



*Lord, you have been
our dwelling place
in all generations.*

Psalm 90:1

**HISTORY OF
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF WALDO**

In May, 1850, seventy Lutherans built a little brown church about two miles east of Norton. This place was known as Pennsylvania. No record is available as to who served as the first minister. The second minister was Rev. Gast, then Rev. Hoffman, Rev. Simon, and later Rev. Hurlbrink.

The constitution of this little brown church was originally written in German. In 1882, it was translated into English.

The officers were to be two elders, two deacons and three trustees. These officers were to be at least twenty-five years old, and a member of the church at least a year to be eligible to hold office.

When the Reformed Church built a new church in Waldo, the little brown church was vacated and the Lutherans bought the old Reformed Church. The purchase price was \$125.00. By this time, the membership was down to thirty members.

The majority of the members went four and a half miles on horseback to attend church services. At first the congregation sang without a musical instrument. Henry Strine purchased an organ for ten dollars and presented it to the congregation.

At times, services were held in the Methodist Church in Waldo. Rev. Hurlbrink and some others began to plan for establishing a Lutheran Church in Waldo.

In 1900, the church was sold to J. L. Davis for \$50.00. (This church is now located on the Lloyd Benedict farm East of Norton.)

On February 7, 1901, the St. Paul's Evangelical Church at Waldo was organized. The first election was held on November 10, 1901. The officers were: Elders, Henry Strine and William Stark; Deacons,

David Bower and Henry Augenstein; and, Trustees, Adam Lauer, J. G. Augenstein, and H. E. Groll. J. E. Schaaf was the Secretary and John Mochel was the Treasurer. The officers were installed on November 24, 1901. The constitution was adopted the same day.

In the latter part of March, 1902, the work on the new church began. The cornerstone was laid. May 11, 1902. Rev. E. W. Stellhorn, of Marion, assisted Rev. Hurlbrink. A collection of \$203.00 was received this day.

The building was completed and dedicated on November 16, 1902. The pastor was assisted by Rev. Spielman of Columbus, Ohio, and Rev. Dreyer of Marion. Rev. Schultz of Cardington delivered the sermon in the afternoon. The evening service was conducted by Rev. Sheatsley of Delaware. The collection for this day was \$231.00. The prayer of the first pastor of the Waldo St. Paul's Evangelical Church was that God's Blessing would rest upon it; that He would cause it to grow, and prosper to His name, honor and glory, and to the salvation of many souls.

In June, 1912, the congregation severed its connection with Prospect and united with St. John's Church at Windfall. By making this change, we were able to have morning services.

Rev. Mollenauer of the Pike Congregation installed Rev. Kittel. The communicant membership was seventy-five. This year, the minister's salary was raised from \$150.00 to \$200.00.

In July, 1917, Rev. J. J. Baumgartner was ordained and installed. His salary was \$720.00 a year.

August 30, 1917, the congregation decided to purchase the Luellin home on Main Street for the parsonage. Fifteen hundred dollars was raised in one day's time to pay for the parsonage.

There were eighty communicant members in 1917. This year, the amount collected by the congregation was \$1,831.00.

In June, 1920, Pastor Baumgartner accepted another charge.

Rev. S. C. Long was installed on August 1, 1920, by Rev. Desbro, of Terre Haute, Indiana. We had one hundred communicant members at this time. We sold the parsonage to C. C. Conklin. Pastor Long purchased his own home on South Main Street.

In 1923 the church was raised and a new basement was completed in November.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the church was observed in 1927. The interior was redecorated for the occasion.

Rev. J. J. Baumgartner was the morning speaker for the thirty-fifth anniversary in 1937. Rev. G. C. Gast delivered the evening message. New lights were installed and the new American Lutheran Hymnals were purchased at this time.

Our forty-fifth anniversary was observed on November 16, 1947. Rev. Long dedicated the new organ. This organ was purchased by the congregation in thanksgiving to God that all of our men who served in World War II were returned to their homes safely.

Rev. Edward Schramm delivered the sermon in the morning. Rev. Carl Diemer of the Windfall Congregation delivered the sermon that evening.

It was near our forty-ninth anniversary that one of our members sailed for the mission fields. Rev. Thiele, accompanied by his bride, Juanita Retterer Thiele, arrived in New Guinea in October, 1951.

Their going has made us more interested in God's children on the other side of the globe. Our prayers are that God will guide and will strengthen them in their great and noble work.

Rev. Long made it known that he was planning to retire in a few years. The congregation started to make plans to build a parsonage. Land was bought across the street from the church. The plans for the house were adopted in October, 1956. The dedication services were held in September, 1958. At this time the parsonage had no indebtedness.

On October 6, 1957, Rev. S. C. Long read his resignation to the Council. The resignation was to be effective June 1, 1958. Pastor Long served St. Paul's faithfully for thirty-eight years. He preached his farewell sermon June 1, 1958, thereby ending forty-five years of active service as a minister.

Our membership at this time was 153 confirmed members. The baptized membership was now 230.

Rev. Theodore Wendt was installed on July 13, 1958, by Rev. Priebe. Pastor Wendt was the first minister to live in the new parsonage.

On February 23, 1960, the church council met to consider and approve the new building fund proposal and program for a three-year building fund campaign.

Pastor Wendt asked for a release as pastor of St. Paul's, effective November 20, 1960, to accept a call to a package mission to be established in Massillon, Ohio. During his period of service, our baptized membership had increased to 278 and the confirmed membership from 153 to 186.

Pastor Peter J. Wuebbens was installed on April 9, 1961, by Dr. Leonard Ludwig of the Columbus Seminary.

On June 28, 1961, at a congregational meeting, it was decided not to remodel the present church. Eighty-two percent of the people present voted to build a new church.

July 16, 1961, the congregation voted to purchase the Roscoe Strine property for the new building program. The transaction for this property was concluded on February 9, 1962.

The new constitution and the new hymnals were adopted in 1962.

In 1963, six months were spent on a merger study with Trinity Lutheran Church. At a joint meeting both congregations voted against the merger. Waldo St. Paul's congregation then proceeded with plans for a new church. The congregation approved the building plans for the new church in January, 1964.

Pastor Wuebbens, on May 3, 1964, preached his farewell sermon. He accepted a call to a mission in Wayland, Massachusetts.

On April 26, 1964, the congregation voted to send a call to Pastor George L. Troutman of Groveport. He accepted the call as of May 16, 1964. Dr. Paul Moeller, President of the Ohio District, installed him on June 7, 1964.

On September 13, 1964, the congregation met and resolved to begin construction of the new church and educational building in the spring of 1965.

An annuity of \$10,000.00 was given by Miss Ethel Cook of Circleville, Ohio. This made it possible for us to proceed with our construction immediately.

By unanimous vote, Miss Cook was made an honorary member of our congregation. Miss Cook is a close friend of Pastor Troutman and is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Circleville, Ohio, where Pastor Troutman served the first 25 years of his ministry.

April 4, 1965, was the day set aside for the formal ground breaking ceremonies for the new church and educational unit of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Following a worship service in the present church, the congregation went from the present location to the new site, where the ceremony was held.

A goal of \$1,000.00 was set as a special offering of praise and thanksgiving -- over \$2,000.00 was received. The membership on that date was 273 baptized members and a confirmed membership of 199.

Early in May, Pastor Troutman received a notice that one of our members, David Augenstein, had been accepted to the Seminary at Capital University. He is the first son of our congregation to prepare for the ministry.

May 16, 1965, the cornerstone was laid in the afternoon. Pastor Troutman and Pastor C. T. Langholz conducted the service. The preparatory service that was conducted by the above-mentioned ministers.

Day by day during the years 1965 and 1966, we watched our new Church and educational building, the house of God where we may gather to worship in Word and Sacrament, being built. This Church assures us that the Lord is still in the midst of us. The date of dedication was April 17, 1966. A service of praise and thanksgiving was held in the morning and the dedication was held in the afternoon.

Participants were the two living former pastors, Rev. Theodore Wendt and Rev. Peter Wuebbens, who brought the message at the morning service of praise and thanksgiving.

The dedication message in the afternoon was delivered by Dr. Paul Moeller, President of the Ohio District. The dedication rite was performed by Rev. George L. Troutman, local pastor, assisted by the above-mentioned clergymen, as well as seminarian, David Augenstein, son the congregation. Four hundred-eighty-two persons were in attendance at the afternoon dedication.

On Wednesday evening of April 20, a community open house and worship service was conducted. The sermon was by Rev. Francis Bock. Fourteen pastors presented and conveyed greetings. The total attendance for the three services was over 1,000.

We celebrated our first anniversary of our Church on Sunday April 16, 1957, with Rev. L. E. Mielke of Columbus, Ohio, as guest minister and speaker. A basket dinner and fellowship followed at the noon hour. The offering for the day was \$1,499.70.

On April 19, 1970 Rev. Joseph E. Landon was called to St. Paul's, Waldo from Upper Arlington Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio. He left September 1, 1972.

Rev. G. Luther Mann began his term on March 18, 1973 and died August, 1983.

Our 14th and present pastor is Rev. Robert L. Young. He was a seminary graduate. His term of office began July 8, 1984.

Andrews