

# Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

The members of Trinity Lutheran Church have much to rejoice about. We have experienced over 95 years of God's grace, love and mercy. This is a brief history of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

In 1925 a group of Lutherans, including Pastor Goltermann from Hessville, our circuit visiting Pastor, Reverend Rump, and Herman Herz canvassed the Lowell area finding enough people who were interested in starting a church.



Rev. Walter Vandre  
1926-1941

The first services of Trinity Lutheran Lowell were held in the homes of various members with the services being conducted by Reverend Goltermann. In May 1926, the Reverend Walter Vandre of Washington came to Lowell as our first resident Pastor.

In September 1926, an organizational meeting was held with nine gentlemen signing our congregation's first constitution. The nine charter members were: *William Bartz, Herman Herz, Edward Kruger, Herman L. Loitz, Hugo Poppe, John Rehborg, George Rust, Ed Stulmacher, and Walter Woodke.*

Church services were held in a vacated Methodist Church building on the corner of Burnham and Main, which was rented at a cost of \$400 per year.

An excerpt from a special meeting on October 24, 1926:

**“The motion that the Church Property be bought as economically as possible was carried.**

**The motion that Mr. Effenberger repair the furnace at \$.75 per hour – the Congregation to provide parts – was carried.**

**Hugo Poppe, Secretary”**

November 27, 1926 Special Meeting:

**“The pastor reported that the bell, donated to the church, was at the train station. The motion that we donate the old church bell to a mission church near Champaign, Illinois was carried. “**

December 12, 1926 Special Meeting:

**“The motion to have the children's Christmas program on Christmas Eve, was carried. It was resolved to permit those attending the Divine Services of the following evening to decide whether they desired to have German services on Christmas night or not.”**

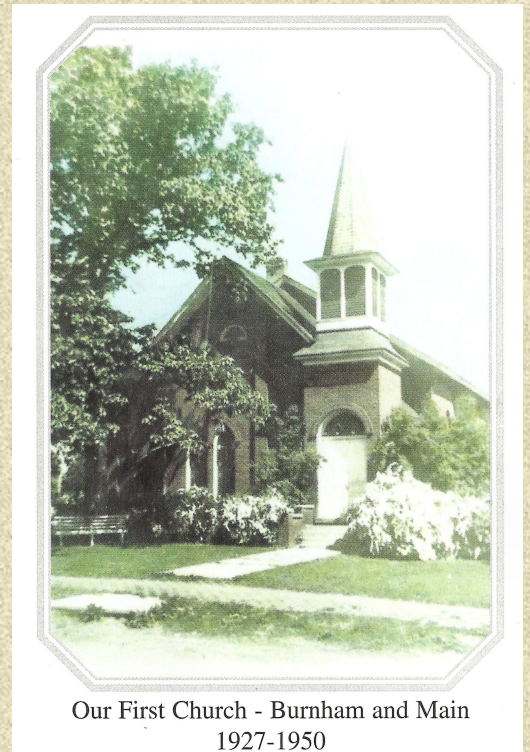
The red brick building was eventually purchased along with the parsonage for \$5000; and dedicated on May 15, 1927, with Professor Mueller of Valparaiso as guest speaker.

April 8, 1928 quarterly meeting:

**“The pastor and Mr. Bartz were authorized to price out chemical closets and to purchase the same whenever best.”**

October 2, 1928 meeting:

**“The Church Council reported that 5 tons of coal had been put into the church basement for \$6.50 per ton and 5-6 tons at \$7.50 per ton for the parsonage. Motion was made and carried to build a chicken house for the pastor.”**



Our First Church - Burnham and Main  
1927-1950



January 8, 1929 Quarterly meeting:

**“The pastor reported, a gentleman had offered to put and keep the organ in good condition for the sum of \$10:00 per year.”**

April 15, 1929 Quarterly meeting:

**“The pastor reported having the congregation at Paar to his field of service. A telephone had been installed in the parsonage as a necessity. The congregation at Paar has offered to pay a dollar a month to help defray the expense. It was resolved to add a dollar a month for upkeep of the service.”**

In 1933, the congregation became a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. In 1936, a Ladies Aid Society and a Young Peoples Society were organized. Later in 1947, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League became a part of our ladies' activities.

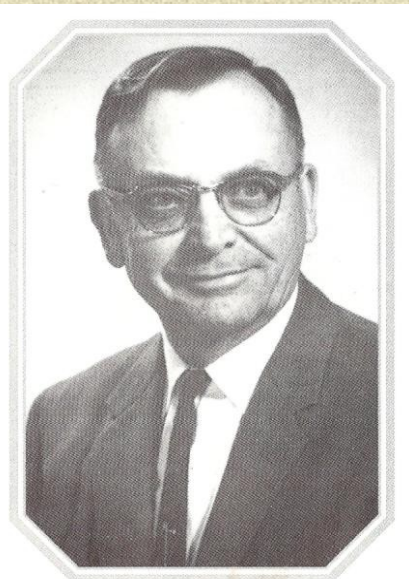


Rev. Hillis Hall  
1943-1949

In October 1941, Pastor Vandre accepted a call to Kappa, Indiana. He served his longest period here at Trinity and died on June 30, when he suffered a succession of heart attacks. The Reverend G. Gotsch of Paar then served as vacancy pastor until March 1943, when the Reverend Hillis F. Hall became the second resident pastor.

On February 20, 1944 the congregation voted to become self supporting – a real milestone in any congregation! The members of Trinity were indeed grateful for the subsidy received from the Central District of the LCMS.

In 1945 the congregation was given the choice of either repairing the old church or building a new house of worship. The decision was made to build. After 18 years, on September 30, 1945, the old debt of \$5000 was paid. From then to the end of 1949, a total of \$36,567.56 was collected for a new church and parish hall. On March 18, 1948, the purchase of the property for the new church was made at our current location. Construction started in 1948 and was completed in 1950. The architect was Herbert A. Brand of Chicago, IL. On May 21, 1950, our new “L” shaped church and parish hall, built of Wisconsin Lannon stone was dedicated to the glory of God and the welfare of man. The total cost including \$4000 for furniture was \$86,714.17.



Rev. William Adam  
1949-1966

The building committee was composed of: Emil Harding, Elmer Meyers, Otto Klukas, Herman Wietbrock, Henry Grelck, Don Sickinger, Arnold Rosenthal, Henry Sickinger, Otto Widdel, Herman Herz, and Earl Rehborg.

In January 1949, Pastor Hall accepted a call to Burlington Ohio. The Reverend Robert W. Rippe, Institutional Missionary at Crown Point, served as vacancy pastor. On May 15, 1949, the corner stone laying ceremony took place and work on the new house of worship had begun. Soon after this, the Reverend William Adam of Chicago Park, CA. was installed as pastor on July 3, 1949.



After being the home for the members of Trinity for 23 years, on May 14, 1950 the last worship service was held in the old church. On May 21, 1950 the dedication of the new house of worship took place with seven hundred people attending. Reverend Friend, PhD, of Joliet Il., was the guest speaker. Almost 400 people remained to partake of the ham supper provided by the women of the congregation, in the parish hall. An 8:00 p.m. service

also took place with 250 people attending the evening service of thanksgiving and praise with refreshments being served afterward in the parish hall.



New Church - 631 W. Commercial  
1950-1984

Pastor Adam gave the following report of Trinity Lutheran congregation at the time of the dedication for the new church. **“Trinity Lutheran Church has experienced a slow but steady growth. Since it’s organization in 1926, 396 souls are listed on the register. There have been 113 baptisms, 115 confirmations, 69 marriages and 26 burials. At present there are 200 souls and 140 communicants.”**

The first vacation bible school was started in 1950, and on September 23, 1951, Trinity Lutheran Church celebrated 25 years of GOD’s blessings. Reverend Adam stated, **“When we stop to think that in spite of all human weaknesses, GOD has shown His grace to our church through proclamation of His Word and the administration of His Sacraments for a quarter of a century, both to those now living and to those who have entered the Church Triumphant, we have much reason to thank and praise the Lord for His bountiful blessings.”**

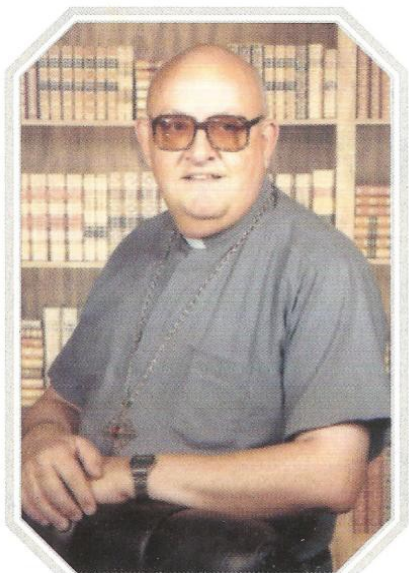
In November 1953, the new parsonage was started east of the church. Upon request, Pastor and Mrs. Adam drew up a plan for a seven room house, including a study, living room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and a bathroom. Their plan was adopted. With the help of 30 men from our congregation and other craftsman, the house was completed in four months at a cost of \$12,900.02. This and the cost of the church and parish hall totaled \$99,614.19.

The parsonage was dedicated on February 14, 1954 during the 10:00 a.m. service. With the blessings of the Lord, the sum was paid in full by May 1958, so that our congregation was debt free.

All available space had been utilized in the church, parish hall and parsonage for Sunday School. In 1964 much time was spent discussing the possibility of constructing an education building. On March 14 a contract was signed with B&W contractors for \$51,807.00. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on April 18, 1965. The construction was completed and the dedication was held on November 14. Reverend Julius Acker, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church of Hammond, was the guest speaker. There was a beef and ham dinner served by the ladies of the church. The donation cost was \$2.50 per adult and \$6.00 per family.

After serving Trinity for 16 years, Reverend Adam asked for his peaceful release, effective November 30, 1966. He went on to serve the congregation of Zion, Bonfield, IL. And later retired to Bourbonnais, IL. He spent his last years at the Lutheran Retirement Village in Crown Point. During the vacancy, Reverend Meyer of Crown Point (Circuit Counselor), handled meetings while Reverend Kaufman took care of daily activities and Professor Umbaugh of Valparaiso served at church services.

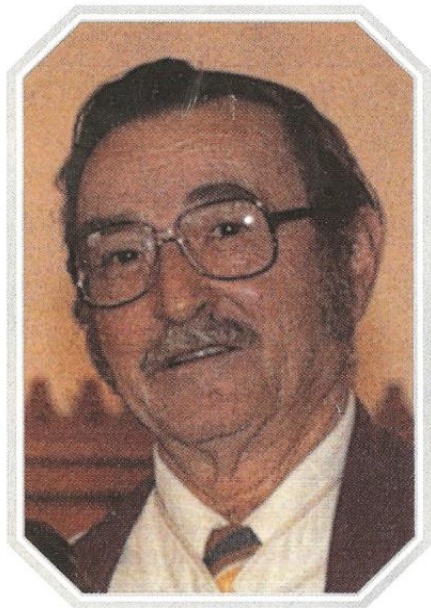




Rev. Luther Russert  
1967-1972

On October 15, 1967 Reverend Luther Russert was installed as pastor. He served for a period of 5 years until he accepted a call to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Hammond. During the vacancy, Pastor Nickel (Circuit Counselor), conducted meetings and Reverend Rothe of Crown Point conducted confirmation classes, while Reverend Harthun of Lansing held church services.

On May 12, 1971 it was decided to purchase an Allen Organ at a cost of \$9,450.00 including some needed balcony remodeling.

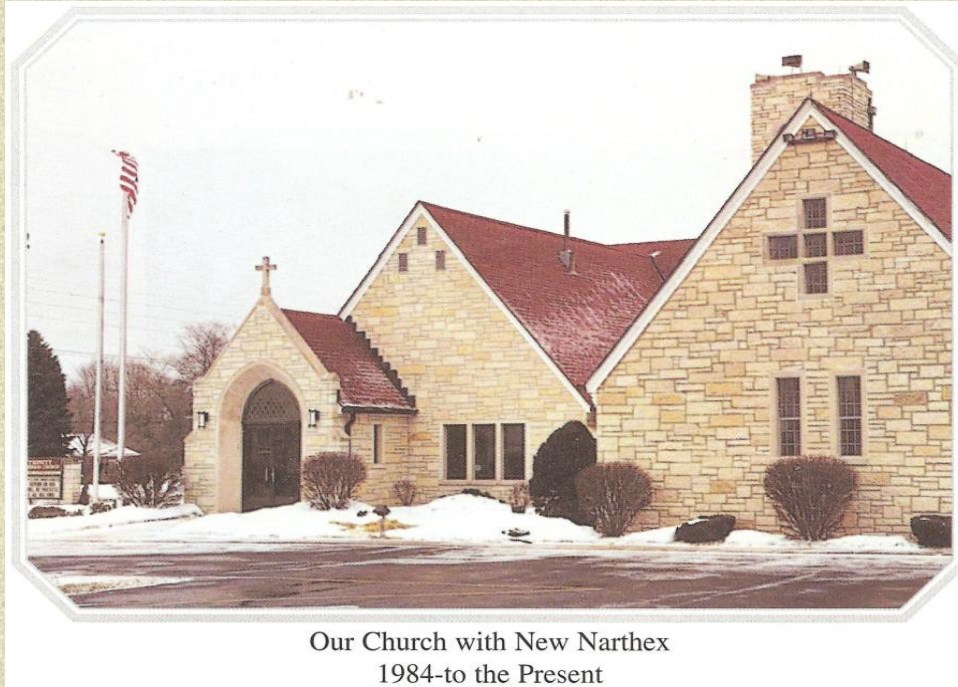


Rev. Andrew Vavra  
1973-1987

On September 9, 1973 Pastor Andrew Vavra, from Sadorus, IL., was installed as our fifth resident pastor. On June 10, 1976, Trinity Lutheran Church celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Reverend Zimmerman served as our guest speaker.



On June 1979 plans were presented for a new narthex to be added to the church. In August 1983, a contract was signed for \$122,300.00. Dr. E.H. Zimmerman was the guest speaker at the dedication of our new addition on June 10, 1984. A carry in dinner followed the service. At this time came other new changes including carpeting of the pews, chancel changes, and balcony revision.



Our Church with New Narthex  
1984-to the Present

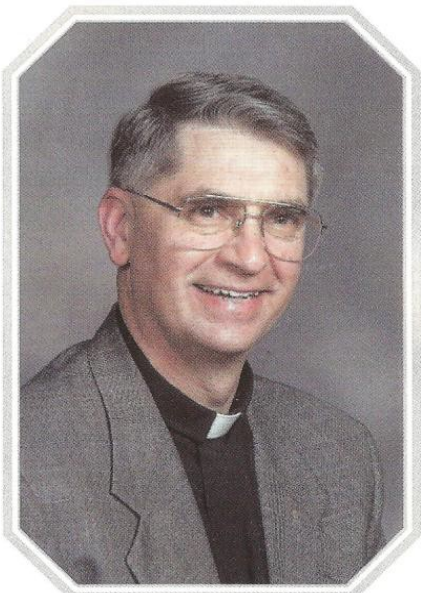
Below is an aerial photograph of the church property in 2006.





In 1980, Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services Inc. of Watertown, Wisconsin built a group home in Lowell and the eight new residents were warmly welcomed into our congregation.

On February 15, 1987 Pastor Vavra retired from the ministry. Pastor Marvin Rastl of Cedar Lake served as vacancy pastor. Pastor Robert Schulz of Hebron and lay assistant Ed Herzog served for the church activities.



**Rev. Mark Pflughoeft**  
1987-2007

On June 28, 1987 Pastor Mark Pflughoeft, from Boone, Iowa was installed as pastor. Our food pantry was established in 1987, to serve the needy in our community. The food pantry now serves more than 100 families each month and has 18 members of the congregation as helpers. Our preschool was started in September 2000, and has grown to 60 students and 5 staff members.

In August 2001 our congregation purchased a "Rembrandt 3000" organ which was made by the Johanunus Organ Company in Holland, Europe. It was installed by the Pickle Church Organ Company of Bloomington IL. The original cost was \$62,500.00. The company offered a \$2000 trade in on our old organ, and also offered to reduce the cost if they could occasionally use the organ for demonstration purposes. The arrangement was accepted by the congregation. The final cost was \$42,600.00.

On May 9th, 2007 Pastor Pflughoeft was granted a peaceful release effective after services on July 1st, 2007.



**Rev. Norman Aman**  
2007-2008

Pastor Norman Aman, served as interim pastor from July 2007 until March 2008. Pastor Aman lived in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. He and his wife commuted to Lowell on Fridays and back to Ft. Wayne on Tuesdays. Members of the congregation donated furniture for them to be able to stay in the parsonage.



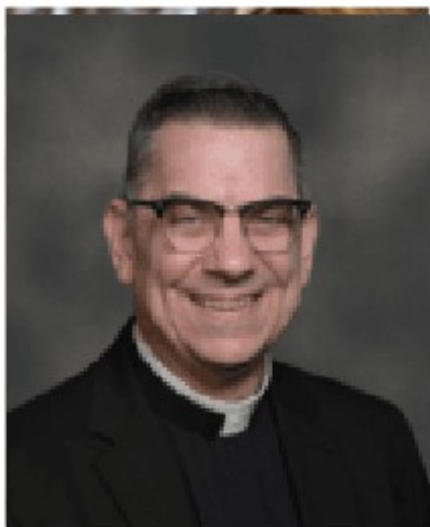
Rev. Chad D. Kendall  
2008 - 2020

Pastor Chad D. Kendall, from Spirit Lake Iowa, accepted our call and was installed on March 9th, 2008. Pastor Kendall was ordained on August 4, 2002 at Immanuel Lutheran Church at Spirit Lake, Iowa, where he served as Associate Pastor until his installation at Lowell.

Staff recruiting issues caused us to close our preschool in May 2019.

On January 24, 2020 Pastor Kendall was granted a peaceful release effective April 13, 2020. Pastor Kendall accepted a call as Associate Pastor St. John Lutheran Church Wheaton Illinois.

Due to Covid-19 Pastor Kendall could not start his call at St. John until June 2020. The voters assembly approved extending his pay until he could start on June 1, 2020.



Pastor Rich Heinz

In July 2020 our Voters Assembly issued a call to Pastor Richard Heinz, who was serving Concordia University Chicago in the area of Church Relations and Resident Director. Pastor Heinz accepted the call and was installed on August 9, 2020.

As of March 2021 we have 627 baptized and 481 communicant members.



In retrospect, we can see how the Lord has bountifully blessed our congregation. As we proceed forward, we pray for the Lord's continued work through the members at Trinity Lutheran Church. May our prayers and praise which we make before the Lord, be near the Lord our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His people as each day may require, that all peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other. We pray in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

*Soli Deo Gloria*

*"Glory To God Alone"*