

Christianity Marks County's March Of Progress

A Century Of Lutheranism In Adams County Detailed

By The Rev. W. H. Werning, Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Decatur (Friedheim), Indiana

Writes History



Rev. W. H. Werning
Rev. Werning, pastor of the Zion Lutheran church at Friedheim, has written a comprehensive history of the Lutheran churches in Decatur and vicinity.

Westward bound, without the convenience of distance-eliminating trains, efficient bus lines, fast-moving vans and automobiles on hard-surfaced roads, the early settlers pushed forward to the frontiers of civilization and entered along the forests primeval of Indiana a century ago. Leaving their homes, relatives, and friends in Europe they came to the "new world" to seek their fortunes and establish their future homes. Among those early settlers we find also a large number of immigrants from the Land of the Reformation.

The Lutherans were among the pioneers in New England. When William Penn came to America in 1682 and founded the City of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia, he chose a spot not far from the place where a Swedish village and a Lutheran Church stood. The Swedes had been there for 44 years, settling there 18 years after the arrival of the Mayflower.

As those early Lutherans experienced the hardships and suffered the privations in a pioneer country and their descendants helped write history in the days of the Revolution and the establishment of the Thirteen Colonies, so also the followers of the Great Reformation were to contribute their part in building and developing this "western" country.

Zion Lutheran Church, Friedheim

In the year 1836 a man and his wife and four oldest children arrived in Ft. Wayne, which then was a village of 500 inhabitants; here they purchased a piece of land in the north-western part of Adams county, sight unseen, from a real-estate man, and then made their way through the dense forest to their future home. Here they first had to clear enough land to make room for their log cabin home. This humble building was to become the temporary home of many a new settler during the next few years, and this first settler, Mr. Frederick Buuck, and his family, were destined to play an important part in the development of the country.

Marching Along With Decatur

We heard many splendid words about Decatur before we came and during the short span of time we have been here, we find they are all true.

We are glad to be here—the fine community spirit so characteristic of Decatur citizens is bound to build for a greater city during the next one hundred years.

Every good wish for the success of the Centennial, August 2 to 8.

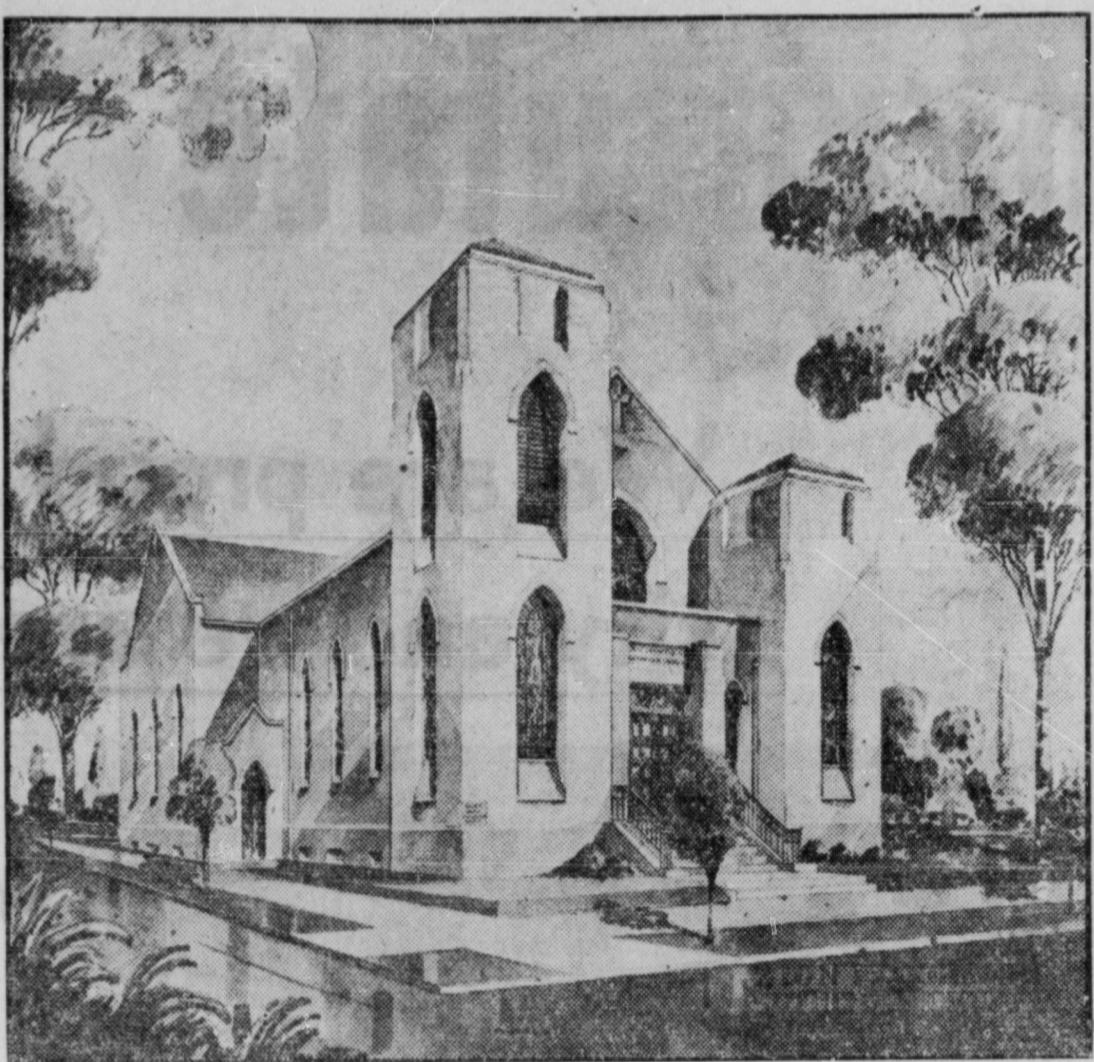
CENTENNIAL WEEK
SPECIAL

25%
DISCOUNT
ON ALL ACCESSORIES

England Auto Parts
DECATUR

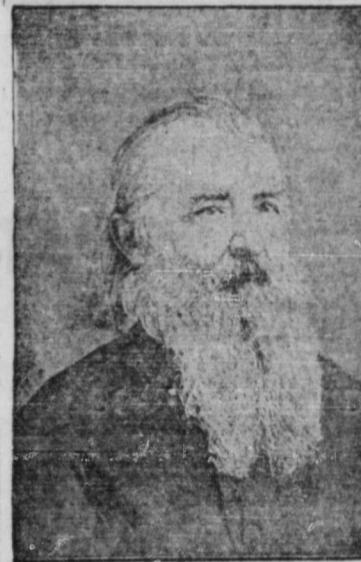
1st Store South of Court House

Zion Lutheran Church Being Remodeled



Pictured above is a view of the Zion Lutheran church of this city, as it will appear when remodeling is completed. A new section is being built in the rear of the building. A new tower is being erected. On the west side will be a new entrance and the entire building will be faced with a light colored brick.

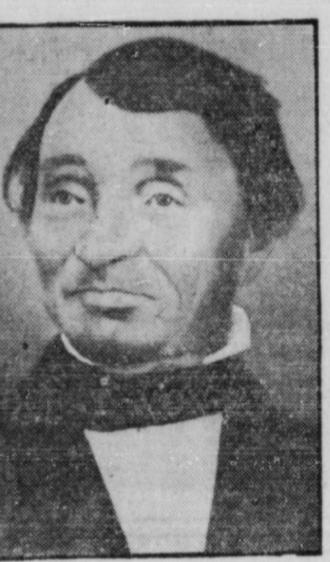
Pioneer Missionary



Rev. F. C. D. Wyneken

Lutheran Congregation in the village of Fort Wayne, the oldest Lutheran congregation in Indiana. Pastor Hoover now also served the little group at Friedheim, which had grown during the past months, as often as time permitted. It is to him that this district owes its name. On February 25, 1838, these pioneers organized Zion Lutheran Congregation. They adopted the "Formula for the Discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church" recommended by the General Synod, according to which the congregation was to be ruled and governed. On the same day six candidates were nominated for the offices of the congregation. Two weeks later the election took place, when Mr. Frederick Buuck was elected elder and Mr. Christian Fuhrman and Mr. Henry Doeffer deacons. The newly established congregation numbered 56 souls—26 adults and 30 children. After the organization was effected the young congregation immediately celebrated Holy Communion—the first Lutheran celebration of the Lord's Supper on record in Adams county. The services and also the instructions

First Settler



Frederick Buuck

for the children was held in the Frederick Buuck home, until the first small house of worship was built.

Rev. Wyneken Serves Zion

This young pastor, however, was permitted to serve the congregation but for a short time, since he was called out of this world as early as May 23, 1838. About this same time a young candidate for the ministry arrived in Baltimore. After a brief stay in the East he was sent out as a missionary among the Lutherans in Northern Indiana and became the successor to Pastor Hoover. This was the Rev. Frederick Conrad Dietrich Wyneken. His principal congregations were St. Paul's in Fort Wayne and Zion at Friedheim. Railroads and good highways were unknown in those days and therefore he made his journeys in Indiana, Ohio and Michigan on foot and on horseback, by day or night, in summer and in winter. We gain a picture of the zeal, courage, and self-sacrificing spirit which was required of a missionary in those pioneer days (as on the northern and western frontiers and South America even today) from the following words:

"Day by day and month after month this zealous servant of Jesus Christ labored in his field of missions. Wherever he went, he preached, baptized, instructed, and confirmed. Many times he was rejected by those whom he came to help; at other places, again, he was received with open arms. But in spite of the primitive conditions and the many hardships and difficulties he counted those days as the happiest of his life. He was very poor, and most of what he received for his own living he gave away to such as needed it more than he. He ate whatever the poor settlers placed before him; he slept when they made a resting place for him, on hay or straw or in a bed—it made no difference to him. When he came home from these journeys, worn and spent

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