

Zion Lutheran Church

Pine City, Minnesota

First Service – August 1884

Incorporated – January 1885

Dedication of First Building – April 24, 1887

Dedication of Second Building – February 6, 1955

Dedication of Building Addition – September 9, 1979

Pastors Serving Zion:

Student Pastor Fischer, 1884-85; Wm. Braunwarth, 1885-88;

H. Dahlke, 1888-90; A.F. Ude, 1890-94;

C. Abel, 1894-1900; A.W. Schultz, 1900-05;

C. Huebner, 1905-09; A. Domman, 1909-10;

G. F. Luebker, 1910-21; Paul Heinke, 1921-27;

Carl Steging, 1927-48; A.W. Roegge, 1949-59;

Ross Schuler, 1959-62; Frank Sass, 1962-69,

David Meyer, 1969-74; Russell Peterson, 1975-77;

Donald Schmiede, 1977-85, Erick Schmiede, 1983-85;

Vernon Dorn, 1985-96, Glen Kleppe, 1997-present

Oh God,



*Our help in
ages past...*

*Our hope for
years to come*

Zion Lutheran Church

125 Years Strong

1884 - 2009



Zion Lutheran Church

Pine City, Minnesota

The following history of Zion Lutheran Church was compiled in 2009 as a part of our 125th anniversary celebration. The content covering the years 1884-1984 was copied almost entirely word for word from the booklet that was prepared for our centennial. At that time, documents were translated from German and the files of the Pine City Pioneer were searched for information. (From 1884 to 1923 the minutes were written in German.) The last 25 years are covered more casually.

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to assemble that centennial booklet. Thank you also to the committee that worked on the 125th for their contribution.

The lumbering town of Pine City was only three years old when a group of German settlers gathered to organize a Lutheran Church. The first official business meeting of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Parish of Pine City was held on August 10, 1884. At that time a formal constitution was drawn up establishing the new parish.

Mr. Oscar Fisher who had been acting minister of the parish and was a student of theology was selected as the "servant" to the new congregation. His wages were set at \$25 a quarter and he was boarded free at the homes of four church members. His wages were collected by Henry Rath, but later other members took turns making the collections. The new pastors duties included teaching school "in connection with Beroun and Rush Lake every third week." A paragraph was added to the constitution setting down the responsibilities and obligations he was to fulfill:..." hire him as the Bible says as a servant of Christ and accept him as their preacher as long as he preaches right, lives morally, and does his duties in true faith."

Plans got underway for construction of a church building on three lots of land donated by Miss Jennie E. McCaine. The building would be financed by collections made by Mr. Fisher, the newly appointed pastor "with God's help" and by donations of materials by members of the congregation.

From the beginning the congregation sponsored a German school and eight members agreed to send their children. In the beginning it was held in the home of H. Lumberg.

During the first few months fourteen additional men signed the constitution, thus becoming voting members of the congregation. Pastor Sievers who had been serving as a temporary pastor previous to Pastor Fisher was released and was

asked for the church records. Church meetings were held on the first Sunday of the month following services, but later this practice was discontinued.

A Board of Trustees was established made up of George Kick, Adolf Radden, Henry Ausmus, Hans Wick, and William Glasow. These men in addition to Henry Glasow also made up the committee which would plan the building of an edifice.

The plans called for a building 28'x40' including the altar nook. Decisions about a tower, the foundation, and exterior were left up to the committee and contractor.

The first constitution was lost so the pastor drew up a new one keeping the Lutheran faith. Later a copy of the original one was found and after a public reading of both, the newly written one was adopted on January 25, 1885. It was signed by George Kick, August Towsley, Hans Wieck, Henry Ausmus, E. Venhoven, Henry J. Rath, Adolf Radden, Hans Kruse, Hans Bottgen, Henrick Kruse, W. Glasow, Henry Brandes, J. Fohottlen, Herman Borchers, N.W. Lohriman, Paul Liebau, Fredrich Hottschule, Christian Dosey, Henry Schultz, Jochim Grimm, E. Dahlke, W. Dahlke, H. Dahlke, J. Wandell, John Kline, and Herman Spearing.

The Articles of Incorporation of the Evangelical Lutheran Zion Society of Pine City were formally filed with the Register of Deeds of Pine County, Minnesota, on January 26, 1885.

At a special meeting in March, 1885, Pastor Fisher presented his resignation effective August 1, 1885, as he planned to continue his studies and return to his "old brotherly synod." Several months after his departure he was requested to return the books and paraments.

By January, 1887, the church building was nearly completed with an outstanding debt of \$300.00 which would be repaid in three years.

The following article was printed in the Pine City Pioneer on January 8, 1887:

"To the Public:

The members of the German Lutheran Church wish to extend their hearty thanks to the many kind friends who have so generously given us financial aid in the erection of our new church and especially the ladies who assisted in the several entertainments given for our benefit. We heartily appreciate your past favors and to enjoy the continuance of the same in the

liquidation of the indebtedness now on our church. Our friends may rest assured that our best wishes will always be with them.
The Trustees"

The dedication was planned for April 24; Pastor H.P. Rolf of St. Paul was invited to take part and was also given power of attorney to look for a new pastor for the congregation. The dedication was reported in the Pine City Pioneer on April 29, 1887, as follows:

"The dedication of the German Lutheran Church which has recently been completed at this place, took place last Sunday and was conducted by Rev. Mr. Rolf of St. Paul and the Rev. Mr. Braunwarth of Rush City. During the day three services were held, one in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. The church building is one of the neatest little edifices of the kind there is along the line of the road, and the completion and dedication of the church speaks volumes for the enterprise and push of the congregation."

At a meeting in July, 1887, it was decided to send a letter of request to the Missouri Synod that the congregation be served by a pastor of the synod from Minnesota and North Dakota District. During the interim the congregation was served by Pastor Sievers and Pastor Braunwarth of Rush City.

Pastor H., Dahlke accepted a call to Pine City in August, 1888, after travel money had been requested. He was asked to introduce the catechism in school and get writing and reading books. Parents paid tuition for German school which was held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings until Easter and after Easter it became day-school. Both English and German were used. Pastor Dahlke was also requested to visit every member of the community.

Mission giving was begun when the Easter collection was used for "sick students in Springfield, Minnesota." (The taking of



collections during service was mentioned as a new idea. Evidently all church monies up to the time had been collected by the "collectors.")



In January, 1889, it was decided that communion would be celebrated every three months. Wine and wafers would be bought by the congregation. A reading service was sometimes conducted by

members of the congregation following Sunday School.

The first Mission Festival was held on September 1, 1889, in the woods. The collection of \$19.50 was to be used for inner mission.

Pastor Dahlke received a call the following year and was "released in peace." In October, 1889, Pastor A.F. Ude was called and accepted. Travel money was collected from the other four congregations: Rush Lake, Rush City, Wyoming, and North Branch.

Pastor Ude introduced a formal Lutheran service that was used by other Lutheran congregations. Although the congregation was in debt locally and had to again borrow \$130 to pay debts, missions collection were taken on one Sunday for the Minnesota - North Dakota district and on three others for "missions or other church purposes.

The church building was refurbished by painting the interior and installing shutters on the outside. Plans for the Christmas tree and gifts for the children were responsibilities of the women.

Beginning in 1891, Sunday School was held after each service and children were to attend "up to their 18th year."

Plans got underway to build a parsonage which was begun August 1, 1891. The Pastor was to visit all members and collect money for the building fund. They had to "drive deep" for water when they placed a pump near the parsonage.

Pastor Ude resigned in 1893 to accept a call to Blue Earth County and Pastor Carl Abel became the new pastor of the congregation.

The Pine County Pioneer of July, 1894, carried a notice of a mission program at the German Lutheran Church with A.J. Schroder delivering a lecture on "Darkest Africa."

In 1894 a shed (barn) 14x16x12' high was built. In January, 1895, more building was planned when a resolution was passed to build a school. A school board was appointed with George Kick and H. Schultz as co-chairman and more plans for the school were set. Smaller children would attend from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. and the older children from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. with a charge of five cents a month.

The pastor was granted a two week vacation "to get a wife," The May 10, 1895 issue of the Pine County Pioneer contained the following:

"Rev. Charles Abel of the German Lutheran Church returned from Chicago accompanied by his bride. Thirty members of the German Lutheran Church surprised the pastor by calling at the parsonage with a pound party, just having returned from his wedding tour."



For the first time discussion was held as to the possibility of an English mission and the question of affiliation with Missouri Synod was discussed and on April 7, 1895, they voted to join.

The December issue of the Pine County Pioneer gave an account of the Christmas celebration in 1895;

"Christmas was observed in royal style by the German Lutherans on Christmas Eve with a large and well filled tree. The entertainment consisted of speaking by 32 of the Sunday School children who also sang seven songs, appropriate for

Christmas, the choir also rendered two selections which were well received. No presents were put on the tree by parents, but Miss Ida Dose received a fine album and pearl penholder in recognition

of her service as organist. Christmas morning divine services were held at 10:00 o'clock."

August 30, 1895 saw the continuation of Mission Festivals at Zion. A combined service with Rush Lake and Rush City congregations was held at Rush Lake. Pine City sent a delegation of 45 according to the local paper's account of the event. Preachers, Prof. A. Landbeck of Concordia College, St. Paul, and Hebrew Missionary Nathaniel Friedman, and Pastor Charles Abel, presented the program. The Rush Lake Brass Band furnished the music and a collection of \$30 was taken. "All those in attendance report a pleasant time."

In 1896 permission was given for sixteen women to organize a Woman's Club. One of the organization's first projects was papering the church. The following year they purchased two lamps and a wall map for the school. They held a picnic for the children in August.

In 1897 it was felt that Rush City, North Branch, and Wyoming should have pastors of their own so the work would be divided. However, five years later the records show that the pastor was again given permission to serve the other towns until they could find a pastor of their own.

Discussions were held at meetings dealing with the position the church should take on mixed marriages. Although it was considered to be "a very dangerous practice," the pastor was not forbidden to conduct such marriages."

The full Evangelical Lutheran liturgy was introduced and it was decided that the evening service should be based on words from the Holy Scripture. The catechism edited by Lehman was introduced.

The church dealt very rigidly with members who did not take communion regularly. One member "who for several years made herself guilty by ignoring the means of grace was talked to for several hours when she finally accepted and acknowledged her guilt."

The upkeep of the church buildings was a constant expense including the painting of the parsonage, installation of electric lights in the church in 1899, the hiring of a chimney sweep for \$1.50, and installing a cement floor in the parsonage basement to keep out the water. The lack of funds stalled the building of a

school house. The congregation wrote synod asking for help of \$10 a month toward the pastor's salary.

In 1899 it was decided to have an English service "once in a while" so English song books were ordered.

Pastor Abel accepted a call to Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Pastor A.W. Schultz was called and accepted the position in April, 1901. At that time a custom which was to be followed for a number of years was introduced. A collection plate was placed near the altar at communion services so participants could give a thank offering which would be used to buy supplies.

Mission work continued with the Easter collection being sent to poor students. The annual Mission Festival was planned at Koletsky's Woods.

The Swedish (Norwegian?) Lutherans used the church and helped pay toward its upkeep. The Pine City Pioneer reported that the Norwegian Lutheran Church conducted Confirmation Services on Thanksgiving Day, 1901 at the German Lutheran Church.

Christmas, 1902 was celebrated with a Christmas tree decorated with candles. Earlier trees had been decorated with candy. George Kick, St. was assigned to watch the tree with a pail of water at his side during the service.

On July 17, 1903 a local drug store, the Breckenridge Pharmacy, published an ad in the local paper:

"Always being interested in the welfare of our churches and after talking with some of the members are willing to show our interest in a substantial manner 'as follows.' Will give half of entire proceeds from our Soda Fountain on each of the following Saturdays (which are usually the best days of the week)

Methodist July 18; Catholic July 25; Presbyterian August 1; German Lutheran August 8.

If the pastors or committee ladies for each denomination will confer with us, will be pleased to do all in our power to make the business of these days as large as possible. Breckenridge Pharmacy"

Action was taken at a business meeting to inform Mr. Breckenridge not to use the name of the parish in the advertisement.

During Lent in 1904, services were held on Wednesday afternoons at 2:30 p.m. Ascension Day services were held at 10 a.m. During services girls were to sit on the women's side of the church if there was enough room. If not, they could sit in the front pews on the men's side. A choir would sing and the Lord's Supper would be served on Pentecost.

Guest speakers, Pastors Kessel and Finaken, preached at the Mission Festival in 1904 and part of the collection was sent to African missions.

In 1904 Pastor Schultz accepted a call to Michigan and Pastor Huebner was called to Zion. Once again special collections had to be taken to eliminate a debt of \$100. Anna Kick was given a gift for being the "organ player."

The Engler house was considered for a school in 1906 and later was purchased and moved in from west of the village. Electric lights were installed the following year.

Although local debts existed, in May a collection was taken for the synod building fund.

Four families resigned because they lived at such a distance that they decided to form their own parish. The first custodian was hired at \$7 a year to make fires and clean the church. Up until this time the job had been shared by the members of the board of trustees.

Another first in 1906 was the sending of a delegate, Mr. D. Grandt, from Zion to a synodical meeting.

At Christmas time \$4.10 was left from the Christmas money so it was given as a gift to the pastor. Pastor Schultz had received a call from a parish in Michigan, and although the congregation felt, "It is God's will not to let him go," he did leave. Again in 1906 a letter was sent to synod to ask for help for the pastor's salary, "because District does not contribute and some members do not contribute." By now the mission Festival was an annual event held each year in August.

The Women's Club wallpapered the church and the men installed an oven in the church. The Kroschel and Brook Park congregations became independent.

Church discipline at this time included warnings to families who "rarely came to church." Several special invitations were extended to them to activate their membership.

Pastor A. Domman became the new pastor in 1909 and served for two years. It was decided to raise the pastor's salary

from \$500 to \$600. Any overage from the Christmas collection would also be given to the pastor as a gift. One dollar rent was collected from the Swedish Lutherans every time they used the church for services.

The congregation celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the completion of the church in 1911 at the annual Mission Festival held in September.

Pastor G.F. Luebker was installed in 1911. His salary was partially paid by the congregations who shared his services. For the first time every member made a pledge and in January, 1912, printed pledge envelopes were introduced. A hot air furnace was added to the church building at this time.

The church continued to be in debt. On July 4, 1913 a dinner was held with the monies going toward the debt. In 1914 the financial statement showed receipts of \$632.30, expenses \$614.08, leaving a balance of \$19.22.

Further additions were added to the church property: church steps at the cost of \$27, a kitchen installed in the school building, a bell to be attached to the steeple purchased by the youth group, and a new chimney for the parsonage. By 1917 the church was insured for \$1600, the school for \$200, and the parsonage for \$600. Several members were to collect for the benefit of the pastor's automobile.

The first formal records of the women's organization called the Lutheran Club are dated May 13, 1918. The first officers included: President Mrs. Emil Hoefler, Vice President Mrs. N.P. Larson, Secretary Renata Luebker, and Treasurer Mrs. H.S. Tampke.

Meetings were held every two weeks at private homes or at the school house. It was decided to serve coffee, sandwiches, one kind of cake and anyone who wished could serve beans or potato salad. Dues would be 20 c.

Original members included: Mrs. Emil Hoefler, Mrs. Albert Klände, Mrs. G.F. Luebker, Mrs. Red Spearing, Mrs. Ernst Hinze, Mrs. H. Tampke, Erma Tampke, Margaret Hoefler, Renata Luebker, Mrs. Peter Rohweder, Lizzie Rohweder, Mrs. A. Biederman, Mrs. William Engler, Mrs. George Kick, Mrs. Marion Lones, Ms. Henry Meyer, Mrs. A. Heyn, Mrs. Al Oman, and Mrs. Brusig.

One of the organization's first projects was the making of a service flag for the members serving in the armed services during

the First World War. In 1919 the women used profits from the Fourth of July dinner to have the benches fixed and the woodwork varnished. The women had the church papered and paid \$75 toward the old church debt.

Through 1919 the pastor's salary had been paid separately by donations collected on a house-to-house solicitation. At this time it was decided to replace this practice by the use of pledges for the salary.

In 1920 a request was made to have English services one Sunday morning a month. Ushers were also appointed: Georg Kick, Tony Klicker, Olly Klicker, and Otto Weidemann.

In 1921 Carl Heinke became the pastor of the congregation and served Zion for six years.

During the winters in the early 20's the Lutheran Club did not meet from December to March due to severe winter weather.

In 1923 a decision was made to write all church business meetings' minutes in English instead of German as had been done from the organization of the congregation.

During the following year, discussion took place concerning building a new parsonage. As \$2500 would be needed before beginning, it was decided to remodel the present structure for \$1500. The following year all members were requested to donate a day's work on the church grounds or pay \$2. A janitor swept and dusted each week but the women were asked to clean the church for Easter.

At the September meeting in 1924, it was decided to have German and English services each Sunday. Children were to attend confirmation class on Saturdays.

The women's organization continued meeting monthly in the school house. Due to the church being "terribly in debt," the women were asked to pay for repairs and put in light fixtures at the parsonage and in 1926 they paid \$100 toward the debt of the house. The name of the woman's organization was now officially set at "Ladies Aid."

In 1927, Pastor Carl Heinke asked "for a peaceful dismissal" from the congregation as he had accepted a call to Spirit Lake, Iowa. A motion was made to call a graduate student at \$1000 per year. Rev. Carl Steging accepted a call to Zion in 1927.

English services were now held every Sunday morning at 10:30 and German services were held at 2:30 p.m. twice a month. The church yearly budget was set at \$1650:

Pastor \$1000, janitor \$40, Organist \$25, Fuel, light, telephone \$90, Interest and insurance \$75, Debt and building fund \$300.

A yearly statement of the business and the listing of the amounts given by individuals were published. A new style of hymnal was introduced and members were asked to buy their own.



The school house was sold to the highest bidder and moved away. Plans were underway to build a full basement under the church. The Ladies Aid donated \$10 for an English Bible for the church. The organization again served a dinner for the Mission festival on August 2, 1929. Rev. Steging was "to take care of the Park Service as he saw fit."

In 1930 "The congregation decided to give the 'outing house' to anyone who would take it and fill in the hole. "The pastor was given permission to serve Rush City and Rush Lake. The budget for 1931 was \$1845.

The Zion Lutheran Aid Society was re-organized. All ladies wishing to become members were to sign their names and the charge for lunch would be 10c. If a member missed two consecutive meetings (business) for any reason other than illness they would forfeit membership and would have to rejoin. The organization transferred their funds from the bank to postal savings for a period of time during the depression. In 1933 several ladies' meetings were postponed due to cold weather and a measles epidemic. An ice cream social was held in July where the Ladies Aid cleared \$11.70.

In August of 1933, a committee was formed to plan the congregation's 50th anniversary to be celebrated on June 17, 1934 at the National Guard Armory. The oldest living pastor, Rev. Carl Abel, who was then serving a congregation in Elmhurst, Illinois,

and Rev. Paul Heinke, another former pastor, were invited as guest speakers.

Statistics for the first fifty years of the congregation were gathered as follows: 726 Baptisms, 462 Confirmations, 221 United in marriage, and 161 Christian burials.

The members of the church council were: Ernest Hinze, George Kick, Oscar Schultz, Henry Moeding, Ray Nelson, Emil Stapel, and Gust Schwartzwald. Following are excerpts from the Pine Poker of June 21, 1934, as it reported the anniversary celebration:

"Last Sunday a crowd of approximately 400 people gathered in the local armory from near and far to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the organization of Zion Lutheran Church of Pine City.

"The festivities opened at 10:45 a.m. with a service conducted by the Rev. Carl Abel who was pastor of the congregation about 34 years ago. His address based on Rev. 21:1-8 concluded as he urged those present to remain faithful to the one thing in this uncertain work which is stable, namely to the Word of God as it is proclaimed in the Lutheran church on the basis of the Bible alone.

"At noon a chicken and ham dinner was served to those present and the Kroschel Band furnished a delightful program of music.

"At 2:30 p.m. another festival service was held when the Rev. Paul Heinke who was pastor seven years ago, delivered the address based on the 23rd Psalm. He closed by encouraging his hearers to remain sheep of the Good Shepherd and to become ever more zealous in the work of the Lord.

"Immediately after this service there was an informal social gathering at which Pastor Abel who was at the time serving all of the Lutheran congregations from Barnum on the north to Wyoming on the south related some of his experiences. This man was one of the committee instrumental in retaining the county seat in Pine City and was also very active during the great Hinckley fire. His address touched on these incidents of the early history of Pine City and was very interesting to some of the pioneers present as well as to the newer generation.

"All in all it was a very happy occasion and one which will not be forgotten soon by those present."

In November a Sauerkraut Supper was held charging 25c for adults and 15c for children. A final decision was made to build a basement under the church with \$1000 borrowed from the Ladies Aid. Before the new basement was begun, discussion centered around the possibilities of building a new church but only \$5,260 was raised in pledges so the idea was dropped. The Women's Club made bags to give to each family for the purposes of collecting a penny a day for a year to be used to pay for the basement. On November 28 the newly remodeled building was dedicated as described in the Pine Poker:

"The Zion Lutheran Church will formally dedicate their remodeled House of worship with services Sunday at 1:30. Rev. J.C. Meyer, President of the Minnesota District of the Missouri Synod, will deliver the address. A loud speaker will be placed in the parish hall so a large crowd can be accommodated. A hot lunch will be served following the service for which 15c will be charged. The public is cordially invited to attend".

In 1937 the practice of a collection plate for the communion service was discontinued and the German service was also dropped. Choir gowns were the project of the Ladies Aid in 1938.

The Ladies Aid had a birthday bank in which each member placed a penny for each year of age on her birthday. The collection was used for the flower fund and any surplus was given to missions. A discussion took place trying to decide on a wood, electric, or bottled gas range for the kitchen.

In 1940 colored windows were added to the church. Green ones in the front and amber ones on the sides at a cost of \$1.75 apiece and \$1.00 to cut a pattern. The total cost was \$12.00.

During the Second World War an Honor Roll of service men and women was placed in the church. The women made kits and baked cookies to be sent to them and the congregation subscribed to the Lutheran Witness for each of them. Special collections were taken to buy New Testaments to be sent to all service people of the congregation.

In 1942 one hundred fifty new hymnals were ordered. The women's organization continued to serve funerals for those who wished for that help. The secretary was instructed to approach

the ration board about coupons for sugar and coffee due to the rationing restrictions during the war. The women from time to time redecorated the church. In October, 1943, they sent cards to the boys in service and bought a \$300 War Bond. All Ladies Aid meetings began with a prayer for the boys in service. In the fall of 1945 the women had a Food and Fancy-work Sale.

About this time the church began to investigate the cost of becoming self supporting which would cost each family \$26. Fluorescent lights were installed in the church.

Following the war in 1946, the women planned a Memorial Banquet for the ex-servicemen and women. As a memorial a Hammond organ was purchased. All members were asked for food and funds. The lacking amount was taken from the Ladies Aid fund. Servicemen to be honored guests were seated at a separate table. After all the preparations were made, the banquet had to be postponed several weeks due to the polio epidemic.

In 1947 the Ladies Aid adopted a family in Europe. The Teschke family in Germany had three children – six years old, two years old, and six months old. Packages which contained cod liver oil and \$6 worth of groceries were sent from time to time. One package contained \$3.95 worth of seeds.

A second women's organization was formed in February, 1947, when seventeen ladies met to form the Women's Guild. Dues were set at 25c and sewing was chosen as the main project. The group decided to make rugs to raise money to purchase benches for the church. The Guild and the Ladies Aid planned a combined auction for October. Lunch was served with pie at 10c, cake at 10c, and coffee at 5c. The profits of \$197.91 were divided by the two organizations. Another joint project was cutting out aprons for a future sale.

After serving Zion for twenty-one years, Pastor Carl Steging was released to accept a call in Pierce, Nebraska, and Pastor A.W. Roegge was installed as the new pastor of the congregation in February, 1949. The educational program of Zion grew with the Release Time Program where school children were released from public school classes in the various churches. Vacation Bible School became a regular event at Zion



with the Ladies Aid providing some of the supplies. The Women's Guild bought two dozen Bibles for the education programs of the church.

In 1951 definite plans started to take shape for the building of a new church. Several parcels of land were under consideration, but following much discussion and inquiry, it was decided by a 41-6 vote to build on the present site. Walter Schwartzwald, Roy Teich, and Jack Oman were named to a building Committee. An architect was engaged to draw up plans. Canvassers called on members of the congregation to obtain pledges toward the new building. Pledges totaled \$9,000 by October 1951.

In January, 1952, plans for the building which was described as "modern functional" were accepted as drawn by Max and Gerald Buetow of St. Paul. Ground breaking for the new building took place on June 7, 1953, and the corner stone was laid on June 27, 1954. Volunteer labor helped greatly in keeping the construction costs at a minimum.

In July, 1954, officers of the Ladies Aid and Women's Guild drove to Milltown, Wisconsin to place an order for furnishings for the new church. The order included: 34 pews \$3,240, 2 chancel pews \$40, 2 frontal screens \$162, 1 altar \$282, 1 lectern \$96, 1 baptismal font \$145, 1 communion rail with gate and padded kneeler \$363, total \$4,563.

The pews and chancel furnishings were made from northern red oak with a driftwood finish. Although the initial cost was covered by the women's organizations, many of the furnishings were later purchased as memorials by individuals and families of the congregation. Since that time a Memorial Fund has furnished many items



for the church.

The new church was dedicated on February 6, 1955. Members and visitors assembled in the old church at 10:25 for a brief farewell or leave taking after which the congregation walked in a procession to the new church, led by the pastor and the officers of the church who carried the bible and Altar service pieces into the new edifice. The service was conducted by the pastor, Rev. A.W. Roegge, and the sermon was delivered by Pastor Carl Steging of Pierce, Nebraska, a former pastor. Following the service a potluck dinner was served in the church basement. At 2:30 p.m. a thanksgiving service was conducted with Rev. K.F. Lichthardt of St. Paul as speaker. The day of Sabrina, a violinist, the Pine City Men's Chorus; and the Walther League Chorus all accompanied by Nina Larson at the organ.

The original church building was sold for \$500 to the Seventh Day Adventists from Cambridge and was moved to a site in south Cambridge where it still stands. The new kitchen was furnished by the Ladies Aid with over \$3000 worth of equipment purchased from Joesting and Shilling of St. Paul.

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the congregation in 1954, a commemorative plate bearing the picture of the original church building on it was sold for \$2.25. A list of the pastors who had served the congregation was printed on the back.

During the 1950's a project of the congregation was a food stand at the annual Pine county Fair. The menu included: chili 25c, pie 15c, donut 5c, hamburger 25c, pie alamode 20c, hot dog 20c, pop 10c, and coffee 5c. The profit in 1951 was \$304.

In 1954 the following amounts of food were used during the three day event:

120 lbs hamburger, 32 lbs wieners, 5 qts cream, 31 qts milk, 60 pts chocolate milk, 16 loaves bread, 50 dz hamburger buns, 45 dz wiener buns, 25 gal ice cream, 600 ice cream cones, 12 dz cherries, 10 dz popsicles, 1 dz eggs, 12 dz boxes crackers, 15 lbs coffee, 80 homemade pies (not enough), 15 dz homemade donuts. Supplies for chili: 5 gal kidney beans, 40 lbs onions, 6 boxes chili powder, 50 lbs hamburger, 5 gal tomatoes, 1 wooden crate of celery. The fair stand continued as a project until 1960.

The Women's Guild continued their sewing projects and in January, 1956, they completed seven layettes for Lutheran World Relief. Four boxes of additional clothing were also packed for World Relief.

In the fall of 1956 the first Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Mission was held at Zion in an attempt to reach the unchurched members of the community. It was a week-long mission with members calling on prospective members and inviting them to one of the special evening services led each night by Rev. Ted Raedeke.

The Women's Guild made confirmation gowns which were rented by the confirmands. The Guild sold Christmas cards with an etching of the new church on them.

Father-Son and Mother-Daughter banquets had become annual events with profits being placed in a Scholarship Fund for any congregation member who planned to enter Christian service upon completion of training.

The 75th Diamond Jubilee of Zion was planned for June 14, 1959. An anniversary booklet was printed with a capsule history of the congregation. A dinner was served at noon by the Ladies Aid and an afternoon coffee was served by the Women's Guild.

Shortly after the anniversary celebration pastor Roegge announced his acceptance of a call to a mission congregation in Miami, Florida. A farewell reception was held in his honor.

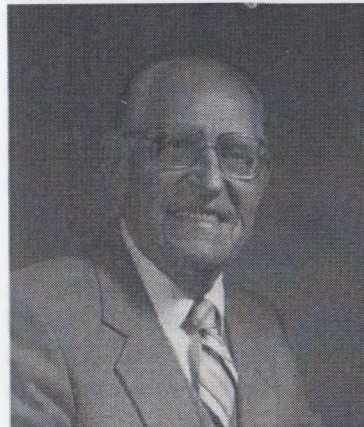
Pastor Ross Schuler from Wright, Minnesota, accepted a call and arrived in July, 1959, to begin his ministry in Pine City.

In 1960 the women of the Ladies Aid and the Women's Guild joined women of other Pine City congregations to organize a visiting program for shut-ins at Lakeside Nursing Home and in the community.

The Easter Service in 1960 was broadcast over the local radio station, WCMP. Since 1960, altar flowers have been provided by congregation members. The practice of sending cards to visitors was begun.

After serving Zion for three years, Pastor Schuler accepted a call to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. One month later Pastor Frank Sass accepted the call to serve the congregation.

Through the years the women's organizations continued to work to supply the congregation



with choir robes for the junior choir, flowers for the church gardens, and supplies for the kitchen.

In 1964 the practice that had taken place during summers previously now became a regular – two services each Sunday.

Land was purchased for a new parsonage in the west part of Pine City for \$1,500. Work was begun and in November, 1965, the home was dedicated. Its cost was \$20,574. The old parsonage was sold and moved four miles south of Pine City and the area was covered with lawn. The Sass family moved into the parsonage that winter.

After many planning meetings by a joint committee of officers of the Women's Guild and the Ladies Aid, both organizations were dissolved in order to form a new unified organization for all women of the church. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League of Zion Lutheran Church of Pine City was established in May, 1965. The treasuries of both organizations were combined and new officers were elected. The new constitution was approved on July 20. The first officers were: Mrs. Dick Lindig, President, Mrs. Richard Klande, Vice-President, Mrs. Robert Teich, Secretary, Mrs. Ilene Hill, Treasurer, Mrs. Elmer Henning, Christian Growth chairman, Mrs. Fred Engler, Jr., Christian Growth Chairman.

All business of the organization was handled at four quarterly meetings so that each monthly meeting could be a program.

A library project was begun to provide members of the church with Christian oriented reading material. The organization also adopted a missionary family, the John Franeshie family of New Guinea. Christmas gifts and birthday remembrances were sent to the members of the family. Our service persons were remembered in the same manner.

An important date for Zion Lutheran Church was August 15, 1965, when, as part of the morning worship service, the mortgage for the church was burned.

Pastor Sass accepted a call to Vergas-Loon Lake and left the congregation in January, 1969. Pastor Guettersloh of Hinckley served the congregation for six months as interim pastor until July 27 when Pastor David Meyer, a former missionary to the Philippines, was installed as pastor.

Through the years, the LWML continued a number of projects: gifts to shut-ins at Lakeside and in their homes, cans of cookies of service persons, volunteers visiting on a one-to-one basis at Lakeside, church flower beds, several Bible study groups were begun, building a library, holding showers for those who had home fire losses. In 1971, thirty-one packages of clothing were sent to Lutheran World relief.



In 1972 woman suffrage was discussed by the congregation but no action was taken on this issue until 1978 when women were granted the vote.

In 1972 the LWML adopted a second missionary, Margarete Schuster who was a Lutheran Bible Translator in the Philippines.

In 1973 the congregation budget had grown to \$27,796 and the church had a communicant membership of 483. Discussion continued for a number of years concerning the building of a Sunday School wing but it was decided in 1973 not to start until \$20,000 had been pledged.

A Schumerlich Magnabell carillon was placed in the bell tower as a memorial. The chimes play Christian hymns at noon and at 6 p.m. each day and between services on Sunday morning.

In 1974 Bill and Dorothy Tracy began taping the Sunday sermons to be taken to shut-in members of the congregation as well as used in a service for patients at Lakeside Nursing Home.

Zion celebrated its 90th anniversary with a special service and congregational dinner on June 23, 1975. Dr. August Mennicke, President of Minnesota North District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and Pastor Carl Steging, a former pastor, took part in the celebration.

In December, 1974, Pastor Meyer was released to accept a call to Aurora, Minnesota. During the nine month period without a pastor, Pastor David Bode of Weber served the congregation. Pastor Russell Peterson of Groton, South Dakota, accepted a call in August and served the congregation until March, 1977, when he accepted a call to Sawyer, North Dakota.

In 1975, a Monday quilting Project was begun that has produced thirty to forty quilts a year for the Lutheran World Relief and other projects.

Stained glass windows were dedicated in the church on May 30, 1976 as a memorial.

Debbie Wiechman, a daughter of the congregation, served 27 months as a medical missionary in Taiwan.

On July 17, 1977, Pastor Donald Schmiede was installed as pastor. In the same year, it was decided to sponsor a 15 minute program on Sunday evenings on the local FM radio station, WCMP, which continued for a number of years. In 1978 after a number of years of discussion, definite plans took shape for a new addition to the church and architect's plans were accepted in August. The new wing would be built for \$120,536. Ground was broken following the service on October 29, 1978.



The new building would house the kitchen, banquet-assembly area, coat rooms, offices, and workrooms. At the same time the basement was remodeled into classrooms for the education program of the church. The completed building was dedicated in September, 1979.

The educational program of the church expanded in 1978 with the formation of nine women's home Bible study groups, one men's group, and a couple's group that meet once a month with lay leaders who receive guidance from the pastor.

In 1982 following a two year study of the ministry of Zion Lutheran Church, a number of congregational lay-committees were established in the areas of Stewardship, Evangelism, Public Relations, Education, Worship, and Parish Fellowship.

The Centennial of Zion Lutheran Church was celebrated in August, 1984. Dr. Oswald Hoffman, speaker of the Lutheran Hour was the guest preacher. All former pastors were contacted and invited to take an active part in the program. Invitations were sent to former members, friends, and congregation members. An

anniversary plate with a sketch of all the church buildings was sold.

The celebration included an old-fashioned picnic supper on the church lawn and an informal program on Saturday, August 18. Three services were held on Sunday with Dr. Hoffman speaking at all three. A congregational dinner was served at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church at noon and an informal coffee hour following the afternoon service concluded the celebration. It was estimated that over 700 people participated in the weekend's activities.

Late in 1985, Pastor Schmiede accepted a call to Hibbing, MN. He left Zion in early 1986. Pastor Ted Goehle of St. Paul, served Zion in the vacancy following Pastor Schmiede's departure.

Pastor Vernon H. Dorn was installed as Pastor of Zion on August 31, 1986. Pastor Dorn was known for his interest in acting. He often presented first-person accounts of Bible characters for Lent and/or Advent services. He led the congregation in presenting the chancel drama, "The Pew," which gave the life-story of a church pew and the people that sat there. It was well received.

During this time, the church added a "Crying Room" at the back of the sanctuary where parents with restless children could sit and see and hear the service, but not disturb those around them. It is still used regularly.

By 1990, the church annual budget had grown to \$93,414. In 2000, the church budget was nearly the same at \$93,144. By 2009, the budget has grown to \$154,872. Church membership went from a high of 884 (baptized members) at the time of the Centennial celebration, to 688 in 1990, 411 in 2000, and by 2009, the membership stands at about 429.

After a period of some difficulty and disagreement, Pastor Dorn resigned in November, 1996. Pastor Tim Shoup of Hinckley agreed to serve as vacancy pastor. He was very helpful in healing some of the wounds and hard feelings that had developed in the congregation.

On October 19, 1997, Rev. Glen Kleppe was installed as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church. In 1999, a Wednesday evening service was added in the summer (it was later expanded to a year-round service).

In 1999, Gerry and Jane Robbins donated a Rodgers 9505 organ with 3 ranks of pipes and digital sound. It also has a MIDI

(computer interface that can generate many sounds). This organ was placed at the south side of the front of the sanctuary so the pulpit was moved to the north side, and the entire sanctuary was re-carpeted. Over the next couple of years, most of the church received new carpet.

With the addition of the new organ, many concerts have been held at Zion to the delight of the congregation and community.

In the summer of 2002, the entire church building was reroofed. \$45,000 was borrowed from the Lutheran Church Extension Fund to pay for the new roof and a new furnace for the parsonage. Over the next several years more money was borrowed to put new shingles, windows, and siding on the parsonage. In addition, several repairs were made to the parsonage bathrooms. Much progress has been made by the congregation to pay off these loans, and as of the 125th anniversary, the balance was considerably less than \$10,000.

In addition to these changes to the building, Air Conditioning was added. Several improvements were made to try to keep water out of the basement. The south side of the church was landscaped, the window wells were covered, and gutters were added on the south and west sides of the building. The sacristy was improved by adding a sink. The Sunday school rooms were painted, and one room was made suitable for a Bride's dressing room.

In 2004, the bathroom in the basement of the church was cleaned up and painted after some years of neglect. A new vanity and sink were added along with privacy stalls and a paper towel dispenser. In the education area of the basement, two walls were removed and two doors were added along with accompanying electrical changes. These changes were made in preparation for the start of "Growing in Grace Preschool" in the fall of 2004.

After much work by the elders and preschool committee, Zion received its preschool license from the state of Minnesota in the fall of 2004. The basement space was licensed for 18 students. It was decided to hire a teacher and aide for the preschool. Jessica Root was the first Director, Jan Kislenger was the first Teacher, and Chelsey Hall the Aide for the first year. Pastor Kleppe served as director for some time. Currently, Laura Rolf is the Director/Teacher and Luann Peterson is the Aide.

The preschool has successfully ministered to the families of Pine City. Many children have enrolled in Vacation Bible School and/or Sunday School because of their connection to "Growing in Grace." Some families have joined the church. The enrollment has always been at or near the legal limit of 18 students. The financial impact on the congregation has been minimal.

Vacation Bible School continues to be a great outreach program for the congregation. Many members help with the



program. Children of Zion, other churches, and some with no church home come together to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. The numbers have steadily grown with about 70 children registering in 2009.

In 2004, 8

members of the high school youth group and 3 chaperones attended the National Youth gathering in Orlando, FL. This was something that hadn't been done by the youth for many years. Spaghetti suppers and serving food at Art-in-the-Park were the main sources of fundraising, but other things were tried as well. 9 youth attended the gathering in 2007 (also in Orlando) and several are preparing to attend the gathering in 2010 in New Orleans, LA.

In the fall of 2006, three "Harvesters for Christ" spent several weeks in Pine City teaching the members of Zion the importance of evangelism and how to do it. Although participation in the program was fairly good, the lasting impact of the program has been lacking. We continue to struggle to bring the good news to our neighbors.



In 2008, after decades of service, the quilting group made their last quilt. The members of the group had moved away and/or aged and there weren't enough new, younger members to carry on the work. Through the years, hundreds of quilts were sent from Zion to places all around the world.

The Sunday School has continued to faithfully minister to the children of Zion. Many of our teachers have put in years of service. The congregation looks forward to the children singing in worship the first Sunday of each month during the school year (and they are often accompanied by students).

Over the past several years, the Stewardship Committee has planned and executed a fall program each year. Guest speakers have been asked to come, including Rev. David Bode and Rev. David Strohshein. Letters and dinners and "Temple Talks" have sometimes been a part of the program as well.

In August, 2009, the congregation plans on celebrating the 125th anniversary of our ministry with a Saturday evening potluck and program and a Sunday morning festival worship service and dinner.



May the Lord continue to bless Zion Lutheran Church.