

PASTOR'S MESSAGE



**Rick Rostek, Pastor
2001-Present**

As we celebrate 100 years of ministry in Norton, KS, a question comes to mind: Why does Immanuel Lutheran Church exist? There are, perhaps, several answers to that question.

If we look back in history for the answer, we find that seven families from Deshler, Nebraska, moved to northwest Kansas in the early 1900s. They brought with them their Lutheran Christian heritage and set about organizing Immanuel Lutheran Church and

School in 1908. For those early Lutheran pioneers, the church served many functions. It was, indeed, a place to worship Almighty God. It was a place to teach their children about Jesus

and His salvation. It also served a social function by being the gathering place for those first families and the families that would follow.

In the 1930s when rain was scarce, and the 1940s when the world was at war, Immanuel Lutheran Church existed to bring meaning and comfort to lives that suffered from nature's fury and human aggression. In those difficult times, what a blessing and comfort it was to hear the words of the Psalmist, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46).

In the 1970s, following a very difficult period in the life of the congregation, Immanuel existed to bring hope for a future even in the midst of great change. Holy Scripture tells us, "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23). Indeed, God has been faithful since that time, providing faithful pastors to bring the Word of God, and committed leaders from the congregation to guide the congregation forward.

But the most important reason for Immanuel to exist for these past 100 years, and the most important reason for Immanuel to continue to exist is to proclaim the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Only through the death and resurrection of Jesus can we have forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. As St. Peter says in Acts 4:11-12, "This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

This is the message we proclaim week in and week out. As we get ready to begin our second 100 years, Immanuel Lutheran Church recommits itself to that precious message of salvation, that more might know Jesus and have everlasting life!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

August 31, 2108. Just looking at the date stimulates many thoughts. Will the world still be here? If it is, what will the world be like? What will Norton, Kansas be like? Will Immanuel Lutheran Church, still be here?

In the context of tumultuous world events, these are valid questions to consider. Yet I look *back* to December 31, 1908, to the difficult world facing the founding fathers and mothers of this blessed congregation. I would suggest that those wonderful patriarchs and matriarchs of our German Lutheran heritage expressed similar concerns and doubts when they surveyed the challenges and the uncertain days, years and decades which lie ahead.

We gather today to mark a significant milestone here at Immanuel; one hundred years of proclaiming the gospel of Christ. As we reflect on our past, and look toward our future, there is one thing of which we can be sure; the faithfulness and mercy of a benevolent and loving God! A loving God who nurtured his flock through times of war, times of drought, times of depression and of course, times of plenty.

While we do not know exactly what the future holds, we do know *who* holds the future; God. May his Holy Spirit continue to work in His people and His good and gracious will be done. Immanuel, "God with us!"

In closing, these familiar stanzas penned by noted hymn writer, Dr. Isaac Watts based on Psalm 90, are a fitting reminder of the source of our past and future blessings.

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

A thousand ages in Thy sight,
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night,
Before the rising sun

Under the shadow of Thy throne
Still may we swell secure;
Sufficient in Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come;
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal Home

May the good Lord bless and keep us, until we meet again!

Yours in Christ,

Steve Herra

Soli Deo Gloria, "Glory be to God alone!"

HISTORY OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH NORTON, KANSAS 1908 - 2008



“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee” Deuteronomy 32:7. We kept these words in mind as we approached the task of compiling a short historical sketch of the history of Immanuel Lutheran Church. Much of this information was gathered during the 50 year celebration in 1958. Prior to that there was no previous church history, written to use as a guideline, or source of information. So information was gathered from old record books, and by interviewing some of the older members of the church. We were told of interesting incidents and important events in connection with the history and development of the church. We hope that you will find this history interesting, and that it is fairly accurate and authentic in content.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

The genesis of this church dates back to the year 1907 when seven Lutheran families decided to leave the more densely populated area of Deshler, Nebraska, and to go west, to the wide expanses of prairie land in Northwest Kansas to establish church, school, and home.

HOUSE SERVICES HELD

In the apostolic age, house services were quite common. Also, early settlers followed this pattern of conducting services in the homes of members. If no pastor was available, reading services were held. These services, however, were regarded only as a temporary arrangement. In their dreams they visualized the coming of other Lutherans, organizing a congregation, building a church and school, and calling a pastor of their own.

In 1908 these seven families, coming originally from Nebraska, decided to appeal to the Nebraska District to make some provisions for divine services.

A PREACHER IS SENT

Rev. O. Batz, Orleans, Nebraska, was dispatched to Northwest Kansas to investigate and to explore the possibilities of building a Lutheran Church in this newly populated area. Preaching services were held only once a month. On all other Sundays reading services were held as usual. August Wegener was without a doubt the guiding spirit in this movement, assuming the role of a lay-worker in the church.

ORGANIZATION MEETING

It was in the springtime of the year, April 21, 1908, when the congregation was formally organized under the leadership of Rev. Grother. The people were greatly encouraged and filled with a spirit of hope and optimism. As their great venture of faith, they decided to apply for a loan of \$250 from the Nebraska District. This request was granted and building operations were immediately begun. George Wegener donated the first church site, 10 miles northwest from the city of Norton.

GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

Norton is situated near the Nebraska border. It was the Nebraska District that answered the urgent call for help from Norton, Kansas, and not only gave them pastoral attention and service, but also made a loan of \$250, needed to build the first church in 1908. In 1912 this loan of \$250 was repaid to the Nebraska District. That \$250 could have made the difference in having, or not having, a church at Norton. We thank God, but we also are grateful to our Nebraska neighbors for the assistance given in furnishing money and men to build Immanuel of Norton. The congregation which was now established decided that it would be proper to become members of the Kansas District.

CHARTER MEMBERS

In every congregation there are certain family names which are prominent. The following are the charter members of the Norton Lutheran Church: August Wegener, George Ruff, Henry Finke, Martin Brase, Willie Werner, Herman Braun, Sr. Others of the top ten names include: G. Gienau, Henry Renken, Fred Hofmeier, Arthur Walker.

THE DROUGHT

Pioneers of all lands who blazed the trails toward new horizon experienced many hardships, like droughts, floods, wars, fires, sickness, and death. Seven years of drought ensued following the settlement of these early members. Four of the seven families decided to return to the land of their fathers. Only August Wegener, George Ruff, and Herman Braun, Sr., remained. The loss of membership together with the drought years was hard to endure and was a severe set-back to the little church. Is it possible for the church to survive? This was the question then. By the grace of God and with His help, the church did survive.

THE MINISTRY OF IMMANUEL

Immanuel Lutheran Church in the past 100 years was served by a long array of ministers, teachers, vicars, and lay-workers. Intermittently, vacancy pastors ministered to them.

MEN OF THE MINISTRY

Immanuel Church has given three men for the ministry, the late Dr. Arthur Wegener; Rev. Norbert Wodtke, Topeka, Kansas; and Rev. Karl Thiele, Florida. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He may send forth laborers into his harvest."



Rev. Norbert Wodtke



Rev. Karl Thiele

REMEMBERING LEST WE FORGET

The following historical sketch will list most of the ministers who served Immanuel and will name and date the more important events:

1908—April 21—Constitution accepted and signed by 9 members (Rev. Grother).

1908—May 24—Rev. Theo. Norden, Orleans, preached his first sermon as supply pastor. (Vicar O.W. Ninke was the teacher).

1908—July 26—The first church was dedicated. Rev. P. Baeder, Arapahoe, Nebraska preached the sermon in German. Rev. Grother, Oxford, Nebraska, preached the English sermon.

1908-1909—Student Joachim Cohrs did the preaching and teaching.

1909—Immanuel was received into membership with the Nebraska District.

1909-1910—Student O.W. Ninke served as preacher and teacher.

1911—January 22—Rev. Theo Norden preached his farewell sermon on Acts 20:23.

1911-1917—Rev. G.W. Arkebauer, Stuttgart, Kansas served the church until his death in 1917. In 1914, Miss Minnie Braun taught the school. No salary was asked. Rev. Toenjes was the successor to Rev. G.W. Arkebauer.

1917-1918—Rev. H. Wagner, temporarily out of office, and a member of the local church, served as pastor.

1918-1921—Rev. T. Toenjes, Stuttgart, served as vacancy pastor.

1921—Rev. E. Klawitter was installed as the first resident pastor on September 11, 1921, by Rev. Toenjes. He served until the year 1925.

1925-1929—Rev. H. Pennekamp.

1930-1933—Rev. E. Kreutz.

1934—Vicar Errin Heidorn served the church.

1935—October—Candidate Lade began his service as pastor and teacher. Rev. Beck, Hoxie, was the vacancy pastor.

1936—July 12—Rev. A. Lade was ordained and installed by Pastor Beck of Hoxie, Kansas.

1936—Sunday School was introduced. Young people were organized into a society for Bible study and recreation.

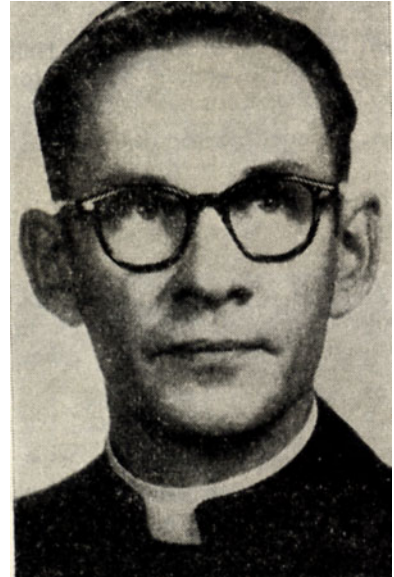
1937—A building fund for a new church was begun.

1939—On the first Sunday in April, Rev. A. Lade preached his farewell sermon.

1939—Rev. R.H. Koehnken served as vacancy pastor until the second Sunday in October, when candidate Arnold G. Griesse was ordained and installed, serving until 1942. Wilfred Wegener was teacher in 1940.

1940-1942—Student Elmer Griesse taught the school. The teachers were paid by the District Mission Board so that the pastor might be free to serve the State Sanatorium in Norton. Services were held there once a month.

1942—October—Rev. A. Griesse preached his farewell sermon. Rev. R.H. Koehnken again served as vacancy pastor.



**Rev. Alvin R. Lade
1936-1939**



**Rev. Erwin Moehring
1943-1945**

1942-1943—Student D. Behrens taught the Lutheran School.

1943—July 18—Candidate Erwin Moehring was ordained and installed. Under his pastorate, Sanatorium services were resumed.

1945—In March, services were begun in Norton at the Legion Hall above the Western Auto Store. In November, Pastor Moehring accepted a call to Holy Cross, Wichita, Kansas.

1946—Rev. Ed Schmidt, Oberlin, was vacancy pastor until August 18, 1946.

1946—August 18—Candidate Orlett D. Brack was ordained and installed. Mrs. Brack was engaged to teach the school for \$75 a month.

1947—In April, it was decided to close the school. Rev. Brack accepted a call to Otto, Texas. Rev. Ed Schmidt, Oberlin, was again asked to be vacancy pastor.

1947-49—Rev. M.A. Pullman served as vacancy pastor.

1949—November 16—Rev. W. Seefeldt was installed as pastor.

1949—The parsonage was moved into Norton and was ready for occupancy when Rev. W. Seefeldt arrived in Norton. The building of the church was delayed because of an impending steel strike.

1950—January 15—Cornerstone laying.
May 21—Valedictory service at the Old Church.
May 21—Dedication of the New Church.

1952—November 17—Wurlitzer Organ purchased and dedicated on December 7, 1952.

1953—September 1—New pews were installed.

1954—August 24—Church flags dedicated. November 17—Laymen's League organized. The outdoor sign was the first project completed.

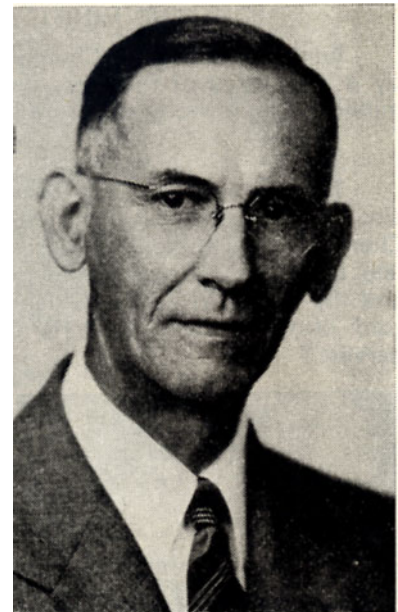
1956—May 20—Mortgage burning ceremony. July 29—Rev. Seefeldt preached his farewell sermon, having accepted a call to Orchard, Nebraska. Rev. E. Licht, Oberlin, served as vacancy pastor for eight months.

1957—May 12—Rev. Carl F. Juergensen assumed charge of Immanuel Lutheran church, being installed by Rev. E. Licht.

1959—Youth Walther League team of caravaners came to revitalize Walther League. Paraments purchased by Ladies Aid.



**Rev. O. D. Brack
1946-1947**



**Rev. Walter Seefeldt
1949-1956**

- 1960**—Voter’s meeting changed to quarterly events.
- 1961**—Preaching, teaching, reaching event held. The church entered float in Norton Centennial parade.
- 1962**—Lawn care hired. Congregation participated in “Train Two” program.
- 1963**—Special memorial service held for John F. Kennedy
- 1964**—Broadcast through KNB1 Midweek Services during Lent. Church chancel redecorated. Pastor Jurgensen accepted call to Sabetha, KS, October, 1964. Pastor Dennis Hill, Kensington, served as vacancy pastor.
- 1965**—In July, Rev. Hubert Kluck began serving as vacancy pastor.
- 1966**—The lawn was replanted and landscaped.
- 1967**—Rev. David Behling installed. Pipe organ installed.
- 1968**—In November, Rev. David Behling accepted call to Iowa. Pastor Temme served as vacancy pastor.
- 1969**—Rev. Richard Klein installed. Many members “unsatisfied because of doctrinal questions.” Rev. Klein served as full time Valley Hope Counselor.
- 1970**—Rev. Klein resigns as pastor. Rev. John Brogaard installed. Parsonage is purchased for \$18,500 at 1110 Nixon Drive.
- 1971**—Midweek school began.
- 1972**—Altar paraments purchased.
- 1973**—Carpet was purchased for the church.
- 1974**—Pastor Brogaard accepted call to Two Rivers, Wisconsin.
- 1975**—Pastor Otto Schultz installed.
- 1976**—Five youth attend Youth Gathering in New Orleans.
- 1977**—Average church attendance was 92.
- 1978**—Pastor Otto Schulze left to accept employment in Lincoln, Nebraska. Pastor Ken Kaufmann served as vacancy pastor. Pastor Marvin Huggins began ministry here.
- 1979**—New hymnals were purchased.
- 1980**—“Greeters” Program was established.
- 1981**—New hymnal, “Lutheran Worship,” was purchased.
- 1982**—Pastor Huggins left for a position in St. Louis with the Concordia Historical Institute. Pastor Joel Heisterman served as vacancy pastor.



**Rev. Carl F. Juergensen
1957-1964**

- 1983**—Celebration of Immanuel’s 75th Anniversary on October 9, 1983. Parsonage basement finished. Pastor Richard Wertz installed.
- 1985**—Joint agreement with St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in Logan for pastoral services.
- 1986**—Sound system installed for narthex and basement. Termites move in!
- 1987**—Kansas District observed its centennial. Contributions began to Norton Transient Fund.
- 1989**—Joint agreement with Logan continued.
- 1990**—New Visions weekend at Immanuel approved.
- 1991**—New Visions weekend conducted in March, 1991.
- 1992**—Pastor Paul Kaldahl, Oberlin, served as vacancy pastor after Pastor Wertz resignation. Pastor David Bretcher installed.
- 1993**—Growth in Bible Study and Sunday School attendance. Education wing is renovated.
- 1994**—Church secretary was hired.
- 1995**—Piano placed in sanctuary.
- 1996**—The building fund was established. Visiting committee to new Norton residents was started.
- 1997**—Building Committee conducted site visit and investigated land.
- 1998**—Mission outreach for Rev. John Mehl family in Russia. Sprinkler system installed at parsonage.
- 1999**—1999 Hymnal supplement purchased.
- 2000**—Pastor David Bretscher was called to Lexington, Missouri. Pastor Chad Eckels, Oberlin, served as vacancy pastor.
- 2001**—Pastor Rick Rostek installed.
- 2002**—Memorial fund policy adopted. Amendments of the Synod constitution approved.
- 2003**—Motion passed to build new church and educational facility.
- 2004**—Land purchased across from Prairie Land Electric.
- 2005**—“Building God’s Way” selected as architect and builder for new facility.
- 2006**—Artist sketches of new building.
- 2007**—Capital fund drive conducted.
- 2008**—Pipe organ refurbished and architect’s drawings received.



**Future Home of
Immanuel Lutheran Church**

MINISTERIAL ACTS IN 100 YEARS

From 1908 to 2008, there were 332 baptisms, 329 confirmations, 119 marriages, and 103 funerals performed.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES 1908-2008

1910—Elsa Finke, Arthur Finke,
Edward Wegener

1914—Fredrich Wegener

1916—Elsa Wegener

1917—Clemens Wagner

1922—Leonard Binger,
Clarence Binger, Ester Poppe,
Fridora Poppe

1925—Wilbert Poppe,
William Wegener, Lorenz Wegener

1926—Erwin Poppe, Melvin Benien,
Erna Duensing, Louise Rathe

1927—Herman Wudtke, Ruth Benien,
Hulda Duensing

1928—Gilbert Binger, Walter Poppe,
Hilda Kluender, Lorina Herman,
Eleonora Rathe, Alma Wudtke

1929—Walter Cohrs

1931—Ellis Wyatt, Evelyn Cohrs,
Dorothea Wegener, Louise Duensing,
Lorna Duensing, Elsie Poppe,
Velma Kluender, Carl Herman

1932—Bernard Braun, Alfred Benien,
Melvin Mussmann, Letha Wegener,
Gertrude Wegener, Leo Harding,
Miss Reichert

1933—Lorenz Cohrs, Arthur Duensing,
Lydia Duensing, Katherine Kluender,
Lillian Poppe, Lenora Wudtke,
Francis Mussmann.

1936—Raymond Cohrs, William Cohrs,
Edward Duensing, Walter Duensing,
Adolf Kluender, Helen Mussmann,

Raymond Thiele, Elmer Wagner,
Floyd Wagner, Iona Wegener,
Irene Wodtke, Arthur Wudtke,
Ida Wudtke

1937—Verna Braun, Clara Duensing,
Donald Wegener, Gertrude Wodtke

1938—Roderick Binger, Everett Cohrs,
Mildred Mussmann, Erwin Thiele,
Virgil Wegener, Bernice Cohrs,
Bernard Poppe, Leotha Poppe

1939—Viola Duensing, Emil Kluender,
Norbert Wodtke, Ray Shelton

1940—Ruth Braun, Eileen Thiele,
Kenneth Wagner, Marvin Wudtke,
Leo Schulze, Thomas Hibschmann

1942—Irene Werner, Irma Werner,
Roberta Wegener, Charlotte Thiele

1944—Alice Cohrs, Norma Wudtke

1945—Beulah Poppe, Robert
Houghton, Kenneth Sanders,
Allen Braun, Norma Strecker

1947—Erwin Duensing, Loren Thiele,
James Skrdlant, Pershing Frederick,
Carl Frank

1952—Eldon Earley, Wanda Thiele,
Janice Klotz, Aileen Rentschler,
Evelyn Meier

1954—Louis Delimont, Eugene Mall,
Glen Wilner, Mrs. D. Townley,
Mrs. John Rieger, Jerry Wudtke,
Gerald Seefeldt

1955—Cleta Holste, Dennis Schulze,
Patricia Braun

1956—Karlene Rieger, Judy Herman,
George Meier, Mary Luther,
Lynn Hagermann

1957—Lonnie Schulze, Paul Klotz,
Sharon Thiele, Karen Thiele,
Judith Poppe, Clarice Holste, Dean Meier

1958—Richard Braun, Lee Ann Wood,
Ronald Wudtke, Fontaine Thiele,
Michael Rieger

1959 – Jon Hagerman, Waunita Thiele

1960 – Sharon Wright, Norman Wright,
Kathleen Linner, Carol Stagemeyer,
John Holste, Arthur Poppe,
Patricia Werling, Mary Hiser

1961 – Marcia Thiele, Mark Hagerman,
Roger Braun, Steven Turner,
Marcia Wood

1962 – Mrs. Joan Tiemann, Ivan Bohl,
Connie Wegener, Janis Johnson,
Gerald Thiele, Cynthia Wegener,
Thomas Hiser, Jan Hagerman,
Jack Bielser, Mrs. Alvin Naeve

1963 – Dan Mlinek, LaCretrica Hoover,
Michael Turner, Dale Schulze

1964 – Wayne Thiele, Donna Schulze,
Deborah Oades, Cathy Holste,
Kenneth Nelson, Barbara Wegener,
Theodore Thiele

1965 – Judy Miller, Carlene Herman,
Cynthia Braun, Twila Bohl, Mary Minge

1966 – Mrs. Minnie Minshall,
Mrs. Mariann Earley, Rebecca Baeder,
Robert Hiser, Marc Kroeger,
Lynn Thiele, Jack Turner

1967 – Timothy Bohl, Vance Poage,
Jeanette Thiele, Scott Turner,
Bruce Wegener

1968 – Kenneth Braun, Jay Holste,
Terry Thiele

1969 – Scott Stuewe, Vail Poage,
Arloa Veh, Glenda Wegener,
Sandra Wegener

1970 – Lona Pinkston, Tona Veh,
Cynthia Rau, Jackie Poage

1971 – Mr. Tom Carter, Mr.
John DePozzi, Mr. Ed Luther,
Mr. Larry Shepard, Ronald Thiele

1972 – Jeannie Poage, Jon Stuewe,
Judith Brew

1973 – Janette Bowen, Judy Janssen,
Marsha Kuhlman, Kevin Rau,
Kathleen Sprigg, Sue Ann Stutheit,
James Jones, Lindell Lyons

1974 – Cheryl Bowen, Janet Janssen,
Rodney Rau, Sara Stuewe, Carla Weyand

1975 – Jeffrey Bielser, Paul Lawrence,
Kelly Persinger, Von Poage,
David Sprigg, Eric Thiele, Darron Veh,
Curtis Weyand

1976 – LaVerne Coker,
Mrs. Clara Oman, Mr. Dean Sprigg,
Connie Bowen, Jodi Poage

1977 – Mark Bietz, Gail Bowen,
Sue Hempler, Jerry Janssen,
Jimmy Jones, Shawna Lawrence,
Gary Shepard, Paul Shepard,
Dwight Sprigg, Priscilla Thiele

1978 – Brenda Bietz, David Deines,
Joan Deines, Julie Lueschen

1980 – Jacqueline Bowen

1981 – Janet Hempler, Lisa Lueschen,
Bradley Persinger, Janelle Stapp

1982 – Todd Howard, Jimmy Shepard

1983 – Lisa Thiele, Leann Stapp

1984 – Kathy Bietz, Laura Bietz,
Carisa Braun, Teresa Howard,
Brian Schulze

1985 – Daniel Deines, Tamara Sprigg, April Hadley, Clara Schievelbein

1986 – Mr. Rodney VanLoenen, Jeremy Wertz, Shauna Rau

1987 – Spencer Braun, Julie Howard, Brandon Schulze

1988 – Richard Hadley, Evan Thiele, Jason Wertz

1989 – Fay Schievelbein, Mrs. Cheryl Krueger

1990 – Mitchell Hempler, Ryan Manning

1991 – Luke Hempler, Randy Russell

1992 – Chad Manning

1993 – Joshua Kellerman, Melissa Schoen, Brooke Thiele, Carey Schulze

1994 – Dustin Herrs, Candace Manning, Katrina Thiele

1996 – Kelsey Holste, Shawn Thiele

1997 – Sheena Herrs, Courtney Holste, Joy Lauer, Megan Lemon

1999 – Jeffrey Jackson, Sarah Streck

2000 – Eric Burton, Sean Lauer, Casiel (C.J.) Thiele

2001 – William Hadley, Keesha Holste, Joshua Jackson, Amanda Phoenix, Justin Shirk

2002 – Clarke Nelson, Naomi Streck

2003 – Patrick Burton

2004 – Logan Runnion

2005 – Ashley Colip, Brock Lauer, Bradley Nuzum, Stanton Nelson

2006 – Bethany Roy, Aaron Pulec

2007 – Jade Braun, Spencer Shirk, Dustyna Sprigg, Rebekah Streck

2008 – Mariah Farber, Kylie Nuzum, Mr. Bill Manning

CHURCH BUILDING

It was during a longer vacancy of two years from 1947-49 that members began discussing the advisability of moving the church to town, as many other congregations had done. This was necessary for various reasons. In the country the church had no future. It was difficult to procure the service of the pastor for a place that offered little prospect for future growth and development.



**Sanctuary of Original Building
Picture taken on Easter Sunday.**



Sanctuary at current church before renovation.

In 1950 the congregation moved to Norton as the potential for future growth and development was much greater in town than in the country. The present facility was built at an estimated cost of \$30,000. Of this amount, \$15,000 was borrowed; after five years the congregation was debt free.

Today an active building plan has been initiated. The present location lacks parking space, the structure is

not energy efficient, and the basement walls are deteriorating. Membership growth is inhibited by lack of space for Sunday School and Vacation Bible School activities. To alleviate these problems, land has been purchased on the west edge of Norton for the new facility. The congregation hopes to build in the near future. The cost of the new facility is projected to be over one million dollars.

EDUCATION AT IMMANUEL

Education continues to focus on both youth and adults. Sunday School classes were begun in 1936 and continue today. Five teachers will teach children and youth from age 3 to age 18. Sunday School attendance this year averages 15. Sunday School is not only for children, but also adults. The average Sunday adult class attendance is 13 for this year. Two home Bible studies are conducted for adults throughout the year, one meeting on Sunday evening, the other on Wednesday morning. In addition to Sunday School, Wednesday Mid-Week classes are held for those in grades 1-6. Confirmation instruction is also held for those in grades 7-8.

A highlight of the educational program and a community outreach is the Vacation Bible School which is usually held in July. Attendance for children this year averaged 32 nightly. Many adults were also involved as leaders and helpers. An adult Bible Study was also held.

SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League, formerly known as the Ladies Aid, is the oldest congregational organization. Organized in 1940, the group has continued to carry on the tradition of "Serving the Lord with Gladness." Although the group is small, eleven members, service to God and His people continues through service projects such as Meals on Wheels, cookies for the developmentally disabled and shut-ins, aid to

families of prisoners, and church related activities. The organization has been blessed to have members active in zone and state leadership positions. At present, Pastor Rostek serves as Pastoral Counselor for the District LWML.

Although the Lutheran Laymen's League was chartered in 1954 it is presently inactive. Once a year the men sponsor a pancake feed with proceeds going to the state LLL project. Ed Lawrence is presently serving as LLL Ambassador for the congregation. Several members continue to be active at the zone and state level.

The Lutheran Youth Group, formerly known as the Walther League, was organized here in 1944. It is active in mission trips and fellowship events, and has attended the National Youth gathering. Twelve youth are active in one way or another. The mission trip this year was a trip to Mexico to build a house.

Immanuel has continued its community outreach by conducting services weekly at the Andbe Home, a long term care facility.

GOD WITH US

Although faced with many challenges, Immanuel congregation continues to place its trust in our Lord Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God with us, as we look toward the future. God has richly blessed us and continues to do so each day of our lives. We give Him thanks and praise for all He has done for us. We therefore move confidently into the next century rededicating this church and its members to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in service to Him and His kingdom.



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod