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History of Zion Lutheran Church

Zion Lutheran Church

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HISTORY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Worship services were begun in 1911 under the direction of Pastor Baumann in the Swedish Lutheran Church located at 17th Street & Avenue C. In 1912 they began to conduct their services in the Congregational Church. The first Sunday School enrollment in that year was 13 and the congregation consisted of 17 families and 40 communicant members. The formal organization of Zion Lutheran took place September 14, 1913. The Christian Church on 25th & C was purchased by a small group for \$1,317.50. Reverend Jiede was installed in 1915 and served until 1921. He was succeeded by Reverend Staehr who remained pastor of Zion until 1929. Reverend E. O. Potratz was installed in 1929 and served until his retirement in 1959. In 1930 Zion opened its Christian Day School, and at the present time has an enrollment of about 60 taught by 3 full time teachers. In 1951 the new church building located on 25th & C was dedicated. Upon the retirement of Pastor Potratz in 1959, Pastor Max Heinz accepted the call and remained until 1967 at which time Pastor Carl Brueggemann assumed the work of pastor. The present staff includes Carl Brueggemann, pastor, Anton Loock, assistant pastor, Ronald Koehler, principal, Velma Fritz, teacher, LaVonne Peterson, teacher, Linda Fritz, secretary, and Mark Zimmermann, custodian.

Zion Lutheran grew from a handful of Lutherans to approximately 1200 baptized souls in 1973. In 1973 they purchased the service station directly east of the church, and they hope to acquire other residences within the block for the future expansion of its education and recreation facilities. In 1973 they still owned the property between Avenue B & D and between 32nd & 33rd Streets.

In 1965 a group of the members of Zion organized Holy Cross Lutheran Church whose property was located north of Kearney State College.