

The Flame of Compassion

*A Brief History of the
Lutheran Mission Society
1905-2006*



Years of Healing Ministry

Forward by Dr. Richard L. Alms

In the course of history, a hundred years is like a fleeting moment. However, to an individual, a business or a ministry like the Lutheran Mission Society, one hundred years is a very, very important time period. It is important to the Mission Society for three reasons.

First, it shows the leading and guiding of the Lord. History is always humbling when we recognize God's hand of love and blessing.

Second, the number of hearts that were touched and lives that were changed by the ministry causes us to stand in awe. Faithful people serving in the name of Jesus have accomplished a mighty ministry.

Third, the future is yet ahead – *where will the Lord lead? What is His plan for the future?*

O God, you are the Good and Great Shepherd – help us to be faithful sheep.

In Jesus name we go forward with great anticipation and joy.

Thank you Mr. & Mrs. Herman Schmidt

The Lutheran Mission Society would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Herm and Gayle Schmidt who gave freely of their time and talents to research and write this history of the Mission Society's first 100 years. God bless you both for a job well done.

The Flame of Compassion

A Brief History of the Lutheran Mission Society

Paul's words to Timothy to "*Fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you...*" (2Timothy 1:6) were heard and understood by a group of Baltimore Lutherans early in the 1900's. They manifested their Christian faith by fanning into flame a Christian urban ministry whose century of healing compassion we celebrate this year.



Smoldering embers of the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904

Ironically, as the sparks and embers of the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904 were being extinguished, a new and more far-reaching spark was being fanned into flame. The flame of compassion became the embryonic beginning of the Lutheran Mission Society.

Almost from the beginning, the heart of the Mission Society has been the faithful and committed volunteers. Hence, the story of the Lutheran Mission Society and the Lutheran Women's Mission Auxiliary is the story of committed Christian men and women who took very seriously Jesus' commands to go forth and preach and heal. (*Mark 16:15-18*)

As the years went by, needs and circumstances

changed in society, requiring the Lutheran Mission Society to change the focus of its ministry. In order to provide a relevant and dynamic ministry, three eras evolved which necessitated new and different approaches by which the Lutheran Mission Society would provide comfort and healing to those in need.

The initial era – 1905-1920 – found people coming to the Lutheran Mission Society to have their needs met. During this time services to German immigrants began, mission stations were established and assistance was provided for the establishment of nine congregations. Beginning in approximately 1921 through approximately the middle 1960's the mission effects changed. During the second era the



View of Baltimore Harbor in 1912

Lutheran Mission Society brought its message to the people in need. This was the era of institutional chaplaincy.

The third era, beginning in the middle 1960's to the present, brought another change. It was the era of Compassion Centers and Compassion Care for women and children.. During this time those in need once again came to the Lutheran Mission Society to the seven centers of healing that were established during this era.

THE FIRST ERA 1905-1920

The Lutheran Mission Society began with a meeting at St. Paul's School on November 14, 1904. Present were delegates from Immanuel, Martini, Emmanuel, Redeemer (Irvington), Bethany (Violettville), St. Thomas, Bethlehem, Jackson Square and St. Paul. On January 9, 1905 these representatives met again and formed a new organization and elected officers. This was the beginning of the Lutheran Mission Society.

By June 1905 Reverend Karl Kretzmann was called to start congregations in the Baltimore area. In these early days, the Lutheran Mission Society was influential in founding the following nine congregations: St James in Overlea; Christ Church in Dundalk; Messiah in Baltimore; St. Paul in Glen Burnie; Trinity in Bowie; Calvary in Baltimore; Holy Nativity in Baltimore; St. Matthew in Baltimore. Later requests



Rev. Karl Kretzmann
1905 - 1906

came for help in congregational development in Bowie, Baltimore, Washington and Annapolis.

Important Dates During Era I

1905 - Establishment of the Lutheran Mission Society as a not-for-profit, religious, charitable and educational ministry.

1906 - Volunteer participation began.

1909 - Assisted in the establishment of nine congregations.

Very soon after the Mission Society's organization, it was actively engaged in services to German immigrants arriving at the Baltimore dock. These services included welcoming the people, supplying food, finding them shelter and work and helping them locate relatives, living locally or throughout the country, who preceded them to America. By 1909 the work increased to the point that Reverend R. Eirich received part of his salary from the Immigration Mission Board.

This new organization needed a name and wanting to be inclusive of any future ministry endeavors it was "christened" the *Mission Board of the Baltimore Congregations belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America of Baltimore City*. The name was later shortened to the "Lutheran Mission Society of Maryland" which still kept the organization's original pur-

The Lutheran Mission Society - popularly called LMS or the Mission Society - was originally named:

Mission Board of the Baltimore Congregations
belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical
Conference of North America of Baltimore City

Even the *acronym* -- MBBCELSCNABC -- is a tongue twister!

The Early Churches LMS Helped Establish



Nazareth Church
Bank St. and Highland Ave.
Begun 1905



St. James Church
W. Overlea and Spruce St.
Begun 1905



Christ Church
Sollers Point Road
*Held title to property
1906-1917*



Messiah Church
Cross and Cleveland Streets
Begun 1911



St. Paul's Church
Glen Burnie
Begun 1908



Trinity Church
Bowie, MD
Begun 1908



Calvary Church
Northern Pkwy at Old Harford Rd.
Begun 1914



Holy Nativity Church
Linden Avenue, Arbutus
*Supplied LMS with a Vicar
while LMS assumed direction
of church during 1941-43*



St. Matthew's Church
Druid Hill Avenue
*LMS purchased building
and grounds in 1938.*

pose of reaching out to the community with all kinds of ministries and mission services.

The early workers of the Lutheran Mission Society took seriously Christ's commands to preach and heal. This was made evident by calling their staff members *missionaries*, a name that lasted until January 1952.

2ND ERA 1921 – MID 1960'S

World War I and the curtailment of immigration and the successful formation of nine new congregations ended Era I. At no time, however, did the flame of compassion flicker. Rather, it caused a redirection of the Mission Society's efforts into a new and much-needed ministry – institutional chaplaincy.

This second era of institutional chaplaincy began in 1921 and continued to grow and expand until the middle 1960's. The ministry grew rapidly through the untiring efforts of the called missionary, local volunteer pastors and lay people.

A full-time instructional chaplain – Dr. H.D. Mensing – was called in 1928. His salary was \$2,100.00 per year. Shortly thereafter, a parsonage was purchased for the "city missionary" and his family, not to exceed \$7,000.00.



Dr. Leslie F. Weber

society's most vulnerable, providing chaplaincy and Christian care.

In 1954 Dr. Leon H. Hetherington, M.D., Chief of the Bureau of Tuberculosis for the Maryland State Department of Health, wrote: "I appreciate what your chaplaincy service has done in the State Tu-

berculosis Hospitals. Many patients have found comfort and peace of mind through a strengthening of their beliefs. Your help gives the patients hope and faith. Your help in securing blood donors as well as donations of furniture for specific patients aided the patients on the road to recovery."



Springfield State Hospital
Sykesville, MD (1950's)

Among the institutions served by the ministry of the Lutheran Mission Society were Augsburg Lutheran Home, Baltimore City Hospitals, Children's Hospital School, Eudowood Sanatorium, Veteran's Administration Hospital, Henryton State Hospital, Lutheran Hospital of Maryland, Maryland House of Correction, Mt. Wilson State Hospital, Springfield State Hospital, Spring Grove State Hospital and Victor Cullen State Hospital.

Mary L. Dunlop, R.N., Superintendent of Children's Hospital School in 1954, wrote: "Those in the the Respirator Unit asked to be included in your Chaplaincy Service and they and the others on the adult ward have felt the warm, loving personal interest you took in them. The children look forward to Saturday afternoons. They love the hymns, the simple Bible lessons and talks. You give to one and all the same love and kindness in His name."



Children's Respirator Unit
Children's Hospital (1950's)

In 1951, in compassionate response to an apparent need, a Sunday School for mentally retarded children was organized. Volunteer teachers and help-

COOKIE PACKING

A program of "Christmas Cheer" was begun early in the LMS Women's Auxiliary's history. The program grew to where more than 1,000 packages of candy and 600 packages of oranges were given out in city hospitals in 1933. By 1942, the cost of candy and oranges was increasing. Because of these increasing costs, it was suggested that cookies be distributed instead of oranges. A plea was made to the women of our congregations to bake cookies and help pack them at Martini Lutheran Church parish hall on December 15, 1942. This was the beginning of the *Cookie Packing* custom,



and this project has been operating every Christmas since. A copy of the Christmas story from the Gospel story is bundled in every package of cookies now, helping to share the Miracle of Christmas along with the tasty treats.

ers gave of their time and talents, with definite benefits



being observed in the lives of the attending children.

Sunday School for Retarded Children
Lutheran Church of Our Saviour (1951)

The needs and growth of this new ministry is reflected by the 1960 Annual Report. In the nearly 40 years that follow the inception of the institutional chaplaincy, we read from the report that: "The services of the Lutheran Mission Society were performed in 33 regularly assigned institutions. The institutions served included prisons, school for the retarded, homes for the aged and in general, tuberculosis, chronic and mental hospitals."

The true extent of the Lutheran Mission Society's influence is seen in the following statistics from that 1960 Annual Report:

- 2,286 trips to institutions;
- 44,174 patients seen;
- 3,667 Sunday school classes conducted;
- 294 Bible classes conducted;
- 13,739 adults in attendance.

There were also 964 services conducted by the staff that reached 65,521 hearers. This was certainly a vibrant and important ministry.

As important as this ministry was, it virtually came to an end in the 1960's. Its demise was caused by the wholesale closings of some institutions, the cutting back of some services and the combining of some institutions.

The flame of compassion again did not flicker. Instead, a reconfiguration of the LMS mission of comfort and healing was needed. This led to the third era of the Lutheran Mission Society's first century of operation.

The Lutheran Women's Mission Auxiliary

The Lutheran Women's Mission Auxiliary began with 67 women from five local churches on January 12, 1921. By January 8, 1921 a constitution was adopted. The organization was called the Ladies' Mission Society and "its purpose was to assist the Lutheran Mission Society." By January 1922, membership had increased to 227. By 1980, their membership had swelled to 1,000 in number.

Throughout their many years of existence, the Womens' Auxiliary became an influential and important arm of the LMS ministry. Their contributions were vital to the growth of the Mission Society. Some of the more important and lasting contributions include:

- Being instrumental in gathering a full-time missionary for institutional work by pledging \$700-\$800 each year toward his salary. Their efforts became a reality in November 1927 when Prof. Henry D. Mensing accepted a call to become the first full-time City Missionary/Chaplain in Baltimore.
- Throughout the 1930's the Women's Auxiliary, on a number of occasions, bought or contributed to the purchase of a car for the City Missionary/Chaplain. They also contributed to the upkeep of his car.
- The Women's Auxiliary helped sponsor the first Mission Festival held on the grounds of the Augsburg Home in June of 1934.
- In 1975 the Women's Auxiliary assumed the obligation to pay for a part-time secretary for LMS.
- The "Christmas Cheer" collection in 1951 included cookies and one ton of candy to be distributed in institutions. Gifts and the story of the Savior's birth were presented

to 9,700 patients during services conducted by the chaplains.

- Teachers and helpers were recruited from the Women's Auxiliary in 1952 to conduct Sunday School for mentally retarded children. Eventually, the program expanded into



four additional churches.

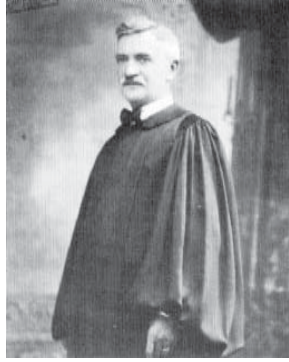
- In 1962, Women's Auxiliary members had donated 100,000 cookies for the *Christmas Cheer* effort that were packaged by more than 200 volunteers.
- In December 1965 the Women's Auxiliary developed the idea of the *Economy Center* to help fund LMS. In April of 1966 the Women's Auxiliary adopted the *Economy Center* as a project. The name was later changed to *Compassion Center*. Today there are seven *Compassion Centers* throughout Maryland and in York, Pennsylvania.

In their nearly seventy years of existence, the Women's Auxiliary members were a vital force in assisting the ministry of LMS. The women served their Lord and those in need through their time, talents and treasure. They helped bring the Word, hope, healing and cheer through LMS's needs-based ministry.

LMS Directors



Rev. Karl Kretzmann
1905-1906



Rev. E. Totzke
1907-1908



Rev. Louis Roehm
1908



Rev. R. Eirich
1909-1910



Rev. Carl Grahn
1921-1927



Rev. H.D. Mensing
1928-1940



Rev. Leslie F. Weber
1941-1964



Rev. Edward Muhly
1964-1967



Richard L. Alms, Ph.D
1967-2006



Rev. David R. Maack
2006 -

"Unless the LORD
builds the house, its
builders labor in
vain. Unless the
LORD watches over
the city, the watch-
men stand guard in
vain."

Psalm 127:1

Important Dates during Era II

1921 - Lutheran Women's Mission Auxiliary formed

1921 - Institutional chaplaincy services started

1928 - Rev. H.D. Mensing called as first full-time institutional chaplain

1940 - Dr. Leslie F. Weber called as Executive Director of the Lutheran Mission Society of Maryland

1950 - Religious education services to the mentally retarded began

1963 - Counseling services started

1965 - Rev. Edward C. Muhly called as Executive Director

THE THIRD ERA 1965 – PRESENT

The third era began in 1965 when the Lutheran Mission Women's Auxiliary introduced the concept of the *Economy Center* that changed the direction of the Mission Society's ministry. The efforts of the

Lutheran Mission Society and the Women's Auxiliary culminated in the establishment of the first *Economy Center* in Fells Point in 1966.

In 1967, Dr. Richard L. Alms was called as Executive Director and this new era in the life of the Mission Society was energized. The Women's



Richard L. Alms, Ph.D
Executive Director
1967 - 2006

Auxiliary's original idea of the *Economy Center* was to help supply operating funds for the Mission Society. Dr. Alms expanded the concept to encompass new areas of ministry. The idea was: *If we can no longer go to the people, we will be where the people can come to us.*



LMS Fells Point Economy Center
Baltimore, MD - Opened in 1966

During the next 18 years, a dynamic expansion of the Mission Society took place. Responding to peoples' needs, five more centers were opened in areas where people could be served: South Baltimore in 1972; Essex, MD in 1976; Annapolis, MD in 1977; Cambridge, MD in 1979; and Havre de Grace, MD in 1984.

The most recent center in York, Pennsylvania,



Christmas Basket Distribution at Fells Point
Chaplain Al Newton (r) helps client with food basket

LMS LOGO



The Lutheran Mission Society logo is an expression of Christian faith. The logo was designed by Mr. John Raschka in 1967 and is federally registered.

The broken circle with the downturned arrow represents the brokenness and sinfulness of mankind. The cross and anchor represent Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who places strength, wholeness, health and healing back in our lives.

opened in 2001. A new concept to reach those in need -- a mobile *Compassion Center* to address a rural ministry in Southern Maryland and also to respond to disasters -- is now underway.

The centers are now called *Compassion Centers* and over six hundred people a day passed through their doors - people with needs both physical and spiritual. Providing emergency assistance, food, clothing, counseling, Bible studies and health services, the *Compassion Centers* have become integral parts of their communities and beacons of hope in Jesus' name.

The *Compassion Care* program - a residential, rehabilitation for women and children - was established in 1988. This program was developed to bring aid and comfort to single mothers and their children, as well as provide training in parenting skills/child care, nutrition, homemaking, budgeting and computer skills. Bible study and instruction in Christian living is a keystone of the program..



Compassion Care mother and child
Annapolis Compassion Care Educational Wing

The Compassion Care program began in Annapolis and Baltimore and, in 2002, became part of the Compassion complex in York, PA.

The *Compassion Care* shelters are, in reality, efficiency apartments where mothers and their children

stay together as a family unit. Housed within each *Compassion Care* complex is also an educational wing where daily activities, classes, child care and Bible studies take place.

Heartwarming stories abound - stories of lives being changed, for this generation and the next. "I wasn't ready the first time I was here," said one program participant. "But thank God for His love for me. I know a peace and joy I never understood before. You've taught me so many things -- practical and spiritual."

The relocation of the Baltimore *Compassion Care* shelters to York, PA brought new opportunities for the Baltimore property on Marshall Street. Thus, the *Compassion House* program was born.

The *Dausch Guest House* - the first in the *Compassion House* program - is a short-term residence for out-of-town families of patients receiving medical treatment at one of Baltimore's renowned hospitals. The *Guest House* is



Dausch Guest House
View of living room

Compassion Care

*"When my friend threw me out, I was crushed. But now I realize it was for the best because I found the *Compassion Care* program and, more importantly, I found Jesus Christ."*

The Mission Society's *Compassion Care* program for single women and their children started in 1988. The program provides individual residential shelters along with training in parenting skills, nutrition, homemaking, job skills, budgeting and Bible study.

The *Compassion Care* program was



originally housed in Annapolis and Baltimore. In 2002, the *Compassion Care* program expanded into York, PA with the opening of

five new shelters and educational area. The single Baltimore shelter was transformed into a new ministry - the *Dausch Guest House*.

Since its inception, the LMS *Compassion Care* program has made a difference in the lives of over 500 women and children in residence, and over 1,000 as non-resident clients.

"If I would have stayed on the street I would have died. You saved me."

located in downtown Baltimore convenient to Johns Hopkins, Union Memorial and University hospitals. The program provides compassionate support for families, both physical and spiritual.



Dausch Guest House
View of bedroom

To date, a number of families in crisis have been blessed by the Guest House ministry:

- Three sisters from different states united in prayer and support at the Guest House while their mother was treated at Shock Trauma after being hit by a car, and then stayed again when their mother went through rehabilitation just blocks from the Guest House.

- A family from the eastern shore of Maryland stayed together at the Guest House while one young family member received a kidney transplant and another family member was the donor.

- A man receiving cancer treatment at Johns Hopkins Hospital was blessed with peace of mind while his wife received the hospitality and Christian support of the Guest House program. "You went out of your way for us," he wrote afterwards. "I am very much 'on the mend' after my operation and felt peace of mind while in the hospital knowing that [my wife] was in a fine, well-equipped house, with compassionate people such as you and your staff just a block and a half away."

The Lutheran Mission Society has been, and will continue to be, a healing ministry.

Important Dates During Era III

1966 – First Compassion Center established in Fells Point

1967 – Dr. Richard Alms called as Executive Director

1972 – LMS Compassion Center – South Baltimore, MD

1973 – Main office relocated to South Baltimore, MD

1976 – LMS Compassion Center – Essex, MD

1977 – LMS Compassion Center – Annapolis, MD

1979 – LMS Compassion Center – Cambridge, MD

1984 – LMS Compassion Center – Havre de Grace, MD

1988 – LMS Compassion Care program for single women and their children established in Annapolis and Baltimore

2001 – LMS Compassion Center – York, PA

2002 – LMS Compassion Care program for single women and their children established in York, PA

2004 – Dausch Guest House established

2006 – Rev. David Maack becomes 10th LMS Executive Director -- Main offices moved to 601 Hammonds Lane, Baltimore, MD 21225.

To fully understand the Mission Society's impact in the region, one need only look at the compassionate activities for the 2004-2005 year. Though not definitive, the following numbers are representative of the scope and depth of the LMS ministry. It shows how brightly the flame of compassion is burning today.

The 2004/2005 story of ministry is told through the following activities:

116,689 - Compassion Center visits
98,272 - Pounds of food donated
\$147,408 - Value of food distributed
91,135 - Pieces of clothing distributed
827 - Health Care brochures distributed
104 - Prescription eyeglasses distributed
15 - Discount prescription cards distributed
4,523 - Children's educational activities
4,749 - Attended children's educational activities
1,845 - Educational video sessions
2,109 - Attended educational video sessions
84 - Health Check sessions
1,137 - Health Care team sessions
1,655 - Compassion Care sessions with single mothers and children
543 - Mothers/children served in program
260 - Chapel services
1,694 - Attended chapel services
431 - Pastoral Care sessions
892 - Bible classes
1,419 - Attended Bible classes
812 - Bibles distributed
4,816 - Confessions of faith
2,256 - Counseling sessions
30,225 - Total of all volunteer hours
1,864 - Total of all volunteers
\$1,069,380 - Value of volunteer hours
(This is approximately equivalent to 45 full-time paid staff.)

Look closely at those last statistics. Volunteers, whose hearts have been touched by the Spirit, have always been the lifeblood of the Mission Society. Volunteers, earnestly sharing their time, treasure and talents, are a huge factor in bringing the Mission Society to this 100th Anniversary Celebration of ministry.



Volunteers at Christmas Basket Packing

Ending devotions, ready for work

Throughout the past century, God's providential hand and guidance has been evident. From a staff of one and a few volunteers, to the current staff of forty and over 1,500 volunteers, the Lutheran Mission Society has grown and prospered. From the able and dedicated leadership of Missionary Kretzmann to Executive Director Dr. Richard L. Alms, the sole purpose of the Mission Society's efforts were "to bring healing, health and wholeness to individuals, families and communities who are dealing with conflict and disease through the power of Jesus Christ and the servanthood of compassionate caregivers."

Little could the evangelical Christians in 1904 know that their missionary efforts would grow and expand and continue to bear fruit 100 years into the future. Little could they also know that from the ashes of the horrible devastation of the Great Baltimore Fire would soon emerge the powerful spark of Christian love that they fanned into a flame of compassion. That flame would serve as a guide and model for the coming century.

As the Annual Report of 1985 stated, this has been a "dynamic story of a growing ministry." The story of the Lutheran Mission Society is that of a *Flame of Compassion* that still burns brightly today, and with God's help and guidance will never be extinguished. Amen. Let it be so.

Lutheran Mission Society

A HISTORY OF MINISTRY WOVEN THROUGHOUT A CENTURY



1905

AID TO IMMIGRANTS;
VOLUNTEER SERVICES



1920's

SOUP KITCHENS;
WOMENS AUXILLIARY



CHAPLAINS FOR
PRISONS, HOSPITALS

1930's



1940's

SUPPORT FOR TROOPS;
CHAPLAINCY TO POW'S

Lutheran Mission Society

A HISTORY OF MINISTRY
WOVEN THROUGHOUT A CENTURY

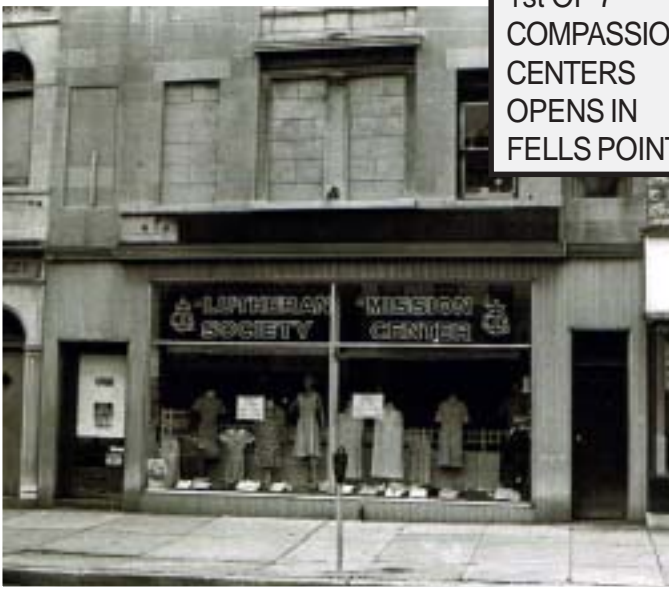


1950's

MINISTRY TO MENTALLY
RETARDED; COUNSEL-
ING SERVICES

1960's

1st OF 7
COMPASSION
CENTERS
OPENS IN
FELLS POINT



1970's

HEADQUARTERS IN
SOUTH BALTIMORE
DEDICATED

Lutheran Mission Society

A HISTORY OF MINISTRY
WOVEN THROUGHOUT A CENTURY

1980's

COMPASSION CARE
PROGRAM FOR WOMEN
& CHILDREN BEGINS



1990's

MINISTRY EXPANSION;
PRAYER NETWORK



2005



2000's

DAUSCH GUEST
HOUSE OPENS

...AND BECAUSE
THE
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR
MINISTRY
CONTINUE TO
CHANGE,



THE
Lutheran Mission Society

WILL ALWAYS
BE A

***NEEDS-DRIVEN
MINISTRY***



An Ode to the Lutheran Mission Society On a Century of Christian Love and Compassion

Seven golden lampstands shining forth,
Lighting the darkness of a sin-stained earth.
A Society of Healing to a society conflicted,
Bringing balm and healing to those afflicted.

One hundred years of faithful love,
Reflecting a Light that's come from above.
These golden lampstands will never cease
As beacons of hope, loving comfort and peace.

The angels who have served you these many years –
Faithfully, caringly, ever sincere –
With hard work, they've given their best for You.
To you, O Lord – their first love – they will ever be true.

Sharing the Gospel of healing Salvation;
A ministry of aid and Christian compassion.
A century of service to many in need –
Making a difference in the lambs that they feed.

As fishers of men they follow the Lord,
Sharing His love, His life and His Word.
To those who are downtrodden, sad, in despair;
The Good News – our Savior – they always will share.

All praise to you, O Lord, we pray;
Whose century of blessings were felt every day.
Your gracious works we'll ever boast.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost!

By Herman Schmidt

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