A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LIFE
OF LOUIS J. HELFRICH OF NEW ORLEANS
AND HIS ANCESTORS

ADDENDUM 2

The life of Louis Helfrich and his family (including the family of his wife Lois Franke) is partially documented from articles that appeared in the newspapers of New Orleans. This addendum contains a selection of these articles.
First English Lutheran Church first constructed a small building at the corner of St. Claude Avenue and Port Street. It was later replaced by a large edifice on Port Street. The cornerstone for this second church was laid on Sunday, May 28, 1893. The services were conducted by the Rev. George C. Franke, Louis Helfrich’s future father-in-law.

Daily Item, 29 May 1893, p 8, c 4

CORNER STONE LAID.

The First English Lutheran Church of New Orleans.

The cornerstone of the First English Lutheran Church, now in progress of construction on Port street, between Rampart and St. Claude streets, was celebrated yesterday with imposing ceremonies and a large attendance.

The services were conducted by Rev. G. C. Franke, and were opened by hymn No. 130, the choir being under the direction of Prof. C. Lemke and composed of the following ladies and gentlemen: Messrs: F. Schaefer, C. Waldo, C. Huff, Misses: Emma Schott, Louise Thiemann, Mrs. Lambou and Miss Nettie Theole.

Rev. T. J. Lankenau then preached an eloquent sermon, which was followed by the hymn “Here, in thy name, eternal God.”

Pastor Franke, the minister in charge, was born in Mobile in 1861, where he received his primary education. He entered college at Port Wayne, Ind., in 1874. Six years later he graduated with the highest honors and entered the Theological Seminary of St. Louis, Mo., from which he graduated three years later.

Afterwards the young divine served with great success in the Lutheran congregations of Algiers and Gretna; then two years as assistant pastor of St. Paul’s Church, Third District, and last at Closter and Havershaw, N. Y., until he received the call to the new church, by whose members numbering now 900 communicants, he is highly esteemed and beloved.
The Rev. George C. Franke and his wife, Katherine Thoele, were married in 1892. Their 15th wedding anniversary was celebrated in the basement of First English Lutheran Church.

*New Orleans Item, 22 January 1907, p 9, c 1*

**CHURCH MEMBERS HONOR PASTOR**

The fifteenth anniversary of the marriage of Rev. and Mrs. G. C. Franke was an enjoyable affair. The ceremonies were held in the basement of the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, of which Mr. Franke is pastor.

At 8 o'clock Frank R. Schaefer, the president of the congregation, called at the Franke home and invited Mr. and Mrs. Franke to come to the church at Port and St. Claude streets. The couple consented and as they entered the basement the hundred or more friends sang a hymn. The surprise of the couple was all the greater when Rev. F. J. Lankenau, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, made a short address.

Dr. and Mrs. Franke were presented with a magnificent cut glass chandelier which was installed in the Franke home to-day. Dr. Lankenau explained that the gift came from the members of the different organizations of Mr. Franke's church, including the congregational meeting composed of men.

Mr. Franke made a few appropriate remarks in receiving the gift and concluded by warmly thanking the donors for his wife and himself.

Immediately after the presentation the following programme was rendered:

Piano duet, Misses Lola Giesen and Anna Dieck; violin solo, Fred Gensler; bass solo, L. E. Hilgartner; piano solo, Miss Lola Giesen; baritone solo, Fred Gensler; piano solo, Miss Anna Dieck; vocal duet, Miss Carrie Gensler and Fred Gensler; piano solo, L. E. Hilgartner.

Among the ministers from Lutheran churches present, besides Mr. Lankenau, were: Rev. E. W. Kuss, of Zion Church; Rev. F. Wamb harus, Trinity Church; Rev. H. H. Hartmann, Christ Church; Rev. F. Sieblitz, Gretna Lutheran Church.
Someone named Louis Helfrich was a wrestler in New Orleans. These two articles describe two events in which this person participated. There is no evidence to suggest that this was Louis Jacob Helfrich, but it is possible.

New Orleans Item, 31 Oct. 1909, p 20, c 4

**Women Arrive For Match On Mat**

Both Blanche Whitney and Grace Hale, the women wrestlers, who will grapple in a catch-as-catch-can match at the Dauphine Theater Monday night, are in the city, and everything is in readiness for one of the most unique wrestling exhibitions ever held here.

Not only will there be a finish match between these two women, who rank as two of the best female wrestlers in the country, but the programme includes a very novel exhibition of a man wrestling a bull. Athos, the Frenchman, of international reputation, will give this exhibition for the first time in the South.

A great many persons have been anxious to know how a man can wrestle a bull on a stage. It is very easily done, as Athos requires only 40 feet of the stage. A low fence is built around this space. After getting the bull inside the enclosure Athos keeps his attention centered within a small area and the bull has no chance to cover much territory. Catching him by the horns Athos keeps the bull struggling in one place to keep to his feet.

The preliminary match will be between Carl Fons and Louis Helfrich. Fons is well known in more than one country, having been the Graeco-Roman champion of France.

Times-Picayune, 22 June 1911, p 3, c 3

**Wrestling.**

LOUIS HELFRICH WINS MATCH.

At the fair held at Burns, La., Sunday, under the auspices of John L. Burna, for the benefit of the Church of Our Lady of Good Harbor, Louis Helfrich, the "New Orleans Thunderbolt," easily proved the winner over Emilie Kopp, the "Southern Favorite," in a catch-as-catch-can wrestling match, securing two straight falls inside of thirty-five minutes. Helfrich was accompanied to Burns by his manager and financial backer, C. R. David. They expect to put on a number of matches similar to this.
The Rev. George C. Franke and his wife Katherine had three daughters: Lillian, Marian, and Lois. Lillian married Richard W. Wismar in 1914. Lillian’s youngest sister, Lois, was the flower girl.

*Times Picayune, 28 June 1914, p 13, c 2*

A lovely wedding of the month was that of Miss Lillian Martha Magdalene Franke, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. George C. Franke, to Mr. Richard Waldemar Wismar, which took place on Wednesday evening, June 24, at six o’clock at the First English Evangelical Lutheran church.

The church was prettily decorated with palms and fern. The bride’s father, Rev. George C. Franke, performed the ceremony. The bride was attended by Miss Marion Franke as maid of honor and the bridesmaids were Misses Julia Hauser, Ruth Reboul, Georgiana Ackerman, and Alice Beckemeyer.

The attendants were attired in pretty gowns of the various rainbow colors, made of crepe meteor and their flowers were carnations and roses. The little flower girl, Miss Augusta Thoele, wore a dainty lingerie frock and the little ring bearer was Miss Lois Franke.

The bride wore a lovely gown of taffeta trimmed with pearls and tulle. Her cap veil of illusion was held with orange blossoms and she carried orchids and lilies of the valley.

Mr. Wismar was attended by Mr. John Webert as best man and the groomsmen, Messrs. George Schaefer, Fred Brown, Edward Stoll, and John Clark. The ushers were Messrs. Henri Randolph, George Hauser, Fred Brinkman, Ward Odenwald and Henry Lambou.

A reception followed at the home of the bride’s grandmother, Mrs. H. Thoele. Only the members of the bridal party and the immediate relatives were entertained.

Mr. and Mrs. Wismar left for Chicago, Ill., to be away for the summer months.
Louis Jacob Helfrich was ordained as a pastor of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod on Wednesday, August 30, 1916, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, as part of an annual session of the Louisiana District Conference of pastors and teachers.

*New Orleans States*, 30 August 1916, p 7, c 5

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**Public Ordination For Lutherans Here**

Officers were elected, two addresses were heard, and a quantity of routine business was disposed of at the annual session of the Louisiana District Conference of pastors and teachers of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, held Tuesday in St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Rev. C. Scheibe of Clinton, La., was named president; Rev. A. O. Friedrich of New Orleans, vice-president; Rev. C. Keugele, of Algiers, secretary; and Prof. D. Meibohm, of New Orleans, treasurer. After being elected to membership, Rev. L. J. Heitrich of De Ridder, and Rev. M. E. Schaeffer of Baton Rouge were invited to sit with the conference.

"How May Mission Congregations be Founded?" was the subject of an interesting address by Rev. E. Kuss, of the St. Paul Church. Rev. G. M. Kramer spoke on "Preaching the Gospel." Both talks aroused considerable discussion.

Wednesday night a public ordination service will be held. Holy communion will be administered, and Rev. L. J. Heitrich will be ordained to the ministry, with ceremony by Rev. William Weidig, of Jennings, La.
The Rev. George C. Franke and his wife Katherine Thoele celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in 1917.

*Times-Picayune*, 22 January 1917, p 4, c 2-3

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**PASTOR AND WIFE CELEBRATE THEIR SILVER WEDDING DAY**

With impressive church services and a delightful social program arranged by the congregation of the First English Lutheran Church, Port Street, near St. Claude avenue, the twenty-five wedding anniversary of the Rev. George C. Franke and wife was celebrated Saturday night at the church. Mr. Franke had arranged to have a family gathering Saturday, but did not know that the members of his church were arranging such a program for the occasion.

The committee in charge of the celebration and the members of the church arrived at the church a short while after 7 o'clock. When the lights were turned on the Rev. Franke and Mrs. Franke were asked to come into the church.

More than four hundred men, women and children gathered in the church. The Rev. C. W. Rass, of the Zion Lutheran Church, delivered the sermon. Mr. Rass said the Rev. Franke had enjoyed all the privileges of life while working for God, and at the conclusion of his address presented the couple with a silver service. The Rev. Mr. Franke thanked the members of the church for the celebration and their co-operation. He told them that he and his wife would continue to work with them.

After the church services the Rev. Franke and his family marched through the church to the basement in the rear where the social program was carried out. The church and basement were decorated with silver leaves and flowers. Several musical numbers were given in the basement and refreshments were served. The couple received many handsome presents.

The Rev. Franke was born in Mobile, Ala., and has been a minister for thirty-four years. Shortly after he was placed in charge of the First English Lutheran Church, nearly twenty-six years ago, he met his wife, who was a Miss Katherine Thoele of this city. They were married twenty-five years ago Saturday. The couple were blessed with three girls, who are: Mrs. Richard Wisman, Marion and Julia Franke.
The second daughter of the Rev. George C. Franke and his wife Katherine was Marian. She was married to John P. Clark on Wednesday, April 25, 1917. Marian’s younger sister, Lois, was one of the flower girls.

Times-Picayune, 29 April 1917, p A-13, c 2

CLARKE-FRANKE WEDDING.

Popular Couple Married Wednesday at
First English Lutheran Church.

One of the interesting weddings of the season was that Wednesday evening, April 25, at the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, Port and St. Claude streets, when Miss Marian Franke, daughter of the Rev. C. C. Franke, and John P. Clarke were married before a large gathering of relatives and friends.

Mendelssohn’s “Wedding March” announced the approach of the bridal party led by Messrs. W. W. Brown, A. A. Randolph, H. Sprich, H. Lambou and H. Wolty, preceding the bridesmaids, Misses Hilda Manthey, Mabel Salvant, Augusta Schaefer, Mary Bernhardt, and Matilda Cuoulu. Next came Miss Gertrude Hanover, the maid of honor, followed by the little flower girls, Lois Franke and Louise Keenan, carrying gilt baskets filled with roses and sweet peas, which they strewed in the path of the bride. Little Lucille Guthans acted as ring bearer.

The bride entered on the arm of her father, who gave her in marriage.

While the vows were exchanged, “Meditation” from “Thais” was rendered by Miss A. Dieck on the organ, assisted by Mr. Fred Gensler on the violin. Pastors Wiseman and Smith sang “I Will Extol Thee” during the signing of the registry.

Arches of palms were effectively placed and Easter lilies were used in profusion throughout the church.

The bride was gracefully in her exquisite gown of bridal satin, which was a creation of rose-point lace and tulle, ornamented with pearls and lilacs of the valley. Her veil of illusion, which hung to the end of her court train, was draped in cap effect with orange blossoms, which also advanced her train. She carried a large shower bouquet of bride’s roses and lilacs of the valley.

After the wedding a reception was held at the home of the bride for the bridal party and relatives. The house was handsomely decorated. The table with the wedding cake was beautifully decorated with flowers and fruits furnished by the bride’s grandmother, Mrs. Henry Thoels. The bridal couple were the recipients of numerous gifts. They left for a short tour.
In 1919, the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich was called to First English Lutheran Church to take the place of the Rev. George C. Franke. Pastor Helfrich was installed there on Wednesday, May 28, 1919.

Rev. L. J. Helfrich Takes Place of Rev. G. C. Franke

Ceremonies attending the installation of Rev. Louis J. Helfrich as assistant pastor of the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, Port and St. Claude streets, were performed Wednesday night by the pastors of the seven churches of the denomination in the city. More than 1000 persons attended.

Rev. Mr. Helfrich will preach his first sermon Sunday morning. He is to take the place of Rev. G. C. Franke, pastor for the last thirty years, who Saturday leaves for Biloxi, Miss., for a stay of several months. Rev. Mr. Franke has been in ill health since last January.

Reared at the Lutheran Bethlehem Orphan Asylum, the new pastor became an ordained minister four years ago. For the last three years he has been engaged in missionary work in and around Jennings and De Ridder. He is 27 years old.

The church is the largest of the denominational branch in the city and one of the largest of the branch in the South. More than 3000 persons form the congregation, many of whom are from outlying country sections, and from towns along the lower coast.
The Rev. George C. Franke died on February 17, 1920.

Article below from *New Orleans States*, 18 Feb. 1920, p 16, c 5
Photo on right from *Times-Picayune*, 18 Feb. 1920, p 20, c 6

REV. G. C. FRANKE BURIED WEDNESDAY

Was Pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Church Here for 29 Years

The body of the Rev. George C. Franke, for the last twenty-nine years pastor of the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, Port and St. Claude street, who died at 2:45 p. m. Tuesday, was laying in state in the church Wednesday. funeral will take place at 3 p. m. Burial will be in St. Vincent de Paul's Cemetery.

The Rev. Mr. Franke was 59 years old. In failing health for two years, he became seriously ill following a Sunday sermon two weeks ago. He steadily declined. Lutheran clergymen of the city will be the honorary pall-bearers. Members of the church council of Pastor Franke's congregation will serve as pallbearers.

Dr. Franke earned the distinction of being the first pastor of the denomination to preach in English. Formerly all services were conducted in the German language. Difference of opinion among the congregation resulted in the formation of the First English Congregation. At various times Dr. Franke served in churches in Algiers and in Closter and Haverstraw, N. J.

Surviving are his widow, three daughters, Mrs. R. W. Wismer, Mrs. John Clark and Miss Lois Franke. four sisters, Misse Emma and Minnie Franke, Mr. Marie Zundell and Mrs. Irving Post and three brothers, Edward, Phillip and Arthur Franke.

PASTOR'S DEATH MOURNED.

Funeral of Rev. G. C. Franke Largely Attended.

One of the largest funerals which has ever taken place in the Third District was that of the Rev. G. C. Franke, pastor for twenty-nine years of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wednesday evening at 3 p. m.

The body of the deceased clergyman lay in state in the Church while the Rev. G. J. Wegener and the Rev. E. W. Kuss delivered funeral orations. Hymns were sung by the Rev. O. W. congregation, and by the Rev. O. W. Wismer. Following the ceremony a solemn cortège, headed by the Lutheran clergy in their gowns, Dr. Franke's family, and the Sunday school children, proceeded to the cemetery.

In the death of Dr. Franke his church loses a pastor who has baptized, confirmed, married, and buried thousands, and who built up a large congregation. Dr. Franke was well known as an orator.

He is survived by his wife, who was Miss Katherine Thoele, three daughters, Mrs. R. Wismer, Mrs. John Clark, and Miss Lois Franke, four brothers and three sisters.
On a regular basis, First English Lutheran Church placed an advertisement in the New Orleans newspapers giving the times of the church services and Sunday School. The ad shows that in June 1920, the Rev. Helfrich was living at 2709 Royal Street.

New Orleans States, 19 June 1920, p 7, c 1

Oh Come, Let Us Worship the Lord.
FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Port and St. Claude Streets
Services Sunday Morning at 6:00 A. M.
Bring Up Your Children In the Fear of the Lord
SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:30 A. M.
REV. L. J. HELFRICH. Pastor.
Phone Hemlock 1358 Residence 2709 Royal St.
Throughout much of its history, the Evangelical Lutheran Bethlehem Orphan Asylum hosted an annual festival on the grounds of the home. In 1920, the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich, who lived as a youth in the orphanage, gave the opening address.

*New Orleans States*, 15 August 1920, p 9, c 7

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**Lutheran Asylum to Fete 39th Anniversary**

The thirty-ninth anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Bethlehem Orphan Asylum will be held at the institution, 5413 North Peters street, Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock. An address by the Rev. S. J. Helfrich of the First English church will open the program. Songs and selections will be given by the Orphan's chorus.

Refreshments and a supper will be served in the evening by the Ladies' Auxiliary and an entertainment will fill the evening. This later part of the program will begin at 7:45 o'clock.

A voluntary collection will be taken for the benefit of the home.
The future wife of the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich was Lois Franke, the third daughter of the Rev. George C. Franke. Lois Franke was a graduate of the Francis T. Nicholls Industrial School, located at 3649 Laurel Street.

Times-Picayune, 9 June 1920, p 15, c 6
In 1922, the New Orleans Item featured a confirmation class of 90 at First English Lutheran Church that received its "Second Communion."
The Rev. Louis J. Helfrich was in the right place at the right time to be a Good Samaritan, when a streetcar on St. Claude Avenue left the tracks and crashed into a car. The article explains the story and his role.

*Times-Picayune*, 20 April 1923, p 18, c 7

**CAR RUNS DOWN WOMAN.**

North Claiborne Trolley Leaves Track, Mounts Sidewalk.

Mrs. Delphine Durel, 45 years old, 1904 Canal street, was injured when a North Claiborne avenue street car left the track at St. Claude and Paris streets and ran up on the sidewalk Wednesday afternoon.

Mrs. Durel was the only passenger in the car. She was taken to Charity Hospital in an automobile by the Rev. Louis Helfrich, 1028 Port street, where it was said she was shaken up and suffering from shock. The car was in charge of Motorman Anthony Marchesa and Conductor Lloyd O'Bryan. They escaped injury.

According to the police, shells recently were put between the car tracks, and some of them got on the rails, causing the car to jump the tracks.
On another occasion, Louis Helfrich was in the wrong place at the wrong time. In 1925, he was apparently courting his future wife, Lois Franke, when the car they were in was struck by another car on Burgundy Street.

Times-Picayune, 7 July 1925, p 3, c 1-2

POLICE HUNT PAIR
WHO FLED AFTER
AUTO ACCIDENT

The police continued their search last night for two young white men who abandoned their automobile in Burgundy street after having crashed into a car occupied by the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich, pastor of the First English Evangelical Lutheran church, and Miss Lois Franke, 20 years old, 1028 Port street, shortly after midnight Sunday, according to the police.

HUNT FLEEING PAIR
Miss Franke suffered slight injuries. She was treated at her home. The Rev. Helfrich escaped injury. The two occupants of the other car are said by eye-witnesses to have abandoned their car and run away. The license plates on the automobile were issued to Leon Pretania of St. Bernard parish. Police are seeking the pair.
On Sunday, July 4, 1926, the Rev. Louis Helfrich gave a patriotic sermon entitled, “God and Our Country.”

*Times-Picayune*, 3 July 1926, p 6, c 5

**ENGLISH LUTHERAN SERVICES ANNOUNCED**

“God and Our Country” is to be theme of patriotic sermon by pastor

The Rev. L. J. Helfrich, pastor of First English Lutheran church, Port street and St. Claude avenue, will conduct a patriotic service Sunday morning. W. T. Hall will deliver an address and the pastor will preach on the subject, “God and Our Country.” The congregation, led by the junior choir under the direction of Professor Thomson, will sing “The Star-Spangled Banner,” and the orchestra of the church will render “The Stars and Stripes Forever.” Waldo Treuting will read the Declaration of Independence. The Boy Scouts will take a prominent part in the service.

The mission society will meet Monday; the adult Bible class Tuesday and the Earnest Workers on Thursday.
First English Lutheran Church was home to a variety of social activities, including plays. One of the cast of “The Dutch Detective” was Lois Franke, Pastor Franke’s youngest daughter and future wife of the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich.

*Times-Picayune*, 13 Nov. 1926, p 21, c 8

**FIRST ENGLISH LUTHERAN**

*Franke Missionary Society to Celebrate Its Anniversary*

Services will be held at the First English Lutheran church, Port and St. Claude streets, Sunday morning at 8 o’clock. The subject of the sermon will be “Lacking.” Sunday school begins at 9:30 a.m.

The Franke Missionary Society will celebrate its anniversary at 3 p.m. The Reverend M. W. Holls will deliver a short address on the synod’s mission work. Preparation for the annual fall festival is in progress. The members of the Truth Seekers’ Adult Bible class will present the play “The Dutch Detective.” Those who will take part are: George Bywater, Louis Orth, Robert Breaud, Charles Breaud, Erol Orth, Roberta Gross, Gladys Defourneaux, Allene Leftwich, Ethel Hoth, and Lois Franke. A large number of children will also appear on the stage under the direction of Mrs. Ortenbach, Olga Gross and Lois Franke.
On Wednesday, June 29, 1927, the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich and Miss Lois Franke were married at First English Lutheran Church. The newspaper announcement served as the invitation. A few days later, the newspaper reported that 2,000 people attended the wedding ceremony.

*Times-Picayune, 26 June 1927, p 2, c 6*

**HELFRICH-FRANKE--Mrs. G. C. Franke announces the approaching marriage of her daughter, LOIS CAROLINE to THE REV. L. J. HELFRICH on Wednesday, June 29, at 8:30 p. m. at First English Lutheran church, Port and St. Claude streets. Relatives and friends are invited through this medium.**

*Times-Picayune, 1 July 1927, p 16, c 2*

**REV. L. J. HELFRICH WEDS MISS FRANKE**

Lutheran Pastor Marries
Daughter of Predecessor;
2000 Attend

The Rev. L. J. Helfrich, pastor of the First English Lutheran church, and Miss Lois Franke, daughter of the late Rev. G. C. Franke, the Rev. Mr. Helfrich's predecessor, were married in Mr. Helfrich's church on Port street Thursday morning. The wedding was attended by more than 2000 friends, including practically the entire congregation of the church.

The Rev. Mr. Helfrich came to New Orleans as assistant pastor more than ten years ago, when Mr. Franke was pastor. He became pastor several years ago when Mr. Franke died, after more than twenty-five years' service. The romance began with Mr. Helfrich's association with Miss Franke's father.

The wedding ceremony was performed by the Rev. Mr. Weldig of Pascagoula, and Mr. and Mrs. Helfrich left shortly thereafter for a trip through the East. During their absence, the Rev. Mr. Willgrube will serve as pastor of the church.

Mrs. Helfrich was attended by Miss Myrtle Barrios, maid of honor, and Misses Irene Hall, Dorothy Schober, Gladys Deforneaux, Roberta Gross, Aline Leftwich and Elva Davis. Rodney Emmett was best man.
Regular announcements about church activities appeared in The Times-Picayune. This one refers to the Sunday services at First English, as well as a meeting of the Franke Mission Society.

Times-Picayune, 12 November 1927, p 12, c 5

**ENGLISH EVANGELICAL**

The Rev. L. J. Helfrich, pastor of the First English Evangelical Lutheran church, 1032 Port street, will preach Sunday morning at the 6 and 8 o'clock services on “Pleasure, Plenty and Praise.” The Sunday school service will begin at 9:30 a. m. Midweek services will be held Wednesday at 7:30 p. m. Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock the Franke Mission Society will observe its anniversary. The Rev. S. Thies, city missionary, will talk on “Missions.” The junior choir will sing at the service. Monday evening at 8 o'clock the regular meeting of the congregation will be held.
In 1935, First English Lutheran Church celebrated its 35th anniversary. Special services marked the event.

*Times-Picayune*, 15 Dec. 1928, p 20, c 1

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**CHURCH TO FETE 35TH ANNIVERSARY**

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Special Services to Be Held Sunday by Evangelical Lutherans

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The thirty-fifth anniversary of the First English Evangelical Lutheran church will be celebrated at a special service Sunday evening in the church, 1032 Port street. The church was dedicated December 17, 1893, on which day services were held for the last time in the small church which had previously served the congregation for five years. In the afternoon of the same day the church on Port street was entered and a thanksgiving and praise service was held.

Only two pastors of the Lutheran faith who were present at this service thirty-five years ago are still in the city. They are the Rev. G. J. Wegener, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran church and for many years president of the Southern District of the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran churches and the Rev. E. W. Kuss, pastor of Zion Lutheran church. Both pastors will be present at the anniversary service Sunday. At this service the Rev. Mr. Kuss will preach the sermon and the Rev. Mr. Wegener will be present as honorary guest and will also address the congregation.

At the dedication of the First Evangelical church in 1893 the Rev. G. C. Franke conducted ceremonies. He was pastor for twenty-nine years and after his death in 1920 a bronze memorial tablet was placed in the church to his memory.

The Rev. L. J. Helfrich is now pastor and will lead the regular services Sunday morning at 6 and at 8 o'clock with a sermon at both hours on “Make Ready the Way for Jesus.” George Knopp will sing at the 8 o'clock service. Advent will be observed Wednesday evening at 7:30 o'clock.

Members of all Lutheran churches in New Orleans have been invited to the anniversary celebration Sunday evening.
In the 1892 confirmation class at First English Lutheran Church there were 103 young men and women. In 1932, 37 of them renewed their vows in a special service.

*Times-Picayune*, 21 March 1932, p 19, c 2

37 IN CHURCH RENEW CONFIRMATION VOWS

Group Forms Part of English Lutheran Class of 1892

Thirty-seven members of a class of 103 persons who were confirmed in the First English Evangelical Lutheran church, 1028 Port street, shortly after its dedication 40 years ago, renewed their vows Sunday night at the church.

Fourteen men and 23 women of the class of 1892, who were confirmed by the late Rev. G. C. Franke, appeared to renew their confirmation vows before the Rev. L. J. Helfrich. The rest of the 103 are either dead, have moved out of the parish, or were unable to appear.

The same music which was played during the confirmation ceremonies of 1892 was played again Sunday night, with David Rodriguez at the organ. Mr. Rodriguez also rendered several vocal solos. Mrs. Nicholas Gross and Miss Sophie Schmidt were in charge of the program.
For many years, the congregations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in New Orleans held a joint Reformation Service. In 1932, it was held at First English Lutheran Church and the Rev. Louis J. Helfrich presided.

*Times-Picayune, 29 Oct. 1932, p 7, c 1-2*
Louis Helfrich continued to serve as pastor of First English Lutheran Church into the 1930s. The article below from *The Times-Picayune* of October 7, 1933, describes a Rally Day program.

*Times-Picayune, 7 Oct 1933, p 7, c3-4*

**SPECIAL PROGRAM SET FOR SUNDAY**

First Evangelical Lutheran Sunday School to Celebrate

Members of the Sunday school of the First English Evangelical Lutheran church will observe their annual Rally Day Sunday at 9:30 a.m., with a special program to be held at the church, 1025 Port street.

The program will open with the Rev. L. J. Helfrich, pastor, introducing members of the executive department. Graduates of the teachers' training class will be presented diplomas by R. M. Haas, president of the congregation and Sunday school executive for the past 20 years. Rally Day boxes will be received at the door of the church as the children march in, the pastor announced.

Services at the First English church Sunday morning will be held at 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. The Rev. Mr. Helfrich will preach at both services on "One God and Father of All."

The following graduates will be admitted as teachers at the conclusion of the rally: Misses Lorraine Anderson, Melva Artignes, Althea Keppler, Henrietta Mallu, Ursula Rippoli and Ethel Schwab and Messrs. Louis Felson and Elmore Orth.
An obituary for the Rev. Louis Jacob Helfrich appeared in The Times-Picayune of November 19, 1940:

*Times-Picayune, 19 November 1940, p 2, c 8*

HELFRICH—Of No. 12 St. Claude Court, on Monday, November 18, 1940, at 2 o'clock p. m., THE REV. LOUIS JACOB HELFRICH, beloved husband of Lois Franke, father of Lois Lyn and George Franke Helfrich, brother of Mrs. J. Villere. Mrs. E. Hof, Mrs. J. White and Emile Helfrich, aged 48 years, a native of New Orleans, La.

Relatives and friends of the family, also the officers and members of First English Evangelical Lutheran Congregation and all auxiliary bodies, Bethlehem Orphan Asylum, its board of directors and Ladies' Auxiliary, and also all Lutheran pastors and congregations, are most respectfully invited to attend the funeral from First English Evangelical Lutheran church at 4 o'clock p. m. Tuesday, November 19, 1940. At 2:30 o'clock this afternoon his body will be taken to church from the mortuary of Jacob Schoen & Son, 527 Elysian Fields avenue to lie in state until funeral time.

Interment in St. Vincent de Paul cemetery.

Houston, Tex., papers please copy.

NDH/PIH 21 March 2011