

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

JORDAN, MINNESOTA

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Saint Paul's Lutheran Church
Jordan, Minnesota

In looking at the history of a congregation such as St. Paul's there are several questions that one feels inclined to ask. The first question would be concerning the beginning of the church. The next question would be about the buildings that have served the congregation. Thirdly one wonders who the builders of the congregation were, that is who were the men who served the congregation as Pastors. Finally one is compelled to find the oldest living members of the church and hear their comments on the past and present of the congregation, referred to as "Babblings" in this paper. These were the questions that I asked as I began to look into the history of the Jordan Congregation that I had served as Vicar. It proved an interesting task.

THE BEGINNINGS

While the town of Jordan had its beginnings in the early 1800's by the middle of that century it had grown to be an attractive town that drew people to its door. By the 1900's the town had two breweries, a chicken hatchery, a stone and brick company, two local newspapers, two cigar factories, two tailors, two harness shops, a millinery, and two churches. St. Paul's was one of those churches.

The earliest settlers of Lutheran persuasion had arrived in 1855 from Illinois. For the first four years little is known of the worship life of these people but in 1859 the first missionary, C.F. Heyer, began to serve the congregation. He held services once every three months. After that a number of missionaries and dual-Parish Pastors served the Lutherans in various homes of the members. Services ranged from once a month to every other week. For the brief period of 1862-1864 services were held every week.

According to the History of the Minnesota Synod the congregation first came into official establishment in 1867. The congregation was called, "Evangelische Lutherische Sankt Pauls Gemeinde, U.A.C. in Jordan, Scott County, Minnesota". Although no actual minutes of this meeting were taken, sixteen years later a verbal account of the event was written down by Pastor J.G. Albrecht. Some of those who were charter members are of some interest. Friederick Kurtz or Cords whose son had entered into theological training but had died before he could put his training to use. Frederick Blume the grandfather of the Rev. Prof. Fred Blume of Seminary fame. There is also Jacob Morlock whose son, grandson, great grandson, and great, great grandson are still or had been members of St. Pauls.

THE BUILDINGS

From the official establishment of the congregation in 1867 the members went to work on building their first worship structure. A lot at the corner of First and Wood St. was purchased for \$90. From there a frame structure measuring 24'X 36'X 14' was erected at a cost of \$700. The chancel furniture and alter were donated by Fr. Krumwiede. It is recorded that members supplied their own pews for a cost of \$5 each. The dedication of this building was Nov. 24, 1868. Somewhere in the period from 1868-1869 the congregation adopted and wrote their first constitution. In 1869 they became members of the young Minnesota Synod.

The next building to serve the congregation and its sister congregation in Belle Plain was found on Third and Wood St. Purchased at \$900 and renovated for an additional \$100 this was the dual-parishes first parsonage. It served the congregation until 1920.

In 1887 the congregation felt the need to expand the buildings in which they worshiped. Plans were drawn up for the addition of a steeple measuring 8' X 8' X 65'. Folding doors separated the steeple from the original church so the room created could serve as either a classroom or as additional

seating during the service. The steeple was dedicated on Reformation Day of the same year. The tower would remain silent for only two months.

The bell of Saint Paul's first rang out on Christmas Eve of 1887. The youth of St. Paul's had gathered gifts and purchased a half-ton bell from the H. Stuckstede and Son Co. of St. Louis. Cost was \$188.65. This bell still serves the congregation today. One other facet of the steeple is the European custom of putting on top of the steeple a rooster. This was done in Jordan and gives one the best clue as to what denomination the other church in town was.

The frame building of 1868 served the congregation until 1910. The congregation had experienced rapid growth and as early as 1902 the building of a new church had been discussed. These discussions led to a property purchase of two lots on Second and Wood St. for \$300. Due to congregational opposition, the resignation of the pastor, and a \$12000 design by architects the matter was dropped until 1908.

In 1908 a new building fund committee was put into action. The success of the committee led to a unanimous decision to build. On Sept 12, 1909 the cornerstone of the second church was laid. It is interesting to note that the "History of the Minnesota Synod" article written by Pastor G.A. Kuhn had hopes of a 1909 dedication. The cost of the 36' X 86' church was \$12,500 and Pastor Kuhn states in his history, "That is certainly some output for a congregation numbering 68 eligible voting members and about 30 single women." The newest church of St. Pauls was dedicated on March 6, 1910. It had a seating capacity of 365.

The old frame church was subsequently sold in 1911 for \$500. The bell in the steeple was moved in to the new church steeple in 1910. The frame building was dismantled and its materials used to build a house on the same lot.

The next building project of the church occurred in 1920-1921. At this time the 38 year old parsonage was sold for \$3500 and a new parsonage was

erected next to the church. It was at this time that both the church and parsonage were now connected to the central steam heating plant of Jordan.

Again the congregation experienced a good growth rate. As early as 1942 the members were aware that action would soon need to be taken. Finally in 1955 the newest church of St. Paul's was dedicated. The building measured 38' X 82' with a fellowship hall-education wing of 44' X 82'. The bell of the original church found its third home here. This is the present building of worship for the Jordan congregation. (It was my priviledge to see film footage of the building of this third church. In one day, through volunteer labor the whole foundation was laid. Throughout construction the members of the congregation gave voluntary labor. It was a sight to see and attests to the faith and willingness of these Jordan members to take an active role in their congregations future.)

In 1973 the congregation erected the present parsonage across from the church. During the planning of the parsonage the Pastor was asked for his thoughts on the lay out. The result is one of the most efficient and practical residents for a Pastor in the Synod. The final building project of the congregation to the present was a large pole building behind the church to accomodate power equipment and serve as a work space for the Pioneer organization.

St. Paul's in Jordan has undergone many changes in buildings since its beginning. It is a congregation that has been blessed many times.

THE BUILDERS

I felt the best way to show the men who served the Jordan area wouldbe in a list type of format. In the first column is the men and their dates for service. The second column is entitled "Highlites".

Rev. C.F. Heyer
1859-1861?

The first missionary to Jordan. He began services in 1859. Services were once every three months. He is responsible for

directing the next man to the area.

(was the founder and first Pres. of Minn. Syn.)

Rev. Adam Blumer

1861?-1862

Served the congregation monthly from Shakopee. Services were in private homes. (another founder of Minn. Syn.)

Rev. Julius Wolf

1862-1864

Originally from Germany he settled in Jordan and held weekly services in the Public School. Because of unorganization of the members and the inability to support him, he accepted a call to Lanesboro.

1864-1867

Congregation served by various traveling missionaries. Pastor Winter the only name recalled.

Rev. Philipp Schmidt

1867-1869

Originally from the Mission House in Basle, Switzerland he was in all probability directed by Minn. Syn. officials to Jordan. Brought about the organizing of the congregation under a constitution and the joining of the Minn. Syn. He also kept the first written records for St. Paul's. Pastor Schmidt also served the congregation in Belle Plain so services were held bi-weekly. The first church was erected at this time.

Pastor Fr. Hoffman

1869-1873

For a brief period the services were conducted by Pastor Fachtmann of Henderson. In 1869 the Jordan and Shakopee churches formed a dual parish served by Hoffman. Services were bi-weekly.

Pastor K. Conrad

1873-1874

Already a resident of Jordan Pastor Conrad was extended a call. Records show that his ministry ended "as the result of difficulties". This may be a reference to Jordan's inability to support a full-time man. Until a new man arrived Pastors: J.H. Sieker, M. Quehl, and L. Emmel served alternately.

Pastor L.F. Frey
1874-1882

Again a dual parish was established between Shakopee and Jordan. During this time the congregation was directed to replace their old hymnals with the hymnal published by the Wisconsin Syn. The churches also had their first doctrinal dispute against the Masons. Several families were lost in the Jordan area. After Pastor Frey left Shakopee desired to discontinue the dual parish. For six months the services were held by Pastor H. Raedeke of Carver.

Pastor J. Gottlieb Albrecht
1883-1897

Arrangements had been made with Belle Plain for a dual parish. The Pastor would reside in Jordan and thus the first parsonage was bought. From Germany Pastor Albrecht took a year of studies at the Lutheran Theological Sem. in Milwaukee. He arrived at Jordan/Belle Plain as a candidate. During his pastorate the addition was added and the bell acquired. In 1890 Jordan broke with Belle Plain when that congregation began to deviate from the Lutheran Confessions. Pastor Albrecht served the segment of the Belle Plain church which broke off and formed a new congregation. In 1892 Jordan took on full responsibility for the Pastor and ended the dual parish. The first organ and chandeliers were added to the church. In 1884 the old constitution was replaced and the congregation was incorporated. The vacancy was served by Rev. E. Moebus. (J.G. is the great grandfather of Mike Albrecht now a Senior at our Seminary.)

Pastor O. Hagedorn
1898-1900

It was during this time that English was first used in the Jordan Church. Once a month on Sunday evening and on every festival Sunday the English language was used. Pastor Hagedorn also began the Ladies Aid in 1898.

Pastor Julius Dammann
1900-1907

The ministry of Pastor Dammann was by and large smooth running. Pastor Dammann resigned his call on Jan.1,1907 for "reasons of illness". Nothing is known of the nature of the problem. A building committee for a second church proved unsuccessful.

Pastor Gustav A. Kuhn
1907-1911
Pastor A. Kuhn

By far the biggest accomplishment of this ministry was the successful completion of the second church structure. Pastor Kuhn was also the author of the article found in the "Geschicht der Minnesota Synod" on the Jordan congregation. Pastor A. Kuhn was the father who was called as a part-time pastor since he was living with his son. During a five month vacancy Pastors: C.F. Kock and R. Gruber served.

Pastor A.M. Eggert
1912-1915

Pastor Eggert's claim to fame was conducting a parochial school in the basement of the church on a full time basis. A German School had been in existence on a part time basis but the originator of this is unknown. The part time school possibly referred to in records may have been a reference to catechism and Sunday School classes.

Pastor A.E. Frey
1915-1922

The son of L.F. Frey became the 13th minister of St. Paul's. English services were increased to two evening services monthly. The old parsonage was sold and the new parsonage erected. Pastor Frey also started the youth organization called the Luther League. Vacancy pastors were: C.F. Kock, O.H. Schmidt, E. Ulbricht, and H. Gamber.

Pastor Louis F. Brandes
1922-1961

By far the longest serving servant of St. Paul's. From his installation on services in English were now conducted every two weeks on

Sunday morning. In 1951 he brought the English language to the forefront and the German was discontinued. Pastor Brandes also discontinued the use of the older hymnals "Hymnal for Evan. Luth. Missions" for the "Ev. Luth. Hymn-book" and then in 1942 for "The Luth. Hymnal". In 1942 the old Barkhoff organ was replaced by a new Wick's Direct Electric pipe-organ. The records of the church and the constitution were now translated into the English. The third church was built during this long ministry. Organizations started by Pastor Brandes are the Stewardship Committee (1958) and the Senior League (1936). In 1959 the use of the weekly printed bulletin began. Pastor Brandes requested his release in 1960. He departed in 1961 and now resides in Peoria, Ill. Pastor Brandes was a member of the Miss. Syn.

Pastor Roy Hoenecke
1961-1970

Under Pastor Hoenecke's ministry the church organization, Board of Christian Education was started. With the help of the Pastor and the B.C.E. not only was a limited supply of Christian education books purchased for general use but the third floor was partitioned off to form extra Sunday School rooms. Other acquisitions during this time were a new heating plant for the church, a stereo tape recorder to tape sermons, and the single pocket envelope system was begun. A lot across from the church was purchased for a future parsonage.

Pastor Verne Voss
1970-

Now the present Pastor of St. Paul's this ministry has been a busy one. Programs started under Pastor Voss were an Evangelism Committee, Lutheran Pioneers, Daughters of Debra, a Jr. Choir, and the Vicarship program. Pastor also started the radio ministry on the air every Sunday at 11:30 via a local station. The first

Vicar was Dennis Schlict, an ELS student during the 1975-76 school year. The next full-fledged program was begun in 1980-81 and still continues. Three other note-worthy events occurred: a new constitution was drawn up, the parsonage of today was built (1973), and the organ was re-worked and a new set of ranks added.

BABBLINGS

In this last part of the paper I have tried to find odd bits of information on the congregation both from talking to some of the oldest members and from church records. The oldest members spoken with were D.M. Liefer, and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Kerkow. D.M. (as she likes to be called) is 83 years old and quite a progressive and interesting lady. She has worked for the Jordan paper since her high-school graduation. Mr. and Mrs. Kerkow were farmers and are respectively 88 and 86 years old. The three summed up their lives in the words of D.M., "I was baptised in the first church, confirmed in the second church, and it looks like I'll be buried in the third."

While many who look back may be inclined to attribute the growth of the church to immigration into Jordan, my three interviews brought out the fact that "the church kept itself going" or "the biggest reason for Jordans growth was the amount of children the congregation had."

On the transition from German to English: "We finally stopped because the congregation decided the Pastor worked too hard to preach in German. He'd finish preaching and then go outside and talk English!"

On the preaching heard: "We always had good preachers. I don't remember anyone who was bad in the pulpit."

The original constitution read, "anyone who does not give \$5 per year will be extracted." Over the years the 5 had been crossed out and then 10 put in. The crossing out continued until 25 was the last figure. This was excluded in the new constitution.

There was also in the original constitution this:

Sexton

I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Ps. 84.

Duties: Keep the church clean, light the lamps, heat the church in winter

and prepare wood needed for this purpose. Air the church in summer so that the congregation need not offer up thanks to the Lord in the heat of the day." How was this man chosen? "It was left to the elders to hire that person who would do the work the cheapest."

In the early 1870's the church was rented for an annual fee of \$12 to \$25 to a Presbyterian congregaation and a Swedish Lutheran congregation.

In 1942 two flags, the Christian Flag and the United States Flag were placed in the church.

The church has several members who have gone on to work for the Lord. Rev. Prof. Fred Blume, Pastor Wilmar A. Schultz, Rev. Henry Schroeder, and teacher Mr. Ferdinand Schultz.

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