

Lavelle people worshipped in Ashland

Before the formation of St. Peter's congregation, the Lutheran people of Lavelle, (then called Huntersville) went to Ashland to worship in the German Language in Zion Lutheran Church on the 14th and Market St. Area. The church stood on a hilly piece of ground at the end of 13th street and across it was a huge plot of ground which was made later into a beautifully kept park by volunteers of Zion.

The Rev. J. Weber was pastor at Zion at the time. In 1891, Rev. G.W. Fritsch began his pastorate at Zion, and organized a small congregation in (Huntersville) Lavelle. Services were first held in the old church in Taylorsville, later in the public school house in Huntersville, and following that, in the church building of the Evangelical following that, in the church people worshipped—ever 3rd

Sunday—in the German language.

While the congregation was being supplied by The Rev. Paul E. Bergeman of Zion, Ashland, in 1904, a charter was secured as preparations began for erecting a permanent church home. A plot of ground was obtained in purchase from a member of the congregation, Mrs. Charles Lexo, and things got started. The cornerstone was laid on May 1, 1904, and the building erected during the summer. Dedication Service was October 2. The total cost of the building was \$2,500. (those were the olden days according to building costs). About this time the Sunday School, Young Peoples' Society and Ladies Aid were also organized.

The debt was paid in October 1907, and progress in the form of bringing the English into the

service alternating each week with the German service was accomplished. Around 1915 German Language services were discontinued entirely, and all worship was English.

Steadily but surely, improvements were made: most noteworthy were the installation of electric light, 1920; building the Primary Room, 1928; dedication of the beautiful stained glass windows, 1934. An altar was purchased, being dedicated in 1940. The following year brass altar furnishings were provided, and in 1942 the chancel was completed with addition of paraments and chancel furnishings.

In 1939 it became necessary to enlarge the church property with the purchase of the picnic grove, where an artesian well was drilled in 1941. Next, the exterior of the building was renovated in 1948 with present

siding. In 1950 the interior was done. In November of the same year the Hammond Electric Organ was donated and dedicated; 1951 the present heating system was installed, and—in 1952—at long last—a new kitchen, modern and bright. A few years later the front exterior was renovated, adding the cloak room, and stairway down to the Sunday School room; also modern bathroom facilities.

It brought to Christ's United, did this buzzing little church, a healthy, vigorous leadership which has contributed to the spirituality of its people.

Dedication dates: Altar 1940; cross, candles 1941; fair linen, missal stand, American and Christian flags, reredos, altar covers, paraments, 1942; lectern, 1945, pulpit, 1946; organ 1950; chimes on organ, choir gowns, stalls, 1951; book marks for hymnals, kitchen 1953.