

Inventory of the

**Wheatland Salem United Methodist
Church**
Naperville, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 119

INTRODUCTION

Reverend Scott Field, Naperville, Illinois, deposited the historical records of the Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church with the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on November 19, 1980. A small addenda was added on April 20, 1999.

Property rights in the collection remain with the Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear Feet of Shelf Space: 3
Number of Containers: 6 + 2 volumes
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection: 119

SCOPE AND CONTENT

A church fire in November 1927 destroyed a portion of this organization's historical manuscripts. Nevertheless, the remaining records provide sufficient documentation for a thorough study of the Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church's history. Of primary importance are the church minutes dating from 1860 to 1963 (1916-1947 are missing.) describing organizational changes, building or expansion problems, and general church business. In addition, quarterly conference records (1920-1967) detail administration, financial, and inter-organizational policies. The treasurer's account books furnish a wealth of information on the church's financial development through the Depression years to the early 1960's (1931-1963). Supplementary records, including membership records (1920-1948), burial records (1861-1904), and bulletins and newsletters complete the general church record series. The remaining materials partially document the Sunday School (1916-1952), Ladies' Aid Society (1908-1948), Women's Society for World Service (1959-1975), Young Peoples Alliance (later the Evangelical League of Christian Endeavor, 1908-1942), Crusaders (1946-1949), Philathea Class (1923-1946), Young Men's Bible Class (1919-1928), Salem Brotherhood (1934-1954), and the church choir and drama club. Finally, a small series of photographs depict church construction and some of the congregation. The addenda added at a later date consists of information on the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church archives, a family membership roll, and a church register that includes a record of pastors, members, marriages, baptisms, deaths, and statistics.

Researchers should note that one minute book discussing church construction is in German. In addition, the historical file (Box 1, Folder 1) contains a detailed historical sketch as well as anniversary booklets. Researchers also are encouraged to consult other church collections held by the Regional History Center for complementary information: Unitarian Fellowship (RC 13); DeKalb First Congregational Church (RC 17); DeKalb First United Methodist Church (RC 24); St. Paul's Episcopal Church, DeKalb (RC 55); Rockford First

Lutheran Church (RC 83); Salem Lutheran Church, Sandwich (RC 84); and Trinity Lutheran Church, Mt. Morris (RC 104).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The missionary zeal of preachers at Naperville, Plainfield, and Oswego led to the formation of new church societies in the surrounding area. The Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church grew from the formation of two of these societies, Wheatland and Copenhagen, both of Wheatland township in Will County.

The Wheatland society organized in 1860 under the leadership of Samuel Dickover. A service, officiated by Bishop J.J. Esher, dedicated the church building on October 2, 1870. The society functioned prosperously until 1894 when a declining membership forced the church to close its doors.

The Copenhagen Church's history began at the home of Enos Stark of Wheatland, Illinois on December 26, 1860. The society built and dedicated a church at the cross roads near David Brown's home on May 5, 1861. Membership increased to 53 in 1888 and the Plainfield and Wheatland circuit began serving the Copenhagen Church. By 1905 the society deemed it necessary to either repair the old church or erect a new one. A dispute arose when some members requested that a new church be constructed one and a half miles south for convenience. In 1907 the members finally decided to agree on the new location. Simultaneously, they sent a petition to the Illinois Conference Session for permission to combine the defunct Wheatland Church and the Copenhagen Church. On April 5, 1908 Bishop S. P. Spreng held dedication services for the new church--the Salem Church.

The Salem Church continued to be served with Plainfield until 1920. On November 23, 1927 a fire completely destroyed the church building. Rather than remodeling the old structure, the society built a new church dedicated on November 25, 1928. By 1936, the church association requested that a parsonage be built for the residing pastor; they dedicated the manse on December 20, 1936. A few years later, 1947, the congregation decided to light the picture window of the sanctuary at night. To this day, the Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church is known as the "Church with the Lighted Window."

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Copenhagen Church
German Americans
Immigrants, German
Methodists

Naperville, Churches
Salem Church
Sunday Schools
Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
1	1	Historical Materials, (1860-1968)	
	2	By-Laws, 1954, n.d.	
	3	Subscription List, Copenhagen Church, 1860	
	4	Certificate of Election of Trustees, Copenhagen Church, 1861	
	5	Certificate of Organization, Immanuel Society of Wheatland, 1870	
	6	Minutes Discussing Church Construction (In German), (1870-1894)	
	7	Church Construction Contracts, 1907	
	8-10	Minutes, 1860-1915, 1948-1963	
	11-15	Minutes and Records, Quarterly Conference, 1920-1967	
	16-17	Conference Reports, 1946-1961	
	18	Treasurer's Monthly Report to Conference Treasurer, 1959-1965	
	19	Annual Reports, 1973-1975	
	20	Resolution, 1959	
	21	Committee Lists, 1965-1966	
	22	Membership Record, 1920-1948	
	23	Correspondence, (1935-1963)	
	24-28	Treasurer's Account Books, 1931-1947	
	2	1-3	Treasurer's Account Books, 1943-1963
		4	Minutes, Finance Board, 1944-1945
		5-6	Burial Records, Salem Church, (1861-1904)
		7	Church Bulletins, (1912-1977)
		8	<u>Wheatland News Bulletin</u> , 1st ed., n.d.
		9	<u>The Handclasp</u> , Newsletter, 1949-1955
		10	Building Fund Pledge and Cash Record, 1947
11-16		Secretary's Records, Sunday School, 1916-1927, 1948-1952	
17-23		Secretary's Records, Ladies' Aid Society, (1908-1948)	
24-25		Treasurer's Records, L.A.S., (1920-1953)	
3	1	Minutes, Women's Society for World Service, 1959-1969	
	2	Reports, W.S.W.S., (1959-1975)	
	3	Annual Reports, W.S.W.S., 1971-1973	
	4	Correspondence, W.S.W.S., (1959-1968)	
	5	Yearbooks, W .S .W.S. , (1954-1975)	
	6	Convention Brochure, W.S.W.S., 1965	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
4	1-3	Minutes, Young Peoples Alliance/Evangelical League of Christian Endeavor, 1908-1942
	4	Treasurer's Book, E.L.C.E., 1931-1949
5	1	Minutes, Crusaders 1946-1949
	2	Treasurer's Accounts, Crusaders, 1946-1947
	3-4	Minutes, Philathea Class, 1923-1946
	5	Minutes, Young Men's Bible Class, 1919-1928
	6	Minutes, Salem Brotherhood, 1934-1954
	7	Minutes, Church Choir, 1929-1957
	8	Minutes and Attendance Records, Drama Club, n.d.
	9	Photograph Album, n.d. (39 prints)
	10	Photographs, (1864-1978), n.d., (4 envelopes, 51 prints)
	11	United Methodist Women Information, 1973-1975
	12	Annual Report, Women's Auxiliary of Edward Hospital in Naperville, 1973-1974
	13	History, <u>The Evangelical Church</u> , n.d.
	14	<u>Structure and Program of the Local Church</u> , 1966-1967

ADDENDUM

	15	Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church Archives, 1980-1981
6	1	Financial Ledger Sheets, 1939-1952
	2	Booklet on Promoting Church Membership, n.d.
Oversize	2 volumes	Family Membership Roll, 1952-1981 Church Record, 1941-1979