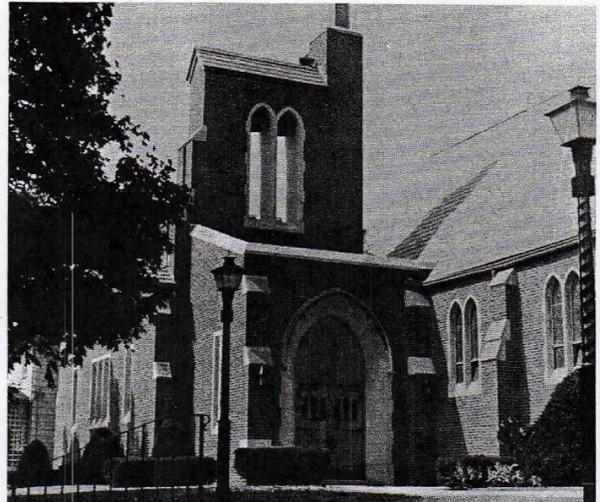




"TO THE PAST WITH GRATITUDE"



"TO THE FUTURE WITH FAITH"

Except the Lord Build the House,
They labor in vain that build it" Psalm 127:1

HISTORY OF BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Bethel (house of God) Lutheran Church was established as a mission congregation in January, 1925. A few devoted God fearing Christian families were granted permission by the English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States to establish their congregation in what was then the extreme northwest section of the City of Canton, Ohio. Bethel then moved to 7th St. & Broad Ave., N. W. where it remained until 2015 when it merged with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

During the infancy of Bethel congregation they made their first public outreach of ministry to the community. Published in the Canton Repository in March, 1925 was the following invitation ---

Lutheran Church Services in Clarendon Avenue School Auditorium. A Sunday School will be conducted at 2:00 PM and each Sunday thereafter, A preaching service at 3115 by Rev. J. F. A. Lautenschlager, Pastor of Faith Church, Massillon, Ohio. A welcome is extended to all who may be interested in establishing a Sunday School and Lutheran Church in this part of Canton. All these services will be conducted in the auditorium or the auditorium of the Clarendon Avenue school for the present.

How fitting that the first public call for teaching and worship was the Sunday school. Throughout our history our church maintained a strong desire for God's Word by conducting study for Nursery thru three Adult classes. Bethel also participated in the celebration of the "200th Year of the Sunday School" throughout all denominations of the Christian churches.

Fifty-eight charter members with love and trust in God, and hope for the future, founded Bethel Lutheran Church. Of the 58 charter members the following were still worshipping at Bethel as of October, 1980: Miss Wilma Barnhill, Ralph Barnhill, Mrs. Herman (Zelah) Roshong, Mrs. Hazel Roshong Shively and Robert Shearer. Because of them, Bethel held a 50th Anniversary celebration of our church in 1975. We can still meaningfully say, "To the past with gratitude to God; to the future with faith in Him." We thank God for those dedicated members who through the years have supported and nurtured Bethel congregation.

Bethel was a growing church. Not in respect to "numbers" of members, but members who have been interested in – (a) growing in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior, (b) growing in the gospel thru Sunday School and worship services, (c) growing in reaching out to others through a continued benevolent program , (d) actively engaging in ministry in the community organizations, (e) by training and equipping its members to carry on the ministry of the Word, (f) by promoting and supporting organizations within the church such as; Bethel Lutheran Church Women, Bethel Lutheran Church Men, Luther League, Jr. Hi Fellowship, Senior-Youth-and Junior Choirs, Girl - Cub - Boy Scouts programs, Bethel Co-Weds, Parish Planning Committee, and Congregational Cares and Concerns Committee. It is by the functions and programs of these organizations that fellowship, unity, outreach to fellow members, community and the world have been met.

How did Bethel become a growing church? The church's foundation was--Jesus Christ, Our Lord. It was by called ordained men of God that we became a thriving church. It was through love, dedication, consecration, and sacrifice that we were wisely led by faithful Pastors.

With great honor and respect we list those who served the ministry at Bethel Lutheran Church.

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|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Rev. Arthur Combs | June 1925 - Nov. 1934 |
| Rev, Charles Rasel | Jan. 1935 - Feb. 1944 |
| Rev. Leonard Frirschel | June 1944 - Nov. 1949 |
| Rev. George Strobel | July 1950 - April 1954 |
| Rev. Orville Lueck | Aug. 1954 - Jan. 1972 |
| Rev. Alfred Stein | May 1972 - Dec. 1974 |
| Rev. Walter Ruth, (Interim | Jan. 1972 - May 1972 |
| Pastor) | Jan. 1975 - June 1975 |
| Rev. James Kennell | June 1975 – |

Other tributes: David Kuntz, Mission Builder in New Guinea
Richard Hites, first son of this congregation to enter the ministry.

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church has had a rich heritage. To list the many areas of the life of the church would be too lengthy. For all members, young and old,

this is only to remind us of that heritage begun in 1925. A summation of the history can best be revealed in a poem written by one of its Pastors.

This is your church, so love her -
Love her, deep down in your heart.
For beauty and strength, color and light,
Means of expressing your thanks to God.
In Whose Name, dedicated -
To Whose praise, consecrated -
This is your church, love her always!

This is your church, so trust her -
Trust her, for all years to come.
Her message divine, of faith in Christ,
With words assuring, of pardon, peace.
Such good news, here proclaiming -
Salvation, life eternal -
This is your church, trust her gladly!

This is your church, so serve her -
Serve her, in your own best way.
Speaking the good news, Jesus is Lord,
Living example, of Christian faith.
When all done, to the glory
Of Jesus, truest of friends -
You are the church, serving truly!

by - Rev. George Strobel

In 2009, Bethel joined the Covenant of the Canton City Lutheran Parish.

Then, after 91 years of faithful service to Jesus Christ, our Lord, Bethel merged with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on December 31, 2015.