



ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AT RED HILL

GOLDEN JUBILEE SUNDAY MARKS ANNIVERSARY RED HILL CHURCH

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Founded in 1887 Oldest of Denomination Here

Debt When Building Was Completed Totaled Only \$200 — Services in German

By ORPHA CROSS

Because pioneers in a new land congregated in a neighborhood home to worship, the Saint Paul's Lutheran church at Red Hill is observing its 50th birthday on Sunday. The oldest church of the denomination in Parkersburg area, the church was founded by a little band of pioneers recently arrived from their fatherland, Germany.

Those pioneering fathers and mothers, who migrated from Europe to endure without complaint the hardships and privations of a new country, built their homes in Red Hill vicinity in the section that became known as "Dutch Ridge." As they built their homes they built their church.

Golden Jubilee services Sunday will be a tribute to the work of those pioneers in building the church and community.

Founding a Church

Beginning in 1884, the church forefathers held services for several years in what was called the old "Conoway House," a home below the site of the present church. Ministers from the neighboring cities conducted the services.

In 1886, under the pastorate of the Rev. Otto Meerwein, who lived in Parkersburg, plans for the erection of a church building were proposed. Records do not reveal the names of those who were present in the charter meeting of the congregation, but the families included Roth, Affolter, Brethauer, Otte, Schueler, Boern, Weber, Moeck, Holle and Schockner.

Lumber and stone for constructing the church were secured from the surrounding country. On September 25, 1887, the edifice was completed and the Rev. Otto Meerwein gave the dedicatory sermon. Collection amounted to \$55.46. Very little debt remained on the building, only about \$200, which was liquidated in a few years.

The church was called "Die Evangelische Lutherische St. Paulus Gemeinde."

Community Growth

In paying the church indebtedness, records, written in German as the services were held for many years, give account of the work of the little group of members. There was an old-time social when purchases included lamp oil, ice cream freezer and dipper, sausage and other articles.

During the years that followed the growth of the congregation was not rapid. Pastors usually lived at

ices there and at Sand Hill with infrequent meetings for the Red Hill church. In 1917, however, the Rev. T. L. Luft became a resident pastor. Measured and steady growth was noted from that time.

In 1922, under the pastorate of the Rev. E. H. Joost, who will speak in the anniversary services Sunday, the new parsonage was built. In 1923 the present pastor, Rev. Walter A. Pohl, came from Concordia seminary in St. Louis, Mo., to take over the work of the church. In the past fourteen years many changes have taken place.

The congregation, which had been assisted by the synod of the denomination, became self-supporting in 1936. The envelope system was introduced to meet the financial obligations. Even during the years of drought and depression current obligations were met as they came due. The old German

speaking members having died, in 1936 the German services were dropped entirely and at present all the work is being carried on in the English language.

Program for Sunday

Golden Jubilee services Sunday will include morning and evening programs with a picnic dinner at noon at Pine Grove, near the church. Morning services will include:

Prelude—Mrs. Willa Roth.

Altar service—Conducted by Rev. Elmer Bliss of Logan, Ohio.

Responsive reading led by Rev. Walter A. Pohl, pastor. Scripture lessons.

Solo—Roy DeViese.

Hymn, "My Church, My Dear Old Church."

Sermon—Rev. O. F. Stolzenburg, Columbus, Ohio, former pastor. Theme, "A Word of encouragement to renewed zeal and fidelity in the work which you have been pursuing these fifty years."

Offertory, hymn, prayer, creed in unison, benediction, doxology, Lord's prayer and postlude, Mrs. Willa Roth.

Evening Service

Prelude, Mrs. Willa Roth; hymn, "I Love Thy Zion, Lord;" altar service, Rev. Elmer Bliss; responsive reading led by Rev. Mr. Pohl;

scripture lesson; solo, Roy DeViese; hymn, "From All That Dwell."

Sermon, the Rev. E. H. Joost, Amlin, Ohio, former pastor. Theme, "Offer Unto God Thanksgiving on Your Fiftieth Birthday." Offertory, hymn and closing devotions.

Pastors who have served the church down through the years are: 1887-1905, Rev. Otto Meerwein, Rev. A. A. Sallman, Rev. H. Uhle, Rev. H. W. F. Gerike, Vicar; Rev. L. O. Hammer, Rev. G. Stiegemeyer; 1905-1909, Rev. Carl Hassold; 1909-1910, Rev. William Henkel; 1910-1911, Rev. Theo. Gohlke, Vicar; 1911-1914, Rev. O. F. Stolzenburg; 1914-1915, Rev. A. F. Wegener, Vicar; 1915-1916, Rev. W. F. Bode; 1916-1917, Rev. O. F. Stolzenburg; 1917-1920, Rev. T. L. Luft; 1920-1921, Rev. R. E. Scaer, Vicar; 1921-1922, Rev. E. H. Joost; 1923, Rev. Walter A. Pohl.

Student

Pomeroy, Ohio, and conducted serv-