunkett.

(Information above taken from the 1950 Dedication Booklet and the 1966 Centennial Booklet of St. John's Lutheran Church.)

**Our Church Edifice**  
***-From the dedication booklet, July 16, 1950-***

Architecturally St. John's Lutheran Church follows the traditional cruciform design. The 2 ½ to 1 ratio of width to length in the nave and the deep chancel carry out the historic plan of the liturgical church and give the worshipper an impressive perspective upon entering the building. The east transepts contain the organ console and the choir. The west transept and a balcony above the narthex provide additional seating for the congregation. The seating capacity is approximately 500. The open ceiling with solid timber trusses accentuates the height. The ridge beam has been carried through to the rear chancel wall, omitting the usual chancel arch, to add to the effective length of the church. The overall length is 110 ft. The furnishings in the nave are of oak in a soft medium finish. The floor is covered with asphalt tile.

The focal point of the entire interior is the chancel lancet window, which rises 19 feet above the altar. The theme of the window is "Redemption." It is fashioned of finest imported glass in rich blues and reds with a touch of gold and green for variety and color. The center medallion is a large crucifix. Below and above the crucifix are symbols of the Savior's passion. The chancel furnishings representing the Word and Sacraments, the lectern, pulpit, altar and font, are of white oak in a natural finish. Clergy chairs, upholstered in rich maroon, and maroon carpeting add the necessary color. The altar brasses, the cross, the candlesticks, the candelabra, the missal stand, the ewer and the vases are of the finest materials in simple design. Altar rails and paneling complete the chancel furnishings. The walls are of grey brick harmonizing with the limestone trim.

Adjacent to the chancel are the sacristy for the church office and the choir room. Above these rooms are the organ chambers with openings into the chancel. The organ, built by the Hilgreen Lane Organ Company, Alliance, Ohio, has 15 ranks of pipes, Deagan chimes, and a two manual console with 30 stops.

The exterior of the church is of variegated red brick trimmed in Indiana limestone. The present building incorporates the building erected in 1935 and is constructed to harmonize with it. In addition to the tower at the east entrance a spire, surmounted by a cross, towers above the roof where the transepts join the nave.

The basement contains an auditorium, 30 ft. by 75 ft., with a stage, a classroom, 13 ft. by 25 ft., and other small rooms for Sunday School and social purposes. This is also a completely equipped kitchen, a furnace room and wash rooms. The building is heated by an oil burning hot water furnace. Heat is automatically controlled by three thermostats.

We rejoice in this glorious privilege of being permitted to erect and dedicate this church edifice to the glory and praise of the Triune God. May He abundantly bless all who worship and labor here in His Kingdom for the glory of His Name and the saving of precious, blood-bought souls. This building will then serve the great and blessed purpose for which it was erected. Its doors will stand open at all times that Christians may enter for meditation and prayer.

*As part of the research for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary dedication of the church addition I could not omit my findings of the "blue window". After putting out a notice of having anyone who knew of any information about the window to contact me, I received several calls. Irene Wenthe explained to me that she was told by Dorothy Wenthe that the cost of the window, in 1950, was \$1,000 (!) In addition, Doris Hammer provided me with the Dedication Service Booklet that contained valuable information. Her father was president of the congregation at that time and was present during the ground breaking ceremony. Finally, Joyce Miller, provided me with the valuable contact of Marcia Luecke who recorded her precious memories and story as it related to her father and family.*

*-Dean Manuel*