

Some of the St. Marcus Lutheran School Principals

Johannes B. Denninger*

1846 Born in Berlin, Germany, on January 18

1862 Emigrates to America; lives in Addison Twp, Washington Co., Wis.

1865-1868 NWU in Watertown. Must not have graduated officially, because the first B.A.s were not conferred until 1872.

1868-69 Serves in Addison Twp. in **Lomira & Theresa**

1869-1873 German Ev. Lutheran School, 49 8th St. **Oshkosh** (WELS).

Marries Emma Lindenstruth of Oshkosh, 4/23/1872. Two sons: Paul, Otto
Ten years later that congregation was torn in two by the Election Controversy. The majority rejected Pastor Dowidat and left the WELS with the church property for the Ohio Synod. It is known as Peace Lutheran today and is part of the ELCA. The minority stayed with Pastor Dowidat and they founded a new church, taking the name of the Scriptural doctrine at the heart of the controversy, "Grace." Their official ("re-") birth year is 1884. Rev. Dowidat served them for the rest of his ministry

1/1/1874 to 6/1875 **St. John's** Branch School, Milwaukee; one-room schoolhouse on Short St.

6/1875-9/1875 When **St. Marcus** Church was founded in June of 1875, he was called by the new group and pledged a salary of \$50 a month. But he must have known that his time would be short, since the fledgling group could not possibly afford two called workers. He served as St. Marcus' first congregational secretary, and the earliest minutes are in his hand. During that adventurous and courageous four-month stretch Teacher Denninger would lead worship on Sunday mornings, reading a sermon, and scheduling other pastors from the area who would come to lead worship on Sunday afternoons.

Knowing that St. Marcus planned to call a pastor who would teach as well, he could in good conscience take a call to Watertown in September. Pastor Westenberger arrived in October..

1875-1884 **St. Mark's, Watertown**

1880 Principal of the "German Lutheran School" (St. Mark's). Residence: Jones St., between 6-8th. Daughter Dora born in 1880. Also had a son Otto.

1884 Dies on March 15 at the age of 38

1887 Watertown City Directory lists Emma as a widow, living with son Paul on Main St.

From 1930-1949 his grandson Walter Denninger served on the St. Marcus faculty.

*St. Mark's Watertown records his name with the middle initial "M." It is possible that Mr. Denninger had two middle names, as was the custom in those days. But he signed his St. Marcus minutes "J.B. Denninger."

Rudolph W.E. Fritzke

1849 b. on October 7 in Ruetzenragen, Prussia; grew up in Schiefelbein, near Stettin

1866 or 1867 Emigrates to America. Took a job on a farm near Watertown, Wis. to learn English and save up money for further education.

1870-1872 Teachers' Seminary, Addison, IL (LCMS predecessor to Concordia River Forest)

1872-1883 **St. Peter's** Lutheran School in Fond du Lac.

1874 Marries Emma Leeseberg from DuPage Co., Ill. b.1853. She came from a huge family—eleven siblings.



Children: three girls and one boy, Rudolph, Jr, who was born in 1880

Daughter Rose died one week after her wedding

1883-1900 **St. Marcus** Lutheran School

Brought stability and leadership to St. Marcus School after early years of constant turnover of staff

Residence: 4th & Meinecke, then 821 Island Ave. (2329 N. Palmer St.)

Was St. Marcus' organist; his boys would pump the Schuelke organ

Resigned from ministry "because of impaired health"

1900-1902 Became a coal and wood dealer with former student A. Froemming

1902 Elected to Wisconsin State Assembly as a Democrat from the 13th District. That year there were 75 Republicans and 25 Democrats.

1907-1927 Truant officer for MPS

c.1912 RWEF is still very active at St. Marcus, serving as a trustee and council secretary. He was chosen for the Building Committee for the new church. Emma died in 1929 and Rudolph on October 17, 1931.

Kole Knueppel

- 1970 Born. Son of Paul and Barbara Knueppel
- 1988 Graduated from Winnebago Lutheran Academy
- 1993 Graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran College with an education major
Began graduate studies at UWM
worked at Messmer High School with Brother Bob Smith
- 1997 Master's degree from UWM. Began doctoral studies
Worked at Greendale High School for one year
Worked at Niles North High School, Illinois, as an administrator
- 2001-2004 Principal at St. Marcus Lutheran School
- 2004-2008 Superintendent of Hope High School
- 2008-2010 Co-founded the Center for Urban Teaching, based at WLC
- 2010-2015 Worked for "Schools that Can—Milwaukee" with Abby Ramirez
- 2015-2021 Director of the Center for Transformation of Educational Leadership at Notre Dame University
- 2021- Executive Director, St. Marcus Ministries

Kole is married to Ana; they have two children, Sophia and Atticus.

Kole and his brothers were legendary in winning 3-on-3 basketball tournaments all over the country. He is also certified as an NCAA college football referee, working primarily in Big Ten games

Henry M. Tyson

- Born in England
- B.A. in Slavic Studies, Northwestern University, Evanston
- M.A. in secondary education and social studies from DePaul, Chicago
- Taught at Joan Arai Middle School in Chicago
- Taught at Niles North H. S.
- 2002-present St. Marcus, first as vice-principal, then as principal, then superintendent
- 2010 Co-founded "Schools that Can Milwaukee" with Kole Knueppel and Abby Ramirez Andrietsch, who later became the administrator of St. Augustine Prep.
- Formed a campaign cabinet to connect outside donors.
- 20?? Married to Laura Volpe
- Two children: Dre and Laila

Henry's warmth, charm, and romantic British accent made him a favorite in the urban educational scene. Thousands of people came through the school over the years to see how St. Marcus could achieve such significant results. He also became a talented fundraiser.



