

Chapter 6: Zion's Second Century Begins (1960-2010)

1960 brought change to Zion. A merger occurred between three bodies of the Lutheran Church:

The old American Lutheran Church (German)
The Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian)
The United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish)

Zion now was part of a new church body, The American Lutheran Church, with its headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A great deal of work, time and energy went into the merger and, although there were mixed feelings about the venture, Zion members pledged to accept the actions taken and to devote themselves to its success.

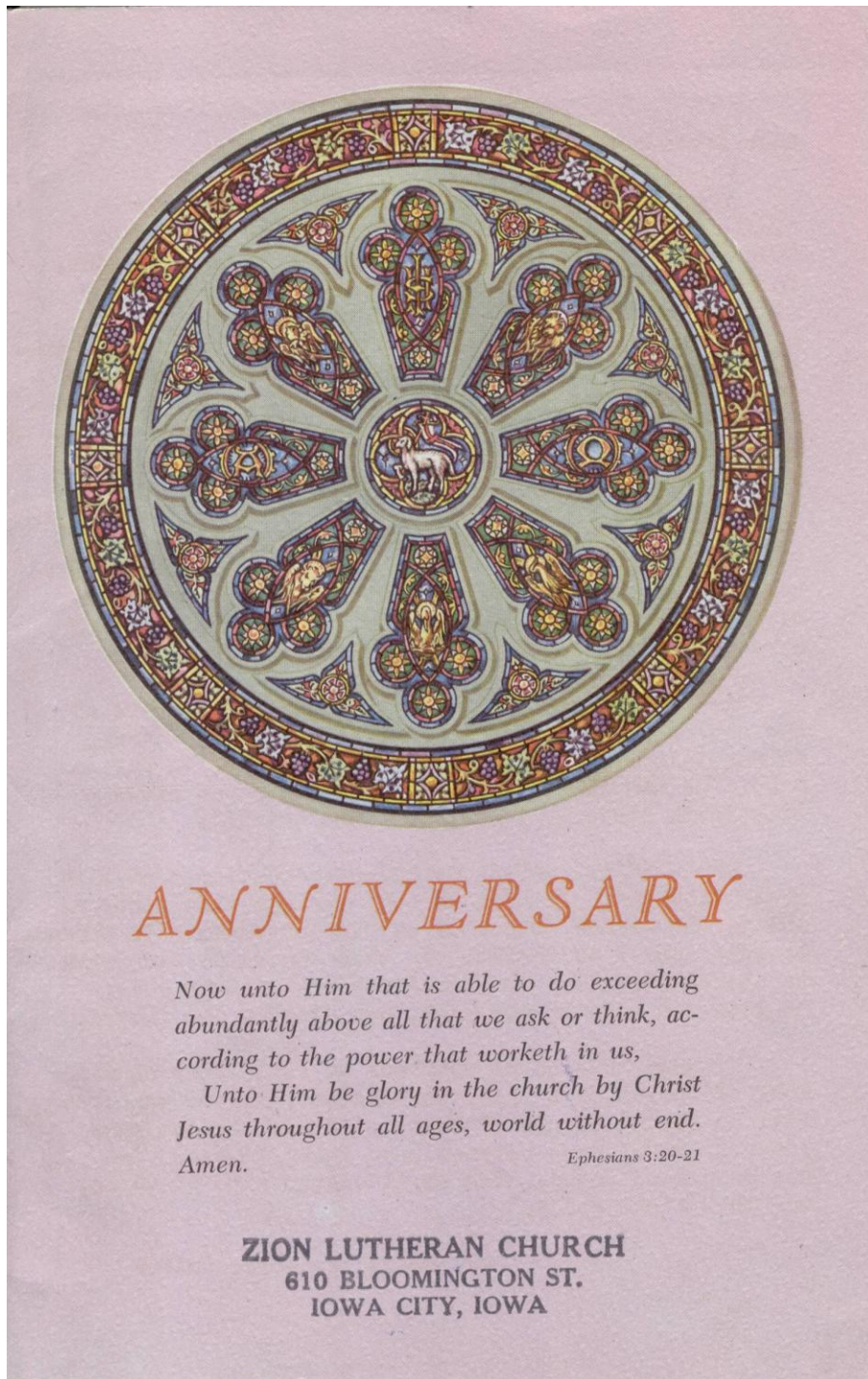
On October 9, 1960, Zion celebrated its 100th anniversary; former Pastor Proehl delivered the sermon. In the Anniversary bulletin Pastor Koch wrote:

One hundred years of history has been written since our forefathers first met here in Johnson County, Iowa, to organize this congregation. In those years thousands of people have received the Word and Sacrament from the pulpit and altar here. In those years, faithful pastors and Christian people have labored here in this particular part of the Lord's vineyard.

Our debt is great. We owe much to our faithful pastors who have served here. Above all we owe endless praise and tributes of thanksgiving to our great God, our Lord and Savior whose gospel is taught and preached among us.

The Lord is waiting to bless the children of this generation. He wishes to use us as His instruments in spreading the gospel of Christ. To this end we at Zion wish to pledge ourselves in the 100th anniversary year.

We pray that as we continue to build Zion on the Rock of Christ, her chief Cornerstone, all of our people will be living stones of that building. God has been good to us. 'God shall continue to bless us, and that right early'.



ANNIVERSARY

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21

**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
610 BLOOMINGTON ST.
IOWA CITY, IOWA**

Anniversary Bulletin Cover

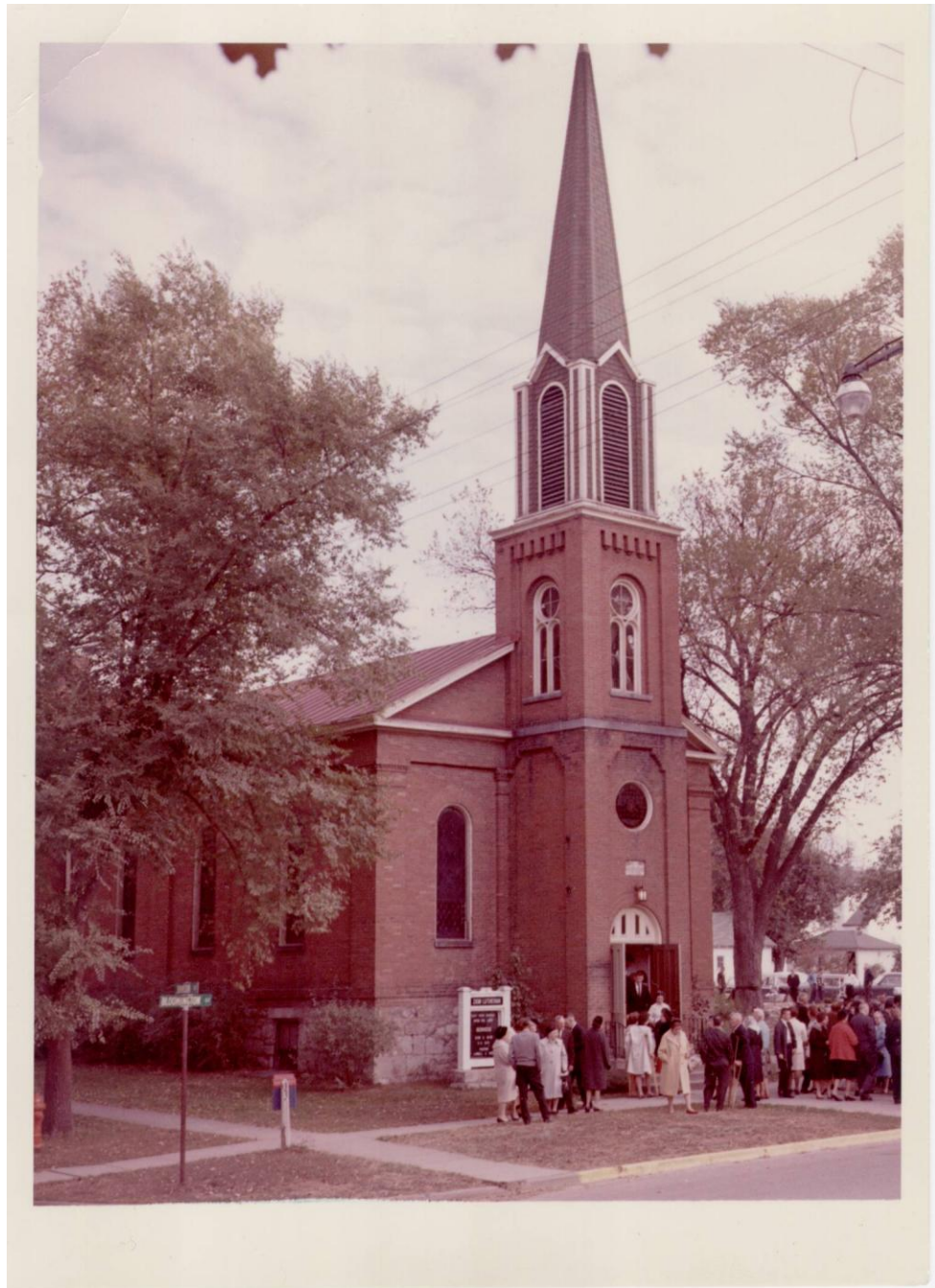
In June of 1962 it was decided to purchase the Bertha Meineke property at 820 East Bloomington for \$6,000 as the future site of a new parsonage. The parsonage was to be a two-story structure, having 4 bedrooms, kitchen, dining and living rooms, a study, 2 baths and a garage.

In September of 1963 Charles “Buck” Walden received the contract to start building the parsonage at a bid of \$25,817. The following story was recalled by Walden as one of his favorite Zion tales:

We wanted the new parsonage to be special with some outstanding features to make it homey and comfortable. We decided to make the fireplace special. A friend of Zion, Charlie Showers, had some walnut wood over 100 years old in his attic, which he gave Zion for the mantle. We were budgeted \$75 for stone or marble for the hearth. Pastor Koch and I drove over to the West Liberty Monument Company. The owner had returned recently from a buying trip to Italy and was well stocked. We looked at lots of marble, but we kept going back to a beautiful piece of rare, black marble from the area of Pompeii that had just arrived. After seeing it, nothing else looked good. The owner asked what we wanted it for, so we explained it was for our new parsonage. He'd really bought it for his own use. It was way over our budget. He said that if we'd promise not to make any hoopla over it, he'd give it to Zion as a gift. We were ecstatic. It took four men to slide the marble into the cut made for it. The hearth was raised up 14 inches off the floor. We all breathed a sigh of relief when it was in place and grouted in. We'd been given instructions to the fact that until it was set the fireplace mustn't be used as there shouldn't be any heat underneath the marble until the hearth was finished. The Koch family members were all warned not to use the fireplace yet – but somebody forgot! Paper was lighted and the heat split that gorgeous marble. We were all just sick about it. Feeling just terrible, we took it back to our benefactor. I don't know how, but he and his men grouted and glued the marble back together so beautifully you couldn't even see the seam. It was a great job of craftsmanship!

The new parsonage was dedicated early in October of 1964. It was eventually sold to Pastor Trost in the 1970's.

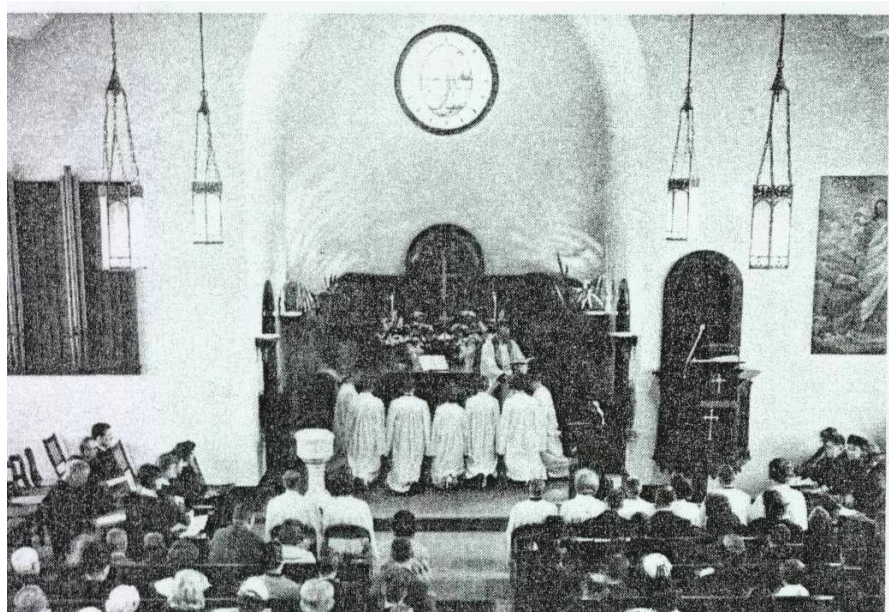




Zion moved forward with plans to tear down the current building and build a new worship center.



Zion's Nave with Pastor Koch in the pulpit



The last confirmation class in "Old" Zion.

Ground Breaking for the new Nave was held on October 6, 1964.



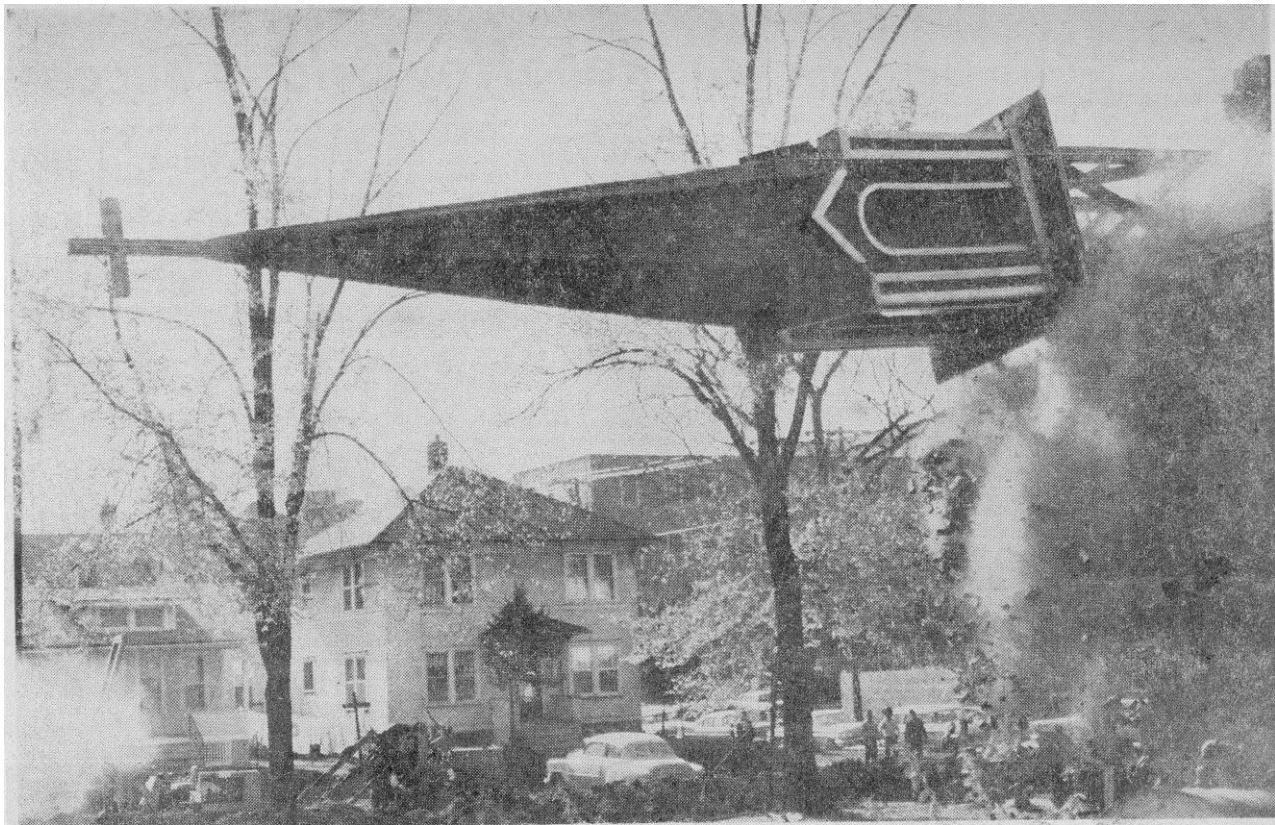
Participants included:
Back row: Architect Harvey Henry, Jerry Dennison, Pastor Koch
Front row: Elmer Schrock, Emil Schmidt, Dick Schultz



The old parsonage was moved to 905 North Governor

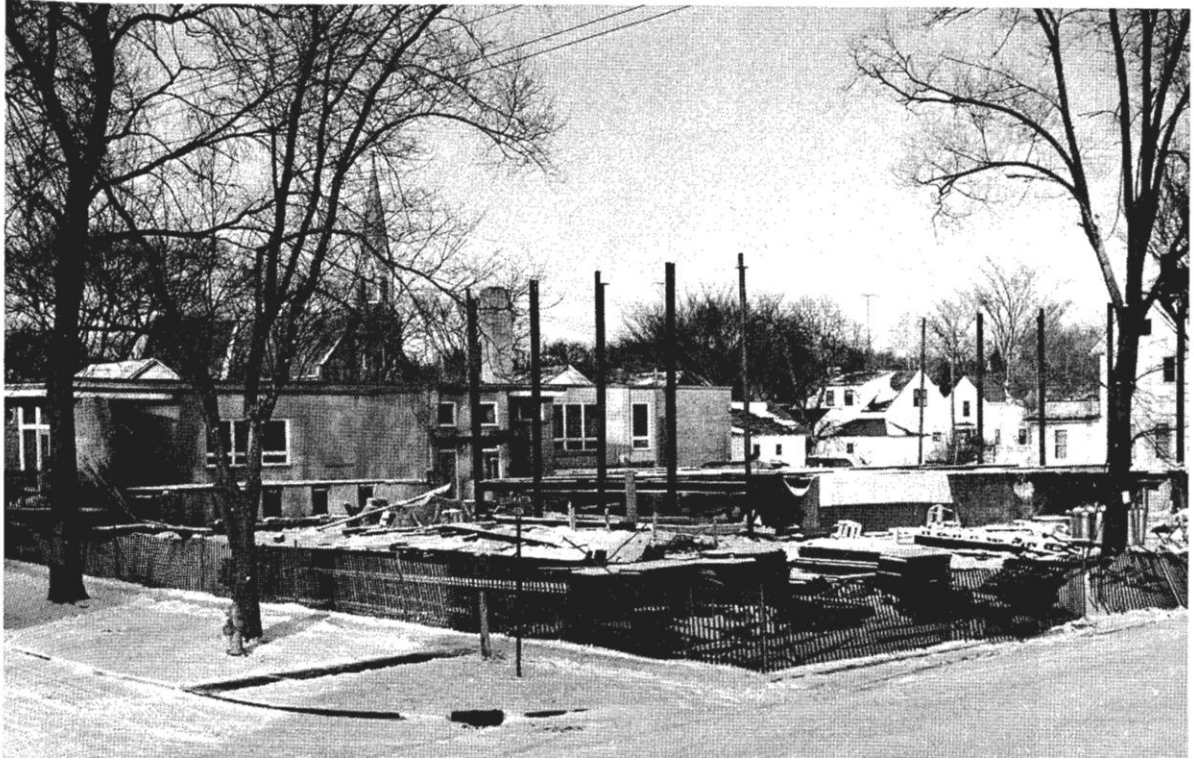


A view from the back of the parsonage as it appears today on North Governor above Happy Hollow Park.



END COMES FOR OLD CHURCH – The steeple of 104-year-old Zion American Lutheran church crashes to the ground Wednesday as workmen demolish the building to make way for a new church. The congregation will hold services in the parish house until the new \$270,000 church building is built near the site of the old structure at 694 Bloomington street. The congregation built the old church in 1860; the steeple was added in 1875. The bell from the old building was removed before the church was razed. (Press-Citizen Photo & caption - October, 17, 1964)

(Note: The picture's view is to the southwest)



Foundation and support beams in place with the Parish Hall in the background



View to the northeast - late 1970's



View from the South - 2010



The Nave – Christmas 2007

On Sunday, November 21, 1965 our new Zion Lutheran Church was dedicated. District President, the Reverend H. W. Siefkes presided at the dedication. After a responsive dedication prayer by Pastor Koch and the congregation, Dr. Siefkes gave the Declaration of Dedication:

I do now set apart this building with its organ*, its pews and all these chancel furnishings and dedicate it to the glory and honor of the Almighty God and to the service of His holy church, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*the organ used at the time was a small electric instrument purchased from Gloria Dei.

The Koch family had grown to seven children. The Koch sons followed the Zion tradition of being hired to mow Zion's lawns as noted in the Council minutes of April 17, 1963. Healthy and active children, they were busy in their schools and extracurricular activities. A very difficult time concerning one of the boys occurred in 1968. Tim, a student at Iowa City High School, became seriously ill. He was hospitalized and reached a point where the situation was critical. All of Zion prayed for Tim and the Kochs, and helped where help was needed. Our prayers were answered, and Tim recovered slowly but surely. On March 14, 1968 Council Secretary Maureen Knowling recorded in the minutes "Reverend Koch offered thanks for all the love and concern shown his family recently." At the same meeting the Bethel Bible Series was discussed, and received a favorable vote to participate in it "as soon as possible".

A special congregational meeting was held August 24, 1969 to vote on the resignation submitted by Pastor Koch. It was approved. Another special congregational meeting was held September 3, 1969. Dr. Bruno Schlachtenhaufen, President of the Iowa District, spoke and explained the Call Form sent to a minister. The congregation voted to extend a call to the Reverend Richard L. Trost, who accepted.

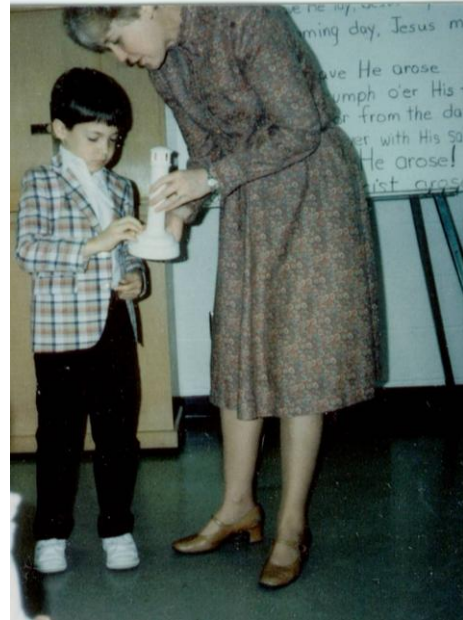
Pastor Trost was serving St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church at Charles City, Iowa. He and Shirley had four children when they arrived in Iowa City: Elisabeth, Kirsten, and twin sons Derek and Friedrich. Maria joined the family later. After serving in the U.S. Army from 1952 to 1954, he entered Capital University (a school of ALC). After receiving his B.A. in 1957, he continued his education at Evangelical Lutheran Seminary and the University of Ohio; in May 1961, he received his Bachelor of Divinity from Wartburg Seminary. He studied later at Erlangen in Germany, where he was awarded the degree Doctor of Theology magna cum laude, February 1964. He was ordained at his home congregation, St. Paul Lutheran Church of Michigan City, Indiana, on April 5, 1964. In 1969 he was elected to serve on the board of regents of Luther College.

Pastor Trost was installed at Zion on November 1, 1969 by the Reverend Seifkes, former President of the Iowa District ALC. Dr. George Forell of the University of Iowa School of Religion preached the sermon, "True Happiness," Mathew 5:1-12. A Zion potluck followed. Gene Brawner, president of the congregation, served as M.C. at a program following the dinner.

Pastor Trost instituted several changes at Zion in the early 1970s. He received permission to introduce the practice of children going to the altar rail with their parents during Communion and receiving a blessing. In accordance with the new national church policy, Zion also lowered the age of first Communion. No longer did one have to be confirmed first; with the permission of their parents and after completing a short course of instruction, 5th graders were allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper. "In 1973 we should focus on the youth of the church," Pastor Trost stated. This was a major

area of interest to him and he had worked toward his goal since his arrival. Zion had an active Sunday School with Shirley Trost serving as Superintendent. Classes for adults were added to the Sunday School hour. He also was responsible for two additional members to the Council, one from the ALCW and a Youth Representative. Also at this time, women were permitted to serve as elected officers on church council boards. In 1975 Elaine Hovet was elected as an elder. For the first time at Zion, a woman assisted with the serving of the Lord's Supper.

One activity during Sunday School was a special celebration. Rosalie Moninger recalls, "During my years as 'opening lady' in Sunday School one of the favorite activities for the children was birthday celebrations with the LIGHTHOUSE. The birthday person would add a penny for each year of their age and the lighthouse would blink. If someone had forgotten his/her pennies Millie Jepson, Sunday School Superintendent, would quickly fish out the needed coins from her purse. The boys and girls would count the lighthouse' blinks' and determine how old the birthday child was."



The Altar Guild was reorganized. Music and Drama departments grew and improved. Favorite memorial and gift funds were the Bell Tower, Furnishings and Kitchen Equipment, Building and the Organ. A German Advent service was proposed by Vicar Val Gies. Pastor Trost thought since it had been about five years since the Press Citizen quit referring to Zion as "the German Lutheran Church" the idea should be pursued. The "Deutsche Weihnachten" service was held during Advent in 1975 and is still observed each year.



The Moningers - 2010

In the early 1970's Bob and Rosalie Moninger became the music directors at Zion. Building on the choral foundation of previous directors, the Moningers expanded the vocal music program, both in numbers and scope. In addition to the Junior Choir, seventh and eighth grade Choristers was added. As boys and girls grew out of Choristers a High School Choir was formed to continue their musical involvement in the church. Finally, the Cherub Choir was eventually started to offer musical opportunities to the youngest singers.

There was growth in instrumental opportunities under the Moningers' direction. A two octave handbell set was given to Zion as a memorial gift and over the years this has expanded to include four and one half octaves plus three octaves of handchimes. At different times instrumental groups have included a recorder ensemble, a string orchestra, a flute choir and the Zion Brass Choir directed by organist Marlys Boote.

In 1974, Zion entered the Seminary-Vicar program. Through this program seminary students would serve a year-long internship at Zion. Seven vicars served at Zion for the next seven years, 6 men and 1 woman (A list of vicars may be found in Appendix E). In 1970 the ALC permitted the ordination of women.

In 1975, Zion celebrated ten years in the new church. Pastors Proehl and Koch and their wives attended and shared in the festivities. At noon – what else? Potluck! In 1975 as a surprise for the Trosts and a show of appreciation for their dedication, Zion presented them with a gift – finances for a trip to the Holy Land. In a letter from “P.T.” dated Sept. 18, 1975, he discussed his surprise at the presentation of the gift by President Sulo Wiitala:

Your gift really surprised me. Sulo talked about my ministry and Shirley’s love and work for the congregation – it sounded exactly like the sort of thing people say when you’re pulling up stakes and packing the tent...A trip to the Holy Land! Nothing like this has ever happened to me before. What a powerful affirmation of your “call”. These eleven days in the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – the land where Jesus was born – will be thrilling. Shirley and I sincerely thank you.

Another letter was sent to the congregation on February 11, 1976, after Pastor Trost returned from the funeral of Pastor Proehl:

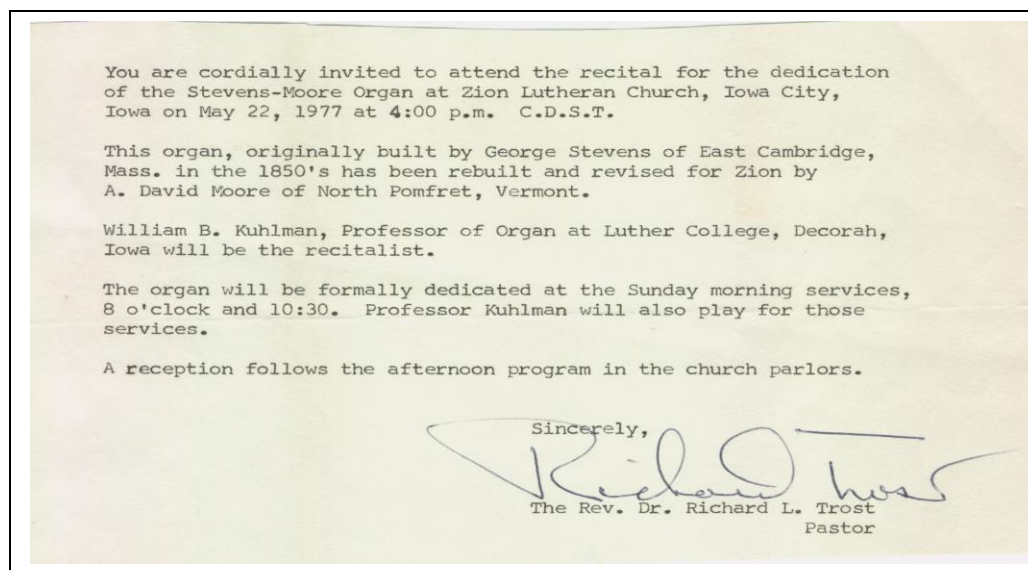
The burial service of the Rev. A.C. Proehl wasn’t sad; it was commemorative. It commemorated years of honest, dedicated ministry. 32 of those years were spent here at Zion. Pastor Proehl worked hard in this parish and also on the campus of the University of Iowa...Pastor Lavin of St. Paul’s, Davenport, Iowa summed up the substance of Pastor Proehl’s ministry beautifully: ‘To Papa, the word of God meant everything’.

On March 28, 1976, a noon potluck was held; next was a slide show of pictures Shirley and Dick had taken on their Holy Land trip. Trost had purchased a Bible to carry on his pilgrimage. He brought it to the gathering that afternoon and requested each person to sign it as a memento of the trip. He and Shirley brought back a miniature olive wood cross for every family at Zion and they distributed them at the potluck.

Zion held special services on July 4, 1976. The bulletin recalls that the Declaration of Independence was read along with quotes from John Adams and Patrick Henry. A trumpet introduction led to “God of our Fathers”. Other songs were “America”, “America the Beautiful”, and “God Bless America” (sung as a solo by Steffi Hite). A potluck was held at 12:30 on the church lawn and a patriotic program followed. At noon all the churches in Iowa City rang their bells. Zion’s bell was rolled to the edge of the steps at the west entrance of the church. A long rope tied to the clapper enabled people passing by on the sidewalk to ring Zion’s bell adding to the City’s festive bell ringing.

At the September 9, 1976, Council Meeting it was decided to establish the position of Parish Worker as of January 1, 1976. Linda Sheetz, a member of Zion, was the first to fill the position, followed by another Zion member, Jan Bolander. Jan was later married at Zion to Phil Butin, Youth Minister at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Iowa City. They left in June, 1982 to attend Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. The position was discontinued.

Zion's Bicentennial Project in 1976 was the purchase of the Stevens-Moore Tracker organ built in 1856 in East Cambridge, Mass., by George Stevens. The project had its origin at a congregational meeting called during the winter of 1974-75 to refinance the church debt. A two part organ committee was appointed to look into acquiring a pipe organ to replace the electric machine then in use. Part of the committee was to look at new instruments the others at used instruments. Acting on a tip from UI organ student, Rick Hass, "used" committee member Bob Moninger made a trip to New England and discovered the George Stevens organ we now have, sitting usable in the haymow of David Moore's barn in North Pomfret, Vermont. After due investigation and negotiation the congregation contracted with Mr. Moore to restore and revise the instrument for us. It was delivered in the Spring of 1977. Probably the oldest tracker organ in Iowa, it is "housed in a majestic case of 19th Century Greek Revival design, and is ornamented with basswood carvings in Rococo style", wrote Robert Moninger in the Dedication Program, May 22, 1977. The organ has genuine ivory stop-knob labels, hand-carved in script by Noel Mander of London, England. It is a true Zion treasure.



The Act of Dedication stated:

Blest and dedicated be this Organ to the praise, honor and glory of Almighty God, and to the edification of his holy people: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

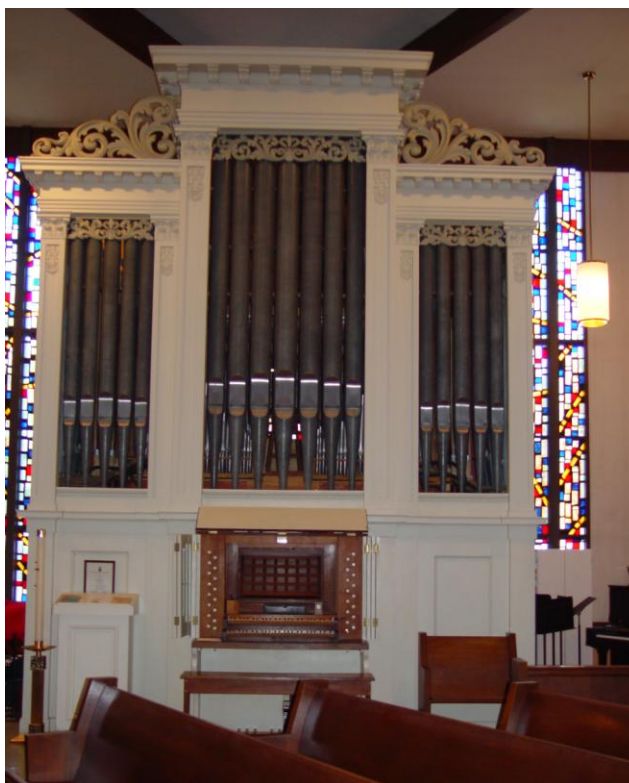
After Trost said "Blest and dedicated" he rapped smartly on the left side of the key deck with a gavel – so startling organist Doris Turnquist that she was unable to play for the better part of a minute.

Also quoted in the program is the following by Martin Luther:

Music is a gift of God, not of men. It drives away the Devil and makes the people happy...After theology, music has the next place of honor. And you note how David and all the Saints have bequeathed to us their blessed thought in verse, rhyme and song.

QUIA PACIS TEMPORE REGNAT MUSICA.

(For music reigns in times of peace)



Our famous Stevens-Moore Tracker organ has been played by many talented musicians over the years. Dr. Delores Bruch became our Church Organist in 1985 replacing Doris Turnquist who had served as Organist for 14 years. Joseph Adam served as Assistant Organist. In 1986 he was replaced by Marlys Boote. When Delores Bruch resigned as Organist in 1992 in order to join her new husband in Louisiana, Paul Tegels, accepted the Senior Organist position. We regretfully accepted Paul's resignation as Senior Organist in 1997, but we understood that there were bigger things in store for him and he needed to further his career as a professor at Bethany College in Kansas (He is now at Pacific Lutheran in Washington State). We wished him well and sent him off with God's blessings. Marlys Boote, also a wonderfully gifted organist, who had served us well in the past as an assistant organist agreed to fill the position of Senior Organist. Tim Meier began serving as Associate Organist in 2001.

Early in the morning on Sunday, August 12, 1978, Pastor Trost became seriously ill. Upon hospitalization at Mercy Hospital, it was determined he had a tear in his esophagus that would not stop bleeding. As his affliction became critical, prayer vigils were held at Zion each evening the following week. Other churches and pastors in Iowa City joined in praying for his return to good health. By the following Saturday, Shirley reported, "Keep the prayers going! It's working". Sunday she brought even better news, "He's better". He was allowed to go home on Tuesday August 21; a grateful Zion rejoiced and more prayers were said – prayers of gratitude.

A special congregational meeting Sunday, January 6, 1980 was held between services. Pastor Trost had received a call from Central Lutheran Church in Eugene, Oregon. The congregation regretfully voted to accept Pastor Trost's resolution that his resignation be accepted. "P.T." had served Zion for 10 years.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the direction of Marilyn and Al Baker, Dick and Elaine Hovet, Ed Brinton, Al Grundstad and others, Zion sponsored several refugee families from Viet Nam. Kitty Davis, a friend of Zion and a Mandarin Chinese translator, provided help in communicating with the families. Members of Zion's Refugee Committee and Kitty helped our new friends settle into their quarters, supplied furniture, food and clothing for them, and helped secure employment for the adults. Money was collected for the families. Local physicians offered medical aid. English language classes were organized and volunteers helped with shopping, transportation and other needs.

On May 11, 1980 Zion voted to call the Reverend Roy C. Nilsen. He received his B.A. from Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota in 1960. That same year he and Mary were married on April 2nd. In 1964 he received his B.D. from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. During the next 16 years he served as pastor in two Minnesota parishes and in district and synodical capacities: Board for Service and Mission in America of The ALC, Committee on Mission & Ministry of The Lutheran Council, and various boards of the Southwestern Minnesota District. Roy and Mary Nilsen have five children: Per, Kai, Linnea, Solveig, and Erika.

Pastor Nilsen was installed September 14, 1980. His installation theme was "Partners In Ministry". He wrote later:

I am very committed to this partnership. I rejoice in the eagerness which Zion's membership in leadership positions continue to show for this partnership. It is my prayer that there may be an ever growing sense of ministry together among all of Zion's members...It is my hope that our "Partnership" in the Gospel will grow as we go about ministry...in the coming years.

On July 25, 1982, the congregation voted to "extend letters of call to William R. Russell and Ann Svennungsen Russell to become Associate Pastors of Zion Lutheran Church, sharing one call half-time each." They accepted the calls.

In the early 80's youth group leaders included: Wendy & Ron Berg, Jeanne & Rick Dobyms, Cheryl & John Stark, and Becky & Jim Logue. They worked with Jan Butin, Parish Worker, and Vicar Mark Reshan and his wife, Beverly. Youth meetings were at the church on Sunday nights. Wendy Berg recalls,

There was a tradition of having a lock-in the night before Easter Breakfast. The year before we started, the kids played hide and seek in the sanctuary and some hid in the organ. Apparently, they messed something up and the organ wasn't up to snuff for the Easter services. We still had the lock in, but the organ was strictly off limits.

Karrie (Knutson) Craig remembers her experiences as a member of the youth group,

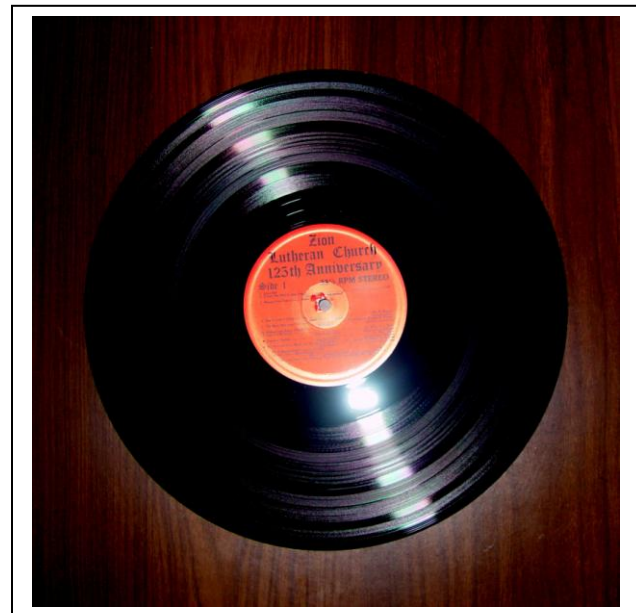
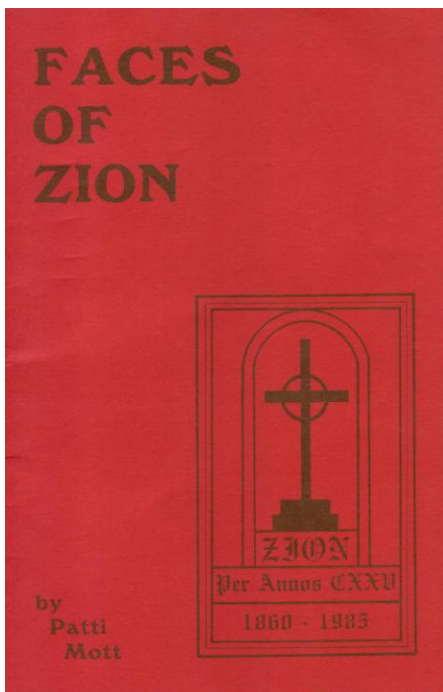
We met at the homes of youth and played lots of games! Great discussions about teenage issues. We took several trips to Adventureland and at least one time spent the night there in a church basement -- no one slept, of course.

A trip to the Apostle Islands one summer was awesome! We took a ferry across, made our own food, and slept in tents. It was just our youth -- no one else. A great nature-based faith experience.

The early '80s were busy ones for Zion:

1. Zion enjoyed a significant growth in membership.
2. We expanded our ministry in the community.
3. We saw development in the Music and Drama ministries.
4. Zion witnessed an increasing number of Sunday School students and an expanded educational program. The adult education program included several Bethel Bible Series classes for adults.
5. Zion Family retreats were begun at Camp EWALU. Families, singles, seniors and youth were all involved in a weekend of fellowship, worship, learning and fun.
6. A Shalom prayer ministry was spearheaded by Mary Nilsen and continues to be active.
7. Another "Zion Surprise" was planned and executed. On January 7, 1984, a "secret letter" was sent to Zion members. Pastor Nilsen would celebrate his 20th year in the ministry in early 1985. He would complete 5 years of service at Zion later in 1985. To celebrate early, Zion collected a purse to help defray the cost of a trip to England the following summer for the Nilsens. Pastor Nilsen had planned a three-week stay to study at Oxford. It worked; we really surprised Roy and Mary!
8. New additions to Zion included an elevator, a computer, a copy machine, an electric curtain control for the stage in the Parish Hall, new sound system, and additional stage sections to expand the upper altar level.

All of the above were significant, and represented major improvements as we progressed to our 125th year in ministry. To commemorate Zion's 125th Anniversary two keepsakes were produced and sold. Patti Mott wrote a history of Zion entitled "Faces of Zion" and Zion's Music Department produced a 33 1/3 LP record album and cassette tape with Zion's Choirs featured.



The weekend of June 29 & 30, 1985 included many events to mark Zion's 125th Anniversary. On Saturday afternoon tours were given followed by an Anniversary Banquet in the Parish Hall. "A Homespun Homecoming" Pageant was presented in the Nave at 7:30. Patti Mott directed the Pageant which included a wide variety of entertainment. A copy of the program is included below.

ZION'S 125th ANNIVERSARY PAGEANT		SUFFRAGETTE CHORUS	
<u>A HOMESPUN HOMECOMING</u>			
OVERTURE	Julie Ballandby	Ruth Fisher Elaine Hovet Millie Jepson	Mary Nilsen Mary Ness Marilyn Trumpp
NARRATOR	Cliff Eldredge	THE FUNNY FIFTIES	Alex Schmidt, Director
WELCOME	LUTHER & LENA KINDER Pastor Roy Nilsen & Patti Mott	"Charley Brown", "See Ya Later, Alligator", "Take Out the Papers and the Trash" Arranged by Emmett-Johnson	
PIONEERS	The Zion Zealots	Julie Boatman Renda Carpenter Thad Eldredge Phil Luebke Solveig Nilsen, Accompanist	Christie Rodman Alex Schmidt Benjamin Schmidt Todd Trolliet
	MAMA LISLE - Janis Eldredge PAPA JOHAN - Gene Brawner GROSZMUTTER - Ruth Fisher GROSZVATER - Ed Brinton MARIA - Vicki Lackender FREDDA - Rory Mott HELGA - Tara Mott HANS - Jim Lee KARL - Benjamin Schmidt HORSE HANSGL - Alex Schmidt, Front Chuck Lanik, Rear OXEN GREILE - Donna Grundstad, Front Jason Grundstad, Rear	ORGAN SOLO	Abbey Hallberg "Prelude and Fugue in G Minor" By J. S. Bach
STYLE SHOW	Sue Schmidt, Director	CHEFS de CUISINE	"A Chef's Best Friend"
	Maryellen Boe Ruth Fisher Gerry Lackender Rosalie Moninger Ann Monson LaVonne Monson	Maryellen Boe Janis Eldredge Rosalie Moninger	Patti Mott Sue Schmidt Marilyn Trumpp
CHARLESTONETTES	Jenny Jepson, Director	ZION'S ANNIVERSARY BAND	"Tannenbaum"
	Kelly Jo Eldredge Jenny Jepson Kim Knutson	Directed by Bob Moninger	
SUFFRAGETTES	Zion's NELSON & JEANETTE Al Grundstad & Ann Iverson	ZION'S CORPS de BALLET	
		Prima Ballerina - Rosalie Moninger Corps de Ballet - Gene Brawner Ed Brinton Dave Drummond Gregg Kruse Chuck Lanik Dave Schmidt Wardrobe Mistress - Jackie Lanik	
		FINALE	Entire Zealot Ensemble

On Sunday, June 30, 1985 both worship services celebrated Zion's long history of ministry. In the afternoon Zion's special 125th Anniversary celebration culminated with the ordination of Thomas Jeffrey Lewis. Tom was the first member of Zion to enter the ministry. Four mission projects were established as Anniversary Projects: Good Shepherd Lutheran in Bloomfield, Iowa; Operation bootstrap in Africa; Hispanic Ministry through Fordham Lutheran Church in the Bronx, New York; and Youth Service Corps at Woodward, Iowa with a goal of raising \$12,500 for support.

Staff changes and additions marked 1985. At the Congregational meeting on January 20, 1985 two new part-time staff positions were created: Volunteer Coordinator and Director of Drama. Mary Presteman served as our first Volunteer Coordinator and Patti Mott was now officially the Drama Director.

Zion's Dramatic presentations included the traditional Epiphany Pageant in January. Zion's children presented musicals during the service to dramatize Bible stories. Rosalie Moninger recalls,

During the years I was children's choir director at Zion the Junior Choir and Choristers performed several musicals. They included: *Adam's Rib*, *Let's Go with Mo*, *Babble at Babel*, *100% Chance of Rain*, *You Can't Run Away from the Lord (Jonah)*, *David and the Giants* and *the Story Tellin' Man*.



Probably the most remembered musical was *Cool in the Furnace* with Pastor Roy Nilsen as King Nebuchadnezzar. The most memorable scene from that musical was the entrance of our Pastor Roy as the King coming down the center aisle dressed in a hot pink nightgown with hot pink bedroom slippers with his “snake” crown on his head and clutching a teddy bear! To all in attendance that morning this was an unforgettable moment!





Patti Mott's "friend", Pearly Gates, was a frequent visitor around Sunday School activities.

In November of 1988, on the 50th anniversary of the Holocaust, the Drama Department Zion Zealots produced, presented, and performed "River of Broken Glass" written by Patti Mott; the first of a trilogy dealing with a three generation Jewish family caught up in the horror. In addition to Zion Zealot members, Iowa City Community Theatre and Young Footliters members were involved. Open forum discussions were conducted involving members of the Agudas Achim Synagogue and Rabbi Jeff Portman. The play was well received in Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines and Dubuque. A shortened version was performed in schools.

The second drama in the "River of Broken Glass" trilogy entitled "A Sack of Stones" was presented in November of 1993 by the Drama department. In November, 1996 we saw the third and final drama in the "River of Broken Glass" trilogy entitled "Immortal Stars". In November 2000 the Drama Ministry once again presented, "A Sack of Stones". Freewill offerings were given at performances and over \$6,000 was raised and sent to Steven Spielberg's SHOAH Foundation.



“Holy” became “holey” in 1986 when the roof of the church sprang many leaks and replacement/repair could not be postponed. It was decided to replace the flat roof above the parish hall with a pitched roof. The project was funded by refinancing and enlarging our mortgage. (Another) Long Range Planning Committee was formed and a new Pictorial Directory was printed. Margie (Schrock) Alton Herr became our Volunteer Coordinator, a position she held and most ably filled until her resignation in 1994.

A new confirmation schedule was initiated in 1986 beginning with distribution of Bibles to the Second Graders on Reformation Sunday and culminating with the affirmation of Baptism/Rite of Confirmation in the fall of the Ninth Grade year.

The ALC, LCA and AELC merged into the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) in 1988. The congregation ratified this merger and Zion became a member of this body and locally, a part of the Southeast Iowa Synod of the ELCA. In 1988 Zion reorganized and revised the Articles of Incorporation: The five boards, Property, Worship and Stewardship, Outreach, Education and Congregational Life, now each consisted of five members. One member of each Board together with the Officers made up the Executive Committee which met monthly to take care of regular business. The entire Church Council, made up of the Officers and all the board members met when any out of the ordinary business needed attention.

In 1987 Zion established a partnership with New Hope Lutheran Church and Lutheran Family Mission in Chicago and with St. John’s Lutheran Church in Olin, Iowa. The following year members of New Hope visited us and later 14 members of Zion traveled to Chicago to worship and to work with them. Zion’s Senior choir sang for services twice in Olin in 1987 and 1988.

In 1987 Associate Pastor, Bill Russell, started working with the youth and paired up with “Young Life”. A group from Zion went to Castaway near Moorhead, MN. and had a winter retreat at EWALU. Hayrides were an annual event each fall. Each of the volunteer leaders was expected to attend one City High and one West High event each week, and sit in on the high school Sunday school class. The volunteers met as a team each week.

The position of Parish Worker was reestablished and in May of 1988 Vivian Lee began work in that capacity. A Building Supervisor was also added to the staff. Pastors Svennungsen and Russell resigned, departing in January of 1989, she having accepted a call to Community Lutheran in Edina, Minnesota. In order to assist Pastor Nilsen during the time when he was the only pastor on staff the Parish Worker, Vivian Lee, and several other lay persons accepted the responsibility of composing and delivering the prayers of the church for Sunday Worship Services. In August, 1989 Pastor Dan Rasmus accepted our call to be the Associate Pastor. Our Parish Worker, Vivian Lee, resigned in 1994 and was not replaced. Our Volunteer Coordinator, Margie Alton Herr, also resigned and Grace Maurer took over that position.

Zion established a bond with the congregation of the City Church in Ludwigslust East Germany in 1980. In 1983 five Zion members (Ruth Hiliger, Marge Jansen, her children Andy and Linea, and Bob Moninger) traveled to visit Pastor Romberg and others at the City Church in Ludwigslust. In 1988 the first of Zion’s Music Missions took place when the Zion Choir together with several members of Zion, traveled to East and West Germany and Norway. They were able to meet with Pastor Wilfried and Mrs. Barbara Romberg of the City Church of Ludwigslust and this meeting strengthened our relationship/partnership with them. At the last minute Zion’s group was not

permitted by the East German government to visit the city and the members of the congregation. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Pastor Wilfred and Barbara Romberg visited us in April of 1991.

United Germany

'Just one country ... the way it's supposed to be'

By Stacy Swadish
The Press-Citizen

The Rev. Wilfried Romberg never gave up hope that East Germany would one day be reunified with West Germany.

"I knew it would happen, but I didn't think it would happen in my lifetime," Romberg said Friday through a translator. "Now, it's just one country. That's the way it is supposed to be."

Friday, Romberg and his wife, Barbara, walked through downtown Iowa City and visited with the Rev. Roy Nilsen at Zion Lutheran Church.

Zion and City Church in Ludwigslust, Germany have been sister churches for more than 10 years. The Zion choir has traveled to Germany and congregation members write to each other.

Church members raised money for the Rombergs' trip to Iowa.

Before reunification, such travel would have been almost impossible because of bureaucratic regulations.

The Rombergs' drove to Hamburg and flew to Amsterdam, Netherlands. They then flew to Chicago and, 22 hours later, arrived in Cedar Rapids.

In the months before reunification, people filled the City Church in Ludwigslust, offering prayers for peace, Romberg said. East Germany opened its Western borders — including the Berlin Wall — in November 1989. Prior to reunification, people were allowed to gather in churches.

"Before and during the turnover, the churches were very



Press-Citizen/Scott Norris

The Rombergs (left) in Iowa City with Rev. Roy Nilsen.

full," Romberg said. Now, the churches have returned to the pre-reunification level.

But Romberg said there were signs that Germans wanted to be part of the church. At Easter, he baptized 10 children. That was a remarkable number, Romberg said. In previous years, he baptized about five children.

Reunification has made society more complex.

In the communist form of centralized government, all decision-making was made at upper levels of government and business.

"Nobody at the bottom had to

think for himself," Romberg said.

Unemployment has also increased. People want to buy products made in Western or Asian countries. People even refuse to buy cucumbers or tomatoes grown in what used to be East Germany, Romberg said.

"A lot of companies are bankrupt," he said. Western companies have started to invest in Germany, but slowly.

Romberg said the church had been able to expand beyond its physical structure and reach out to people.

Romberg gave these examples:

Busy visit

The Rev. Wilfried Romberg will preach Sunday at Zion Lutheran Church. He will speak in German and church members will receive an English translation. A congregational dinner honoring the Rombergs will start at noon.

Romberg will also preach at Faith Lutheran in Des Moines next Sunday.

The Rombergs are staying with Bob and Rosalie Moninger, Zion Lutheran's choir directors.

After two weeks in Iowa, the Rombergs will visit friends in upstate New York before returning to Germany.

■ He wrote an article about Easter for a local newspaper.

■ He was allowed to have the Stations of the Cross reenacted on Good Friday in Ludwigslust.

■ He was allowed to minister to people in hospitals and offer religious education in schools.

The Rev. Roy Nilsen of Zion Lutheran said having the Rombergs in Iowa City completed a visit interrupted by the former East German government. In 1988, church choir members were in East Germany but at the last minute were denied permission to travel to Ludwigslust.

Iowa City Press Citizen, April 6, 1991 p. 1B .

These were a joyous few days, highlighted with Pastor Romberg delivering the sermon at our Sunday morning worship followed by a congregational potluck at noon. It was an informative time for us as we learned of the many changes in Germany and how these changes since the fall of the Berlin wall have affected the Rombergs and the City Church. In 1995 members of the Senior Choir and the Bell Choir along with several Zion members traveled to Estonia, Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany as the second Music Mission. While in Germany they were finally able to visit Ludwigslust, worship and offer their music in the Stadtkirche there.

In 2000 Zion had the opportunity to serve as host to the Rombergs and members of the Ludwigslust City Church when they visited the United States. Their visit included a trip to the Mississippi River, Easter worship, a trip to an Amish house for dinner, breakfast at the Amana Colonies, and an "all-American" picnic. Pastor Trost met with our German friends and helped trace the path their German ancestors took when they came to Iowa from Mecklenburg Germany.

Zion's third Music Mission was in June of 2002. Members of Zion along with members of the Senior Choir and Bell Choir traveled to the British Isles and Ireland. They were guests of Lord and Lady Walpole at their estate and were recognized at their concert in Mold, Wales by the Lord Mayor herself. A fourth Music Mission is planned to Ireland and Wales in 2011.



The collage above was used to advertise Zion's Music Mission Concerts in the Britain and Ireland in 2002

Top left: Finnish church in Russia *Top Right:* City church in Ludwigslust, East Germany
Center left: Stift Bethlehem Hospital, Ludwigslust
Center Right: Entrance to Auschwitz - Birkenau , Poland
Bottom: Zion's Senior Choir

Iowa's hot summer months often made worship in the Nave quite uncomfortable. The parish hall had a portable air conditioner and often summer services were held there to get some relief from the heat. After much discussion and wavering pros and cons, the congregation did approve the air conditioning of the Nave. It was finally installed in 1988 and since then worshippers have been able to do so in relative comfort during the hot months of summer.

On January 18, 1989 the congregation celebrated with Pastor Nilsen and Mary as their son Kai was ordained into the ministry here at Zion and in 1994 when their daughter, Erika's ordination was celebrated at Zion in June. Daughter Solveig was ordained at Zion in August of '95. Pastor Roy recalls, "As a family, we were personally trying to influence the ratio of ELCA pastors to congregations during those years".



The Nilsen clergy: Per, Erika, Roy, Solveig, Kai

In November of 1989, our long time Security Guard, Gladys Lumsden, retired after many years of service. Gladys was known to use her flashlight on the cranium of an intruder in the building who tried to stay inside the church one night by hiding in the men's room. Pastor Nilsen said of her departure, "Her commitment to the 'well being' of the church was extraordinary . . . I will miss her 'flashlight in hand' strolls at late hours of the night as she checked the doors and then came to the office to 'chat' a bit."

As we have become more aware of the many ways in which the environment is being damaged, several members of Zion formed an Environmental Stewardship Task Force to present ideas and implement actions which will be good for the earth. ZEST, as the group was known, initiated a

program to recycle much of Zion's used paper such as old bulletins. This recycling project grew to include plastics and tin cans among other things. ZEST sponsored many Adult forums on Sunday mornings each year to inform, educate and inspire members to be environmentally responsible stewards of the earth. Zest also sponsors an annual field trip focusing on environmental concerns.

In 1990 the purchase of properties, across the alley from us, at 619 and 621 East Davenport Street and 320 N. Johnson Street was approved. The upper floor of the Johnson Street house was used as an emergency housing facility. The lower floor, in 1991, was transformed into a Youth Group gathering place and is currently used as rental property. After much discussion and negotiating with the city and the Northside Neighborhood, the houses on Davenport Street were razed and the land became a much needed addition to the parking lot. To further expand our parking options an arrangement with Mercy Hospital was reached in 1996 for some of their employees to use an area in our parking lot on weekdays and Mercy allowed our members to use their parking lot, across the street from Zion, on Sunday mornings. This has worked out very well for us over the years and we are thankful for the much needed extra parking spaces on Sunday mornings.

During Dan Rasmus' tenure as Associate Pastor (1989-1992) Junior high youth activities took place 3-4 times a year within the confirmation schedule. He met with the high school youth on Sunday nights and was assisted by young adult leaders including Shawn and Diane Hedlund and Todd Sheets.

The interior of our church building was once more refurbished with fresh paint and new carpeting in the Parish hall, Narthex and the entry halls in 1991. The main floor restrooms were updated with accessible fixtures thus making them more user friendly. The lighting fixtures in the Nave were replaced with fixtures that actually threw light into the area. The Arts Guild took on the responsibility for making, or having made, colorful festival banners to hang on the walls at the front of the Nave in the proper season. In 1996 a proposal was approved to upgrade the Nave with some new chancel lighting and a new sound system, including video components. The sound and lighting project in the Nave was completed in 1997

The Board of Worship learned that a new city fire code prohibited having a "real live" Christmas Tree in the Nave. They considered long and hard to find an acceptable alternative to such a tree. In 1992 they purchased a very lovely, large artificial tree which we were delighted to have in the Nave. Chrismons were made by many congregation members to decorate the tree. Unfortunately the tree was damaged time and again in the process of storing it during the "off" season. And time and again it was repaired by John Fisher who restored its beauty. Actually, we had a whole series of trees, eventually purchasing one already affixed with lights much to the delight of those whose responsibility was the decorating of the tree.

Early in 1992 Pastor Dan Rasmus resigned as Associate Pastor to accept another call. Pastor Judy Gerlitz and Pastor Michael Burk served as interim Associate Pastors, each on a half-time basis. Pastor Robert Hamel was called as Associate Pastor in 1993 and arrived only six days before Pastor Nilsen was scheduled to leave for a sabbatical. Pastor Hamel quickly became acquainted with Zion, its people and its mission and began providing leadership immediately. The Sunday night format for youth group meetings was continued when Bob Hamel became Associate Pastor. One year, meals were provided before the Sunday youth group meetings

In addition to the Communion settings in the Lutheran Book of Worship, the congregation began using Haugen's Communion Service, "Now the Feast and Celebration." In an effort to make Holy

Communion available to all, Zion began serving white grape juice as well as the traditional grape wine at every Communion Service. In 1995 we began using “With One Voice” as a supplement to the Lutheran Book of Worship, giving us many more hymns from which to choose.

During the summer of 1993 Iowa City suffered through the “Flood of ‘93” during which the Zion Church basement was, indeed, flooded. Many boxes of Sunday School supplies, Drama Ministry costumes, anything stored in a box on the floor was lost. Many willing volunteers worked many hours cleaning up the mess. Zion members also reached out to people who had been forced from their homes by the flood. Meals were prepared and served at City Park where flood victims were grateful for such small comforts as “real silverware”.

On December 4, 1994 the Zion Choir hosted its first annual Messiah “Sing-along” for the Iowa City area. Choir members and community musicians provided the musical leadership. The sing-along was held the following four years.

In 1995 the Zion Mission Statement was formally approved and adopted:

Zion Lutheran Church celebrates being a diverse Christian community, centered in and responding to the Gospel. Our mission is to proclaim the Good News that God cares passionately for all creation; grow in faith; care for and challenge each other; dedicate ourselves to serve the community and the world.

Sunday morning Worship Services at Zion were expanded to three in number at 8:00, 9:15 and 10:45 with two Sunday School sessions at 9:15 and 10:30. This made for a very hectic Sunday Morning. There was very little time for a cup of coffee.

Dramatic presentations expanded to the summer when Susan Hamel directed the summer musical, “Godspell” which was a great success and lots of fun to perform. The cast was made up of Zion members with a few from Iowa City Community Theatre. The Drama Ministry’s 1995 summer presentation was, “God’s Favorite” and was also directed by Susan Hamel followed by “South Pacific”. The dramatic production of 2002 was “Whales of August” presented as a Dessert Theatre by the Whimsical Women of Wednesday for Zion’s benefit.

In 1998 Roy Nilsen resigned as Senior Pastor to accept a call to St. John Lutheran Church in Des Moines. He had been with us for 18 years. We wished him God’s blessings in his new call. During this interim period, Pastors Arno Frerichs and David Mosher were with us. With some creative remodeling new Sunday School classrooms were produced, making it possible for Sunday School to return to only one session on Sunday mornings at 9:15.

Matt Hibbard was hired as Zion’s first full time youth director in 1998. He began a Sunday morning outdoor contemporary service in the summer. In 1999 the full time Youth Director position was replaced by part-time Youth Workers. Loren Wehmeyer and Stacie Eastman were hired as Youth Workers with the High School Youth. Youth meetings were changed to Wednesday nights to coordinate with confirmation and rides. Once a month Loren assisted the Confirmation Program with a fellowship night.

Pastor Frerichs resigned in 1999 in order to spend more time with his wife during her illness and Pastor Mosher received a call. Pastors Terry Slinde and Karl Koch became interim pastors until

Zion issued a call to the Reverend Dwight DuBois in August of 1999 to serve as our Senior/Administrative Pastor.

The position of Parish Administrator was established in 1998 and two years later the job description/title changed to Administrative Assistant. Julianne Bruce was hired to fill that position. The Christian Education Director became the Minister of Faith Formation. Mark Bauman was hired in that capacity. Approval was given to establish the position of Parish Nurse/Health Minister. The creation of a Steven Ministry was also approved. The continuing concern for health and wellness was evidenced by the installation of an Automatic External Defibrillator in the Narthex. Volunteers were instructed on the operation and use of this equipment. We truly hope that it is never needed, but just in case . . .

Pastor Ginger Anderson-Larson served us as part time Interim Associate Pastor while that position was vacant. We issued a call to Pastor Tim Malek to serve as our Associate Pastor in April of 2001 In August of 2000 we reverted to having only two Worship Services on Sunday mornings: 8:15 and 10:45.

Our first “Kraut and More” dinner was held in March of 2001. Sherry Carpenter and Carole Knutson (below) organized the dinner but it was an all member endeavor and it has become an annual event.



Along with the very special sauerkraut; pork loin roast, REAL mashed potatoes, green beans, apple sauce and home made pies are on the menu. If you don't like sauerkraut, you don't have to eat it, but you are missing a yummy treat. It takes approximately 150 Zion members to help cook and serve and clean up. Carole and Sherry have this down to a science, down to the minute of when the potatoes need to be mashed, to when the pies need to be sliced. Dinner is served in three seatings to about 450 guests. Proceeds have been used to fund a variety of improvements to the church.

Zion approved the “Called to Common Mission” agreement between the ELCA and the Episcopal Church in America although not everyone was in agreement with this action. Cyberspace was conquered when Zion's web page was designed and got up and running.

Jan Buettner became our nighttime Security Person. She made sure the building was locked and that no unauthorized persons were sneaking about. She received no salary but rented the apartment at 320 No. Johnson Street at a reduced rate. This worked out very well for all of us.

In the fall of 2001, a relationship was established between the Southeast Iowa Synod and the Tanzanian Lutheran Church, Pare Diocese. Zion Lutheran was eager to take this mission up and was assigned to the congregation located in Lambo, Tanzania. The global mission team began personal correspondence with the leaders of the Lambo congregation. Face to face contact first occurred when Pastor Dwight Dubois and Charles Bursch visited the area in February of 2004. Pastor Dubois called it “a marvelous beginning to a companion relationship”.



Charlie Bursch and Pastor DuBois visited Lambo in 2004

Zion's relationship with Lambo Lutheran Church is maintained by the global mission committee through e-mail communication with Pastor Kennedy Kanyarota and letter exchanges on Easter and Christmas. We currently support elementary and secondary school education through monetary donations and educational scholarships. Zion members are especially pleased about our support of the church kindergarten where we facilitated teacher training and are regularly sending toys and educational materials.

At the annual meeting in 2003, the Council together with the Congregation approved a change in governance from Boards to Ministry Teams for a period of one year. This necessitated the setting aside of the By-laws for that period. We were not at all sure of how this method would work but we were willing to try it. The motion to set aside the by-laws passed.

2004 saw Hurricane Charlie wreak destruction in Florida. Encouraged by Pastor DuBois (because of his experience of Hurricane Hugo in 1989) Zion members together with members of other churches and other organizations in the area in three days gathered and sent to Florida 21,000 pounds of food and supplies, valued at over \$75,000.

On Sunday, December 12, 2004 all our choirs were involved in a new service, the Festival of Lessons and Carols patterned after the service at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England. This was a change from our annual Advent Choral Service and brought the message of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany to us through nine scripture readings and music. The Lessons and Carols tradition which began in 1918 in England is now a Zion tradition and has become an annual event.

The Council and other members of Zion worked with Kairos Consultants to put together a Master Strategic Plan for Zion. Out of that study came a resolution that Zion commit to remain at its present location into the foreseeable future. The minutes of the February 13, 2005 Congregational Meeting state: "Motion: That we commit to staying at our current location now and into the foreseeable future so that Zion can commit further to our present location, facilities, neighborhood outreach, and ministries of our congregation. (McKay / Schmidt) Motion passed." The congregation also approved the continuation of the Ministry Team form of governance and approved a new constitution based on Ministry Teams.

Over the spring of 2005, the “books are basic” campaign was launched which raised dollars for the purchase of much needed text books in Tanzania. These funds, along with medical supplies, were presented to the community in July of 2005 when Pastor Tim Malek, Charles and Heide Bursch visited Lambo. The direct result of this initiative was an increase in the number of students passing the final examination and being eligible for secondary school.

Pastor DuBois left in 2006 to become Director of the Center for Renewal at Grand View University in Des Moines. Tim Malek accepted a call to Wisconsin as a senior pastor. His farewell party was a brat fest complete with Packer decorations to send him on his way.

We were fortunate to have Pastor Harris Hostager assigned as our transition pastor. Zion had purchased the property at 332 No. Johnson Street (at the corner of Johnson and Davenport Streets) which was useful as a home for Hostager (and his wife). We were greatly blessed by Pastor Hostager’s presence among us and were grateful for his caring spirit and optimistic attitude.

Pastor Jan Rippentrop was called as a term associate Pastor for Zion. She, to our delight and pleasure, accepted. She was ordained in her home church in Pella, Iowa before she and her husband and daughter joined us in Iowa City.

Zion has continued to support mission congregations as it has in the past. A task force was created in 2007 with members of Gloria Dei, Christ the King and Zion to explore the sponsorship of a new ELCA congregation in the North Corridor. This endeavor resulted in the formation of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in North Liberty. Zion contributed \$10,000 for 3 years to assist the congregation. In May of 2010 Holy Trinity adopted a constitution and was recognized at the Synod Assembly as a new congregation. In addition to financial support Zion has assisted with worship. In Zion’s 150th year we celebrate the first year of ministry of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

Zion’s commitment to mission extends to missionary service. Two members of the congregation, with their families, are currently serving as missionaries overseas.



In Senegal
Dirk & Sarah Statlander, Eva & Ellen



In Bolivia
Paul & Laura Kienzle, Rachel, Erica & Rebekah

In 2006 Zion hosted our first annual Neighborhood Block Party. We served hot dogs and chips, cookies, fruit, along with popcorn and root beer to any and all comers. We provided live entertainment, had drawings for prizes and a wonderful yard sale where each and every item was priced at only 25 cents. The same format for the Block Party has continued through 2010.

In 2007 we extended a call to the Reverend Mark Pries from Peace Lutheran Church in Pella, Iowa (same congregation from whence Jan Rippentrop came) to be our Senior Pastor. He did accept our call and we were delighted and thankful for him. Shortly after arriving he suffered a heart attack. The congregation, while very supportive with good deeds and lots of prayers, did not accept responsibility for this turn of events. After his temporary setback, Pastor Pries quickly became involved in Zion's ministry as well as community outreach. He was invited to join the Northside Neighborhood Association and became a member of the Iowa City Downtown Association. He was asked to serve as a member of the Partners for Alcohol Safety Committee. Lesley Pries became a valuable contributor and tireless worker in the Zion Sunday School program and member visitation.

Since Zion had decided to remain at the corner of Davenport and Bloomington for the foreseeable future it became clear that renovations were needed in order to have facilities appropriate for our ministry needs. Pastor Pries brought a wealth of experience with him in relation to overseeing major building projects. He spearheaded 4 projects before coming to Pella where he had provided leadership for 2 major building projects. Zion adopted the Facility Leadership Team concept Pries had devised in Pella consisting of 7 committees with 5-7 members on each committee.

Sara Hollander was hired in January of 2007 after the Hand in Hand Congregational Training in 2006 when the congregation voted on adding a full time position to work on building intergenerational ministry at Zion. When Loren Wehmeyer left in the spring of 2007, Sara Hollander took over the High School Youth Worker's responsibilities with her responsibilities as the Coordinator of Youth and Family Ministries. Ryan Panzer was hired in August of 2008 as the Youth Worker and he continued to lead Youth Group on Wednesday evenings and Sunday School for the High School Youth. In August of 2009 Nick Smith was hired after Ryan resigned due to his work schedule. Youth Group meetings were moved back to Sunday evenings. The youth continue to be active with Easter Breakfast, Mission/Service within the community, camping, lock-ins and just enjoying a good time with charades.

The year 2008 was also the year of the 500 year Flood. While Zion was not itself affected by the waters, many of our members experienced anything from minor damage to total destruction of their homes and businesses. Countless sandbags were filled by volunteers from the Zion community in an effort to control the rising river. We are thankful for the loving support we were able to give and/or receive as the members of Zion. Thankful also for the caring ministry of Pastor Jan Rippentrop, we extended a regular call to her to be our Associate Pastor.



Pastor Jan Rippentrop and Pastor Mark Pries

Several face to face contacts with our partners in the Pare Diocese occurred in 2008. In February, Heide Bursch was in the Lambo area as part of a southeast synod medical outreach team, inservicing health care workers about palliative care for advanced AIDS and cancer patients and was able to visit the congregation for a few days. In the summer, Zion members Pastor Jan Rippentrop, Steve Noack, Carly Hilemann, Charles and Heide Bursch, Karin Bursch, and John and Anne Hartson spent 5 days in Lambo renewing friendships, visiting parishioners homes, gathering information on water needs and current educational initiatives. A new teacher's quarters sponsored by Zion was inspected.

The Sunday School rooms were remodeled, redecorated, and reclaimed from other uses to provide pleasant learning environment for our children. The structure of the Sunday School was reorganized and Minda Davison was hired as our Sunday School Administrator in 2009

In October 2009 Zion hosted Pastor Kilango from Tanzania who visited Iowa for 2 months through "Crossing Borders". From him we heard that Tanzanian Lutherans do not delegate the Christian duty to share understanding of God's grace to their pastor, but are responsible to speak about God's involvement in their lives among each other and with non-Christians, always reaching out.

A year of celebration for Zion's Sesquicentennial was planned for 2009 - 2010. The Sesquicentennial committee members were: Jim Lane (Chair). Lesley Pries, (Secretary), Sherry & Bob Carpenter, Catherine Lane, Mark Pries, Rosalie & Bob Moninger, Sally Leme, Sue & Dave Schmidt and Linda & Ed Scheetz. The festivities began with a worship service on April 26, 2009. The service was a look back to Zion's past, a celebration of the present, and a vision for the future. Prior to the service, members whose families had been part of Zion for generations were recognized. The processional was then led by Zion's newest members.



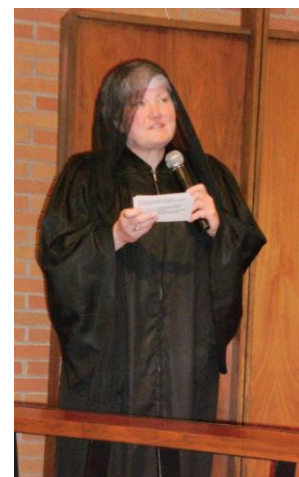
Zion's Generational Members

Front: Margaret & Marilyn Hiscock, Claudia Horick, Helen Kottman, Joan Luhman
Back: Bob & Sherry Carpenter, Paul Horick, Ada Crow, Donna Schmidt, Maxine & Robert Ruppert
 David & Lowell Luhman

Pastor Pries dressed in clerical garb typical of what was worn by German clergy in Zion's early days. The "Ghost of Christians Past" interjected some historical facts throughout the service highlighting how things have changed through the 150 years of Zion's ministry. A copy of the worship service and historical notes may be found in Appendix F.

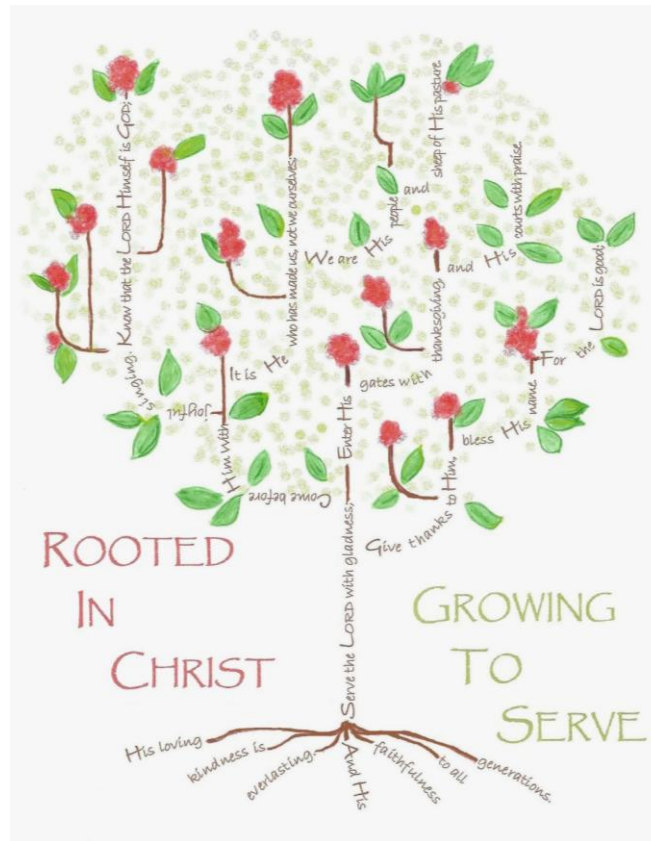


Pastor Pries greets Helen Moe, one of Zion's oldest members



Ghost of Christians Past
 Sally Leme

The bulletin cover and processional banner for the worship service featured Zion's Sesquicentennial logo which was designed by Sue Schmidt.



The Sesquicentennial year was celebrated with a variety of activities. Zion's history was highlighted through five "Pastor on a Stick" presentations prior to worship services and "Food on a Stick" was provided between services. A series of Bulletin covers highlighted "Then and Now" glimpses of Zion in the past and Zion as it is today (See Appendix G). A new membership directory was produced. Souvenir mugs with Zion's Sesquicentennial logo were made available to the congregation. Members of the congregation were invited to share their favorite recollections in a Zion Memory Book.

Plans for building renovation and fundraising for construction were undertaken in 2009. ZEST (Zion's Environmental Stewardship Taskforce) which was formed in 1989 had been active through the years within Zion and toward involving other churches in environmental programs through the Environmental Awareness Committee of the ELCA's Southeastern Iowa Synod and more recently through the Interfaith Environmental Effort to increase the effectiveness of faith groups in Creation Care. ZEST became actively involved in the building/remodeling plans for Zion advocating LEED certification for the project. (LEED certification is a nationally recognized benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings.) An initial phase building improvement was completed during the Sesquicentennial year. The west entrance to the building was completely reconstructed providing an impressive, accessible entrance to the building.



Old west entrance during Zion's Block Party



Zion's renovated entrance (ramp to the left)

No celebration at Zion would be complete without food! Through the years Zion has had a series of picnics and “parties”. Some historic photos from these events may be found in Appendix H. As the Sesquicentennial year progressed Zion stayed true to tradition. In addition to “Food on a Stick” Zion’s diversity was celebrated with Lenten soup suppers featuring ethnic food. The making and consuming of kolaches was a learning event enjoyed by all. The 10th Annual Sauerkraut Supper celebrated our heritage and funds raised supported Sesquicentennial events. A special Zion Sesquicentennial Cookbook containing nearly 700 recipes was published and sample recipes were made and provided to the congregation one Sunday between services.

April 25, 2010 was a day of celebration culminating our Sesquicentennial year. Regular worship services were held with the Reverend Stephen Bouman, Executive Director of ELCA Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission as guest preacher and the bishop of our Southeastern Iowa Synod, the Reverend Michael Burk, as presider. Special music by the choir and rousing tunes from Zion’s brass highlighted the special services. We welcomed former pastors: Roy Nilsen, Dwight DuBois, and Harris Hostager and former bishops: Phil Hougen and Paul Werger.

Following the services the congregation gathered at the Johnson County Fairgrounds for a family style banquet of fried chicken with all the trimmings and, of course, birthday cake(s). The cakes featured a picture of Zion from the past and the current structure (see insert in red box below)

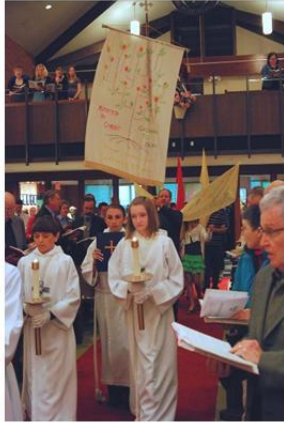


Pastors Rippentrop, DuBois, Nilsen and Pries cut the “birthday” cakes

While waiting in the buffet line, a slide show of Zion pictures was available for viewing. After the meal entertainment was provided by some of our youngest violin and ‘cello virtuosos. Singers, dancers (with walkers), and comedy songs and skits were also part of the fun.

Zion’s June/July, 2010 newsletter featured two pages of photos from the Sesquicentennial celebration finale. The pages are reproduced below. Additional photos may be found in Appendix I.

Sesquicentennial Celebration a Great Success!



Worship!



Food and Fellowship!





Cake!



Games!



Old Friends & New



Entertainment!



In addition to the many programs already mentioned, Zion continues to provide a variety of activities for all members. An early Tuesday morning men's Bible study affectionately known as "The Lost Boys Club" was started by Pastor Pries. Seniors can participate in social activities with the "Senior Singles" or "Prime Timers". Musically inclined seniors may join the hand chime chorus known as the "Prime chimers". Quilts continue to be produced as they have for many decades by the "Quilt-tiers" who meet on a regular basis. Women have the opportunity to participate in small group gatherings. Ruth Circle and Naomi Circle continue to meet monthly. The Zion Women's Reading Group provides the opportunity to read and discuss selected books. Historic photos of "Women of Zion" may be found in Appendix J. Zion's structure of small ministry groups allows a variety of different activities, perspectives and interests to thrive. The activities and ministry groups continually evolve to make Zion the vibrant community of believers it has been for 150 years.

This is an exciting time for reflecting, dreaming and brain storming, for hoping and wishing. Who knows where we will be in another 25 years? What will the next 150 years bring?

"O Zion, haste, your mission high fulfilling!"



Iowa City

Established 1860