

Sketch of the History of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, U. A. C., of Knoxville, Tennessee

Among the earliest settlers of East Tennessee were a number of thrifty German Lutheran families who had come across the mountains from Virginia and North and South Carolina. As early as 1813, Lutheran missionaries made regular trips through East Tennessee administering the Word and the Sacraments to their German brethren who were scattered throughout the mountains and valleys. And their work was not in vain; for already, in 1816, these German Lutherans had established a Theological Seminary in Greene County, Tennessee, whose president was that indefatigable pastor and missionary, Rev. Philipp Henkel. And but four years later, in 1820, the German Ev. Lutheran Tennessee Synod was organized at Solomon's church, East Tennessee, by five pastors and nineteen delegates.

Although there were quite a number of German Lutherans in Knoxville, yet we find no record of an attempt to organize a German Lutheran church at that time. Before and during the late war the Lutherans of this vicinity were served occasionally by the Rev. Wilkens, of Wartburg, Tenn. After he had accepted a call as professor to Gettysburg, Pa., Seminary, the Revs. Eggers and Bachmann, of Nashville, Tenn., looked after the spiritual welfare of the Lutherans at Knoxville. During the time from 1867-69, various futile attempts were made to organize a German Lutheran congregation. September 2, 1867, a number of German Lutherans bought a lot on corner Broad and Asylum sts., from Mr. G. W. Watkins, for church purposes, at a cost of \$900.00. In 1868 a charter was applied for by the Messrs. Dr. Ed. Goetz, John A. Aurin, Carl Baum, Ferd Aurin, Peter Kern. The charter passed both houses of the legislature on March 3rd, 1868.

In 1869 the Rev. Passavant, D. D., of Pittsburg, Pa., who carefully watched the interests of the Germans in the South, appealed to the Rev. Grossmann, then president of the German Ev. Lutheran Iowa Synod, to send a missionary to Tennessee, especially to Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville. Rev. Grossmann appointed the Rev. John Heckel, of Mendota, Ill., to make a tour of inspection through the eastern part of the state.

Rev. Heckel arrived in Knoxville during the first week of October, 1869, and preached his first sermon on the 10th of that month.

Monday, Oct. 11, 1869, at 7:30 p. m., about twenty German Lutherans assembled in Mr. Peter Kern's Hall, No. 7, Market square, and resolved to organize a German Lutheran congregation. A constitution and by-laws were drawn up, discussed, and unanimously accepted.

A second business meeting was held Tuesday, October 12, '69, in which the formal organization of **The First German Evangelical Lutheran Church, U. A. C., of Knoxville, Tennessee**, was effected, twenty-two men signing the constitution. viz: John A. Aurin, Dr. Ed. Goetz, Ferd Aurin, Carl Baum, Geo. Fuchs, Ferd. Mueller, T. E. Aurin, Christian Sturm, John Lichtenwanger, Carl Aurin, Julius Aurin, H. J. Haverkorn, A. Setzepfand, Leonhard Schweickerd, John Hiller, C. Belitz, John Meeh, John Marquardt, George Nagel, Jos. Fanz, Peter Kern, Wm. Fisher.

The first Church council was elected in the same meeting; it was composed of the following members: Dr. Ed. Goetz, President; Peter Kern, Treasurer; Carl Baum, John A. Aurin, Geo. Fuchs, Ferd Aurin.

On Sunday, October 17, 1869, the first children were baptized in the new congregation. viz: Emma Marquardt and Minnie Lichtenwanger.

October 19, 1869, the Rev. John Heckel was duly called as the first pastor of the congregation. He accepted the call and held his inaugural sermon

December 19, 1869, in an old Methodist Church. The congregation then rented the old Hampden-Sydney Academy, where regular and parish day-school were held.

Immediately after Rev. Heckel's arrival the congregation resolved to build a church on the lot on Asylum street. The contract was let to Mr. M. B. Fahnenstock & Co., January 29, 1870, who was to receive \$597.00 for work, the congregation furnished all materials. Among the workers on the old church building, were John A. Aurin, Ferdinand Aurin, Carl Aurin and Julius T. Aurin, who labored with their own hands in erecting the building. The Glass for the windows, some of which are now in the present Sunday school of the new church, was furnished by John L. Lichtenwanger. Hon. Peter Kern and Ferd. Miller, Sr., rendered material assistance in the building of the church.

June 5, 1870, the basement of the Church was so far completed that the first service could be held in the large school-room.

August 30, 1870, Clara Concordia, the beloved wife of Rev. Heckel, died peacefully in the confession of Jesus' redemption.

September 25, 1870, the now finished Church was solemnly dedicated to the service of the triune God. The pastor, Rev. John Heckel, delivered the German sermon on Psalm 84; and the venerable Rev. Abel J. Brown, D. D., of Blountville, Tenn., the English one on I. Peter 2: 6. The Church had cost five thousand and some odd dollars, every cent of which was paid before another year passed by.

In December, 1874, Rev. Heckel accepted a call to Nashville, Tenn., whereupon Mr. Geo. Schaid, a candidate for the ministry, of Philadelphia, Pa., was called. He was installed July 16, 1875, by Rev. G. H. Cox, then President of the Ev. Luth. Holston Synod.

March 15, 1881, a pipe organ was bought for \$560.00. \$500 of the sum was donated by Mr. E. W. Eckhardt.

April 8, 1883, a vacant lot on Union street, suitable for a parsonage, was bought for \$600.00. This lot was sold September 13, 1886, for \$1,200.00, and the proceeds used to buy a house and lot, No. 140, Luttrell street.

July 31, 1887, Rev. Schaid accepted a call as President and Professor of North Carolina College, at Mt. Pleasant, N. C. The vacancy was filled August 28, 1887, by calling Mr. J. R. Lauritzen, who had come South on a lecture tour in behalf of the temperance cause.

February 10, 1889, the parsonage on Luttrell street was sold for \$1,800.00; and the congregation resolved the same day to erect a suitable parsonage on the rear part of the church lot on Broad street. The new parsonage was finished June 9, 1889. It had cost \$1,742.68.

Rev. J. R. Lauritzen having resigned his pastorate February 14, 1892 the congregation called Rev. Julius A. Friedrich, (then pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel's Church at Chattanooga, Tenn.,) on the 15th of May, 1892. He arrived at Knoxville, June 7th, and was installed on the 12th of June, 1892, (Trinity Sunday), by the Rev. C. C. Schmidt, of St. Louis, Mo., President of the Western District of the Ev. Luth. Missouri Synod. Pastor Friedrich held his inaugural sermon June 19, 1892.

August 7, 1892, congregation resolved to re-open the parish school, the pastor to act as teacher.

September 6, 1892, day school opened with an enrollment of 26 children.

October 7, 1892, congregation by unanimous vote resolved to sever its connection with the Evangelical Lutheran Holston Synod.

October 22, 1893, the first official visitation was held by the Rev. J. G. Goehringer, of Wartburg, Tenn.

April 8, 1894, congregation calls Prof. Oscar Katthain, of Lutheran Normal College at Addison, Ills., as principal of the parish school. He was installed August 26, 1894.

September 30, 1894, congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary in special

services.

October 13, 1895, congregation ordered regular English services every Sunday evening.

October 11, 1896, congregation resolved with but one dissenting vote to join the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri.

In October 1896 the congregation resolved to apply for membership in the Lutheran Synod of Missouri.

October 14, 1897, at the convention of the Western district of the Missouri Synod the aforesaid application was received and favorably acted upon.

February 3, 1907, Rev. Julius A. Friedrich accepted a call to the congregation at St. Charles, Mo.

February 10, 1901, Rev. Wm. Brand, of Milwaukee, Wis., was elected as pastor of the congregation.

April 14, 1901, installation of Rev. Wm. Brand by Rev. Julius A. Friedrich.

December 15, 1902, the congregation accepted the offer of the Louisville & Nashville R. R. to buy our church property, corner Broad and Asylum Avenue for \$14,000.00.

January 25, 1903, the congregation decided to buy the E. C. Camp lot corner Broadway and Fifth Avenue for \$5000.00.

June 28, 1903, the cornerstone of the new church was laid, Prof. Ed. Koehler of Mosheim, Tenn., officiating.

On the same day the congregation sent a call to Prof. Ed. Koehler who shortly after accepted the call and was installed October 11, 1903.

September 13, 1903, Rev. Wm. Brand accepted a call to Pittsburg, Pa.

March 20, 1904, the new church, corner of Broadway and Fifth Avenue, was dedicated. The total expenses for the lot, rebuilding of parsonage and construction of church building being \$16,693.35.

June, 1904, Prof. Wm. Kammrath accepted our call as Teacher, serving up to June 13, 1907, when he was called to Zions congregation of Chicago, Ill. Mrs. Coutant was secured to fill the vacancy in the school.

September 27, 1908, Rev. Ed. Koehler accepted the call as Prof. at the Lutheran Teachers' Seminary, Addison, Ill., and preached his farewell sermon January 3, 1909.

May 2, 1909, Rev. C. J. Fricke from Aurora, Ill., was installed by Prof. Geo. Luecke of Conover, N. C.

May 22, 1909, Prof. Wm. Buck accepted our call as teacher.

July 11, 1909, the congregation authorized the Trustees to buy the Heidelberg property, 535 W. Fifth Avenue, as teacher's residence, for \$3500.00.

August, 1911, Prof. W. Buck resigned.

November 26, 1911, Rev. C. J. Fricke accepted a call to Aurora, Ill.

March 31, 1912, the congregation called Rev. C. L. Mueller of Hemlock, Mich.

June 2, 1912, Rev. C. L. Mueller was installed by Prof. Weiss of Conover, N. C.

August 15, 1914, Prof. F. B. Miller accepted our call and was installed August 17th, serving until his resignation July 15, 1915.

November 26, 1915, Rev. C. L. Mueller accepted a call to Black Jack, Mo., and preached his farewell sermon December 19, 1915.

April 9, 1916, the congregation called Rev. H. Kellermann of St. Louis, Mo., who was installed May 14, 1916 by Rev. Paul G. Heckel, of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

In July, 1916, Prof. C. Michel accepted our call.

October 14, 1917, Rev. H. Kellermann resigned on account of ill health.

November 11, 1917, Rev. H. Kellermann preached his farewell sermon.

In December, 1917, the new pipe organ was installed. The old organ was given in part payment on the new organ, and the remaining part since paid off in full.

In March, 1918, Rev. K. Kretzschmar of Hastings, Neb., accepted our call and was installed by Rev. O. Graebner of Chattanooga, Tennessee, on April 14, 1918.

On August 18, 1918, the congregation called Prof. W. W. Rittamel of Staplehurst, Neb., to fill the vacancy in the parish school. Prof. W. W. Rittamel was installed September 22, 1918.

The congregation having decided to sell the Heidel property, which had been used for our teacher's residence, it being inconvenient to our school, and of late years our teachers being single men, the property was accordingly sold for \$3500 cash, and the only debt of the congregation paid off.

April 12, 1919, the congregation concluded one of the most successful campaigns in its history for good work, viz; a drive to raise funds for the three million dollar Endowment Fund for the support of superannuated ministers and teachers and the widows and orphans of such as have died. The drive resulted in subscriptions amounting to over \$1000.00 the greater part having been paid in.

October 12, 1919, Fiftieth Anniversary of the organization of the congregation. Sermons by Rev. Julius A. Friedrich of St. Charles, Missouri, and Prof. Ed. Koehler of River Forest, Ill.

October 13, 1919, congregation at this time has no debts on its church property, and with exception of a few current accounts, is free from debt.

Legacies have been given to the congregation by the following:

- Mr. C. Sturm, \$100.00.
- Mrs. C. Sturm, \$100.00.
- Miss Lizzie Aurin, \$100.00.
- Mrs. Rosalie Heidel, \$300.00.
- Mr. E. W. Eckhardt, \$300.00.
- Mr. Jacob Friedrich, \$100.00.
- Mrs. E. Belitz \$100 00

OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

President	Mr. Gus Engert
Secretary	Mr. Gustav Gade
Assistant Secretary	Prof. W. W. Rittamel
Treasurer	Mr. J. Fred Tauscher

CHURCH COUNCIL

- Messrs. Gus Engert
- Gustav Gade
- Ferd Miller
- Wm. Furian
- John H. Meyer
- J. Fred Tauscher
- Rev. K. Kretzschmar, Pastor
- Prof. W. W. Rittamel. Teacher

A WORD ABOUT OUR PARISH SCHOOL

Our parish school has been in existence for nearly fifty years. Beginning with the ministry of Rev. Julius A. Friedrich in 1897, the school has been maintained without interruption up to the present time. Many are under the erroneous impression that our parish school is conducted in opposition to our public schools. Nothing further from the truth could be imagined. Our parish school like the nearly 2000 schools of the Missouri Synod, is designed to supply what public schools, according to our country's constitution are unable to give, religious instruction, training and discipline. While our people willingly pay their taxes for the support of the public schools, they cheerfully raise large sums for their parish schools, because they are convinced that it is of prime importance that children be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, so that they may be and remain children of God, and honest, faithful citizens of their country as well. It

goes without saying that all essential secular branches of learning are as competently taught in the parish school as they are in the public schools, so that children passing from the former to the latter, keep up with others of their age without difficulty.

During the years in which our parish school has been maintained by our church, the following teachers have had charge of the school:-

Prof. O. Katthain	Student E. J. Friedrich
Prof. George Maahs	Student Theo. Sanders
Prof. William Kammrath	Mrs. O. Katthain
Prof. William Buck	Prof. C. Michel
Prof. Frank B. Miller	Mrs. Ida Trotter
Mrs. Martha Coutant	Prof. W. W. Rittamel

OUR LADIES' AID SOCIETY

The Ladies' Aid Society has been in existence in our congregation for many years, but reorganized by Rev. Ed. Koehler, in July, 1904. It is an acknowledged important factor in our church activity, covering a broad field of usefulness. This band of faithful followers of the Master is constantly busy with charitable and benevolent work, comforting the sick, helping the helpless: in very truth bearing one another's burdens. A regular contribution is paid into the church treasury. An average of \$120.00 yearly is expended in this way. A tax of one penny is levied per year on each member, and the funds thus collected are used to provide delicacies for the sick. Quite a neat sum is forthcoming from the quilting department, annually. The Lutheran Tuberculosis Sanitarium, of Wheatridge, Colorado, and our Orphan Homes, are remembered by shipments of articles indispensable to the inmates of those institutions. The society has an active membership of thirty-two, with an average attendance of twenty, at the meetings held the first Thursday of each month at the homes of the members. Standing on the threshold of our fiftieth anniversary, we thank God with devout hearts for the countless blessings that have been ours, and rejoice that we have been permitted to labor for the upbuilding of his Kingdom. Through the leadership of the following officers, we try in truth to be an "Aid" society.

MRS. E. B. NICHOLS, President
 MRS. MARY GROSS, Vice-President
 MRS. LENA NEAS, Secretary
 MRS. CLARA WHISMAN, Treasurer

OUR YOUNG PEOPLES' SOCIETY

An organization which has always had the welfare of the church at heart is the Young Peoples' Society. The present society was organized June 29th, 1909, under the able leadership of Rev. C. J. Fricke, and since that time it has enjoyed a steady growth. The object of the Society has always been to keep the young people with the church and to co-operate with the church in any way possible toward upbuilding the Kingdom of God. In addition to assisting materially in various ways, the society has been instrumental in buying a piano for the Sunday school, installing electric lights in the church auditorium, enlarging the choir platform, and creating the impulse which resulted in the purchase of a pipe organ.

The officers are;

MISS LOUISE MAUELSHAGEN, President
 MR. CLARENCE MEYER, Vice-President
 MR. ALFRED FRANKENBERG, Treasurer
 MISS VERA MEYER, Secretary

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday school classes are held in the Sunday school hall adjoining the church auditorium every Sunday morning at 9:00 o'clock. Pastor Kretzschmar in charge. Prof. Rittamel, Superintendent.

Teachers are:

Mrs. Louise Nauss, Primary Class
Miss Rosa Knaffla, Junior Class
Miss Alma Asquith, Senior Class
Pastor Kretzschmar, Bible Class

OUR CHURCH CHOIR

The congregation is proud of its choir, and appreciates the time and labor given so willingly by the members of this splendid organization to enhance the beauty of the church services.

Prof. W. W. Rittamel, Director	Miss Louise Mauelshagen
Miss Hilda Mae Nichols, Accompanist	Miss Henrietta Furian
Rev. K. Kretzschmar	Miss Florence Bonifacius
Mr. Richard Kretzschmar	Miss Alma Asquith
Mr. Alfred Frankenberg	Miss Grace Aurin
Mr. Clarence Meyer	Miss Gertrude Kretzschmar
Mrs. Louise Nauss	Miss Irma Kretzschmar
Miss Vera Meyer	Miss Clara Tauscher
Miss Mildred Meyer	Mr. Robert Tauscher

Mr. Clifford Tauscher

OUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Many ask the question what does the Lutheran Church stand for? In the little space before us, we can only very briefly answer this question, and then not fully.

The following statement presents the chief elements of Lutheranism:

The Lutheran Church bears the name of Doctor Martin Luther, the greatest of all reformers of the sixteenth century. The name Lutheran was originated by the enemies of the Reformation and is borne by our church not as a token of man-worship but as a testimony to the conviction that Luther's Gospel was the original divine and saving truth revealed in the Bible.

Lutheranism stands for:

First—Implicit faith in the divine inspiration and infallibility of the Bible in its every word and utterance, which faith involves the acceptance of the Bible as the complete and only guide of doctrine and life.

Second—Justification without the deeds of the law alone by faith in Christ Jesus who being the Son of God and man was made a substitute for sinners, keeping God's law for them, atoning for their sins with his death and being raised from the dead for their complete justification.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church is the largest Protestant Church in the world, numbering almost as many members as all the others combined. In this country it ranks third among the Protestant bodies, and in white membership is said to exceed them all. Its missionaries are found in every corner of the globe.

The Lutheran Church however, does not seek glory in numbers but in the saving of souls by the preaching of the pure Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ, the only Saviour of mankind.

A WORD ABOUT THE MISSOURI SYNOD

Many ask the question what is the Missouri Synod, and what's it for? Well, the answer is simple. The Missouri Synod is a body or a number of churches of the Lutheran Doctrine, joined together in what is termed a Synod, for the purpose of united efforts in all lines of spiritual and religious activities.

A Lutheran historian has this to say about the early history of the Missouri Synod: "New life was infused into the Lutheran Church in this country by the arrival, in the late thirties, of loyal Lutherans who had left the fatherland, because they could not, for conscience sake, remain where error and false doctrine were tolerated and defended by the church authorities. They settled chiefly in the Middle West, and in 1847, under the leadership of C. F. W. Walther, F. Wyneken and others founded the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States, which has ever since stood for conservative, confessional Lutheranism and by its courageous testimony to the truth has had a decided influence for good upon the whole American Lutheran Church. A loghut college, which had been erected in 1839 in the backwoods of Perry County, Mo., by the Saxon immigrants, was taken over by this Synod and in the course of a few decades developed into a chain of educational institutions stretching from New York to San Francisco, and from St. Paul to New Orleans."

To show to what a strong, powerful and active organization the Missouri Synod has grown, it is only necessary to give a few statistics.

The Synod proper comprises 22 districts in the U. S. and Canada, with 2403 ministers; 3244 congregations; 1002 preaching stations, which include more than one million souls and nearly three quarter million communicant members. 1846 parish schools are conducted, in which 320 female teachers, 1050 male teachers and 973 ministers teach 84,832 pupils. The Synod furnished more than thirty thousand men for the U. S. army and had thirty-three chaplains in the army and navy. The Synod carries on missionary work in fifteen different languages and dialects.

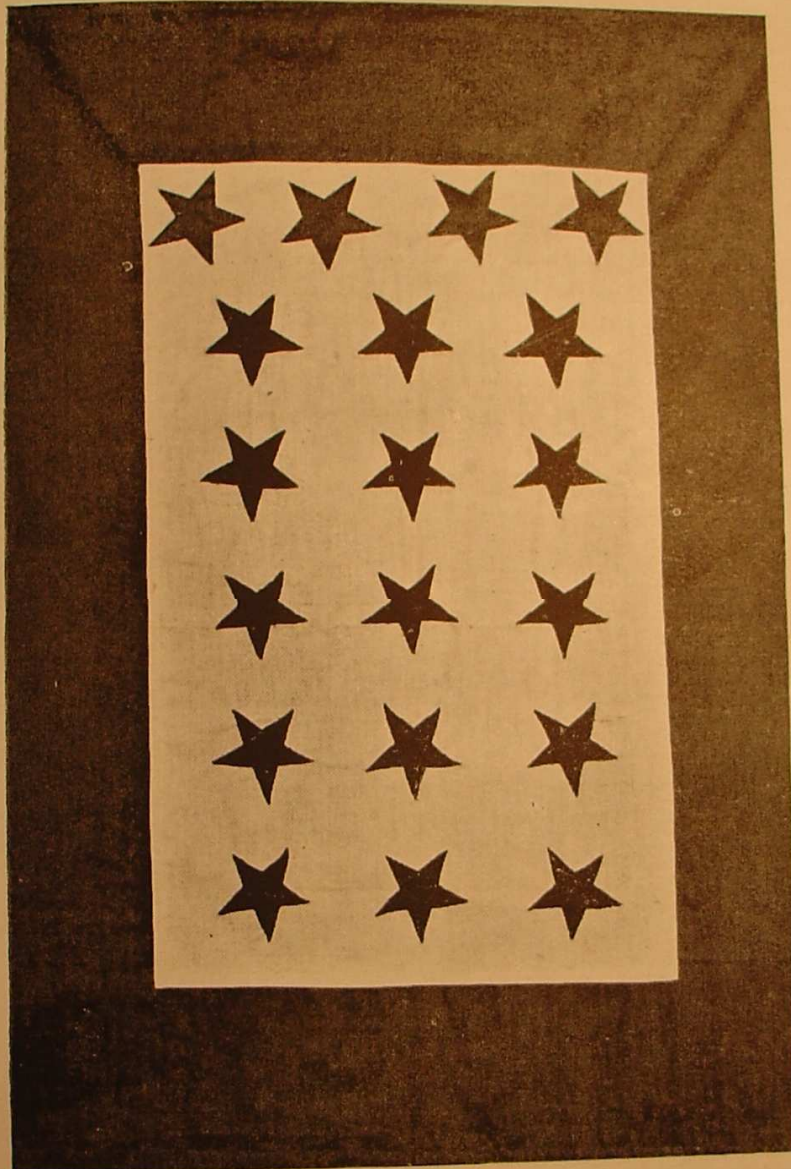
An Interesting Item

One event in the history of our church is well worthy of recording in this sketch, and the Publicity Committee is pleased to give the event this public announcement.

The Louisville & Nashville Depot and the depot property rest partly on the site of our old church and parsonage. The lot on which the church and parsonage stood, cost the founders of our church \$900.00 September 2nd, 1867. In the negotiation for the sale of our church property to the Railroad, our congregation was of the unanimous opinion that the progress of time demanded a peaceable sale of its property to the Railway Company, and although the officers of the Company in charge of the negotiations could have driven a sharp bargain for our property, they did nothing of the kind—instead they graciously and generously and no doubt with the view of not offending any member of the church, paid our congregation in cash, the liberal price of \$14,000.00 virtually for the naked lot, donating to the congregation the old church building, the two story parsonage, all iron fencing and the stone walls.

Is it a wonder that all our pastors, teachers and members ride on the L. & N.?

HONOR ROLL
 Our part in the Great World War as represented
 by our Boys



Walter E. Engert	----- Army	Ferdinand A. Hessler	----- Army
Herbert H. Meyer	----- Army	Richard Gross	----- Army
Erman D. Nichols	----- Army	Carl R. Haemsh	----- Army
Paul H. Nichols	----- Army	William A. Kaminski	----- Army
Harold E. Nichols	----- Army	Henry Louis Gade	----- Army
Charlie T. Knaffla	----- Army	George H. Heins	----- Army
William F. Knaffla	----- Navy	Frank A. Asquith	----- Army
William G. Kohlhase	----- Army	Otto Shubert	----- Army
Albert J. Sobolewski	----- Army	Clarence Bohner	----- Army
		Rudolph Sobolewski	----- Navy

Under the Lord's protection, all our boys returned safely to their homes at the close of the war.

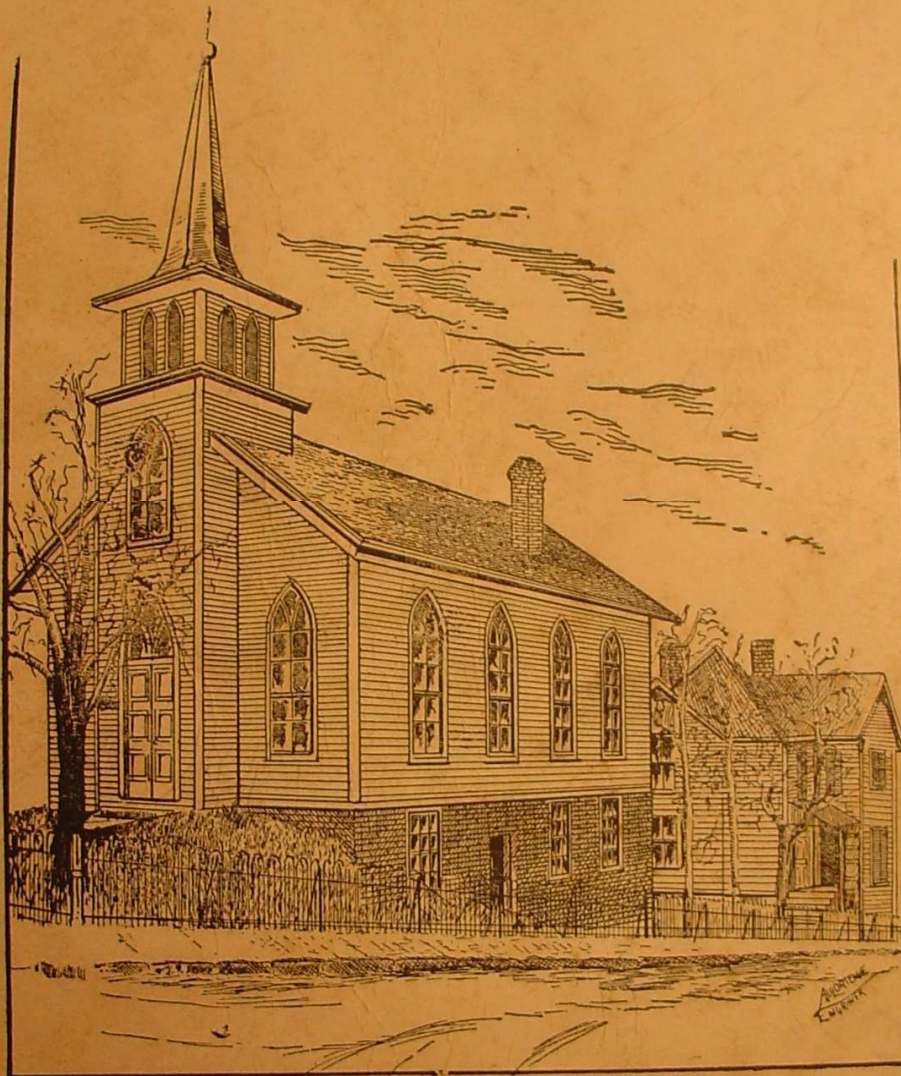
The congregation, by individual subscriptions, raised \$278.75 for the Lutheran Army and Navy Fund.

Many of our women worked in the Red Cross Supply Stations.

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“My church, my church, my dear old church,
My father’s and my own”



The old Church Building, as it stood on the corner of Asylum Avenue and Broadway, from 1869 to 1903. The old Church was torn down in 1903, and some of the material was used in the construction of the new Church. The windows in the present Sunday School came out of the old Church and remain as a lone memento of the old church.

The parsonage seen in the rear, was built some years after the church building, and was torn down and rebuilt on the present church property, North Broadway and West Fifth Avenue, by J. M. Dunn & Sons, Contractors, in 1903.