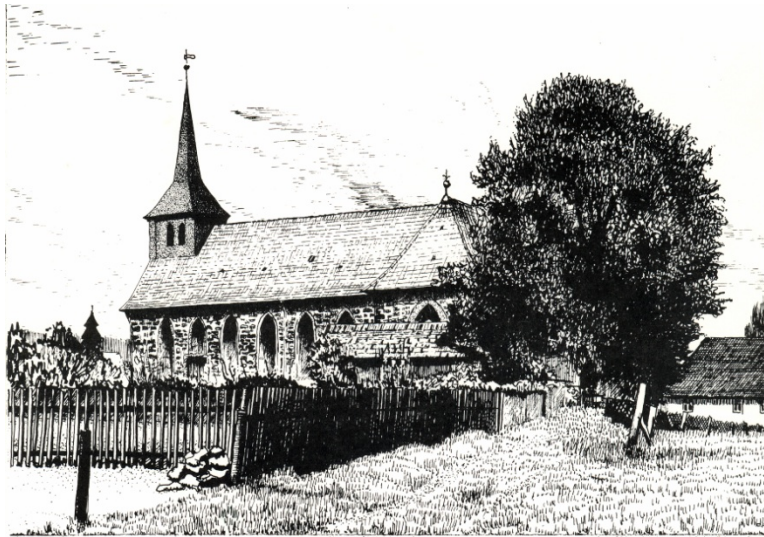


Chapter Six

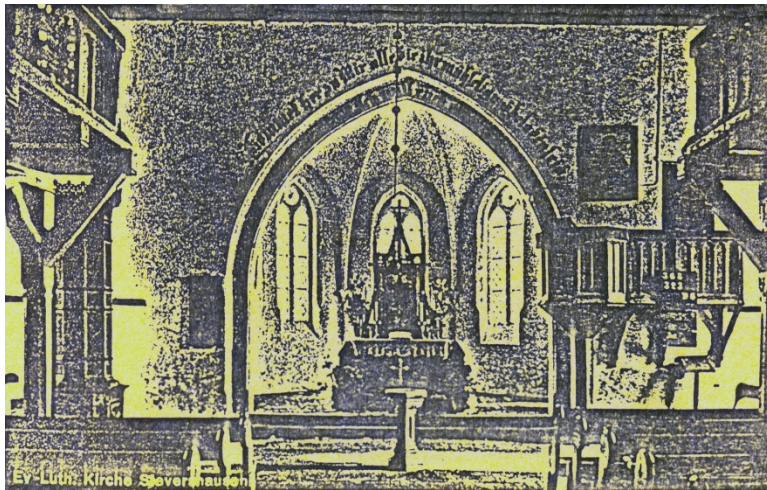
Sporleder Family Churches

St. Trinitis Kirche Sievershausen, Germany





Baptismal Font



Altar



Linda and Dale Sporleder Collection
August 2004

**Laurentiuskirche
Dassel, Germany**



The photo of the Laurentiuskirche was provided by Duane Luebe.
Built 1729
Photo taken August 1997



Heinrich Sporleder, Lutheran Pastor and Duane Luebe

St. Stephanus-Kirche Egestorf, Germany

When the Sporleder family lived in Nindorf near the Lüneburg Heath from about 1854 until 1871, the closest Lutheran church was St. Stephanus-Kirche in Egestorf. The parish was established in 1337 and became a member of the Lutheran faith in 1527 when the Reformation movement came to the Lüneburg area.¹

Evangelisch-lutherische Kirchengemeinde St. Stephanus zu Egestorf

Die Evangelisch-lutherische Kirche St. Stephanus steht in der Mitte des Dorfes, malerisch von einem Lindenkranz umgeben. Sie vermittelt neben den Kirchen in Raven und Undeloh an schönsten das Bild der romantischen "alten Heidekirche." St. Stephanus, benannt nach dem ersten Märtyrer der christlichen Kirche, versammelt als Mitte des früher so genannten Kirchspiels auch die Kirchgänger der umliegenden Dörfer, so aus Döhle, Evendorf, Nindorf, Sahrendorf und Schätzendorf. Die Kirchengemeinde zählt zur Zeit 1740 Mitglieder. Wie bei Heidekirchen häufig, rufen die Glocken von einem hölzernen Turm, der hier westlich neben dem Kirchenschiff steht. Bereits im Jahr 1337 stand hier eine hölzerne Kapelle, die 1449 durch eine Kirche mit Steingewölbe ersetzt wurde. Da sich diese Bauart als nicht standfest erwies, wurde 1645 die St. Stephanus-Kirche als Fachwerkbau auf Feldsteinsockel errichtet.

Evangelical-Lutheran Church St. Stephanus of Egestorf

The Evangelical-Lutheran church pc. Stephanus stands in the center of the village, pictorial surrounded by a lime tree ring. They mediate beside the churches in Raven and Undeloh² at the most beautiful picture of the romantic "old heath church."³ St. Stephanus, designated after the first martyr of the Christian church, meets the Kirchgaenger⁴ of the surrounding villages, thus from Doehle, as center in former times of the Kirchspiels⁵ so mentioned also Evendorf, Nindorf, Sahrendorf and treasure village. The church municipality counts at present 1740 members. As frequent is the case for heath churches, call the bells of a wooden tower, which stands here west beside the church ship. Already in the year 1337 stood here a wooden chapel, which was replaced 1449 by a church with Steingewoelbe.⁶ Since this design did not prove as stably, 1645 the pc. Stephanus church was established as framework construction on field stone bases.¹

¹ The drawing of the church was purchased by Linda and Dale Sporleder in Egestorf in August 2004 when the photos on the following pages were also taken. The motif to the left is Martin Luther.

² Communities in the Lüneburg Heath

³ Referring to the Lüneburg Heath

⁴ Worship needs

⁵ Geographical areas for rural churches

⁶ Stone arch

**Kirche
Ganzlin, Mecklenburg**

The Lutheran Church in Ganzlin, Mecklenburg, Germany is where Minnie Boell was baptized and her family attended church. As indicated by the large rock in the photo taken at the front of the church, it was founded in 1346.

Linda and Dale Sporleder Collection, August 2004



When the Sporleders and their spouses' families came to America, they brought their religious heritage with them. Even when there was no formal organized church, German Lutherans met in their homes for religious services, to educate their children in the faith, and to socialize. Jürnjakob Swehn journalized his experiences that would have been typical for any immigrant family living in a rural area regardless of nationality and religion.

We'd get together with everybody who lived with six to eight miles. Pastor would preach and then have school for the older children, the ones who were going to be confirmed. The little ones would cluster around and listen. Quite a few of them fell asleep. If there was time, he'd work with them: learning the alphabet and starting to read. After a couple of days the Word of God would climb on his horse and go to another farm and start over. That's how it was to being with.

Letters of a German American Farmer, Jürnjakob Swehn Travels to America, page 150

Our pastors in this country have an uncomfortable life. They all look pretty lean. In the beginning, our pastor worked mostly as a circuit preacher. He preached four times a week, two times on Sundays and two times during the week. He came to our place on Tuesdays. And you had to keep up with things real good, otherwise you made a Sunday of the Tuesday.

Seven miles a day on horseback was how our pastor did it. He would get here early and have church until noon. Then he did Bible history with the older children—we also stayed around for that. Later on he got himself a wagon and came by more often. Mostly he came toward evening because he would found us home.

At first he was on horseback the whole day, going from farm to farm. That meant he'd only get to see the younger children. The big kids and their folks were in the field. So he started Bible classes for the little ones and confirmation for the big ones. He would teach school in town for three days and in the country three half-days. Our children learned the Bible, catechism, and hymns.

Most of the children still couldn't read. They could plow, they could mow, and they could ride, but they couldn't read. Reading is harder. Ja, if you could only mow and rake these letters into some kind of sense.

The pastor would read out loud and the children would repeat it after him until they knew it. So in two winters they did their ten hymns and then some. They even sang them. As time allowed, they learned from him to read and write and cipher.

Letters of a German American Farmer, Jürnjakob Swehn Travels to America, page 109

To begin with, we sang, 'Ich singe dire mit Herz und Mund,' 'Oh Lord, I Sing with Lips and Heart.'⁷ We made the walls ring. It was good, but when the end of the verse came we were straggling all over the place. Some were fast, some were slow. The fast ones, though, held on to their notes till the slow ones caught up.ⁱⁱ

A Dane was there. He came from Næstved (*Næstved*). It's a town over there behind Rostock.⁸ He sat in the corner behind the stove. That's where it was the warmest. There he sat on his log end. He sweat American and sang Danish. What was good was that he did what the hymnal calls, 'In eigener Melodie, this hymn has its own tune.' Ja wohl, he sang according to his own tune and that was a real Dane. My dear friend, you know what I think? I think the dear God had second thoughts about his bush⁹ people that Sunday.

Letters of a German American Farmer, Jürnjakob Swehn Travels to America, page 110

The pastor preached about Jesus feeding the five thousand. The cows and oxen groaned, the pigs squeaked, and the roosters crowed. It was a good background music for the text. Because the birds and the animals praise God with their voices just like we do. All according to his kind.

⁷ The hymn, 'Oh Lord, I Sing with Lips and Heart,' by Rev. Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) is based upon Psalms 92:01, "A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath day. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:" It is Hymn 569 in *The Lutheran Hymnal* published in 1941 by the Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri.

⁸ Næstved (*Næstved*) is a small seaport community of about 38,000 located on the Jutland Peninsula between Denmark and Germany.

⁹ Jürnjakob's reference to the "bush" was his term for the rural country.

After the amen, a woman came forward and wanted to be baptized. Who do you think it was? Dürten Fründt from our village. She married Fehlandt's second boy. And I'm the godfather to their little girl; Wieschen (his wife) is the godmother.

When all that was over, we picked things up and moved the tables together. Most everybody stayed and ate with us. My dear friend, I tell you there were some different eats served up there. A poor man could come to that table. But you can believe me, we all ate and were satisfied. Folks said, '*Dank, ich habe plenty.*' I was terribly proud of my Wieschen (his wife).

We all sat around and told stories. First we talked spiritual, then we talked worldly, afterwards we came back to the spiritual. It was all very nice and it lasted a long time. We didn't get together very much in those years. But when we once got down, we stayed that way real good.

First we talked about the dead. Now one of us had a grampa buried in the cemetery at Picher (Mecklenburg). The other one's dad is buried at Konow (Mecklenburg) and mine is buried at Eldena (Mecklenburg). The dead are neighbors to one another in the old country, as their children are neighbors in America. The one buried his first wife somewhere in Hanover, the other one has a boy buried in Holstein, and the pastor spoke good words over all of this about life and death, and about the resurrection.

First we talked about the dead, then we talked about the living. *Denn was dem einen recht ist, ist dem andern billig*, 'cause what's good for the goose is good for the gander. Pastor himself told stories from the old country... and out of his best books. It was a real joy, and our eyes sparkled.

Then one of us had to tell about mowing beans in Holstein, and what hard work that be. Another had a story about that three-cornered wheat on the Lüneburger Heath.¹⁰

All of a sudden, we were back in our childhood and we began to talk about home and about our school. Next, we were on our farms, and the one sold last year's pigs all over again. The other one began to thresh the coming wheat harvest, which he didn't even have in the ground yet. The number three talker was cutting wood, and number four blew out the stumps with dynamite. Everything *auf Plattdeutsch*, in Low German. Only this didn't last long, because we do it around here all the time, and on Sunday *der Mensch* wants to hear something different.

By golly, one of us even got to talking about his army time.¹¹ He was a dragoon (cavalryman) in Ludwigslust (Mecklenburg). Another guy was an infantry man in Rostock. A third one stretched out his crooked knees and showed how a Schweriner grenadier¹² marched. So we all got to putting on a parade for the grand duke of Mecklenburg's birthday. This meant we had take Wieschen's (his wife) broom and make believe it was a gun.

The dragoon started to sing: *König Wilhelm sass ganz heiter*, William the King sits high, and he's happy!" He couldn't get much further than verse one, but that's no problem because by then we were in the war. We were capturing Sedan and Strassburg¹³ and Metz and Orleans. But when we got to Paris, the broomsticks were wandering back into the corner. Old Schuldts had already started with his *Häih*?! That's proof that he's tired and wants to go home. The women all said too, now it's time and began to act as if they were going home. It was getting dark.

Letters of a German American Farmer, Jürnjakob Swehn Travels to America, pages 112-113

Jürnjakob Swehn's recollection of military stories refers to the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). The conflict was of relatively short duration from July 19, 1870 to May 10, 1871 ending in complete victory for the newly created German Empire.

The clash was caused by a dispute between Prussia and France over the possible selection of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen family and the Prussian royal house to the Spanish throne. Fearing an alliance between the Prussian emerging military with Spain, France successfully opposed Leopold's

¹⁰ "Three-cornered wheat" is buckwheat that is similar to wheat, but it is not wheat. It's a three-cornered tan colored seed while the wheat seed is a smooth oval.

¹¹ In 1854, Heinrich Böll entered the military and served for six years with the 2nd *Fusilier* Battalion in Wismar. Later, he participated in a mobilization and was honorably discharged.

¹² Historically, a grenadier was a soldier formerly trained in the use of grenades, but more often it referred to a military guard.

¹³ The key city in the French Alsace province

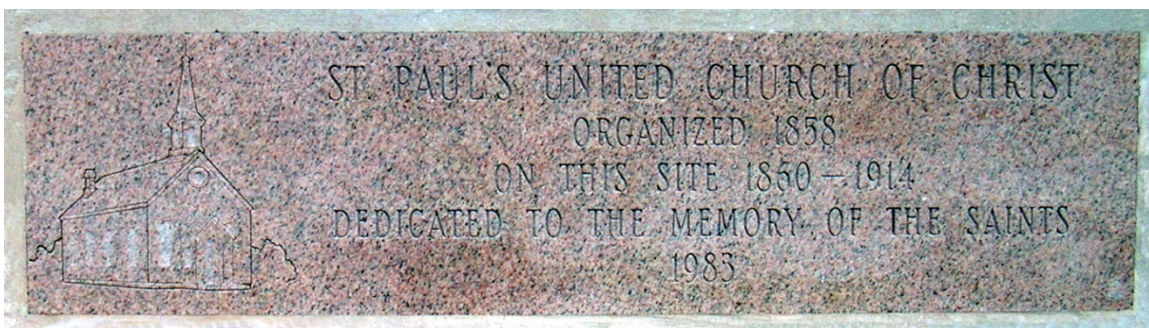
claim. Not satisfied with its immediate achievement, France also attempted to extract a permanent commitment from both Prussia and Spain that Leopold would never be considered for the Spanish throne. Prussian King William I was unwilling to concede and on July 19, 1870 French Emperor Napoleon III declared war against Prussia.

Most felt that the militarily superior French would quickly and surely defeat the upstart Prussians. Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck convinced the independent south German states of Bavaria, Wurttemberg, and Baden to support their Teutonic brethren because of their fear of French aggression.

At the Battle of Wörth on August 6, 1870, the French were dislodged from their positions near Saarbrücken and retreated to the Metz fortress. Losing battles on August 16 and 18 continued to force them to take refuge at Metz. The Battle of Sedan began on August 31 and by September 2nd the French troops and their leader, Napoleon III, surrendered. With the French Army trapped in Metz, the possibility of a quick and certain French victory disappeared.

On September 4, 1870, Emperor Napoleon III was deposed and the Third Republic was established. By September 19, the Germans besieged Paris. Negotiations to end the conflict were broken off because of the German demand for the French Alsace and Lorraine provinces. By October 27th, the remaining French troops at Metz surrendered. The Orleans campaign was marked by initial success by the Bavarian Army with French forces later retaking this French city. Reinforced by two Prussian divisions, including the army of the grand-duke Friedrich Franz of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the city was retaken by December 4th. Paris capitulated on January 28, 1871. The Treaty of Frankfurt on May 10, 1871 finally ended the fray with the new German Empire annexing Alsace and half of Lorraine including Metz. France paid five billion francs plus the costs of the German occupation of France's northern provinces until payment was made.ⁱⁱⁱ

St. Paul's Evangelical Church
Now known as St. Paul's United Church of Christ
Monee, Illinois



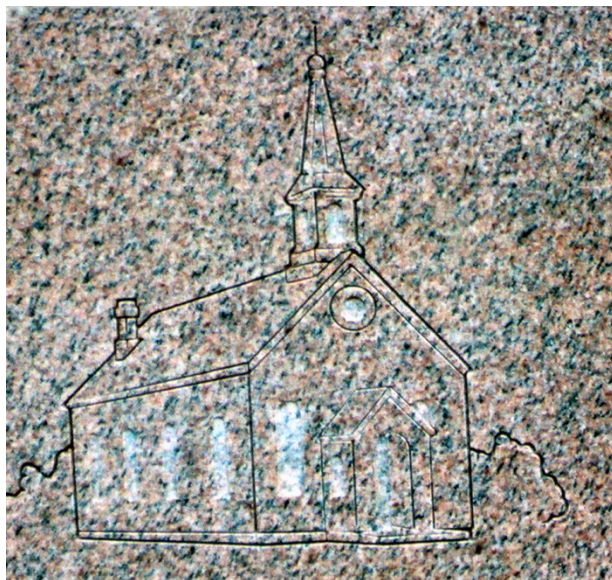
The Evangelical Synod of North America traced its beginnings to an association of German Evangelical pastors in Missouri. This association, founded in 1841, reflected the 1817 union of Lutheran and Reformed churches in Germany. Both sects originated with the Reformation in Europe. Their churches in America were established by immigrants from Germany and Switzerland. The Reformed Church in the United States, long known as the German Reformed Church, organized its first synod in 1747 and adopted a constitution in 1793. Evangelical Synod of North America was founded in 1840 at Gravois Settlement, Missouri by missionaries from Basel Mission House, Switzerland and the Barmen Mission House, Germany. Three pastors of note were Johann Jakob Riess who arrived in 1835, Joseph Rieger in 1836 and Adolf Herman Baltzer in 1845.^{iv}

The Evangelical and Reformed Church is presbyterian in organization and governance that is typified by the rule of an assembly of presbyters or elders as opposed to control by hierarchies of single bishops that is referred as an episcopalian governance. The Evangelical and Reformed Church creed is based upon the Heidelberg Catechism, Luther's Catechism and the Augsburg Confession.

The Heidelberg Catechism was written in Heidelberg at the request of Frederick III (1559- 1576) of the Palatinate. Zacharius Ursinus, Professor of Theology at the Heidelberg University, and Rev. Caspar Olevianus prepared a catechism for instructing the youth and for guiding pastors and teachers. The entire theological faculty assisted in its preparation. It was adopted by a Synod in Heidelberg and published in the German language on January 19, 1563. The Catechism was subsequently divided into 52 sections for an explanation each Sunday of the year. For The Netherlands, the Heidelberg Catechism was translated into the Dutch language by Petrus Dathenus. The National Synods of the 16th Century adopted it as one of the Three Forms of Unity and required officials to subscribe to it and ministers to explain it to the parishioners. These requirements were strongly emphasized by the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619. The Heidelberg Catechism has been translated into many languages and is the most influential and generally accepted of the several catechisms of the Reformation.^v

Historically, a catechism was an explanation of Christianity to prepare one in the faith. Martin Luther wrote his Small Catechism (1529) as a basic clarification of the Christian faith for lay people. It follows the historic form of a catechism based on explanations of the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. Luther added sections on Baptism, Confession, and the Sacrament of the Altar, along with forms for Morning and Evening Prayer and Grace at Table.^{vi}

The Augsburg Confession (1530) was the first of the great Protestant confessions. In 1530, Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, called together the Lutheran nobility in the various German territories to a Diet at Augsburg. He sought their assistance against attacks by the Turkish armies in Eastern Austria. Also, he hoped to resolve the religious differences dividing the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestants to stop the Reformation. Philip Melancthon, a close friend of Martin Luther and a Professor of New Testament at Wittenberg University, drafted a common statement of faith for the Lutheran royalty to be followed by their subjects. His Augsburg Confession was presented to the Emperor on June 25, 1530 in both the Latin and German languages. It was accepted and became the foundation for all orthodox Lutheran church bodies.^{vii}



Theologically, the Evangelical character is rooted in a strong sense of Biblical authority. Any change in denomination, conference or local congregation priorities and directions not rooted in a clear Biblical rationale is resisted. Practice of the Christian faith is important, continuing the strong Evangelical sense of responsibility for social justice and support of institutions which provide care for people. The slight difference between Lutheranism and United Church of Christ is the great latitude in interpretation allowed by the latter and its greater emphasis toward deed rather than creed.

In 1934, the Synod united with the Reformed Church in the United States to become the Evangelical and Reformed Church, which in 1957 joined with the Congregational Christian Churches to become the United Church of Christ. They are not to be confused with the Evangelical Church,

which merged in 1946 with the United Brethren in Christ to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

St. Paul's United Church of Christ Church is located at 5323 Margaret Street in the small community of Monee, Will County, Illinois. It was organized in 1858 and formerly known as St. Paul's Evangelical

Church. The image of the original church is from a memorial where the first church was located from 1850 until 1914. The memorial was placed in 1985.¹⁴

Franziska Werner, wife of Fritz Sporleder, was confirmed there in 1872.

¹⁴ The photos of the present church and image of the original church were taken in June 2005 and are from the Linda and Dale Sporleder Collection.

First German Evangelical Lutheran Church Manitowoc, Wisconsin

“The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” [Matthew 13:31-32] As everywhere in the world where the Lord’s kingdom is built it has been going here in Manitowoc, Wis., according to the Lord’s word: As the grain of mustard seed were the beginnings of this church. The noble seed of the divine word was spread based on the hope that the Lord would put His blessing on it and would let grow a Christian community out of small beginnings.

When Pastor C. F. Goldammer, who had followed a vocation of the Ev. Luth. Church in Newton, Manitowoc Co., Wis. in spring 1851, started to preach in the same year here in Manitowoc, too, this town was only a minor place of a few hundred inhabitants. But among the few families there were several ones who willingly wanted to listen to the preaching of the divine word. These gathered every two weeks on Tuesday evening for service in the district’s old school-house at Washington and 7th Street.

Pastor Goldammer didn’t dare to form a church out of these few families immediately, but considered Manitowoc as an outpost for mission. The following year, after he had purchased a horse and wasn’t forced to go the distance on foot any more, he preached in Manitowoc every Sunday evening.

In spring 1853, the little flock did one step further to the foundation of a Christian church by buying a lot at the northwestern corner of Marshal and 10th Street for sake of a future church building. In the deed [of transfer] Richard Klingholz transfers lot 7 in block 271 for \$110 to Gottfried Melzner and Johann Riederich as “trustees of the United Lutheran and Evangelical church in the village of Manitowoc, Wis.” Cash money was scanty in those days and the purchase price was collected partly in and around Manitowoc. In spring 1854, Pastor Goldammer handed over one of his country parish to another preacher and thus was able to spend more time and energy for Manitowoc. The number of those who stood by the word of God had been growing in such scale, too, that it had seriously to be considered to vacate its own preacher to Manitowoc. Pastor Goldammer tried to get someone for Manitowoc but with no success. In this situation, he decided to cede his country parish in Newton to another preacher and move to Manitowoc himself. Summer 1855 a successor to Pastor Goldammer in Newton was found and he moved here.

Yet as early as February, 7th, 1855 - as can be drawn from old documents - the church members had adopted a parish code and had organized themselves under the name of “Ev. Luth. Trinity Church at Manitowoc, Wis.” In fact, this name was changed soon, for the community incorporated on April 9th, 1855 as “German Ev. Luth. Church.” But this name still didn’t please; on March, 23rd, 1860, once more a change was legally having made by the legislature of the state. They now adopted our current name “First German Ev. Luth. Church in Manitowoc, Wis.” In that first parish code of February, 7th, 1855, which, by the way, was signed by 71 heads of family already, the community professed the “Augsburg confession and Luther’s Small Catechism, but a preacher of the church never may apply the rites of the old-Lutheran church when administering service acts.” It was held necessary to insert this clause with respect to some families of the Reformed Church who liked to join the community. Soon this addendum was found of undue consideration and abolished.

Article 35 of that code of 1855 which concerns the examination of those who applied for admission to the federation [i.e. the parish](examination and admission then was performed by the parish council) reads: “The most important articles of the church code must be read to the member-to-be, where after same has to conscientiously answer the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Bible to be God’s word?
2. Do you believe man unapt to all good and apt to all evil?
3. Do you believe that man will be justified and beatified solely through the faith in Jesus Christ, out of free grace by Christ’s merit?
4. Do you confess that a Christian must be renewed by act of the Holy Spirit and his life be sanctified, as no one can see the Lord without sanctification?

5. Do you commit yourself to contribute to the best of your ability whatever is to advantage the parish and the honour of the Kingdom of God?

In spring 1855 construction of the first church building was decided. The lot acquired in 1853 didn't seem suitable anymore and was sold for \$400, the present church lot was bought for \$400 but half of the sum was donated by Mr. Samuel Hinkly in New York. Construction was undertaken at once and completed by spring 1856 by carpenter Johann Meyer.

In this year, the Ev. Luth. Synod of Wisconsin assembled here on invitation of the parish, and the new church was consecrated to the name of the Holy Trinity on May, 18th, 1856 in the presence of the Synod. As the parish in its first code already had decreed for its preacher "that he should join the Ev. Luth. Synod of Wisconsin" and "that he should every year, if possible, attend the synod's assembly" it now did this for its own. On occasion of the synod's assembly here in 1856 the parish joined up for membership and was admitted to the federation of the synod. A true daughter of the synod's has it [i.e. the parish] ever remained! In later years it has repeatedly invited and housed the synod: 1864, 1871, 1880, 1894, and now 1905. It has regularly had represent it by a delegate to the assemblies and has taken a vivid share in every work of the synod. It has collected contributions at church and in houses - above all it has commissioned its young men to the service of the synod and the church. Amongst them are the pastors: Wilhelm Schimpf (deceased), Albert Fröhlke, Wilhelm Schlei, August Kirchner, Christian Sieker, Wilhelm Kansier, Eduard Bartke, Arthur Schneider, Johann Guse, August Pätz; and the teachers: Emil Sampe, Eduard Schneider.

The parish in 1856 now had a church, a preacher on its own, services every Sunday, School lessons - but quite a many still was rather scanty. The school lessons had to be held in the vestibule of the church, and space there was very tight. Pastor Goldammer had to makeshift by lodging, even didn't get a fixed salary from the parish yet. From these times many a strange resort [from difficulties] is told even nowadays. In spite of the meager circumstances the parish grew quickly in membership number and was able as early as spring 1857 to chance the decision "to build a parsonage and a school-house, too." In the same year still this construction was accomplished by Gerhard Meyer, so that the pastor now had his own residence.

On August, 1st, 1858 Pastor Goldammer delivered his parting preach and followed the vocation of the parish of Burlington, Racine Co., Wis. - Pastor Ph. Köhler of Renno, Washington Co., Wis. was vocated his successor and was ordained by Pastor Ph. Sperling on September, 5th.

Not later than February 1859 Pastor Köhler had to call the managing board's attention to the fact that the class room was far too small and could not hold the number of pupils. One would have loved to buy the adjacent half lot, too, but didn't dare to in those hard times. The parish was very pleased to hear in April 1860 that the desired half lot had been donated to it by Mr. Hinkly and Mr. Allen. Now they immediately set work on enlarging the annex of the old parsonage to a considerable degree to gain more space for the school. Money was scarce; therefore most of the parishioners paid their contribution to the building with material and work. Karl Hardow provided the carpenter work and got paid \$1.00 per day. This building of 1860 served the parish in various ways until it was torn down in 1891 to give way to the present school-house.

In 1863 the old church had to be enlarged by adjoining galleries on both sides to gain space for the churchgoers. In March 1866, the parish totaled 184 families and 193 children at school. Such a growth, although they counteracted the [Masonic] lodges in 1859, 1861 and later on seriously. On February, 21st, 1859, the managing board was told by Pastor Köhler "that several members of the parish were at the same time members of the lodge existing at Manitowoc, that such [things] could not get on with each other and ought in no way be approved according to God's word but be suppressed; hence means and measures should be taken to keep the community immaculate thereof for all future times." So, on September, 9th, 1861, the parish determined that "an article should be added to the parish code that hereafter nobody should be a member of this parish who is member of a secret society". The records bear multiple witness that in the various cases it was very patiently tried to come to terms, but that after all it was acted according to this determination. Up to now the same has never been a dead letter, this point is carefully discussed with each admission, the applicant, if necessary, is rejected or the pertaining parish member is excluded.

One hundred and ninety three children at school! No wonder that in 1866 the community has to debate on new building, again; a big two-storied school-house was erected and served for 25 years

until it had to give way to the present school building in 1891. Many of our present parish members have lived there the good and bad times of their schooldays. From the beginnings on this community has with special effort paid attention to instruction and education of its young people, and always was willing to accommodate foreign children. The parish code of 1855 already demands the pastor to "take care of the education of the young." But this does not mean by way of confirmation classes or Christian teachings on Sundays only! No, in the report of 1856 we already read: "The parish had Christian teaching for their young on workdays." In 1857, a school-house is built, in 1859 "two school directors to assist the preacher" are chosen, who are assigned to "inspect the school once every month." In 1864, several parish assemblies discuss and finally adopt meticulously elaborated school regulations, as well in 1880. In 1864, the first teacher is employed, later on classes are split according to requirements and more teachers are appointed. In 1866 a big school-house is built, in 1890 our present one, which costs with all equipment about \$15,000 and is inaugurated and put into use in December 1891. It contains 6 big class rooms and one assembly hall which holds 450 persons. Builder [was] Louis Bartke. It would go much too far to show in detail how parallel was the growth and advancement of the school to that of the parish, how school regulations and curricula were improved and expanded from time to time, how much - in the last years still - teachers and school directors have strived to effectuate in our school the ideal of an Ev. Luth. parish school: a school, wherein the word of God and Luther's doctrine not only be a subject matter of teaching, but permeate all subjects and questions of discipline, a school, in which not only the secular sciences are cultivated, but which in its achievements may not be afraid of being compared to other schools. 230 children are instructed in 4 classes, they enter school with six and are released when been administered confirmation, either when they have regularly passed the full course of lessons or have reached the age of 13 years on August, 1st, before confirmation. The teachers are:

[List of teachers omitted]

The school-directors are: Heinrich Wernecke, Heinrich Groth and Johann Wolter. During 40 years since the school was established there has been many a change, but Mr. Grotheer has been the teacher of the 1st class for 22 years, and Mr. Wilh. Krause has passed away on duty here in 1904. From 1855 until 1864 the pastors of the parish, Pastor C. Goldammer and pastor Ph. Köhler, held the lessons as good as just possible.

[List of teachers omitted]

That first church building of 1856 served the parish for many years, but in 1870 one started to raise funds for a new church. On October 1872 a resolution was made, to build a new church 48 by 96 for about \$10,000. Construction plan and realization were made by Johann Meyer. On 21st of December 1873 the present church was consecrated to the service of the Trinity with the participation of the synodal dean, Pastor Johann Bading and C. Goldammer and Ph. Köhler. Subsequent acquisitions were the present altar in 1894, the organ, two bells and the church clock, which, however, was replaced by a new one in 1903. The parsonage, located south of the church, was built by Theo. Schmidtman and Hermann Strothoff in 1882.

As official acts over the past 50 years were taken: baptized 4755; confirmed 2137; married 814; buried 1237. The pastors of the parish since its existence were the following:

Pastor C. F. Goldammer, 1851 - 1858

Pastor Ph. Köhler, September 1858 - July 1867

Pastor D. Ebert, May 1867 - April 1868

Pastor H. Quehl, September 1868 - September 1872

Pastor C. Hübner, October 1872 - July 1874

Pastor G. Thiele, October 1874 - September 1876; subsequently professor with the Theological Seminary of the Rev. Synod of Wisconsin and other states at Wauwatosa, Wis.

Pastor Franz Pieper, October 1876 - September 1878; subsequently professor and Doctor of Theology with the Concordia Seminary of the Rev. Synod of Missouri and other states at St. Louis, Mo.

Pastor R. Pieper, September 1878 - March 1891; subsequently professor with the Theological Seminary of the Rev. Synod of Missouri and other states at Springfield, Ill.

Pastor K. Machmüller, introduced on March, 29th, 1891

Parish officials are: Joh. Mahnke, chairman; Joh. Wolter, secretary; Hein. Groth, general treasurer; Friedrich Rockhoff, treasurer of 1st district - south of Marshal Rd; August Pohl, treasurer of 2nd district - north of Marshal Rd until the river; Eduard Brey, treasurer of 3rd district - north of the river; Herm. Strothoff, deacon and attendant of paupers; Heinrich Groth and Johann Wolter, school-directors; Johann Schäfer and Karl Stahl, directors.

The number of family names in March 1905 according to the parish registers summed up to 466 names. An inventory of names of all parish members since that February 7th 1855 follows, names marked with an asterisk are parish members today. "That this parish code has been accepted today as presented here the underwritten persons testify by signature of their names":

[List of members omitted]

"First German Evangelical Lutheran Church, Jubilee Book 1855-1905"^{viii}

Johann (John) J. Jonas was baptized at this church.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Kellogg, Iowa

When a parish was organized, it soon would build a church with an accompanying cemetery. Jürnjakob Swehn described to his teacher in Germany the church as well as the dedication and placement of the cemetery.

Our new church has four walls. Yours and ours are alike in that respect. Only here the four walls are closer together. That's why on Sundays ours is fuller than yours. It's also true that over here we have more interest in church. Here we don't have to pay money; here we also get to make decisions. Here the pastor comes to the people. He doesn't wait until the people come to him.

*Letters of a German American Farmer, Jürnjakob Swehn
Travels to America, page 105*

We're really pleased to have a new church, and the dedication was impressive. The pastor preached on the word: '*Bis hieher hat uns de Herr Geholfen*, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.'¹⁵ It fit in real good. We took that word and stored it in our hearts.

At the same time, we put in a new cemetery. At first, we also wanted to bury our dead up there on the hilltop, but they wouldn't get much out of the view and besides there wasn't a whole lot of room up there. So we put them on the hillside. That way they'll still hear the bells and the organ. So we have a gathering place for the dead and for the living, one right next to the other one. On a Sunday when a man walks around out there, he knows where he belongs now and where he's going to belong later. The way people are these days, it's good for them to walk through a cemetery every once in a while and answer the questions of the dead ones. One of them dead ones asks, 'How are things *bei mir zu Hause*, at home, by my folks? Do you look after my children and my farm once in a while? You promised me that when I was sick abed.' And the other one asks, 'You've not been here for quite a while. What you been up to all this time? Surely, you haven't forgotten me?' And a third one says, '*Das ist nett*, it's nice to see you. You're probably here to pick out a nice spot for yourself.'

*Letters of a German American Farmer,
Jürnjakob Swehn Travels to America, pages 90-91*

The creation of St. Paul's and its cemetery was noted in the history of the community of Kellogg at a later posting on the Internet.

"The St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Kellogg was organized in 1870 and was mothered by St. Clement's Church of Mokema (Mokena), Illinois. The church was constructed under the supervision of Charles Bobzin and Mr. Pentico and in later years remodeling and enlarging was accomplished."

Kellogg Historical Booklet Vol. I – 1974

"Kellogg German Lutheran Cemetery, otherwise known as Kellogg Lutheran, German Lutheran, German Burying Grounds and St. Paul's, is located in Section 22 of Kellogg Township, Jasper County, Iowa. It is at North 27th Avenue East West of East 92 Street North. This one acre piece of land was deeded to the Lutheran Church of Jasper City, Iowa by Milton and Sylvia M. Briggs on 11 January 1870. The Articles of Incorporation were drawn up and filed in 1879 for the German Evangelical Lutheran St. Clemens Church of Kellogg, Jasper County, Iowa. In the articles the name Jasper City appears again when it reads: '...of Lyman's Addition to Jasper City, town of Kellogg, Jasper County, Iowa, for which they have a warranty deed dated 3 Jun 1872 for the plot of ground known as the German Burying Ground. The condition of the cemetery is fair to good. Many of the stones are inscribed in German. It is fenced, there is no sign, maintenance is good and you can drive in. Kellogg German Lutheran Cemetery is also known as Old German Lutheran.'"

¹⁵ 1 Samuel 7:12, "Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.'"

“Kellogg German Lutheran Cemetery, also known as Old German Lutheran,”^{ix}

St. Clement’s Lutheran Church at Kellogg was formed in 1869, by Rev. F. A. Boden, who served as pastor many years. In 1878 the congregation had a membership amounting to thirty families. In 1873 a house of worship was erected at a cost of one thousand three hundred and sixty-five dollars. The present membership is about seventy communicants. The first child christened here was that of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Boden, August 31, 1873. Rev. J. G. Olterman, now of State Center, Iowa, was pastor here until a few months since, he being the last pastor serving the congregation. At Elk Creek, this denomination has another church of about seventy-five communicants, worshipping in a frame church erected in 1900.

Past and Present of Jasper County Iowa (1912)^x



While farming in the Kellogg area, William and Marie (nee Berens) Sporleder and Fred and Wilhelmina (nee Sporleder) Jonas attended St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. Louise Sporleder was born there on July 4, 1875. Friederich Heinrich Theodor Jonas was born there on October 2, 1875 and baptized March 5, 1876. Later the site of the parish was relocated to the community of Kellogg where it continues as a place of worship.¹⁶

¹⁶ The photo of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church is from the Linda and Dale Sporleder Collection and was taken August 2005.

St. Paul Lutheran Church



St. Paul Lutheran Church located at 1844 Highland Drive in Carroll

“The Saint Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Parish, Original Augsburg Confession at Carroll, Carroll County, Iowa. About 25 years ago, the venerable German Evangelical Lutheran traveling minister Mertens also visited the area of Carroll. Here he found some Lutherans, who received him with joy and requested that he appear more often in their midst and attend to them with the word of God. He happily accepted the invitation, and he appeared in our town as often as time and circumstances allowed and preached to his fellow believers the words of sanctifying truth. But after a time, the parish in Arcadia called its own minister, Pastor Meinecke, who took over serving the Lutherans in Carroll. When, however, Pastor Meinecke was called away from Arcadia after about a year, it was Pastor Sessler who conducted the ministry among the Lutherans in Carroll. During this time, the Arcadia parish called Pastor Hermann from State Center, Iowa, as its pastor. Since he only had one parish to serve, that being in Arcadia, and on the other hand, Pastor Sessler of Sheridan [Township] had several, the Lutherans in Carroll were pleased to be served by Pastor Hermann. He performed his duty in total loyalty and served the parish with unselfish love until his blessed final hour. It was also he, who in 1887, founded the “Evangelical Lutheran Saint Paul’s Parish” among the local German Lutherans. The newly founded parish was very small. About 10 families belonged to it. Since the parish did not have its own church, it was sometimes forced to hold services in the city hall, sometimes in the public schoolhouse, or also in the churches of other denominations. The desire for their own church grew ever more powerful. Finally, in 1889, the parish decided to build a church, one block south of the site where the new railway station would later be erected. The individual members had to sacrifice heavily, but they did so with joy. An honorable-thinking German, who holds fast to the customs and practices of his ancestors, also maintains churches and schools in his new Fatherland as equally important, indeed more important, than his daily bread. On 8 September 1889, the parish had the joy of dedicating its church and being able to turn it over to the service of God. From this time on, the parish increased notably. In September 1895, the parish called a vicar, who was to preach with Pastor Hermann, but mainly was to conduct school. The vicar, Mr. Wilhelm Schweppe, administered the school with great energy and dedication. He instructed only in the German language, and this was all the more important because previously the parishioners’ children had received either no, or at best very little, instruction in the German language. The school flourished greatly under his direction, and his sermons were also gladly received. He was greatly esteemed by young and old. On 7 January 1896, the Lord of Life and Death saw fit to call away the pastor of the parish, Pastor Hermann of Arcadia. So, the parish was again without a pastor. At this time, the parish counted 18 voting members and about 25 families. This little church decided to call its own pastor, who in addition to conducting the ministry, would also conduct the school as much as he was able. They would gladly have called Vicar W. Schweppe as pastor, but he had not yet finished his studies and so could not accept the offer. Therefore, they called Albert Discher, a candidate for the holy ministry. He accepted the offer, came to Carroll on 7 August 1896, and on the following Sunday he was appointed to his office by Pastor Müller from Sheridan [Township]. The following summer, the parish built a beautiful, spacious rectory. It is the second house south of the church.

The parish now counts 26 voting members and approximately 170 souls. Last winter, the school was attended by 23 children. In the church, services are conducted only in the German language, since all the members are of German origin and are friends of German culture in America. May the Lord of this church bless the parish a thousand times a thousand.”

Der Carroll Demokrat^{xi}

“Lutherans in the Carroll area began meeting as early as the 1870s with Lutheran missionaries looking after the spiritual needs of their people. In the early 1880s, the Rev. C. F. Hermann of Arcadia and the Rev. John Sessler of Lidderdale held services in Carroll. Services were held in members’ homes, the public school, and the county courthouse.

St. Paul congregation was officially organized in 1886 with a charter membership of 15 families. August Boehme,¹⁷ Charles Brown, Charles Lange, Albert Kuschel, Charles (also known as Carl Henry) Sporleder, Johan Meisel, Christian Pluckhahn,¹⁸ M. Selzer, Charles Neu,¹⁹ Henry Scharmweber (or Scharnweber) and W. Schulz were charter founders. The congregation built its first house of worship in 1889 at West and Third Streets. The Rev. F. Lothringer of Denison conducted services after Pastor Hermann’s advanced years prevented him from continuing to serve the Carroll congregation. During one year, a seminary student, W. Schweppe, conducted services and prepared a class of adults for confirmation. The Rev. Andrew Mueller of Lidderdale also served the Carroll congregation.

The first resident pastor in Carroll was the Rev. August Discher who began in the summer of 1892. In 1897, a mission was opened at Glidden and Pastor Discher served both parishes until 1903 when he accepted a call to Boyer, Iowa. A parsonage had been erected in Carroll in the early 1890s.

The Rev. G. F. Luebker was the next pastor serving the Carroll-Glidden parishes. He resided in Glidden from 1908 until he moved to Hammond, Indiana in 1909. The Rev. Louis Eschbach became the next pastor serving from the summer of 1909 until May 1915 when he accepted a call to Grand Mound, Iowa. Rev. Eschbach was the last pastor to serve the combined Carroll-Glidden congregations.

The Rev. A. J. Mueller became the first resident pastor in 1915 when the St. Paul congregation became an independent parish. He came from Winona, Minnesota. Under his leadership, the congregation outgrew its building and worshipped in the Episcopal Church at Ninth and Adams Streets from April 1924 through November 1925, which it rented for \$12 per month. In 1925, the Baptist Church at Seventh and Adams was purchased with the dedication services held on March 14, 1926. A parsonage was also purchased at that location.

On Thanksgiving Day 1936, Pastor Mueller was called to his eternal home. The Rev. A. O. Bleeke of Lake City was installed on February 21, 1937, serving the Carroll congregation until 1945 when he accepted a call to Storm Lake. The Rev. Waldemar Hinck, a former Army chaplain, was the next pastor.

A new Wicks pipe organ was dedicated on Palm Sunday 1949 to Lt. Victor A. Mueller. The son of a former pastor, he was the only young man of the congregation to give his life in World War II.

Pastor Hinck accepted a call to Milwaukee, Wisconsin in July 1950. The Rev. E. W. M. Brewer of Glidden served as the pastor during the vacancy and the observance of the 25th anniversary of the church. The church building was completely redecorated for the occasion.

The Rev. Paul Bergmann of Wisconsin became the next pastor for St. Paul congregation in 1951. During this time, 11 lots in northwest Carroll were purchased for expansion and relocation. Pastor Bergmann accepted a call to Luxemborg, Wisconsin in 1956 and was succeeded by the Rev. Harold Keck of Wakefield, Nebraska. Construction began on a new church and parsonage in September 1959. The new church at 1844 Highland Avenue was dedicated to the glory of God on June 19, 1960. An overflow crowd of 1,500 attended the two special services.

¹⁷ August Boehme also was a co-founder of the *Deutsche Vereinâ* (German Club)

¹⁸ Johann Friedrich Christian Plückhahn (1848-1910) is interred in the Carroll Cemetery. He was related to Marie Pluckhahn who married Heinrich Boell and Anna Sophie Josephine Pluckhahn who married Anton Sporleder.

¹⁹ Charles Neu (1848-1896) was the editor of the German newspaper *Der Carroll Demokrat*.

Pastor Keck accepted a call to Glenwood Springs, Colorado in January 1970. The Rev. Timothy Koenig was installed in July 1970, serving until October 1974 when he accepted a call to Pampa, Texas. The Rev. Donald Wuertz was installed as the next pastor in March 1975 until he accepted a call to Rochester, Minnesota in March 1995.

Pastor Rev. Charles Hake was installed in September 1985, coming to Carroll from Owatonna, Minnesota, until he retired in August 2003. The current Pastor, David Anthony, came from Fairgrove, Michigan and was installed in January 2004.”

St. Paul Lutheran Church^{xii}

Henry Carl and Wilhelmina Ferdinandine Marie Caroline (Minnie) Boell were married at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Ernest Sporleder was baptized there. Also, Anton Sporleder and Anna Sophie Josephine Pluckhahn were married there. Mildred Heuton and Vernice George Gray were married there. Lloyd Thede was confirmed, married and his funeral was at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Laura Thede's funeral service was in St. Paul Lutheran Church

Lidderdale Immanuel Lutheran Church



Lidderdale Immanuel Lutheran Church was organized August 22, 1872 and initially consisted of 22 adults and 15 children. It was located in the rural countryside outside the small community of Lidderdale and served by Rev. Gottlieb Harr as a circuit rider. A parsonage was constructed in 1876 and on January 8, 1881, the parish approved the construction of church that was dedicated on October 30, 1881. On July 14, 1901, the cornerstone was laid for a new church in the community of Lidderdale and on September 30th of that year, the church was moved to the new site.

“Dedication of the Lutheran Church in Sheridan [Township]. Pursuant to the friendly invitation of Pastor Sessler, we traveled on Sunday morning to Sheridan Township in order to attend the dedication of the Lutheran Church there. Through the kindness of Mr. C. Sonneborn, we received a coach and driver with which we were brought to the town and the scene. As we left town, the weather was overcast and a cold mist was settled on the meadows. Thanks to the endless rain during the last few days, the roads were as soaked and as muddy as possible, and so the coach went forward only slowly, often sinking up to its axles in the deep holes in the road, and the horses were able to pull it out only with great effort, while the sun did constant battle against the damp, unpleasant fog. But just one more push, and the sun broke through and dispersed the fog, radiating its warm, golden glow over the barren autumnal fields and meadows. After a journey of about two and a-half hours, we succeeded in reaching the new church, dedicated to the service of God. The members of the parish were present in large numbers, and had come in haste from great distances in order to attend the celebration. The rooms of the church were packed full, and according to our estimate, there were 300 people there. After the parish sang a song, Pastor Sessler gave a very moving sermon, worthy of the occasion, which was listened to with great attention by all those present.”

“After the morning church service ended, those present dispersed to take their noon meal. Those who had come to the celebration from a great distance were kindly invited and entertained by

those who lived nearby. With Mr. C. Sonneborn and Mr. H. Scharnweber, we went under the hospitable roof of Mr. Fricke, where we enjoyed our noon meal, which was superbly prepared in the German fashion, flavorful and spicy. Around 2:30, the afternoon church service began. Pastor G. Gülker, the former pastor of the parish, appeared at the ceremony by invitation of Pastor Sessler, and after the parish had sung some songs, he gave an uplifting sermon, fiery and skillful, explaining the meaning of the ceremony. After the church service, a young citizen of the world was baptized. The church is built in the pointed arch [Gothic] style, and makes the most pleasant impression from the inside as well as the outside. The altar is simple and is covered with black cashmere bordered with gold fringe. A crucifix stands in the center of the altar, and on both sides are lamps with candles, as well as artistically placed flowers, a simple yet tasteful display. Immediately behind the altar rises the pulpit.”

“Through the greatest perseverance and sacrifice of Pastor Sessler, and the solidarity and self-sacrifice of the small parish, it was possible to build this beautiful little church, and it is to be hoped that the parish may grow and flourish, so that—as Pastor Gülker would say—it may always work against the ever-threatening forces of disbelief.”

“And then, after we had shaken hands with many of our readers, we joined company with the parents of Mr. Sonneborn on the way home, and as the thousands and thousands of stars looked down from the dark firmament, we drove once again on the streets of Carroll.”

“Lutheran Church, Sheridan Township, 1881 Dedication,” *Der Carroll Demokrat*^{xiii}

“The Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Parish in Sheridan [Township]. The above-named parish was established in 1872 by Pastor Haar. It was independent by 1876, and received its own pastor. Pastor G. Guelker, however, remained there only one year. In 1878, the parish called Pastor J. Sessler, who provided his services to the church for a period of 16 years. Since 1894, Pastor A. Müller has held office as its pastor.”

“The parish counts 70 families and about 300 communicants. Up to the present, 437 children have been baptized. Since 1894, about 2000 have received communion. Twenty-six couples have been married, and 69 people have been confirmed. Twenty-three have departed through death. Two other parishes—Grant [Township] and Glidden—have arisen from this parish.”

“Lutheran Church, Sheridan Township, 1899 History,” *Der Carroll Demokrat*^{xiv}

“Sheridan Township. The missionary festival and the dedication of the new school in Sheridan Township last Sunday was accompanied by good weather. It was a splendid fall day which enticed visitors from all parts of the county and even from neighboring counties. There was a large delegation from Carroll, as well as from Breda, Kniest Township, Grant Township, and visitors even arrived from Auburn to take part in the celebration and, through their appearance, to express their happiness over the missionary festival and over the flourishing of the parish. Already by early morning, the pretty little church was unable to hold all the visitors, and many people had to be content with a seat outside the church. At 10:30 a.m., the celebration church service commenced, wherein Mr. Pastor R. Amstein from Anowa [probably Onawa] delivered the sermon. He captivated his listeners from beginning to end, and his manner of elocution was quite pure and clearly understandable. In the afternoon, the church service began at 2:30, wherein Pastor Anton Ehlers from Gray gave the sermon, and then followed the solemn dedication of the pretty schoolhouse. Preceded by the Rev. Pastors, the church directors, and the building committee, those present went to the new school, where Pastor Ehlers performed the dedication amid prayers and songs. The celebration ended inside the school with prayer and communal singing, after which those present exchanged yet a few friendly words, and then everyone went home with the experience of having attended a most beautiful and uplifting celebration. Pastor Sessler deserves recognition for having so beautifully arranged the celebration and for the exalting presence of Pastors Amstein and Ehlers. Pastor Sessler is undoubtedly a worthy man, who through years of striving has made the Evangelical Lutheran Parish in Sheridan Township what it is today—a strong and flourishing parish that possesses a beautiful and tidy church and a church school. The parish members, therefore, are also very attached to their pastor, and the best proof of the mutual love and respect in the parish is the progress it is currently making. We are especially obligated to thank Mr. Jac. Sievers and family for the friendly invitation to the noon meal and for the very noble hospitality. Gladly and often will we think back on that beautiful celebration and the friendly

residents of Sheridan Township.”

“New Lutheran Schoolhouse in Sheridan Twp., 1893,” *Der Carroll Demokrat*^{xv}

The Fred and Franziska Sporleder family attended the Immanuel Lutheran Church of Lidderdale. In 1915, Fred Sporleder traveled to the Carroll railroad station where he obtained the new bell to be installed in the church. The bell is large and heavy. It is rung by pulling a large rope. The bell is tolled when a member of the parish passes away and at the member’s funeral.

Immanuel was and also continues to be the home for many Sporleders and their spouses.^{xvi} The following were baptized there: John Wilhelm Sporleder (1879), Wilhelm Carl Heinrich Sporleder (1881), Louise Sophia Marie Sporleder (1883), Johann Friedrich Kurth (1886), Arnold August Friedrich Sporleder (1890), Anna Katherine Elisabeth Sporleder (1893), Carl Heinrich Sporleder (1899), Friedreich Christian Anton Sporleder (1906), Carl Frederich Sporleder (1907), Ervin Arnold Sporleder (1915), Gladys Alberta Thede (1917), Glen William Thede (Glynn, 1918), Dorothy Marie Thede (1919), Friedrich Arnold Sporleder (1920), Ivan William Thede (1921), Martha Frances Sporleder (1922), Eugene Henry Thede (1923), Catherine Anna Sporleder (1925), Lawrence Anthony Sporleder (1925), Emil Frederich Sporleder (1926), Robert Carl Sporleder (1927), Joan Elizabeth Sporleder (1932), James Carl Sporleder (1935), Larry Leroy Sporleder (1940), Linda Lou Sporleder (1941), Steven Stanley Sporleder (1946), Mary Margaret Sporleder (1949), Joyce Lee Sporleder (1951), Kristin Lou Sporleder (1952), June Rose Sporleder (1953), Phillip Romaine Sporleder (1954), Marsha June Sporleder (1954), Mark Frederich Sporleder (1954), Sandra Sue Sporleder (1955), Sally Ann Sporleder (1955), Janel Jo Sporleder (1958), Scott Robert Sporleder (1958), Ms. Cheryl Rose Pierce (as adult, 1962), Pamela Jo Sporleder (1965), Curtis R. Sporleder (1968), Michael John Strum (1970), Anna Michele Sporleder (1974), Stacy Marie Sporleder (1975), and Stephanie Kay Sporleder (1978).

The following were confirmed into the Lutheran faith: Wilhelmine Ferdianadline Marie Caroline Boell (April 3, 1887), Anton Sporleder (March 29, 1896), Arnold Sporleder (March 27, 1904), Anna Katherine Elisabeth Sporleder (March 24, 1907), Albert George Johanne Thede (April 4, 1909), Carl Henry Sporleder and Mrs. Emma Wilhemine (nee Sporleder) Thede as an adult (April 19, 1916), Carl William Sporleder (March 20, 1921), Ervin Arnold Sporleder (March 24, 1929), Martha Frances Sporleder and Frederick Arnold Sporleder (April 14, 1935), Catherine Ann Sporleder and Emil Frederich Kurth (April 14, 1940), Robert Carl Sporleder (March 29, 1942), Mrs. Ardith Sporleder (February 12, 1953, as an adult), Linda Lou Sporleder (April 3, 1955), Stephen Stanley Sporleder (March 26, 1961), Mary Margaret Sporleder (April 7, 1963), Joyce Lee Sporleder (April 11, 1965), Kristina Lou Sporleder (April 13, 1966), June Rose Sporleder (March 19, 1967), Mark Frederick Sporleder (April 7, 1968), Philip Romaine Sporleder (March 30, 1969), Janel Jo Sporleder (April 15, 1973), Stacy Marie Sporleder and Anna Michele Sporleder (May 29, 1988), and Stephanie Sporleder (April 12, 1992).²⁰

The following were married there: Albert John George Thede and Laura Katherine Francis Sporleder (1917), John Frederich Kurth and Anna Katherine Elisabeth Sporleder (1919), Carl Sporleder and Sophia Sievers (1931), Ervin Sporleder and Luella Breidert (1940), Theodore Hoemann and Martha Sporleder (1948), Wilbur Woock and Marie Kurth (1950), Emil Luetze and Linda Lou Sporleder (1961), Roger E. Sporleder and Cheryl Pierce (1962), Donald Sturm and Mary Sporleder (1969), Steven Sporleder and Marilyn Bonney (1973), Mark L. Lase and Joyce L. Sporleder (1975), Philip R. Sporleder and Marilyn K. Nelson (1978), and Troy Edward Jackson and Anna Michelle Sporleder (1994).

Funeral service and interment were there for the following: Friederick Christian Anton Sporleder (1906), Elisabeth Werner (mother of Franziska nee Werner Sporleder, 1906), Carl Henry (Charles) Sporleder (1910), Sporleder baby (1910), Fred (Fritz) Sporleder and Franziska Sporleder (1937), Sporleder baby (1945), Marsha June Sporleder (1964), Anna Catherine Elisabeth (nee Sporleder) Kurth (1970), Arnold August Friederich Sporleder (1971), Gretchen Catherine (nee Faber) Sporleder (1975), and John F. Kurth (1981).

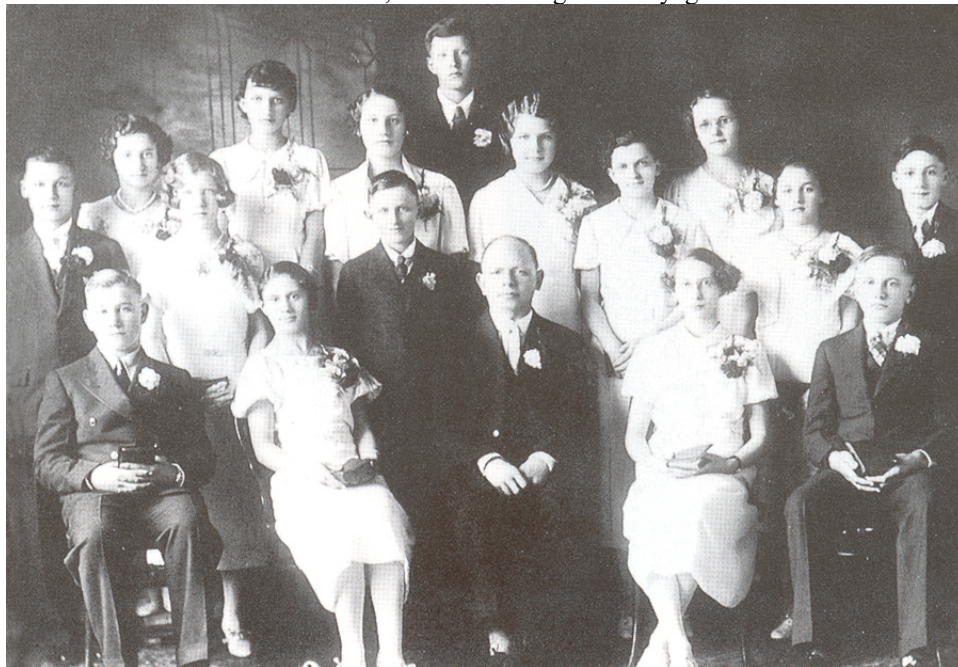
²⁰ The confirmation photos were taken from the *One Hundred Twenty-Five Years in God’s Hands, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lidderdale, Iowa*.

Confirmation
1921
Carl William
Front row to



Class of
Sporleder
the right

Confirmation Class of 1929
Ervin Anton Sporleder
Middle row, second from right with eyeglasses



Confirmation Class of 1935
Martha Francis Sporleder and Frederick Arnold Sporleder

Second row: far right



Confirmation Class of 1940

Emil Frederick Kurth; second row, second from left
Catherine Ann Sporleder; front row, second from left



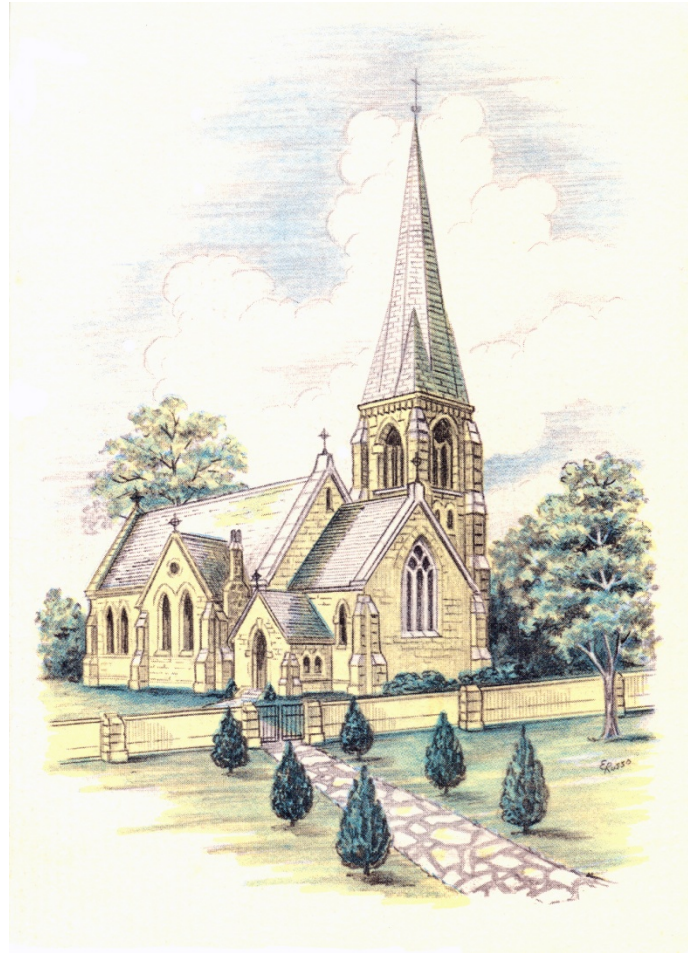
Confirmation Class of 1942
Robert Carl Sporleder
Second row, second from the right



St. John's Lutheran Church

Glidden, Iowa

Anton and Anna (nee Pluckhahn) Sporleder were members of St. John's American Lutheran Church of Grant Township. Charles Heuton and Clara Sporleder were married there. Clara was confirmed as an adult and her funeral was held in this church.



St. John's Lutheran Church²¹

East of Pierce, Nebraska

Saint John's Lutheran Church, two and a half miles east of Pierce holds the distinction of being the first established church congregation in Pierce County. A colony of German settlers had come to that vicinity in 1869. Most of them were from Wisconsin, a few directly from Germany, and a scattering from points south. Ox-team was the prevailing mode of travel, while a few had horses.

As far as memory recalls, the following families were members of the group who gathered for the first church service ever held in the county: Christof Marks, Michael Manske, Christof Krueger, William Otto, John Manske, Carl Klug, William Streich, Fred Koehler, Carl Korth, William Schellin, Henry Buckendahl, Sr., Henry Warnecke, Henry Holz and William Ahlman.



The early history of St. John's Church is closely interwoven with St. John's Church at Norfolk. In 1870, a number of Lutherans around Norfolk and Pierce asked the late Rev. A. W. Freeze of Cuming County to serve them. In July, 1871, Rev. J. C. Rupprecht came to Norfolk as the first resident pastor.

In those days it was a long journey to and from Norfolk and with the aid and advice of Rev. Rupprecht, the Pierce Lutherans withdrew from

the Norfolk church and on October 23, 1871 organized St. John's near Pierce. In the early days the Norfolk pastor continued to come to the Pierce colony. The first service was held in the sod home of William Otto.

Following the organization of St. John's Church, Rev. Rupprecht of Norfolk served until July 26, 1874. The meetings were held in the schoolhouse of District Number Three. At that time Rev. S. Estel became the first resident pastor, his territory covering all of Pierce County. Rev. Estel remained here until 1882. During that time a parsonage had been built on the present church property. Rev. H. Bremer was the next pastor serving until 1894.

In 1884, the first church, twenty-six by forty-six, was dedicated. Rev. Louis Bendin and Rev. A. Hofius also served as pastors and in 1912. Rev. Hilpert was called from Wisner and is still serving in 1940. The present church was built in 1913. From the very first, a parochial school was held in connection with the church.

Echoes of the Past and Along Pioneer Trails in Pierce County Nebraska, by Esther Kolterman Hansen, pages 32-33^{xvii}

The Buckendahl and Warneke families were very instrumental in the founding and development of St. John's Lutheran Church. Henry Buckendahl and Lena Sporleder were married there. Lena attended school and was confirmed into the Lutheran faith at St. John's Lutheran School. Emma Sporleder was baptized there on September 4, 1887. Albert and Mary Sophia (nee Sporleder) Koehler attended school at St. John's Lutheran School where they were confirmed into the Lutheran faith. They are interments in the St. John's Lutheran Church Cemetery. Henry and Martha (nee Koehler) Sporleder are interred in St. John's Cemetery. Ella Dorthea Sporleder was baptized and confirmed at St. John's Lutheran Church. Lizzie (nee Buckendahl) Koehn was baptized and confirmed at St. John's Lutheran Church, Pierce. Louise (nee Sporleder) Koehler lead the church choir on Sundays and her funeral was there. Christina Lena (nee Poignee) Sporleder confirmed there and her funeral was held there. Her husband's, John Sporleder, funeral was there. John's first wife, Emma Meier, is interred there. Albert Koehler was baptized, confirmed and married there and his funeral was also there. His wife, Mary (nee Sporleder) Koehler, was confirmed and married there as well as her funeral. Henry Sporleder was confirmed there and his funeral was there. Ella Sporleder was baptized there. William Sporleder, son of William and Marie (Berens) Sporleder is interred there.

²¹ The photo of St. John's taken June 2005 was provided by Duane Luebe.



Concordia Lutheran Church

Concord, Nebraska

Arthur Nelson was baptized and confirmed in the Concordia Lutheran Church. His funeral services were also held at there. Arthur and Ella (nee Sporleder) Nelson are interred in the Concord Cemetery.

Zion Lutheran Church^{xviii} **Pierce, Nebraska**

“Zion Lutheran Church was organized on August 20, 1903, in response to the desire for a Missouri Synod Church to minister to spiritual needs of residents within the community and those living to the west of Pierce. A Lutheran church was already in existence a few miles to the east (St. John’s Lutheran Church). A number of men had met earlier in the spring to begin the process of obtaining a pastor, and in May, Zion’s first pastor arrived to assist this group in forming a new congregation. By December, a church building had been erected on donated lots, with a wing closed off for a Christian Day School. In 1903, the membership of Zion stood at 102 souls.”

“The remaining lots of the block of property were acquired in 1908, where a parsonage was soon built and the teacherage remodeled some years later. In 1915, a two-room schoolhouse was erected on the northwest corner of this block. By moving the students into their new quarters, more seating became available in the church for a membership that had grown to over 500. School enrollment was then at 71 with two teachers employed.”

“During the next few decades several church organizations were formed and proved to be of invaluable service to both the congregation as a whole and to individuals as well. The years of World War I, the flu epidemic of that decade, and the Great Depression of the Thirties were solely trying times, but with God’s grace Zion continued to thrive. Shortly after World War II, there were 842 members, and discussions were held concerning the need for a larger edifice.”

“Before this could become a reality, however, the parsonage was replaced in 1949, and an addition to the school was built in 1953, filling dire needs. There were three Sunday services by this time, and discussion again surfaced concerning the need for a larger church. A committee was organized to raise funds during the Fifties for this project.”

“The old parsonage and the teacherage were moved off the block in 1958 and 1960 respectively, providing the necessary space for the new building. On August 5, 1962, dedication services were held for the present house of worship. Membership stood at close to 1,000. The old building was used as a parish hall for several years until razed in 1970. An extension to the west wing was added at that time, joining the church to the school building. This provided additional classrooms, a kitchen, and a spacious parish hall and meeting room. School enrollment had hovered around 100 for quite some time, with a faculty of four.”

“After many years of effort in providing adequate facilities, a renewed sense of purpose arose in 1983, when it became apparent that one pastor could not meet the spiritual needs of so many members. A sharper focus was placed on the spiritual life of the congregation. To help the members and the pastor of Zion more effectively fulfill their duties, Zion availed itself to the Synod’s vicarage program, and in 1987 turned to an assistant pastor more continuity in ministry. A new organ was also installed in 1987, and was dedicated to the glory of God on Thanksgiving Day.”

“As of January 2000, we had 1164 baptized members and 916 communicant members.”

By Don Zimmer

Heinrich and Dorothea (nee Warneke) Buckendahl are interred in the Zion Lutheran Cemetery. William and Marie (nee Berens) Sporleder are interred there. Richard L. Malzahn, husband of Ella Sporleder, is interred there. Ella was confirmed and also interred there. Albert and Lizzie (nee Buckendahl) Koehn are interred there as well as her brothers Hugo, Ed, Ruben, and Otto Buckendahl.



**St. John's Lutheran Church
Randolph, Nebraska**



St. John's Lutheran Fox Lake, Wisconsin

"St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Two Rivers and the Tannery Church (Emanuel Congregation). In the early years (1850-60), Two Rivers was an area of sparse settlements around the townships. Services were held in the homes of residents until the churches were established and a church building could be erected. One of those early homes was that of Irwin Wilke in the area of Shoto. Pastor Goldammer was the first pastor to visit the area. After he left, Pastor Philip Koehler of the Manitowoc congregation made frequent visits to the area."

"Three miles up the East Twin River from Shoto, Emanuel Congregation was established on September 9, 1860. Many of the Two Rivers Lutherans traveled up the river by boat or on foot to meet for church in the small village near the tannery. It has been recorded that in November 1862, Pastor Koehler performed 35 baptisms. Thirty-one persons signed the constitution of the newly formed parish. Land was purchased for the church and cemetery."

"The Lutherans in the village of Two Rivers decided they no longer wanted to travel up the river for services. On February 1, 1861, St. John's was established. The first services were held at Smith's Meeting house, located on Washington Street between 15th and 16th streets. The building was built in 1857 and served as a gathering place for the congregation."

"On May 14, 1864, St. John's purchased the church building of St. Paul Episcopal Church. St. Paul had been abandoned for several years due to the loss of members during the Civil War. When this church building was purchased, Emanuel Congregation at Tannery was disbanded. Only the cemetery remains."

"As early as 1861, occasional Lutheran services were held in the village of Two Rivers, but it was not until 1863 that St. John's Congregation was organized by Rev. H. Barthels, a missionary pastor of the church. In the same year 'the little brown church' built and owned by the Episcopalians was purchased from Bishop Kemper and was used as a place of worship by the new congregation. Rev. Barthels remained until the latter part of 1865 and was succeeded by Rev. Braun and under his pastorate a parsonage was built."

"In October 1869 Rev. Braun was succeeded by Rev. Zuberbier, who died in the midst of his activities in 1872, whereupon Rev. C. Jaeger assumed pastoral duties for six years, he now being a resident of Racine. His successor was Rev. P. Lucas, who passed away at Two Rivers July 28 1881, Rev. J. P. Koehler then taking up the work. He remained seven years, at the end of which time he resigned to accept a position as professor in the Northwestern Theological Seminary in Watertown."

"It was under his guidance that the congregation decided to build a new church edifice. The building operations, however, were carried on by his successor, Rev. A. F. Siegler, the dedication taking place in 1899. In September 1892, the present pastor, Rev. C. A. F. Doehler, assumed charge of the church and under his leadership it has prospered, numbering now about nine hundred communicants."

"The school, started at the same time as the church, was for ten years under the care of the pastors, but from that time on teachers were hired and the institution now numbers 160 scholars. Two frame structures are utilized for school purpose, one of them being the old church."

A History of Manitowoc County by Ralph G. Plumb^{xix}

Funeral services for Hulda (nee Klausch) Jonas, Emil C. Jonas, Martha (nee Schmidt) Jonas were held there.

**St. Peters Evangelical Lutheran Church and School
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin**



St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church and School

Sturgeon Bay, WI



History of St. Peters

111 Years of Blessings at St. Peters Lutheran Church^{xx}

“From 15 members in 1891 to almost 1,700 a hundred years later, St. Peters congregation has grown by God’s grace. Our pastors: John Kaiser, Martin Kionka and Emil Schulze conducted services in German in the late 19th Century as St. Peters pledged \$300 for a church and school building. The congregation became affiliated with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in 1893. Pastor Fredrick Schumann began a 40-year ministry at St. Peters in 1904. A year later, parishioners asked that services be offered in English. The church was wired for electricity in 1906, in time for the Christmas program. In 1917, the congregation decided to rebuild the existing church, and three years later spent \$900 for the property where the church now stands. The balcony was enlarged in 1929 and in 1931, a new basement was put under the church, and water was installed. New art-glass windows were also added.”

“The church constitution was translated from German into English in 1932, and the liturgy was changed to allow the congregation and pastor to say the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer in unison. In

1939, the church was enlarged in preparation of the 50th anniversary. German services were discontinued in 1941, and in 1944 Pastor Theophil Baganz was installed. In 1945, plans for building a new church were explored. Groundbreaking was held April, 1950. The new church was dedicated Aug. 5, 1951."

"Sunday School for grade school children started in 1946, and Vacation Bible School began in 1948. The children's choir started a year later. Worship services were broadcast on the radio for the first time in February, 1952. Groundbreaking for the education building was held in June, 1964."

"Pastor Otto Henning accepted the call to be assistant pastor in 1967. After his retirement, Pastor Henning was replaced by Pastor Darald Gruen who was ordained and installed in June, 1973."

"Research was started in 1974 on the feasibility of starting a Christian Day School. It was again discussed in 1981, and by fall, 1983, St. Peters started classes in its Lutheran Elementary School. Principal and teacher Frank Corona and teacher Rhoda Lemke were installed. Jan Seiltz was called as a part-time kindergarten teacher. In 1984, Paul Lutze was called as a full-time teacher, and Arlene Corona was called to take Mrs. Seiltz's place. LES enrollment was 76. Steve Biedenbender was called as the fifth full-time teacher. After he left, Mary Maas was called to take his place. LES enrollment by 1990 was 123."

"After Pastor Gruen accepted a call to Antioch, IL, Pastor John Mattek was installed at St. Peters in August, 1978. Pastor Baganz retired in 1979, and the congregation called Pastor Robert Siirila. He left for a call as a missionary in Taiwan in 1974, and Pastor Robert Schultz accepted a call to St. Peters. In 1989, Pastor David Beckman accepted a call to St. Peters, replacing Pastor Schultz. Renovation of the church was finished in December, 1990, in time for the centennial celebration."

Linda (nee Tess) Robilland attended this church.

**St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Mishicot, Wisconsin**



“During the mid 1800’s, most of the citizens in and around Mishicot found people of their own faith and worshipped in groups in homes and schoolhouses. At first they were served by preachers who were “circuit riders.” These preachers almost exclusively men, traveled from community to community. Their aim was to establish congregations, and eventually be able to have their own congregation to serve as Pastor.”

“Pastor Carl F. Goldhammer made infrequent trips to the Mishicot area. Pastor Goldhammer organized the Newtonburg and Manitowoc congregations, as well as the one in Mishicot. On May 20th, 1861 a group of dedicated Christians along with Pastor Goldhammer, organized St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Township of Mishicot, Manitowoc County, Wisconsin. The little congregation met in homes and a small school house located on Cemetery Hill (near Holy Cross II Cemetery) across from Siebold’s Mill.”

“During the period 1863-1872, the congregation was served by Pastor Bartles, Pastor Quehl, and Pastor Zuberbier of Two Rivers. The church records show that Diedrich Wenzholz was an Elder of the church since about the time he arrived in Mishicot (1867). He attended all of the church meetings and for 3-4 years he kept the minutes of the meeting writing them in German. At this time, all of the meetings and services were held in German.”

“By 1871, the congregation realized they were quickly outgrowing the small schoolhouse and started thinking of a church building of their own. To prepare for this they decided to purchase land to build on. Struggling to make enough to survive themselves, the cost of the land was a little more than the treasury of the congregation could provide. A meeting of the congregation was called to discuss the situation. After the congregation voted to borrow the money, Wilhelm Blum (William Blum) and Johann Heinrich Wulf (Henry Wulf) lent the congregation \$200 at 10% interest, to be payable over two years. The mortgage was signed by Carl Wilsman, Frederick Drews and Dietrich Knickrehm. Finances in the early congregation didn’t improve very rapidly so it was over five years before the mortgage was paid. The courthouse records show that on December 6, 1878 at 11:30 a.m. the satisfaction of the mortgage was received and recorded in Volume 5, page 595. The satisfaction of mortgage reads as follows:

to-wit John Wulf and Wilhelm Blum do hereby acknowledge satisfaction and payment in full of a certain mortgage, bearing date of the 25th day of August A.D., 1871 executed by Carl Wilsman, Frederick Drews and Diedrich Knickrehm, trustees of the German

Evangelical Lutheran Society of Mishicot. To Adolph Manson which said mortgage was duly recorded in the office of Register of Deeds in the County of Manitowoc in the State of Wisconsin, on the 31st of May A.D. 1872 at 11:00 a.m. in Volume X of mortgages on page 240 and do hereby release the same, and all our rights, etc. signed by Wm. Blum and John Wulf.

"Pastor Nietman and Pastor Frankenstien served the church from 1872-1874. During Pastor Frankenstien's service, a parsonage was build. His home was used as a school for individual and group instruction. Pastor Jaeger served the church from 1874-1881."

"A new church building was erected in 1875. The frame structure built in 1875 served the congregation until 1925, when the present edifice was erected. The old school building was sold and the new church was put up. The architect of the building was Karl Koehler. From the air, you can immediately spot that St. Peter's is a church, as it was designed in the shape of a cross. The building is made from red granite stone, from Red Granite, Wisconsin. When the church was built, the stones were shipped in from Red Granite to Francis Creek, Wisconsin. The men of the congregation brought horse drawn wagons to the depot in Francis Creek to pick up the stones, and take them back to the building site in Mishicot. On June 12, 1927 the new church building was dedicated."

"During the period 1881-1902, Pastor Prohl, Koehler, Ziegler, and Doehler served the church. Pastor Bartels, pastor of the Two Rivers congregation, served in 1886. In 1902, St. Peter's and Rockwood congregations combined to form one parish. The two are still combined today."

"The present parsonage was built during the service of Pastor Gustave Vator. This parsonage still remains and is in use today. Pastor Dornfeld served the church during the years 1908-1911. In 1911, Pastor Edward Zell began his 47 year service of St. Peter's and Rockwood Churches. He also served Jambo Creek Church until 1949 when the church disbanded. Pastor Zell received three calls to leave the congregation but was dedicated and remained to serve the people of Mishicot."

"The picture to the right was taken in front of the Wenholz farmhouse, still standing just up the grade from East Main Street past and across the street from the entrance to the apartments. During his first year in Mishicot Pastor Zell was unmarried and lived at least for a while with the Wenholzes. The horse on Pastor Zell's buggy is named Easy (for his initials EZ). The lady in the buggy with Pastor Zell is Ida Wenholz, daughter of Diedrich. She later became Mrs. Hugo Ploekelman. According to Bill Zell, son of Pastor Zell, this may be a show-off picture of his new horse. Pastor Zell bought it in Juneau and drove up to Mishicot in three days. He told Bill once he had seen this horse before going to Mishicot, fell in love with her, and at the first opportunity went back and bought her.



Diedrich Wenholz Sophia Carstens Wenholz Rev. Edward Zell and Ida Wenholz

That horse and buggy were put to good use in courting Alice Jindra when she was teaching school up on the Range Line somewhere. Pastor Zell married Alice, daughter of George Jindra, Jr. and Mary Lenhardt Jindra. They had two sons and three daughters."

"In January 1917, the church voted to pay Diedrich Wenholz, \$45.00 as an annual salary to keep the church clean and to ring the bell at the start of services and for the daily 6 o'clock ringing. During the week, Diedrich would prepare the church for special occasions. He pulled the church bell announcing the weddings of the young couples that were married, and tolling for an elderly parishioner who had died. Diedrich was janitor of the church for 36 years. He and his wife, Sophie Wilhelmina Carstens Wenholz (daughter of Johann Herman Carstens (Herman Carstens) and Marie Boli Carstens, were members of the church for over 60 years."

"Before 1920, all of the services were spoken in German. It was decided in 1920, that once per month, services would be spoken in English. As the population of the area grew, more and more people began speaking English, and leaving their native tongues. By 1930, the congregation voted to hold three church services in English and only one in German."

“In 1932, Miss Alice Zell (daughter of Pastor Zell) began the church choir. In 1933, Ladies Bible Hour was started. A Conn Electric Organ was purchased and put in the church in 1953. You could hear Miss Alice Zell proudly playing that organ every Sunday morning.”

“In 1958, the congregation mourned the passing of Pastor Zell. The congregation went three months with a temporary pastor until Rev. David Worgull answered the call. During this time, Vacation Bible School started and the Young Peoples’ Society. In 1961, the church had hopes of building a Christian Day School sometime in the future. They purchased 4½ acres of land north of the church on the hill and 1961 was also the year of their Centennial Celebration.”

“In 1965, Pastor Arlyn Schmeling was vacancy pastor to the congregation. On November 20, 1966 Pastor Herbert Kesting answered the call to the church. Pastor Kesting was from Gibbon, Minnesota. In 1968, the tower and sacristy were remodeled. Pastor Kesting celebrated 35 years of Pastoral service in 1971.”

“During this same time, an addition was added to the church, which included new Sunday School rooms and a church nursery. Frederick and Hazel Eisenmann donated to the church an Electric Carillon in 1993. It was donated in memory of their parents. Pastor Kesting was laid to rest in Cemetery 63 in 1999. On March 3rd, 1985, Pastor David Waege was called to serve the congregation. Pastor Drews served from about 1997-99. The current pastor held his installation service on June 11, 2000.”

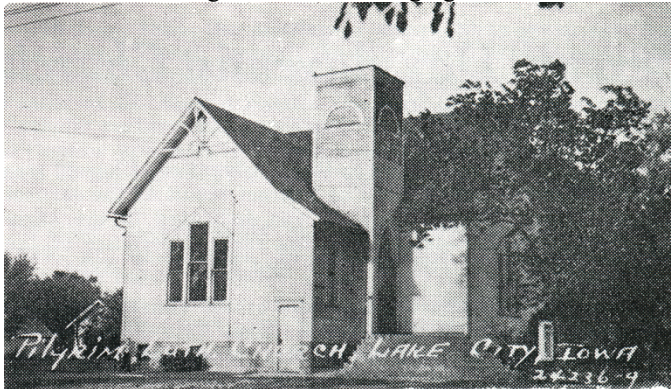
Funeral services for Harry G. Jonas and Fred T. Jonas were held at this church.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Lake City, Iowa



In the early part of 1927, Rev. R. Hermann of Lidderdale, Iowa made a house to house canvass of Lake City and found that there were enough Lutherans to warrant the starting of a congregation. Upon the recommendation of the District President, Rev. Ad Schwidder of Wall Lake, Rev. E. L. Wittkopp of Ulmer and Auburn served as pastor and services were held in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

On May 27, 1928, the congregation was organized and Rev. Wittkopp was formally called. Charter members were Henry Sporleder, Carl Sporleder, Fred Schug, A. J. Lovett, Frank Grote and L. W. Sievert. In September 1929, Mr. A. O. Bleeke, a student at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, was placed in Lake City to assist the Rev. E. L. Wittkopp. After serving the congregation for one year, Mr. Bleeke returned to Springfield and Mr. Paul Voight, also of Springfield, came to serve as a student pastor for one year. In the spring of 1931, Pastor Wittkopp accepted a call to Marcus, Iowa and Rev. Ad Schwidder served the congregation as vacancy pastor. On April 16, 1931, a call was extended to candidate A. O. Bleeke who then served Pilgrim Lutheran congregation as its first resident pastor.



OLD PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH BUILDING

In August 1931 the congregation voted to buy the United Brethren property which consisted of a frame church building, furnishings and a six room parsonage. The church was dedicated on November 22, 1931. Rev. A. O. Bleeke received a call in January, 1937 to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Carroll, Iowa and was released. The vacancy was of short duration and on April 18, 1937; Rev. Luther Loesch of St. John's Lutheran Church, Deloit, Iowa was installed. Shortly thereafter, the congregation joined the Lutheran Church, the Missouri Synod, as a voting

member and maintained steady growth under the leadership of Pastor Loesch.

In 1940, it numbered 217 souls, 155 communicants and 26 voting members. A Ladies' Aid, Walter League and Christian Fellowship Club had been organized during this period. After six years of service, Pastor Loesch accepted a call to Trinity Lutheran Church in Algona, Iowa and Pastor Heddrich of Farmhamville, Iowa served as vacancy pastor until July 4, 1943, when Rev. A. J. Abel of Woolstock, Iowa was installed. During his pastorate, a Reuter organ was purchased and the congregation became self-supporting. On May 31, 1946, Rev. Abel accepted a call to Arriba, Colorado and Rev. E. A. Fritz of Auburn, Iowa served as vacancy pastor. In November 1946, Rev. Albert Huber of Koehler, Wisconsin was called and after serving the congregation three years, he accepted a call back to Wisconsin. The congregation was served by Rev. V. Heine of Ulmer, Iowa until September 24, 1950 when Rev. Arnold F. Boehnke of Fort Dodge, Iowa

was installed.

The following years, there was rapid growth of the congregation and an expansion program became necessary. L. W. Sievert, Herman Beckman, Lawrence Kruse, Paul Mack, and A. W. Turner were selected on March 5, 1954 to serve on the building committee. On November 14, 1954, ground breaking ceremonies were held. The corner stone was laid on March 28, 1955. On September 18, 1955, the new church was dedicated. Stanford Griffith of Fort Dodge, Iowa served as architect and C. I. Hersom of Laurens, Iowa was the contractor. Today (1956), Pilgrim Lutheran Church numbers 417 souls and 269 communicants.

Rev. Arnold F. Boehnke, Pilgrim Lutheran Church^{xxi}

Henry and his son, Carl Sporleder, were among the original founders of Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Lake City in 1928. Family lore is that Henry and his brother Fred came to Lake City on weekends and canvassed the town from house-to-house asking the residences if they were interested in forming a Lutheran church.

Waldo Sporleder was a member of the first confirmation class in 1928. Ivan Thede was baptized and confirmed there. A memorial funeral was held for him after he was killed during World War II. Dale and Larry Sporleder were confirmed there in 1955. Robert and Ann (nee Sporleder) Jacobs were married there in 1961. Emma (nee Sporleder) Thede as well as Ernest and Martha (nee Patten) Sporleder's funeral services were held there. Ernest Sporleder was the finally original member to pass away on January 30, 2005.

United Brethren Church Rural Parsons, Kansas^{xxii}

The European originator of the United Brethren sect predates the Reformation. John Huss (1371-1415) was an early leader of the revolt against the Catholic Church. He disagreed with the Church's position on Holy Communion and the secular authority of the Pope. He believed the communicant should receive both the bread (host) and the wine (chalice). He disagreed with the Pope having a political role and that he should be limited to spiritual leadership of the Church. Huss' opposition resulted in his execution in 1415 by burning at the stake. In 1436, an agreement was reached in which the church in Bohemia was authorized to administer both the chalice (wine) and the host (bread) to all communicants. John Huss' followers became known as the Czech Brethren and later the Moravians. Huss' beliefs were very instrumental to the later Lutheranism movement.

The Moravian Brethren was organized in 1457. A group referred to as the Hussites, named for John Huss, gathered on the estate of the King of Bohemia, George Podiebrad, near Lititz, about 100 miles east of Prague. Later, they took the name *Unitas Fratrum* (United Brethren). To escape the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), they migrated into neighboring Silesia and Moravia. Still, they almost disappeared as a separate religion during the 1500 and 1600s by forced conversions to Roman Catholicism. In 1722, some Moravian Brethren settled in Saxony on property owned by the reformer Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf and formed a community named Herrnhut. They became a home for many others of the Brethren belief.

James Oglethorpe (English military general and philanthropist, 1696-1785) invited the Moravians to his debtors' colony in Georgia in 1735. However many unexpected hardships, caused them later to move to Pennsylvania where they founded the communities of Bethlehem and Nazareth. Count Zinzendorf later relocated other Brethren to America hoping to unit all Germanic non-Catholic groups, including the Mennonites, Lutherans, and Reformed Church, into a single religious with similar cultural roots. He was unsuccessful and some groups moved to North Carolina in 1752 and founded Old Salem in 1766. Quakers and Scots founded Winston just north of Salem and the two cities grew together. This locale is now the depository for many historical and genealogical records of the Moravian Church.

The Hutterian Brethren was organized in 1528 and is also known as the Bruderhof. Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), Felix Mantz (ca. 1498-1527), and Conrad Grebel (1498-1526) began this movement in Switzerland in 1522 with pacifism essential to their Anabaptist theology. A basic tenet of this movement was adult baptism instead of infant baptism practiced by others. With persecution in Switzerland and southern Germany, they found refuge in Moravia where Jacob Hutter was their leaders. Further Catholic persecution forced the Hutterites to seek refuge in Ukraine in 1595. In 1874-1879, they emigrated to the United States and then north to Canada in 1918.

The American origin of the United Brethren in Christ started with Philip William Otterbein (1726-1813), German-American clergyman. He and Martin Boehm (1725-1812) were co-founders. After pastoral work in Germany, Otterbein immigrated to America in 1752 as a missionary of the German Reformed Church. In 1767, he attended an interdenominational "Great Meeting" near Lancaster, Pennsylvania where he heard a powerful conversion story by a Mennonite speaker, Martin Boehm.

Otterbein was a successful evangelist mainly in the German settlements of Pennsylvania and Maryland and became pastor of an independent congregation in Baltimore known as the Evangelical Reformed Church. While continuing his association with German Reformed Church, Otterbein worked with Boehm and a small group of lay ministers to establish United Brethren by 1789. There was no formal structure to the United Brethren until 1800 when they officially organized near Frederick, Maryland. In order to distinguish themselves from the Moravians who were also called United Brethren from their Latin title *Unitas Fratrum*, the group added the words "in Christ" to their title. Otterbein and Boehm were elected bishops.

In the late 1700s, many United Brethren congregations were formed throughout Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and generally adopted names associated with their locality. One such congregation on the east shore of the Susquehanna River came to be called River Brethren, which would later evolve into the Brethren in Christ. Others would be known as River Mennonites, United Zion Holiness, Old Order River Brethren, Yorker Brethren, and Tunkers. The last moniker came about because of their practice of

dunking the person fully and completely under the water. Traditionally, this was also done three times to honor the holy trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

The Hoffmanites were a Pennsylvania group of United Brethren ministers and laymen under Rev. George Hoffman who separated in the late 1860s over doctrinal issues. First known as "Hoffmanites," they later organized in 1878 as the United Christian Church. The majority group known as New Constitution/Liberals merged with the Evangelical Church in 1946 and adopted the name Evangelical United Brethren Church. In 1968, they merged with the Methodists to form the United Methodist Church.

The first establishment of Brethren congregations in the state of Kansas began late in the territorial period when a church was organized at Lecompton with five members led by W. A. Cardwell, a missionary and the first preacher of this denomination in this community. In July, 1869, a church was organized at Topeka with eight members, and within a short time a church building was erected. Progress was made by the United Brethren in Kansas during the next 20 years. An 1890 Census gave the number of congregations as 155 with 5,745 members. By 1906, the United Brethren ranked seventh in the state with a membership of 15,998.

While living in Parsons, Neosho County, Kansas from 1903 until 1913, Henry and Minnie Sporleder and their children attended the local United Brethren church because there was no Lutheran church in the area. The Otterbein United Brethren in Christ Church is a rural church located near Parsons, Kansas.

ⁱ “Evangelisch-lutherische Kirchengemeinde St. Stephanus zu Egestorf,” as retrieved on Jul 31, 2005 20:39:01 GMT, <<http://www.egestorf.de/stephanuskirche/>>.

ⁱⁱ Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676), the “sweet singer of Lutheranism” was born at Gräfenhaim near Wittenberg, Germany. His father, Christian Gerhardt, was the *Grafenhaynichen burgermeister* (mayor). Paul was an ordained Lutheran pastor and also considered a poet. With Johann Crüger, they produced some of the greatest Lutheran chorales including “Awake, My Heart with Gladness,” (“*Auf, auf, mein Herz*”), “Now All the Woods Are Sleeping” and “All My Heart this Night Rejoices.” Also, Gerhardt wrote 123 hymns, which appeared at intervals from the year 1649 onward. Many were published for the first time in the *Praxis Pietatis Melica* (1656). Many of his hymns were well known to English readers by translations beginning with John Wesley including Wesley’s translations of “Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me” and “Commit Thou All Thy Griefs.” Gerhardt was acclaimed as the greatest hymnal composer in Germany and possibly all of Europe.

“Paul Gerhardt,” as retrieved on Mar 3, 2005 00:38:38 GMT, <http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns_and_Carols/Biographies/paul_gerhardt.htm>.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Franco-German War,” 1911 Online Encyclopedia, © 2003, 2004 Love To Know, as retrieved on Apr 13, 2005 08:37:52 GMT, <http://35.1911encyclopedia.org/F/FR/FRANCO_GERMAN_WAR.htm>.

^{iv} “German Evangelical Synod,” as retrieved on Jun 15, 2005 18:42:09 GMT, <<http://www.ucc.org/aboutus/shortcourse/evan.htm>>.

“United Church of Christ,” as retrieved on May 19, 2005 10:44:57 GMT, <<http://www.iscucc.org/history.htm>>.

“German Evangelical Synod of North America.” Love To Know 1911 Online Encyclopedia, © 2003, 2004 Love To Know, as retrieved on Jun 9, 2005 19:37:01 GMT, <http://49.1911encyclopedia.org/G/GE/GERMAN_EVANGELICAL_SYNOD_OF_NORTH_AMERICA.htm>.

^v “The Heidelberg Catechism,” ©1998-2000, Committee for the Canadian Reformed Website, ©1985, Standing Committee for the Publication of the Book of Praise, as retrieved on 1 Jun 2005 10:28:17 GMT, <<http://www.canrc.org/resources/bop/hcat/>>.

^{vi} “Martin Luther’s Small Catechism: a ‘Short Course’ in the Christian faith,” as retrieved on Jun 26, 2005 17:14:59 GMT, <<http://www.ucc.org/faith/small.htm>>.

^{vii} “The Book of Concord: The Lutheran Confessions of 1529-1580,” as retrieved on May 18, 2005 07:56:27 GMT, <<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-boc.html>>.

^{viii} “First German Evangelical Lutheran Church, Jubilee Book 1855-1905,” translation by Peter Bruns, posted by Shari Milks and Ellen Rohr, © 1997-2005, www.2manitowoc.com, as retrieved on 21 Jun 2005 05:29:19 GMT, <<http://www.2manitowoc.com/1gerluthbook.html>>.

^{ix} “Kellogg German Lutheran Cemetery, also known as Old German Lutheran,” St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, 8998 Impala Ave, Kellogg, © 1997-2004, IAGenWeb Project a part of the USGenWeb Project, as retrieved on Mar 14, 2005 09:33:53 GMT, <<http://www.iagenweb.org/jasper/cemeteries/kellogggerman/>>.

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^{xvi} Beyond the information in the text as to births, baptisms, confirmations, marriages and deaths; additional documentation was taken from *One Hundred Twenty-Five Years in God's Hands, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lidderdale, Iowa*.

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^{xxi} *Lake City Centennial Historical Booklet* (1856-1956)

^{xxii} "Biographical Sketches of Memorable Christians of the Past, John Huss," by James E. Kiefer as retrieved on Mar 29, 2005 07:11:36 GMT, <<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bio/7.html>>.

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