

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, U. A. C.
on Clifty, Bartholomew Co., Indiana.

Rev. P. G. Nau, Pastor.
Robert Urbahns, Teacher.

Members of the Church Council
1928

Martin Scheidt, Elder.
Edward Arnholt, Trustee.
Henry Whipker,
Edward H. Scheidt,
Henry Zurbrugg,
Henry Forster.

1929

Henry Siekmann, Elder.
Harry Nolting, Trustee.
Alvin Linsmith,
Walter Franke,
Carl Schnur,
August Arnholt.

Benjamin Wehmeier, Del. to Circuit Meetings.

Trustees of St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Cemetery.
Fred Schulz, Henry Zurbrugg, Henry Forster.

Teachers and Officers of the Sunday-School.

Martin Scheidt, Supt.
Rev. P. G. Nau, Bible Class.
Teacher Robert Urbahns, Senior Dept.
Miss Flora Zurbrugg, Intermediate Dept.
Mrs. Louis Forster, Junior Dept.
Miss Clara Nolting, Miss Hulda Urbahns, Primary Dept.

Officers of the Ladies' Aid Society.

Mrs. P. G. Nau, Pres.
Mrs. George Krieg, Vice-Pres.
Mrs. Harry Day, Treasurer.
Miss Clara Nolting, Secretary.

EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF
ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ON CLIFTY

COLUMBUS, INDIANA

1848-1928

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S ON CLIFTY

"Gather we from the shadowy past
The straggling beams that linger yet,
E'er o'er those flickering lights are cast
The shroud that none can penetrate."

Spencer.



THE first half of the past century was of the greatest significance in the settlement of Bartholomew county. In the course of that period the ever-increasing stream of settlers rapidly occupied the new lands of Indiana and the fertile soil of this region greatly attracted the newcomers. Settlers began to pour in from the Carolinas, Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania and some who had pushed further north at first, came back again and located within the boundaries of this county. The completion of the Madison and Indianapolis railroad in 1843 made it possible for many emigrants from Europe to settle in these parts. Among them were many Lutherans from Prussia and Hannover, who had left the Old World because of political and religious oppression, seeking the peace and freedom which had long been denied them.

The settlers of Bartholomew county were hardy men and not afraid of the privations and dangers of life in the woods. With determined will and brawny arms they cleared the forested lands and planted for themselves and their children homes in the almost unbroken wilderness. Many were the obstacles they had to overcome, but they did not shrink from exposure and hardships, nor were they deterred by the dreaded climatic fevers, which at times prostrated entire families and carried many to an early grave.

In the early Forties a number of German Lutherans settled in what is now known as the Clifty neighborhood. These Germans were pious, intelligent and energetic people. The leaders of these emigrants were men of moral worth, such as John Dietrich Kollmeier and John Henry Fischer, who gave every possible assistance to the newcomers, housing them in their log-cabins and financing them until they were able to establish themselves in these parts. These men came in touch with the Lutherans at White Creek where a congregation had been founded in 1840 by the Rev. C. Frinke. Soon thereafter we find this faithful missionary laboring among the settlers on Clifty,

baptizing the children, ministering to the sick, burying the dead and preaching in the cabins and in a Baptist church, located, as it is said, on what is now the William Bick farm.

As a direct result of the missionary activities of the Rev. C. Frinke St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation was founded in the year 1848, and divine services were held in a public school-house located about two miles northeast from the present location of the church. The Rev. C. Frinke continued to minister to this flock until the end of the year 1851 when his successor at White Creek, the Rev. R. Klinkenberg took charge of the struggling congregation.

Subsequent emigrations from Germany greatly strengthened the congregation and in 1852 St. Paul's called its own pastor in the person of the Rev. J. Rauschert. The first purchase of land was made. On Dec. 11, 1852 John Richard Kollmeier and his wife Mary deeded to the congregation for the consideration of \$100.00 a tract of 14 acres of ground, "to have and to hold said lot of land forever or as long as three members may be attached thereto and of the same belief, that is to say, of the Evangelical Lutheran persuasion or belief." A log cabin for the pastor's dwelling and a log church were erected at the present location. This house of worship was dedicated March 14, 1852.

The Rev. J. Rauschert remained with the congregation until the year 1855. Due to a scarcity of ministerial candidates the congregation was without a pastor for some time and reading services were held by A. Zagel, the teacher of the parochial school, which had been connected with the congregation from the beginning. Being an able and pious man the congregation finally called Teacher Zagel as pastor. He was successful in passing the examinations necessary for entrance into the ministry of the Lutheran Church and he was ordained and installed. In 1856 a log school-house was erected (25 x 19 ft. with four windows) and for some time services were conducted in this building, the old church being no longer safe for a large gathering of people. The following year the congregation acquired three acres of ground from John Richard Kollmeier for the sum of \$25.00, thus completing the triangle of land owned by the congregation at the present time and a spacious frame church was erected. The dedication of this church took place on May 30, 1858, the Revs. Sauer and Schuermann delivering

the sermons on this festive occasion. The building was erected by Francis Pfeiffer.

In the same year a number of members, connected with St. Paul's, but residing at Columbus, organized St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran congregation, because they found the crossing of the Clifty at "Fatal Ford" too dangerous. The current of the stream at that place was swift, its bed deceptive and treacherous and after a heavy rain the entire lowland to the west was inundated. Every assistance was given to these brethren and a substantial collection was raised to enable them to build their first house of worship.

In the year 1860 the Rev. A. Zagel was succeeded by the Rev. E. Rolf, and St. Paul's affiliated itself with the Missouri Synod. This body of congregations had been organized at Chicago in 1847, and truly deserved the name "Lutheran," because it accepted all the teachings of the Bible, subscribed to all the Lutheran Confessions and pledged itself to stay separate from all those who teach otherwise than the Bible teaches. The congregation on Clifty recognized that those who have the same faith ought to meet together and work together in order to preserve the unity of doctrine, to extend the kingdom of God, to train ministers and teachers and to publish sound Lutheran books and papers.

In the fall of 1863 the Rev. E. Rolf accepted a call to St. Paul, Minn. and Rev. E. A. Schuermann was called to succeed him, but he declined the extended vocation. An agreement was now made with St. Peter's congregation of Columbus and the Rev. G. Kuechle was called as pastor of both congregations. According to mutual understanding each congregation was to pay half of the pastor's and the teacher's salary. St. Paul's was to provide the dwelling for the teacher and St. Peter's for that of the pastor. The catechumens of the Clifty church were to be instructed at Columbus and the teacher was held to divide his time and efforts equally between both congregations. This agreement however was of short duration and in 1865 St. Paul's called Rev. G. Schumm as its pastor, the Rev. G. Kuechle continuing as pastor at Columbus. In 1866 a new dwelling replaced the old log parsonage. Many additions have been made to this building and it stands to this day.

The Rev. G. Schumm resigned his pastorage on Clifty because of throat trouble and was succeeded in 1870 by the Rev. A. Heitmueller. The Franco-Prussian war caused many German Lutherans to come to America and

miss. m. g. to
C. K. K. -
1879 -

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S ON CLIFTY

again the congregation received many additions. In 1876 the old log school house was sold to William Whipker for the sum of \$12.00. Two years later Teacher W. Spuhler was called to take charge of the parochial school. A parcel of ground was bought from Henry Held, senior and in 1881 a teacher's dwelling was built. The contract for the construction of this house was let to William Lowe. Since 1880 Teacher Spuhler taught the public school, receiving his salary from the county, but continued to teach the children of the congregation in religious subjects. This arrangement has been continued to this present day. Rev. Heitmueller remained with the congregation until his death in 1886. He was a faithful servant of God and his parishoners were greatly attached to him. In grateful remembrance of his faithful services the classes confirmed by him during his ministry on Clifty have erected a simple and beautiful monument over his grave.

The Rev. M. Mertz became successor of Rev. Heitmueller. Teacher W. Spuhler accepted a call to Akron, Ohio and Teacher H. F. Mensendiek took charge of the school. The old frame church had become too small for the needs of the congregation and extensive repairs were urgently necessary. After some consideration it was thought advisable to build a new church. A contract was given to Brokmann and Keller of Columbus and the present house of worship was erected at a cost of above \$4,000.00. The dedicatory sermons were delivered by Rev. Trautmann of Columbus and Rev. Eirich of Jonesville. The old frame church was converted into a class-room for the preparation of children for confirmation.

A season of quiet development followed. During the pastorate of the Rev. G. Fischer (1893-1905) and that of the Rev. K. Firnhaber (1905-20) additions to the congregation through emigration from Germany had practically come to an end. A number of families moved to Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma. However the congregation enjoyed a normal growth from within and was able to maintain itself. In 1920 the Rev. F. Wambsganss, for many years pastor of St. Peter's congregation at Columbus was called to succeed the Rev. K. Firnhaber who resigned because of ill health. Rev. Wambsganss was very successful in his labors on Clifty. During his pastorate the entire church was remodeled and decorated and a basement with furnace provided. The congregation was in the midst of activity when this faithful servant was called to his reward.

After a vacancy of six months the congregation was

STATISTICS

1848—1928

PASTORS OF ST. PAUL'S CONGREGATION.

Rev. C. Frinke	1848—1851
Rev. R. Klinckenberg	1851—1852
Rev. J. Rauschert	1852—1855
Rev. A. Zigel	1855—1860
Rev. E. Rolf	1860—1863
Rev. G. Kuechle	1863—1865
Rev. G. Schumm	1865—1869
Rev. A. Heitmueller	1869—1886
Rev. M. Mertz	1886—1893
Rev. G. Fischer	1893—1905
Rev. K. Firnhaber	1905—1920
Rev. F. Wambsgans	1920—1923
Rev. P. G. Nau	1923—4-3-1945

Pastor	bapt.	confirmed.	mar.	comm.	buried
Frinke	11	—	—	—	—
Klinkenberg	9	—	2	20	—
Rauschert	37	—	14	186	8
Zigel	59	—	18	437	19
Rolf	47	20	12	473	16
Kuechle	10	9	—	158	5
Schumm	30	22	3	609	11
Heitmueller	145	108	37	3078	56
Mertz	71	61	19	2056	32
Fischer	124	88	34	4786	57
Firnhaber	88	85	26	6274	46
Wambsgans	28	18	6	1364	14
Nau	42	16	10	2014	19
Total	701	427	181	21455	283

Vacancy Pastor Rev. A. E. Brauer of St. Peter's 4-1945 — 3-1946
 Rev. E. O. Metzdorf 3-3-1946 — 9-1952
 Vacancy Pastor Rev. Roy Guelzow of St. Peter's 10-1952 — 2-1953
 Rev. Carl Geist 3-1953 — 4-1956
 Vacancy Pastor Rev. Stratford Eynon of Grace Lutheran 4-1956 — 3-1957
 Rev. Paul Frisch 3-1957 — 10-1962
 Vacancy Pastor Rev. V. Paul Heimer of St. Peter's 10-1962 — 2-1963
 Rev. Karl Lepper 3-24-1963 — 2-1968
 Vacancy Pastor Richard Tremain of Faith Lutheran 2-1968 — 7-1968
 Rev. M. Mertz 7-7-1968 — present

again supplied with a pastor. Rev. P. G. Nau accepted the extended call and continued the labors so energetically begun by the Rev. Wambsgans. In the spring of 1924 a Ladies' Aid Society was organized, which has given valuable aid to the congregation and to charitable institutions of Synod. In the fall of 1926 a regular Sunday School was established which met with gratifying success from the beginning. The congregation at present numbers 286 baptized souls, 200 communicants and 69 voting members. The school is taught by Teacher Robert Urbahns, who was called in 1906 to fill the vacancy created by the death of Teacher H. Mensendiek. By the grace of God St. Paul's congregation is still flourishing and prospering.

To God alone who has prospered the work of this congregation and preserved unto it His Word and Sacraments in truth and purity all praise and honor be given. May God continue to guard and defend this flock and cause his blessing of harmony and peace to rest upon this congregation forever.

OUR ASSURANCE

The church will never fall,
 Nor be reduced to thrall;
 Our Lord Himself protects His fold,
 And leads it on to joys untold.

The Church will never fall,
 For God's great Gospel call,
 "Repent, and trust in Christ alone,"
 Still lives and sounds from zone to zone.

The Church will never fall;
 We need not fear at all;
 "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure
 Will to eternity endure."

Hugh Osterhus.

Teacher Urbahns resigned Oct. 1946
 " " Mrs. E. O. Metzdorf Oct. 1946 — June 1947
 Teacher Rus H Lester June 1947 — June 1948

Teacher C. F. Daberkow Sept. 1945 — Aug 1950