

Trinity Lutheran Drayton, ND

The Religious
and Historical
Journey of
Trinity Lutheran

Assembled by:
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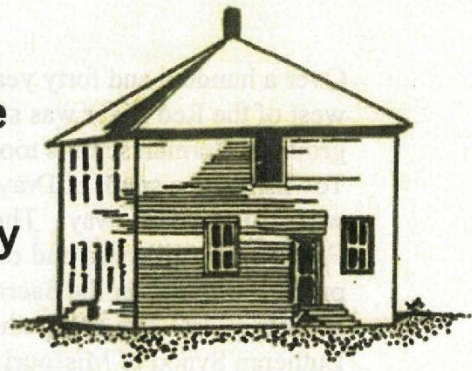
Isaiah 55:10-11

So Shall my word
be that
Goeth Forth out
of my mouth:
It shall not return
to me empty

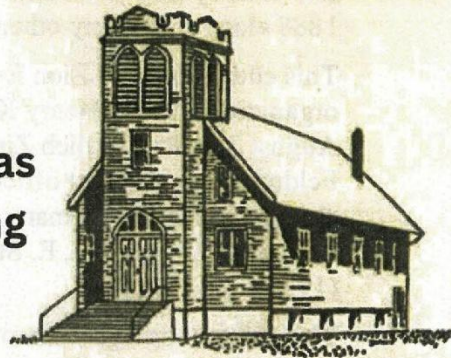
Romans 8:28

And we know that
all things work
together for good
to those who love
God

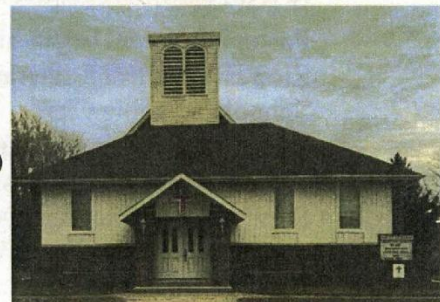
1890
Near the
Acton
Cemetery



1925
Church was
built along
Hwy 17



1948
The church
was moved to
the Present
location in
Drayton



Over a hundred and forty years ago, back in 1879, when the area west of the Red River was still part of the Dakota Territory, a group of German settlers took up homesteading in the Acton Township area south of Drayton and east of Grafton. Statehood was still 10 years away. The group had contact with Rev. Julius Fricke from Hillsboro and decided to call their own pastor to publicly administer the Sacraments and preach the Word of God in their midst. The group chose to join the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri and Other States (in 1947 this became Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod) and Rev. H. Brauer of St. Thomas was called in 1885 to extend his ministry to Acton. During the following years the congregation grew. Henry and Fred Schumacher arrived in 1886 from Iowa followed by Otto Schumacher in 1887 and Christ Weinlaeder in 1888 along with many others.

This church became Zion Evangelical Lutheran officially organized in 1887. Henry Kamper, Henry Ebbinghausen, August Schultz, Gottlieb Zinke, William Schrank and Henry Feldman were the first officers. During these early years the church was served by many faithful pastors: F. Honeck, C. Malkow, H. Baumann, E. Stark, R. Beck and A. Bachanz (1925).

The 1880s congregation moved from a schoolhouse to their first church building in 1890. A two story 24 feet by 30 feet. The lower floor was the parsonage, and the upper floor was the church proper. Six years later this structure was moved to a better location along what would become Highway 17.

A new church building was erected at the same site and dedicated in 1925. (This is the building that was later relocated to Drayton.) The former building was used as the parsonage.

Pastor W. Wudel began his ministry shepherding the members of Zion Evangelical Lutheran in 1927 establishing the Sunday School and Bible Class. He was followed by Pastor M. Adermann who served through 1938. Next, Pastor Runge was installed in 1939. He resided in Grafton and began Divine Services in Grafton that year. Pastor Runge organized the congregation's Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the youth Walther League.

The church building had electrical wiring installed in 1940 and soon added an electric organ. The congregation had grown to include many members in Grafton and also north to Drayton and Bowesmont. Building lots were bought in Grafton and plans for a congregational division evolved with the later purchase of building lots in Drayton Pastor Wm. Harvey Michels was installed in 1943. In 1947 the decision to split and form two congregations was made. The members of the new Drayton Congregation adopted the name Trinity Lutheran. The first officers were: Henry Helm, Arnet Weinlaeder, Christ Helm, Melvin Schumacher, Peter Helm, Ervin Schumacher, and Harry Gonitske.

At its founding Trinity Lutheran consecrated itself anew to the glorious privilege of teaching and preaching the saving Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The rural Zion Evangelical Lutheran church building was sold to Trinity and was moved to Drayton where a new foundation was laid and dedicated in 1948. Pastor Michels became Trinity's first Pastor and moved to the parsonage north of the church.

Trinity's state charter is dated June 20, 1947. Official membership into the North Dakota District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was affected in 1947. Pastor Michels was followed by Rev. W. Gehrs '49-'51 and Rev. C. Baumung '51-'58.

When Rev. Baumung left in 1958 both Trinity and Zion had vacancies and there was a shortage of pastors in the LCMS at the time. The congregations of Drayton and Grafton decided to form a two point parish and share a Shepherd. The first pastor shared by the parish was Richard Ebke who was installed in 1960. A new parsonage was built in Grafton in 1961. A growing youth population was welcomed into our Sunday School. Sunday School Superintendents through the years were Melvin Schumacher, Herb Stegman, Marvin Mosolf, and finally Cindy Johnson.

Rev. Ebke served the parish for eight years and left in 1969 to be followed by Rev. Harry Hager Jr.

Trinity celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1973. Rev. Michels returned to Drayton and preached the anniversary sermon. Trinity also announced at that time its intent was to construct an addition to the church to add space and improvements. An expanded entrance, Bible Class and Sunday School rooms, and bathrooms were included. The project was completed in 1974 under the direction of carpenter/architect Ervin Schumacher. Years later, the kitchen was finally updated in 2009. And bathrooms were redone in 2013.

Pastor Hager left in May 1976. After a two-year vacancy the parish chose to call a graduating seminarian and then waited for the call to be answered. The Reverend Bernhard Seter was the answer, and he was ordained in the summer of 1978 and began a long and fruitful service to the Parish and to the LCMS. He would continue to serve the parish until his death in 2022. A very special 44 years.

Trinity celebrated its 35th anniversary in 1983 and celebrated Pastor Seter's fifth anniversary in the ministry and in service to the Drayton and Grafton parish.

There were nearly continual activities, projects, and improvements during the next years. Trips by the young people to national gatherings, and many active work sessions by the LWML group to design and construct beautiful worship banners. Funds were raised for stained glass windows, and they were designed and dedicated in 1988. Also, regular bazaars, bake sales, quilting sessions, and lefse production. Many projects were

fundraisers in support of mission efforts such as the Lutheran Bible Translator Ministry represented so well by the Dale and Alvina Federwitz family which we continue to support to this day.

The LWML is the Synod auxiliary for women, and the Trinity group has been a strong and active participant in the congregation. Joyfully proclaiming Christ, supporting missions, and equipping women to honor God by serving others. Their energy and work added immensely to the life of the congregation. They also shared their talents with the rest of the northeast zone and state district efforts. Member Kay Kreklau served as District Secretary and then District President from 1994-2004. She was elected to be the national secretary in 2005 and was national LWML President from 2011 to 2015. (Kay's riding on the float in the 2013 Rose Bowl Parade was memorable.) Kay continues to serve on the LCMS ND district board as Treasurer.

Trinity celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1997. The anniversary theme was: "Remember, Renew and Respond, Sent Forth By God's Blessings." A review of the celebration's comments, thoughts, concerns, and prayers indicate an early recognition of changing times and demographics. An idea expressed was: "If we are going to be a feeder congregation to larger congregations in the large cities, let us strive to make our people the best educated and the most motivated sharers of the Gospel that we can."

Through all these years, Trinity has been blessed with amazing musicians. Pastor Seter shared his talents with the production of many CDs that will provide forever listening. Organists Doris Jensen, Linda Merrill, and Sheila Weinlaeder and others have done so much to support the pastors and congregation as we worshiped or celebrated or mourned. Many vocalists and instrumentalists also shared their talents with the church.

In addition to our local ministry, we were privileged to share Pastor Seter during his 44 years with us within a larger role in the LCMS. Part of his ministry was to the State Developmental Center and All Faiths Chapel in Grafton. He was assisted there by many, including volunteer Teachers from Trinity: Clarice Mosolf, Kenny Mosolf and Henry Reith. Pastor Seter served as LWML District Counselor from 1998-2002. He was elected to the LCMS Board of Human Care in 2001, serving as Chairman. In 2010, Pastor Seter was elected Chairman of the LCMS Board for International Missions. He initiated a Kenya mission project that took on the name Project 24. This mission is still growing and is currently serving over 600 children in Kenya. Project 24 is also a current congregational focus with Roger Weinlaeder as an active lay leader in the area.

After the disruption of Covid in 2020-2021 and Pastor Seter's passing in 2022, the parish regrouped and called Pastor Daniel Provost to serve. His service to the parish and Trinity will continue as we transition to a new situation in the coming years.

Through the years we, at Trinity, were blessed with many members who took on extra roles and helped the ministry. Officers, Sunday School teachers, VBS helpers, Bible Class leaders, altar guild, parish nurse, youth leaders, and snow shovelers. Many baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and funerals. All were important and all were special.

We are recognizing an end and celebrating the past. Celebrating the power of the Holy Spirit, who through the preaching of the Word of God and the use of the Sacraments instituted by God continues to bind one generation to another under the unspeakably marvelous blessings of a promise. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age."