

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

ALMONT
LUTHERAN CHURCH



ALMONT, NORTH DAKOTA

1915

1965

PASTOR'S GREETING

To the glory of God, and in honor of all, from the charter members to the present time who have labored to fulfill His commands, this Fiftieth Anniversary Booklet of Almont United Lutheran Church is dedicated.

On this date, Sunday, June 27, 1965, we as a congregation celebrate the Anniversary with former Pastors taking part: Rev. Norbert Jolivette giving the morning sermon and Rev. Carl G. Nelson speaking at the afternoon program, thankful for the blessings of God in the past, we look forward with hope, trusting in God's mercy and grace and guidance to continue the building up of His Kingdom among us.

Other foundation can no one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. — 1 Cor. 3:11.



Pastor and Mrs. O. L. Olsrud

PRESENT CHURCH OFFICERS

Secretary — Mrs. Hazel Hoovestal

Treasurer — Mr. Roman Peterson

Board of Deacons — Ole Feland, Sig Peterson, Rudy Feland

Board of Trustees — Sam Thiel, Trygve Feland, Bob Feland,
Burton Hoovestal, and William Bethke

Board of Christian Education — Sig Peterson, Mrs. Grace
Nelson, and Mrs. Peter Thorson

Organist — Mrs. Sig Peterson — *Assistant* - Lynn Peterson

HISTORY OF ALMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH

Immigrants arriving in this area in the early 1880's, made Sims their community center and organized the Sims Skandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1884. Although Almont was established in 1906, the Lutherans continued to worship in Sims and with the Heart River Scandinavian Lutheran Congregation. The need for a Lutheran Church in Almont was realized in 1915 when a group of interested citizens met in the Town Hall, with the Rev. Larson, of Taylor, and organized the Almont United Lutheran Church. Sims and Almont congregations belong to one parish and are served by the same pastor.

Records previous to 1924 have been lost, but we believe that O. C. Ellingson, E. E. Templeton, C. A. Knutson, O. K. Overgard, J. Jens Nelson, Jonathan Pederson, Mrs. O. Malone, T. A. Barstads', and J. R. Sherwoods'

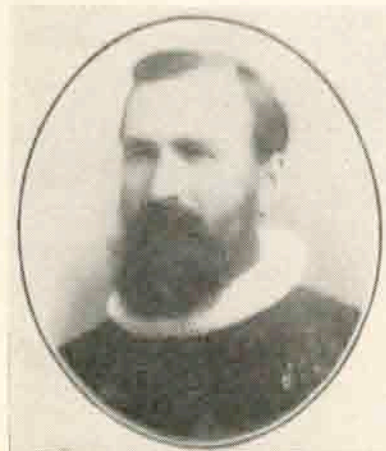


Rev. L. D. Dordal

were among those present at the first meeting. In 1924 the congregation was re-organized and the following served as officers: Rev. J. Thornell, president; C. A. Knutson, Secretary; J. J. Bredvold, Treasurer; Ervin Kruger, Harry Jacobson, O. K. Overgard, Rudolph Olson and Otto Feland as trustees.

The former Almont School was purchased in 1917, moved to the south end of Main Street, renovated and served as a church building for nearly 40 years. Dedication services were held July 22, 1919, with Rev. Ulrich, English Lutheran Church, New Salem, preaching the sermon.

Finances are important to all organizations and the church is no exception. It is noted that dur-



Rev. T. H. Larson



Rev. J. Thornell

ing lean years the highest amount given by a single contributor was \$12.00 per year and the pastor's salary was \$300.00.

The first confirmation class met at the school and were confirmed at the Town Hall in 1917, receiving communion in Sims. Members of the class were Ragnild and Ole Feland, Norman Hansen, Esther and Hilmer Erlandson.

The first marriage service held in the building was that of Miss Bessie Williams to Mr. Alvin C. Wegeman in 1926.

The Ladies Aid, Willing Workers, Sunday School and Luther League were organized within a few years. More recent auxiliaries are the Mission Circle and Brotherhood.

On record as being the first organist is Mrs. Carl Hill. Mrs.

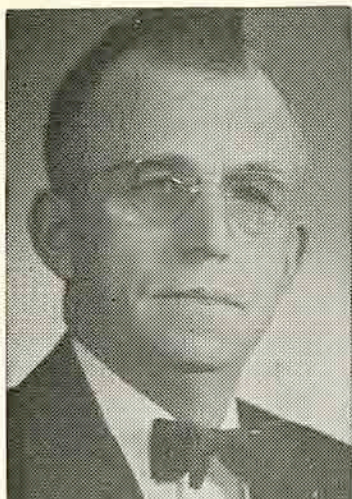


Picture of Old Church at Almont

N. E. Becklund organized the first choir and served as organist for many years. A joint Sims-Almont Choir, under the direction of Mrs. Robert Atkinson provided special music for both congregations for several years. A Junior Choir group helped stimu-

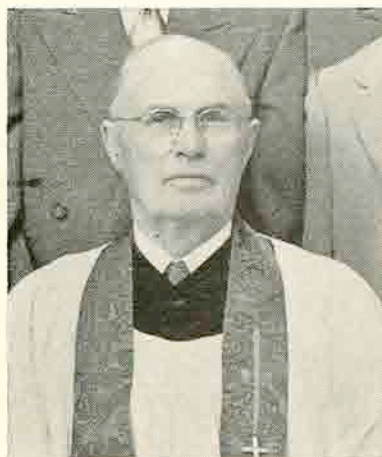


Rev. C. G. Nelson



Rev. Reider Haakenson

late the youngsters interest in singing and they are the present Youth Choir, under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Sig Peterson. Since 1929 a parish male quartette or chorus has willingly provided music for many special occasions.



Rev. C. J. Fylling

It has been an inspiration to all to have three members serve as foreign missionaries. Eileen Becklund Friberg was in Africa; Ardella Reetz Siebert in Pakistan and Laura Reetz Erickson in Iraq. A Bible Study group met each week for three years during Ardella's term in Pakistan and assisted with her support.



Rev. C. O. Brecto

On Pentecost Sunday, 1955, the congregation voted to erect a new church building. The members are grateful to Mr. E. W. Hyde, founder of Almont, for donating the lots of the church site. Finance committee members were Sig Peterson, Art Feland and Nels Becklund. The Building Committee members were Everett Olson, Axel Hoovestol, Roman Peterson, Ole Feland, Norman Hanson and Harvey Thorson. Building Fund



The Church and New Parsonage



Rev. Norbert Jolivette

cation services were held in the present building. Rev. N. L. Jolivette was the pastor and Dr. L. E. Tallakson, N. D. Dist-President delivered the dedication address. Improvements of the building furnishings and yard beautification are constantly being made through gifts and memorials.

A Harvest Festival Dinner and Program have become an annual event. During a five week period each winter, members of the parish divide into groups and meet in homes for Bible Study and fellowship.

Treasurer was Robert Atkinson. A dream became a reality on September 9, 1956, when dedi-



1965 ALMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH YOUTH CHOIR



THE CONGREGATION — MAY, 1965

1961 MEN'S CHORUS



Harold Foley, Joel Johnson, Mrs. Sig Peterson, accompanist, Clarence Jacobson, Roman Peterson, Duane Johnson, Sig Peterson, Margido Willman.

The available records show the approximate statistics: Baptisms, 235; confirmed, 258; marriages, 47; and burials, 79. There are now 149 confirmed members, 200 baptized members.

Pastors that have served the parish are the Reverends L. D. Dorhal, H. D. Halvorson, T. H. Larson, J. Thornell, I. O. Monson, L. Foss, C. G. Nelson, R. P. Haakanson, C. O. Breto, C. J. Fylling, N. Jolivette and presently O. L. Olrud.

Many challenges have been presented during the past fifty years and as each generation faces its responsibilities we ask only for divine guidance to carry on faithfully.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Almont Lutheran Sunday School was organized in 1926 by Pastor Thornell. Mrs. Jonathan Pederson was the first Superintendent. Within a few months it had a membership of 90 in-

cluding the Bible Class. The present membership is 65. Besides being self supporting, the Sunday School also helped support Ardella Reetz who was a missionary in Pakistan, Dr. R. Warren Pierson, a medical missionary in Ethiopia, Sunday School at Home for children who



Mrs. Grace Nelson, Ardella Reetz, Mrs. Nels Becklund, and Mrs. Earl (Laura) Erickson, taken in 1951 at the 25th Anniversary of the Sunday School. Mrs. Becklund and Mrs. Nelson were honored for their 25 years of service in Sunday School work, taken together with our two missionaries.



Eileen Friberg

could not attend regular Sunday School, and also financed a large share of the cost of Vacation Bible School which is held one week each summer.

Those having served as Superintendent are: Mrs. N. E. Becklund, Mrs. Jonathan Pederson, Mrs. Grace Nelson, Mrs. C. G. Nelson, Mrs. Caroline Frey Jordede, Raynold Olson, Mrs. William Knutson, Mrs. Axel Hoovestal, and the present Superintendent, Mrs. Roman Peterson.

HISTORY OF THE ALMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

The Ladies Aid of the Almont United Lutheran Church was first organized at the home of Mrs. Jens Nelson in 1916.

The first officers elected to direct the activities of the newly organized aid were: Mrs. Gundvaldson, Pres., Mrs. Jens Nelson, V. Pres., Mrs. O. Malone, Sec'y.

Other early members were Mmes. Ben Bird, Ole Ellingson, Nels Jacobson, Andrew Knutson, George Ims, Olaf Olson, C. A. Knutson, N. E. Becklund, G. H. Anderson, L. C. Nelson, Albert Aanstad, and J. R. Sherwood.

However, before the Almont Aid was organized there were very few of the women in the Almont vicinity who belonged to any Ladies Aid. Mrs. Nels Jacobson organized a Ladies Aid among the ladies of the Heart River area known as the Heart River Ladies Aid. Most of these ladies later joined the Almont Ladies Aid. During the first years that the congregation was organized there was a group of girls

SUNDAY SCHOOL — 1965



known as the Willing Workers. This group bought the bell for the church with the help of the Ladies Aid.

Membership has varied over the years, from 24 in 1926 to 13 in 1936 and now at the present time, to include all of the confirmed women members of the congregation.

After the Womens Missionary Federation was organized, the Almont Aid joined it in 1934 and worked according to its plans and programs, namely the monthly Bible studies and support of the missions, charity, and education departments of the church synod. The members took turns giving the Bible and department studies each month.

Since the Merger of the church in 1960, the Ladies Aid became known as the Almont American Lutheran Church Women beginning in January 1961, and continues to conduct its meeting according to a program set up by the head office in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Aid members were hosts to the W.M.F. Circuit Convention in 1948, and co-hosts with the Curlew Aid in 1957, and again in 1959, when one of our members, Mrs. Sig Peterson was Circuit President.

Life membership pins were presented to the seven oldest members in 1951, and In Memoriams were given at various times in memory of the following members: Mmes. Mary Nelson, Inger Knutson, O. Malone, Nels Jacobson, and Edwin Bond. There are only two of the charter members who are still active

members in the Aid, Mrs. L. C. (Grace) Nelson and Mrs. T. A. (Albert Aanstad) Barstad.

The Aid Library was started in 1955 and books have been added from time to time. The Nels Becklund Memorial books given in 1964 are much appreciated.

At one time they adopted an Indian girl and kept her in clothing for a period of time. They helped to support Ardella Reetz, a missionary, from our congregation, who worked in Pakistan, by sending food and clothing boxes regularly.

They sponsor a clothing drive each fall for Lutheran World Action and made a layette for the House of Mercy.

They helped to furnish a room at St. Luke's Home in Dickinson, N. D.

They contributed to the Pastor's salary in the early years and bought some of the church furnishings, the carpeting and kitchen equipment for the churches. The Aid bought material and helped make confirmation gowns to be used by the confirmation classes each year. They also helped furnish material and make the choir gowns.

Up until about 1956, in the fall of each year, the Ladies Aid held a fancy work sale and supper to which the public was invited. This was to help raise funds for the Aid.

In 1927 a food sale was held to raise money for the Red Cross Aid to flood victims in the South.

On May 20, 1937, the Ladies Aid sponsored a reception in honor of the youth and adult

confirmation class and their families. There were 21 members in the class, the largest class to be confirmed in the Almont Church.

In 1946 the Almont, Curlew, and Sims Aids gave a homecoming party for the returned servicemen at the Sims church.

In 1947 we sponsored a reception for Dr. and Mrs. Bertil Friberg (Eileen Becklund) at the school auditorium. They were missionaries home on furlough from Africa. The other Aids also took part. A pressure cooker was given to them as a gift. In 1952 we held an open house for Ardella Reetz as she was soon leaving for Pakistan. Refreshments were served by the Aid.

The Almont and Curlew Aids have held receptions in honor of the 50th wedding anniversaries for Mr. and Mrs. Tobias Olson

in 1949, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Kilen in 1955; also the 60th anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Kilen in 1965.

Since 1953 the Aid has held a Mother-Daughter banquet or tea each year. In 1958 the Almont and Curlew Aids prepared and served the dinner at the Father-Son banquet sponsored by the Parish Brotherhood.

In 1955 we were hostesses to the Sims and Curlew Aids and other members of the congregation at our W. M. F. Rally Day October 21. In 1956, on Sept. 9, the Aid served the noon meal at the dedication services for the new church. The Curlew Aid served cake and coffee in the afternoon. Each year the aid serves the Fellowship or Harvest Festival dinner.

At our December meeting each year we pack cheer boxes of



Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Kilen on their 60th Wedding Anniversary

goodies to be given to elderly people, bachelors, and shut-ins.

The Lord has richly blessed us in our efforts to do His will and work thus far, and may He continue to bless us and give us an opportunity to share in His work in the future.

LUTHER LEAGUE HISTORY

The Young People's Society, as it was then called, was organized in 1926, when Pastor Thornell was serving the congregation. The purpose was to give the young people an opportunity to express themselves in word and song; and thus develop their Christian lives. They had as a project the gathering of funds for purchasing a piano for the church.

The name was later changed to "Luther League" and prepared topics were brought into use. Funds were sent in to the League

headquarters to help support missionary projects. A Circuit Luther League Convention was held in Almont in 1927. The Ladies Aid served a free dinner to all.

In 1930 the Badlands Bible Camp was organized and a group of Almont Leaguers, with their advisor attended, a custom which was continued until the Washburn camp was organized. More recently the Garrison camp was organized which continues to leave wonderful memories in the lives of many.

In 1930 the Luther League Reading Project was established. The Pocket Testament movement was also promoted among the Leaguers. They also decided to study the doctrines of the Lutheran Church.

About 1938 the League in Almont, which had hitherto accepted members of all ages, be-



INTERIOR OF ALMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH

came strictly a youth organization. In November, 1939, the Leaguers attended the Rally at Bismarck with the largest delegation present from one vicinity.

In 1940 the League sponsored taking subscriptions to the Lutheran Herald, now called the Lutheran Standard and have continued this practice.

For many years the League has had a Watch Service on New Year's Eve, a time spent in social activities and beginning the New Year in song and prayer. At the present time mission support is carried on through the YES (Youth Education in Stewardship) program.

A special event in the lives of many Leaguers is the International Luther League Convention. The Almont League helped in sending Marlene Torgerson to Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1947, Ernest Feland to Miami, Florida in 1961 and Norma Kilen to De-

troit, Michigan in 1964.

The future of the young people has been and always will be in the hands of God. Through Communion and fellowship with Christ, young people can find more meaning in their lives. May God's blessing be upon the Luther League of Almont and the world over and may it grow in Christ.

MISSION CIRCLE

The Lutheran Mission Circle was organized in February 1956 by the Almont WMF women with the assistance of the pastor's wife, Mrs. N. L. Jolivette. Ten ladies were present at the first meeting. Special interest was taken in the work of two local young women who were then on the Mission field, Mrs. Earl Erickson (Laura Reetz) in Iraq and her sister Miss Ardella Reetz in Pakistan.

The meetings are held the last

MISSION CIRCLE



From left to right: Mmes. Andrew Kilen, O. L. Olsrud, Joe Olson, Thorvald Barstad, Sig Peterson, Axel Hoovestad, Ole Feland, Norman Hansen, and Peter Thorson. (Not pictured: Mmes. Grace Nelson, Joe Hoovestad, Nels Seim, Carl Fallgren, Ralph Dawson, and Charley Hoegar.)

Friday afternoon of each month. The time is usually spent sewing layettes, rolling bandages, and making quilts. After a short devotional period an offering is taken and a light lunch is served. Many articles have been made and sent to the various mission fields, Lutheran World Relief, and for local needs. Many cash gifts have also been given.

In 1958 the Mission Circle had a bridal shower for our returned missionary, Miss Ardella Reetz, who married Robert Siebert.

In 1959 the ladies sewed for the Dorcas Project, making garments for Israel. In 1963 they had a telephone installed in the church.

And the King answered them, *"Truly, I say unto you, as you did it to one of the least of these, my brethren you did it to me."*

Matt. 25:40.

SIMS-ALMONT BROTHERHOOD

The Sims-Almont Brotherhood was organized in 1953 while Rev. Jolivette was pastor. Their chief project has been to help our young people attend Bible Camp, Luther League Leadership School, and other youth activities. Funds have been raised by sponsoring a kumpon supper each spring.

SIMS-ALMONT PARISH PARSONAGE

Being Dedicated Today

Memorials for a new Parsonage Building Fund started in 1962. Joint business meetings of the two congregations on July 19 and September 6, 1964, authorized the Building Committee to proceed with construction. Clyde

Hoovestall of Bismarck donated the excavation for the basement on September 19, 1964. Men of the parish donated labor for erection of the building. Tony Hellman was employed to complete the finishing work. Women of the Parish did the painting. Boy Scouts helped prepare the grounds. Evergreens in front are Memorials for Tenius Ramsland, Charles Reeffer, and Julius Bredvold.

On the Building Committee: from Sims, Joel Johnson, Chairman, Mrs. Clarence Jacobson, and Oliver Anderson later replaced by Willard Johnson. From Almont: Mrs. Roman Peterson, Secretary; Everett Olson and Marshall Feland.

The Finance Committee from Almont: Sig Peterson, Chairman, and Harvey Thorson; from Sims: Mrs. Thorvald Larson, secretary, and Mrs. Clarence Jacobson. Morris Christianson is treasurer of the Building Fund.

A sincere "Thank You" to all who have helped in so many ways.

LIST OF CONFIRMANDS

1917

Hilmer Erlandson
Ragnild Feland
Ole Feland
Esther Erlandson
Norman Hansen

1921

Trygve Feland
1922
Evelyn Erlandson
Evelyn Bateman
Ida E. Olson
Viola Knutson
Ragna Olson

Helen Olson
Norma Erlandson
Donald Peterson
J. Cuno Peterson
Louis Elvik
Carl Feland
Ingeborg Nyquist
Mimi Nyquist
Carl Thor
Leo Hendrickson

1924

Clara Hoeger
Raymond Bateman
Clarence Thor
Verna Williams
Webster Bateman

1925

Christopher Overgaard
Olga Hoeger
Walter Bateman

1926

Lucille Anderson
Mabel Feland
Rudy Feland
Tom Olson
Lois Williams
Lillian Knutson
Myron Knutson
Louise Hoeger
Clarence Lein
Fred Overgaard

1927

Louise Aanstad
E. Viola Olson
Sylvia Ims
Minnie Fulton
Helene Thor
Thomas Stiler
Sophie Stiler

1928

Verna Anderson
Vivian Bateman
Bernice Ims
Walter Reichel

1929

Ruth Pederson
Dagmar Pederson

Olga Halvorson
Gladys Overgaard
Ruth Bergstrom
Richard Feland
Howard Knutson

1931

Martin Kilen
Johan Kilen
Lillian Pederson
Charlotte Feland
Luella Lotspiech

1932

Norman Barstad
Karine Aanstad
Eleanor Pederson
Lois Eileen Becklund
Alice Barstad
Laura Reetz
B. Patricia Bergstrom
Ida B. Olson

1933

Mrs. Beatrice Becklund
Mrs. Estella Weibke
Mrs. Evelyn Butler
Vernon Knutson
Evelyn Ringham
Alma Olson
Emma Johnson
Clifford Anderson
Mavis Kilen

1934

Gudrum Kilen
Norman Kilen
Charlie Anderson
Alton C. Bergstrom
Warren Becklund

1935

Robert Feland
Mildred Pederson
Carol Knutson

1936

Curtis Fallgren
Reynold Olson
Elda Reetz

1937

Gayle Monson
Lillian Monson

Mrs. Hazel Hoovestol
Mrs. Huldah Olson
Anna Weibke
Ernest Monson
William Westman
Emma Pearson
Mrs. Regina Anderson
T. Arnold Barstad
Edith M. Allen
Burton Nelson
W. Edwin Bond
Mrs. Palmer Feland
LeRoy Olson
Grace Anderson
Steven Weibke
Mrs. Frances Kilen
Kathleen Fallgren
Mrs. Ermine Bond

1940

Esther Schwemer
Burton Hoovestol
W. Richard Bond
Arleen Olson
Noreen Olson

1941

Leon Olson
Rose Fallgren
June Pederson
Thelma Barstad
Dorothy Knutson
Delbert Reetz

1942

Frances Nelson
Alta Barstad
Lois Olson
Bernard Ringham
Burton Fallgren
Glenn Hoovestol
E. Thornton Becklund

1944

Everett Olson

1945

Roger Bond
Marian Bond
Audrey Nelson
Marlys Knutson
Clyde Hoovestol

Nathalie Hansen
Ronald Skjolsvik
Muriel Skjolsvik

1946

Ruby Barstad
Roger Becklund
Marold Halvorson
Howard Hoovestol
Donna Knutson
Merrill Olson
Gavis Ringham

1947

Obert Barstad
Virginia Bond
Gloria Hansen
Audrey Ritz
Carol Skjolsvik
Robert Timpe
Mrs. Luella M. Harper

1948

Mrs. Sig Peterson

1949

Ardys Zempel
D'Arlen Halvorson

1951

Marvelle Schwemer
Corna Feland
Ann M. Stegmier
LaVonne Ritz
Ralph Feland
Allan Fallgren
LeRoy Ritz

Iona Hoovestol
Romona Zempel
Darell Hoovestol
Marshall Feland

1953

Janet Feland
Janice Ritz
Marvin Ritz
Donald Knutson
Jerry Nauke
Eugene Harper

1955

Lloyd Mortenson
Clifford Mortenson
Evelyn Mortenson

Irene Mortenson
Mrs. Trygve Feland
Mrs. Ole Feland
Idar Handegard
Duane Hoovestol
Dorothy Hoovestol
Laurel Harper
Arlene Maichel
Wallace Anderson
Mrs. Wendell Dawson
Donald McDowall
Mrs. D. McDowall
Chester Harper
Mrs. C. Harper

1956

Beverly Brinkman
Roger Hoovestol
Tharen Kilen
Thornton Kilen
Gary McDowall
Lee Harper

1958

Mrs. Rueben Olson
Lester Hogan
Karla Anderson
Ernest Feland
Mary L. Handegard
Forrest Rosendahl
Dwayne Thiel

1959

Einar Olson
Robert Hogan
Mrs. R. Hogan
Ardys Brinkman
Judith Gustafson
Norma Kilen
Marilyn Olson
A. Eugene Peterson
Carlyle Reeff
Myron Rosendahl

1960

Nancy Gustafson
Doris Feland
Carol Kilen
Rodney Peterson
Harvey Hogan
Deane Feland

Jerome Willman
Jerome Olson

1961

Royal Handegard
Stuart Olson
Gary Knutson
Lester Feland
Linda Smith
Ginger Gustafson

1962

Leonard Hunter
Ralph Dawson
Mrs. R. Dawson
Mrs. Joe Hoovestol
Candace Gustafson
Larry Hoovestol
Bruce Olson
Edith Smith
Orletta Kilen

1963

J. Patricia Anderson
J. Penelope Anderson
Patricia Feland
Carol Feland
Larry Handegard
Lynn Peterson
Douglas Thorson
Kerry Wanstrom
Aaron Zempel
William Bethke
Mrs. W. Bethke
Mrs. Gordon Anderson

1964

Mrs. Gordon Fairchild
Mrs. Marshall Feland
Mrs. Art Feland

1965

Martin Wohlman
Mrs. M. Wohlman
Doreen Willman
Peggy Thorson
Amy Kilen
Bruce Peterson
Charles Olson
Joel Olson
Larry Smith
Elliot Olson

