

St. Paul's Evangelical

Lutheran Church

1887-1948

Dutch Ridge Rd.

Parkersburg, W.V.

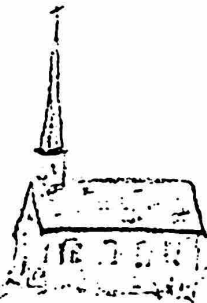
Red Hill
V.B. Church



St. Paul's Evangelical
Lutheran Church

Northwestern Pike

Dutch Ridge Road



Coal
shed

St. Paul's Evangelical
Lutheran Church set
to the right of

Northwestern Pike on Dutch Ridge Road. It was
built in 1887 by the German families that had
settled outside of Parkersburg, West Virginia.

The foundation was stone with
a white weather board frame,
typical of many rural churches
of that era. The original high
spire had been struck by
lightning and never rebuilt. The

base was roofed and years later a cross of
electric lights was erected. Our church
was known by others as "the church of the Cross"



Ye are the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14a

Doris E. Catledge '86

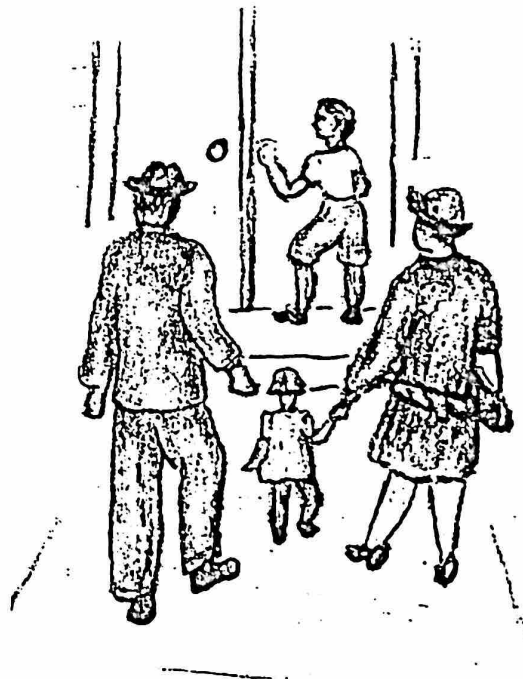
On the outside of the window frame were odd-looking hooks. Mom said at one time the church had shutters. Years later the pains of glass were covered with paper of many colors.

These early memories of St. Paul Lutheran Church are during my early childhood of the 1920's and later during my teen years in the 1930's.

Both my parents went to church as children because their parents were among the founders, Otte and Roth. They took my brother and me, I took my four children, and now I have a grandson attending.

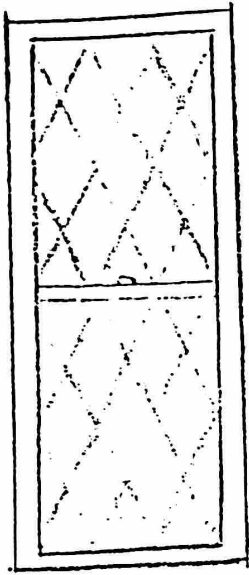
O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

Psalm 95:1,6



Red Hill U.B. Church was on the very top of Red Hill. It was built of red brick and had small window pains of different colored glass. The interior was more like city churches:

green velvet on the altar and chairs, and the woodwork was smooth varnish.



St. Paul had maroon velvet on the pulpit, altar and chairs but our woodwork looked handmade, not the finish of factory made furniture. In hot, humid weather our clothing would stick to the benches.

Our windows were white frosted diamonds. In the wintertime all of the window would look white, but in the summer I could peek through the clear glass between the diamonds and see the green of outside. When it was hot, the windows were opened, then I could see a house down the lane to the right. Mom said those people did not come to our church and I wondered why.

A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Matthew 5: 14 b

The older women all dressed alike to go to church. The dresses were black, made of a material between silk and taffeta, two-pieced and not much shape. They would greet each other by saying "Ve gates."



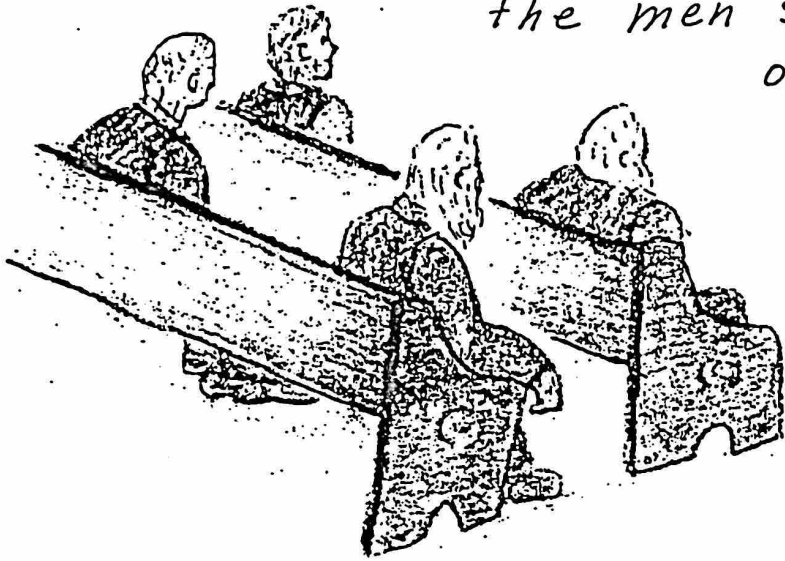
The older kids would say "Ve gates are ok but the hinges are rusty." That kind of scared me when they said that because I thought they were making fun of the German speaking people. I also remembered the Bible story of the bears that

came out of the woods and ate the disrespectful children that mocked Elisha. II Kings 3: 23+24

Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Proverbs 8: 11

When I was very young, I remember four old gentlemen who sat in the two front benches between the altar and the stove. I think at one time the men sat on one side of the church and the women on the other. One of the men

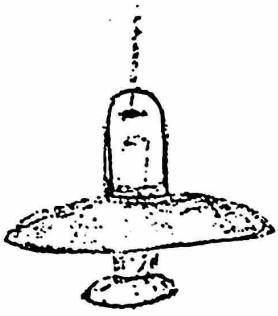


was my grandfather. When there was no organist to play the hymns, he would lead the singing. This

would be on the Sunday of German service. One by one these men stopped coming to church. Mom tried to explain to me, but after my grandfather died, then I understood.

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away.

Psalm 90:10



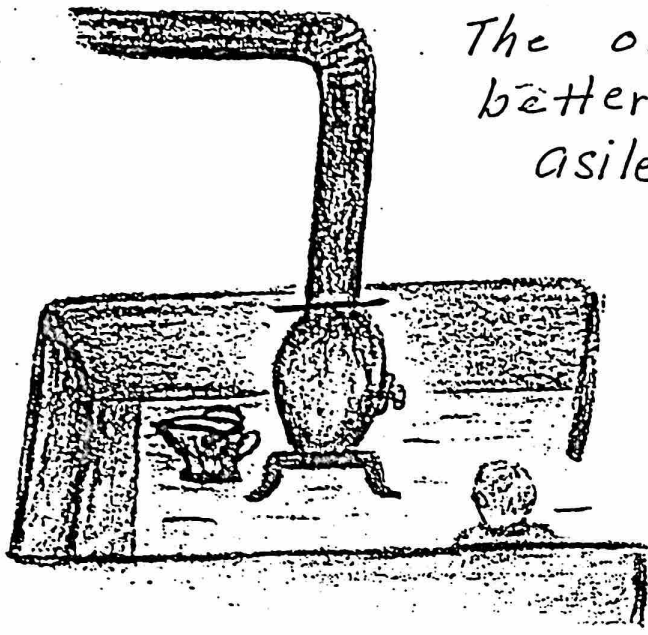
Through the Eyes of a Child



There sat my greataunt Mary Sunday after Sunday with her large brimmed hat and long hat pin that I thought went through her head (until my mother explained) Also there was that oil lamp hanging from the ceiling with the reflector that looked like a larger version of my greataunts hat. One Sunday the lamp and my great aunt Mary were not in church. The lamp chain had broken and the lamp fell on her head. After that the other three lamps were taken down and replaced with pumped air Kerosene lamps that hung from the ceiling over the aisle.

Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness and comfort me on every side.

Psalm 71: 20, 21

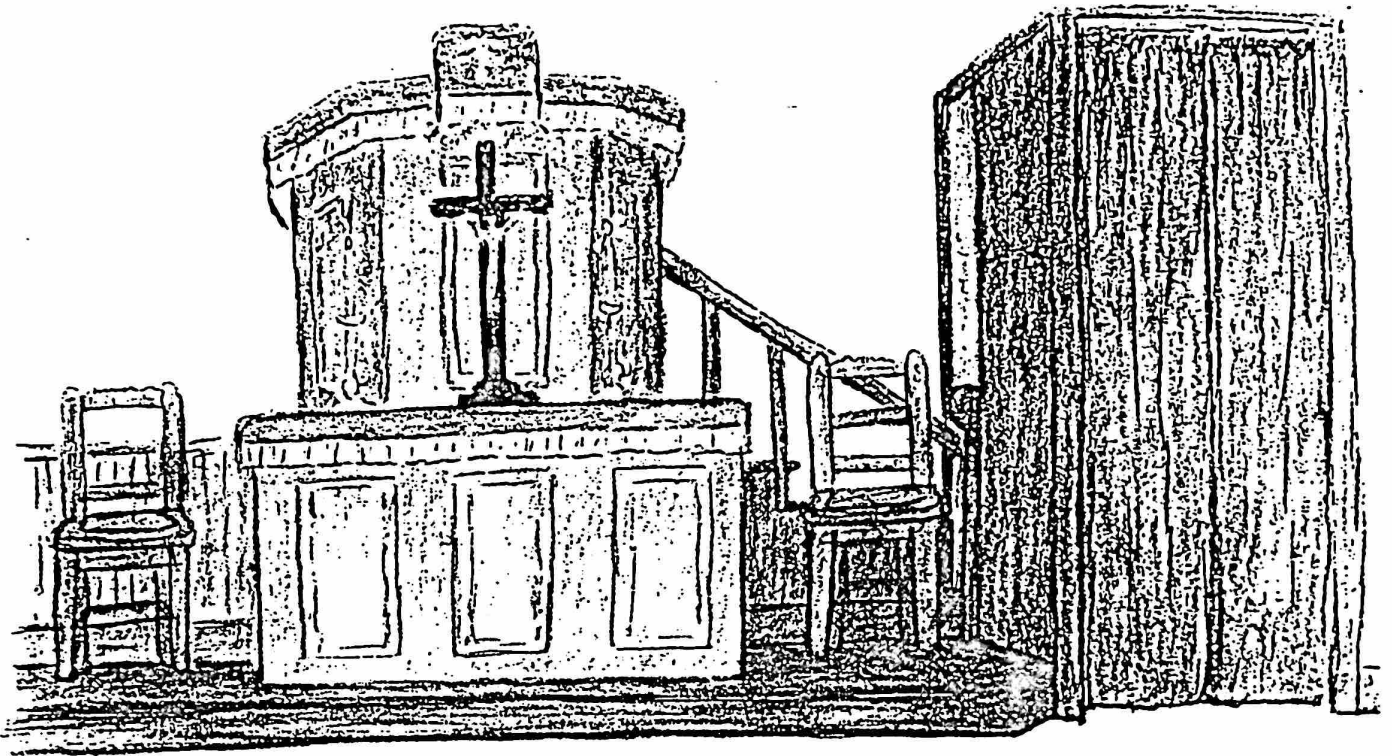


The old pot-bellied stove was better than halfway up the aisle to the left. Two benches were out to make room for it, with one bench along the wall behind the stove. The preacher (that's what the pastor was called most of the time)

had come early to build the fire. In the winter it was very cold in the church and those of us who came at least a half-hour early sat in the benches right by the stove. By the time the sermon was being preached, everywhere was too hot except the corners. The benches by the stove would smell from the heat and they had a permanent blistered finish.

I know thy works, thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou wert cold or hot.

Revelations 3:15



This is an approximate drawing of the original chancel of the church. The organ was to the left and the piano to the right.

At that time the name of the church was St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Evangelical was dropped and after we moved to town the 'S' was dropped.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.
Psalm 122:1

Mom showed me the bowl that held the water I was baptized with. When a child was baptized, each baby's parents brought their own bowl and water.

In the winter time the water had to be hot when it

left the home and hopefully it was still warm when it was used.

There was neither baptismal font nor water at the church.

I still have my bowl.

Rev. Joost was here at the time.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The first minister I remember was the Reverend Walter A. Pohl. The congregation called him reverend but mostly they called him preacher. I called him peachie, and I fell for him.

But I sure got confused.

This place (pulpit) was way up in the air at the front of the church and everyone was looking up listening to the speaker. If this was God's house then wasn't that

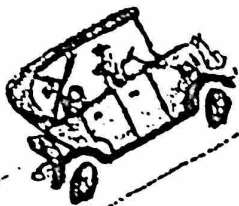


God talking to us? No, it was the preacher. There was a picture on the wall by the pulpit. For the next five years I thought it was the preacher's picture; then someone informed me it was a picture of Luther. That really upset me. Who was Luther?!!

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Isaiah 52:7

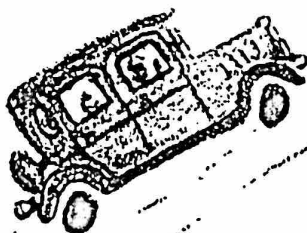
To get to the Red Hill churches, one had to go UP Red Hill. Lou, my father, had a Model-T Ford and the trick was to get a head start. In the half mile before the bottom of the hill, Lou would accelerate to get the maximum speed out of the Model-T and



up we would go... gooo... gooooo... slow... slower... almost stop. But we always

made it. Before church, the men would discuss how far they went before changing gears and the speed they were going when they reached the top of the hill.

Later we bought a Dodge Sedan. A big heavy thing that had a heater on the floor by the back seat.



The fenders were so heavy they could be struck with a hammer and not be dented. It still took the same procedure to get to the top of the hill. Lou couldn't attend church every Sunday because of his work schedule, so Mom painfully learned to drive

For with God nothing is impossible. Luke 1:37



The Christmas tree at Church was like something from heaven - all aglow with light and warmth from real candles in little snap-on holders.

Our program was on the evening of Christmas day. My family had our home celebration on Christmas Eve, Christmas morning services at church, then to my grandfather's for dinner. By evening we children were rather tired so sitting on Mom's lap during the program, I soon fell asleep. Then we went back to my grandfather's for the night.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David;) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child ... And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger.

Luke 2: 4, 5, 7.



Christmas and the
angels sing.

The big girls got
to be the angels
with sparklers.
They would stoop
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of Luke 2:13 "Suddenly there was with the
angel a multitude of the heavenly host
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God in the highest, and on earth peace,
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We younger girls looked forward to the
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Then the shepherds would
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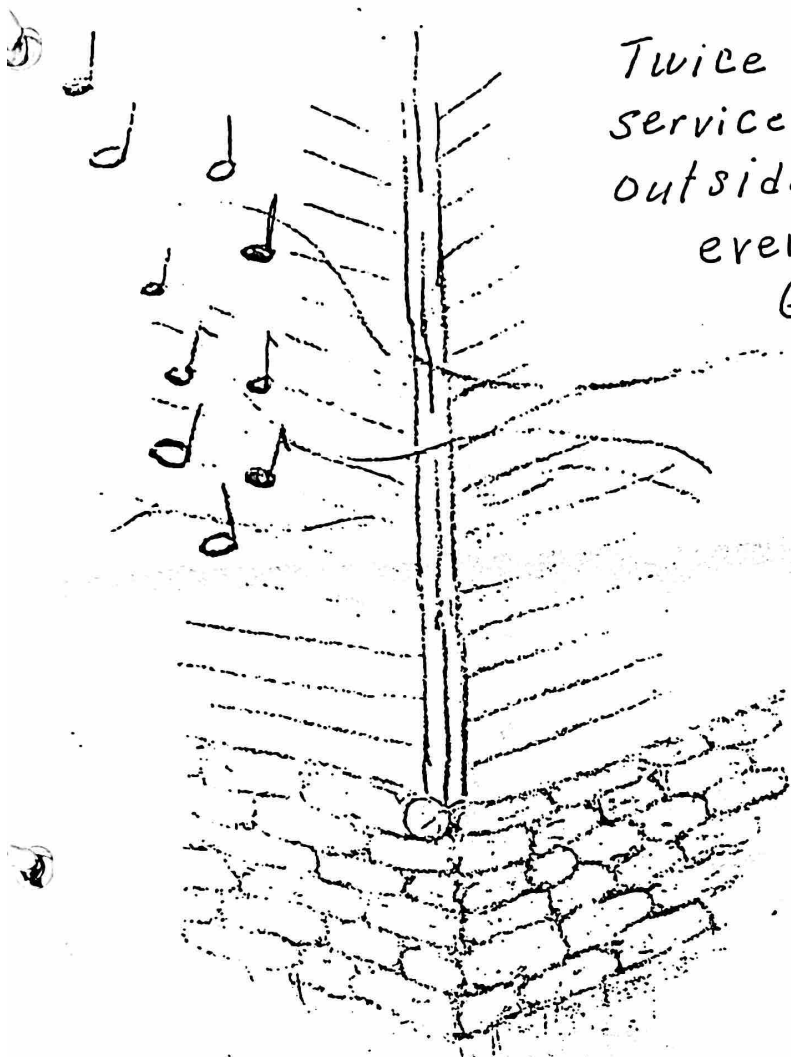
Come and worship Christ the newborn King!

Twice during German service I got to stay outside. I believe it was every third Sunday that German service was held for the original founding members. Both my parents, aunts and uncles could understand German but the third generation didn't learn. I know I didn't. So we played in the graveyard behind the church.

It was lonely and strange to be there without either parent. And quiet, except for the wind which blew around the corner of the church

It was a soft,

rather pleasant sound. It seemed as if the angels and the spirits of the dead were praising God along with the living.



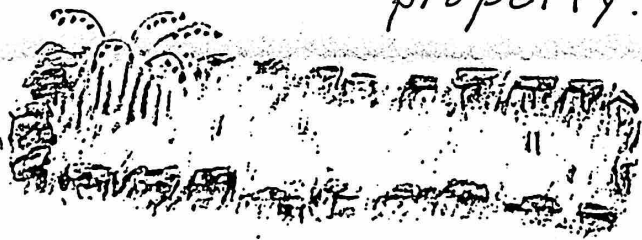
The second time outside, we made too much noise. From then on we sat through German service until it was discontinued.

There was one small tombstone with a tree trunk and a little lamb lying beside it. The little lamb was cute and I would pet it. I asked mom why this tombstone was so different from the others and she told me a baby was buried there.



How sad: that a child or baby would die never crossed my mind. I thought dying was just for the old.

Over against the fence was a very old grave. It was there when the congregation acquired the property. No one seemed to



know who was buried there. Some said it was a soldier's grave. I remember how

pretty the blue bells were in the spring.

I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job 19: 25 and 26

The church at Red Hill had just the one large room or sanctuary, so any other function than Sunday School and divine service was held elsewhere. Vacation Bible school was one of them.



It was called summer school then because the public school did not have summer classes. When I

was around nine or ten years old, we rented the old Kraft School on Staunton Pike for the extra activities. The preacher would leave the parsonage at Red Hill, drive through town, then out the pike picking up the children along the way. In those days not many women drove. The reason we chose Kraft School was that more of our membership lived nearer Staunton Pike than Northwestern Pike.

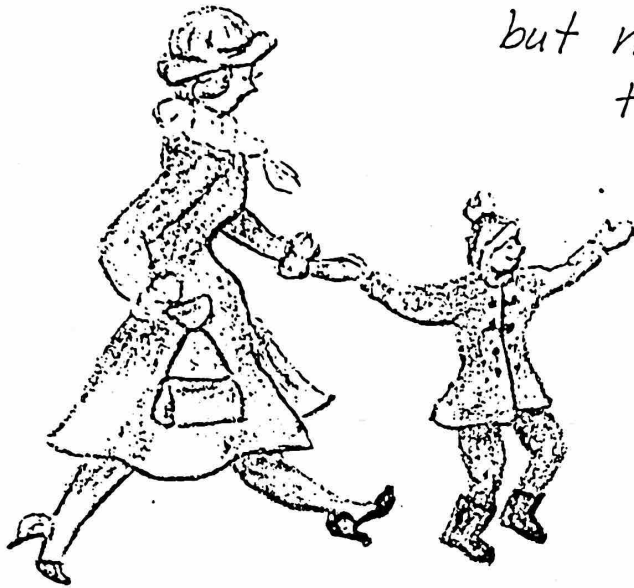
We kids loved going to summer school and we were proud of how much of Luther's small catechism we could memorize. By confirmation time, we had it all committed to memory. We did a lot of singing also and had a heated softball game at recess.

Teach me good judgement and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments, Psalm 119:66

David E. Catledge '86

We held all our meetings in our homes, taking turns and each one was a little party. Mom

didn't go to very many but my aunts did, and they always stopped and took me with them. We went to officers and teacher, and young people's meetings. But whenever it was a holiday like



Hallowe'en, Christmas etc. Mom was the party girl and held a party at our house.

We stored our picnic tables in my uncle Albert's basement and we held a good many of our Church meetings there. After my uncle married Willa, they held many parties at their house too.

The parties we had then were for the entire family and all of us seemed to have a real good time.

The Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalm 100:5

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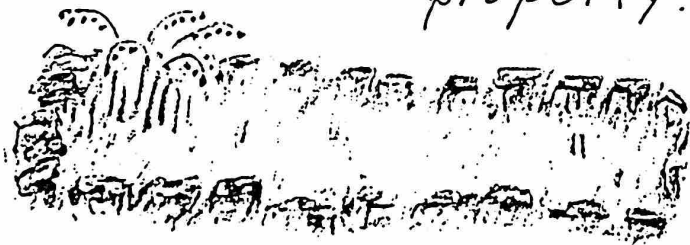
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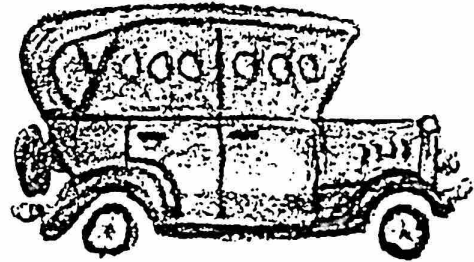
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Luke 2: 4, 5, 7.

During the winter, side-curtains were put on the Model-T Fords. The little isinglass windows on my father's side-curtains were square but my grandfather's were oval.

My aunt Ella, Mom and I were in the back seat and even under a fuzzy laprobe, we were still very cold. All the way back to my grandfather's, Mom scolded over the danger of so large a Christmas tree with lighted candles. She was afraid of fire and a tragedy. The next Christmas she saw to it that there were pails of water by the tree.



After that we discontinued the use of candles. The tree still smelled good but not as good as when the heat of the candles sputtered the pine needles. After electricity was installed, we purchased colored lights.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God.

Luke 2:20a



Lent and Christmas were about the only times we had evening service. The preacher would get out the step ladder, air pump and matches to light the lamps. They gave a good light but the soft hissing sound would make me sleepy.

Electricity finally did come out that way and we installed large, long lights. These lights were later installed in our new church on Broad and Foley where they are hanging to this day in the fellowship hall.



Jesus said, I am the light of the world he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 8:12



Our Christmas programs were looked forward to and the community liked to attend them also. After the program was over, candy in large cartons would be passed to the people. The older girls got to pass the candy and at last it was my turn.

One warm Christmas the crowd was so large that all of them could not get

into the church. After everyone on my side of the church had been served, I realized I should offer candy to the people outdoors also. When I went out the door, I saw many people standing in the yard. The light from the church shone on their faces, and I could see they had eagerly and joyfully accepted the Christmas message. In the same manner they accepted the candy.

And the light shineth in the darkness:
and the darkness comprehended it not.

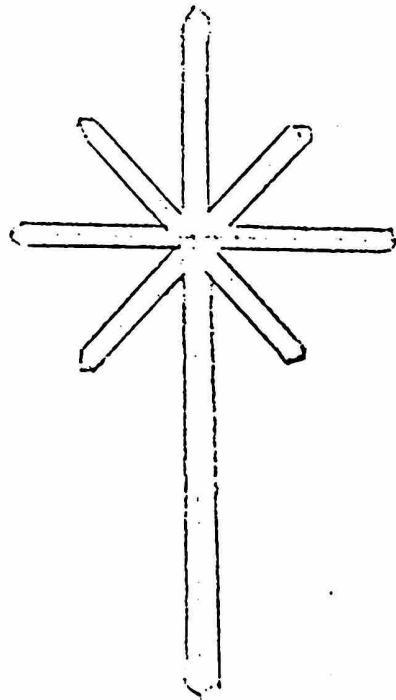
John 1:5

Those people loved our preacher. He mingled with them with his love, disregarding their station in life. They loved what he had to offer but there it ended. I felt some of those people thought they were part of the congregation and one man went so far as to imply he and his family were members. But there never was a commitment.

King Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.
Acts 26:28

Matthew 2:2

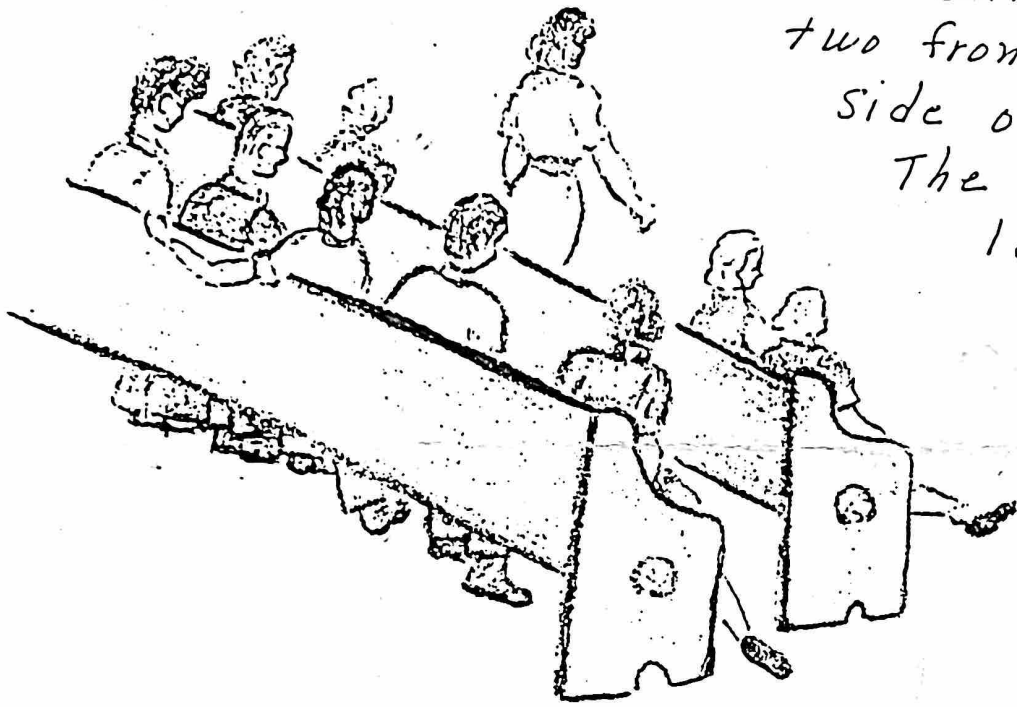
Where is he
that is
Born King
of the
Jews?



For we have
seen his
star in the
east, and
are

Come to worship him.

During the opening service of Sunday School the children sat in the two front seats on each side of the church.



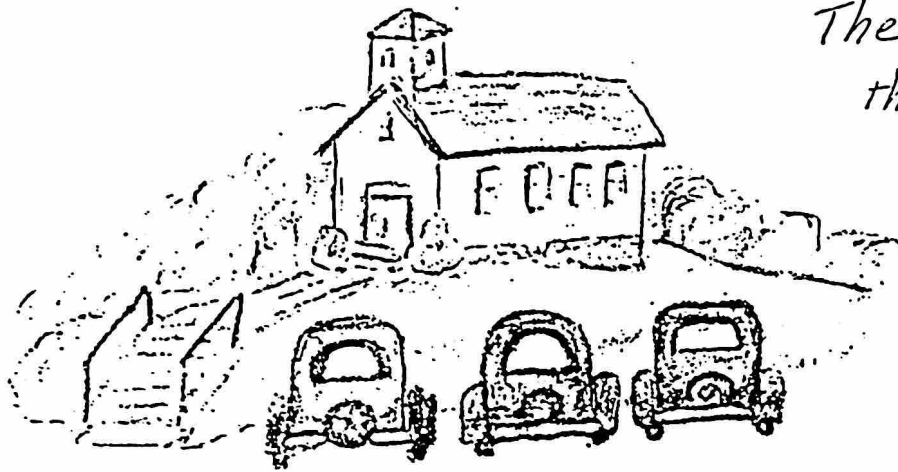
The big kids on the left and the little kids on the right. All of us had a Bible verse to memorize for the Sunday lesson, and one would be asked to

stand and recite their verse. Most of the time the one called on would know the verse, but what humiliation it would be if they forgot.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22:6

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3



The first space in the parking lot belonged to the preacher. No one else was supposed to park there. But the second space was different. My

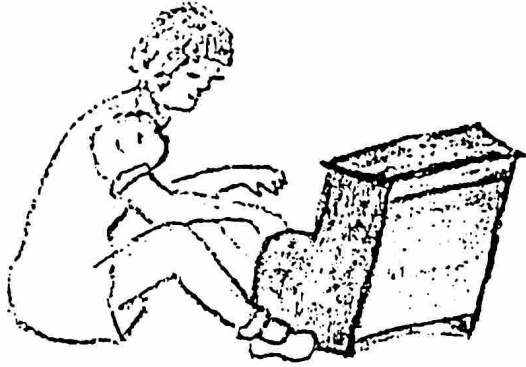
uncle Albert and my father both wanted it, and it was almost like a contest between them. They would leave home too early and arrive at church at least a half hour before Sunday school started. The one getting there first would wear a triumphant grin.

Once in a while they would be a little late and someone else a little early and they would lose "their" parking space.

Later Albert parked his car close to the bank in line with the road on the other side of the steps. No one seemed to challenge him to this space except a visitor who didn't know better.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom
Proverbs 9:10

To play the piano was an early childhood dream, and Mom encouraged this desire by saying we needed someone to play at Church. It was hard to find someone to play full time. Then one Christmas I got a toy piano.



I saved my money and by the time I was nine, I had

enough to buy a used piano. Then I started to take lessons. Soon I was playing for Sunday school.

Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:
praise him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise him with the timbrel and dance:
praise him with stringed instruments
and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals:
praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
Let everything that hath breath praise
the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

Psalm 150: 3-6

My Greataunt Mary had a pump reed organ. Before she died she said her nephew Louis' girl should have the organ because she heard I was taking piano lessons.



Mom didn't take to the idea very well. The organ smelled mousey (they all do) and she didn't like its looks. It was put in the back room where car toys were kept and

she told me to go practice the piano. I thought the organ was beautiful and could hardly wait to play it but I stayed away from it for about six months. It was summer by then, the back room was warm, I picked up the Sunday School hymnal and away I went. Soon the music was coming out of that thing and I was thrilled to pieces. Mom came running in and said "I didn't know you could play hymns!" At that time I was eleven years old. The Sunday before my first day in junior high school I played for Sunday school.

O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Psalm 34:3

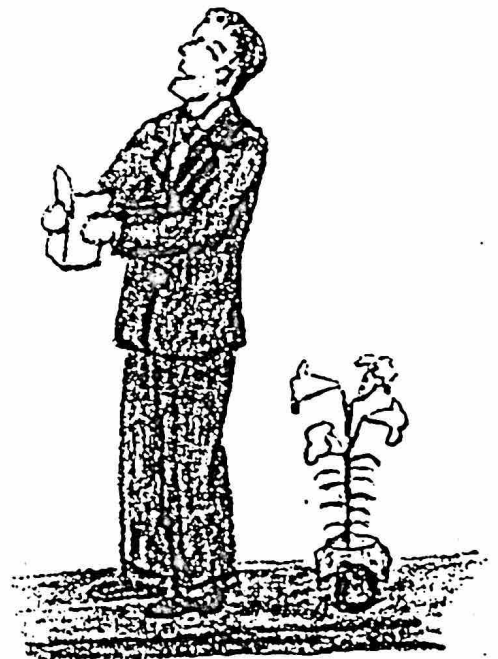
On Palm Sunday the roll was called for all
confirmands of St. Paul.



Several weeks before
letters had been sent to
the ones out-of-town and
backsliders. Those who
couldn't attend usually
sent Bible verses to be
read. Some came back
a time or two and then
we never heard from them again.

Easter was joyful for we were celebrating
Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

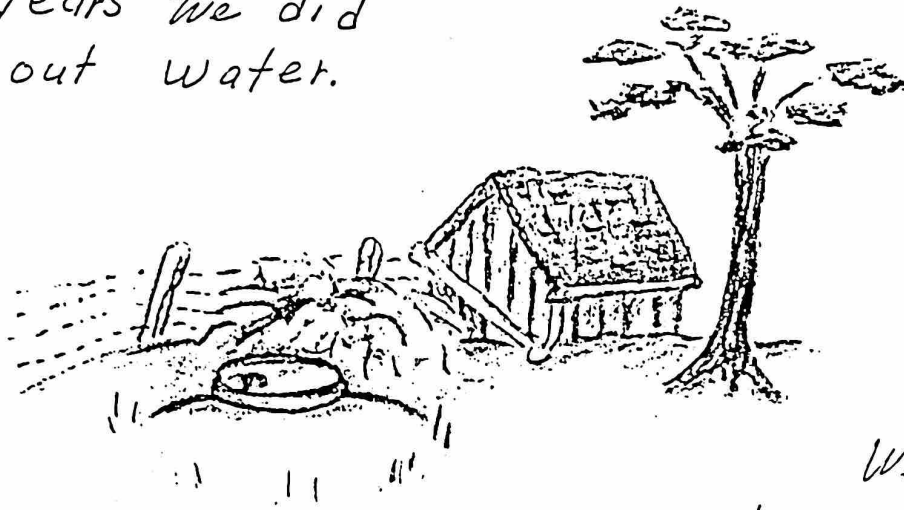
My uncle Roy had a
beautiful baritone voice
and he would sing for
special occasions.
Sometimes our services
were almost as elaborate
as Christmas.



Rejoice because
your names are
written in heaven.

Luke 10:20

For years we did
without water.



Finally a
cistern was
dug behind
the coal shed.

We could not drink

the water because the
cistern did not have a

filter. It was filled in again when we
moved to town.

The preacher planted a van Fleet rose
bush beside the cistern and it grew into
a large, beautiful bush. Years later I
picked a bouquet of roses for my
wedding.

Jesus said... Whosoever drinketh of the
water that I shall give him shall never
thirst; but the water that I shall give him
shall be in him a well of water
Springing up into everlasting life.

John 4: 14



The Sunday School Picnic
was the event of the year.

It was held at
my Aunt Lily's
Green Cabin
and started with
church service;
then the big picnic
dinner, followed by
games for all the
classes. Next came
horseshoes and a big
soft ball game.

Ice cream was dipped
out of five gallon
containers and plenty

for everyone. Then we would finish off the
food from dinner. The day was closed with
vespers; then the picnickers headed home.
Those of us that stayed with Aunt Lily for
the night or lived close, built a bonfire
and sat around it and talked about the
nice day we had.

Many people came from miles away to be
with us once again on picnic day.

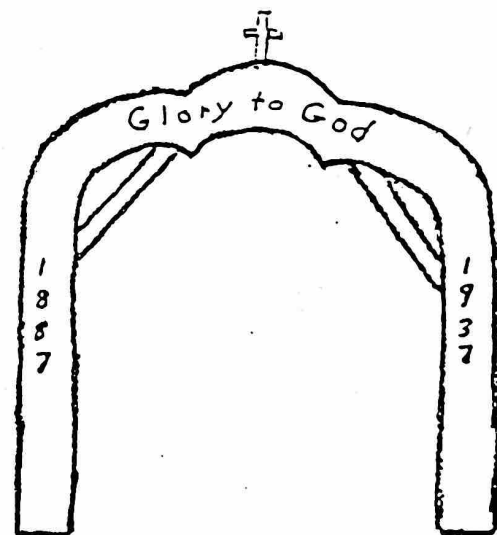
We are the people of his pasture. Psalm 95: 7

and Now a Teen



1937 The year of my confirmation. Everything was so nice, happy and safe.

It also was the year of our 50th Anniversary. We put a wooden arch at the top of the steps for most of the year. The day of celebration started with a festive morning worship. Then we went to Pine Grove, located on Staunton Pike at the end of Dutch Ridge Road, for a huge dinner. There was a pavilion and outdoor fire places. I didn't begin to know all the people. Mom did, so a lot of them must have been former members. I remember the name Pileerwein being mentioned but I don't believe the minister was there. We spent the entire afternoon talking and getting reacquainted. Then we drove back to church for Vespers and goodbyes.



Lo, I am with you always,
even unto the end of
the world.

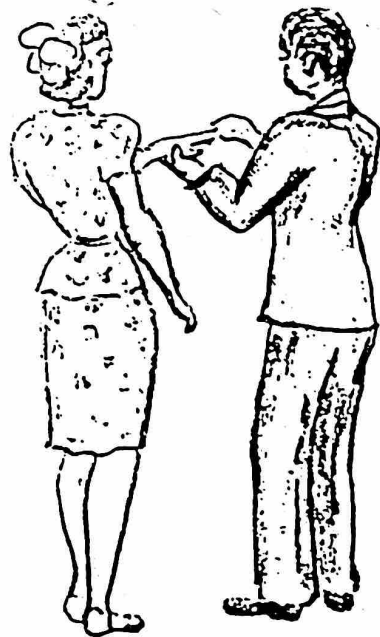
Matthew 28:20

The Reverend Vogelsang stayed about three years and then we called the Reverend Rosenberg. He was a family man and both he and his wife were over qualified for this small parish, but we benefited by them being here. He was an exceptionally good organist and our choir began to flourish.

It was during his pastorate that we purchased the lots and house at Broad and Foley, Parkersburg, W. Va. (The Reverend Pohl started the building fund under much protest.) Rev. Rosenberg and his family moved into the house and we felt better that his children could go to city schools.

The depression was going out but World War II was going strong. The CYPO Club was having picnics but the young men were leaving.

When the war ended, I got married. On our honeymoon we visited a church in Kentucky and they knew our minister had been called. When we got home and asked him, he said it was true.



I will not leave you comfortless:
I will come to you. John 14:18

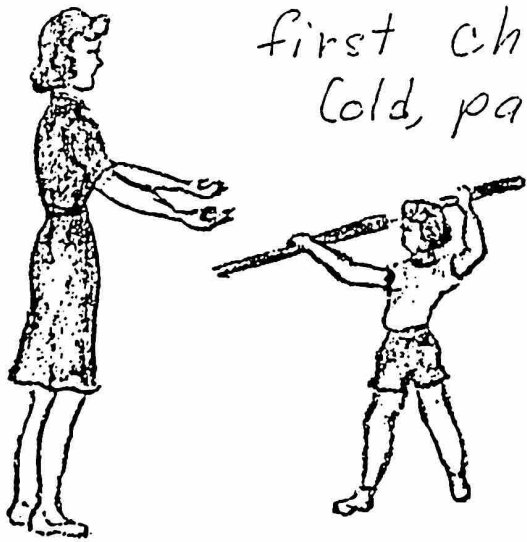
Soon after our anniversary year the preacher had a "Call" and he took it. I was devastated; my friend, my helper and my spiritual guide. Moira explained this was the way things went and that we would call another minister.

The time was the great depression years and there was a surplus of ministers. We called the Rev. Vogelsang from Cleveland who was doing other work to make a living. He, his wife and son were very happy and grateful to be here and we loving took them in. He could play any musical instrument he touched.

After awhile he started a Christian young people organization, the letters were CYPO, so the CYPO club was formed. This was the

first change from everyone cold, parents, babies and teens

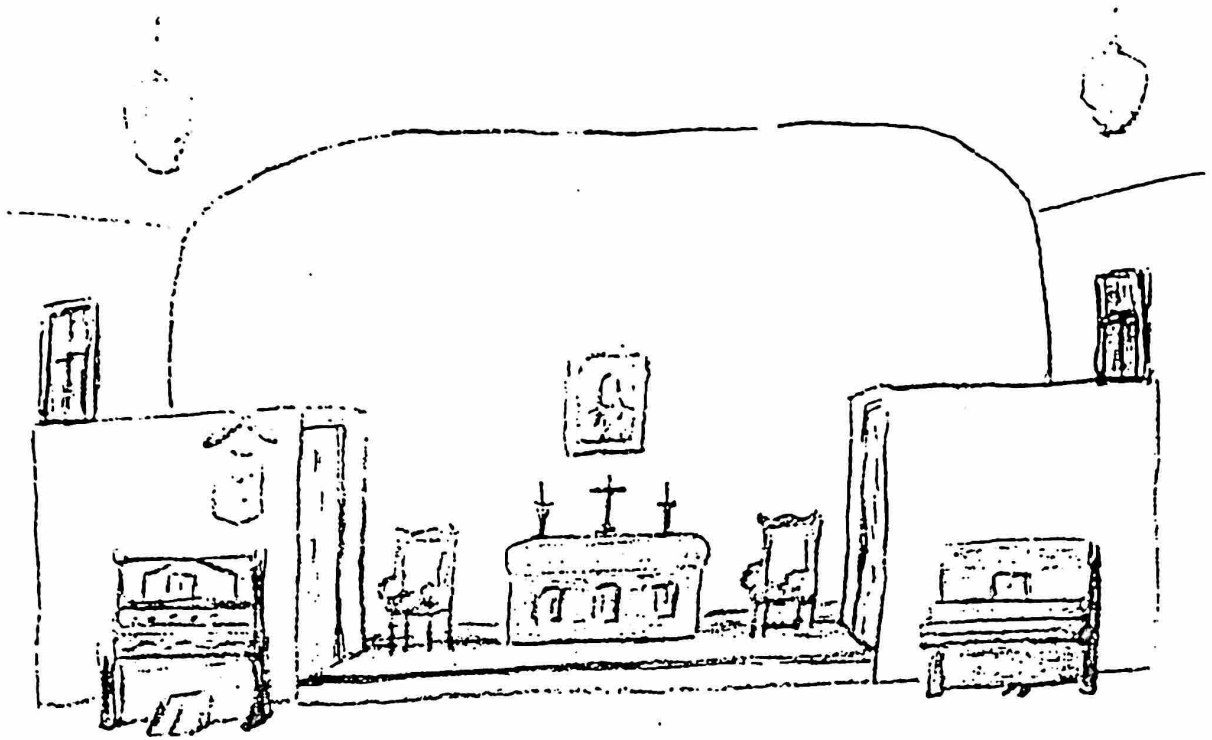
being together. The Rev. Vogelsang also started a choir.



I had a walking stick and my little cousin thought that it was

the CYPO Club.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me. John 14:1



We needed more rooms for Sunday school classes, and the only thing to do was use the vacant area up front. The pulpit and stairs were taken out, the altar set back and a cubicle was built on either side. The minister preached from a lectern.

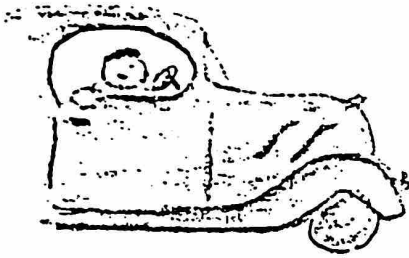
I don't remember just when this was done but we knew we had to plan for a new and larger church building.

Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalm 15: 11

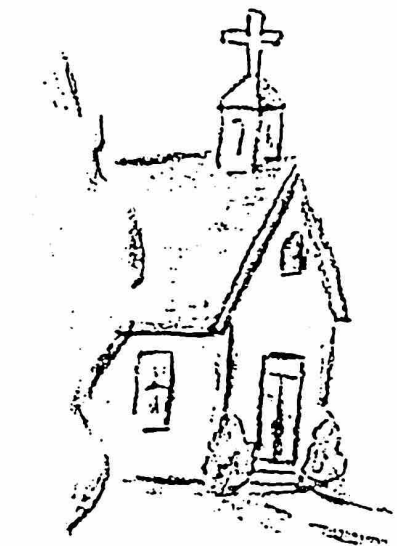
One Trinity Sunday morning a traveler was driving along Route 50, probably wishing he were home, when he heard the strains of

- Holy ^d
Holy ^d
Holy ^d



Coming
from St. Paul.

He stopped his car to listen then decided to participate. He came in late but joined in with our worship. He introduced himself after the service and he was a very likeable person. Whenever he passed through, he would worship with us. I often wonder whatever became of him.



Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Isaiah 6:3