



St. Paul Lutheran Church
State Center, Iowa
1965

The following article is from the 2001 Pfantz news-letter-----

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH - OUR CONNECTION

This year our 27th Pfantz reunion will take us to the St. Paul Lutheran Church, State Center, Iowa

The early records of the church were either not recorded or were destroyed by fire long ago. The earliest history comes from pieced together accounts and reports handed down through the early families of the congregation. According to reports, sometime in the late 1870's, Lutheran services were held in the Adventist Church in State Center and also at about this time in some rural homes.

Our connection? In 1884, a group of Lutherans organized the church and took the name of St. Paul German Evangelical Lutheran Church. Ten years later, 1894, they built a small church. In 1900 the first building was moved to a new lot (now 208 2nd Ave. N.E.) and the facilities were enlarged and remodeled several times in the ensuing years. This would be the church Clem and Elizabeth attended at least by 1900 when Harvey was confirmed. Another assumption is that their children were baptized there.

Needing more space, in 1934, the congregation purchased the J. G. Gutekunst house and moved it to the church property to be used as a Parish House. It was used for Sunday School and Bible School as well as wedding receptions and other church related social events.

In 1947, St. Paul incorporated with the Synod of the American Lutheran Church. The constitution needed to be rewritten and the name was changed to St. Paul Lutheran Church. At their 75th Anniversary, the congregation decided to begin making plans for a new church. Ground breaking (for the present building, 605 1st Ave. N.) was July 4, 1965 and on July 31, 1966, St. Paul dedicated the new church.

In 1984, for their Centennial celebration, a committee compiled a booklet: "Confirmation Classes of St. Paul Lutheran Church, State Center, Iowa." The first confirmation class was 1895. The nine children of Clem & Elizabeth are listed in the booklet as follows:

Harvey and Carl (William) confirmed 1900
Albert, 1901
Clarence (George) and (Elma) Aleta (Emma) in 1905
Leona, 1910
Walter and Marie (Mary), 1913
Lester. 1918

The following descendants of Clem and Elizabeth were also listed in the confirmation booklet:

First Cousins; Melvin Wilkening, Merle Wilkening, Junior Mulcahy, Eugene Wilkening, Kathryn Wilkening, Betty Mulcahy, Robert Mulcahy (DC), Bonnie Mulcahy, Barbara Mulcahy.

First Cousin's Children: Ruth Ann Wilkening, Mary Jane Wilkening, Diane Wilkening, Teresa Wilkening, Dennis Wilkening, Steve Bodie, Bruce Bodie, Chris Wilkening, Constance Wilkening, Stanley Wilkening, David Wilkening.

These are the children and grandchildren of Aleta and Mary and no doubt all had been baptized at St. Paul. Leona also had her five children baptized at St. Paul.

From the St. Paul One Hundred Years booklet, 1984: "The oldest living person baptized at St. Paul Lutheran Church is Leona Pfantz McAlister. She was baptized in March of 1897. She is also the oldest confirmed person, having been confirmed in 1910. This was the last class confirmed in the German language."

Most of this article was taken from the St. Paul Centennial booklet. St. Paul has been a part of our lives for a good many years. There have been weddings and funerals and maybe since 1984 more baptisms and confirmations. We still have relatives as members at St. Paul.