

## JENNY LIND CHAPEL - NIS 2020 ASSEMBLY REPORT

As a ministry of the Northern Illinois Synod (NIS), the Jenny Lind Chapel (JLC), located in Andover, IL, is a landmark of pioneer faith, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is the first church of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America, a predecessor of the ELCA. It is also the founding site of the Norwegian–Danish Augustana Synod. It is named after the “Swedish Nightingale,” Jenny Lind, who gave a sizeable contribution toward the cost of construction of the Chapel.

When Pastor Lars Paul Esbjörn, accompanied by his family and a small group of Swedish immigrants, arrived in Andover in 1849, they almost immediately organized a congregation. They needed a place to worship; however, it took three years and untold sacrifice to complete the building in 1854. There is no steeple on the church because the lumber had to be used for coffins for those stricken in a cholera epidemic.

A variety of worship services are held at the JLC, including a Founders Day service, vespers during the summer months, a Swedish service, and several Christmas events and services. Close ties with Augustana College are evident in many of these services. Following his ministry in Andover, Pastor Esbjörn, became the first president of Augustana College and Theological Seminary, which was first located in Chicago.

Several special services and events planned for this year had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Since this is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Jenny Lind, a spring and fall service had been planned to celebrate this special anniversary. The celebration of Andover’s 185<sup>th</sup> anniversary was postponed this summer until June of next year. The JLC Board had planned to have a float in the parade, and a special event at the Chapel featuring “Jenny Lind.” Depending on the region’s re-opening status, there may be vespers held the last Sunday in July and the last Sunday in August.

The September 27 service originally was being planned by a pastor and members of his parish in Sweden. They have had to cancel their trip to the United States. Hopefully, they will be able to reschedule coming next year.

Several NIS members serve on the JLC Operating and Endowment Committees. These persons are responsible for the maintenance of the building and cemetery, arranging worship services, and the management of funds. Visit [jennylindchapel.org](http://jennylindchapel.org) for details about the ministry of the JLC and listing of services and events.