

## THE HISTORY OF IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

In the Spring of 1870 John Vollrath, Henry Decker, Henry Schwarze, including their families left Franklin County, Wisconsin. Their destination was Clark County Wisconsin, where they wanted to establish in the woods a new home. The trip to here was rough. You could only travel so far as Humbird by rail. The remaining 35 miles would be by wagon. In one area they all had to get off the wagon. The horses could hardly pull the empty wagon. On June 1st they arrived at their destination. They wanted to establish their new home, close to where our church now stands, which was still woods; you could see many nice evergreens.

The three families, the first summer they lived together in a log house that had been abandon. The first summer they grew the nicest potatoes without plow or drag. There was very little clearing. The price of land was \$5.00 per acre. Railroads were not established yet on trails through the woods one could travel to Greenwood.

In the summer of the same year the brothers John and Herman Schwarze. One year later Fredrick Decker and family. In the year of 1872 Fredrick Buker came with horses and wagon from town Herman, he bought a tract of land and built a house the same fall. In the fall of the same year. Henry Humke arrived. The next year Ludwig Noah, August Beilke and their families. In the year of 1874 Henry Fravert arrived. They had to bare many hardships we do not know. It took work, determination to cut the trees, to prepare the land so they could seed and harvest. They knew man lives not by bread alone. Many came out of Immanuel's Congregation in town Herman and were Lipper. When they came here they did not forget their God. It was their need in their new homes not to forget their belief. In their houses they built it with Bible and songbook on Sundays they gathered in the Decker's school house (NOW THE SCHOOL THE AMISH USE) where a sermon was read by Henry Schwarze. Yet the people were without a house of God.



without a Shepherd and care of souls. One member was of the opinion if no congregation would be formed he would leave the area but a wish to form a congregation would soon be fulfilled. In the year of 1873 Pastor Schoepfle came from LaCrosse, Wisconsin to preach in Decker Schoolhouse. Through the grace of God already on 11th of January 1874 thru the urging of pastor the organizing would become a reality. Following names were found in a church book as organizers John and Phillip Vollrath, August and Adolph Noah, Henry Humke and later Henry Schwarze, Fred Buker, Henry Decker, August Beikle, Fred Decker, Ludwig Noah and wives. Out of those Will Vollrath and Herman Schwarze from the beginning shared. Pastor Schoepfle served the Congregation now and then he was absent so there reading services held.

The congregation was formed but they had no house of God it was not layed aside it went smoothly on with the help of the Lord.

Already in the year after organizing 40 acres of land were purchased. The purchase price was \$160.00 and was paid right away. So then a two story log house was built. The first story as a parsonage. The second story as church and schoolhouse. Pastor Schoepfle served them until the year of 1878 they called Pastor Brungar who had studied at the Mission House. He held is first service on Christmas in 1878.

At this time the young Congregation had acquire 40 acres of land, built a two story log house, dug a well and built a barn and 30 new members were received. The services were well attended. They advanced well under his leadership, all though in the year of 1882 he resigned to enter another field of work. His follower was Pastor Venker who was doing Mission work in Marathon County.

The Congregation at this time had 20 families as members. Pastor Venker writes about his tasks in Clark County. His predecessor had preached in various places. He gave Greenwood three Sundays out of four church services and Sunday School. Two Sundays out of four in the afternoon 4



Miles East of Greenwood and on other Sunday 18 miles Southeast of Greenwood and on the fourth Sunday forenoon 10 miles Straight South from the church on afternoons in Neillville. On week days he held Congregational School which he had great delight for. Toward the end of September, 1884 he left the congregation.

In the year 1884 the family of August Franz came from town Herman and was accepted into the membership.

The congregation was vacant for one year after Pastor Venker until 1885. Until they gave a call to Pastor Busch whom did not belong to the Reformed Church but studied in Germany. He served the congregation until 1887. During his time we belonged to the Minnesota Classis with the Sheboygan Classis as overseer. We were incorporated in Sheboygan Classis in 1886.

After Pastor Buschs termination we were vacant until 1888 when through a proposal of the Sheboygan Classis Pastor Jon Schmalz came as our Sousearcher. His obligation was to have four months Congregational School and every two weeks to preach. The remaining time he was to devote to Missions. Last to devote to the Village of Thorp until 1893. In the year 1889 the Congregation decided to give the alms money for charity. This still happens today.

In the same year were also received into membership at Immanuel, August Beyer, Herman Reinhardt and Gottlieb Kuester and families. From this time forth there were few drawn to this area from other places. But the youth grew stronger, so the membership grew to 115. Until now the second story had served as church, but the space was to small and a new building was in the making.

A decision was made to build on January 1890. The carpenter August Franz was awarded the contract for \$762.00 on November 2nd that year the dedication would take place.



Since August 23rd 1891 Pastor Schmalz preached every 4th Sunday in Braun settlement plus a schoolhouse in town Hiron. This last congregation was abandon on June 27, 1897. Since the year 1897 Pastor Schmalz preached every Sunday forenoon at Immanuel and had Sunday School in the afternoon. As often he preached in Braun settlement, Sunday School was conducted by Elder Philip Vollrath. Earlier this was done by Herman Schwarze and Fredrick Wehrmann, truly a great help. In the year of 1899 the Sheboygan Classis had their yearly gathering in our midst. Until this time our membership grew to 171 members. In the start of 1902 Pastor Schmalz served every four weeks in the City of Greenwood. In the year of 1905 a number of members left Immanuel to find new homes in Montana. On July 4, 1908 in his resignation to the church board here served 20 years faithfully (Soul Searcher) (Healer of Souls) Preacher as teacher for the youth as sower of the word of God which has brought forth fruit.

After Pastor Schmalz left, Pastor Saevert was given a call. His ministry began October 1908. He also had Zion and Salem to serve. Through this period a new church and a parsonage was built in 1910.

The Congregation grew through the years so more room was needed. It was often talked about but did not progress. Though on January 23, 1910 a special Congregational meeting was held and through this John Schwarze and Theodore Meinholdt were chosen to approach the members for pledges to better the facilities or put up a new church and parsonage. The committee sat with the congregation at yearly meetings and had enough pledges for \$4,250 for a new church plus \$1,310 for a new parsonage, with pledges from Salem for \$150.00 and \$60.00 from Zion included in above amounts and accepted with great thanks. It was agreed to build the new church and parsonage.

On the 29th of May, 1910 the cornerstone was laid of the church and a dedication was celebrated September that year.



So the congregation had a new church built with bricks and a parsonage the same. In that year the congregation had 200 confirmed and 148 unconfirmed members. For alms money \$178.00 and for church up keep \$667.00 was given in the year of 1911 we hosted the Classis. Pastor Savert ended his ministry May 1 1916. (THE INTERPRETER WAS BAPTIZED BY PASTOR SAEVERT)

Pastor F. Hall of Hoiffington, Kansas was Savert's replacement. He served the Congregation from August 6, 1916. In the following year, April 6, 1917 we declared war on Germany. The war affects us in our congregation. Some of our men were called for duty. With fear in their heart, will we ever see each other on earth again. Those that have a German name were of the opinion if they could be loyal. In this wartime in October 1918 the Northwest Synod had their meeting in our midst. In the last year of the war the influenza was felt here. Many were placed on sick bed, one of our youth was stricken in its blooming years. Out of our congregation the following served their country; Otto Reineking, Alfred Schwarze, Emil Noah, Wilhelm Wehrmann, Gustave Wehrmann, Calvin Franz, Arthur Meinholdt, Oscar Decker, Calvin Muller, Paul Schwarze, Arthur Awe, August Kippenhan, Otto Fravert, Adolph Franz, Calvin Noah, and Arthur Muller whom was killed in battle.

Pastor Hall left Immanuel in March 1921. Then Pastor C. J. Zenk was called from Eureka South Dakota. He left shortly this climate was not adaptable for him. Upon O. J. Uriesen was called.

On September 11, 1921 he held his first sermon on June 15, 1924 as we had the Classis in our midst, we could celebrate our 50th Jubilee. A new cemetery was laid out in 1927, the language of the people was German and English.

,The church consistory were as follows. Elders William Vollrath and Henry Awe. Decons Arthur Schwarze, Ed Steiger, Theodore Kippenhan. The Congregation numbered in the year 1927, 245 confirmed members and 120



unconfirmed members.

TRANSLATED FROM BLUE SHEBOYGAN CLASSIS: SEVENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY BOOK IN  
THE YEAR OF 1988 BY ALBERT WEHRMANN.

\*Notes in uppercase letters were added by the translator.