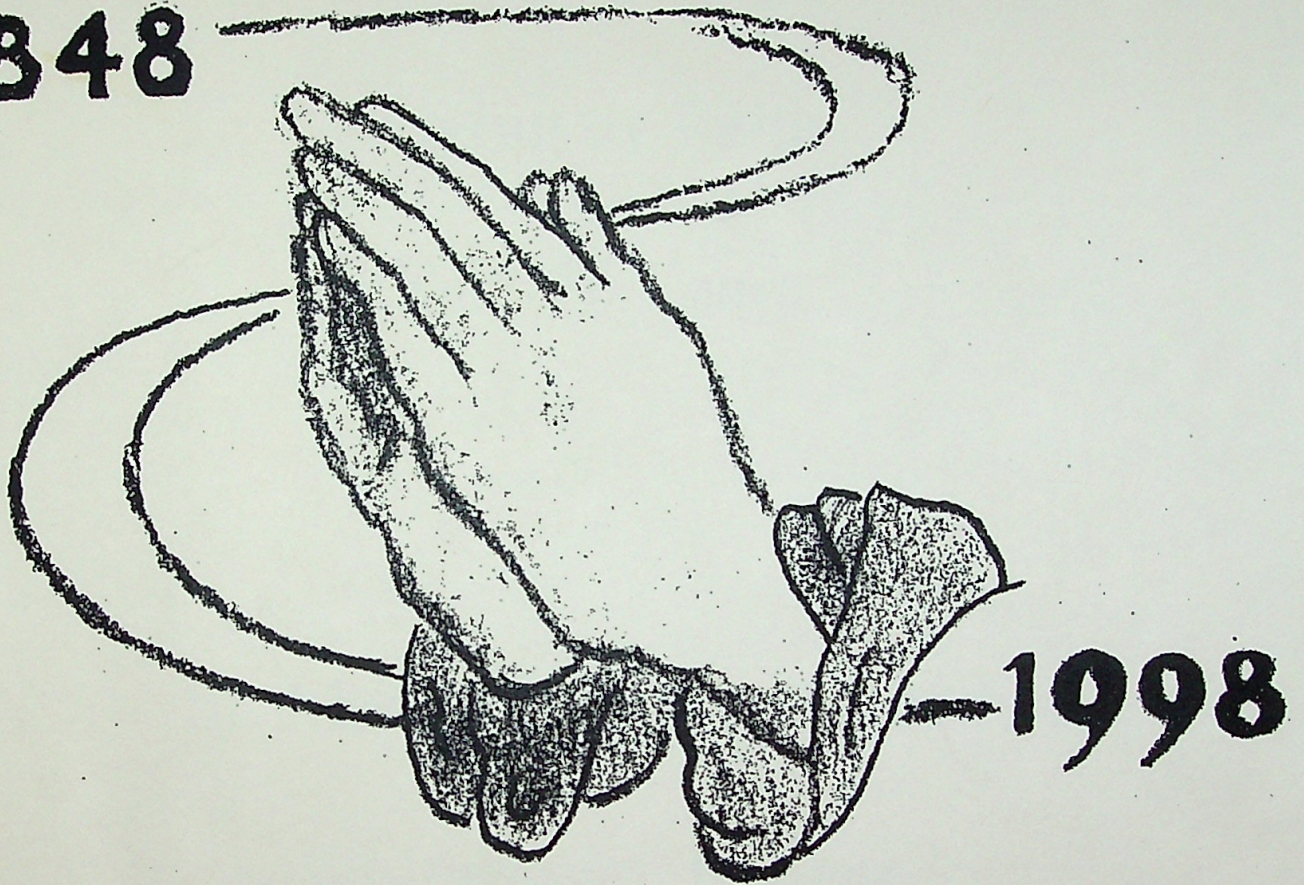


Living

1848



1998

**BY FAITH
FOR
150 YEARS**

1848 – 1998

*The Story of 150 Years
Of
Living By Faith*

Living by Faith

For 150 Years

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Whitestown, Indiana

October 18, 1998

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Living by Faith

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ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Whitestown, Indiana

The Story of 150 Years Of Living By Faith

The origins of St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Whitestown can be traced back to some of the earliest Lutherans in North America. The missionary society of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania took an interest in the religious life of Lutheran pioneers in the "western states." In 1835, after organizing the Salem Church (then called "Hopewell"), in Marion County, Indiana, the Rev. Ezra Keller, missionary explorer, went to Boone County. There, about six miles southeast of Lebanon, he made contact with a number of Lutherans from eastern Tennessee. Evidently these people had also been visited earlier by the Rev. Eusebius S. Henkel.

The first members of the congregation that became known as St. Mark's were hearty individuals who had moved to the frontier in the hope of improving their lot. Although few of them had had much religious training, they generally maintained a sincere piety.

The first recorded meeting of Lutherans in Whitestown was in 1848 – in a log cabin. Six years later, twenty-three persons gathered to organize a congregation and adopted the name "Newton," selecting Eusebius S. Henkel as their first pastor. They soon erected a house of worship west of the later interurban station in Whitestown.

In 1868, a new church building was erected at the site of the present church. This structure was dedicated on August 15, 1869, by the Rev. Miles Julius Stirewalt, who was assisted by pastors Ephraim Rudisill, Julius L. Stirewalt, and Jacob Efred Wesner. Three days earlier, the name of the congregation had been changed to St. Mark's.

Construction of a new 48 x 72-foot church, with a seating capacity of 400, was begun in 1904. The \$10,000 edifice, which continues to serve the congregation, was dedicated, free of debt, on January 29, 1905 by Pastor David L. Reese. Pastor Reese was assisted in the service by pastors W. J. Seiberling and Alonzo H. Arbaugh.

Little is known of parish events in the half century after 1869 because many congregational records were lost in a fire which destroyed the parsonage in 1925. The residence

on the north side of Whitestown had been purchased in 1919. It was replaced by another parsonage, built on the original foundation, which served as the home of pastors who also served Salem Church in New Augusta. Later, in 1950, the joint parish was dissolved, and Salem built its own parsonage.

For a time, St. Mark's was a member of a five-church parish which included Salem, nearby Union Church, St. James of Darlington, and St. George of Edinburgh. After several changes in parish alignment, St. Mark's finally became independent in September, 1950.

A number of improvements were made in St. Mark's property after World War II. In 1948, a display sign was placed on the grounds, and a Baldwin electric organ was installed. These items added to the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the church in October of that year.

Further refinements in the church building in the period 1965 to 1970 included the lowering of the ceilings and a general redecoration of the interior. Paneling was applied to the pulpit, the entranceway, and the stairway to the basement. And much of the inside and outside woodwork was painted or varnished.

Sandblasting and tuck-pointing of masonry on the exterior of the church was done in 1976 at half the cost (\$5,000) of the original building price (\$10,000). In 1985, a gift of a new organ was received from Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Merrillville, IN.

For many years, St. Mark's was noted for its annual fish fry, later replaced for many more years by the ham and bean dinner during Whitestown Pioneer Days in September.

Many pastors have served St. Mark's. Perhaps the most famous one to Lutheranism during the 20th century is H. Grady Davis (served 1924-1937), who went on to teach Preaching at Chicago Lutheran Theological School and wrote *Design for Preaching*, a major textbook on the subject.

In 1995, St. Mark's voted to affiliate with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. In July, 1996, Pastor Michael Peterson arrived, the first AFLC pastor to serve St. Mark's.

Through thick and thin, St. Mark's has continued to proclaim the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. We trust in Jesus that for years to come, St. Mark's will be "Living through faith," just as it has for 150 years.

Pastors Who Served St. Mark's Congregation

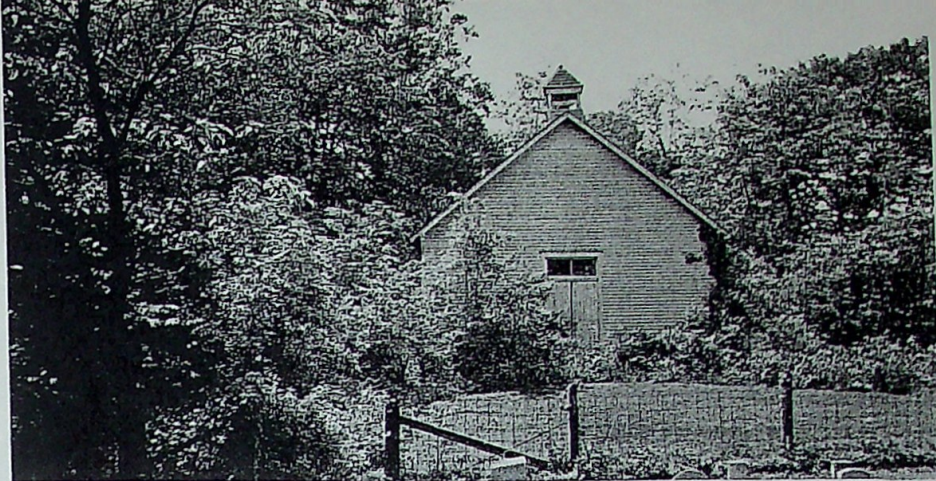
Eusebius S. Henkel, Abraham Reck, Ezra Keller	
Ephraim Rudisill	1848
Samuel Good	1849-1850
Eusebius S. Henkel	1854-
John Livingood	1858-
David Philo Groundt	1862-1863
J. Efred Wesner	1864-1869
Jacob Wesner	1869-1875
Miles Julius Stirewalt	1875-1878
William C. L. Lauer	1879-1881
John G. M. Hursh	1881-1882
James C. Barb	1883-1895
Miles Julius Stirewalt	1895-1896
Simon P. Fryberger	1897-1899
David L. Reese	1900-1905
Charles L. Warstler	1907-1909
Solomon D. Myers	1909-1911
Charles L. Warstler	1912-1917
Brady Lee Westenbarger	1919-1921
William Curtis Laughbaum, D.D.	1922-1923
Theodore Brosche (student)	1924
H. Grady Davis	1924-1937
Graham L. Kleespie	1937-1944
Raymond A. Heine	1945-1947
John R. Spangler	1948-1950
Wilford C. Butt	1951-1953
Richard Thain Kraus	1954-1957
John F. Schnabel	1958-1959
James Stanley Ford	1961-1964
Frank C. Hurst	1964-1965
Howard K. Marken	1966-1970
Dale H. Beutler	1971-1983
John W. Kost	1983-1986
George B. Zornow	1987-1989
Dr. John V. Strom (interim)	1990-1996
Michael W. Peterson	1996-

Previous Synodical Affiliations

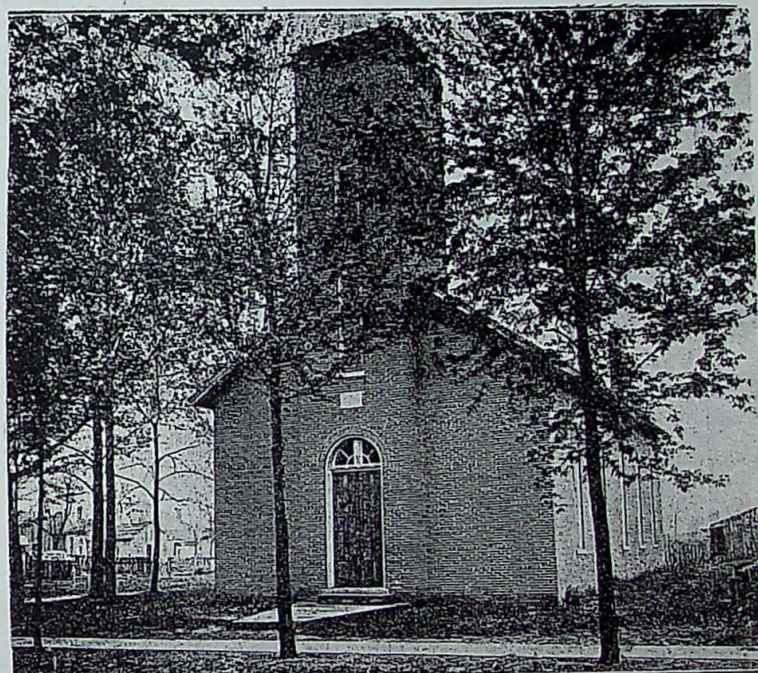
Of

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Indiana	1856-1859
Union Synod of Indiana	1859-1871
Indiana Synod	1871-1895
Chicago Synod	1895-1920
Indiana Synod (ULCA)	1920-1962
Lutheran Church in America	1962-1988
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	1988-1995
Association of Free Lutheran Congregations	1995-



The last church at Lutheran Cemetery. It burned in 1960.



First St. Mark's church building in 1869, on site of the present church.



Present church building as it appeared in 1904.



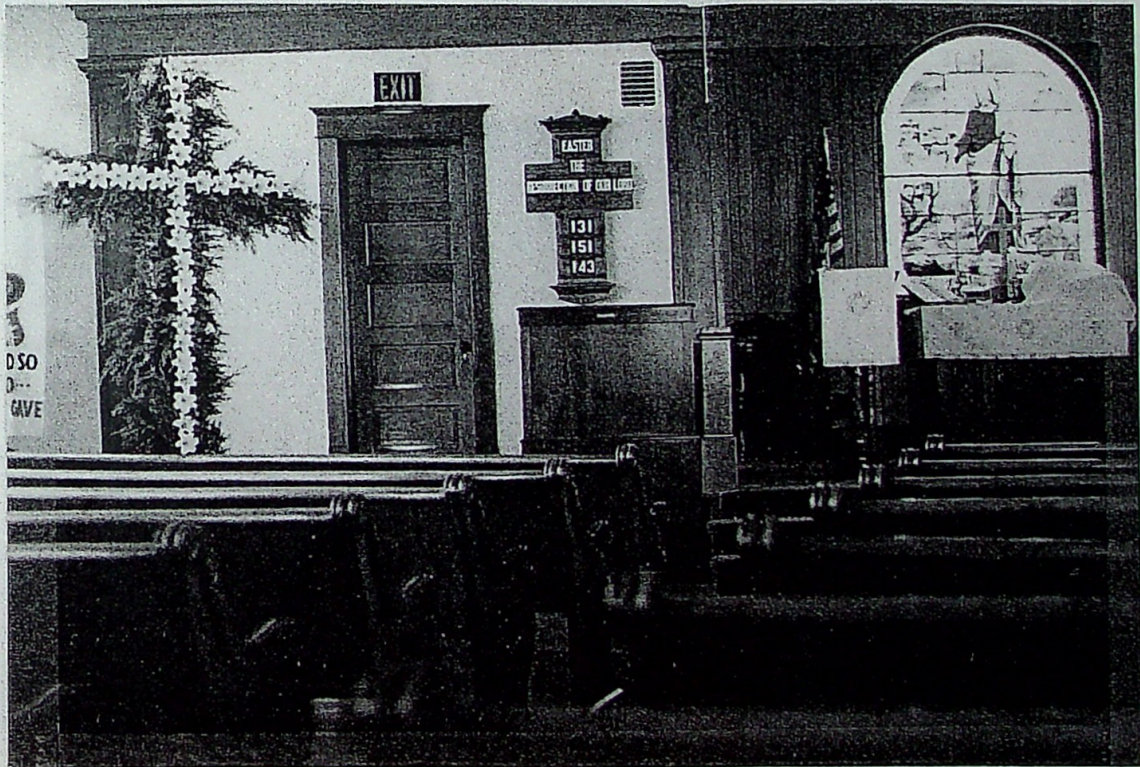
100th Anniversary



Approximately 1980



Do you know any of these people?



Our sanctuary on Easter morning 1981

Some of our many Pastors



Miles Julius Stirewalt
1875 - 1878 &
1895 - 1896
1st full-time pastor



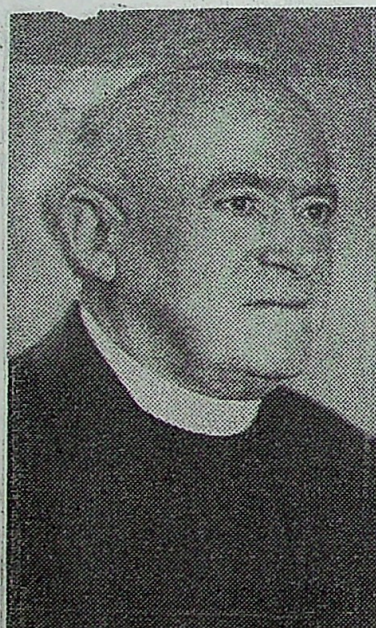
James C. Barb
1883 - 1895



David L. Reese
1900 - 1905



Charles L. Warstler
1907 - 1909 &
1912 - 1917



Solomon D. Myers
1909 - 1911



Brady Lee Westenbarger
1919 - 1921

Some of our many Pastors
(Continued)



William Curtis Laughbaum
1922 - 1923



H. Grady Davis
1924 - 1937



Graham L. Kleespie
1937 - 1944



Raymond A. Heine
1945 - 1947



John R. Spangler
1948 - 1950



James S Ford - 1961 - 1964

James Stanley Ford
1961 - 1964

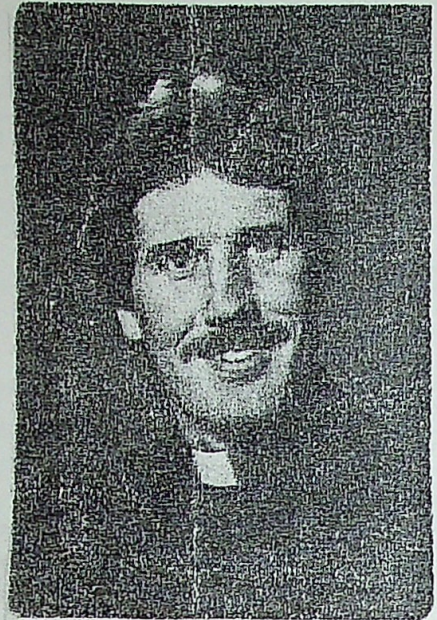
Some of our many Pastors
(Continued)



Howard K. Marken
1966 - 1970



Dale H. Beutler
1971 - 1983



John W. Kost
1983 - 1986



Dr. John V. Strom
1990 - 1996
(interim)



Michael W. Peterson
1996 -

