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February 15, 2000

The Rev. Karl F. Ribbeck, Pastor  
Zion Lutheran Church  
500 S. Brentwood Drive  
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Dear Karl:

Years ago, back in the late 50's Delton Welling was on the Zion Church Council. I asked him what Zion had done with the statues that were on the altar in the old church building. He said they were up in the balcony gathering dust. And then he said to me, "Why, are you interested?" I replied by saying that I would be interested if nothing was to be done with them.

The next time I visited Delton & Leora he said he had checked with the church council and that I could have the three statues. We took them back to Cleveland where I had started Redeemer Lutheran Church as a new mission congregation. At the next Redeemer Church Council meeting I asked if they would be interested in the statue of Christ. When they saw it they readily agreed to take it. The statue now stands in Redeemer's large narthex.

A member of the Redeemer Council had a close friend who was the assistant art curator at the Cleveland Art Museum. She said she would ask him to look at the statue. He said it was an excellent piece of art, and the fact that it was hollowed out in the interior made it even more valuable. I told him that one of our members wanted to touch up the gold leaf where it had flaked off and he immediately responded, "DON'T TOUCH IT!!" I also informed the Redeemer Church Council that if they ever chose to dispense with the Christ statue that it was to be given to Trinity Seminary in Columbus. They agreed to those terms.

I gave it to Redeemer since Zion, under Pastor Lembke's leadership, had been a mission-minded congregation. A short time later Pastor Harold Brown, a missionary in New Guinea, spoke at

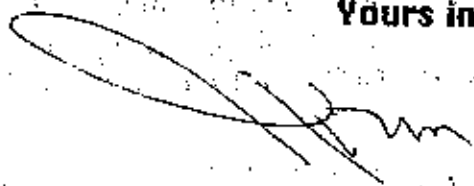
Redeemer. When he saw the St. Paul statue he was fascinated so I asked him if he would like to take it with him back to New Guinea. He responded affirmatively. Since Zion had been a strong supporter of the mission in New Guinea, especially the work of Andrew Mild and his wife, I felt it a natural place for that statue to be given.

I kept the Luther statue for a few years until we moved East. At that time the statue was given to Trinity Seminary. In the Te Deum publication following last year's graduation a picture of the procession showed members of the class carrying the Luther statue.

I had not thought of sharing this information until a recent conversation with Lois Paul Gibson. In our reminiscing about our years at Zion we talked about the old church building. I then told her how I had received and presented the statues as stated above. She asked me if I had shared with Zion where the statues had been given. I told her that I had not, but that it was an excellent idea. So, now you know.

If you or members should have any questions about this subject please feel free to contact me. Our very best wishes to you and the members of Zion.

Yours in Christ,



Norman E. Minich  
Retired Pastor