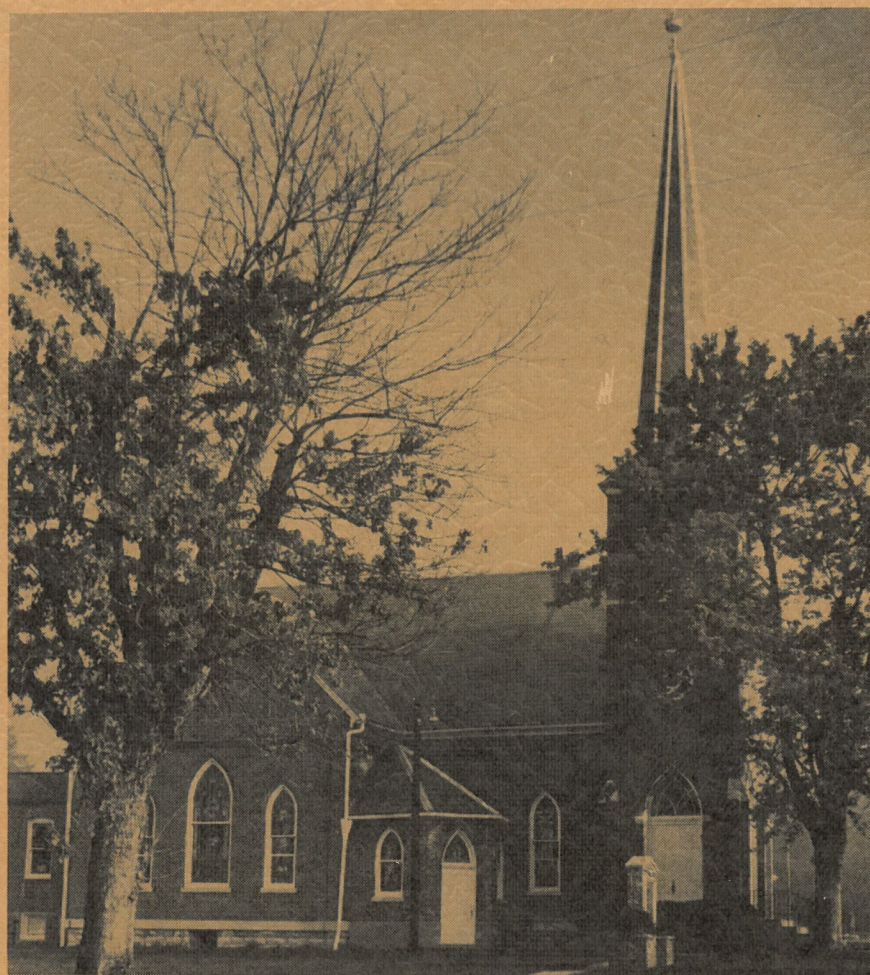


1815 - 1976
History

Salem Ellerton Evangelical Lutheran Church

4573 South Union Road
Miamisburg, Ohio



*Issued In Connection With The 90th Anniversary of The
Dedication of The Basic, Present Church Building in 1887*



A Warm Welcome Awaits You
At
Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church
Of
Ellerton

Rev. Olan W. Aughbaugh, *Pastor*

HISTORY OF SALEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELLERTON, OHIO
1815-1976

By
Mark Eshbaugh

THE FOUNDING

"Go ye into all the world."

Over the mountains and through the valleys, following streams and trails and their own instincts, into the Ohio country came those seeking fertile land and a place where they could build their homes and rear their families. Among them were Lutherans of German stock from Pennsylvania, Maryland and elsewhere, who carried in their possessions their Bibles, their catechisms and their prayer books. Here, in what is now known as Ellerton, several miles from the Miami River and near the banks of Bear Creek, some of these early and hardy pioneers settled. Here they began an ancestral life the religious effects of which are still to be seen and felt in the locale and in the multitude of descendants to which that ancestral life gave birth.

One may assume that included in those early forebears were strong-willed, zealous-in-the-faith soldiers of the cross who in their quest for land and home, did not forget the "assembling of themselves together" as they had opportunity. One may rightfully assume too, that their spiritual needs were sometimes met by itinerant ministers as well as by some of the more knowledgeable or devout members of the newly established and sparsely populated community. One of the itinerant pastors probably was Johannes Samuel Mau who is known to have taught and preached in western Ohio and eastern Indiana. It is established that in 1808 he purchased land in Jackson township and that he made special effort to call his German brethren into an organized fellowship. At one time he was said to have slightly faltered in the Lutheran faith and espoused the Reformed cause but at a convention in 1816, he asked to be and was reinstated in the fellowship of the Lutheran pastorate. It was reported of him that he was imbued with much missionary zeal and fervor.

In the early days of Salem's history as well as that of other churches in the area, there was a joining of interdenominational groups in establishing places of worship and ministries. Especially was this true of the Lutheran and Reformed followers. However inter-faith lines were also drawn and among the early spiritual leaders in this general vicinity were John Lewis Markert in West Alexandria, Andrew Simon and Henry Heincke in Germantown on the Lutheran side, and John Jacob LaRose, Jacob Christman, and Thomas and Thomas H. Winters (father and son) on the Reformed side.

It was through the joining of two denominations that this congregation's life came into being. On February 17, 1815, a deed

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer of this History wishes to recognize the contributions of the late Rev. R. A. Albert and the late Misses Blanche and Elizabeth Christy and Mr. Howard Getter for the historical information contained in the booklet "A Brief History of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church" compiled in the year 1940. The writer is also indebted to all who preserved reference material since that date, to Rev. Olan W. Aughbaugh and Mrs. Herschel (Irma) Drake who provided statistical data referred to herein and to Mrs. Charles (Gloria) Higgins who typed the History material for the writer in preparation for its publication.

was given by a William Brown for 120 perches of land to Henry Gephart, Peter Kreitzer, Jacob Weaver and Frederick Stiver representing the Lutherans, and to Peter Baker, Conrad Leighty, Christian Shuder and John Stump representing the Presbyterians which later became the Reformeds. Through a merger in 1957, the Reformed church became the United Church of Christ.

During the pastorate of Rev. John Casper Dill, the construction of the first jointly-held church structure was completed, chiefly with donated labor and each of the male members hewing and hauling his share of the logs. The building was said to have been a model structure, one story high with galleries on three sides and a high pulpit according to the custom of those times. The German language was used exclusively in the worship services but by degrees as the people adapted to change and their new environment, English also came to be used.

The deed for the church site as worded by Mr. Brown, clearly reflected the religious and fixed devotion of the grantor and is a unique document. In it Mr. Brown set forth that he was "Positively and entirely against having any part of it set apart and appropriated for any other purpose whatsoever" than as a place of worship and as a burial ground. He provided that in case either congregation permitted it to be used for any other purpose, such congregation would forfeit all right and title to the ground; and in case both churches should ever suffer the land to be used for any other than the stipulated purposes, "both churches declare themselves to have forfeited all their right to said ground and to the improvements that have made on it forever" and that in such case "the ground is no more to be the property of any man or set of men upon this earth but is immediately to become the property of the Almighty Himself, that the bones of His servants may rest in it unmolested until He is graciously pleased to order the trumpet to be sounded for their resurrection in Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom be eternal praise forevermore. Amen."

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

In 1839 the first attempt was made to organize a Sunday Church School wherein the service and instruction were chiefly in German. This innovation within the church was not well received by many of the orthodox church members and due to their opposition and general lack of support, the School was discontinued after a few years.

About 1852, effort was made again to establish a School following an invitation to church members to a Sunday Church School celebration in Farmersville where all comers received a free dinner but opposition to such a program in the church at Ellerton continued and after three or four years, the second attempt failed. Proponents tried again about 1861 or 1862, this time meeting in a school house, but the organization was short lived. One can only surmise that the resistance to the movement over a score of years, stemmed from the belief that a church was a house of God built for the purpose of worship only, that only the pure word of God was to

be heard there and that the interpretation of the Word should be left to His duly appointed ministers.

Finally in 1867 there was sufficient support to ensure an on-going Sunday Church School and it was accepted as a part of the congregational life and purpose. For a time, no sessions were held during the winter months but later they were conducted throughout the year. It is known that by the year 1887 the enrollment was approximately 200 - an outstanding record in consideration of the long-time opposition, the scattered population and transportation hardships. The first year of operation as a strictly Lutheran School as opposed to the former one composed of the two congregations, was said to have netted an annual collection of \$116.87.

References to later years of operation will be found in succeeding pages of this History.

On September 14, 1841, an acre of land adjoining the site of the log church, was purchased from Lewis Ebert in order to provide space for hitching posts for members' horses and a nearby plot for additional burial ground. This and the originally deeded land was used as prescribed and the cemetery portion was increased from time to time, the responsibility for which was vested in the Trustees of the two congregations. By the year 1908 the cemetery had become more of an area burial ground rather than one for the churches' members and accordingly in that year the Ellerton Cemetery Association was organized. At least 7 Revolutionary War soldiers are buried at Ellerton.

On June 14, 1858 an additional quarter acre was purchased from Jacob Getter, possibly as a site for a new church building since it was located at the southeast corner of the previously acquired land.

The rights and duties of both congregations were spelled out in a constitution adopted in 1830, with no record of a former one.

Likewise, no articles of incorporation were found prior to 1858 but in that year incorporation and a constitution were approved by the State of Ohio "in the 82nd year of independence of the United States, James Buchanan being President of the United States and Salmon P. Chase, Governor of Ohio." Changes were made in the Constitution and/or By-Laws governing the Lutheran congregation in 1852, in 1898 and perhaps at other times. On January 2, 1875 a Confession of Faith was adopted and was reaffirmed on August 10, 1886. Reference to the 1830 constitution and subsequent changes are to be found elsewhere in this History.

In 1860 a brick church was built slightly south of the original structure to replace the log church erected in 1815. It was said to have cost \$3000.00, contained a rear gallery and had a spire in which was hung a bell purchased from the Buckeye Foundry of Cincinnati at a cost of \$200.00. Later greatly renovated and improved, it became the congregational home of the United Church of Christ - formerly Reformed.

In 1867, Lutheranism as previously organized in certain sections of the country and as reflected in Salem's affiliation, underwent a change. Formerly the congregation had been affiliated with the Joint Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States, originally an exclusively German speaking body. In 1857 the English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio had been organized and in 1867 the General Council came into existence as a protest to the "New Measurism" or emotional tendencies that were creeping into some parts of the Church.

The new English District favored the views of the recently organized General Council and its congregations including Salem withdrew from the Joint Synod, becoming a part of the General Council. The word English was dropped and the organization was then known as the Evangelical Lutheran District Synod of Ohio. In 1920, the Ohio District Synod merged with the East Ohio, Miami and Joint Synods and became the present Ohio Synod. Prior to that, in 1918 the General Council, General Synod and United Synod of the South merged to form the United Lutheran Church in America (U.L.C.A.) and in 1962 through merger of the U.L.C.A., Augustana Suami (Finnish) and Danish Church bodies, the Lutheran Church in America (L.C.A.) was founded with Salem, Ellerton being one of its congregations.

On September 20-24, 1882, the District Synod of Ohio met in Salem church and in 1883, the Miamisburg-Ellerton parish was divided. The following year it was reported that the Ellerton congregation paid the sum of \$50.00 on apportionment and had a membership of 265. Church property value at that time was indicated as being \$5000.00.

On October 27, 1882, 1/2 acre of land was purchased from Peter Shade, on which to build a parsonage at an address later to become known as 4448 South Union Road. This continued to be the parsonage location until through a deed dated August 31, 1954, another house and .922 acre of ground situated at 4573 South Union Road, was purchased for a parsonage from Walter Recher, Sr. at a cost of \$20,000.00. Later, the first parsonage was sold.

Because "recent events make it necessary now to effect a separate incorporation," on August 17, 1886, the Lutherans obtained articles of incorporation from the Ohio Secretary of State under the name of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Salem Church, thus bringing about a dissolution of the joint services and ownership of the two Ellerton congregations. The signatories of the documents of incorporation were Rev. C. Albrecht, George Stine, John H. Recher, William Shell, Henry Shell, George Heller and John H. Eck. The purpose was stated as not being for profit but to provide a place of worship for the church's members; services were to be conducted according to the faith and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; to promote the interests of the Christian religion, and to secure and hold donations, bequests and funds arising from other sources for the benefit of the said congregation.

It appears that on April 4, 1877, an acre of land was purchased from one George Miller and to this was added 1 and 28/100 acres to the south which was purchased from Mr. Miller on September 25, 1886. Within these boundaries a brick church with its sanctuary formed in the shape of a hugh cross, was built in 1886 and 1887. The cornerstone was laid October 30, 1886 by Pastor C. Albrecht and visiting ministers. The contractor was Mr. C. D. Routzahn. The completed church building was dedicated October 2, 1887 by Rev. Seibert, assisted by Rev. Poorman and Rev. Brown. Rev. Seibert's sermon was based on Hag. 2:9 - "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Eleven years later the so-called Primary Room was added to the northeast corner and in 1900, a recess was made in the walls of the northwest corner and in it was placed a pipe organ purchased from the Hinner and Albertson Company of Pekin, Illinois. The cost of the organ and a general renovation of the church at that time was said to have approximated \$2500.00. The dedication of the organ and the reopening of the church took place December 23, 1900, with Rev. F. W. E. Peschau delivering the sermon.

20TH CENTURY NOTES

FOREWORD

This History will not record the names of members or others who presented the congregation with special gifts, items and accouterments. Many of these are a matter of record elsewhere - in hymnals and books, on doors, windows and equipment, plaques, the Book of Remembrance and other means. Some have not been recorded or have been inadvertently omitted, lost or misplaced as the years have passed and no permanent archives existed. In addition, many of Salem's members have anonymously made generous special contributions or have collectively donated large sums which are not a matter of public record. It is in consideration of these facts and the lack of complete information extending from Salem's founding to the present time, that it is deemed inappropriate to incorporate herein a listing of donors. Rather, let there be thanksgiving and rejoicing in His name for the response of all as they saw the need or heeded the call.

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In the spring of 1913, the church's original opera house-type chairs were replaced with the more conventional pews purchased from the American Seating Company. At the time, opposition was expressed to the change by those who were averse to giving up the arm rests and the contour of the old chairs which were well adapted to the seeking of a comfortable position in which to sit. The noise made by the hinged seats when the congregation arose or sat down did not deter the opposition members from vehemently protesting the change and questioning why it was necessary. In addition to the purchase of new pews, other improvements were

made in 1913-1914, including new art glass windows, the frescoing of the interior, carpeting and new lighting fixtures. The pews were stated to have cost \$1100.00 and the other improvements about \$1900.00, "all paid for." Appropriate services were held in connection with the renovations on the "22nd Sunday after Trinity," 1914, with the principal sermon being delivered by Rev. J. Sarver of Washington, Pa. following brief addresses by neighboring pastors. Also from June 12th to the 16th of that year, the District Synod of Ohio held its 38th annual convention in Salem church.

On Thursday, August 26, 1915, the two Ellerton congregations joined in the observance of their Centennial celebration. The following is an account of that event as published in the Miamisburg News.

"Services were held both morning and afternoon. There was a combined choir of both congregations. A platform was erected on the lawn just north of the Reformed Church yard and south of the plot where had stood the first log church used from 1815 to 1860. On the platform was the communion table, hand made and used in the first church. There was a picnic dinner on the grounds. Three tables, each about 100 feet long, were loaded with good things from the countryside, and friends from near and far lined along their sides and did ample justice to the magnificent spread. By 1:30 P.M. six or seven hundred people had come together to hear and take part in the program. Addresses were delivered by Reformed ex-pastors Beck and Burkhalter; and by the only living Lutheran ex-pastor, Rev. H. J. Kuder of Bethlehem, Pa. Rev. Wagner and Rev. Seibert gave historical addresses and Rev. Brown and Rev. Peters spoke words of congratulations on the happy occasion. Letters were read from Rev. Segrist and Rev. Stump. A dispatch from Rev. Peschau was also read. The quaint old deed given by William Brown for the first land for the church and cemetery was read."

In the 1920s, gifts of a new altar, lectern, pulpit and a baptismal font were presented to the congregation. They were all crafted by a Salem member, Mr. C. D. Routzahn who also was the contractor for the construction of the church in 1886-1887. It is known that the altar was dedicated and first used in the worship services on Easter Sunday, April 8, 1928. A reredos, also a gift to the congregation, was added to the altar in 1938 and was dedicated on December 18th of that year. It was made by the American Seating Company from which the pews were purchased in 1913, and the carving was the work of Mr. Aloise Lang who was from the same family as Anton Lang who played the part of the Christ in the Oberammorgau Passion Play for many years.

In 1926, the church walls were refrescoed, hardwood floors were laid and new carpet purchased for the chancel and aisles. The dedication service was held on Sunday, May 26, with Dr. Paul Koller, President of the Ohio Synod, delivering the sermon. On Sunday, September 27, 1931, an all-day homecoming service was held, followed by a dinner on the south church lawn and an

appropriate afternoon program. On this occasion, the pastor and choir were cloaked in robe and vestments for the first time.

The church walls were again frescoed in the fall of 1936. On October 3, 1937, the 50th anniversary of the erection of the church building was observed in a special service at which Prof. E. E. Flack of Hamma Divinity School in Springfield, Ohio, occupied the pulpit. An informal program was held in the afternoon following a basket dinner at the near-by Grange Hall, formerly a two-room schoolhouse.

In 1938, the first increase was made in church facilities since the addition of the Primary Room at the turn of the century. A room with basement was added to the west end of the main structure and at that time, the organ was reconditioned and moved back into an enlarged recess, the chancel and choir loft enlarged and other improvements were made including the redecorating of the church interior. Dedication services were held on Sunday, December 18, the guest minister being Rev. J. W. Frease, Director of Religious Education and Young People's Work of the Ohio Synod.

On Sunday, October 6, 1940, the 125th Anniversary of the congregation's founding was observed. Minutes of the congregation dating from 1939 had been destroyed in a fire at a parishoner's home and congregational action preceding the occasion is not on record. A brochure issued for the anniversary contained the day's program and a Brief History of Salem Church was distributed. The sermon at the 10:30 A. M. service was delivered by Rev. W. P. Christy, D. D. of Minneapolis, Minnesota. A basket dinner was enjoyed at noon followed by an informal service at which Mr. Mark Eshbaugh presided, with greetings by ministerial sons of the congregation and others. On Wednesday evening, October 9, vesper services were held featuring a sermon "The House Beautiful" by Rev. H. C. Getter, D. D. of Lewisburg, Ohio. Motion pictures of the congregation at work and worship were a part of the observance.

In July, 1950, the congregation voted to convert the coal furnaces to oil at a cost of \$895.00; install folding doors in the upper rear room at a cost of \$1531.00; purchase a new pipe organ using such materials from the old organ as were possible, and to excavate a basement under the main church building to make more room and sanitary facilities possible. During the year, the church was redecorated and new aisle and chancel carpet was laid. In October, 1950, a new organ was purchased through the Baugh Organ Company of Miamisburg, Ohio, from the Durst, Ball and Lewis firm in Erie, Pa. for \$6950.00. On Sunday evening, February 4, 1951, the organ was dedicated. A recital followed, played by Mr. Melvin C. Toyne, church organist, Mr. Everett Baugh, guest organist, and Mrs. Melvin C. Toyne, guest pianist. The church choir under the direction of Mr. Ralph H. Shade, choir director, rendered special numbers. The work on the "Lower Church" having been completed in the early months of the following year, in April, 1952, the new facilities were dedicated by Rev. Albert Buhl, the Ohio Synodical Director of Youth of the Church.

Other major improvements, costs and changes occurred as follows:

- 1952 - Purchase of 3 Modern-Fold doors to serve as room dividers in the "Lower Church." Cost, \$2200.00.
- 1953 - Resolution was adopted by congregation to be presented to Synod, petitioning for the division of Salem-Slifer parish. The division was subsequently approved and Ellerton became a single parish thereby terminating an arrangement which had been in effect since about 1891. Also during the year, the "Lower Church" floor was tiled.
- 1954 - A new blower and additional air ducts were procured for the organ. Cost, \$426.00.
- 1955 - A Modern-Fold door was installed in the room to the rear of the church and the kitchen in the basement was remodeled.
- 1957 - The church drive and parking lot were blacktopped. New pipes were added to the organ and it was otherwise improved at an approximate cost of \$1000.00.
- 1958 - Through a deed dated October 22, 2.86 acres of land were purchased from Walter Askins for parking, possible expansion of facilities and recreation. Cost, \$3865.00.
- 1961 - Improvements and additions to the organ were completed by the A. W. Brandt Company at a cost of \$3742.00.
- 1964 - The sanctuary was redecorated by Charles Witter and Sons. Cost, \$2975.00. The floors were refinished at a cost of \$700.00.
- 1969 - A communion rail with kneeling pads was made up and installed by the Souder Company for \$1075.00; the porous, brick walls of the original church structure were pointed up and sealed by the Garnett Company for about \$925.00.
- 1969-1970 - The stained glass windows were releaded, repaired, and some were fitted with a metal mechanism for opening and closing, by the Ohio Glass Company of Greenville, Ohio for approximately \$4000.00.
- 1971 - Two new front doors were installed at the front entrance -- donated by a member.
- 1971-1972 - The front steps were replaced as was the sidewalk to the front and north of the church; also a walkway was constructed leading to the south parking lot. Approximate cost, \$1500.00. Three mercury vapor lights on poles were located around the church building to better protect person and property.
- 1973 - Blacktop on the north parking lot was repaired at a cost of \$530.00.

1974 - New siding was installed on the parsonage for approximately \$2000.00.

1976 - New locks were installed on all doors after a number of thefts and vandalism beginning in 1968. Before the latter date it had been the policy for a few years, to not lock the church doors in order to make the sanctuary always available for individual prayer and meditation and to accommodate group meetings. The church steeple and other hard-to-reach places were painted by the Litsey Company at a cost of about \$1000.00. From 1968 to 1976, extensive sanctuary roof repairs were made by several firms.

1977 - Major repairs were made to the roof of the room west of the sanctuary - donated by the family of a late member.

As this History is being written, plans are proceeding for the observance of the 90th Anniversary of the dedication of the present church building, scheduled for the week of September 25 - October 2. Tentative arrangements include appearances by Rev. Alfred Buehner and Dr. Harold R. Albert as guest ministers, a hymn sing and special music, and a carry-in noon meal on October 2 followed by an informal afternoon program.

SALEM'S CONSTITUTIONS

The 1830 Constitution and 1852 By-Rules governing Salem Church as it was then known, were both written in German and were translated into English by Rev. Henry Heincke. The constitution adopted in 1830 was prefaced as follows:

"In the Name of the Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen! God being a God of order and St. Paul exhorting the church (1 Corinthians, chapter 14, verse 40) 'Let all things be done decently and in order', therefore we the members of the two congregations of Salem's church in Jefferson Township, Montgomery County, State of Ohio namely: the German Evangelical Lutheran and the German Reformed have composed and adopted for ourselves and our descendants the subjoined Articles as the Constitution (rule of church government and discipline) of our said congregations and church, and we have joined ourselves together and bound ourselves to govern and to transact our churchly or ecclesiastical affairs in accordance with it."

Included in the Articles of the 1830 constitution were such provisions as:

1. Both congregations had equal and common rights, hence it followed that they should live together in Christian Harmony and Order, none hindering or interrupting the other in their religious services.

2. Both congregations should amicably agree as to the Sundays on which each would hold their religious meetings, in consequence of which other denominations "have not the right to worship in the church."
3. Each of the congregations had the right to elect their own minister separately. Missionaries or travelling preachers who made application to preach in the church were subject to the Order of the two Synods, namely they had to get approval of the minister of the congregation or in his absence, that of the Church Council.
4. Preaching in the English language was allowed when deemed useful and necessary but only if approved according to Item 3 above.
5. The Church Council was to consist of Trustees, Elders and Deacons, optionally elected separately by the two congregations but jointly if desired. Non-members and those who failed to aid in the support of the church were not eligible to serve. A Council member who rendered himself unworthy of the office by unchristian or ill conduct was to be announced to the Church Council who was to refer the matter to the congregation for a short examination of the case and if he was found guilty, he was to be expelled from his office.
6. When a member's conduct was not consistent with his or her Christian Profession, admonition was to be given by Church Council and when a member offended by leading a vicious life and did not amend his ways after being earnestly admonished, on the advice or with the concurrence of the minister, Council was to suspend him or her from partaking of the Lord's Supper. Should any minister of the church be guilty of an open vice - "which God in mercy prevent" - and should exhorting him to reformation fail or the case be such as to bring disgrace upon the church, the Church Council was to report him to the President of Synod and dismiss him.

The Constitution contained 14 Articles and the Church Council in their own names and those of the congregation's members signed the document on September 18, 1830. Signatories were as follows:

Elders	Deacons
John Snep Christian Shuter	(Christopher Lighty and George Foust --- of the German Reformed congregation
	(John Shaefer and John Jacob Weaver --- of the Evangelical Lutheran congregation

On December 12, 1830, a By-Rule was added providing that if in the future any person who was neither a member of Salem Church, nor contributed any towards the erection of the building of the

same, nor was contributing any towards its support, desired the use of the church graveyard for the interment of his or her dead, such person would be required to make application to obtain said privilege which was to be granted on the condition that the applicant pay three (3) dollars for each burying place. In case such person or applicant was indigent, the Church Council was given the right to diminish the amount or to charge nothing.

On October 9, 1852, three Articles were adopted by the Lutherans having to do with the Confession of Faith and the duties of the minister and members. In them it was stated that the Augsburg Confession of Faith "delivered by the fathers of our church in the year of our Lord 1530 the 25th of June at Augsburg to Charles the 5th, Emperor of Germany -- is a venerable Symbol of Christian faith and practice - a faithful exhibition of the Doctrines of the infallible word of God." Accordingly the congregation was stated to have unanimously confessed themselves to it and adopted the unaltered Augsburg Confession in connection with the catechism of Dr. Martin Luther as the Standard of Faith and practice in the congregation. It was stated further that "such Doctrines and usages (practices) which are opposite to said Confession, in short all religious innovations of Man's invention, and not commanded and sanctioned by the precepts and example of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, cannot and shall not be introduced or their practice not be permitted in our congregation or among us."

In addition to other qualifications, the minister was required to recognize and confess the Augsburg Confession as a Symbol of the truth and other duties were outlined "in order that the believers may be edified and Sinners may be converted."

The Third Article provided that in the future no by-rules could be adopted "which destroy or abolish the foregoing rules, but they shall remain in force and power as long as there shall exist an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Salem's church."

It was required that all members and future members in testimony of their commitment, sign the Articles "with their own proper signatures or authorize it to be done."

Many changes in the Constitution and By-Laws of Salem Church have been made since those early years of the congregation's history but with the exception of certain additions and wording, the spirit and meaning of the Preamble and Confession of Faith still remain.

Among the major changes made beginning in the 1960s are the following:

- a) Before the adoption of a constitution or amendments thereto, the same shall be sent to the Synodical office for review.
- b) Responsibility for the Sunday Church School was transferred to the Church Council and a Committee on Christian Education. Formerly the School was more or less an independent entity and members elected their own officers and had a School treasury.

- c) Removal from the active membership rolls of those who neither commune nor contribute as a matter of record within a year and reinstatement if they both commune and contribute as a matter of record for a similar period.
- d) The privilege of voting and holding a church office was extended to any active member regardless of length of membership or age with the exception that such officer must be of legal age before serving as President or Vice President of the Church Council, as Church Treasurer or as a delegate to Synod. Earlier, a candidate for church office must have been a member for three years and those under legal age could not be elected to Council and they could vote on limited issues only.
- e) The Church Treasurer is automatically a member of the Church Council, having equal voice and vote with other Council members. Formerly, the Treasurer had no vote in Council affairs.

OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS

Occasionally appearing in these pages are the names of various laymen who helped shape the religious life and events of the congregation. Usually the names appear in connection with some particular items of interest and their listing is by no means an attempt to exclude others who may have made equal or even greater contributions in both the earlier and later days of the congregation's existence. There is no equitable way whereby adequate recognition can be given to all those who over a span of many years, consistently helped guide the congregation in its organization and work, remained faithful in their attendance and Christian duties, contributed so much of their talents and substance and demonstrated exemplary lives. It is with grateful acknowledgement to all these members, named and unnamed, past and present, men and women, as well as to those who served and continue to serve their Lord in more humble ways such as merely finding joy in being numbered among His followers and assembling in His presence during worship, that this portion of the Church History is written.

If it is noted that the names of only male members appear in past records, it is not because the women had no vital part in congregational life. In fact they were of great influence through their teaching, witnessing, dedicated service, contributions of work and talents and the voicing of convictions though it may have been while standing in the shadow of male members or in the privacy of their own homes. It was not until the 1960s that women were first elected to the Church Council.

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The Women's Missionary Society was organized on July 19, 1917, with a charter membership of 33. On May 13, 1957, it was reorganized and became known as Lutheran Church Women and was divided into Women's Circles. Throughout their existence, these groups served the parish and the church-at-large in many ways -

through study, education, visiting, sharing, projects and financial donations.

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The Youth Group developed as a result of the demise of the Luther League which was begun in or before the early 1900s, and had as its purpose the study, discussion and promotion of the Church's history, teachings and devotional life. Through the Youth Group have come endeavors designed to foster good fellowship, wholesome activities and the development of young leadership capable of assuming broader church responsibilities.

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The Altar Guild was formed to keep the chancel in readiness for worship services. Paraments are changed according to the church calendar or occasion. Linens need to be laundered, preparation must be made for administration of the sacraments, candles must be trimmed or replaced, unused elements must be carefully stored or disposed of and vessels thoroughly cleaned. An Altar Guild booklet contains guides for its members.

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Annually since 1951 and sponsored by the Sunday Church School or the Church Council, a congregational dinner and program have been held to recognize and honor members who are seventy five years of age and older. The group is known as "Club 75" and the event after a number of years, was merged with the annual fish fry which had become a tradition by that time.

The "Club's" origin stemmed from a desire to in some way, acknowledge the debt owed to older members for the heritage and often many years of service and support they had given to their church. Some had been life-long members, some taught, some had been active in church affairs for many years while others served their Lord by merely being faithful in worship and attendance and in the exemplary lives they humbly tried to live. It is at the time when members' advanced age or health problems limit or prevent their presence in their "appointed places" or when it is felt they are no longer needed and their words appear to be unheeded, that a void is filled through such an event of recognition.

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Acting on the recommendation of the pastor, in 1968 the Church Council voted approval for him to name laymen Adam Becker, Charles Bunting, Mark Eshbaugh and Clarence Heindl to alternate in assisting him to administer Holy Communion by distributing the wine to communicants. Later the names of Linda Bechtol, Lewis Cluxton, Roger Dils, Herschel Drake, Raymond Marker and Eugene Weaver were also approved.

The delegation of such a role to lay-persons was unprecedented at least at Salem, and two prior, similar requests of Council had been voted down. It is known that initially, most if not all of the Council members considered the administration of this Sacrament to be totally the prerogative of an ordained minister - an opinion probably shared by Salem's members to individual degrees. However the L.C.A. does not disapprove of the practice provided the communion service is conducted by an ordained pastor and the true spirit and meaning are preserved.

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Salem's Sesquicentennial observance in 1965 had its focus during the week of August 15-22 beginning with a 9:45 A.M. Communion service. This service was followed in the evening with a Historical Pageant presented by the youth groups of Salem and the next-door United Church of Christ (formerly Reformed) which shares with Salem a common religious heritage.

An Old Hymn Sing was held on Wednesday evening by both congregations and on Thursday night Salem's Lutheran Church Women presented a program. Following a Friday evening church service joined in by both congregations, the youth groups of the two churches held a song fest and a street dance in the parking lot.

The special week's observance was closed with an Anniversary Worship Service of Thanksgiving on Sunday morning, August 22 with the Rev. Harold Albert D. D. being the guest minister. A congregational Anniversary Fellowship banquet followed.

As a special means of observing Salem's Sesquicentennial year, the Church Council had authorized the publication of a pictorial directory by the Olan Mills Studio which was distributed to all members. It contained an up-dated church history, pictures of members, church officers, auxillary organizations' members and others, as well as much information related to church activities. Pictures of Salem's pastors from 1815 to 1965 were included, together with biographical material on each one; also there was a listing of congregational sons in the ministry with messages of greetings from some of them.

Note: In 1974 a second pictorial directory was authorized by Council through the Pictorial Directories of America located in St. Louis, but other than the pictures, names and addresses of members and a message by the pastor, it contained no informative material.

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On July 4, 1976 and in observance of the nation's Bi-Centennial year, the Muhlenburg Liturgy was used in Salem's Sunday worship services. This was the English translation of the liturgy prepared in 1748 for Lutheran congregations in the colonies, by a committee including the Reverends Henry Melchior Muhlenburg,

Peter Brunnholtz and John F. Handschuh. It was the only authorized version for Lutherans at the time of the Revolutionary War.

The Muhlenburg communion service was also used by pastor and congregation in the morning service. In part it bore similarity to that found in Common Service Hymnals.

THE MEMBERSHIP

Throughout the many decades since Salem's founding in 1815, the congregation experienced some vicissitudes but its over-all record had been one of growth and particularly stability. The religious heritage it conferred upon succeeding generations and the Spirit-filled lives it brought forth are beyond measurement.

However for a number of years Salem has been in a state of serious decline, both in active membership and in attendance. This decline has not been in personal faith nor in individual works on the part of those who remain among the faithful band of His followers.

Accurate and comprehensive figures are not available for the 19th century nor for the earlier part of the 20th century in respect to active membership and attendance. If figures were obtained there would be no way of knowing whether they were correct because of changing methods of reporting, even in more recent years. However at the 1889 convention of Synod, Salem was reported to have "500 souls, 275 communicants and 250 communed." The "500 souls" reported as members probably included many who rarely if ever attended and may have reflected the baptized membership.

Under the method of reporting then in vogue, it is recalled that in the 1920s and 1930s Salem's membership approximated 500 and it is known that the Sunday Church School had an enrollment in excess of 300. The Church Bulletin of April 15, 1928 for the First Sunday after Easter, noted that on the previous Sunday, 289 were present in the Sunday Church School and 406 attended the worship service with 315 communing. In the evening there were 242 who gathered to hear a cantata rendered by the choir.

It is remembered that on special occasions such as Christmas Eve services, Cantatas and the like as well as worship services on Palm and Easter Sundays, chairs had to be placed in the sanctuary aisles to accomodate the numbers attending and there were times when there was standing room only. Attendance and membership remained high throughout several succeeding decades with some fluctuations at various times.

For purposes of comparison and as an indication of Salem's downward trend during the past few decades, the following information is revealing.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Different Members Communing</u>	Church attendance too, decreased markedly. In 1956 the average attendance was 269; in 1964 it was 197 and in 1976 it reached a new low of 105. As of December 31, 1976 the baptized membership was 421, the confirmed membership stood at 367, but the number of active members (communing or contributing as a matter of record) dropped to 203.
1936	346	
1946	375	
1956	390	
1966	311	
1970	249	
1976	185	

The Sunday Church School attendance reflected a more serious loss, declining from an average of about 250 in 1936 to approximately 125 in 1965 and to only about 43 in 1976. The latter extremely low average attendance took place despite the fact that in 1972, Salem and the neighboring United Church of Christ combined Sunday Church School classes for those up to Junior High School age in the hope of stimulating interest.

The reasons for Salem's decline are many and varied. In earlier years the members were church-family-community oriented and the congregation tended to perpetuate itself as new generations of families grew up and remained in the vicinity or if they moved within the general area, they still retained their membership and usually attended because of family and social ties. For many decades Salem was not a strictly rural congregation nor was it a community church in the sense that its membership was confined to a geographically limited section.

As the years passed, the former church-family-community life styles gave way to the encroachment and influence of many secular interests and activities, new customs, shifts in population, a technically advanced society and a tendency to break with old traditions as well as the moral and spiritual values of the past as taught by structured religion. The result was that almost all denominations including the LCA and Salem congregation, experienced membership losses. The latest figures released in 1976 indicated that three quarters of the LCA congregations received four or less unchurched people into membership annually.

However Salem's membership and attendance were affected by other factors of local import. As many long-time members moved or passed away so too did many of their descendants. Unlike some other sections of the country wherein there was a proliferation of land development and housing, there was little if any growth in the vicinity of the church. Many properties changed hands and though some new homes were built, they were generally at some distance away.

The ultimate result was that the community came to be made up of fewer long-time residents and a greater number of persons whose background, race and heritage were not rooted in the congregation nor deeply imbedded in the environs where Salem church was located. Relatively few of the more recent residents of the area were

inclined toward Lutheranism with its liturgical forms of worship and accordingly some of them chose to remain members of their former congregations or to join other churches while still others felt unmoved to affiliate with any denomination.

Thus it was that Salem's active membership and attendance decreased and its potential for growth was severely curtailed; also the congregation in 1976 consisted of a disproportionate number of middle-aged and older members, many of them retired. The above conditions coupled with attrition through death, transfers and physical infirmities compounded the problems and materially eroded the congregation's financial base.

ECHOES FROM THE PAST

SOME BREVITIES OF THE 1800S

From October, 1824 to July 13, 1852, Pastor Heincke officiated at 115 funerals, recording most of the sermon texts; 1825-1852, administered Holy Communion to 3111 members not including shut-ins; 1828-1851, performed 56 wedding ceremonies. Between 1825 and 1852 the smallest number communing at any one time was 22 which was in 1832, and the largest number was 130 in 1851.

- 1873 - January 1 - A balance of \$120.00 was reported due on the minister's salary.
- 1876 - A committee was appointed to devise plans for the formation of a choir.
An 8-foot extension to the woodshed was approved.
- 1877 - Total yearly receipts were reported to have been \$268.16 and expenses \$276.00.
- 1879 - Motion was passed not to use "preacher money" for general expenses and to solicit special funds for the latter. A committee was appointed to investigate charges against unnamed members for conduct unbecoming Christians. After several meetings, in June the said members were suspended "for the time being."
One cord of wood was purchased for use of the Lutherans only, the Reformed brethren to be so notified.
- 1882 - Carpeting for church was purchased for \$55.70; thread, 5¢; tacks, 20¢; coal oil, 60¢; lamp chimneys and wicks, 65¢. The Treasurer's report at the time indicated \$107.50 as having been received for the pastor and \$102.50 "paid over."
- 1884 - Sexton's salary set at \$40.00 annually.
- 1885-1886 - Records reveal disagreement between the Lutheran and Reformed congregations over the amount each had invested in the church property and the stipulations in the event of dissolution, of the agreement entered into in 1858 when the

two congregations were incorporated. The problem arose as the Lutherans were preparing to build their own church begun in 1886, and had made an offer to sell their share in the jointly held church property to the Reformed congregation.

Deadlines were established and as they were not met, reduced offers and counter-offers, charges and counter-charges were made - all in language befitting Christian gentlemen but written quite plainly, firmly and to the point. Ultimately the Lutheran Trustees were authorized to offer to the Reformed congregation for its financial interest in the property, only about 1/6 of the amount originally suggested, and if acceptance was not forthcoming within 10 days it was proposed that a disinterested appraisal should be made and the property be sold at auction to the highest bidder - proceeds to be divided.

No further information concerning the matter is on record in the minutes following authorization for the Trustees of the Lutheran congregation to attend the sale of the church property at Dayton, Ohio, on July 31, 1886. Whether or not a public sale was held or a compromise was reached or what amount was eventually paid or divided cannot be ascertained through the material presently on file in the archives of both Salem congregations.

From the loose notes and copies of correspondence, it does appear that not all members of the joint-Church were in favor of a dissolution and it further appears that the Lutherans were dissatisfied with the arrangements though not explicitly so, while the Reformed Consistory, initially at least, expressed itself as favoring the commonly-held place of worship. Speaking to this point, a letter dated October 31, 1885, was received from the Reformed Consistory in which more or less of an appeal was made to continue the present arrangements and setting forth the thought that "If the fathers and mothers who built this church, and most of whom have gone to their heavenly reward and rest, could come back to us and tell us the feelings of their hearts, we don't believe that they would want to see the joint-ownership of the church dissolved." After reasoning that they could not see any special changes in the community or any causes that would seem to make it necessary for either congregation to buy out and put out the other from the church building "where there were so many blessed memories and associations," the Consistory had this to say: "...God forbid that we should wish to sell out our share in a church building...as in the Salem Church where so many of our sainted fathers and mothers have toiled and prayed and worshipped God and under whose roof so many of us who now compose the Lutheran and Reformed congregations have been reared spiritually and taught to know Christ as our Savior."

The letter closed with the expressed hope "that we may not be estranged or separated one from another but that we may all be truly one in Christ and work on for the Master in our respective services in the Church property jointly-owned by our congregations...."

It was probably because the Reformed sincerely did not wish to have the dissolution take place and of an equally strong call on the part of the Lutherans to build a separate church, that a stalemate existed for a matter of months and led to some divisive states among the former brethren.

- 1887 - Secretary of the choir was authorized to subscribe to 1 copy of the Parish Choir. Call issued to Rev. Amos Poorman as a supply pastor provided he reside in the Ellerton parsonage. The stipulation was rejected by Rev. Poorman but he temporarily accepted the call.
- 1888 - Cost of cemetery lots was set at \$12.00 and after 30 days, at \$15.00 per lot. Lots were to be sold to Lutheran church members only.
- 1888 - Entire cost of church building erected in 1886-1887, including structure, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ A. lot, stone walks and iron fence was reported to have been \$8532.14.
- 1889 - Church indebtedness was stated to be \$128.79.
- 1891 - "Preacher money" received during the year was reported to be \$865.25.
- 1898 - Congregation voted to build the "primary room" rather than purchase a pipe organ.
- 1898 - Motion was passed to purchase new acetylene gas equipment for lighting the church.
- 1899 - Insurance premium on the church was reported as being \$50.00 annually.

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The general contractor for the improvements made in both 1938 and 1952, was W. L. Wagner, a member of Salem congregation. Especially in 1938 did he have willing, volunteer assistance from male members when the excavating was begun. They came with picks, shovels, scoops and other tools to help ready the site for the pouring of the concrete walls and floor, spurred on by a number of female members who provided home-prepared edibles and refreshments.

The ladies' efforts were spearheaded by a group who called themselves "The Willing Workers" and were organized on December 23,

1924 for the purpose of helping further the interests of the congregation. This they did persistently and faithfully through social activities, quilting, services to members, serving meals at public auctions and on special occasions donating goodly sums to the church and its programs. During and after the 1938 improvements the organization gave \$3000.00 toward the building and equipment. The group's last known activity was in 1945 and in 1951 it donated its remaining funds, dishes, silverware and other items to the church.

Another organization no longer existent is the Men's Brotherhood, established in the early 1920s. It was a sizeable group, met monthly in Bible study followed by recreational activities, and joined activities with men's groups from other Lutheran Churches. It too furthered congregational interests and fellowship but as its membership decreased the organization was disbanded. Occasional efforts were made to reactivate it and in 1957 it was reorganized under the name of the King's Men but it was not well supported and did not meet after 1964.

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It is not known when or why the custom began but over a span of many years the Sunday Church School gave "treats" of candy and an orange to each of its members at Christmas time. Perhaps the reason in the beginning during the early 1900s or before, was that many could not afford such delicacies or it could have been another demonstration of the church-home-community ties which then prevailed.

In those earlier days and following the Christmas Eve program, large baskets containing the treats were carried to the front of the church and distributed to children and adults alike who came forward as their classes were called. Originally, the candy was sacked at some member's home and was a mixture of hard-tack, "sugar candy" now known as French Creams, and a not too liberal quantity of chocolate drops and bon bons.

Because of shortages during World War One, the practice was discontinued but was resumed in the mid-1920s after a majority vote of the School's members despite opposition on the part of some whose religious convictions forbade their sanction of the custom. On resumption of the practice, distribution of the treats was effected either in classes after the lesson period or at a central point outside the sanctuary, and they were given to children only.

When rationing became necessary during World War Two, treats were again discontinued but were later resumed. The exact date that the sometimes controversial custom ended is not known but it was in the 1950s.

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During the 1930s and 1940s it was not unusual for the congregation to hold Sunday Church School classes and worship services annually at the Chautauqua grounds south of Miamisburg. Sometimes joint services were held with other Valley Lutheran churches, the combined choirs participating or rendering a cantata. Following a basket picnic, the afternoon was set aside for fellowship and recreation.

Throughout approximately the same years, a pulpit exchange was arranged during the Lenten mid-week services whereby the pastors of the Lutheran churches of Ellerton, West Carrollton, Miamisburg, Germantown and Stettlers interchanged in conducting the service at each location.

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People, including adult Sunday Church School members, are not always receptive to change. The writer recalls that beginning in the 1920s he served nineteen years as Superintendent of the School but they were not consecutive because there were two years during the period when he was not reelected because he had relocated some classes and some members had lost their favorite seating arrangements. After two years he was reelected and served until he resigned.

* * * * *

Older long-time members of the congregation still remember the regular ringing of the church bell in its lofty spire as it pealed forth its encouragement and invitation to worship an hour before services were to begin and immediately preceding the Sunday Church School hour and the worship service.

When the first bell was hung in the church tower and some of the members who lived several miles distant could not hear its tones, a new and larger bell was procured in order that its message would be clear to all who lived within the area.

Faithful too, was the tolling of the bell when a member departed this life and when the funeral cortege approached the church and the body was carried in for the final service. When the bell was first tolled for a departed member, the number of tolls was determined by his or her age and was anxiously counted by the residents of the area.

In retrospect, somehow it seemed appropriate that it was on the winged tones of the bell that the departure from an earthly home and the flight of the spirit to heavenly places should be so heralded. Perhaps some said then as others would today, that the sound of a tolling bell was too doleful or that they needed no reminder that there is an end to earthly things. Perhaps some would say that their rest or preoccupation with other matters was disturbed by the sound of a ringing bell or that they needed no such reminder or call to worship.

For whatever the reason, the bell no longer tolls for the dead and it seldom rings for the living with past regularity or purpose. In its place and amid all the confusion and tumult and noises of today, are to be heard only the echoes of the past as they ring out in mind and memory.

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Several generations and more ago, the congregation's deacons had duties similar to the present responsibilities but also had to "put up" visiting pastors and church dignitaries and above all, had to personally help to raise "preacher money." The latter duty required that the deacons make visits to all parishioners' homes and engage in some convincing arguments that the pastor needed a certain amount of cash in order that his salary could be paid, in addition to some chickens from the farmyard or choice hams from the smokehouse which members were generous in donating. Although salaries or stipends were set for the pastors, the uncertainty of collecting the stipulated sum through the system then in vogue, did not give them a feeling of security nor any great degree of confidence that personal and family bills could be paid when due.

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Prior to 1953 when Salem and Slifer's congregations were served by one pastor, it was the custom for Slifer's to hold one monthly late morning service and on those Sundays, Salem's members had to perform their household and outside chores at unusually early hours in order to attend services. Earlier in that era, Salem had one afternoon service each month for similar reasons -- an arrangement that now would not be conducive to good attendance. However despite the hot, dusty and drowsy summer afternoons and the rigors of severe winter weather, throughout it all the members remained faithful and kept alive the religious heritage they conferred upon succeeding generations.

No doubt the greatest hardship was upon the pastor who was first required to spend much of the day on the road and who secondly, had to maintain a schedule regardless of the elements or other handicaps. Perhaps it was none of these things but only an unexpected number of greetings or questions that sometimes delayed the pastor at his first service of the day and caused him to be late for the worship period at Salem. In these circumstances, there were times when Salem's services began without a preacher and the congregation under the choir's leadership, sang a few extra hymns until the pastor put in his appearance. More often, the beginning of the church service was delayed until a "lookout" passed the word that the pastor was in sight and it was safe for "church to take up."

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During the days of the kerosene and carbide lighting of the church, joint effort was required on the part of the organist and one or

two "pumpers" to play the pipe organ. The pumping arm, not unlike a wooden water pump handle, extended horizontally from the side of the organ and had to be pumped up and down in order to inflate the bellows. The amount of air pressure generated could be determined by a pointer gauge in a slot above the handle.

Not only did the one or two pumpers have to make air pressure available before the organ could be played but when the full stops were used, faster pumping was required to sustain the amount of air needed. Because of this requirement, there were times when a slight lapse of memory or a distraction on the part of a pumper caused the pressure to drop and no tones were heard for several seconds or the volume was not as full as it should have been.

The privilege of pumping the organ was an honor generally sought and appreciated by early male teen-agers but because decorum did not permit, girls did not get to share the honor nor the conspicuous place at the front of the church. Following the electrification of the organ mechanism, the manual method of providing air to the bellows was retained until reliance could be placed on a steady, electric current.

IN CONCLUSION

On succeeding pages are to be found the names of Salem's pastors to date and the names of congregational sons who entered the ministry. For the purpose of establishing uninterrupted sequences, no attempt has been made in this History to link individual pastorates with congregational affairs or events other than the founding in 1815.

Throughout Salem's history it is known that its pastors have ever striven to be loyal to the Word as confessed and taught by our own Lutheran Church and the dictates of their conscience. Of each one it can be said that he performed no miracles but he spoke true words for Christ and demonstrated many acts of faith. Thanks be to God for the ministry of all these, His servants, who so faithfully and with dedication shepherded the flock and sought to lead all into the straight and narrow Way.

The reader of this History of the congregation may, with some validity, have the impression that too great emphasis has been placed on the material phases of its life. If so, it is because there is no way of measuring or recording the spiritual growth and state of grace attained within the membership for these are known only to each person and to God himself. It is acknowledged that everyone is a sinner though he strives toward sainthood and it is also recognized that every person has feelings as well as faith. It is because there is no way of knowing when sinners become saints within themselves nor of separating the works of faith from those which are not brought forth from God, that this History has been chiefly confined to known and visible attainments rather than the spiritual enrichments which were wrought in individual lives.

We do know that this congregation has received a goodly heritage from its fathers and mothers in the flesh and in the faith. There are many examples of zeal and fervor and labor and sacrifice and fidelity which have descended to it from earlier generations, and even from those who presently work and worship within the fellowship. For all these blessings, for the opportunity still given to enter into and continue like examples, and for the goodness and mercy of Almighty God which have rested on this congregation for so many generations, may His name be praised and glorified.

To Thy temple I repair,
Lord, I love to worship there;
And each evening, let me say
'I have walked with God today.'

THE CONGREGATION'S PASTORS

The First Pastor 1815-1824

Rev. John Caspar Dill is the first pastor of record though there may have been a congregation prior to the time he is said to have come to Germantown from the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Born in Germany in 1758, Rev. Dill received his theological education at the Lutheran University of Giessen before emigrating to Pennsylvania where he was ordained. In 1815 he became pastor of the church in Germantown and assumed pastorates at Stettler's and Gephart's churches near Miamisburg. He later began serving as pastor of Bear Creek church, now Ellerton, which he could have helped organize following earlier beginnings. Rev. Dill was said to have been a good theologian, an excellent preacher and a tireless worker. Because of the hardships of his work in those early days, his widely scattered preaching points, the many needs which pressed upon him and his advancing age, his health and strength began to fail. During his ministry here and in and around Germantown, he died in August, 1824.

The Second Pastor 1825-1859

Rev. Henry Heincke also was born in Germany and served in the army of Napoleon Bonaparte. He received a liberal preparatory education in his native country and following his emigration to America at the age of 23 and two years' study of theology under the direction of Rev. J. C. Dill, he was licensed to preach in 1820 and was ordained in 1825. He then entered upon his work as pastor of the Ellerton congregation as well as three others in and around Miamisburg, also visiting and preaching in Champaign, Greene, Warren, Butler and Darke counties in Ohio and at points in Indiana.

Rev. Heincke had sufficiently mastered the English language to enable him to preach in both German and English and he would sometimes preach three sermons a day, using both languages after traveling on his horse through cold and heat, rain and drought, to reach his destinations.

He toiled faithfully and uncomplainingly throughout the years and when his rural parishioners were receiving only twenty-five cents per bushel for their wheat and could not do much for him materially, for less than a stipend of one hundred fifty dollars a year he still gave of himself unstintedly.

Pastor Heincke's ministry closed after thirty-four years of service at Ellerton. He had administered communion to a congregation in Champaign county when he became ill. He and his wife took a train to Miamisburg but from there they had to walk about a mile to their home. The illness and exertion were too much for Rev. Heincke to overcome and he died on July 10, 1859 at the age of 65.

The Third Pastor 1860-1887

Rev. Christopher Albrecht was the third of Ellerton's initial pastors to be born in Germany and he came to America at the age of 9. He attended Capital University in Columbus, Ohio when it is said the seminary faculty numbered only two professors. He came to Miamisburg after ordination and became pastor of five congregations but shortly thereafter the parishes were divided and he became minister of the Ellerton and Miamisburg churches. He may have been called to his new charges as the result of a request made to the Synod in 1859 by a delegate Gebhardt who requested that a pastor be sent who could preach in both the German and English languages.

Rev. Albrecht was the first president of the English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio which was organized in 1857. Ten years or more later he led his congregations into affiliation with the new General Council. When in 1883 the Miamisburg-Ellerton parish was divided, Rev. Albrecht was retained as Salem Ellerton's pastor.

Rev. Albrecht's long and successful pastorate came to a close on January 22, 1887. On that day and in seemingly good health, he had gone from the parsonage to the new church then under construction but suddenly became ill. He attempted to return to his home but after falling to the ground, he was carried to the parsonage by some workmen and expired about an hour later. At his funeral, Rev. Seibert preached in English and Rev. Mechling in German.

During the summer of that year, Student W. L. Hunton of the Philadelphia Seminary acted as supply pastor but it is not known whether it was he or others who supplied at the time of the dedication of the new structure or until a new pastor was called. Most probably it was Rev. Amos Poorman of St. Andrew's Church,

Farmersville, who was known to have taken on the duties of supply pastor for several months.

The Fourth Pastor
1888-1889

Following the dedication of the church building on October 2, 1887, the congregation was without a regular pastor until Rev. H. J. Kuder arrived from Pennsylvania in December 1888. Little information is available concerning him either before or after he became Salem's pastor.

Apparently the congregation had some difficulty in determining whom to call since according to Synodical notes, a Synodical committee had advised Salem to hold a election to choose a pastor and to place only one name before the congregation at one time. The congregation was advised further that should it fail to select a pastor within sixty days, Synod should be called on for assistance. From the records it appears that the 60-day deadline was not met and that Salem's vestry requested help in adjusting the problems. The result was that Rev. J. F. Fahs, Synod president, and Rev. Mechling visited Salem and on Sunday, July 8, 1888, Rev. Fahs preached a sermon on the topic "Unity necessary to the prosperity of a Christian congregation." Following a meeting the next day between the Synod officials and Salem's vestry which dealt with a "full and free statement" and an investigation of "all their difficulties," that evening the congregation voted unanimously to adopt proposed recommendations and subsequently a call was issued to Rev. Kuder. He served less than a year, resigning in November, 1889.

The Fifth Pastor
1890-1923

Rev. V. B. Christy was installed as pastor of Salem on August 31, 1890, the officiating ministers being Rev. Mechling, Rev. Nieffer and Rev. Seibert. Rev. Christy's academic training had been obtained at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, and at Fairfield College in Iowa, interrupted in part by service in the Civil War. His theological work was completed at Mt. Airy Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa. He came to Salem from Zelienople, Pa., having served there and in two other parishes for 22 years. Soon after assuming his pastorate here, the Slifer's Lutheran Congregation requested that he act as its supply pastor. He did so and though never formally called, he continued to serve Slifer's throughout his entire ministry at Ellerton.

At the District Synod convention held in Findlay, Ohio in 1918, the golden anniversary of Rev. Christy's ministry was observed with addresses by his ministerial neighbors and Salem's lay delegate, Mr. John A. Shell. During the year the Ellerton parish also honored him through a similar commemorative event and other appropriate acts.

Throughout Rev. Christy's fifty five years in the gospel ministry, he had not been absent from a single service because of health until the last four Sundays of his life. On June 15, 1923 he suffered a stroke of paralysis and died on July 7. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. W. L. Spielman of Miamisburg who was assisted by visiting pastors. Thus came to an end a fruitful, distinguished and extended pastoral service to which few of His servants attain.

The Sixth Pastor
1923-1953

Rev. R. A. Albert was a graduate of Wittenberg College in Springfield, Ohio and received his theological training at the Chicago Lutheran Seminary. He was ordained at the Golden Jubilee convention of the District Synod of Ohio in Lancaster, Ohio on June 17, 1906, by Rev. V. B. Christy whom he was now succeeding at Salem, Ellerton. He began his ministry as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Paulding, Ohio, and started Emmaus Church in Cleveland where he served seven years prior to assuming a pastorate at Ada, Ohio from which he came to Ellerton.

Pastor Albert continued the work at Slifer's congregation despite the growing membership and duties of the Ellerton charge until 1953 when Ellerton became a single parish. In 1936 Wittenberg College conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity and in recognition of the honor bestowed upon him, Salem's members presented him with a silk Doctor's robe.

Because of advancing years, Dr. Albert submitted his resignation on February 17, 1953, to become effective on April 15. His resignation was accepted on March 8 but he graciously continued to supply until the latter part of November, 1953 when Dr. Herman Getter, retired and now again a member of his home church, filled the pulpit until Dr. Albert's successor could be named. Upon retirement, Dr. Albert was presented with a new automobile by the congregation in recognition of his many years of dedicated service and his contributions to church and community which spanned almost one third of a century.

After leaving his pastorate at Salem, Dr. Albert acted as supply pastor at several churches in the vicinity until no longer able to do so. He died January 9, 1961 at the age of 81. Thus for approximately half a century he brought to his parishes a spirit, selflessness and an energy the memory and examples of which will long remain.

The Seventh Pastor
1954-1958

Following service in the U. S. Navy, and graduation from Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, Rev. John M. Buchholtz

was issued a call by this congregation while still in his senior year at Hamma Divinity School, also in Springfield, on September 12, 1954. In accordance with the rules of Synod and following his call to Salem, he acted as supply pastor only until after his graduation and ordination.

A combined ordination and installation service was conducted at Salem on Sunday evening, February 20, 1955. Officiating in the dual service were Rev. George W. Miley, President of the Ohio Synod; Rev. E. Rudolph Walborn, Secretary of the Synod and pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, West Carrollton, Ohio; and two brothers of Salem's new pastor - Rev. Luther E. Buchholtz, pastor of St. Paul - Salem and St. John's churches of Belleville, Ohio, and Rev. Paul H. Buchholtz who was minister of the Church of the Reformation, Toledo, Ohio. Rev. John Buchholtz's late father, Rev. William E. Buchholtz, was also a Lutheran minister.

Following a decision to leave the ministry and enter another profession, Pastor Buchholtz submitted his resignation to become effective May 25, 1958. He conducted his last worship service on that date but his resignation was not formally accepted by the congregation until June 29. His service in the Ellerton parish was marked by his exceptional preaching ability and the ease and friendliness with which he related to young and older members alike.

The Eighth Pastor 1958-1964

Rev. Charles Phillip Seltzer was installed as Salem's new pastor on Sunday evening, October 19, by Dr. E. E. Flack, Dean of Hamma Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio, and Dr. Joseph W. Frease, pastor of the First Lutheran Church, Miamisburg, Ohio.

Rev. Seltzer was born in Washington, D. C. and following graduation from the University of Maryland, he served in the U. S. Army and later was employed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Responding to a call to become a minister, he studied at and graduated from Hamma Divinity School at Springfield, Ohio in 1952. He was ordained on March 9, 1952, at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, Maryland. Before becoming pastor of Salem congregation, he served the parishes of Easton-Cordova, Easton, Md., and St. Mark's Incarnation Church of Washington, D. C.

Having accepted a call from the Lordstown Lutheran Church in Warren, Ohio, Pastor Seltzer submitted his resignation to become effective here as of November 30, 1964. During his pastorate at Ellerton, Rev. Seltzer demonstrated a sincerity of purpose akin to that which motivated him to enter the ministry following lengthy government service.

The Ninth Pastor 1965-1967

Rev. James McDorman was born and reared in Springfield, Ohio, and attended Ohio State University before entering and graduating from

Wittenberg University in Springfield. He received his theological training at Hamma Divinity School also in that city, and on February 7, 1965, was given a call by Salem congregation while he was still in his senior year.

He was ordained on June 6, 1965 at St. John's Lutheran Church, also in Springfield, and was installed as Salem's pastor on June 20, 1965, by Rev. J. A. Updegraff of the Lutheran Church of our Savior, Dayton, Ohio. The installation service was officiated by Rev. Loren L. Spenny of Grace Lutheran Church, West Carrollton, Ohio.

Pastor McDorman resigned effective September 15, 1967, in order to accept a call from the Board of World Missions for service in Argentina after special training. During his pastorate at Salem he was known for his missionary zeal and fervor which led him to accept the call to broader fields of mission service.

The Tenth Pastor 1968-1973

After graduating from Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio, and while still a senior at Hamma Divinity School also in Springfield, Rev. John H. Keithley was issued a call by Salem early in 1968. He was ordained on June 9 by Dr. Frank Fife, President of the State of Maryland Synod and was installed at Salem on July 14, 1968. The officiating minister and preacher for the service was Rev. J. A. Updegraff, Dean of the Dayton, Ohio District. Rev. Loren Spenny, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, West Carrollton, Ohio, was the Liturgist.

Prior to graduating from Wittenberg and Hamma, Pastor Keithley was employed by the Bell Telephone Company of Washington, D. C. for approximately twenty years. Thus it was that through a persistent call by the Holy Spirit and at a considerable sacrifice on the part of Rev. Keithley and his family, he readied himself for the ministry of the Word.

Pastor Keithley resigned effective August 3, 1973, to accept a call from the St. Timothy congregation in Mansfield, Ohio. During his pastorate at Salem, he was instrumental in not only bringing the Word to the members but also in establishing a material service to those in need and engaging in extensive counselling in behalf of members and the unchurched in the community who sought help in their personal problems.

The Eleventh Pastor 1974-

Rev. Olan W. Aughbaugh was called by Salem congregation on January 20, 1974 and was installed as its pastor on April 21, 1974, by Rev. Alfred R. Buehner, Assistant to the President of the Ohio Synod.

Pastor Aughbaugh began his ministry at St. John's Lutheran Church, Melbourne, Kentucky, and had been Associate pastor at First English Lutheran Church in Mansfield, Ohio. He had held an 18-year pastorate at Emmanuel and St. Paul's congregations in Coschocton, Ohio, and the Divinity Lutheran Church in Oregon, Ohio, where he last served before accepting the call to Salem.

On May 23, 1976, Pastor Aughbaugh observed the 35th Anniversary of his ordination and the occasion was marked by several collective gifts from Salem's members and the attendance of a number of his former parishioners at the regular church service.

Since becoming Salem's pastor, Rev. Aughbaugh's first priorities have included regular visits to members and prospective members, the encouragement of a caring, sharing, witnessing fellowship and goal setting for the congregation.

CONGREGATIONAL SONS IN THE MINISTRY

Gomer B. Matthews was born in Durham, England and emigrated to America as a young boy. He found a home with several families in this community and later became a member of this congregation. Eventually he entered and graduated from Muhlenberg College and Mt. Airy Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa. Following his ordination he first served as a missionary to India. In 1910 he transferred to the ministry of the Episcopal Church.

William P. Christy, son of Rev. and Mrs. V. B. Christy, received his A. B. degree at Thiel College in 1901, following a year of service in the Spanish-American War. He graduated from the Chicago Lutheran Seminary in 1904. Later in that year he was ordained by the Northwest Synod and assumed the pastorate of Holy Trinity Church at Janesville, Wisconsin.

Walter I. Eck was the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Eck. He graduated from Thiel College in 1901 and from the Chicago Lutheran Seminary in 1905. He was ordained by the Pacific Synod, following which he became pastor of his first church in Vancouver, Washington. From 1916 to 1958 he held the post of Secretary of the Pacific Synod.

William C. Stump, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Stump, graduated from Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, in 1907 and completed his theological training at the Chicago Lutheran Seminary in 1910. Following his ordination by the District Synod of Ohio, his first parish was in East Germantown, Indiana.

Herman C. Getter was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Getter. He graduated from Wittenberg College in Springfield, Ohio, in 1911 and the Chicago Lutheran Seminary in 1914. Following his ordination by the District Synod of Ohio in Miamisburg's St. Jacob's Church at the Convention of Synod in 1914, he became pastor of the Amanda, Ohio parish.

Walter D. Sharrit, son of Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Sharrit, graduated from Ohio State University in 1917, and the Chicago Lutheran Seminary in 1920. He was ordained by the Northwest Synod and in 1923 became Field Missionary in Cleveland, Ohio, later serving several congregations in the Michigan District.

John P. Eshbaugh was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Eshbaugh. He graduated from Thiel College in 1918 and following military service entered Northwestern Seminary and graduated from there in 1922. He was ordained by the Northwest Synod and served his first parishes in that District.

Richard W. Albert, son of Rev. and Mrs. R. A. Albert, graduated from Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, in 1933 and from Hamma Divinity School of that city, in 1936. He was ordained at Mansfield, Ohio, during the Ohio Synod's Convention of that year. His first pastorate was at St. John's, Dayton, Ohio.

Harold R. Albert, also the son of Rev. and Mrs. R. A. Albert, graduated from Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio in 1935 and from Hamma Divinity School there in 1938. He was ordained by the Synod of Ohio at its Convention in Canton in May, 1938. His first charge was that of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Springfield, Ohio.

Austin F. Shell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Shell, graduated from Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio and from Hamma Divinity School of that city, in 1945. He was ordained by the Synod of Ohio at Salem Ellerton on November 25, 1945. His first call was to the congregation in Sulphur Springs, Ohio.

All of the foregoing congregational sons were confirmed members of this congregation. Other congregational sons in the ministry either through baptism or close parental ties to this congregation include the following:

John M. Recher and Paul S. Recher whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Calvin Recher had been members of Salem Ellerton the major part of their lives. John M. Recher received his college training at Weidner Institute, Mulberry, Indiana, and graduated from Northwestern Seminary in 1922. After ordination by the Northwest Synod his first parish was in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Paul S. Recher also received college training at Weidner Institute and later at Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, before graduating from Northwestern Seminary in 1925. He was ordained by the Indiana Synod and his first parish was in that State.

Dorsey R. Stebbins, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Stebbins whose membership at Salem Ellerton spans many years. Following graduation from Gustavus Adolphus College at St. Peter, Minnesota, in 1955 and the Augustana Seminary of Rock Island, Illinois in 1960, he was ordained by the Augustana Synod at its Centennial celebration. His first charge was the Brunswick Grasston Parish in Minnesota.

Nicholas K. Mays, Son of Mrs. Earl Whitesell, formerly Eleanor Eshbaugh Mays who was a member of Salem, Ellerton before moving from the locality. He was baptized here as an infant. Following graduation from Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio, and Hamma Divinity School in 1966, on May 29 of that year he was ordained at St. John's Lutheran Church, Dayton, Ohio, by Dr. Herbert Veeler, President of the Ohio Synod. His first parish was St. John's, Ingomar, Ohio where he was installed on June 5, 1966.

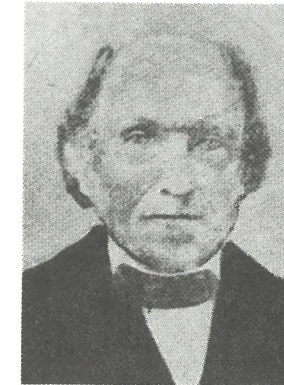
Donald R. Taylor, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald W. Taylor who were members of Salem congregation before moving from the community. He completed his theological training at Hamma Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio, and was ordained at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas. His first charge was Peace Lutheran Church, Vernon, Texas.

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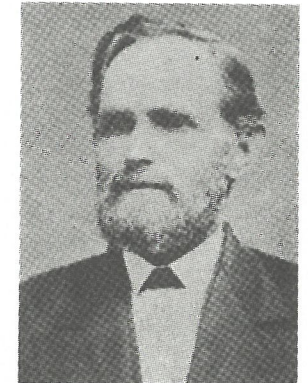
PASTORS OF SALEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELLERTON



Rev. John Casper Dill
1815 - 1824



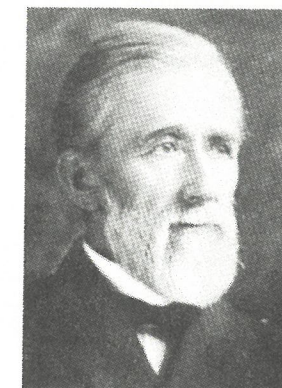
Rev. Henry Heincke
1825 - 1859



Rev. Christian Albrecht
1860 - 1887



Rev. Hiram Kuder
1888 - 1889



Rev. V. B. Christy
1890 - 1923



Rev. R. A. Albert, D.D.
1923 - 1953

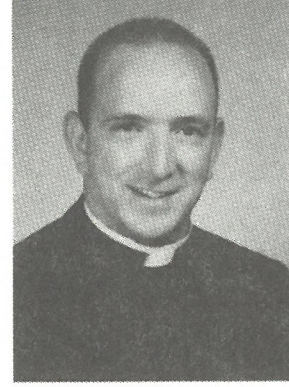
PASTORS OF SALEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELLERTON



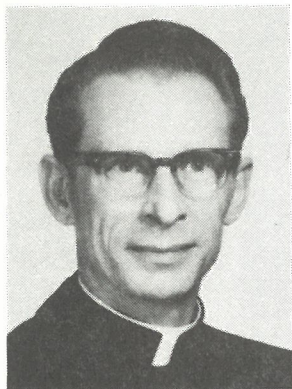
Rev. John M. Buchholtz
1954 - 1958



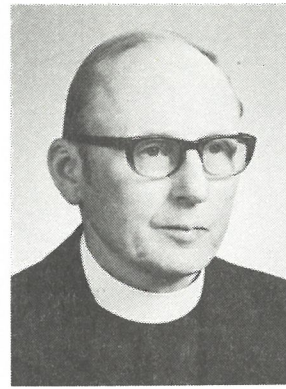
Rev. C. Phillip Seltzer
1958 - 1964



Rev. James W. McDorman
1965 - 1967



Rev. John H. Keithley
1968 - 1973



Rev. Olan W. Aughbaugh
1974 -