

## ***The History of St. Paul Lutheran Church***

According to Synod records, services at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Town of Washington, Shawano County, began in 1868.

Reverend Peter Dicke, being stationed in Belle Plaine, Wisconsin, south of Shawano, held services in this area at the home of Mr. A. Bleck. On January 11, 1874, a special meeting of the membership was held and it was decided to incorporate as a congregation and to call Pastor Peter Dicke as their first resident Pastor. Pastor Dicke accepted the call and moved with his family to the Town of Washington. Because the young congregation had no parsonage for the Pastor, Reverend Dicke – with the help of some members – built a log house on land he owned a short distance west of the present church property.



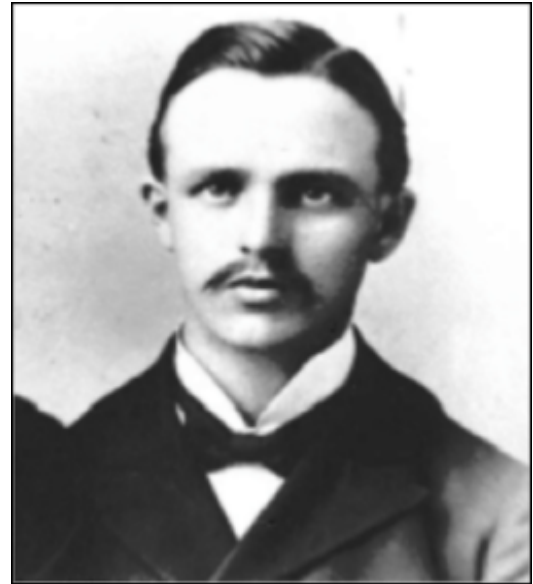
Reverend Peter Dicke  
1874-1897



Two years later on November 30, 1876, a decision was made to build a church. A building committee was elected consisting of Mr. Henry Strehlow, Mr. Julius Schwan, Mr. Friedrich Krueger, and Mr. A. Meyer, and were instructed to get a cost estimate for a building 26' wide, 40' long, and 20' high. It was estimated the building would cost \$820.28. Stones were brought in for the foundation and lumber was donated by members of the congregation. Only a mason and a carpenter were hired. The members offered whatever services they could render. The church building was completed and dedicated to the glory of God in the fall of 1877.

On March 1, 1879, St. Paul congregation decided to build a school house for the instruction of the children. The Pastor would serve as the teacher. In 1888, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Town of Washington, became a member of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. In the spring of 1897, the congregation resolved to build a parsonage. At the same meeting, Pastor Dicke announced he was retiring from the ministry because of his age and ill health, but promised to serve the congregation until another pastor was called. Pastor Dicke faithfully served the congregation for more than 23 years.

In the summer of 1897, Reverend William Naumann became Pastor Dicke's successor. Besides his pastoral work, the Pastor was asked to teach school 4 days a week. His salary was to be \$350.00 a year and to be paid quarterly. In the fall of 1899, the first new organ was purchased and was dedicated to the glory of God on October 15<sup>th</sup>. A church bell was also installed. During Pastor Naumann's ministry, not only were various improvements made in the church, school, and parsonage, but membership also slowly increased.



Reverend William  
Naumann  
1897-1908

In a meeting held January 29, 1905, it was decided to turn the church building – which was facing east and west – to north and south, build a 20 foot addition to the church, and add a bell tower. In the fall of that year, new church benches were purchased as well as a new 1300 pound church bell.

In January 1908, Reverend Naumann received a call from a sister congregation in West Bloomfield, Wisconsin. He was granted a peaceful release, having served the St. Paul congregation for 10 ½ years.

***“For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.” Matthew 18:20***



Reverend Herman  
Handrich  
1908-1913

After the release of Rev. Naumann, Reverend G. Kanies, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Zachow, Wisconsin, served as the vacancy pastor. In a special meeting held in March of 1908, a call was issued to Reverend Herman Handrich and soon after he was installed as pastor of the congregation. That same fall, the congregation decided to build a two-story, 18 by 26 foot addition to the existing parsonage and install a new furnace. After serving the congregation for 4 ½ years, Rev. Handrich left to serve a Montpelier-Luxemburg, Wisconsin parish.

In the spring of 1913, Reverend Theodore Norden was installed as pastor. After faithfully serving the congregation for six years, he eventually resigned from the ministry because of ill health.



Reverend Theodore  
Norden  
1913-1919

The original St. Paul Lutheran School, Town of Washington schoolhouse was built in 1879. This photo was taken in 1912.



Left to Right: Henry Hartwig, Otto Schultz, Paul Froelich, William Behnke, Dan Hartwig, Edwin Hartwig, Ewald Froelich, Leonard Hartwig, Edwin Schultz, Tillie Destinow (teacher), Erwin Marohl, Adolph Benter, Dewey Krueger, David Falk, Ella Popp, Arnold Falk, Hattie Korth, Dora Marohl, Hulda Benter, Bertha Marohl, Irene Dicke, Minnie Flessert, Clara Weisnicht, Pearl Friedrich, Lydia Krueger, and Florence Falk.

Subsequently, Rev. Rudolph D. Tornow was called to serve as our next pastor. In the spring of 1920, the interior of the church was redecorated and the parsonage was renovated. At the annual meeting held in January 1921, it was decided to start a building fund for a new schoolhouse. Each member was asked to contribute \$5.00 per year.



Reverend Rudolph  
Tornow  
1920-1926

At the annual meeting held on January 8, 1923, the congregation passed a motion to build a new brick school house. At a later meeting, it was suggested the plan for the new school house include a basement with a furnace room, a meeting room, and a built-in stage for the young people. About two years after the school house was completed, weekly classes were discontinued. After serving this congregation for seven years, Pastor Tornow accepted a call to another parish. Reverend A. Oswald was asked to serve during the vacancy.



St. Paul Lutheran Church, Town of Washington Schoolhouse



Parsonage after additions and renovations.  
Located to the west of the present-day church.

In the spring of 1927, members living in Cecil expressed a desire to organize a congregation in the Village of Cecil. Permission was granted with the condition that the new congregation and St. Paul Church remain one parish. On April 24, 1927, Reverend Herbert Borchers was installed as the new pastor. At the annual meeting held in January 1928, the congregation agreed to hold one English service each month. In the fall of 1931, the first church furnace was installed at the cost of \$235.00.

On September 1, 1934, the congregation observed its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The guest pastors were Rev. William Naumann, Rev. Herman Handrich, and Rev. Rudolph Tornow. In May 1935, the steeple was removed from the church and the exterior of the church was painted. In 1937, the church and parsonage were wired for electricity. The following summer, Rev. Borchers became afflicted with a throat ailment and was advised by his doctor to rest his voice for a few months and go to a warmer climate. A few months later he resigned as Pastor of this parish and he moved to California with his family. Several months later, the Rev. Herbert Munderloh came from Bowler, Wisconsin, to serve as our pastor.



Reverend Herbert  
Borchers  
1927-1938



St. Paul Lutheran Church, Town of Washington after 1935 with the steeple removed.



Reverend Herbert  
Munderloh  
1938-1943

In 1941, the new English Lutheran Hymnals were introduced and used in our services. That same year, the interior of the church was redecorated and a new furnace equipped with a blower was placed in the parsonage. After five years of serving St. Paul, Rev. Munderloh resigned in order to enter the chaplaincy of the Armed Forces.



Reverend Harry  
Wians  
1944-1987

At a joint meeting of the St. Paul and Hope congregations on April 20, 1944, a call was extended to Rev. Harry E. Wians of Barney, North Dakota. He was installed as Pastor on June 4th, 1944. In the fall of that year, a Sunday school was organized. In 1946, since no janitor could be hired, it was decided to convert the wood and coal furnace to an oil burner. That same year, a new electric organ was purchased for the church. In 1947, a new well was drilled and a water system was put in in the parsonage. Two years later, a bathroom was installed in the parsonage.

In 1954, the school basement was remodeled and a kitchen was built where the stage had been. Two years later, the entire interior of the church was redecorated. In 1962, new entrance doors were installed. Since attendance at the German services was dwindling, it was decided to drop the German services altogether and hold only English services. Since that change, both the membership and church attendance increased. In 1970, a new Wurlitzer organ was purchased for the church and in the fall of 1972, a lighted cross was placed on the church tower as a memorial.

On Sunday, June 16, 1974, St. Paul observed the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its congregation. The guest speaker at the morning service was Rev. Hans Tornow, son of the congregation. In the afternoon service, Rev. Leonard Buelow – also a son of the congregation – was the guest speaker.

In 1978, it was announced that St. Paul church had received an inheritance gift of \$35,188.77 from the Henry Lemke estate. At a meeting of the St. Paul Church Council held on November 8, 1978, it was decided to deposit the entire amount in a six-month certificate until the congregation could give it further consideration. Because of this gift, some ideas were developed regarding building a new church. At a special meeting of the congregation held on May 23, 1979, the following members were chosen to serve on the building committee: Arlen Wians, John Wartman, Robert Hoeffs, Paul Klatt and Lester Juedes. At a voters' meeting held on April 27, 1980, a ballot vote indicated 22 votes in favor of building a new church and 12 votes against it. A resolution was passed to have members of the Finance Board work with the Building Committee on arranging further financing. On May 31, 1980, the trustees signed a contract with A. L. Schott Construction of Green Bay to build our new church for \$128,140.00. The basement was started in June of 1980, and the first service in the new church was held on Thanksgiving Day – November 26, 1980. After the sidewalk and landscaping were completed, dedication services were held on June 21, 1981.

On Sunday, June 1, 1982, a special service was held observing the fiftieth anniversary of Rev. Harry Wians' ordination into the office of the ministry.



At the annual meeting on January 18, 1987, Pastor Wians announced his intention to retire from the ministry in June because of his failing eyesight and hearing. He had faithfully served in the pastoral ministry for 57 years and with this congregation for 43 years. Rev. Steven Anderson of Luxemburg served as vacancy pastor. On July 14, 1987, at a joint meeting of the voters of Hope and St Paul congregations, a resolution was passed to place a call to Reverend Thomas Peterson of Bloomer, Wisconsin. Rev. Peterson was to serve this congregation as a supervised Vicar. He conducted his first service on August 2, 1987. In the fall of 1987, Pastor Peterson completed his colloquy program at the Seminary in St Louis, Missouri. After serving for one year, he was finally installed as Pastor of the St. Paul congregation in a special service held on November 27, 1988.



Reverend Thomas  
Peterson  
1987-1991

In the spring of 1991, Rev. Peterson announced he had accepted a call to a parish in Stoughton, Wisconsin. He had served our parish for four years. At a voter's meeting on April 7, 1991, it was decided to request the North Wisconsin District Office to call a

candidate suited for our parish. Called was Rev. David P. Miller who was completing his Colloquy at St. John, of Maple Grove, Minnesota. Reverend Miller accepted our call and was installed as Pastor of St. Paul and Hope Lutheran churches on August 4, 1992. He conducted his first service on August 11<sup>th</sup>.



Reverend David  
Miller  
1991-2009

*Christ*  
The Way, the Truth,  
and the Life.

JOHN 14:6



St. Paul celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1993. The congregation celebrated throughout the year with five special services – the celebration theme being "Give God Glory as we Reflect, Renew and Rejoice!" Rev. Leonard Buelow, Rev. Thomas Peterson and Rev. Donald Schultz were the guest speakers. The celebration included pot luck meals as well as a formal banquet at the Fox Ballroom located in Cecil. Thanks to the generosity of Zastrow Funeral Home and Schneider Monument Company, the congregation buried a time capsule in late fall containing correspondence, advertising, anniversary booklets and bulletins, all in an effort of preserving our history of glorifying God.

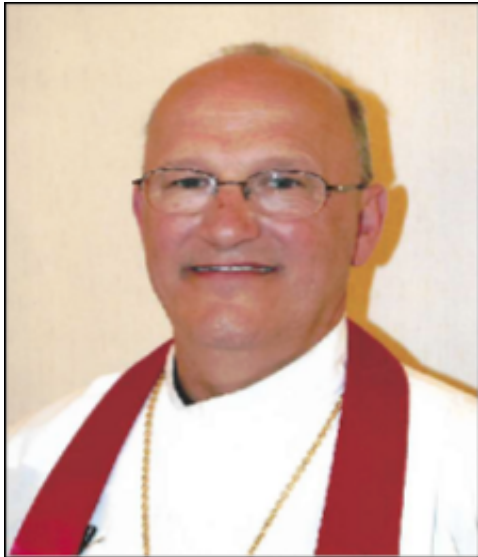
In 2005, the congregation voted to tear down the existing parsonage due to the costly maintenance and necessary renovations that would need to occur. In its place would be an additional parking lot. Its demolition occurred in the fall of that year.



At a Council meeting on Sunday, February 22, 2009, Pastor Miller announced his retirement would be on August 1, 2009. He had faithfully served this congregation for 18 years.

On July 15, 2009, knowing that Hope Lutheran Church in Cecil was closing, St. Paul entered into a dual parish agreement with Immanuel Lutheran Church in rural Cecil, WI and together, placed a call for a new Pastor. Representing St. Paul on this joint council was Jon Wesenberg, Jessica Lederer, Dennis Daskam and Sue Olson. Circuit Counselor, Rev. Paul Scheunemann assisted and advised the churches through this process. One of the recommendations by Rev. Scheunemann was that to facilitate the Pastor's work, either St. Paul (in Circuit 13), or Immanuel Lutheran (in Circuit 14) change to the other circuit, and that we wait and let our future Pastor help to make that decision. On October 17, 2010, after prayerful consideration, the voting members of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Inc., respectfully made a formal request for transfer from Circuit 13 to Circuit 14 within the North Wisconsin District – L.C.M.S. and the request was granted.

On November 29, 2009 our sister congregation, Hope Lutheran in Cecil, WI held its closing services and many of their members were accepted into membership at St Paul. As one of their final decisions, they kindly directed some of the funds from the sale of their church to install air conditioning in our church and generously donated to the Rev. Wians Ministry Fund.



Reverend Steven  
Pockat  
2010-present

At a Joint Voter's meeting of Immanuel and St. Paul Lutheran Churches on January 24, 2010, there was a unanimous decision to call Reverend Steven Pockat, who was currently the Pastor at Trinity and Grace Lutheran Churches in Bear Creek, WI. On April 25, 2010, Reverend Steven Pockat was installed as Pastor and faithfully served the congregation for 11 years, until his retirement at the end of April 2021.

During Pastor Pockat's ministry, St. Paul celebrated the congregation's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018. The congregations celebrated on five Sundays in the spring and summer of 2018 and followed the theme of Psalm 78:4 – "We will tell the next generation." Various dinners and special services were held, along with having guest pastors, a cemetery walk, and a family picnic and carnival. The time capsule that was buried for the church's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary was dug up in the spring of 2018.

In April 2022, Reverend Craig Nehring accepted the call to be the next pastor of the St. Paul & Immanuel dual parish. He was installed on June 12, 2022 and continues to faithfully serve.

