

The Gamm Story



Richard Gamm, 1935

Mr. Richard and Mrs. Lydia Gamm were heirs of a family active in the establishment and growth of Northwestern College (the first WELS synod college and seminary in Watertown; now the site of Luther Preparatory School) and St. Marcus Lutheran Church and School.

Mr. Richard Gamm's family were German immigrants who arrived in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1852. His family was active in the establishment and growth of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Watertown (1854), Northwestern College (1865) and the Wisconsin Synod (1850).

Richard's grandparents arrived in Milwaukee in 1882 and built a large duplex on 2nd and Meinecke, blocks from St. Marcus. They joined St. Marcus Church, which was founded by German immigrants in 1875.

Richard was an only child, whose parents and aunts were lifelong St. Marcus church members.

Four of those aunts (Elizabeth, Emma, Dorothea and Leonore) lived extraordinary lives of service and around St. Marcus were known as the "Gamm Girls."

Dorothea began St. Marcus School's kindergarten program in 1911 and taught her entire career at St. Marcus. Her sister, Leonore, was later brought on to run the kindergarten program, while Dorothea worked in the primary grades.

Richard was baptized at St. Marcus on September 23, 1917, and later graduated and was confirmed as a member in 1931. He attended the Lutheran High School and graduated in 1935. He attended college for two years and went on to work at a DuPont spinoff, the Hercules Powder Company that provided gunpowder and explosives for the military.

In 1941, at the age of 24, he enlisted in the Army. He became a warrant officer and later received the Bronze Star for heroic and meritorious achievement and service. He was honorably discharged in 1946 and went back to work at Hercules.

In 1947, he was married at Zion Lutheran Church to Lydia Daubert. They started their lives together, living in the "Gamm" duplex on 2nd street and later moved to Fox Point, Milwaukee's Eastside, and then Shorewood.

In 1952, Richard and some friends founded the Milport Chemical Company located on Oregon Street, which later relocated to Virginia Street. He worked for many decades and in the 1990s, he sold his interests and from the proceeds established the Richard and Lydia Gamm Living Trust. After retirement Richard and Lydia wintered in Carefree, Arizona, and spent their summers at the Village at Manor Park in West Allis.

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***St. Marcus, Milwaukee.
1881 church and 1894 brick school***

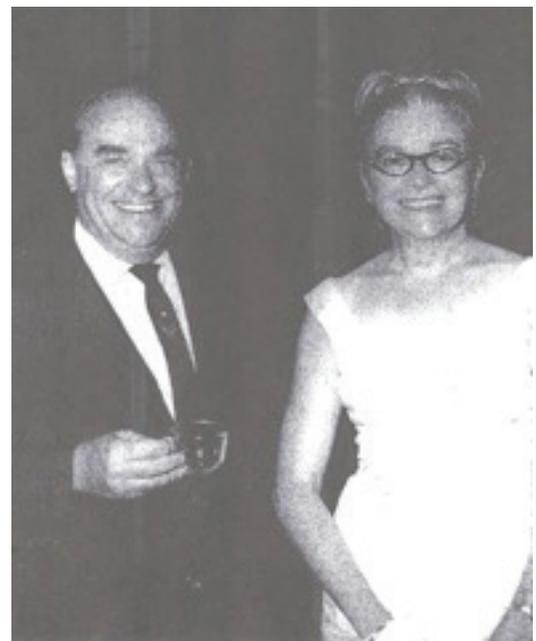
Richard and Lydia were intensely private people. They had no children. They loved to travel, had a circle of close friends, and were very generous. Richard loved animals and would let his back yard grow wild to provide a habitat for them. Lydia was a stylish dresser and into health food; she was making her own yogurt long before it was popular.

Richard lived his faith privately and continued to read his Bible remaining a Christian believer. In death Richard and Lydia were as quiet as in life—Richard’s published obituary had only two lines and Lydia had none at all. Richard passed away in 2012 at the age of 94 and Lydia in 2015 at the age of 91. Richard and Lydia bequeathed an estate gift to St. Marcus Church in the summer of 2015. This gift serves as a catalyst to advance the values and vision of St. Marcus Church and allows for transformational growth and ministry outreach.

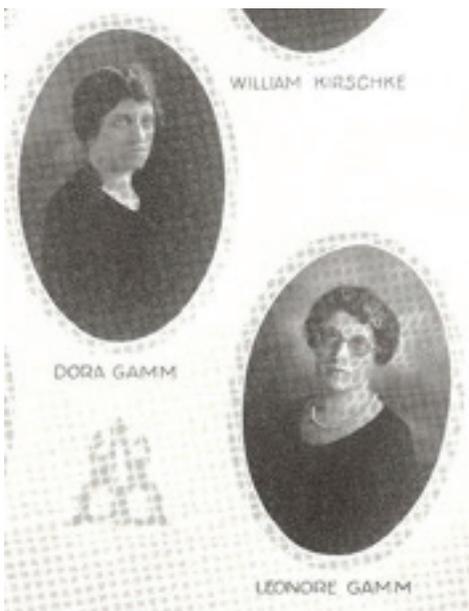
St. Marcus Church is an alive, growing and energetic ministry locally and nationally renowned as a leader in the following:

- Diverse, biblical, inspiring worship
- Urban, Christian education
- Media outreach
- Vibrant faith life...*that results in changing lives for joyful service and community impact.*

St. Marcus is honored to be a beneficiary of their trust.



***Richard Gamm,
August 29, 1917 - February 15, 2012
Lydia (Daubert) Gamm,
August 24, 1923 - March 3, 2015***



***Leonore and Dorothea (Dora),
St. Marcus faculty, 1925***