Hope for All Generations: Lutheran Social Service of Iowa—125 Years, 1870-1995

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REVIEWED BY BEVERLY STADUM, ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

Needs of children—orphaned and poor—touched nineteenth-century Iowa Lutherans and resulted in homes and asylums that evolved over time into Lutheran Social Service of Iowa. Hope for All Generations begins by describing pioneer staffs who provided residential care on thin budgets enabled by congregational and synodic support. By the 1930s, shifts in government policies supporting families and an antiinstitutional philosophy among national child welfare leaders encouraged reorganization as the intersynodic Lutheran Welfare Society of Iowa. Statewide branch offices provided case work, child placement, and other services in cooperation with public agencies. Church mergers in the 1960s led to a renaming as Lutheran Social Service (LSS). Changing social needs and the use of various funding sources have made LSS a multiservice agency with a demographically diverse clientele.

As LSS history is interwoven with church politics in this volume, non-Lutheran readers may become confused by synodic differences and church body names; an organizational chart would have been useful. The story also could have been clarified by a more chronological organization and a comparison of developments in Iowa with those in neighboring states. What the book does well is celebrate the hard work of individuals, often named. The last chapters describing LSS’s current work are the best, making an eloquent statement about the need for a “many-faceted response” in today’s world (116).


REVIEWED BY ALAN M. SCHRODER, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESS

This is a well-researched, reasonably objective, and very readable history of the State Historical Society of Missouri at Columbia (SHSM). The society was established in 1898 under the impetus of Missouri’s newspaper publishers, who wanted a central depository for their back issues. From 1901 to 1915 the society’s secretary, Francis Sampson, expanded the collections to include books, pamphlets, and to a lesser extent manuscripts on Missouri history and western Americana. During his long tenure from 1915 to 1960, Floyd C. Shoemaker employed his