

# **Zion Lutheran Church History**

## **1905-2005**

**First Hundred Years--A Year Book**

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June 2005

# Preface

When a church is a hundred years old, whom do you go to for a Preface? All original members of Zion Lutheran Church are long passed away to their reward. Very few members from the last celebration, the 60th Anniversary, remain in the congregation. Memories from the past obviously fade. We are thankful that memories are as good as they are and especially appreciate the work of long-time members in review of this year book in its completed form. Times change. Familiar people in service to their church are no longer with us. So where do you go for a Preface? Three different perspectives are reflected in this Preface, each having its own flavor and presenting its own view of Christ's work in Zion Lutheran Church. Gary Kubina is a child of long-time members Victor and Ella Kubina; he grew up in Zion. Ernest and Henri Etta Burnett have been involved in the life of the church beginning in the 1970s. We are thankful for their crafting the following thoughts for this Preface.

## A Broad Overview

Swedish Lutheran Zion Church was organized in 1905 by people from the Midwest, mainly the Chicago area. They were lured to the Silverhill area by the rich farmland. During the early years of Zion, they met in Oscar Johnson's land office and probably other public buildings. In 1914 the congregation began assembling pledges for a building and began construction in 1915, the church building in which we now worship. The land was donated by Mr. Johnson. The beautiful pulpit, altar and posts of the church were made from local heart pine. Unique in the construction of the building are the two metal rods that reach from side to side to hold the church together. They can be seen in the sanctuary. The stained glass windows are a later addition. They were crafted and donated in 1985 by family member Lee Nitteberg who was living in California. Members drove a pick-up to California to fetch the windows. Robert and Charles Nitteberg built the frames and installed them.

Zion Church has been affiliated with several Lutheran bodies. Originally there was the Augustana Synod, then the United Lutheran Church (UCLA), the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and now the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC). Services were held in Swedish until about 1920. Church records, however, continued in Swedish for several years afterwards.

In the late 1920s and 1930s Zion had a close relationship with a Norwegian congregation in St. Elmo, AL. Its name was St. Elmo Lutheran Church. Over the years these two congregations helped each other with pastoral exchanges and had many fellowship gatherings. That church has been disbanded for many years, but we still hear of the close association of these two Scandinavian congregations.

As in many small rural churches, there have been highs and lows. I think we are somewhere in the middle at this time. We have supported missionaries and seminarians. We have been involved in establishing several new congregations and we support local and church-wide charities. A big accomplishment in 2004 was when we completed our new Parish Hall. This has allowed us to reach out to our members and to the community.

Over the years, our attendance has been like a roller coaster. We have had to rely on other congregations such as St. Paul's and St. Peter's Lutheran Churches in Mobile to fill our pulpit. At times we were not a viable church because we did not have the people or the resources. That has changed. We are making a difference in our community and in our church. I believe we are slowly moving forward as a congregation and a lot of that has to do with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Also, we now have a full time pastor who lives in the community and who is interested in our past, present, and future.

Men have not been active in the same way as the women of the church over the years, but men have been involved in a variety of men's groups even during my tenure at Zion, but the continuity present in the LCW has been wanting in men's groups. But we have been encouraged over the years by fellowship among our peers and in our church at large.

Zion Church has been advised more than once that it would not survive. But, let me tell you one thing. In 2005 Zion celebrates its Hundredth Anniversary. And believe you me, it is still kicking! No one can foresee the future but things are looking up by the grace of the same God raised up in Silverhill a hundred years ago. To God be the glory!

**Ernest E. Burnett**

## **A Women's Ministry View Point**

We called ourselves the "L.C.W" or the "Ladies Aid" regardless of what the church hierarchy named us. We met monthly and enjoyed each other's company. We gave up trying to have a Bible Study or present programs because no one felt competent to be the leader. There were an opening and closing prayer and perhaps a shared poem or article. Our gathering consisted of a business meeting with the reading of minutes, treasurer's report, and discussion of future and ongoing projects. After the closing prayer, we sang "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." Some times we watched part of a Christian video and most of the time a work day was scheduled for sewing projects.

Lillian Moseley ably and graciously served as president for many years followed by Eleanor Nitteberg. Others who were in regular attendance were: Alice Seymour (now deceased), Violet Buonauro, Charlotte Zander (now deceased), Della Sandell, June Langenbach, Ella Kubina and Henri Etta Burnett.

Ongoing projects consisted of making quilts and baby layettes to send overseas, making lap robes for area nursing homes, and creating banners to enhance our worship service. There were usually two sewing machines going. The iron and ironing board were set up and tables were pushed together to do the cutting. The Christmons that decorate our tree at Christmas were made by these dedicated ladies.

We took up an offering at every meeting. With our offerings and the money made from fish fries we supported a missionary family, bought items for the church, and gave to local social agencies.

Two yearly projects close to Eleanor Nitteberg's heart were the Heritage Day Fish Fry and the Robertsdale County Fair. At the fish fry Eleanor saw that each lady willing to serve had a special job. She also organized the men to help--Charlie Canning, Pete Midgarden, Victor Kubina, Emil Sandell, to name a few. The night before, Eleanor, with help, set up to accommodate the 250 or so people who would come through the line. The menu was fried mullet, baked beans, slaw, hush puppies, ice tea, and cake. Fred Langenbach made and fried the hushpuppies. Robert Nitteberg and several other men fried the fish on the screened porch in the old building and a "gofer" passed the fried fish through the window over the sink in the kitchen. All of the ladies baked and brought a cake for desert with the meal. Any left over food was taken to Baldwin County Mental Health off of Highway 90 or the girl's home in Silverhill. Our day started at 8:00 and usually ended with the cleanup at 3:00. Those who were able were on their feet all day. For several years we had baked goods and crafts for sale on Heritage Day.

We entered the county fair for many years and usually placed among those winning. When we won first place, we were able to donate the \$100 prize to the church. Eleanor and Robert Nitteberg with the help of others spent many hours putting the booth together, to the glory of God, and to have the name of Zion Lutheran Church before the community. The millennium was the last year we entered and we won first place.

The ladies of the LCW seemed most happy when they were busy with their hands and working toward the goal of helping others. It seems that their motivational gifts were givers and servers. Praise the Lord for their ministry of love and compassion in the Name of Jesus!

**Henri Etta Burnett**

## **A Youth Ministry View Point from the 1960s**

What do you do for a preface to a 100 year history of a church? Well, look to memories, of course! For those of you who are relatively new to Zion, my Mom is Ella and my Dad was Victor Kubina and my brothers are Jim (Jimmy) and Ron (Ronnie). I grew up primarily in the time when Zion was part of the LCA, born August 1, 1957, baptized December 8, 1957 (St. Paul's Lutheran in Foley), confirmed July 4, 1976, at Zion, and married to my wonderful wife Beverly on July 4, 1987, at Zion, of course. I now attend St. Paul's Lutheran in Mobile (Pastor Dr. Karnig Kazanjian). I am a Math Teacher at Citronelle High School in Mobile.

I thank God that my parents were Christian role models. Attending Zion Lutheran Church was a big part of the growing process for me. I remember the building and the grounds, but especially the people. I remember ringing the enormous bell and having the rope lift me off the ground. I remember special events at Easter and Christmas. I looked forward to the Easter candy, even as I got older. One Christmas my two brothers and I played the three wise men. During the play, someone wound up the musical lamb beside the manger, and I started to giggle. I remember lots of dinners. We are Lutherans, after all.

Even to this day, when I return to Zion, I am greeted like an old friend or family member. I can recall people from my childhood. It was like taking a mental roll call each Sunday, because you knew exactly where

everyone sat, pew by pew -- and you knew everyone. As a child I can remember going to Sunday School. Mrs. Kinard taught me so much of the Bible, but she always made it relevant to my life. She was such a good teacher. As I got older, the sermons during church service started to sink in and make sense. Growing up in the church was not just a physical growth over time, but more importantly, a spiritual growth. I was confirmed and married in Zion Lutheran Church.

When my fiancée, Beverly, walked into the church for the first time, she said, "This is it." Pastor Nipper (our Mobile pastor) and Pastor Jolliff (my Zion pastor) both performed the wedding. A thread from Zion has certainly weaved itself into my life. I will pray for and think fondly of the people at Zion Lutheran Church. Some memories never fade. Zion, I know your doors will always be opened to me and to the community. May the love of Christ continue to be shared within your walls!

**Gary Kubina**

## **Acknowledgment**

The assistance of members and friends of Zion Lutheran Church in assembling the following material is gratefully acknowledged. Memories, documents, and pictures used in this brief history of our church can only suggest the depth of struggles and successes of the fellowship in Christ we all share through the Zion congregation. Please recognize that not all materials could be used in this year book because of space limitations. We are thankful, however, to all who provided information and historical documents and pictures. A careful reading of this document will affirm the graciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ in sustaining the little Zion congregation through an eventful hundred years. The organization of this brief history is summarized in its title. This is a year book with events organized by year. Groups of years occasionally are given a broad title to connect the flow of events. Names of people, places, and events may be in bold print for easier reading. The vast majority of the history is directly drawn from church documents archived from 1905 to the present. Whether our church archives or other resources were accessed for our history, all material is footnoted for source. In the last pages is the historical record of membership for our first hundred years as we have pieced it together. Unfortunately, there may be gaps in membership rosters relating to lost documents or poor record keeping.

**Pastor Dave Johnson, Editor**

## **Introduction and Organization**

This century review of the activities of Swedish Lutheran Zion Church of Silverhill, Alabama, (aka Zion Lutheran Church) was produced to support the celebration of the first hundred years of the congregation's existence. As the reader will note, this document has been organized by year starting with some background on the early development of the Silverhill area and the Lutheran experience prior to the actual organization of Zion in 1905. Some information has been limited for several of the years but many events have been remembered with anecdotes and facts. Of course there have been many things that are not remembered and no doubt some memories are a bit inaccurate. Please feel free to make observations or annotations in the margins as you read our history. We have attempted to supply a historic list of members since the beginning, but we know there were incomplete membership records for the early years and at least 20 years during the 70s and 80s so additions may be needed in those time ranges particularly.

The congregation is greatly indebted to Pastor Dave Johnson for leading this history effort and writing most of it. In addition, he oversaw much of the research. He even had to increase his knowledge of the Swedish language to read and understand the records for the first thirty years or so. Many of our long-time members have provided memories, old written material, and pictures that have been a great help in understanding what God has done for us in blessing Zion's first hundred years.

There have been many high points, of course, and tough times during the years, but through them the Lord has allowed the congregation to continue and to seek to do His will. The church has been associated with several Lutheran groups during its existence, the most recent the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The move to the AFLC has brought Zion "full circle" as it rediscovers its pietistic roots. The clear and conservative understanding of God's Word as understood by the early Augustana Synod and as Luther himself expressed it at the time of the Reformation, is again celebrated and honored by Zion's membership.

Zion's web site at [www.LutheransInSilverhill.com](http://www.LutheransInSilverhill.com) contains lots of additional material, especially pictures and sound. In addition, it has a current schedule of services, events, and activities if you desire a church home.

**Peter Midgarden, Congregational President**

# Zion Lutheran Church History, 1905-2005



Figure 1. Zion Lutheran Church in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



Figure 2. Stationery rendering used for church business.

## First Hundred Years--A Year Book

# Zion Lutheran Church History, 1905-2005 First Hundred Years--A Year Book

## Before There Was a Silverhill, Alabama

1888

**Dr. and Mrs. E. C. Slosson** and daughters **Ellen** and **Lois** (later **Mrs. Ellen Slosson Bouse** and **Mrs. Lois Slosson Sundberg**) raised sheep south of **Silverhill** beginning in 1888. The **Slossons** had emigrated from **Illinois** and were instrumental to the land development that would become **Silverhill**. **Dr. Slosson** engaged in the care of the ill and needy, making countless trips on horseback in the area. More significantly, the **Slosson** home welcomed travelers and land seekers who came to the area, the most important for local history being **Oscar Johnson**. **Oscar Johnson** settled in **Silverhill**, built a home, and encouraged people to come and settle in the area. Ultimately a hotel would be erected, followed by a small store in 1902, built by **Theodore A. Johnson** of **Chicago**. **Charles Olander** would build the **Olander** hotel in 1899 where the **Baptists** organized their church.<sup>1</sup>

**Oscar Johnson** is fascinating, because each of the early churches which developed in **Silverhill** sprang from services held in his land office, home of the **Svea Land Company**. An interview with **Elvera Armstrong** fleshes out the man: "Her father **Oscar Johnson** took care of almost everything in **Silverhill**. In the beginning, he provided facilities for both school classes and church services. When there was no pastor in the settlement, **Johnson** preached and conducted funerals. He donated the land for the cemetery. Sometimes he also paid for having a grave dug and a casket made. The family was of the Lutheran faith, but since a Lutheran pastor was not always available, **Elvera** was married by a Baptist minister (in the Lutheran Church). **Elvera's** sister was confirmed by a pastor of the Evangelical Covenant faith. The pastors often exchanged pulpits."<sup>2</sup>

## Early Lutheran Activity in Silverhill, Alabama

1895-1904

**Pastors J. E. Hedberg, H. F. H. Hartelius, and J. J. Richard** began visiting **Silverhill** on an irregular basis in conjunction with their ministry in **Thorsby, Alabama**, an outreach of the **Augustana Synod**, the Swedish Lutheran Synod in North America. The **Evangelical Lutheran Concordia Church** was not formally founded in **Thorsby** until January 1, 1897, by **Pastor H. F. H. Hartelius**. **Emanuel Lutheran at Fruithurst** was founded about same time. There were only 50 Swedish Lutherans between those two churches when **Swedish Lutheran Zion Church** (later called **Zion Lutheran Church**) became the third **Augustana** mission church in **Alabama** in 1905.<sup>3</sup>

1895

Despite the optimism concerning **Silverhill** that many have reported, the view of early Augustana Synod church workers was reserved at best. **Pastor Hjalmar Frithiof Hartelius** reported on **Augustana Synod** activities two decades later: "In this state [**Alabama**] the **Synod** has carried on home Mission work since before 1895. The latest statistics show that three congregations belong to the **Synod**, named **Emanuel in Fruithurst, Concordia in Thorsby and Zion in Silver Hill** with a total of 66 communicants. These small communities are the results of private speculations and do not seem to have any future. But since those who

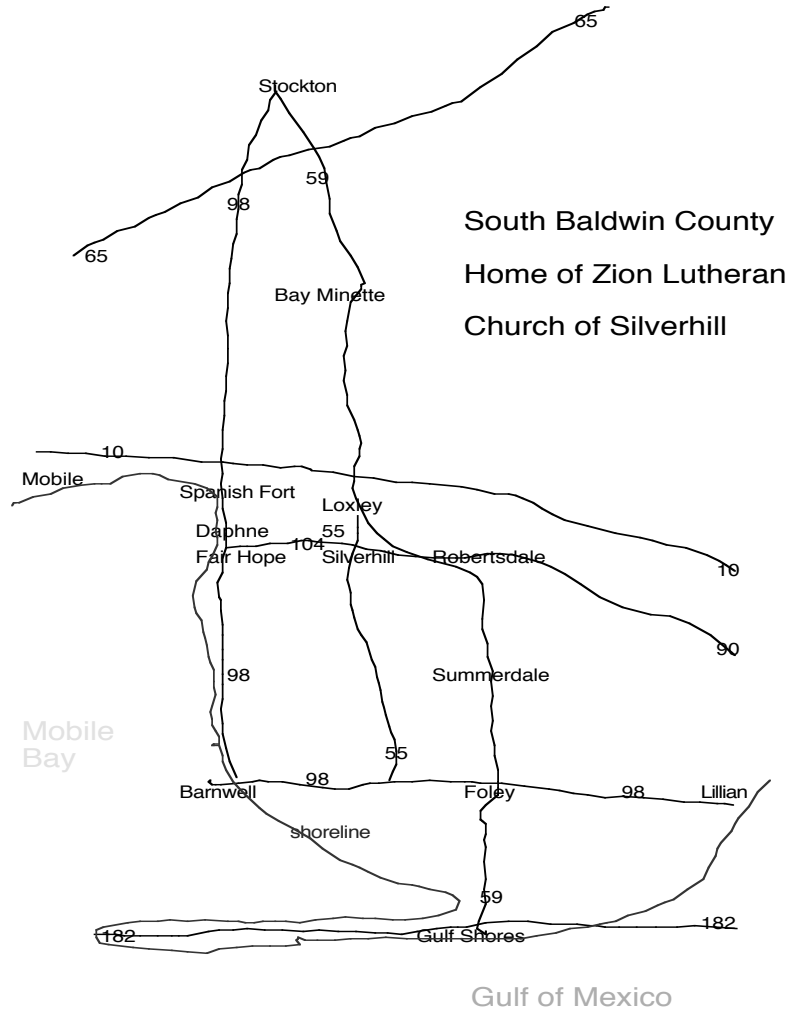
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<sup>1</sup>Anna Linder Anderson, "History of Zion Lutheran Church: Silverhill, Alabama" ([Silverhill: Zion Archives], 1965). [Edited for spelling and punctuation on transcription by David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003).] General history and non-church specifics may be accessed at web addresses <http://www.rootsweb.com/~alcsilve/history.pdf> and <http://www.rootsweb.com/~alcsilve/woodbooktext.html> per Debbie Owen, Webmaster for Site [Personal E-Mail] (May 23, 2005 and May 29, 2005).

<sup>2</sup>Lilly Setterdahl and American Friends of the Emigrant Institute of Sweden, Inc., Memories Preserved, Vol. II: Scandinavians in Alabama and Guide to Interviews with Swedish Americans (Verona, MO: Johnson's Valley Printers, 1992), 70-74. Owen, [Personal E-Mail] (May 23, 2005).

<sup>3</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Church Council Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003).

have settled down there have realized their lack of spiritual and churchly care and have asked for help, the **Synod** has tried to do everything possible for them. The pastors who have served the field in **Alabama** are: **J. E. Hedberg, H. F. H. Hartelius and J. J. Richard**. They made their homes in **Thorsby**, the largest congregation and from there they visited different localities in the state."<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 3.** Silverhill is located between Daphne and Fairhope on State Highway 104, fifteen minutes from Mobile Bay and half an hour from Gulf Shores on the Gulf of Mexico.

## 1896

What did those early settlers of the area really see? **Silverhill** was seen as a pleasant town in **Alabama**. The **Svea Land Company of Chicago** began development of the area in 1896. It was pine-wooded and lay east of **Mobile Bay**. Land company officials, **Oscar Johnson, C. O. Carlson, and C. A. Vallentin**, initially directed the development. The town derived its name from the activities of **Martin Lowell**, operator of a turpentine distillery east of the town site, on "**The Hill**" (later gifted to the area as **Oscar Johnson Memorial Park**). **Martin Lowell** reportedly paid his workers in silver coin obtained from a bank in **Mobile** and shipped by boat to **Daphne**, and then by mule to **The Hill**, which became "**Silverhill**" when the new town was so named. It would become a picnic spot for the churches in future years.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Lilly Setterdahl [Translator], Eric Norelius, *De Svenska Lutherska Forsamlingarnas och Svenskarnes Historia i America* (Rock Island, 1916), 131. In: Setterdahl et al, *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 26.

<sup>5</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

The **Axel T. Westerlunds** were the first family to arrive in **Silverhill** with their infant daughter, **Esther Louise** (later **Mrs. George Lundberg**). The next year **Mrs. Oscar Johnson**, Oscar's father, and daughters, **Vera and Agnes** (later **Mrs. Phil Armstrong and Mrs. G. W. Utter**) arrived from **Chicago**. They found **Silverhill** to be laid out like the markets in **Sweden**. The town center was comprised of four squares, called **Market Square** which later would become endowed with parks, flowers, shrubbery and pecan trees.<sup>6</sup>

The early settlers were Scandinavians, mostly Swedish. They cleared land, built houses, and laid out fields. Soon they began to build churches and schools. All denominations met for worship services and **Sunday School** in **Oscar Johnson's** land office (the present Library Building). Services were conducted in Swedish by **Mr. Westerlund**, and later by **Mr. Carl Edfeldt**. School classes were initiated there as well and the first teacher coming to the settlement would be **Miss Millie Anderson**, followed by **Miss Sara Carlson**. A school was eventually constructed (later to become the home of **Mrs. G. Edhegard**). Settlement growth brought church development along the denomination lines present in the Old Country. The Baptists were the first to exert autonomy becoming **First Baptist of Silverhill**, followed by the Mission Covenant people becoming **Silverhill Mission Covenant**, and lastly the Lutherans who incorporated **Zion Lutheran Church**. **Oscar Johnson** was instrumental in providing lots for the school and the churches. Early Lutheran services for the first ten years of worship would utilize the school.<sup>7</sup>

## 1897

The **Reverend John Emil Hedberg** organized the **Evangelical Lutheran Concordia Church in Thorsby**, January 1, 1897. The pastor had arrived in the settlement in 1896. In addition to serving the **Thorsby** congregation, he also would serve the developing **Zion Lutheran Church in Silverhill** and the **Emanuel Lutheran Church** congregation in **Fruithurst**. The baptismal records for **Concordia Lutheran Church** (1897-1928) show that many of the people who had their children baptized in **Thorsby** lived in **Fruithurst** and **Silverhill**.<sup>8</sup>

## 1904

**Pastor Hjalmar Frithiof Hogstedt Hartelius** would succeed **Pastor Hedberg** in 1904 and would stay in **Alabama** until 1908. He was able to identify with and minister to the Swedish émigrés, being born in 1861 in the city of **Lund, Sweden**, and himself an émigré from **Jonkoping** in 1887. He, like other **Swedish immigrants** had initially traveled elsewhere in the United States, arriving in **Thorsby** from **Sweaburg, NE**. His wife, **Edith Olivia Olson**, and four children were born in **Sweaburg**. Little daughter, **Anna Edith Irene**, would be born in 1907 in **Thorsby**.<sup>9</sup>



**Figure 4 (l)**. Lanterns such as this lit the early meeting spaces of people gathered for evening worship. This particular lantern was used along with its twin in our historic church building in 1915, and may have been used earlier in the church history. **Figure 5 (r)**. Original mock-slate hymn board used in the original church prior to the use of bulletins to announce hymns of the day, etc. This board may have been used in the school rented by the church as early as 1905 or in pre-church days beginning in 1897.

<sup>6</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Mrs. Trygve Anderson, "Zion Lutheran Church Will Mark Its 60th Year Sunday" ([No newspaper source identifiable], April 28, 1966). <http://www.rootsweb.com/~alc/silve/memories.html#memories3> per D. Owen, Webmaster [Personal E-Mail] (May 29, 2005).

<sup>7</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>8</sup>Setterdahl et al, Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 26.

<sup>9</sup>Setterdahl et al., Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 25.



# Organization of Evangelical Swedish Lutheran Zion Church in Silverhill, Alabama

1905

**Pastors J. E. Hedberg and E. J. Werner** of **Thorsby** preached and performed ministerial acts when they visited **Silverhill** in the late 1890s, but there were no formal, organized activities until **Zion Lutheran Church** was developed late in December, 1905, by the **Reverend H. F. H. Hartelius** of the **Augustana Synod**.<sup>10</sup> This is the year that **Mr. A. A. Norden** built the **Norden Hotel** that became popular with the northern tourists during the winter months (i.e., **Silverhill's** first "**Snowbirds**"). **Mrs. A. Norden** would be hosting **Zion's Ladies Aid** nine years later. Both the **Olander** and **Norden** Hotels would have their turn at housing the **post office** and **grocery stores**. **Pastor H. F. H. Hartelius** gathered Lutherans in the **Silverhill** area together and organized **Evangelical Swedish Lutheran Church** on December 18, 1905 with 16 charter members.<sup>11</sup>

**Pastor Hartelius** had been ordained in **Moline, IL**, about the time **Silverhill** was developing. He had attended **Augustana College and Seminary**, and served in **Marshfield, OR, Concord, NE, and Sweaburg, NE**, before coming to **Thorsby, AL**, in 1904. **Pastor H. F. H. Hartelius** was sent to **Silverhill** by the **Augustana Synod**. The formal church name would become the **Evangelical Swedish Lutheran Zion Church** the next month. Record documentation would be filed in the Office of Probate in **Baldwin County** on May 21, 1906. A constitution was adopted. The first members of the congregation were: **Sam Jacobson, Hugo Valin, Herbert Jacobson, Jonas Hammarstrom, Lina Hammarstrom, Gilbert Jacobson, Bengt Johnson, P. M. Johnson, Carl Johan Swenson, Emma Kristina Swenson, Mr. and Mrs. P. W. Paulson, Lars Peterson, Tilda Peterson, Erick Ulrickson and Mrs. Otto Anderson**.<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 6.** Pew with two-board back was used upstairs of the Silverhill School for church meetings from 1905 to 1915 when there was no church building.

That first church meeting is interesting in itself because it is apparent what is important to these 16 charter members. At this first meeting of the **Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Silverhill, Bengt**

<sup>10</sup>"In 1905 Silverhill Forms Lutheran Church" (Baldwin Times, 11 November 1971), p. 13C. Setterdahl et al., Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 69-70.

<sup>11</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Owen, [Personal E-Mail] (May 29, 2005).

<sup>12</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion" (1965). Conrad Bergendoff, The Augustana Ministerium: A Study of the Careers of the 2,504 Pastors of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod/Church 1850-1962 (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Historical Society, 1980), 52.

**Johnson** was made secretary; **Pastor Hartelius** was made pastor. **Sam Jacobson, Hugo Valin, Herbert Jacobson, Jonas Hammarstrom, Lina Hammarstrom, Gilbert Jakobson, Bengt Johnson, P. M. Johanson, Carl John Swanson, Emma Kristina Swenson, P. W. Paulson, Lars Peterson, Tilda Petterson, Erik Allrikson, and Mrs. Otto Anderson** were present. The fifth item of business was to add "Zion" to the church name so that it became **Svenska Evangelistic Lutheran Zion Congregation**. A formal decision was made to affiliate the church with the **Augustana Synod**. **Carl Hugo Valin** was appointed deacon, **Jonas Hammarstrom** was appointed trustee for three years, **Oskar Johnson** for two years, and **P. W. Paulson** for one year. Contact was to be initiated with **Herr Vallentin** in **Chicago** to obtain transfer of an organ to **Silverhill** and **P. W. Paulson** was appointed organist. **Herr P. M. Johanson** was appointed church care-taker.<sup>13</sup>

Education was important to the early settlers in the area. **Sunday School** for this new Lutheran church would start on the first Sunday in 1906 with **C. H. Valin** and **Lina Hammerstrom** teaching. **Pastor H. F. H. Hartelius** was to be recognized as the formal Augustana mission pastor for **Alabama**. The developing congregation decided that meetings would be in the public school house. Secretary **Bengt Johnson** and **Pastor H. F. H. Hartelius** each signed the minutes for the meeting.<sup>14</sup>



**Figures 7a and b.** Zion Lutheran Church began under the auspices of the Augustana Synod in 1905, then became part of the United Lutheran Church in 1953, the Lutheran Church of America in 1962, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in 1988, and the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in 1995, each with a distinct hymnal.

The plan initiated in 1905 was for **Pastor Hartelius**, who was headquartered in **Thorsby**, to visit **Silverhill** every other month and to hold services in the schoolhouse. **Sunday School** was to be held every Sunday whether or not a Pastor was available. Whether **Sunday School** activities ceased after pastoral supply was limited and some members withdrew or moved from the area, is uncertain. What is apparent from the record is that there was emigration from **Silverhill** to the North, perhaps related to agricultural cycles, the economy, and to cyclical maladies such as yellow fever endemic to the area. It would only be with the arrival of **Pastor Swanlund** from the **Augustana Mission Society** in 1913, that the congregation would be reactivated with a pastor. This in turn would lead to the building of the current church structure in 1915.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Church Council Minutes for December 18, 1905" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>14</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights for December 18, 1905" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>15</sup>Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 69-70.

We have already had some insight into worship expectations. Services were held in the school house. A tramp organ was received from Illinois, the home of the **Augustana Synod**. The original church bell was obtained to call the community to worship and to mark the beginning of services. This original bell would later be given to the **Silverhill School** in 1928 when the current bell was obtained for the church. That original bell is now permanently erected on the **Silverhill** school campus in memory of the early days of **Silverhill**.<sup>16</sup>

## 1906

On January 21, 1906, the first of six services per year were commenced with **Pastor Hartelius** in the school house in **Silverhill**. Formal church organization would occur on May 21, 1906, but actual registration would not be processed by the Office of Probate in **Baldwin County** until June 2, 1906.<sup>17</sup> Church and **Sunday School** services were initially held in Swedish, the language of most people in **Silverhill**. English became the language of the church as the children of émigrés became adults and as other nationalities settled in **Silverhill**. It is significant that the **Silverhill** school had been built early in the development of **Silverhill** and was able to allow the congregation to hold services there until a church could be erected. It would be another nine years! That school building continues to be part of the **Silverhill** community, remodeled and occupied by **Mrs. Grace Edhegard** when the last history of **Zion Lutheran Church** was compiled, and now occupied by the **Phil Owen** family.<sup>18</sup>

After 100 years, recovery of historical events relating to the first days of **Zion** Lutheran Church sometimes has been difficult. **Peter Midgarden**, Congregational President at the time of this writing, was researching historical documentation relating to the 2003 church building project. He found that **Zion Lutheran Church's** Articles of Incorporation were not public record with the **State of Alabama** until the 1980s. As a result, only corporations that are fairly new or have had their incorporating documents forwarded by the county are public record. **Zion Lutheran Church's** original incorporation document states that the congregation held an organizational meeting, May 21, 1906, at which time it agreed to incorporate and elected three trustees, **Jonas Hammarstrum, P. W. Paulson and L. Peterson**. The document also specifies that a replacement trustee will be elected each year for a three year term so that there will always be a viable board of trustees for the church as required by **Alabama** state law.<sup>19</sup>

Regardless of formal incorporation documents, the church was functioning before formal incorporation. Church minutes from January 22, 1906, reveal a discussion about the church organization structure for the **Augustana Synod**. Specific organizational articles were discussed, item by item. Deacons were formally appointed: **Mr. Bengt Johnson** for 3 years, **Mr. Carl Johan Swenson** for 2 years, as were a trustee, **Mr. Lars Peterson** for 2 years. A church care-taker was appointed to replace **P. M. Johanson**, i.e., **Mr. Erik Ulrikson**. The minutes are duly signed by **Bengt Johnson**, Secretary. It is, perhaps, interesting that **Pastor E. Oscar Johnson** annotated these minutes July 3, 1930, and apparently conveyed the document to **Rock Island, IL**.<sup>20</sup>

These early church minutes were affirmed in a short meeting, April 2, 1906. Incorporation papers were completed, May 21, 1906, but **C. H. Valin** was now acting as church secretary. The official church record shows that the "organization was filed for record in the Office of Probate in **Baldwin County** on May 21, 1906."<sup>21</sup>

A dramatic event changed the **Silverhill** community later in the year. A **hurricane** came ashore west of **Mobile** and devastated much of the **Silverhill** area. Specifics may be gleaned from a number of resources including history data at two web addresses: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~alcsilve/silverhill75text.html> and <http://www.rootsweb.com/~alcsilve/silverhillhistory1.html>.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>17</sup> Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> Anderson, "History of Zion" (1965).

<sup>19</sup> Peter Midgarden, "Tracking Down Historical Documents Relating to the Formation of Zion Lutheran Church" [Verbal Narrative at Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003]. Documents. Corporation Records, State of Alabama (Bay Minette, AL: Baldwin County Seat, February 18, 2003), Vol 1, P. 199, Copy placed in Zion Lutheran Church Archives, February 18, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from Church Council Minutes for January 22, 1906 from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>21</sup> David Johnson, "Church Highlights from Church Council Minutes for April 2, 1906 and May 21, 1906 Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>22</sup> Owen, [Personal E-Mail] (May 23, 2005).

## 1907

The church apparently met in January and the minutes of the previous year were reviewed for meetings of January 22, 1906, April 2, 1906, and May 21, 1906. No documentation regarding this meeting is extant. Indeed, there is limited information for the next five years.

## 1908-1912

Although we have no formal records for this period, we do know a number of things. **Pastor Hartelius** continued in **Alabama** until 1908. We know that **Sunday School** was conducted regularly, but church services were only conducted as **Lutheran Home Mission** pastors were sent down this area. Congregational life apparently did continue in this historically quiet period, although we find no regular written records of **Zion's** services from 1906-1914. At the end of this period, a fully functional **Ladies Aid** was organizing in the home of **Mr. and Mrs. Carl J. Swenson** just a couple years before the first full-time pastor was called by the congregation. **Mrs. Swenson** was elected first **president**, but it is interesting to note that the pastor served as the Ladies Aid official "**president**" when present at the meetings. That term continued to be used for the pastor at various times throughout the century. This **Ladies Aid** continued until almost 2000. It would become the "**Lutheran Church Women**" when **Zion Lutheran Church** joined the **Georgia-Alabama Synod, ULCA** in 1953, and with a later name change with the church mergers of the 1960s, become the "**Lutheran Church Women of America**" in the mid-1960s.<sup>23</sup>

People have tried to interpolate what transpired in the silent years, but such information may disagree with what is known and actually be misinformation. For instance, **Lilly Setterdahl** reported that **Pastors J. E. Hedberg of Thorsby and E. J. Werner** preached and performed ministerial acts when they visited **Silverhill**, that there were no organized activities until **Zion Lutheran Church** was founded on December 18, 1905, by the **Reverend H. F. H. Hartelius** of the **Augustana Synod**, that there were 16 charter members, that **Pastor Hartelius** visited **Silverhill** every other month and held services in the schoolhouse, that **Sunday School** was held, and that activities ceased when several members moved to the northern states while others withdrew.<sup>24</sup>

The sequellae of what we believe was a **1906 hurricane** hitting near **Mobile** resulted in a mass destruction in the area and mass exodus. People reportedly lined up at the **train station** to go north leaving everything behind. By **1910's census**, less than a third of the original 16 members of **Zion** still resided in **Silverhill**.<sup>25</sup> We have no information about **Lutherans** moving into the church fellowship after the devastation, but we know there were **Lutherans** functioning in the community. Thus, the scenario presented by **Setterdahl** is partially correct, but there was activity in the community prior to the arrival of **Pastor Swanlund** from the **Augustana Mission Society** in 1913, who typically gets credit for activating a quiescent church.<sup>26</sup>

However, **Zion Lutheran Church** may not have been as quiescent as previously reported by others. **Pastor Albert A. Swanlund** was formally charged with the **Alabama** mission field of the **Augustana Synod** in 1917 but was somehow active in **Alabama** from his home base in **Galveston and Texas City, Texas**, during the period from 1908 to 1916. **Pastor John J. Richard** was resident pastor in **Thorsby** from 1908 till 1912. Given the previous three-point parish history of the **Augustana Synod in Alabama** (i.e., **Thorsby-Fruithurst-Silverhill**), it can reasonably be argued that something continued to happen in **Silverhill** since **Pastor Richard** apparently stepped into the ministry of **Pastor H. F. H. Hartelius** who was into a six times a year worship service schedule there.<sup>27</sup>

## 1913

It certainly is affirmed from church archives that **Pastor Albert A. Swanlund** did indeed come to **Silverhill** from **Augustana Mission Society**. Although received into Ministerium June 1905 in **Stanton, Iowa**, he

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<sup>23</sup> Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 69-70.

<sup>25</sup> Debbie Owen, "Analysis of Historical Data Bases Including Census Data from 1910." Personal Communication (May 21, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 69-70.

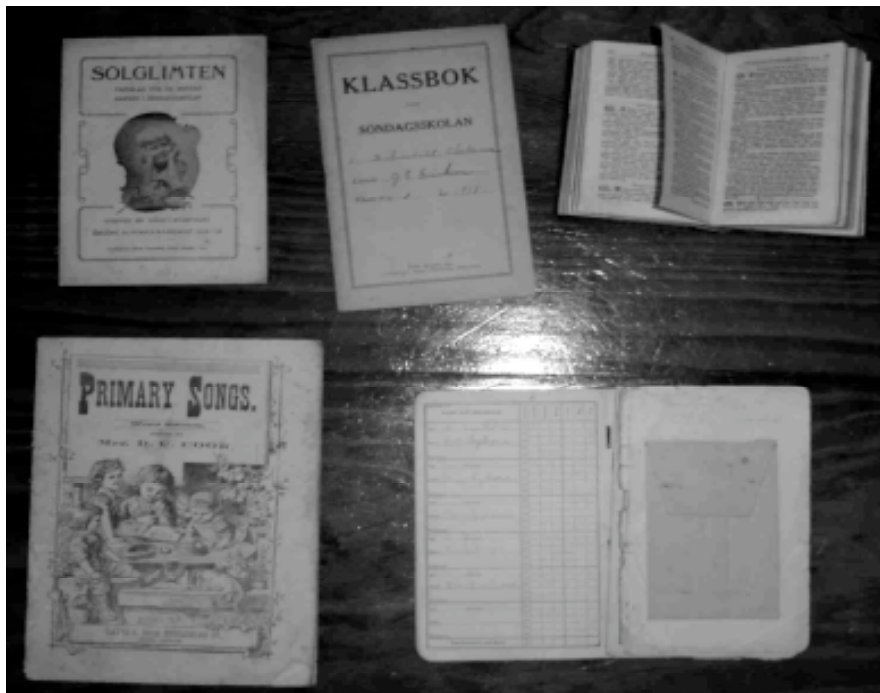
<sup>27</sup> Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 26, 69-70.

had originally been recommended for ordination by **Illinois Conference of the General Synod**. He too was from the Old Country, born May 11, 1863, in **Kristianstad, Skane, Sweden**, coming to the U. S. in 1887. He was formally charged with the **Alabama** mission field 1908-1916. Given the three-point parish history of **Alabama** and given that parish bookkeeping in baptisms, for instance, recorded activities in other of the three parishes (i.e., **Thorsby-Fruithurst-Silverhill**), it can reasonably be argued that Lutheran church activity continued in **Silverhill** up to 1913 when **Pastor Swanlund** is first mentioned in archival data from **Zion Lutheran Church**.<sup>28</sup>

**Pastor Swanlund** did not labor alone. **Seminarian Albin Larson**, who would be ordained June 13, 1915, in **Minneapolis** and who would subsequently be involved in mission congregations and higher education management, did short-term mission work with the congregation.<sup>29</sup> He was one of a number of theology students who would serve the congregation in the summer. Supply pastors from other communities would conduct services and provide ministerial service. The work of the **Reverend Arnold Nilson** is noted.<sup>30</sup>

## 1914

The name of **Pastor Jon Leaf** who would become associated with the church for a number of years first is mentioned in 1914. **Zion** archives noted that he traveled from **Tennessee** for services on several occasions. All services were conducted in the Swedish language until 1919.<sup>31</sup>



**Figure 8.** From its beginning, Zion Lutheran Church has been interested in children as these early Swedish Sunday School books illustrate. Note the mixture of Swedish and English Resources.

To this point in the church history note has related to Sunday worship services and **Sunday School**. It is nine years after **Zion Lutheran Church** was organized that women's ministry is first noted. The **Ladies Aid Society** started in home of **Carl and Christiana Swenson**.<sup>32</sup> Significantly, all minutes were in English. Also called the **Lutheran Aid Society**, the women met at homes of **Mrs. Emma Swenson**, March 7, 1914; **Mrs. Victor Olson**, April 4, 1914; **Mrs. Wicklund**, May 9, 1914; **Mrs. Anna Linder**, July 11, 1914; **Mrs. Torsen**, Sept. 12, 1914; **Mrs. Hammerstrom**, Oct. 10, 1914, **Mrs. A. Norden**, Nov. 14, 1914;

<sup>28</sup>Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 76, 96. Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 69-70.

<sup>29</sup>Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 96.

<sup>30</sup>Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 69-70.

<sup>31</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion" (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>32</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Mrs. O. Wickstrom**, Dec. 12, 1914; and **Mrs. H. Erickson**, January 1915. Their membership was 15. The **Ladies Aid Society** assessed dues and received \$71.14, designating \$7.70 for **Pastor Hess**. **Mrs. Swenson** served as secretary **Mrs. A. Norden** served as **organist** for salary of 50 cents a Sunday. **Pastor Swanlund** received \$26.15 and a Christmas gift of \$5.07. Picnic expenses were noted, totaling \$5.24.<sup>33</sup>

**Pastor Hess** was from **Michigan**, but was active in some sense with the congregation in late 1914. He began collecting pledges of resources and labor commitments for the building of the historic church building in December, 1914. These pledges were actualized and were recorded in 1915.<sup>34</sup>

## **Zion Lutheran Church Constructed in Silverhill, Alabama**

### **1915**

It is at this point that some kind of reorganization of **Zion Lutheran Church** occurs. As discussed above, it cannot be presumed that the church was not functioning in the period for which we have limited history. What we do know is that record-keeping in the church takes on a formal organization subsequently after **Pastor S. Swanlund** re-organizes the congregation. Church records do continue in Swedish and will be so-recorded for another 15 years.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps the reorganization is noteworthy in **Zion** church history because the nine-year old congregation commenced a building program. Community organizer and benefactor, **Oscar Johnson**, donated land for church and **parsonage** valued at about \$450 and cut all lumber gratis. Member **John Elfstrand** jump-started the Building Fund with \$500. Members joined together to construct the church building, the same building now on the **Baldwin County Historical Register**. The same archive that records the church building pledges begun with **Pastor Hess's** assistance in 1914, also shows the hours donated by members in the building project and the approximate value of that labor in the dollars of the time.<sup>36</sup> Outhouses were placed in a corner of the lot "behind" a **parsonage** garage that would be built several years later. Those privies would be in use till construction of current church bathrooms in the 1950s.<sup>37</sup>



**Figure 9.** This plaque honoring John Erick Elfstrand (source of seed-money) resided in the nave of the church for many years and now has a place of honor in our museum. He and Oscar Johnson (source of land) were responsible for the first church building in 1915, ten years after the founding of the church.

The church records for this new church administration showed that at the service held on January 18, 1915 a business session followed. **Mr. Victor Olson** was elected as secretary and treasurer. The congregation voted to express appreciation to **Mr. Oscar Johnson** for donation of three lots for the congregation which

<sup>33</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>34</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Church Council Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, April 2, 2004).

<sup>35</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>36</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights from the Church Council Archives" (April 2, 2004).

<sup>37</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

were across from the **Edhegard** residence, formerly the old public school.<sup>38</sup> On July 10, 1915, the building committee was formed consisting of **Victor Olson, Carl J. Swenson, Hans Erickson, Sven Torsen, F. O. Linder** and **John Elfstrand** who himself gave \$500 to start the fund in late 1914.<sup>39</sup> **Mr. Hans Erickson** was elected **chairman** and **Mr. Victor Olson** was designated as the **architect**. **Mr. Erickson** supervised masonry for the foundation. The church building was painted white and had a bell tower which waited for a bell for several years. Members helped in the construction of the building.<sup>40</sup> The church held its first service in the new building in 1915. The first **organist** was **Miss Anna Linder** (later **Mrs. Trygve Anderson**). **Mr. Victor Olson** was elected the **Sunday School Superintendent**. The teachers were **Mrs. S. Torsen, Miss Gudrin Erickson (Mrs. Oscar Swanson)** and **Miss Anna Linder**.<sup>41</sup>

Oil lamps were used in the church at first. The actual date of electrical installation is unknown, but the **Zion** electrical supplier notes that electricity was present in the building by 1947. Child of the church, current member **Ralph Utter**, whose memory would go back into the early 1930s, cannot remember a time when there was no electricity in the church, suggesting electricity was added within the first 15 years of building.<sup>42</sup> Pews (now in balcony) were removed from the previous meeting site, the **school house** across the street, and installed in the church. The current primary church pews were installed at some unknown point, but we do know those current pews were in use by the 1940s. A pump organ had apparently been obtained in 1906 for services, but the first "church" organ was obtained for the new building in 1915 and was played by **Anna Linder Anderson**. This organ was apparently linked in some way to the first bride married in the new building in 1916, **Elvera Johnson**.<sup>43</sup>

**Pastor Swanlund** continued his ministry in **Texas** while doing mission work in **Alabama**. With church reorganization, his work was continued by **Pastor Arnold Nilson** and by students of theology visiting the congregation in the summers. Occasionally, supply pastors from other communities conducted services and ministerial duties."<sup>44</sup>



**Figures 10 a,b,c, and d.** Pastors (l to r) John Emil Hedberg, John Peter Leaf, Emanuel O. Stone, and Albert A. Swanlund.

The **Ladies of the Lutheran Aid Society** elected Officers. **Pastor Swanlund** became President and was to receive \$7 per meeting). **Mrs. E. Swenson** was elected **Vice President**, **Mrs. Thorsen** was elected Secretary, **Mrs. Hoff** was elected Treasurer, and **Mrs. Anna Norden** was elected Organist and was to be reimbursed 25 cents each meeting. **Mrs. Oscar Johnson** was active early on and apparently

<sup>38</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>39</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights from the Church Council Archives" (April 2, 2004).

<sup>40</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>41</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>42</sup>David Johnson, Personal Oral Communication with Ralph Utter, June 4, 2003.

<sup>43</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>44</sup>Setterdahl et al., Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 70.

became the President when the pastor was not present beginning in 1916 through 1923. Meetings of the **Ladies Aid** continued in homes and in the school house in which the church had met since 1906.<sup>45</sup>

Church minutes for January 18, 1915, show that **N. J. Anderson** was appointed deacon for one year, **C. J. Swenson** for two years, and **Victor Olson** for three years. **Victor Olson** was appointed trustee for three years, **John Elfstrand** for two years, and **Mr. Larson** for one year. **Victor Olson** was appointed secretary and treasurer. Church books were to be reviewed by **Mr. Thorson** and **John Elfstrand**. It was at this meeting that **Oscar Johnson** donated three lots and **John Elfstrand** donated \$500 initiating the first church building program. **Pastor Swanlund** was present, closing the meeting with a blessing. **Victor Olson** signed off as recorder of the minutes for this meeting. On July 10, 1915, the congregation officially authorized building on the three lots obtained from **Mr. Johnson**.<sup>46</sup>

The first **Zion Lutheran Church Building Committee** met officially on July 14, 1915. It was determined that **Victor Olson** would be the building contractor and **Hans Erickson** would be the foundation contractor. There was discussion over how to site the church on the lots and the actual building methodology. The church was built by the members of the church, both men and women, under the experienced eyes of **Victor Olson**, **Hans Erickson** and **F. O Linder**. On November 17, 1915, the **Building Committee** reconvened to discuss wall board and insurance.<sup>47</sup>

It is interesting to note that the deed instrument to **Zion Lutheran Church** by which **Oscar Johnson** conveyed the three lots for the church building was actually recorded on March 14, 1916 and is located in **New Deeds Book** number 24 on page 297. It would appear that the church building had actually been in use for about half a year by that time.<sup>48</sup>

## 1916

**Building Committee** concerns continued as the new building was being completed. The meeting of January 15, 1916, revealed specific insurance issues that were unresolved.<sup>49</sup> The regular congregation Council church minutes two days later revealed another challenge: The spark plug **Pastor Swanlund** had received a call and would be leaving. On a positive note, **Anna Linder** began playing for services for 25 cents a Sunday.<sup>50</sup>

On July 23, 1916, student **Arthur Larson** from **Augustana Seminary** came south to serve a summer in **Silverhill** with **Zion Lutheran Church**. He began catechistical classes, the first **Luther League**, and a choir. I believe the student volunteer known to us as **Arthur Larson** is **Pastor Albin A[rthur?] Larson**, ordained June 13, 1915, in **Minneapolis, Minnesota**. He had been born July 13, 1886, in **Fergus Falls, Minnesota**. He graduated with a B. A. from **Gustavus Adolphus College** in 1912 and from **Augustana Seminary** with a B. D. in 1915. He was active in at least seven mission congregations from 1915 to 1924 in **Minnesota**. He married **Olga W. Longren of Thief River Falls, Minnesota**, June 27, 1916, the probable year of summer work in **Silverhill**. Father of six children, **Pastor Larson** died January 4, 1956.<sup>51</sup>

The first wedding in the new church was the marriage of **Philip Armstrong** and **Elvera Johnson**. **Philip G. Armstrong** was from **Omaha, Nebraska**, and would later serve on the **Church Council** and as church treasurer. A pump organ, donated by a Lutheran church in **Chicago**, brought a full worship program to the

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<sup>45</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>46</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights from Church Council Minutes for January 18, 1915 Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003).

<sup>47</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). David Johnson, "Church Council Minutes for July 14, 1915, and November 17, 1915, Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>48</sup>Peter Midgarden, "Tracking Down Historical Documents Relating to the Formation of Zion Lutheran Church" [Verbal Narrative] (Silverhill, Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003). Source of Documents. Corporation Records, State of Alabama (Bay Minette, AL: Baldwin County Seat, February 18, 2003), New Deeds Book No. 24, P. 297.

<sup>49</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights for Church Council Minutes for January 15, 1916, Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>50</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights for Church Council Minutes for January 17, 1916, Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

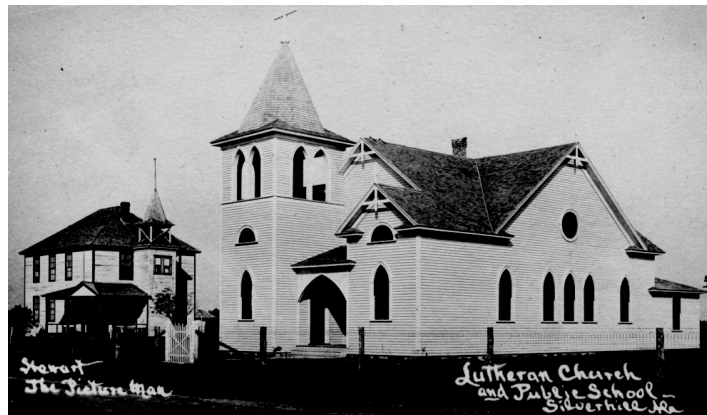
<sup>51</sup>Bergendoff, The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962 (1980), 96.



new church.<sup>52</sup> Reports of a church bell are contradictory. One report notes that the tramp organ donated by the **Chicago** Lutheran church came about the time of a new bell hung in the belfry.<sup>53</sup>

As student volunteers would come, they were housed with church members. Two theological students are specifically remembered, **Arthur Larson** alluded to above and **Arnold Nelson**. **Pastor Nelson** later married **Hildur Swenson** and lived where the **Ellis Nix** family lived in the 1960s. **Pastor Arnold Gottfrid Nelson** was ordained June 15, 1919. He had been born on September 13, 1891, in **St. Paul, Minnesota**. He graduated from **Gustavus Adolphus College** with a B. A. in 1915 and **Augustana Seminary** in 1919. He died October 8, 1972.<sup>54</sup> As yet, there was no regular pastor at the church. In addition to summer volunteers, the deacons conducted services when no pastors were available.

There were two visiting pastors specifically mentioned at this time, the **Reverends Leaf and Stone**,<sup>55</sup> but church funds were directed to others as well, the list including the **Reverend Swanlund, Pastor Hess, Pastor Leaf, the Reverend A. Larson, and the Reverend Nelson**.<sup>56</sup> **Pastor John Peter Leaf** had been ordained June 17, 1883, in **Redwing, Minnesota**. He was an older pastor, born January 18, 1859. He had attended **Augustana College**, graduating with a B. A. in 1880, and graduating from **Augustana Seminary** in 1883. He served in **Tennessee Ridge, Tennessee**, from 1911 to 1921. He edited the **Lindsborg Posten**. He married **Anna Carlson of East Union, Minnesota**, on Jan. 26, 1890. They had 10 children. He died May 7, 1931.<sup>57</sup>



**Figure 11.** Zion Lutheran Church soon after construction. An early meeting place was upstairs in the school which was across the street from where the church was ultimately sited, i.e., the building to the left.

**Pastor Emanuel Olson Stone** was ordained June 10, 1894, in **St. Peter, Minnesota**. He also was an older pastor, born April 13, 1860, in **Farskalla, Bohuslan, Sweden**. He would be the last Swedish-born pastor at **Zion Lutheran Church**. He came to the U. S. in 1880, attended **Gustavus Adolphus College**, graduating with a B. A. in 1892, and attending **Augustana Seminary** in 1894. He was **Vice President** of the **China Mission Society** and a variety of other church-related organizations. The connection with the **China Mission Society** may be significant to **Zion**, since its first full-time pastor would resign from the congregation to go into **China** mission. He received his D. D., from **Gustavus Adolphus College** in 1942. His first wife was **Anna F. Olson**, who died in 1913. His second wife was **Caroline Carlstedt**. There were five children. **Pastor Stone** died on Oct. 29, 1936.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>52</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>53</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>54</sup>Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 105.

<sup>55</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 69-70.

<sup>56</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>57</sup>Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 32.

<sup>58</sup>Conrad Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: A Study of the Careers of the 2,504 Pastors of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod/Church 1850-1962*. (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Historical Society, 1980), 56.

The **Ladies Aid** continued to be important to the congregational ministry. The pastor asked its members, for example, to call on sick **Mrs. Hammarstrom**. It was the **Ladies Aid** which covered the freight costs for the organ donation from **Chicago**. Besides meeting in homes, meetings for the **Ladies Aid** were held in the church parlors by end of year.<sup>59</sup>

**Sunday School** activities had been ongoing informally before there was a church and on a more organized basis since 1906. In 1916 on July 23 and on August 20, there is formal **Sunday School** organization. In September 1916 we find 22 students in four classes, the smallest with four, the largest with 13 students. The average Sunday offering for the month was 48 cents. Class books cost 30 cents, "Children's News" cost \$1.33, and the "Olive Leaf" cost \$1.32. **Sunday School** Record books cost 60 cents; Bible Stories cost \$1.25. Twelve cents was expended on postage and money orders. Christmas materials cost \$1.99. **Pearl Swenson, Alvin Peterson, and Mabel Swenson** had perfect attendance. On a sadder note, early church benefactor **John Elfstrand** had good attendance, but his attendance then falls off abruptly in 1917, perhaps arguing for the beginning of health problems.<sup>60</sup>



**Figure 12.** In 2005 President Peter Midgarden (on the left) and Ralph Utter worked to repair the steeple shingles after Hurricane Ivan. The steeple was constructed with the church in 1915-1916.

## 1917

The first of many **Sunday School** picnics was organized by the **Ladies Aid Society**. The 1917 picnic was held on "**the Hill**" where it would continue through the 1950s on a regular basis. The **Ladies Aid** made donations to a variety of missions, e.g., **Bethphage Inner Mission Orphanage, Gustavus Adolphus Children's Home, Immanuel Deaconess Institute, and Lowman Home for the Aged**.<sup>61</sup> Zion received correspondence from **Bethphage** in May of 2003 advising the church of a name change relating to a merger--that's mission feedback 86 years after the beginning of donations to a ministry that has continued as has **Zion Lutheran Church!**

<sup>59</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Women's Groups Records Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church), February 13, 2003.

<sup>60</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Sunday School Records Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, March 17, 2003).

<sup>61</sup>Johnson, "Highlights from the Sunday School Records" (March 17, 2003).

Although he was apparently active with the parish in some capacity in 1916, note of **Pastor Jon Leaf** traveling from Tennessee for services at **Zion**, is annotated in the archives for 1917. **Seminarian Arnold Nelson** served the congregation in the summer. The next summer he married to **Miss Hildur Swenson**.<sup>62</sup>

The first mention of weather in the archives occurs in 1917. A major storm occurring September 28 required specific cleaning up at the new church by the **Ladies Aid**. Their minutes note that they now had ten members.<sup>63</sup>

## 1918

**Pastor Emanuel Olson Stone** spent two months in **Silverhill** holding services. **Seminarian Arnold Nelson** served the congregation for his second summer, and he married **Hildur Swenson**. The second wedding in the new church united **Paul Anderson** and **Gudrun Erickson**.<sup>64</sup> In 1914 and 1917, **Pastor John Leaf** made several trips from his parish in **Tennessee** to hold services. Now, in 1918 it is **Pastor Stone** of **Minneapolis, Minnesota**, who will spend two months in **Silverhill** and hold special services. Again, we should remember that all services were conducted in the **Swedish** language until 1919.<sup>65</sup>



**Figure 13.** Confirmation class of 1918: (l to r) Mabel Swanson, [John Olaf or Karl ??] Olson, Seminarian Arnold Nelson, Mildred Paulson.

A review of **Sunday School** records for January 1, 1918, showed that **Anna Linder** was teaching class 1, **Gudrun Erickson** was teaching class 2, and **Mrs. Torson** was teaching class 3. **Mrs. F. O. Linder** served as Bible clerk<sup>66</sup>

The church now had five deacons and five trustees.<sup>67</sup> The deacons officiated at church services when no pastor was present. During services on April 21, 1918, special note is made that **Pastor Stone** used a **Psalmbook** with an English Bible for the church readings.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>62</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>63</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>64</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>65</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>66</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights for Church Council Minutes for January 1, 1918, Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>67</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights for January 1, 1918 (February 18, 2003).

<sup>68</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights for Church Council Minutes for April 21, 1918, Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

At the end of this year, on December 8, 1918, **Zion Lutheran Church** called its first full-time pastor, **Pastor John Benson**.<sup>69</sup>

1918 marked a major change in the congregation. Accounting procedures with a "paper trail" for donations, a regular **Ladies Aid**, a **Sunday School** with multiple classes, regular seminarian or pastor service during summers, introduction for the first time of **English** into the service, and the passing of earlier members from the scene! The **Ladies Aid** received a \$10 gift from the estate of **P. M. Johanson**. The **Ladies Aid** subsequently set up committee to care for his grave. **World War I** will have major effects in **Europe**, but in **Silverhill** the effects are present in small ways, the **Ladies Aid** agreeing to cut back on refreshments.<sup>70</sup>

One other activity is noted for the first time in the **Ladies Aid** minutes: Fund-raising! The women of the church would be actively involved in promoting the welfare of the congregation through one variety or another of fund-raising for most the rest of the century. In 1918 they inaugurate an auction fund-raiser to be held at school house.<sup>71</sup>

## 1919

In 1918 visiting **Pastor Stone** introduced **English** into the worship of the congregation. 1919 is the year that full integration of **English** into the service was completed, all **Swedish** services being discontinued. Perhaps it is significant that it is a **Swedish-born** pastor that brings the congregation into the **American "English"** mainstream.<sup>72</sup> **English** changes were noted at the **Church Council** meeting of February 15, 1915.<sup>73</sup>

**Pastor John Benson, Jr.**, had been called by the congregation at the end of 1918. He accepted the call, arriving in August, 1919. **Pastor and Mrs. John Benson** were the first permanent Lutheran pastor family in **Silverhill**. Initially, they occupied what was later the home of **Mayor and Mrs. Ben Kucera**. The church initiated the building of a **parsonage** for the new pastor and his bride, **Edith**, next to the church edifice. Plans were drawn by architect **Arthur Busch**, and were accepted. Donations of labor and money allowed construction of the **parsonage** to proceed rapidly. The **parsonage** was fully completed a year later.<sup>74</sup>

**Pastor Benson** was ordained on June 15, 1919, in **Lindsborg, Kansas**. He had been born on July 29, 1888, in **Hastings, Minnesota**, to **John D. Benson** and **Brita Nilsson**. He received a B. A. from **Gustavus Adolphus College** in 1916 and graduated from **Augustana Seminary**. After serving in **Silverhill** and **Thorsby, Alabama** (1919-23), he did mission work in **Honan, China**, (1923-27), then returned to ministry in **Concordia, Kansas** (1927-40), **Lafayette, Minnesota** (1940-44), **Creston, Iowa** (1944-46), **Vancouver, British Columbia** (1946-50), and **Ivanhoe, Minnesota** (1950-58). **Pastor Benson** married **Edith C. Knock** in **St. Peter, Minnesota**, in 1919 before coming to **Silverhill**.<sup>75</sup>

First mention of other **Augustana Synod** churches in the area are noted in August, 1919. **Pastor John Benson, Jr.**, apparently was being shared with groups in **St. Elmo** and **Sonora**. It is unclear whether they shared in the costs of the **parsonage**.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps this was the beginning of involvement beyond the church walls, as has been noted, "The church has accomplished much, and has contributed much to the community spiritually, socially, physically and economically."<sup>77</sup> **Patty Sherman** reports that there was indeed a **Zion Sunday School** functioning in **Sonora**, but information back to 1923 suggested that the **Sunday School** was not "Lutheran" by that time. There are no extant records relating to the founding of that **Sunday School**

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<sup>69</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights for Church Council Minutes for December 8, 1918, Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>70</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>71</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>72</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>73</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted for January 2, 1920, from the Church Council Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>74</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>75</sup>Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 104.

<sup>76</sup>"In 1905 Silverhill Forms Lutheran Church" (*Baldwin Times*, 11 November 1971), 13C,

<sup>77</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

or of church services at the building which now functions as community center. That building was reconstructed in 1923 after the original building had been destroyed by fire.<sup>78</sup>

The coming of the first full-time pastor brought other events to the congregation. Can you imagine having a "Lutheran service at **Christmas**"? The **Swedish** tradition of **Julota** was celebrated **Christmas** morning and there was a children's program on **Christmas Eve**. And, of course, there was "a beautiful **Christmas Service**."<sup>79</sup>

Review of the **Church Budget** for 1919 reveals some interesting developments in **Zion Lutheran Church**. There were four separate budgets! The books of the church proper showed a Total Income of \$699.75 and Total Spending of \$377.69, leaving a Balance of \$322.06. The **Luther League** generated Total Income of \$85.42, Total Spending of \$48.75, leaving a Balance of \$36.67. **Sunday School** had a Total Income of \$49.29 and Total Spending of \$36.73, leaving a Balance of \$12.26. The **Ladies Aid** generated Total Income of \$131.50 and Total Spending of \$60.86, leaving a Balance of \$70.64.<sup>80</sup>



**Figure 14.** Confirmation class of 1920. (l to r) Back Row: Esther Hoff, Jeanette Boss, Myrtle Boxx, Agnes Johnson, Grace Anderson, Mildred Mohe. Front Row: Finn Nitteberg, Pastor John Benson, Sigurd Heni.

Officers of the **Ladies Aid** for 1919 were **Mrs. Victor Olson**, President; **Mrs. Frank Linder**, Vice President; **Mrs. Torsen**--Secretary; **Mrs. Hoff**--Treasurer; **Mrs. Olson**, **Mrs. Linder**, and **Mrs. Svenson**--Auditors. **Mrs. Emma Linder** was designated "Musician."<sup>81</sup>

A substantial growth in the congregation was seen in the 1920s. But there is a suggestion of growth to come in the **Sunday School** statistics. For 1919 there were now nine **Sunday School** classes.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>78</sup>Vera Avera, "Report of a Conversation with Patty Sherman regarding a Zion Church Connection with Sonora, a Loosely Organized Community about Seven Miles South of Silverhill" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, July 20, 2003).

<sup>79</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>80</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights for January 2, 1920" (February 18, 2003).

<sup>81</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>82</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights for January 2, 1920" (February 18, 2003).

# Zion Lutheran Church Parsonage Constructed in Silverhill, Alabama

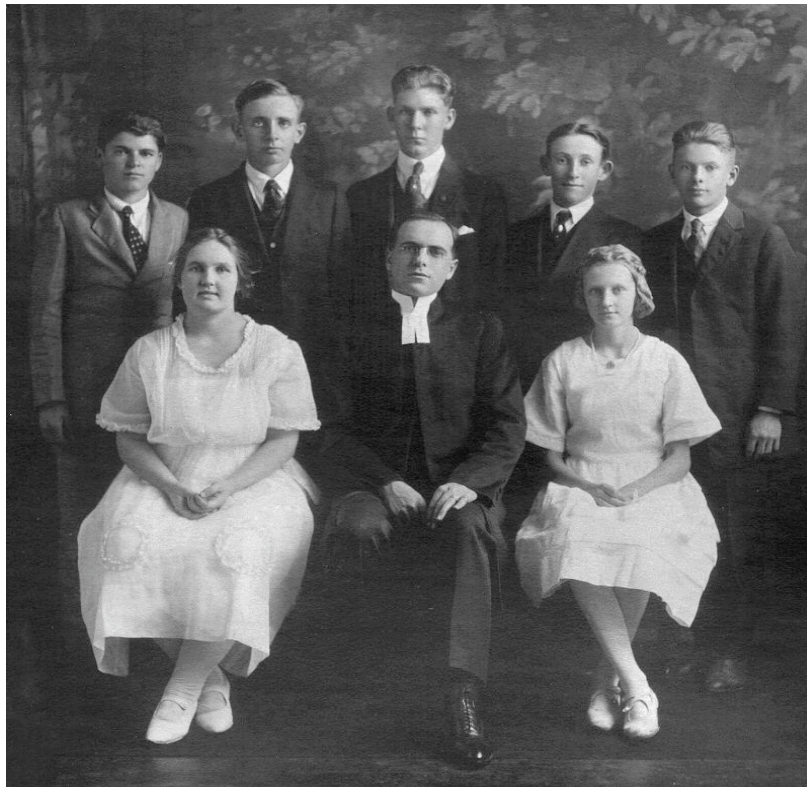
1920

The **Silverhill** community continued to be strongly Scandinavian. **Hans G. Erickson, Victor Olson,** and **John Olson** were appointed **Zion Lutheran Church** delegates for **Midsummers Fest** to take place in June. The importance of the event is demonstrated by the date of appointment, January 2, 1920.<sup>83</sup>

**Pastor Jon Benson, Jr.**, continued as **Zion's** first full-time pastor, serving into 1923. The **Zion Lutheran Church parsonage** was built with donated labor and materials about 1920, the church possessing a picture of **Pastor and Mrs. Benson** on its front porch. **Pastor Benson** provided pastoral services at **St. Elmo and Thorsby**.<sup>84</sup>

1921

By 1921 the **Ladies Aid** had 25 members. The women were active in **outreach**, initiating a **visitation committee** comprised of **Mrs. Heni, Mrs. Carl Johnson,** and **Mrs. S. P. Torsen**. The women began purchasing items for the **church kitchen**, saw to it that the **church floor** had been oiled, and were involved in discussion concerning building a **garage**. In the early 2000s we are already forgetting about the **Communist Revolution in Russia**, but these women of **Zion Lutheran Church** were actively concerned about conditions in **Russia** and were concerned about the need for the gospel there in trying times. There was a concern for **foreign mission** amongst these women.<sup>85</sup>



**Figure 15.** Confirmation class of 1922. (l to r) Front Row: Ruby Ledene, Pastor Benson, Ruth Johnson. Back Row: Harry Heni, Ernest Wigstrom, Axel Rundquist, Elmer Erickson, Gustav Hoff.

<sup>83</sup>David Johnson, "Church Council Highlights Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>84</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion" (1965).

<sup>85</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

## 1922

Women of the church consulted with **Church Council** to pursue the **screening** of the church. \$25 was contributed to the cost of construction of the **garage** and **pump house**. **Thelma Hanson** from the **St. Elmo Lutheran Church** visited **Zion** to sing a solo in June, demonstrating the common ministry of a multiple-point parish. After seven years in the church building, a new covering for the **altar** was purchased. The church had been involved in an **auction** for fund-raising for the church. There is now discussion for converting **auction** activities to a **bazaar** so that food can be part of the fund-raising activities. **Bazaars** would be held many times over subsequent years. There are **oil stove** problems in the church. Remember that **Pastor Benson** is interested in **China mission**. The **Ladies Aid** has become aware of the **Forsberg missionaries** in **China** being carried off by bandits. A review of the women's activities show that \$182.65 was generated by them in 1922.<sup>86</sup>

## 1923

**Pastor Benson** and his wife and young daughter left **Silverhill** in 1923 to prepare for **missionary work** in **China**. The church again relied on theological students for parish support. After a most successful ministry at **Zion**, he resigned in 1923 so that he might prepare himself for missionary work in **China**. **Pastors D. N. Anderson, Brown (Mobile), West, Derrick, W. Lefstedt**, and **Layman M. Zimmerman** would serve the church in subsequent years for various periods in mission to **Zion Lutheran Church**, an **Augustana Lutheran Home Mission Church**.<sup>87</sup>



**Figure 16.** Confirmation class of 1923. (l to r) Front Row: Ebba Olive Olson, Pastor John Benson, [unidentified girl]. Back Row: Edith Olson, Evelyn Ledene, Alvin Peterson, Pearl Nordic, Vera [unidentified last name].

**Herman Olson**, Secretary Pro Tem, reported that **Zion Lutheran Church** was supporting **Augustana Synod Colleges** at a \$1.20 rate per communicant member.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>86</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>87</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms Lutheran Church" *The Baldwin Times*, 11 November 1971, 13C.

<sup>88</sup>David Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer Report Highlights Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

## 1924

**Pastor Einar Oscar Leonard Johnson** accepted Zion's call and would serve as pastor until 1930 when **Pastor J. P. Samuelson** was called. **Pastor E. Oscar Johnson** was ordained on June 12, 1921, in **Chicago, Illinois**. He had been born on January 1, 1890, in **Nedertornea, Sweden**. He had emigrated to the U. S. in 1902 at age 12. Thirteen years later he graduated with a B. A. from **Gustavus Adolphus College** and entered military service in 1917. He graduated from **Augustana Seminary** with a B. D. in 1921, then serving in **Ely and Tower, Minnesota**, until receiving the call to **Zion Lutheran Church** in **Silverhill, Alabama**, in 1924. He later served in **Svea City, Iowa** (1929-31), in **Meadowlands and Payne, Minnesota** (1933-38), in **Underwood and Wilton, North Dakota** (1938-44), in **Clearbrook, Minnesota** (1944-48), in **Isanti and Long Lake, Minnesota** (1948-54), and in **Attica, Indiana** (1954-58). He married **Hanna A. Anderson** the year before coming to **Silverhill**. They had 6 children. When **Hanna** passed away, **Pastor Johnson** married **Ruth A. Yeager** in 1946. **Pastor Johnson** went to be with the Lord on May 29, 1976.<sup>89</sup>

Ministry had continuity. The **Sunday School** continued its work under the leadership of **Mrs. Fred Hallberg** (the former **Muriel Olson**). Although the **Ladies Aid** had no person filling the office of **President**, others continued to fulfill duties of office. **Mrs. Victor Olson** served as **Vice President**, **Mrs. T. O. Linder** as **Secretary**, **Mrs. C. A. Hoff** as **Treasurer**, and **Mrs. Paul Anderson** and **Mrs. Harold Nitteberg** as **Auditing Committee Members**. Membership had contracted to 18. The women were active in the funding of electric light needs, donating \$25 for church and **parsonage**. Their activities were drawing guests from **St. Elmo** and **Mobile**. Auction activities continued and were held in the schoolhouse this year. **Gustavus Adolphus Day** was celebrated again indicating that Swedish roots were still remembered. The **Missionary Benson Family** had sent items from **China** which were sold at the auction.<sup>90</sup>



**Figure 17.** Zion Lutheran Church and Parsonage, circa 1924, from postcard sent from Silverhill to St. Elmo, AL.

## 1925

**Pastor E. Oscar Johnson** took on the vacant **Ladies Aid Presidency** in 1925 and would serve several years in that capacity. **Mrs. T. O. Linder** served as **Vice President**, **Mrs. S. P. Torsen** as **Secretary**, **Mrs. C. A. Hoff** as **Treasurer**, and **Mrs. H. Nitteberg** and **Mrs. Paul Anderson** served on the **Auditing Committee**. Membership was at 19. This is the year that the women investigated buying a new oil stove, ultimately purchasing a **Florence Automatic Oil Stove** for \$21. The women hosted a **Missions Convention** in August. At the December meeting of the **Ladies Aid Pastor Osterberg** shared a

<sup>89</sup>Bergendoff, The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962 (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 108.

<sup>90</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).



presentation in English while **Pastor Palm** did the same in Swedish--their focus was on the **Church in Philadelphia, Revelation 3**.<sup>91</sup>

**Outreach** and evangelism begins to emerge in the **Zion** history this year. 1925 saw the transition of **Church Council** records to **English**. **Dr. G. W. Utter, Church Secretary**, reported that **S. P. Johnson and Pastor E. O. Johnson** would be church representatives at the **Southeastern District** meeting in **Piercen, Florida**, with **Hans Erickson** serving as worship leader during the Pastor's absence. The church decided to have **Sunday School** but no church services when the pastor was in **St. Elmo** for Sunday services. **Southeastern District Missions Meeting** was held for three days in late summer. The cost for painting the **parsonage** this year was \$34. **Zion Lutheran Church** formally called **Ms. Holm** to work with the **Bohemian** people to form a **Bohemian Sunday School**. A Sunday morning offering was given to the **Deaconess Institute of Omaha**. The church designated **Herman Olson** as delegate to **Miami, Florida**, for a **Southeastern District Conference**. **Zion** celebrated its **20th Anniversary**. Perhaps because of these activities, the **Church Council** directed **Mr. Linder** to construct a door of all heart wood pine. Several services were given to **St. Elmo's**. An organ was purchased and an organ was donated, activities perhaps related to the **St. Elmo** ministry.<sup>92</sup>



**Figure 18.** Confirmation class of 1925. (l to r) Frances Anderson, Norman Johnson, Ruth Wallendorf, Rev. E. Oscar Johnson.

## 1926

The **Ladies Aid** was corresponding with the former **Zion** pastor family now **China Missionaries, Pastor and Mrs. Benson**. Membership in the women's group is at 20. The "new" church is aging already--the water pump has to be repaired. **Long-term planning** commences. **Hans Erickson, C. A. Hoff, and F. O. Linder** were appointed to a **Church Bell Committee**. A major bell-designated gift was received from **David Anderson** in **Svea City**. Church body life is active outside the **Ladies Aid**. **Alvin Peterson and**

<sup>91</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>92</sup>Johnson, "Council and Treasurer Highlights" (February 18, 2003).

**F. O. Linder** arranged for ice and ice cream for the church picnic held in **Daphne**. **Zion Lutheran Church** got involved with community service with other churches--on the third Sunday in October they held their "**Day on the Hill**." New public relations activities began when **signage** outside church was authorized.<sup>93</sup>

## 1927

**Church Bell Committee** activity kicks off in earnest. A film on **Martin Luther** was shown to raise funds for the bell. But not all spending is focused on just a bell. The **Luther League** and **Sunday School** funded purchase of 24 hymnals with musical notes. The **Ladies Aid** pursued its **Bazaar** to support painting of the church. **Mrs. Linder** begins service as the **Ladies Aid President** and will continue service into 1933. The **Church Bell Committee** accomplished its fund-raising and obtained a custom bell with these words in relief on the **bell**: "Praise Him for His mighty acts. Psalm 150:2' Cast by **Stuckstede & Bro., St. Louis, MO**, 1927. Donated by Members and Friends of **Zion Lutheran Church**. **Bell Committee: E. Oscar Johnson, Pastor; Hans G. Erickson, F. O. Linder, John Peterson.**" The **Baldwin Register** two generations later would note that, "Late afternoon shadows cross the crisp architectural lines of the bell tower of **Zion Lutheran Church in Silverhill**. The congregation organized in 1906 and built the church structure 10 years later in 1916. Located on the corner of **Fourth Avenue and Seventh Street**, the church is now designated as a **Baldwin County historic site**. The **bell tower** is still functional and 'rings every Sunday,' said church member **Ernest Burnett**."<sup>94</sup>



**Figure 19.** The Zion Lutheran Church bell continues to call the faithful to worship, inspected by Pastor Dave here in 2003. Its predecessor resides in the Silverhill School yard, kitty-corner from the church.

<sup>93</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer Report Highlights" (February 18, 2003). David Johnson, "Church Women's Groups Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 12, 2003).

<sup>94</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer Report Highlights" (February 18, 2003). Inscription read, recorded, and photographed by Pastor Dave Johnson, March 3, 2003. Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Jane McGlotheren, "Still Faithfully Ringing" (Foley: Baldwin Register, n.d.).

1928

The **Ladies Aid** planned for a new **altar cloth**. The Pastor's **salary** was \$360. The **organist** received a **salary** of \$15.<sup>95</sup>



**Figure 20.** Confirmation class of 1928. (l to r) Front Row: Victor Aldeen, Pastor E. Oscar Johnson, Ted Ledene. Back Row: Grace Norden, Avea Engstrom, Beatrice Anderson, Harriet Norden.

## Zion Lutheran Church Recognizes Its Past

1929

**John Erick Elfstrand**, a shoemaker by trade as was his brother, had been instrumental to the building of the church in 1915. He had passed away in the early 1920s with no relatives in this country, but his memory was alive. **Zion Lutheran Church**, perhaps spurred on by the success of the **Bell Committee**, memorialized **John Erik Elfstrand**, "Born 1843 Died 1923," with a bronze tablet "in memory of his generous gifts to the **Zion Lutheran Church**." The cast bronze piece cost \$55 FOB, and was installed in the wall of the church nave where it remained until renovations two generations later. Despite conversion to **English** services in 1919, some **Swedish** services apparently were still held to this time. Again the church shows use and aging--a new church stove pipe was installed.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>95</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). David Johnson, "Church Highlights from the Church Ledger Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 28, 2003).

<sup>96</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer Report Highlights" (February 18, 2003).



**Figure 21.** Confirmation class of 1930. (l to r) Front Row: Muriel Olson, Pastor E. Oscar Johnson, Anna Engstrom. Back Row: Bertil Enstrom, Vida Norden, Robert Ledene, Eleanor Olson, Donald Armstrong.

It is apparent that donations of money and labor through the years have made it possible for **Zion** to have its present facilities. A bell and a bronze plaque are not less special than some of the other donations which might be mentioned: pulpit, **altar** and organ bench crafted by **Frank O. Linder**; \$1500 provided by **John Elfstrand** in whose memory was that bronze plaque; a wooden cross and candelabra gifted by **Mr. and Mrs. Carlton Carlson** in memory of **Arthur Anderberg**; a \$100 memorial by the **Carl Larson** family; a cabinet for **paraments**, **altar** linens and **Sunday School** supplies and also a loud speaker system through the generosity of **Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Swanson**; an individual communion service presented by **Mr. and Mrs. Philip Armstrong**; and, a painting of Christ, drawn by **Sharon Lynn Prah** and painted by **Fred Hallberg, Sr.**<sup>97</sup>

Big things happened in 1929 at **Zion Lutheran Church**. **Pastor E. Oscar Johnson** organized the **Alabama District Luther League** for the **Augustana Synod**. The first **Bible Conference** was held at **Zion**, August 9 to August 11, 1929, with **Dr. E. C. Bloomquist** of **Rockford, Illinois**, bringing the program. **Luther League** officer candidates are interesting because they demonstrate the fruits of **Zion's** outreach to **St. Elmo**: **Presidential Candidates**: **A. J. Johnson** (**St. Elmo's Lutheran League**) and **Ruby Ledene** (**Silverhill Lutheran League**)--Ruby was elected on a vote of 7 to 4. **A. J.** was elected **Vice President**, and **Alvin Peterson** was elected **Secretary and Treasurer**. A large crowd came from **Mobile** and **St. Elmo** for Sunday's **Conference's** two Sunday sermons and dinner. It was at this time that the bronze tablet in honor of **Mr. J. E. Elfstrand** was dedicated.<sup>98</sup>

And the women? Membership Dues were 10 cents per month. The **Ladies Aid** received \$111.14 in offerings and collections this year. As for the **Zion Lutheran Church ledger**, it was still in **Swedish**.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>97</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>98</sup>David Johnson, "Luther League and Youth Highlights Abstracted from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, March 17, 2003).

<sup>99</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Johnson, "Church Ledger Archives" (February 28, 2003). Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).



Figure 22. Uncaptioned photo of congregation and friends, circa 1930.

## 1930

**Pastor J. P. Samuelson** accepted the call to serve as pastor in 1930. He would retire in 1936 and build a home in **Silverhill**, but he would continue providing preaching supply until 1940.<sup>100</sup> **P. John Samuelson** had been ordained on June 12, 1910, in **Rock Island, Ill.**, after being recommended by the **Nebraska Conference**. Born August 31, 1869, in **Rydaholm, Smaland, Sweden**, to **Jonas D. Samuelson and Christina (Peterson-Hartelius)**, he had attended the **Lund Cathedral School** before coming to the U. S. in 1890. He graduated from **Augustana Seminary** in the 1909-10 academic year and served in **Cheyenne and Rock Springs, Wyoming (1910-13)**, **Siloa, Nebraska (1913-16)**, **Morris Run, Pennsylvania (1917-20)**, and **Patton and Hastings, Minnesota (1920-27)**, before coming to **Silverhill**. He had married **Albertina Danielson** in **Des Moines, Iowa**, on October 18, 1894, and they had four children. **Pastor Samuelson** died on January 3, 1955.<sup>101</sup>

Beginning in the 1930s and continuing into the 1950s, the **Zion Lutheran Sunday School** supported a number of mission projects including **Bethphage Inner Mission Orphanage, Gustavus Adolphus Children's Home, Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Lowman Home for the Aged**.<sup>102</sup>

The **Zion Luther League** was busy. Secretary **Alvin Peterson** reported attendance at 15. There were devotional readings and a piano duet by **Eleanore and Muriel Olson**. They celebrated 1100th anniversary of **Ansgarius of Sweden**. They were in contact with **China** missionaries of the **Augustana Synod**, sharing letters from **Pastor Vikner and Pastor Victor Swenson**. The **Luther League** contributed \$30 to the church budget.<sup>103</sup>

## 1931

In 1931 **Luther League** elections resulted in these officers: **President: Ruby Ledene; Vice President: Hans Erickson; Secretary: Alvin Peterson; Treasurer: Gustav Hoff; Program Committee: Mrs. Paul Anderson and Miss Ruby Ledene; Auditing Committee: William Larsen and Hans Erickson**.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>100</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>101</sup>Bergendoff, *The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962* (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., *Memories Preserved, Vol. II* (1992), 85.

<sup>102</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>103</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>104</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

## 1932

In 1932 the **Ladies Aid Society** of the **Swedish Zion Lutheran Church, Silverhill, AL**, elected officers: **President--Mrs. F. O. Linder, Vice President--Mrs. A. Carlson; Secretary--Mrs. P.C. Anderson; Treasurer--Mrs. M. Hoff; Auditors--Mrs. John Olson and Mrs. H. Nitteberg.** Membership was at 18. At the August meeting it was noted that songs were sung in **English** and that **Pastor Osterberg** spoke in **English**.<sup>105</sup>

## 1933

The March **Ladies Aid** Program revealed further transition from a **Swedish** community to **English**. Songbook selection number 222 was sung in **Swedish**, the remainder being in **English**. The program involved reading from the Gospel of **St. Matthew**. There was a song, minutes, and a roll call. There was no outstanding business. They sang Songbook selection number 138, and **Pastor Samuelson** taught on the first Chapter, "Explaining the Birth of Our Savior Jesus Christ." **Pastor Dahlquist and Pastor Osterberg** were present and spoke on same the same chapter. They closed with Songbook selection number 109, a prayer, a benediction, and a doxology. Membership in the **Ladies Aid** was at a 17 level. **Sunday School** and **Church Council** archives reveal participation in organ repair.<sup>106</sup>

## 1935

Membership patterns are always hard to assess, but there is an indirect measure of membership in our archives. The **Augustana Synod** sought funds based on an assessment of 54 confirmed members in the church.<sup>107</sup>



**Figure 23.** Photo of congregation in 1936, all people reference to left side of photo. Anna Steeves (9<sup>th</sup>), Agnes Utter (11<sup>th</sup>), Hilda Olson (15<sup>th</sup>), Doris Erickson (20<sup>th</sup>), Gus Utter (23<sup>rd</sup>), Anita Olson (24<sup>th</sup>) Ina Svaboda (28<sup>th</sup>), Ralph Utter (32<sup>nd</sup>), Eric Hallberg (38<sup>th</sup>). Eske Olson (42<sup>nd</sup>), Mrs. Tom Anderson (46<sup>th</sup>), Ruby Luddeen (47<sup>th</sup>), Elvira Armstrong (48<sup>th</sup>), Phillip Armstrong (50<sup>th</sup>).

## 1936

With **Pastor J. P. Samuelson** retirement in 1936, **Mr. Roland Waldemar Johnson**, a theological student, came and served during the summer. He went by the name "**Roy Johnson**" and would be ordained on June 9, 1940, in **Rock Island, Illinois**. He ultimately was a graduate of **Augustana College, Yale Divinity School, Augustana Seminary, and Carnegie Institute of Technology**. He was most noted

<sup>105</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>106</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights" (February 11, 2003). David Johnson, "Church Sunday School Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, March 17, 2003).

<sup>107</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003).

for directing **Bethphage Mission** from 1967 to 1975, but served churches in **Iowa, Illinois, and Pennsylvania**. He was an associate institutional pastor of the **Lutheran Inner Mission Society** in **Pittsburgh** and in **New York**. He taught social work curricula in **Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa**. He was responsible for a number of building programs related to his various ministries. He was survived by his wife **Alice** and three sons, **Ross, Lowell, and Wynn**, when he died shoveling snow in Iowa in 1980. His involvement at **Zion** demonstrates our church's long-time involvement with mission activity. It is interesting to note that **Zion Lutheran Church Sunday School** was already supporting **Bethphage Mission** long before **Pastor Johnson** emerged as a leader of this organization.<sup>108</sup>

## 1937

**Mr. Thure Johnson**, another student, served as summer pulpit supply in 1937. **Pastor Thure Philip Johnson** would be ordained June 9, 1940, at the same time as **Pastor Roy Johnson**. **Pastor Thure Philip Johnson** was borne on March 24, 1903, in **Allmesokra, Jonkopings Lan, Sweden**, to **Johan A. Jonasson and Marie Kristina (Karlson)**. He came to the **United States** in 1926, attended **Luther College** in 1934 but graduated from **Bethany College** in 1936. He attended **Augustana Seminary**. He served in **Pelican Rapids, Minn.**, 1940-45; **Stromsburg, Neb.**, 1945-52; **Roseau, Minn.**, 1952-59; **Niobe, Lignite, N.D.**, 1959-63; **Milona, Minn.**, 1963-66; and **Providence Valley**, 1966-72. He married **Lillie Olivia Peterson** of **Stanton, Iowa**, on June 12, 1940; they had one child. He married **Selma Alvina Bergstrom** in **Webster, Minnesota**, on September 20, 1958. **Pastor Thure Johnson** died September 26, 1989. Beyond the summer of 1937, **Pastor Samuelson** continued as supply pastor for the congregation as **Zion Lutheran Church** had no pastor available. In 1937 the **Sunday School** continued its work under the leadership of **Mrs. Fred Hallberg** (nee **Muriel Olson**).<sup>109</sup>

## 1938

**Luther League** minutes in 1938 showed that ten responded to roll call at one meeting. Long-time church member, **Mrs. F. O. Linder** passed away. In December the **Ladies Aid** minutes reveal that **Mrs. Frank Erickson** accompanied a Swedish song with auto harp. Membership was at a 15 level. Long-time **Swedish** membership was slowly dying off.<sup>110</sup>

## 1939

The **Ladies Aid Hostesses** for 1939 were listed: **Mrs. V. Olson, Mrs. J. P. Samuelson, Mrs. Carl Johnson, Mrs. Hans Erickson, Mrs. Alfred Carlson, Mrs. John Olson, Mrs. P. Wallin, Mrs. A.M. Ledene, Mrs. Ernst, Mrs. Heni**. Financial problems for the little church brought drastic action. **Pastor Samuelson** was asked to defer wages until church building repairs were paid. The **Church Council** requested that synodical assessment be reduced.<sup>111</sup>

## 1940

In the 1940s the church used a piano for worship. Organ disposition is unknown. **Pastor D. N. Anderson** accepted the call of the congregation in 1940 and continued to serve until 1948 when he retired from ministry. **Pastor David Natanael Anderson** had been ordained five months before the formation of **Swedish Lutheran Zion Church**, on June 11, 1905, in **Stanton, Iowa**. He was born March 19, 1876, in **Neoga, Illinois**. He graduated from **Augustana College** with a B. A. in 1899 and from **Augustana Seminary** with a B. D. in 1905. He served at **Cheyenne and Rock Springs, Wyoming** (1905-08), **York, Nebraska** (1908-10), **Albia and Buston, Iowa** (1911-13), **Butte, Montana** (1913-20), **San Jose, California** (1920-23), **Hilmar, Colorado** (1923-26), **Leadville, Colorado** (1926-1930), **Marus, Iowa** (1930-32), and **York, Nebraska** (1932-41) before coming to **Silverhill**. He served on the **Conference Charities Board in California**. **Pastor Anderson** married **Louise Peterson** in **Omaha, Nebraska** in 1905 (d. 1917) and had three children. He subsequently married **Esther Sandall** in **York, Nebraska** and had four children. **Pastor Anderson** died May 14, 1959. When **Pastor Anderson** came, he and **Pastor**

<sup>108</sup>[No Title] (n.p.:**Bethphage Messenger**, March 1980),68:3. Bergendoff, **The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962** (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., **Memories Preserved, Vol. II** (1992), 147.

<sup>109</sup>Bergendoff, **The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962** (1980), 76, 96. Setterdahl et al., **Memories Preserved, Vol. II** (1992), 147. Anderson, "History of Zion" (1965).

<sup>110</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>111</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

**Samuelson** began an interaction from the beginning. For example, **Pastor Samuelson** spoke in **Swedish** and new **Pastor Anderson** in **English** at the **Ladies Aid** meetings.<sup>112</sup>

## 1941

Given the financial problems in the church in 1939 and the aging of the congregation, the **Annual Meeting** statistics for the January 1941 are significant: **Pastor: Rev. Anderson. Secretary: Victor Olson. President: H. G. Erickson. Secretary: Nels Olson. Treasurer: Victor Olson.** By May 1941 **Sunday School** Attendance had shrunk to four classes. Statistics showed enrollment at 30, but average attendance at 17. **Luther League** offering for the month of May: \$3.59. The church continued to age. The **Ladies Aid** noted the 81st birthday of **Mr. Linder**, oldest member in the congregation. The attack on **Pearl Harbor** and the subsequent entry of the **United States** into **World War II** came at the end of 1941. At the **Ladies Aid** meeting of December 18, 1941, **Pastor Dahlquist** "made a few remarks on the present world conditions and God's kingdom."<sup>113</sup>



**Figure 24.** Confirmation class of 1941. (l to r) Clifford Utter, Elida Utter, Ella Olsen, Carl (Bud) V. Olsen, Pastor David N. Anderson, Aina Olsen, Charles Norman.

## 1942

The **Ladies Aid** again supported the **Crippled Children's Fund**, this year with \$2. The **Ladies Aid Ledger** additionally showed purchase of kerosene, repairs on the church oil stove, and other assorted entries. Membership was at 18.<sup>114</sup>

## 1943

In 1943 the average offering per member for the each week in January was 21.63 cents. Confirmed membership in 1935 had been 54, but membership had shrunk considerably. If membership was at 37 as

<sup>112</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Bergendoff, The Augustana Ministerium: 1850-1962 (1980), 76, 96. Johnson, "Church Highlights" (February 11, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Setterdahl et al., Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 74.

<sup>113</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003). Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>114</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).



it was counted in 1944, that means that the church had only \$32 flowing into church coffers for all of January. Church life was exceeding the ability of the church to support that life. Here are the expenses itemized in 1943: Pastor's salary was \$315. The **organist's** salary was \$18.75. The janitor's salary was \$24. Lighting cost \$18.<sup>115</sup>

## 1944

Given the financial considerations in running this rural church, it is understandable what happened in 1944. **Zion Lutheran Church** asked the **Southeastern District of the Augustana Synod** to subsidize a pastoral salary to the tune of \$240 a year. **Zion** membership consisted of 16 men, 21 women, and 24 children. Despite the financial desperation, **Zion Lutheran Church** took an offering for **Norwegian Lutheran Relief** on a Sunday morning in September.<sup>116</sup>



**Figure 25.** Zion Lutheran Church kept an active roster of those in harm's way during World War II.

## 1945

Financial things were settling down. Funds came in from early members and their families in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the church's founding. In 1945 the church purchased a piano from **Pastor Dahlquist** for \$25. Insurance for church and **parsonage** was \$11.35. **Pastor Hartelius**, now a member of **Bethany**

<sup>115</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003)..

<sup>116</sup>Augustana Synodical Record (Rockford: Augustana Synod, 1944). Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

**Lutheran Church in Seattle, WA**, talked to his **Church Council** which sent a **40th Anniversary** gift of \$25. Formal celebration took place on April 8. The church celebrated its **40th Anniversary** with a dinner after the service. There was a lot of preparation. "The **Ladies Aid** [obtained] ... a permit for extra sugar ... [for] the necessary baking." The **Ladies Aid** was reaching out. It served refreshments at the **Silverhill Farmers' Association's** Annual Meeting in October. Membership in the **Ladies Aid** was down to 16.<sup>117</sup>

## 1946

The **Ladies Aid** welcomed **Pastor and Mrs. Nygren** as pastor and wife at the **Silverhill Baptist Church**. **Pastor and Mrs. Eckerholm**, also of Silverhill Baptist, were also welcomed. **Mrs. John Olson** served as **Ladies Aid** President. **Mrs. V. Olson** had served as **Ladies Aid** President for the period 1933-1946.<sup>118</sup>

## 1947

The **Ladies Aid** in 1947 elected new officers: **President--Mrs. Carlton Carlson, Vice President--Mrs. Victor Olson, Secretary--Mrs. Trygve Anderson, Treasurer--Mrs. D. N. Anderson**. **Baptist Pastor and Mrs. Nygren** were **Ladies Aid** guests, giving the lesson and song in February. **Pastor Eckerholm** was involved in the March meeting. The women were busy seeking names of Europeans needing help after **World War II**. They elected to sell **Scandinavian Recipe Books**. **Mrs. Carlton Carlson, Ladies Aid President**, began serving in 1947 and would continue to 1950.<sup>119</sup> Current **Zion** members **Lillian and Lawrence Moseley** were married at **Zion** on December 27 at 7:00 p.m. by **Pastor Anderson**, who still had a significant Swedish brogue.<sup>120</sup>

## 1948

In the 1948 the tenure of **Pastor D. N. Anderson** ended. **Pastor Walter U. Brown** of **Mobile** began serving as pulpit supply pastor in 1948, continuing to 1951. **Sunday School** received offerings amounting to \$98.87 for the year, but an additional \$9.10 was received for the **Sunday School Picnic**. Fund expenditures included purchase of **Sunday School** materials, support of a children's home, and support for church upkeep and improvements. The **Ladies Aid** received \$102.33 in dues and donations, \$12.50 for cook books, and \$65.80 for its **Bazaar**. Some of the **Ladies Aid** disbursements related to purchase of kerosene, flowers, and **CARE** packages, and "stoves for the **parsonage**." The women were able to send a **CARE** package to a **Czech** widow with children. **Ladies Aid** membership was up to 19. **Pastor Brown** received a small stipend of \$5 each time he was present at the **Ladies Aid** to defray expenses of traveling from **St. Paul's Lutheran Church** in **Mobile**.<sup>121</sup>

## 1949

**Zion Lutheran Church** began deliberating its affiliation with the **Augustana Synod** versus joining the **United Lutheran Synod**. The **parsonage** was empty so **Frank Zalata** was allowed to rent the **parsonage** and install a **hot water heater**. Membership continued to shrink. The church roster showed 23 contributing members (and three additional members residing in **Chicago**). The church infrastructure continued to deteriorate, e.g., the **well** not giving clear water so that the well point had to be pulled. More expense! Meanwhile, over in **Mobile Charley Sharp** was building a **baptismal font** for his son **Rusty's** baptism at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**. That font was given to **Zion Lutheran Church** when **St. Paul's** completed its building program which included another **baptismal font**.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>118</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>119</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>120</sup>Interview with Lawrence Moseley by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, April 3, 2004).

<sup>121</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>122</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report" (February 18, 2003). Ernie and Henri Etta Burnett. [Personal E-Mail] (April 25, 2003). Interview with Charles Sharp by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, August 28, 2003).

## 1950

**Zion Lutheran Church** began its practice of **tithing** to its **Synod** on funds coming in. The **Ladies Aid** reported these people served as its officers: **Mrs. Vera Armstrong, President. Mrs. Emma Norman, Secretary Pro Tem. Pastor Engstrom** from the **Silverhill Mission Covenant Church** participated in the September meeting.<sup>123</sup> **Mrs. Emma Norman** had the mail route during the week. She used to pick up folks for church events.<sup>124</sup>

## 1951

**Pastor Walter U. Brown** of **Mobile** concluded his work as pulpit supply pastor at **Zion Lutheran Church** in 1951. **Pastor Waldemar H. Lefstead** of **St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mobile** became involved with **Zion** when he began serving **St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mobile** in the 1950s. It was at **Pastor Lefstead's** suggestion that **Zion Lutheran Church** received that **baptismal font**, built by **Charlie Sharp** in **Mobile** at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church** for his son **Rusty's** baptism. **Pastor Lefstead** utilized charter members from **St. Paul's** in his ministry in **Silverhill**. **Lay Pastors Martin Luther Zimmerman and Radar Torguson** began irregular preaching at **Zion**. **Pastor Waldemar H. Lefstead** would serve in a pulpit supply capacity from 1952 to 1956.<sup>125</sup>

The original **Home Mission** work of the **Augustana Synod** in **Silverhill** for **Zion Lutheran Church** came from **Thorsby** beginning in 1896. **Pastor Lefstead** was a connection with those early days, because he was a child of the **Thorsby, Alabama, parish.**" During **Pastor Lefstead's** tenure with **Zion**, the church continued to negotiate leaving the **Augustana Synod** to affiliate with the **Georgia-Alabama Synod of the United Lutheran Church of America.**<sup>126</sup>

The **Zion Lutheran Church Sunday School** continued to contribute offerings to the work of the national church. Church infrastructure continued to deteriorate. The **Ladies Aid** discussed replacing the water pipes from the broken pump to the kitchen. Its membership was now at 17. Tenants were obtained for the empty **parsonage**. **Matilda Hoff Linden** passed away on January 24, 1951, "a loyal worker in the **Ladies Aid, Luther League** and **Sunday School.**"<sup>127</sup>

## 1952

The congregation continued aging as original members and their children slowly yielded to subsequent generations. The **Zion Ladies Aid** joined with others to help **Otto Johnson**, an old resident hospitalized without resources. **Hostesses** for this year included: **Mrs. R. Norman, Mrs. Nels Olson, Mrs. Vera Armstrong, Mrs. Anna Rogers, Mrs. Lena Heni, Mrs. Victor Olson, Mrs. Anna Nitteberg, Mrs. Lena Olson, Mrs. Anna Linder Anderson, and Mrs. H. Wallin.** 92 year old visitor **Grandma Anna Louisa Miller**, connected to current members **Margaret Stephens** (her grandmother) and **Shirley Stephens** (great grandmother), shared at a number of meetings. She would also be the great grandmother of **Zion's** current **ALFA** insurance agent, **Phil Owen**, husband of **Zion's Webmaster, Debbie Owen.** **Anna Miller** was a devout **Presbyterian** with one of her sons ordained a minister and missionary. Her only daughter **Grace** was a missionary nurse to the **Congo** where she met and married a **Swedish Baptist** missionary, **Nils Sixten Edhegard** (aka **Johnson** or **Jonsson**). **Grace Edhegard** was **Margaret Stephens'** mother. **Mrs. Solveig Nitteberg** regularly supplied special music for the ladies. **Pastor**

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<sup>123</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights" (February 11, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>124</sup>Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

<sup>125</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Interview with Charles Sharp by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, August 28, 2003).

<sup>126</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Setterdahl et al., Memories Preserved, Vol. II (1992), 70.

<sup>127</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Johnson, "Highlights from the Sunday School Records" (March 17, 2003).

**Brown** gave solos.<sup>128</sup> During the other months in the years 1952-1956, **Pastor Lefstead** conducted services with communion twice a month.<sup>129</sup>

## 1953

**Ladies Aid** membership was now at 18 members. Vocal solos during meetings continued.<sup>130</sup> **Mrs. Vera Armstrong** and **Mrs. Anna Linder Anderson** would serve as delegates in April, 1953, when **Zion Lutheran Church** formally would leave the **Augustana Synod** to affiliate with the **Georgia-Alabama Synod of the United Lutheran Church of America** at the Synodical Convention in **Atlanta, Georgia**.<sup>131</sup> That affiliation would be rendered moot when both the **Augustana** and the **Georgia-Alabama Synods** would become part of the **Lutheran Church in America** in just a few short years. There are archival data concerning the physical church.

**Zion Lutheran Church** was now utilizing three big **heaters** and one small one for the back room with a brand new 250 gallon oil tank. The tank with pipes was installed for \$348.27.<sup>132</sup> This replaced the central pot-belly stove in the church.<sup>133</sup> Recognize that this renovation occurred several years before **bathrooms** were installed in the church and almost a decade before the **kitchen addition** to the back of the church was constructed, the "major" construction projects before the **fellowship addition** of 2003.



**Figure 26.** Confirmation class of 1953. (l to r) Front Row: Judith Hallberg, Elizabeth Kinard, Arlene Kinard, Bill Blair, Ronald Hallberg, Christine Blair, Freddie Kinard, Pastor Walter M. Brown. Back Row: Caroline Hauge, Oscar Hauge, Eric Hallberg, Jr., Walter Brown, Jr.

<sup>128</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003); Owen, [Personal E-Mail] (May 23, 2005).

<sup>129</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>130</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>131</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>132</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer Report Highlights" (February 18, 2003).

<sup>133</sup>Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

## 1954

1954 brought more new projects. There is some sense that affiliation with the new **Georgia-Alabama Synod** brought freshness to the church, now almost 50 years old. A new **well pump** was obtained for the **parsonage**.<sup>134</sup> **Seminarian George West** from **Southern Seminary** began providing summer pulpit services.<sup>135</sup> Beyond summer months, **Pastor Lefstead** conducted services twice monthly, actually serving the congregation throughout the years 1952-1956.<sup>136</sup>

## 1955

An interesting problem emerged in 1955. The **Zion Ladies Aid** became concerned about disposing of bees in the church and was ultimately responsible for obtaining an exterminator. **St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mobile** donated **altar** linens to **Zion** this year.<sup>137</sup> Other upgrades besides **paraments** occurred in 1955 when **lighting** was improved in the church.<sup>138</sup> A new summer intern began helping out at **Zion**. **Seminarian Clarence K. Derrick, Jr.**, from **Southern Seminary** supplemented **Pastor Lefstead's** services as he served as summer pulpit supply.<sup>139</sup> May **Sunday School Attendance** for six classes revealed that 42 were enrolled, but average attendance was at an attendance level of 32. **Luther League** was active with offerings for the month of May: \$20.79.<sup>140</sup>

## Zion Lutheran Church Modernizes and Does First Major Construction Since 1920

## 1956

In 1956 the **Rev. Fulton B. Counts** of **Knoxville, Tennessee**, accepted the call of the congregation. He resigned in 1958 to accept a call to **Burkes Garden, VA**. During his pastorate, **gas heaters** were installed in both **church** and **parsonage**.<sup>141</sup> This would have been a conversion from oil which was in place from at least 1953. **Rest rooms** were completed two years later. **Pastor Lefstead** conducted services twice a month in 1956 until **Pastor Counts** arrived.<sup>142</sup>

## 1957

From the group that met in those first years of **Silverhill** in the **Land Office**, three churches sprang. First to leave the group and establish a church were the **Swedish Baptists**. Second were the **Covenanters**. Third were the **Lutherans**. **Zion Lutheran Church** joined the second group, historic **Silverhill Mission Covenant Church**, for the groundbreaking for its new building in 1957. The church took on its first mission focus since the late 1920s. A full week of missions and evangelism was set. An **Evangelism Committee** was established.<sup>143</sup> The **Zion Ladies Aid** caught the excitement and discussed the building of an addition to the **Sunday School** room. But they were concerned about some comfort issues as well, asking **Ralph Utter**, **Oscar Swanson**, and **Gary Cook** to look into getting an **electric fan** for the sanctuary. Looking into the county's needs, the **Zion Ladies Aid** contributed \$10 to support a **TB Xray Unit** from **Mobile County**

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<sup>134</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 18, 2003).

<sup>135</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>136</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>137</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>138</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 18, 2003).

<sup>139</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Council Archives" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>140</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Church Council and Luther League Minutes and League Treasurer's Reports Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003).

<sup>141</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003 and February 18, 2003).

<sup>142</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>143</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 18, 2003).

at the **Baldwin County Fair at Robertsdale**. **St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Mobile** continued to have an indirect connection with **Silverhill**, donating six subscriptions to *The Lutheran* for **Zion** members.<sup>144</sup>



**Figure 27.** Confirmation class of 1956. (l to r) Front Row: Joey Frolik, Thomas Kinard, Nancy Kinard. Middle Row: Jerry Frolik, Kenneth Kuck [?], Ralph Utter. Back Row: Pastor F. Counts, Lawrence Moseley.

## 1958

Up to 1958 the church continued to use the **outhouses** located on the corner of the church site, but finally restrooms were added to church in the **narthex** area. They now comprise our "**vintage restrooms**" with the **restroom** facilities in the **Fellowship Hall** constructed in 2003 serving most restroom needs in the 21st Century. Water for these church **restrooms** was run from a **parsonage** well located near the **parsonage garage**.<sup>145</sup> **The Rev. William Eubanks**, pastor of **St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Mobile**, served as supply pastor from July to October 1958. He would conduct services on the second, fourth, and fifth Sundays for the late summer and early fall months of 1958.<sup>146</sup> There were several updates of significance besides **plumbing**. The old **church organ** was sold. A large **fan** was obtained for the round window over the **altar**. As an aside, it was the responsibility of the young men of the **Luther League** to close up the windows for winter and put that **fan** away.

**Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tutas** joined the church in 1958 and would become involved in **Luther League**. **Robert Tutas** had been born in **Wisconsin** near **Iron Mountain, MI**, and joined the Navy, met his wife, and lived in **Pensacola**, at some point relocating to **Foley**. The couple became involved with **Luther League** at that time. **Robert Tutas** felt called to the ministry, resigned from the **Zion Church Council**, and entered **Newberry College** in 1960. He entered **Southern Seminary** after college, and he was ordained in 1968. **Zion Church** recognized his achievement at ordination. He served in the ministry for 10 years, first

<sup>144</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>145</sup>Johnson, "Church Council Archives" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>146</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

in **Saluta, SC**, for 4 years, then **Orangeberg, SC**, and finally at **Surfside Beach, SC**, where he was involved in the founding of **Shepherd of the Sea Lutheran Church**. **Pastor Tutas** retired from the ministry in 1978 and entered the banking world in **Clearwater, FL**. In later years he suffered from Alzheimer's and resided with his sister Judy in **Kingsford, MI**, and was intellectually intact up until 1999, the last year he contributed to his alma mater **Newberry College**. He went to be with the Lord June 1, 2003.<sup>147</sup>

Now, back to 1958 events! The women of the church assisted in renovations, donating accessories to the two new **restrooms** in the church. They began to work with the **Zion Choir** and the **Zion Luther League** to develop an **Organ Fund**. Donations were sent to the **Old People's Home** at **White Rock, SC**, and were used to prepare **Christmas** baskets for the needy.

The **Augustana Synod** was merging with the **Georgia-Alabama Synod of the United Lutheran Church**, so there is specific information concerning the small **Synod** to which **Zion Lutheran Church** had come in 1953: There were 40 congregations in **Georgia**; 16 in **Alabama**; 16 in **Mississippi**, and 26 in **Tennessee** at the time of the merger.<sup>148</sup>

## 1959

**Mrs. Agnes Utter's** secretarial reports from 1959 showed **Mrs. Vera Armstrong** was still serving as **President of the Ladies Aid**. **Mrs. Lena Olson** was supervising care of the linens for the church. Membership in the **Ladies Aid of Zion Lutheran Church** was at 20. **Mrs. Counts** was visiting the sick. **Mrs. Emma Norman** was involved with special Lenten giving. The little white church now used for **door offerings** was made by **Oscar Swanson** for generating **Organ Funds** in 1959. Worship participation was encouraged, with **choir** members, **Luther Leaguers**, and **Ladies Aid** members being polled as to **Good Friday** Service participation.<sup>149</sup>

The **Zion Ladies Aid** supported the **Lutheran Children's Home of the South, Salem, VA**. Minutes from the **Zion Ladies Aid** reveal many visitors to the **Ladies Aid** programs. The women continued activities to fund more **bathroom** facilities, but now in the **parsonage**. **Hostesses** for 1959 included: **Mrs. Lena Olson, Mrs. Anna Nitteberg, Mrs. Victor Olsson, Mrs. Adele Wigstrom, Mrs. Lena Heni, Mrs. Olga Johnson, Mrs. Emma Norman, Mrs. Gudrun Swanson, Mrs. Anna Rogers, Mrs. Hannah Wallen, Mrs. Norman Olsson, and Mrs. Anna Linder Anderson**. **Officers** elected for 1960 included **Mrs. Vera Armstrong--President; Mrs. Gudrun Swanson--Vice President and Treasurer; and Mrs. Agnes Utter--Secretary**.<sup>150</sup>

The **Organ Fund** was successful with **Zion Lutheran Church** purchasing an organ. A **piano** donation was received this year as well, believed to be the current upright in our **Church Museum**. **Zion** was involved with **Home Missions** and an **Alabama Convention**.<sup>151</sup>

**Lay Pastor Robert Tutas** (**Zion Lutheran Church** involvement spanning the years 1959-1961) began preaching, teaching, visiting, and conducting confirmation and **Sunday School** classes under **Pastor Lefstead's** guidance. As noted above, he later left **Zion** (1961) for **Newberry College** to prepare for formal ministry.<sup>152</sup>

## 1960

The 1960s were the decade of the big **Lutheran Church mergers** in the **United States**. The structure and the organization in place for the last 55 years begin to change. In the reorganization the **Zion Lutheran Church Ladies Aid** becomes **Circle 1** and the younger women of the church are incorporated into

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<sup>147</sup>A. Swygert, [E-Mail] "Re: Rev. Robert L. Tutas, either ULC or early LCA" (via Newberry College: <DShealy@Newberry.edu> and <ASwygert@ltss.edu> to <johns468@gulftel.com>, November 12, 2004, 10:06:54 AM CST.

<sup>148</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>149</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>150</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>151</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003). Johnson, "Sunday School Highlights" (March 17, 2003). Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>152</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Council Archives" (February 11, 2003).

**Circle 2.**<sup>153</sup> The church begins to collect contributions for new **hymnals.**<sup>154</sup> In May **Sunday School** attendance for six classes reveal 39 enrolled with 32 attending on average. The **Luther League** offering for the month of May was \$29.01.<sup>155</sup>



**Figure 28.** 1959 vintage piano resides in the Zion Museum.

In February the **Church Council** sent a letter to **Dr. Wood** advising the **Synod** of improvements made to **Zion** in 1959. **Mr. Tutas** was demonstrating emerging pastoral skills, reporting for the pastor. He would be going to the seminary in Columbia in March for a meeting and by December would resign to go to seminary. **Mrs. Florence Prah** who managed the **Organ Fund** would turn the balance over to the **treasurer**. The **parsonage** was ready in February to be rented out. **Mrs. Muriel Hallberg** served as **organist** and was paid \$25 for her services in 1959. Long-time members of **Zion** will recognize members serving on committees for the congregation: **Property--Mr. Fred Hallberg; Finance--Mr. Ralph Utter and Mr. Lawrence Moseley; Worship and Music--Mrs. Netta Frolik, Mrs. Florence Prah, Mrs. Muriel Hallberg, and Mrs. Tutas; Evangelism--Mr. George and Mrs. Louise Lundberg and Mrs. Gudrun Swanson.**<sup>156</sup>

The **Building Committee** arranged for the **parsonage kitchen** to be done over, but rental of the house was difficult and there were other cash-flow issues. The **Council** was regularly looking at ideas to raise money. **Paper drives** and other things were investigated and tried. It was in March that **Mr. Fred Hallberg** presented the **painting** of the "Risen Christ" done by him and **Florence's daughter, Sharon Prah**; it was placed over **altar** where it resided until 1979. It was then placed on the east wall until it was stored and then placed in our **Church Museum**.

The church was only able to send in a partial **synod apportionment**. Long-time member **Victor Olson** left for **California**. **Mr. Tutas** was receiving a salary of \$15 a Sunday. The congregation was able to have **new service books** by a donation. **Zion** received some services gratis, e.g., the building was sprayed for free. In mid-1960 **Dr. Lefstead** was given an invitation to bring communion. And of course, there was correspondence from the **United Lutheran Church, Georgia-Alabama Synod.**<sup>157</sup>

<sup>153</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003).

<sup>154</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>155</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>156</sup>David Johnson, "Abstract of Council Archives for Council Minutes of October 21, 2004" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, October 21, 2004). Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

<sup>157</sup>Johnson, "Abstract of October 21, 2004" (October 21, 2004).





**Figure 29.** Hallberg-Prahl altar painting, circa 1960, now resides in Zion Lutheran Church's Museum.

The **Luther League** was busy, painting the **Sunday School** rooms in back of the church with **Mr. Tutas**. **Price Broadcasting Corporation in Fairhope** would offer free broadcast time to the church. **Pastor Faddis** of **Christ Lutheran Church** offered to assist the congregation in thinking about **evangelism**.<sup>158</sup>

At the end of 1960 **Zion** was still celebrating **Julata** at 6:00 a.m. **Christmas** morning. **Zion** was a church plagued with things that were wearing out. The **organ** needed repair in 1960 and the outside of the church needed paint again, but it was deferred. Needs, though small, added up. The **Choir** desired \$10 for music for its Christmas cantata. The choir sat where the organ is situated in 2005, on the right part of the chancel. Lillian Moseley, Neysa Utter, Netta Frolik, Florence Prahl, Ralph Utter, Oscar Hauge, Mr. Tutas, and others comprised the choir.<sup>159</sup> And the congregation could not keep lodgers in the **parsonage** to help with its costs. The congregation was looking beyond its walls, though, a **Church Council** annotation noting that old clothes were being shipped by **Mr. Fred Hallberg**.<sup>160</sup>

## 1961

The **Rev. Richard Achgill** of **Houston, Texas**, began his service as pastor in August 1961 and would serve to August 1962.<sup>161</sup> In 1961 **Oscar Swanson** became congregational **President**; **Lawrence Moseley**, the **Vice President**; **Ralph Utter**, the **Treasurer**; and **Harriet Blair** the **Secretary**. **George Lundberg** would become a **Council member** at some point in the first half of the year. **Mrs. Emma Norman** and **Mr. Ralph Utter** served as the **Finance Committee**. Financial problems continued. There were no funds to the pay the **synod assessment** and the congregation decided to reuse its Lenten cards to raise funds.

In January a letter of thanks was directed to **Mr. Tutas** for his work as Lay Pastor to the congregation. By February **Mr. Tutas** would accompany **Dr. Lefstead** to the **Church Council** meeting and **Dr. Lefstead** would commit to doing confirmation and communion while the **Synod** set in motion the process of finding a pastor for **Zion**.<sup>162</sup>

The **Council** set plans for church painting and the purchase of materials for **Mr. Oscar Swanson** to build cabinets in the rear of the church for robes. **Lonnie Swoboda**, **Ted Prahl**, **Elaine Rezek**, **Sylvia Clark**, **Paulette Lindell**, and **Judy Prahl** were confirmed this year. The **Evangelism Committee** reported that the **Junior Luther League** was being developed. **Mr. Lawrence Moseley** donated a light for organ. The

<sup>158</sup>Johnson, "Abstract of October 21, 2004" (October 21, 2004).

<sup>159</sup>Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

<sup>160</sup>Johnson, "Abstract of October 21, 2004" (October 21, 2004).

<sup>161</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>162</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

exterior of the church was ultimately painted by **Mr. Hany of Daphne** for \$225; the total cost for painting, inside and outside, was \$350. A **termite and bee exterminator** charged \$150 this year. **Church Council** meetings moved to a quarterly schedule that summer.<sup>163</sup>

**Pastor Richard Achgill** was invited to pastor **Zion** in midsummer. **George Lundberg** passed away and **Mr. Lewis Lueders** replaced his position on the **Church Council**. The church discussed **fans**: it was an issue of **window fans** versus **oscillating fans**. The **window fans** were removed and two **oscillating fans** with cords were installed at the same time as a new **guest book stand** was added to the sanctuary. What about the **parsonage**? New gutters and a new **lavatory** were installed there. The congregation moved to new **offering envelopes** which combined offerings and Building Fund dollars in a common envelope.<sup>164</sup>

**Pledge cards** were obtained in 1961, the first year any pledge system is mentioned in church records. **Pledge cards** would be used inconsistently to the end of the century, an innovation apparently introduced from **St. Peter's Lutheran Church of Mobile**.<sup>165</sup> **Pastor Achgill's** effects on the congregation began to emerge: An **Altar Committee** was inaugurated under the auspices of the **ULCW**, and **Pastor Achgill** began to select and train **altar boys**. Active membership was defined by who registered on **communion cards**. A partial payment to the **Synod** was made at the end of the year.<sup>166</sup>

## 1962

A review of 1962 **women's** ministry and **youth** ministry data reveals a continuing interest in **missions**. Financial concerns stretched from concern for **kitchen** curtains to pastoral **salary** to purchase of **tables**.<sup>167</sup> By early 1962 materials needed for the coming **church addition** was estimated to cost \$1400. Church **services** were adjusted so that morning worship was set for 9:00 followed by **Sunday School** at 10:00. The **church sign** was resituated. The new **church officers**, **Mr. Lewis Lueders (Vice President)**; **Mr. Ralph Utter (Treasurer)**; and **Mr. Fred Langenbach (Secretary)** would oversee the addition of city water and gas to **parsonage** and repairs to the church **porch**.<sup>168</sup>

Unfortunately, **Pastor Achgill** resigned in mid-year so a **Pulpit Committee** was commissioned. Council minutes in August revealed that 15 **voting members** were present to accept his resignation with regrets, a small congregation indeed. **Financial problems** continued and were real. Here was the situation by September: \$78 on hand and bills due of \$127. \$447.83 in the Building Fund. **Dr. Wood** from **Synod** noted that the **Synod** was supporting the **Zion's** pastor to the tune of \$1200 a year plus a car expense of \$300 a year and a **parsonage** expense of \$300 a year plus hospital insurance. **Zion** Lutheran Church could only raise \$1200 a year! Yes, **Synod** was aware of funding problems for a pastor. Services were moved to 8:15 Sunday and **Pastors Cammeron, Zimmeron, and Cliant** supervised worship. At the end of this depressing year, **Zion** Lutheran Church looked forward to **Pastor Suechting** coming to **Silverhill**.<sup>169</sup>

## 1963

**Zion Lutheran Church** affiliated with the **Lutheran Church in America (LCA)**, the successor of the **Georgia-Alabama Synod of the ULCA** and of the **Augustana Synod** and officially was amalgamated into the **South Eastern Synod of the LCA** at a **Conference Meeting in Atlanta, GA**.<sup>170</sup>

The young people of the church continued with the name, the "**Luther League**," with **President**, Miss **Diane Swoboda**. The **Luther League** was active in manning **Zion's County Fair** booth in 1963. The **President** of the **Church Council** was **Lawrence Moseley**. The **President** of the **Ladies Aid**, now the "**Lutheran**

<sup>163</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>164</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>165</sup>Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

<sup>166</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>167</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>168</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>169</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>170</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Church Women,"** was **Mrs. Vera Armstrong**. The **Sunday School Superintendent** was **Mrs. Lillian Moseley**. A new activity is noted in 1963 when a **Quarterly Birthday Dinner and Program Chairman** of the entire church was appointed, **Mrs. Louise Lundberg**. **Vacation Bible Schools** were ongoing.<sup>171</sup>

**Pastor August G. Suechting** (1963-1966) began a **Vice-Pastor** relationship with church becoming **Zion's** regular pulpit supply pastor.<sup>172</sup> We believe that the **Rev. Martin** from **St. Paul's** also served the church, perhaps as an intern or seminarian. Beginning in 1963 through to 1971 the church was served by a number of **lay pastors** on a rotation basis. These included **Mr. Radar Torgensen, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Zimmerman**. The **Rev. Clarence Daniels** also participated in this rotation.<sup>173</sup>

**Organists** who served the congregation up to 1963 included **Mr. P. W. Paulson, Anna Linder (Mrs. Trygve Anderson), Mrs. Harry Norden, Mrs. Louise Lundberg,** and the 1963 organist, **Mrs. Muriel Hallberg**. **Sunday School Superintendents** who had served up to 1963 included **P. W. Paulson, Mr. Vallin, Victor Olson, Ruby Ledene (Mrs. C. Gaye), and the Mesdames Gudrun Swanson, Grace Kinard, and Lillian Moseley.**<sup>174</sup>

In reviewing the history in 1963, it was concluded that 15 or 16 classes had been confirmed since 1918 numbering about 116 **confirmands**. Records prior to 1918 were apparently unavailable in 1963. Many children and adults had been baptized and **marriages** performed, with the most recent being that of **Mr. and Mrs. Eric Hallberg Jr.** **Mrs. Hallberg** was the former **Sylvia Clark.**<sup>175</sup>

It was 1963 when **Mrs. Peter Christopher (Sharon Prah)** sketched and **Mr. Eric Hallberg** painted the "Risen Christ" picture that remained in the nave until sanctuary renovations in 1989.<sup>176</sup>



**Figure 30.** Pastor William Martin, Pastor C. B. Daniels, and Dr. Harvey Huntley posed in front of the altar with 1960s painting situated over the altar in early 1971.

One of the major problems the church was experiencing related to things just wearing out. The church continued to have to shuffle finances. The church moved back to simple offering envelopes in 1963. The **bulletin service** was canceled until the church had money. **Organ repair** and **lighting repair** was needed. The **parsonage shingles** were bad. The **Church Council** moved to meetings every other month instead of quarterly. The minutes of the **Annual Meeting** confirmed that the church was in the red. **Pastor August Suechting** was able to convince the congregation of the need for **devotional books** for every family to be

<sup>171</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966). Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>172</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion" (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>173</sup>Interview with Lawrence Moseley Conducted by Pastor David Johnson on April 3, 2004. "In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>174</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>175</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

<sup>176</sup>Anderson, "Zion 60th Year Sunday" (1966).

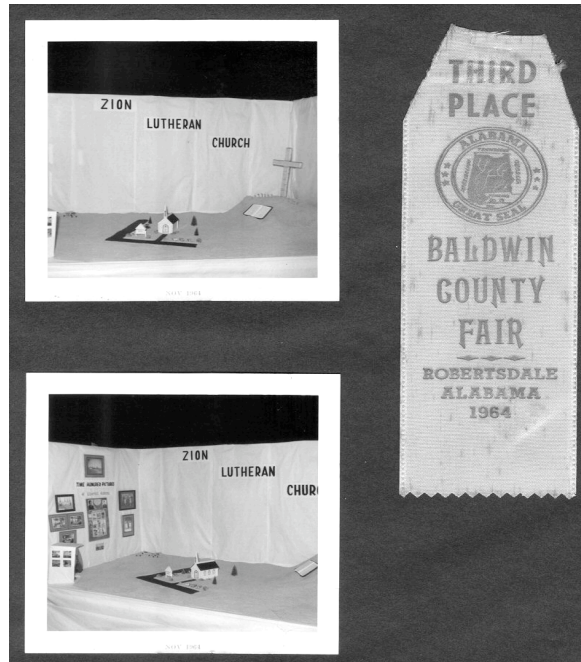
paid for with a **donations box** to be put in church. By the August **Council** meeting all bills were paid up to date and there was \$106 in bank, but the congregation still filed with the **Synod** for salary aid of \$600 for the coming year!<sup>177</sup>

## 1964

Have you gotten the sense that there were chronic funding problems with **Zion** in mid-century? There were bookkeeping issues. The **Ladies Aid**, **Luther League**, and **Sunday School** books balanced just fine at the congregational **Annual Meeting**, but the church books did not. \$1825.76 was pledged for 1964 with \$300 being allocated to **Synod**. **Zion** still had connections with **St. Paul's Lutheran in Mobile** and the **District** meeting was held there.<sup>178</sup>

**Youth** involvement in the congregation was deteriorating. **Luther League** attendance was going down. The **Council** appointed **Mr. and Mrs. Bill Blair** as youth advisors. Was the church in hot water? Well, the pastor's **hot water heater** went out and a new one was donated by **Lawrence Moseley** and installed by **Fred Langenbach**. **Shingles** for the church were purchased and installed by **Fred Langenbach** and his son **Frederick**. **Mr. Billy Blair** rented a sander to use on the church floors. When the church decided it needed a **nursery**, the **Council** decided the **back porch** of the **parsonage** could be used for this. By September things were looking up and the church decided to procure **bulletins** again.<sup>179</sup>

The change in **Synod** brought changes in the kinds of requests being made of the church. **Zion** received a **questionnaire on discrimination** in church. The church began to think **addition** again and decided to ask the congregation if it were willing to take a **loan** for a building addition. And that gets us to the bottom line again. Here steps in the **Pledge Committee** for 1965: **Mrs. Joan**, **Mrs. Grace Kinnard**, **Mrs. Neysa Utter**, **Mrs. Carol Blair**, **Mrs. Vera Armstrong**, and **Mrs. Emma Norman**. By the **Annual Meeting** of 1965, they determine there are 41 members who had responded to the **pledge drive**. The church again applies to **Synod** for pastor salary support. New water shut-off valves were installed for church and **parsonage**.<sup>180</sup>



**Figure 31.** Zion participated in the County Fair in 1964.

It was the year of 1964 that the congregation began planning for an **addition** at the rear of the church for **Sunday School** expansion, **meeting space**, and **kitchen** facilities. The work was begun in November

<sup>177</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

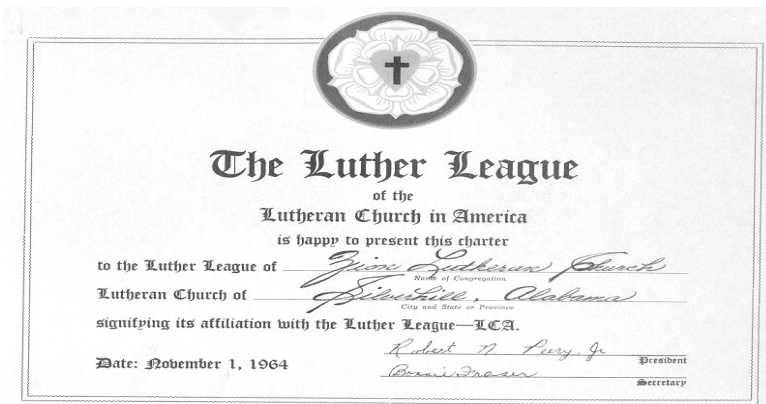
<sup>178</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>179</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>180</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

1964, with **Oscar Swanson** as the supervisor of the plans and its construction with additional coordination by **Rueben Norman** and **Victor Kubina**. A \$500 loan was obtained from the **Oscar Swansons** with the congregation to repay it over a five year period. **Mr. Swanson** was assisted by fellow members of the **Church Council** and also by **Rueben Norman** and **Victor Kubina**, who contributed much of the labor necessary to erect the building, thus limiting building costs to labor and materials. Materials were obtained from a variety of sources, even **Pensacola**. The **front doors** of the church were replaced at the same time as the construction at the rear of the church. The members of the **Church Council** at the time of construction included the **Rev. A. G. Suechting, Lawrence O. Moseley, Fred Langenbach, Mrs. Emma Norman, William Blair, and Oscar Swanson**.<sup>181</sup>

It wasn't all building in 1964. We get some insight into the involvement of youth in the community. The **Luther League** was involved in one of many **paper drives** and participated in a **grasshopper control program**.<sup>182</sup>



**Figure 32.** The new LCA in its early days did put some emphasis on Luther League.

## 1965

With the completion of the combination **Sunday School-Meeting Space-Kitchen Addition**, fellowship and dedication day was set for Sunday, July 18, 1965. At the morning service the **Rev. Waldemar H. Lefstead**, now **Assistant to the President, Southeastern Synod, Atlanta, GA**, brought an appropriate message and officiated at the dedication of the new parish unit. A fellowship dinner followed in the new addition. The afternoon was capped with a musical program by members of the congregation, a reading of the history of the congregation prepared by **Mrs. Anna Anderson**, and greetings brought by the **Rev. Virgil A. Carlson**, dean of the **Alabama-Mississippi District of the Southeastern Synod**.<sup>183</sup>

Outfitting the new space would soon follow. The **Sunday School** would purchase **chairs and tables**.<sup>184</sup> And the congregation would again support a new **Organ Fund**.<sup>185</sup>

There was leadership continuity as the mid-60s came. **Lawrence Moseley** and **Fred Langenbach** were re-elected to the **Church Council** in 1965. **Mr. Bill Blair** was re-elected Secretary and **Mr. Oscar Swanson** was re-elected Treasurer. **Mr. Reuben Norman** was spending much time in the new building addition. The first mention of the "**Southeastern Synod**" is made in the **Council** minutes. It was to meet in **Jackson, MS**. The church **organ** failed again.<sup>186</sup>

Here's what it **cost for the addition** at the rear of the church, the section that had the kitchen and fellowship area that was used from the mid-60s until **Zion** moved into its new **Fellowship Hall** in 2003: **Costs for**

<sup>181</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965). Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Interview with Lawrence Moseley by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, April 3, 2004).

<sup>182</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>183</sup>Anderson, "History of Zion " (1965).

<sup>184</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Johnson, "Sunday School Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>185</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>186</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**"New Annex"**: Material--\$1530.75; labor--\$257.50; total--\$1788.25. But other things were going on besides the **Annex**. There were funds spent to redecorate **Sunday School Rooms**: material--\$361.75; labor--\$50.00; total cost \$411.75. The **bathtub** in the **parsonage** needed replacement. Funds were coming in. There was money available to pay off some of **building notes** early and to buy a **heater** needed for addition.<sup>187</sup>



**Figure 33.** Confirmation class of 1965. (l to r) Freddy Langenbach, Reuben Norman, Carolyn Moseley, Jimmy Kubina, Judy Comstock, Pastor A. Suechting, Floyd Hallberg, Toni Langenbach, Johnny Langenbach.

## 1966

Research into the history of the **Zion Lutheran Church** congregation reveals the church actually began in 1905 and probably had roots eight or nine years earlier. The year discrepancy of **anniversary** reference shows up in 1966 when the congregation chose to celebrate the **sixty year anniversary** of the congregation. **Mrs. Louise Lundberg** observed the **anniversary** in some detail: "The **Sixtieth Anniversary of Zion Lutheran Church** was beautiful, and enjoyed throughout the day by a good attendance. **Dr. R. Wood, President of the Southeastern Synod, Atlanta**, brought the message at the morning worship. The choir sang a beautiful anthem. The fellowship dinner was served on linen covered tables with beautiful roses at table center. **President of the L. C. W., Mrs. Phil Armstrong**, was 'welcome hostess' throughout the day. The afternoon service was led by [the] **Rev. Cameron of the Alabama-Mississippi Synod, Mobile, St. Paul's Lutheran Church**. The choir of **St. Paul's** sang two anthems, and two Swedish solos 'Trygare Kan Ongen Vara' and 'Han Skall Apna Perle Porten' were sung by **Mr. Sharp of Mobile and Minnesota** (an Irishman). Pastors from **Mobile St. Peter's Lutheran**, [and] **Rev. B. Burke and Rev. C. A. Simmons**, the **Silverhill Baptist** and the **Mission Covenant** [Churches, respectively,] brought greetings from their congregations. **Rev. A. Seuchting** read letters from former pastors and church members. Refreshments of coffee, Swedish coffee breads, and the decorated anniversary cake topped with '60' and silver bells, were served at the close of the meeting. **Mrs. L. [Lillian] Moseley** baked the anniversary cake."<sup>188</sup>

**Mrs. Lundberg** continued: "Worthy recognition at this time are **Mesdames Phil Armstrong and G. W. [Agnes] Utter**, daughter of the founder of **Silverhill, Mr. Oscar Johnson and Mrs. Johnson**; present members holding the longest membership in the church are the **Mesdames Trygve Andersen and Oscar Swanson**; first child of the first family in **Silverhill** is **Mrs. George Lundberg**. Two of the early pioneer members of **Zion Lutheran Church** are the **Mesdames Anna Rogers and Harry Peterson [i.e., Agnes]**." She concluded her note by looking at the ongoing life of the congregation, for **Mrs. Lundberg**

<sup>187</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>188</sup>Mrs. George Lundberg, "Silverhill News Items: Anniversary" The Foley Onlooker (Foley, The Foley Onlooker, May 12, 1966).

states that "**Mrs. Reuben Norman** will be hostess to the **Lutheran Church Women (LCW)** on this Thursday afternoon, May 12 at 2 p.m. at the church." That meeting, no doubt, met in the new addition to the church.<sup>189</sup>

One other event was significant for **Zion Lutheran Church**. 1966 saw the purchase of another church organ.<sup>190</sup>



**Figure 34.** Although the "New Annex" added useful space to the historic church building, it is apparent from this photo just prior to completion of the new Fellowship Building, that space was tight from the very beginning.

1966 saw long-time church **Treasurer Mr. Victor Kubina** elected to Council along with **Mr. Oscar Swanson**. Two more "notes were burned." Remember, the congregation was having pastor funding issues for decades. It establishes a pastor "**Moving Fund**" in early 1966. For perspective, **church insurance** cost \$80 a year for \$10,000 of coverage. **Zion** was able to generate almost enough money for its **Synod assessment**. But it costs money to run a church! **Water bills** were "high" so the **Council** recognized a need to check **water lines**, and a new **refrigerator** was needed.<sup>191</sup>

The church decided, as noted above, to celebrate its **60th Anniversary** on May 1, 1966, close to the date of official incorporation. There is no indication that the **Council** was aware of the actual beginning of **Swedish Lutheran Zion Church** in 1905. Celebration required getting ready for events. **Lawrence Moseley** got the **PA mic** fixed! By the fall of this successful year, the **Council** was discussing refinishing the **parsonage**. The **Brownies** had discovered **Zion's** new facilities and had asked to use the new **Annex**. The **Council** referred them elsewhere because of supervision concerns.<sup>192</sup>

Unbeknownst to **Zion Lutheran Church** future **Lay Pastor Charles Jolliff** was moving his family from **South Carolina** where he worked for **International Paper Company** to **Mobile** where his family would attend **St. Peter's Lutheran Church**. He had been playing church organ since his teenage years and would eventually add preaching when no pastor was available to the small church. **Pastor Carl Almer** was at **St. Peter's** at the time and later became **Vice Pastor** at **Zion**.<sup>193</sup>

## 1967

The **Luther League** began talking about providing **altar railing kneeling pads** and an **altar covering**.<sup>194</sup> The church continued to be served by primarily lay pastors on a rotating basis, **Mr. Torgensen, Mr. Zimmerman, and the Rev. Clarence Daniels**.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>189</sup>Lundberg, "Silverhill Anniversary" (May 12, 1966).

<sup>190</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>191</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>192</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>193</sup>Interview by phone with Charles Jolliff, Zion Lutheran Church Pastor for most of the 70s and 80s and for half the 90s, by Pastor David Johnson. Pastor Jolliff was residing with his daughter in St. Louis. (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, April 27, 2004). William Peacock, [Personal E-Mail] (March 30, 2005).

<sup>194</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

At the 1967 **Annual Meeting**, **William Schinert** and **Ralph Utter** were elected to the **Church Council**. **Paulette Lindell** and **Carolyn Moseley** were elected church **pianists**. And, **Mrs. Grace Kinard** was elected **Sunday School Superintendent** with **Lillian Moseley Assistant Superintendent**. **Mr. Moseley** was assigned responsibility to contact pastors in **Mobile** and **Pensacola** for needed services as **Pastor Suechting** moved on from **Zion**. The congregation sought out **Dr. Wood** concerning obtaining a summer **seminarian** for services.<sup>196</sup>

The building which was removed to make room for the "**Fellowship Hall**" in 2003 was long on the minds of the parish. The congregation considered tearing down the **parsonage garage** this year. Also it looked at repairing **parsonage windows** with putty and paint.<sup>197</sup>

A decision was made to renovate the **garage** and rent out the **parsonage**. **Mr. Norman** completed the project and began work on the **porch** floor. The congregation elected to fill **holes** in the church yard and brought in dirt for the purpose. No formal data is available on pastoral support during 1967, but we do know that **Christmas gifts** were given to **Lay Pastors Torgerson and Tracewitz**.<sup>198</sup>

1967 brought re-emerging concerns about **attendance**. It was December of 1967 when **Pastor Lefstead** chaired a **Special Meeting** to invite **Pastor Brade** to come to church for \$25 a sermon and mileage. The **Church Council** rejected this and discussed calling **Pastor William Niebling**.<sup>199</sup>

## 1968

The **Luther League** continued with **Dr. Keith Cooper** serving as advisor. They asked the church to install an outside light by the church door.<sup>200</sup> The **Lutheran Church Women** were involved with a "**Bazaar**," one of many held over the years.<sup>201</sup> The church again continued to be served by the rotation of **Lay Pastors Torgensen and Zimmerman**, and now **Pastor Clarence Daniels**.<sup>202</sup>

The **church floor** needed to be refurbished. **Pastor Lefstead** celebrated Easter at **Zion** on a freshly painted floor. Infrastructure problems again emerged: there was a major **water leak** in the church line! But there was some good news: It is eight years into the 1960s and former **Council member Robert L. Tutas** graduates and receives a gift from **Zion**. There was no **carpet** in the church yet. It is 1968 when **Zion** first gets a **carpet runner** for the **sanctuary**.<sup>203</sup>

**Robert L. Tutas** graduated from **Newberry College** in 1964 and **Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary** in 1968. He served as Pastor of the following **Lutheran churches**: **Mt. Pleasant, Saluda, SC**, 1968-72; **Orangeburg, Orangeburg, SC**, 1972-74; **Shepherd of the Sea, Garden City, SC**, 1974-78 (where he was the mission developer 1974-75). According to the book, ***A History of the Lutheran Church in SC 1971-1987***, he resigned from ministry in 1978. He retired in **Florida** in the 1970s and moved back to **Iron Mountain** in 1998. "He was always there to lend a helping hand." He was member of **St. Anthony Catholic Church in Niagara** when he passed away.<sup>204</sup>

At the time of this history, 2005, **air conditioning** is pretty standard in the South, yet it is 1968 when we first see **air conditioners** discussed for church. **Pastor Martin** from **St. Paul's** was brought on to do communion for **Zion**, and a letter to encourage **attendance** is sent.

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<sup>195</sup>"In 1905 Silverhill Forms Lutheran Church" (*Baldwin Times*, 1971), 13C.

<sup>196</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>197</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>198</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>199</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>200</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>201</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.]

<sup>202</sup>"In 1905 Silverhill Forms ...", 13C.

<sup>203</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>204</sup>A. Swygert, [Institutional E-Mail] "Re: Rev. Robert L. Tutas, either ULC or early LCA" (via Newberry College: <DShealy@Newberry.edu> and <ASwygert@ltss.edu> to <johns468@gulfel.com>, November 12, 2004, 10:06:54 AM CST.



Remember the **church bell** from the late 20s? It is now 40 years later. The **church bell base** needs repair. The **organ** needs tuning. The **front doors** of the church do not lock well and items are disappearing from church. The **Ladies Aid** steps in to buy new **front doors** which are obtained by **Mr. Lawrence Moseley** and **Mr. Oscar Swanson** in **Pensacola**.<sup>205</sup>

The church has been using a variety of **literature in its tracts and handouts** and it has literature from other churches. The **Council** discovers that the **Synod (the Lutheran Church in America)** has a statement which does not permit literature from other churches. The **Council** recognizes a need for pastoral leadership and again asks **President Huntley** to find a retired pastor suitable for **Zion Lutheran Church**. By the end of the year, the Council is again thanking **Lay Pastors Torgerson and Tracewitz** for their services with **Christmas gifts**.<sup>206</sup>

Now, a word about **Pastor Clarence Daniels**. He was from the **Pittsburgh Synod of the Lutheran Church in America** and relocated to **Alabama** about 1968 or 1969. **Pastor Huntley**, the **Bishop in Atlanta**, sent him to **Silverhill** as a pastor who was near retirement. **Pastor Daniels** and his wife, however, were unable to accept a call to **Zion** because of **parsonage** problems. They instead went to **St. Peter's Lutheran Church** in **Mobile** which had a functioning **parsonage**. **Pastor Clarence Daniels** began doing Sunday services at 9:00 at **Zion in Silverhill** and 11:00 at **St. Peter's Lutheran in Mobile**. **Charles Jolliff** was **organist** at **St. Peter's** while **Shirley Stephens** was **organist** at **Zion**.<sup>207</sup>

## 1969

The **Luther League** manned the **fair booth**.<sup>208</sup> The rotation of **Lay Pastors** continued with the addition of **Pastor Clarence Daniels**.<sup>209</sup>

**Council and church records** for much of the first half of 1969 reveal routine activities. Long-term **Treasurer Kubina** gets an **adding machine**, the congregation sets aside a **Newberry College** donation, and the **garage and Sunday School** rooms get painting.



**Figure 35.** The adding machine bought in the 1960s resides on the church desk that sat in the narthex of the church, now placed in the Church Museum.

<sup>205</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>206</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>207</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>208</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>209</sup>"In 1905 Silverhill Forms Lutheran Church" (Baldwin Times, 1971), 13C.

There is limited encouragement as some **transfers** into the congregation are noted. Another **Lay Pastor, Richard Thomas Smyth**, now joins **Mr. Torgerson** on the service schedule in mid-year. **Air conditioners?** Remember these were discussed in 1968. Another **air conditioner** (three total) is added to the **Sunday School** room and a contract for service is implemented in July. A letter is ultimately sent to **President Harvey Huntley at Synod** and to the **Rev. Martin** about pastoral needs. From a historic perspective, this letter is very interesting, because it documents the drift of the **Lutheran Church in America** away from its rural roots to a focus on urban centers:<sup>210</sup>

Silverhill, Alabama

December 20, 1969

President, Southeastern Synod,  
Lutheran Church in America

Harvey L. Huntley, President.

Dear Sir:

Complacency is agreeable and pleasing, but non-productive. We, of ZION, feel that we have been quiet too long thereby introducing the erroneous impression that all is well and good.

Conversely, we have reached the outskirts of period and if ZION is to avoid an inevitable demise thus ending the influence of L.C.A. in this south easternmost area of Alabama, the current Advent season must be one of "Stirring up".

ZION cannot, of itself under existent circumstances, evade a creeping paralysis without immediate aid and assistance from Synod in the field of pastoral care and attentions.

The history of ZION is a matter of record. Our present condition pursuant to plant equipment and properties free of debt, offerings, etc. is also well known to Synod.

As a concerned and disturbed, not confused, congregation composed essentially of the aged with a smattering of middle-aged families and dearth of juveniles, we feel that some action can be taken in our behalf at a time when L.C.A. sees fit to emphasize activity in ghettos and missions catering to our modern transient society while seemingly neglecting established cadres of L.C.A. Lutherans who are in danger of being unchurched. It must be remembered that these latter groups are those which have given stability to our organization.

Our particular geographical area has lingering promise of growth providing that some pastoral care is furnished, even part time, for visitation, education and worship, more especially for youth.

Momentarily, we receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on an average of once per quarter. Laymen lead our worship on other Sundays. Sunday School is taught by our own devoted teachers. We have also managed to maintain our women's activities, participated in community affairs and encouraged commensurate youth programs. But this has not been enough. Because of our lack of pastoral care we have lost members to other denominations whose churches have been better able to provide the regular and emergency functions normally associated with a church congregation. Although we are under the jurisdiction of Pastor Martin in Mobile, his responsibilities to his own congregation, the traveling distances involved and other facets which are well understood by us, preclude his ability for intimate support to us as a congregation.

We feel that the services of a retired Pastor physically able to carry a minimum of responsibilities and instructions would be of immeasurable assistance during this crucial period. To start, we are in a position to furnish a comfortable parsonage and salary of approximately \$1200.00 per annum to augment any income and benevolence from Synod. This naturally could be augmented with any increased growth of the congregation and accompanying offering. Alternately, we could help support a Vicar in the Mobile area who could provide our optional services on a weekly time available status. Our contribution would be proportional to the services rendered.

Irrespective of any current decision and action in our behalf, we request a visitation by you or your representative for purposes of more detailed discussion and inspection of our conditions and facilities. We urge this step at the earliest possible date and certainly before the point of no return is reached.

Yours, in Christ,

Lawrence O. Moseley, President

Ralph V. Utter, Council

Victor P. Kubina, Council

Emma Norman, Council

Mrs. Camil [Delta] Sandell, Council

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<sup>210</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>211</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

# Zion Lutheran Church Finally Gets Its Own Regular Pastor

1970

The decade of the 1970s opens with **depression**. There are more **parsonage roof** problems and more church **painting problems**. **Synod President Huntley** continues to work with the congregation in seeking a pastor.<sup>212</sup>

In the 1970s and 1980s the **LCW** was deeply involved with **annual bazaars**.<sup>213</sup> **Carolyn Moseley** reported in the **Luther League** minutes that the pancake supper made \$8.50. That year the **Luther League** elected **Bobby Moseley, President; Ronnie Kubina, Vice President; and Irene Wigstrom, Secretary-Treasurer**.<sup>214</sup>

**Pastor Martin** was coming for communion. **Caroline Moseley** was recognized for her **piano** playing service covering many years. **Mrs. Muriel Hallberg** was playing on Sundays. There were **organ** problems again and now an **organ** repair. **Mrs. Louise Lundberg** and **Ms. Shirley Stephens** were playing **piano**. **Zion Lutheran Church** was supporting the **William and Henson Boys Home in Tennessee**.<sup>215</sup>

During the 1970s the **Lutheran Church Women** were regularly involved in **Lutheran World Relief**.<sup>216</sup> **Pastor Clarence Daniels**, pastor of **St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Mobile**, began to preach regularly at **Zion** as a pulpit supply pastor. He was especially noted for singing the **Lord's Prayer** during the Sunday Service. When he and his wife **Dorothy** retired and moved to **Florida**, he asked **Charles Jolliff** to serve as a lay pastor at **Zion**.<sup>217</sup>

As **Pastor Jolliff** remembers it, **Pastor Clarence Daniels** retired in the early 1970s, but he was concerned about **Zion Lutheran Church**. He felt that **St. Peter's** was viable and able to recruit a pastor, but he was concerned that **Zion** would be unable to attract a pastor. Essentially, **Pastor Daniels** commissioned **Charles Jolliff** to pastor **Zion Lutheran Church** "with only one stipulation, that Christ be preached." He gave **Pastor Jolliff** his library and told the **Zion Church Council** that **Charles Jolliff** was to be its pastor. **Congregational President Lawrence Moseley** brought the matter to the **Council** and it concurred with **Pastor Daniels'** plan. Thus began the tenure of the longest serving pastor at **Zion Lutheran Church**.<sup>218</sup>

**Jolliff's** wife, **Martha Meier Jolliff**, had a German Lutheran background while **Pastor Jolliff** came from a **Methodist** background. She and **Pastor Jolliff** were soon immersed in the congregational activities. She was a **Sunday School teacher**. She and **Ella Kubina** constructed the **paraments**.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>212</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>213</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>214</sup>Johnson, "Youth Highlights" (March 17, 2003).

<sup>215</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003).

<sup>216</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>217</sup>Interviews with Ernie and Henri Etta Burnett and Robert Nitteberg by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 19, 2003).

<sup>218</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>219</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

1971



### Zion Lutheran Church Women

Members of the Silverhill Zion Lutheran Church Women's group are (front row, from left) Mrs. Phil Armstrong, Miss June Langenback, Mrs. Oscar Swanson, Mrs. Daniels, Mrs. Harry Peterson, Mrs. Norman Olson; (back row, from left) Mrs. Victor Kubina, Mrs. Lawrence Moseley, Reverend Daniels, Mrs. Reuben Norman. Mrs. George Lundberg, hostess at the meeting was the photographer. Three members Mrs. Carl Shenk, Mrs. Ernest Middleton and Mrs. Andy Anderson were not present.

Figure 36. Unidentified newspaper clipping of those Lutheran Church Women.

### 1971

So, **Pastor Clarence Daniels** retires to **Florida** and ultimately donates his **grand piano** to the church. He was **Pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Mobile** and pulpit supply pastor often at **Zion Lutheran Church**. He is remembered particularly for his pastoral concerns for **Zion** and his determination that **Charles Jolliff** should serve as **Lay Pastor at Zion**, which **Jolliff** would do from 1971-1995.<sup>220</sup>

There is some good news in 1971. There are nine active **Luther League** members meeting once a month at **Zion**. **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--President, Mr. Kubina--Treasurer, Mr. Utter--Secretary, Mrs. Norman--Council Member, Mrs. Peggy Wharton--Council Member, and Mrs. Sandell--Council Member** comprised the **Church Council** for this year.<sup>221</sup>

### 1972

A year later, the **Annual Meeting** minutes reveal that the church has dealt with that pesky **porch** and the **organ** has been repaired again. **Pastor Daniels** reported at the meeting and was still serving the congregation one Sunday a month. The **Church Council** is little changed: **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--President, Mr. Kubina--Treasurer, Mrs. Sandell--Secretary, Mrs. Norman--Council Member, Mr. Shienert--Council Member, and Mr. Utter--Council Member**. The church roof was repaired. **Mrs. Wharton's typewriter** was repaired so she could do **bulletins**. At **Pastor Clarence Daniels'** suggestion, this is the year that **Lay Pastor Charles Jolliff** was contacted by **Mr. Moseley**. **Charles Jolliff** and **Zion** were familiar with one another, because he would accompany **Pastor Daniels** for Sunday morning worship monthly. **Jolliff** accepted the pastoral position. The **parsonage** was aging and **plumbing** problems presented.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>220</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>221</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>222</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003).

## 1973

The **Lutheran Church Women** organized **altar** responsibilities, dividing up flower responsibilities for the **altar** on a monthly basis. The new **Lay Pastor Jolliff** was officially approved for giving **communion** at **Zion** under the authority of the **Rev. Huntley**. A new **organ** was purchased with trade in for \$1750. The **Baldwin County Historical Society** met at church. A **new parish record book** was initiated by **Lay Pastor Jolliff** and **Mrs. Sandell** in 1973. (By 1995 when the book was surrendered at **Jolliff's** resignation, no entries had been made in the official record since 1973. Essentially, all record of births, deaths, baptisms, and marriages at **Zion Lutheran Church** had not been entered into the official **permanent records** of the church by either parish officer or pastor until they began again in 1995.) Because the **LCA** really did not recognize lay pastors per se, the congregation did what it would do each year until his resignation: **Pastor Jolliff** was asked to continue another year.<sup>223</sup>

The first mention of long-time **Lay Pastor Charles Jolliff** appears in notes to the **Annual Meeting** of 1973 on January 7. He opened the meeting and gave his first report. **Shirley Mateja** continued as **pianist**. And there was real discussion about upgrading the **organ**. **Pastor Jolliff** committed to continue another year at the same rate as retired **Pastor Clarence Daniels**. **Mrs. Peggy Wharton** was doing the **bulletins** in 1973. The world was brighter, the **light** and **railing** being installed for the west side door. By formal meeting action the **Swedish flag** was to be displayed in the parish building, i.e., the **Sunday School**. Church officers for 1973 included little change, **Mrs. Grace Kinard--Council Member** replacing **Mrs. Emma Norman**.<sup>224</sup>

## 1974

Although a number of Lutheran synods have recognized "lay pastor" as a specific church office at various times, the **LCA** was resistant to the term and reserved "pastor" for people "ordained." **Zion** consistently respected **Charles Jolliff** as its pastor throughout his tenure with **Zion** and designated him "pastor." By 1974 **Pastor Jolliff** had now obtained initial approval from the **LCA Synod** for giving communion at **Zion**. This was necessary because he was not ordained, being a layman.<sup>225</sup>

The first formal **motions to sell the parsonage** were made after continuing and chronic **parsonage** problems relating to maintenance. Discussions arose concerning new **LCA forms and constitution changes**. The **LCA Synod** requested 16% of income from **Zion Lutheran Church** and nothing less than \$600 per year. The **LCW** was involved in **clothing drives** and packing of old clothes for donations.<sup>226</sup>

At the January 6, 1974, **Annual Meeting**, **Pastor Jolliff** proposed to pastor for two years and then take a year off. Audit of the **church books** revealed \$264.80 in **Zion's** account with another \$153.98 in the **Lutheran Church Women** account, \$137.93 in the **Sunday School** account, and \$92.05 in the **Luther League** account. **Pastor Jolliff** initiated an adult **Sunday School**. Further **repairs** to church and **parsonage** were authorized. The minutes note that the **pledge** response was very good. Business from the previous year, i.e., display of the **Swedish flag**, had not yet been implemented. Services were set for 9:30 a.m. during **Daylight Saving Time**. **Council officers** were unchanged from 1973.<sup>227</sup>

## 1975

The **Annual Meeting** minutes for 1975 give details concerning the **rental of the parsonage**. The **parsonage** had been leasing for \$75 a month, but the rate was to increase to \$110 a month with the next

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<sup>223</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003).

<sup>224</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>225</sup>David Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year Abstracted from the Church Council and Treasurer's Reports Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11 and 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>226</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>227</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

lease in 1975. The **Altar Fair Linen** cost \$37.67. **Shirley Mateja** continued as **organist**. This is the first year that **Pastor Jolliff** is identified as "**lay pastor**" in congregational records. As in every year he served **Zion Lutheran Church**, the congregation "called" him for another contractual year. **Pastor Jolliff** advocated rebuilding of the **Building Fund** in 1975. A "**Building Fund**" had ceased to be an issue after the addition to the church in the 1960s. Under **Pastor Jolliff's** guidance, the congregation begins giving 16% of its small budget to **Synod**.<sup>228</sup> In 2004 he remarked that he had been very impressed with the giving at **Zion**, at one time 24% of **Zion's** budget going to **Synod**, the highest giving ratio in the **Synod** at the time.<sup>229</sup>

## 1976

There were struggles with maintaining the parish. **Pastor James Connelly, Assistant to the LCA Bishop**, met with the church to discuss the future of the church. Sixteen members were present. They convinced **Pastor Connelly** that **Zion Lutheran Church** was viable with **Lay Pastor Jolliff**.<sup>230</sup> **Membership** totaled 36 baptized and 28 confirmed. **Sunday church attendance** averaged 27.<sup>231</sup> This year the **LCW** investigated helping the **Retarded Children's School** in **Loxley**. It continued its involvement with **Lutheran World Relief**. The **LCW** made **Chrismons** which have continued as part of **Zion Lutheran Church's** **Christmas** decorations to the present time.<sup>232</sup>

The **Annual Meeting** of 1976 revealed that moneys were coming into the church. The **general operations fund** for the church had an audited \$577.96, the new **Building Fund** had \$555.80, the church's **Savings and Loan account** had \$3911.15, and the **Baldwin National Bank account** registered \$599.94. And there was more, a **special fund** of \$500. Congregational business noted that **Mr. Norman** had been active in odd jobs at church, that **Pastor Nelson** had provided psalms for the year, that **Shirley Mateja** was doing **bulletins** and **organ**, and that **Pastor Jolliff** was reappointed another year. Now years into the **LCA**, the church was working on a new **constitution**. **Church Council officers** included: **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--President**, **Mr. Victor Kubina--Treasurer**, **Mrs. Carl Youngren--Secretary**, **Mrs. Peggy Wharton--Council Member**, **Mrs. Grace Kinard--Council Member**, and **Mr. Carl Youngren--Council Member**.<sup>233</sup>

## 1977

In the **Annual Meeting** of 1977, changes in activities begin to be noted. **Pastor Jolliff's** contract is again renewed. There have been 17 extra services in the past year. And the church has added two new members. The **nave** of the church has become a focus for renovation and bids for painting and paneling the interior of church have been sought. **Mrs. Charlotte Zander** has replaced **Mr. Carl Youngren** as **Council Member**.<sup>234</sup>

Many people may remember the **Arab Oil Embargo** of the late 1970s. At a **Special Congregational Meeting** on July 3, **President Lawrence Moseley** was authorized to bargain concerning the **mineral rights** underlying the church property. The church became interested in **outreach** activities and participated in the "**Strength for Mission**" meeting at **St. Peter's in Mobile**. **Pastor Rutrough** and **Mr. Respius** from **Christus Victor Lutheran in Ocean Springs, MS**, were to be consultants interacting with **Zion** for this program by September. In late November, the congregation was seeking two more members for the "**Strength for Mission**" appeal.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>228</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>229</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>230</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 18, 2003).

<sup>231</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>232</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>233</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>234</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>235</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



**Figure 37.** Pastors Jolliff (r) and Rutrough of Ocean Springs' Christus Victor Lutheran, familiar to Zion from his work in the 1970s and early 1980s, officiated at the June 25, 1989, wedding of Laura Burnett and Steven Cushing. Bridesmaid Amie Burnett (l) and best man complete the picture.

## 1978

At the **Annual Meeting** for 1978 the **total audited income** for 1977 was reported at \$6,765.91. **Pastor Jolliff's** call was renewed. The church had 26 special services in 1977. That was generally good news, but the bad news? Only two young people remained in **Zion's Sunday School**. The stipend for **Synod** support was raised to 18% of church income. **Mrs. Marie Hauge** became a new **Council Member** this year. By the end of 1978, the church was looking at having to replace the church **roof** for \$10,000. It began getting serious about selling its **Hammond spinet organ**.<sup>236</sup> On an interesting note level, the **LCW** dealt with **flea problems** in the **parsonage**.<sup>237</sup>

A number of **altar** renovations have occurred throughout the history of the church. The Christ figure **painting** residing over the **altar** since the **60th Anniversary** of the church was moved to the side wall of the sanctuary and a gold motif was implemented above **altar** in 1978.<sup>238</sup>

<sup>236</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>237</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>238</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).



**Figure 38.** Confirmation class of 1978. (l to r) Ronald Kubina, Pastor Charles Jolliff, Gary Kubina.

## 1979

The **LCW** began to run **church ads** for **Pastor Charles Jolliff**. A new **organ** was dedicated and a new **roof** was placed on the church. **Zion Lutheran Church** had a **summer intern**. This **student pastor** was **Richard Boger** and he would preach every other Sunday during the summer.<sup>239</sup> This was about the time that **Charlotte Zander** and the **LCW** hosted a **South American missionary** on furlough.<sup>240</sup>

The 1979 **Annual Meeting** minutes are sobering. There is a deficit of \$1741.45 which is tied to **painting, parsonage rewiring, and plumbing repair**. **Mrs. Mateja** continued as **organist** and **Pastor Jolliff** continued under his annual call. Four new members were added during 1978. The **Agees** donated a used **organ**. And the **church roof**? No pun intended, costs were still up in the air.<sup>241</sup>

The **parsonage** rental was increased to \$175 a month. **Victor Kubina** did a careful evaluation of **parsonage operational costs** and determined that, even with rent after a number of years, there remained only \$100 profit for all the grief in **renting** that **parsonage**. The church therefore determined to sell the **parsonage** to be moved for \$6110, the funds to be invested with **Merrill Lynch**. **Savings** were to be moved to **Merrill Lynch** as well for a total **investment** of \$19,000. Remember 1979 and **Hurricane Frederick**? The church lost a **window** and needed interior **painting**. The **sanctuary** was to be painted for \$800. All high windows were to be reputted by **Central Glass Company**. As for the **parsonage**, **Pastor Jolliff** was to get its last vestige, the **clothes poles** that went with **parsonage** before it was removed.<sup>242</sup>

The **Jolliff** family donated a number of items over the years to **Zion Lutheran Church** as well. The **crèche** used as a Christmas decoration was constructed by **Pastor Jolliff's** father, **E. Crowith Jolliff**, and donated in 1979. The **crèche figures** had been procured by **Mrs. Jolliff**, and the set-up has been used in Christmas celebrations since that time.<sup>243</sup>

<sup>239</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>240</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>241</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>242</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>243</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).



## 1980

Beginning in the 1980s **Zion Lutheran Church** began using **air conditioning** units in windows with **ceiling fans** during the summers. The **LCW** again invested time in making **Chrismons** this year.<sup>244</sup> At the **Annual Meeting** of 1980 this **Church Council** was elected: **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--President**, **Mr. Victor Kubina--Treasurer**, **Mrs. Shirley Mateja--Secretary**, **Mr. Ernest Burnett--Council Member**, **Mrs. Marie Hauge--Council Member**, and **Mr. Oscar Hauge--Council Member**. At the first Council meeting on January 13, however, it is apparent that **Pastor Jolliff** is functioning as **President** and **Mr. Moseley** is **Vice President**.<sup>245</sup>

The **Council** recognized that there was a need to update the church **constitution**, but other concerns took priority. There was a leak in the **bell tower** where it abutted the church and the wood had rotted. Again, the church needed paint. **Mr. Troy James** agreed to apply oil paint to the church, but the congregation would do the **garage**. There was an attempt to paint the **cross** on the **steeple**, but the truck crane brought in for the purpose could not reach it. Another **organ** was for sale.<sup>246</sup>



**Figure 39.** The old steeple cross was retired a decade ago and now resides in our Museum.

The **Zion** congregation met with **St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Mobile** to celebrate its **50th Anniversary** on November 23 at 11 a.m. worship. This is the year that the **Council** acknowledged the **ceramic Christmas figurines** donated by **Joy Mary Mills**, a friend of **Martha Jolliff**. We still use them! They were fabricated by **Mary Mills** ("**Joy**" probably a nick-name) in **Brevard, NC**, and fired in her kiln. She was a member of **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** there. **Mr. "Slats" Bye** fixed rotten wood on the

<sup>244</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>245</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>246</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

external **widows** and recaulked them. The church gave the **Town of Silverhill** a \$100 check for the loan of its backhoe for cleaning up the **parsonage** lot. **John Roucheve** donated his time to run the backhoe.<sup>247</sup>

## Zion Lutheran Church Retires Its Parsonage, Renovates Former Parsonage Garage

1981

**Zion Lutheran Church** continued to "modernize" in the 1980s. With the issues of **fans** and **air conditioning** in 1980 resolved, attention focused on interior needs. In 1981 **carpeting** was added, apparently to the **chancel** first because we know that most of the **nave** was not carpeted until several years later. The **parsonage** had been a mixed blessing for a number of years as upkeep appeared to be a constant problem. That **parsonage** was removed from the church campus and was re-sited in **Rosinton**. Some 102 yards of **topsoil** were brought in to level the campus.<sup>248</sup>

*Zion, Silverhill*

Page 4B The Independent, Wednesday, October 7, 1981



### *Silverhill Lutheran celebration*

Members of Silverhill Zion Lutheran Church celebrated the church's 75th anniversary recently. Participating in special services Sept. 20 were, front row from left, The Rev. Paul R. Haffly, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mobile, acolyte Latricia Hauge, Ward S. Yunker, lay pastor at Kreole, Miss. First Lutheran Church, The Rev. Charles Nelson, pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran

Church in Mobile; back row, the Rev. Michael Harper, pastor of Silverhill Evangelical Covenant Church; the Rev. Gerald S. Troutman, bishop of the Southeastern Synod, Lutheran Church in America; Wesley C. Ellis, organist and choir-master at All Saints Episcopal Church in Mobile; and Charles C. Jolliff, lay pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Silverhill.

**Figure 40.** A number of congregations joined with the people of Zion to celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

At the **Annual Meeting** of 1981, **Pastor Jolliff's** contract was renewed again and he was recognized for outstanding work. The **Church Council** was unchanged. At a **Special Congregational Meeting** on March 1, the congregation established "**associate membership**" within the congregation. The definition of

<sup>247</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Dallas Shealy, [Personal E-Mail] (March 31, 2005).

<sup>248</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003).

"quorum" was defined as "half the voting membership," and the **Church Council** was empowered to spend up to \$500 without congregational approval of expenditure. The remaining stumps around the former **parsonage** were ground down by **Riviera Electric**. The floor of the fellowship **Annex** area in the back of the church was repaired, but again it was noted that the walls and interior **ceiling** of the church needed repair. The congregation evaluated covering of the fellowship room with new siding and moved to get **vinyl siding** by **Don Cooper** for \$653. **Mr. Cooper** was authorized to replace those earlier-repaired **windows** for \$38 each.<sup>249</sup> The congregation celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the Fall.



**Figure 41.** Confirmation class of 1981. (l to r) Pastor Charles Jolliff, Patricia Hauge, Laticia Hauge, Bishop Gerald Troutman.

## 1982

The **LCW** remained active in sewing. It traded in its old **sewing machines** to keep its ministry current. The **LCW** supported the **Whitten Center for Women**.<sup>250</sup> The **Annual Meeting** of 1982 minutes revealed that five new members joined the church in 1981. The **Jolliff** and **Mateja** contracts were renewed. **Communion bread** was now being baked within the congregation with **Lillian Moseley** taking on the responsibility for 1982. Long-time **Council** member **Lawrence Moseley** completed his 25th year on **Council**. The **Church Council** consisted of **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--Council Member, Mr. Victor Kubina--Treasurer, Mrs. Shirley Mateja--Secretary, Mr. Ernest Burnett--President, Mrs. Eleanor Nitteberg--Council Member, and Mr. Oscar Hauge--Council Member.** **Pastor Carlos Jackson** was authorized to use **Zion's** facilities to develop an "Open Bible Church." Yard care was occasionally alluded to over the years, and in 1982 **Eleanor Nitteberg** and **Oscar Hauge** were mowing the lawn. It is 1982 when there is investigation concerning covering the wooden floor in the sanctuary. Reputting of **windows** and **stained glass windows** were discussed, and of course, the outdoor **church sign** needed paint. **Zion's Synodical giving** was at a 19.5% level.<sup>251</sup>

<sup>249</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>250</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>251</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



Figure 42. Viking ship from Zion was a float at the first Heritage Day in Silverhill.



Figure 43. Who says a viking can't have fun?

1983

**Remodeling** was happening again. At the **Annual Meeting** of 1983, it was decided to sell the old **windows**. The usual reappointments of **Mrs. Mateja** and **Pastor Jolliff** were made and a **Special**

**Meeting** was scheduled to discuss **carpeting**. Thinking of **outreach** in the 80s? A **revival meeting** was scheduled for February 21-23. **Mrs. Henri Etta Burnett** replaced **Mr. Hauge** as **Council Member**. When **Don Cooper** was replacing the boards in the **sanctuary floor**, he discovered much **fungus**. A **vapor barrier** needed to be placed under the whole church and the damaged area needed to be treated for damage. **Windows** on the front and back had to be replaced or rebuilt, a project beyond just repair and caulking.<sup>252</sup>

The church discussed **Peacock** family support. **Gretchen Peacock** was taken on as interim **organist** while **Shirley Mateja** took maternity leave. The congregation acknowledged by letter to **Bishop Troutman** its acceptance of **Pastor D'Aunay** as **vice pastor**, but interestingly enough asked what the duties of a **vice pastor** were. At a **Special Meeting** in June, there was discussion about support for the **Seminarian Peacock** family. Their rent was \$155 per month. The congregation agreed to cover \$140 of it and the **Lutheran Church Women**, \$25 more. **Bishop Troutman** responded to the church's letter, outlining the duties of vice pastor. At the same time, he arranged for the **Rev. Henry Williams** to come to **Zion** to talk about **stewardship**. The front of church now needed painting. In preparing for 1984, the **organist salary** was to be raised to \$50 a month and the **pastor's salary** to \$4000 per year.<sup>253</sup>

**Pastor Jolliff** offered some background on the **Peacock** family in an interview in 2004. **William Peacock** was a native of **Mobile** who married **Gretchen Almer**, daughter of **Pastor Carl Almer** from **St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Mobile**. **Bill** was a musician and **Gretchen** was an **organist**. **Bill** felt a call from music education into the ministry and went to **Southern Seminary**. They had several children at the time. **Zion** paid their rent while they were at seminary and **Bill** was ordained at **Zion** upon graduation.<sup>254</sup>

The **LCW** was involved with **Heritage Festival** in 1983.<sup>255</sup> As noted, it took on **Seminarian William Peacock** (1983-1985) as a responsibility and continued to support the **seminary** family. Presumably with **LCW** input, the church became interested in supporting the **Immigrant and Refugee Service**.

## 1984

It was at the **Annual Meeting** of 1984 that **Zion** decided to **carpet** the floor of the nave. The **Lutheran Church Women** would provide \$1516 and the **Council** another \$500. In late spring the church would look at buying a suitable **vacuum cleaner** for between \$400 and \$500. The record shows another renewal of the annual commitment of **Pastor Jolliff** and **Mrs. Mateja**. Four new members were taken in by baptism in the preceding year. **Henri Etta Burnett** was doing **bulletins**. At the time of this year book compilation, **Henri** is at it again. **Lawrence Moseley** was given a hymnal in appreciation for 27 years on the **Zion Church Council**. **Ceiling fans** were a topic of discussion. Who was on the **Church Council** in 1984? The names are familiar: **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--President**, **Mr. Victor Kubina--Treasurer**, **Mrs. Henri Etta Burnett--Secretary**, **Mr. Ernest Burnett--Council Member**, **Mrs. Eleanor Nitteberg--Council Member**, and **Mrs. Alice Seymour--Council Member**. **Oscar Hauge** would replace **Alice** in July. **Wesley Ellis** was printing **bulletins**. **Zion** made a donation to **Our Savior Lutheran Church** of **Mobile** in memory of the **Rev. Ward S. Ynker** for many kindnesses and services performed for **Zion**. **Zion** met at **Christus Victor** in **Ocean Springs, MS**, for an area meeting with **Pastor Charles Jolliff** and **Ernie and Henri Burnett** serving as delegates.<sup>256</sup>

On a **Synod** level in 1984, the **Zion Council** met with **St. Paul's** and **St. Peter's** of **Mobile** to discuss **Synod covenants**. **Pastor Rutrough** was to meet with the **Zion Council**. Remember the offer of radio time a number of years before this? **Zion** looked at **Lenten advertisement** costs on radio in late 1984. And yes, the recurrent concerns for upkeep included more estimates for sanding and painting the church in the last **Council** meeting of the year.<sup>257</sup> As for the **LCW**, the **sewing** activity continued with five quilts being

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<sup>252</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>253</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>254</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>255</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>256</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>257</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

sent to **Lutheran World Relief**.<sup>258</sup> On a negative and sad note, despite the attention to the church grounds and the physical church building, changing **attendance** patterns resulted in the end of **Sunday School**.<sup>259</sup>

## Stained Glass Windows Become Part of Zion Lutheran Church

1985

**Silverhill** community changes were occurring as it rediscovered its roots. The **LCW** became involved with **Heritage Day**, the successor to the **Heritage Festival**. There were new community needs. **Linens** and related items were supplied to the **Silverhill Group Home for Girls** by the **LCW**. And 1985 was the year that **Zion Lutheran Church** got its **telephone**.<sup>260</sup>

As noted above, 1984-1985 was the academic year in which **Sunday School** ceased. In 1985, **Zion's** first **stained glass window**, **Luther's Seal**, which is mounted over the **altar**, was crafted by **Lee Nitteberg**, son of **Robert and Eleanor Nitteberg**. **Eleanor**, **Rita Cornell**, and another "red-headed" woman<sup>261</sup> from **Gulf Shores** drove to **California** to bring the window back in **Ernie Burnett's** pick-up which had a camper shell on the back. This is also the year that the church **kitchen** got its first **microwave oven**.<sup>262</sup>

Here's a more detailed history of the **stained glass windows** gleaned by **Darlene Tasso** in a number of interviews with **Robert Nitteberg**. The **stained glass windows** were designed by Mr. Lee Nitteberg, the middle son of members **Robert and Eleanor Nitteberg**. They were donated in 1985. **Lee** fabricated the windows at his home in **San Diego, CA**, where he created stained glass art as a hobby. **Robert and Eleanor** sent the design and measurements for the first window to **Lee** who completed the "**Luther's Seal**" located on the north wall above the **altar**. **Eleanor** borrowed **Ernie Burnett's** pick-up truck and drove to **San Diego** with her friend **Rita Cornell** to transport it to **Silverhill**. Upon their return, the **Nittebergs** took the window to a glass shop in **Robertsdale**, where it was fitted with a quarter-inch protective plate glass before **Robert** and son **Charlie** would install it. The congregation was so pleased with the first window that it commissioned **Lee** for the remaining five windows.<sup>263</sup>

Several people have wondered about the origin of the **window designs**. We know that at this point **Eleanor**, **Charles Jolliff** and others went back to work on the **designs** which were sent to **Lee**. He completed the five remaining windows. **Eleanor** made another trip to **San Diego**, this time flying out with son **Charlie**, his daughter **Jennifer**, a sixth grader at the time, and friend **Roger Utter**, son of **Zion** members **Ralph and Neysa Utter**. They rented a U-Haul for the return trip and drove back to **Silverhill** with the five new windows. **Robert and Eleanor** loaded the windows onto his pick-up, took them to the glass shop in **Robertsdale**, and had protective covering added to the glass.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>258</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>259</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 28, 2003).

<sup>260</sup>David Johnson, "Highlights Abstracted by Year from the Church Council and Women's Group Records Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 11, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>261</sup>Name not recalled by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

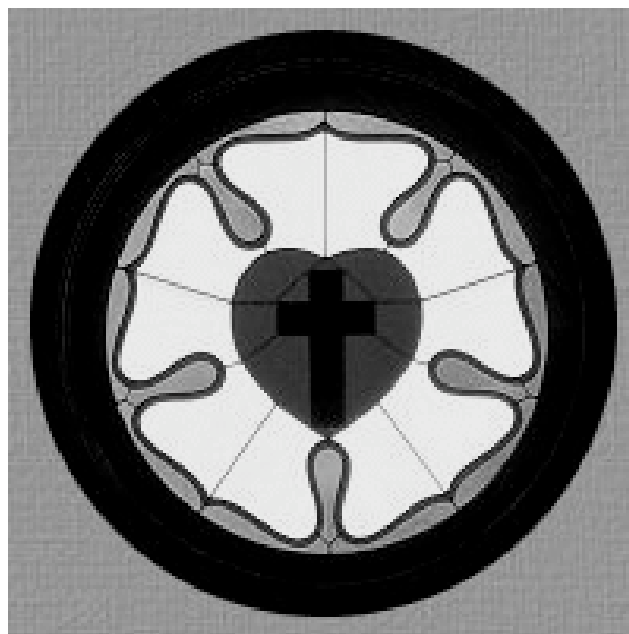
<sup>262</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003).

<sup>263</sup>Information gleaned from Robert Nitteberg by Darlene Tasso in a series of discussions in 2004 (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, May 1, 2004).

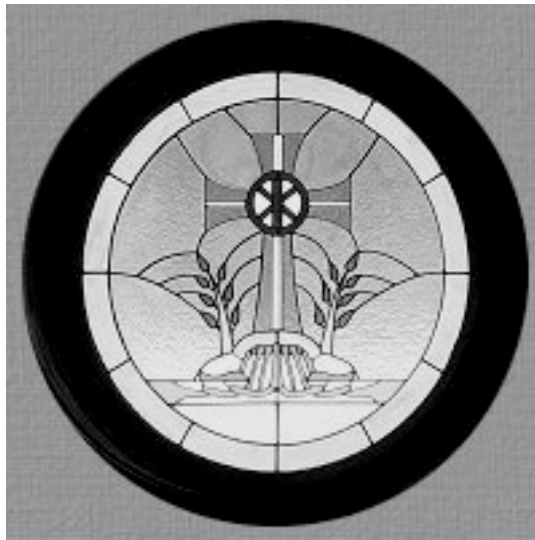
<sup>264</sup>Information gleaned from Robert Nitteberg by Darlene Tasso in a series of discussions in 2004 (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, May 1, 2004).



**Figure 44.** Lee Nitteberg was our stained glass window craftsman, son of Robert and Eleanor Nitteberg.



**Figure 45.** Sanctuary stained glass window detail, north wall.



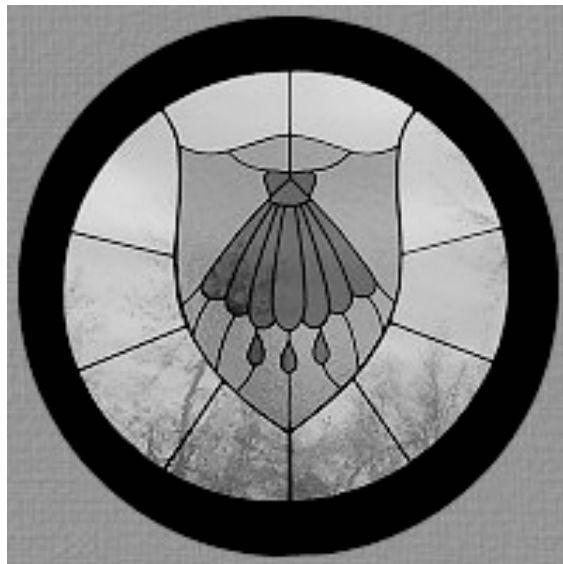
**Figure 46.** Sanctuary stained glass window detail, east wall.



**Figure 47.** Sanctuary stained glass window detail, south entry east side.

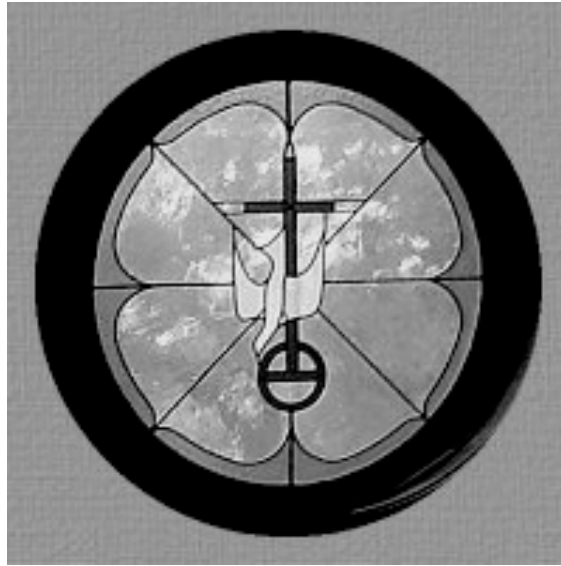


**Figure 48.** Sanctuary stained glass window detail, south entry west side.



**Figure 49.** Sanctuary stained glass window detail, south wall.





**Figure 50.** Sanctuary stained glass window detail, west wall.

With a scaffold borrowed from **Roger Utter, Robert** and son **Charlie** would install this **first window** and the rest of the five new windows, completing the **stained glass windows set** by 1987. They were all framed in Honduras mahogany by **Lee Nitteberg**. The windows remain a focal point for the **Zion** sanctuary of historic **Zion Lutheran Church**.<sup>265</sup>



**Figure 51.** Lee Nitteberg.

Back to other events of 1985. The notes for the **Annual Meeting** of 1985 revealed the results of the **Synod** covenant discussion. **Zion Lutheran Church** committed to support **Lutheran Immigration Services in Atlanta, GA**. The church was looking at extra-Synod cooperation. **Pastor Jolliff** advocated weekly communion and interchange with **St. John's Episcopal Church in Robertsdale**. Remember the

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<sup>265</sup>Information gleaned from Robert Nitteberg by Darlene Tasso in a series of discussions in 2004 (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, May 1, 2004).

business relating to "**associate members**"? There was a motion to allow **associate members** to vote in 1985. The **Jolliff** and **Mateja** contracts were extended another year.<sup>266</sup>

More paint? Maybe not. **Vinyl siding** was investigated for the church for the first time and ultimately the church would be clad in vinyl for a total of \$11,560. But there were many meetings regarding **financing and funding** of the enterprise. Siding would ultimately be installed by **Bay Siding**. The church negotiated a loan for \$8,000 and took \$3,000 from its **savings account** to fund the project. At the same time the church's conventional **windows** would be rebuilt by **Mr. Kimbrell**, a family friend of **Charlotte Zander**. It was at the April **Council** meeting that there was a decision made to create space for the **round stained glass window** over altar. **Bishop Troutman** sent another questionnaire to the church related to the **Synod** covenant prior to the visit of a **Synod** consultant in October.<sup>267</sup>

In 1985 the church discovered that its **Mission Statement** from July of 1974 could not be found and that the **Council** needed to do another, addressing issues of support and nourishment of the fellowship of the family of God, the place of worship and fellowship for the broader community, and the use of **Sunday School** to attract younger members, serve the community, and welcome new comers to the community. There was concern that the community needed to become aware of **Zion Lutheran Church** and that it reach out to other denominations for relationships. A joint **Council** meeting with **St. John's Episcopal Church in Robertsdale** was sought to inquire how the two churches might combine **Sunday School**, deal with follow-up with prospective members, and recruit new-comers to community. The congregation would take an **evangelism survey** in December.<sup>268</sup>

## 1986

By the **Annual Meeting** of 1986 the new church siding was completed and the windows were done. Refurbishment included the addition of kitchen **cabinets**. The first stained glass window, completed and donated by **Robert Lee Nitteberg** and family, was dedicated February 1, 1986. Older members **Elvira Armstrong** and **Hilda Olsen** passed away in 1985. The **Synod** was now receiving 20% of **Zion's** budget. Services were moved to 10:00. The congregation liked the **stained glass** and voted on **symbols** for more new **stained glass windows**. **Pastor Jolliff** still lobbied for **communion** each Sunday, but his proposal was again defeated. The **Church Council** for the year consisted of **Mr. Lawrence Moseley--President, Mr. Victor Kubina--Treasurer, Mrs. Henri Etta Burnett--Secretary, Mr. Ernest Burnett--Council Member, Ms. Latricia Hauge--Council Member, and Mrs. Shirley Mateja--Council Member. Latricia Hauge and Eleanor Nitteberg** served as delegates to the **SE Synod**.<sup>269</sup>

The need for **outreach** was a latent concern through much of **Zion's** history. 1986 was no exception, the **Annual Meeting** revealing a need for more personal contacts of prospective members and visitors and development of **Sunday School** and maybe a **choir**. **Insurance** needs and **organ** service were noted at the **Annual Meeting**. The **insurance** update brought insured values of the building to \$70,000, the church property to \$10,000, employee malfeasance to \$5000, and liability to \$300,000. **Mrs. Eleanor Nitteberg** was asked to head up an **Evangelism Committee** connected with the **Mission Campaign** funding program in April. A formal **Stained Glass Window Fund** was inaugurated. The **Peacocks** advised the congregation in June that they would be leaving for internship. **Shirley Mateja** was typing the **bulletin** in mid-year, and **Pastor Jolliff** was taking the **bulletin** to **Christ's Episcopal** to be run off.<sup>270</sup>

At the July **Council** meeting several new members were accepted, **Mr. and Mrs. Williams** and son **Kerry, Mrs. Fryell**, and **Harold and Clarene Wells**. Council member **Ernest Burnett** urged **evangelism** efforts to grow the church at that same meeting. A **sanctuary light** in honor of **Phillip Meyer** (**Martha Jolliff's** brother) was placed by the **Jolliff and Meyer families**. By mid-September, donations of \$210 had been received for new **stained glass windows**. The dollars were sent to **Lee Nitteberg** for purchase of materials.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>266</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>267</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>268</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>269</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>270</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>271</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

A couple trivia events occurred in 1986: **Beth Ryker** and **Thomas Pigg** were married at **Zion** on September 20 by Beth's father. A **Fish Fry** was scheduled for **Silverhill Heritage Day** with **Wolf Bay Lodge** loaning tables for the event. The church received authorization to run **gas and electricity lines** to the garage which would simplify **Fish Fry** events in the future. **Ernest Burnett** would again advocate setting up a **men's group**. Average church **attendance** for 1986 was at about 30 people. Two deaths were noted: **Fred Halberg** and **Martha Jolliff**. **Attendance at Sunday School** was 17. In 1987, the church would investigate needs for more **Sunday School** space.<sup>272</sup>

Memories and years fade as to specifics. The artist and travel crew for bringing the **stained glass windows** is well known, but what was started in 1985 may not have arrived safely in **Silverhill** till 1986.<sup>273</sup> We do know that there was a focus on updating the church, for the **LCW** lobbied for a new **kitchen door** which was obtained. That **microwave** found its home in that **kitchen**. The **LCW sewing ministry** continued with **linens** and related items being supplied to **Phoebe Hospital**. The **LCW** repaired a **sewing machine** that year. Concern for **sanctuary** beautification resulted in the establishment of the **Altar Flower Fund**. The congregation initiated work on **signage** on highway 104.<sup>274</sup>

As has been noted, the **Jolliff family** donated a number of items over the years to **Zion Lutheran Church**. When **Martha Jolliff** passed away in the mid-1980s, the **Crusader Cross** used in processions was donated in her memory in 1986.<sup>275</sup>

## 1987

**Kitchen cabinets** were installed. **Seminarian Bill Peacock** from **Mobile**, supported in part by **Zion** for the past several years, was formally recognized and ordained at **Zion Lutheran Church**. **Zion** had paid his rent during seminary. **Bill** was married with several children, his wife **Gretchen** being **Pastor Carl Almer's** daughter. Their original church home had been **St. Peter's Lutheran Church** in **Mobile** which was now defunct in 1987.<sup>276</sup> **Pastor Almer** had been pastor at **St. Peter's Lutheran Church** in **Mobile** just prior to **Pastor Clarence Daniels**. It was **Pastor Daniels** who had served **Zion** as a pulpit supply pastor and who had first introduced **Charles Jolliff** as his **organist** to the **Zion Lutheran Church** congregation. When that **St. Peter's** closed its doors in the late 1980s, the **sanctuary candle** now hanging in the **chancel** of **Zion Lutheran Church**, was donated in memory of **Pastor Almer** because of the **Peacock** connection with the **Silverhill** church. It is estimated that **sanctuary candle** has been in continuous use since the early 1950s.<sup>277</sup>

In 1987 the **Annual Meeting** minutes reveal that **Zion** had written a petition letter to **Bishop Troutman** to ordain **Pastor Jolliff** under special provision. Historically, this was the year just before the merger of the **Lutheran Church in America** into the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**. **Church Council** members included **Mr. Harold Wells**, **Mr. Oscar Hauge**, **Mrs. Henri Etta Burnett**, **Mr. Ernest Burnett**, **Ms. Latricia Hauge**, and **Mrs. Eleanor Nitteberg**. **Victor Kubina** functioned as **Treasurer**. Meeting minutes revealed that **Zion** received that **sanctuary candle** in March. That **sanctuary candle** from **St. Peter's** and connected with the **Almer** ministry was formally given to **Zion** by **Amanda Almer** in specific memory of her husband **Pastor Carl Almer** who had provided pastoral services to **Zion** in the past.<sup>278</sup>

Cross-cultural **evangelism** seminars were being held in **Atlanta**, **Savannah**, and **Nashville** with each congregation having its pastor and four lay people invited to each event. Two delegates were invited to the constituting convention of the **SE Synod** of the **ELCA** in June in **Atlanta**. Delegates and alternates for the constituting convention of **SE Synod** were **Henri and Ernie Burnett**; **Charlotte Zander**; **Eleanor**

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<sup>272</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>273</sup>Interviews with Ernie and Henri Etta Burnett and Robert Nitteberg by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 19, 2003).

<sup>274</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>275</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>276</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Women's Group Archives" (February 11, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>277</sup>Interview with Ernest Burnett by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, April 5, 2004).

<sup>278</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Nitteberg**, and **Harold Wells**. Another letter was directed to **Bishop Gerald S. Troutman** requesting ordination of **Pastor Jolliff** under special provision. The **Bishop** advised that his aid, **William Waddell**, Chair of the **Examining Committee**, would take up the ordination question.<sup>279</sup>

Not everything was focused on national **ELCA** events. **Fill dirt** was needed for the church yard. **Garage** repair and renovation was again being discussed. A new **exit** was installed in the church, but it was slippery when wet. The congregation became concerned with **signage** for the emerging **Gulf Shores** ministry. By May there is agreement that signs will be constructed by **Robert Nitteberg**. The new **vinyl siding** does have up-keep needs and the church arranges to wash the siding. A **plaque** to honor long-time church **Treasurer Victor Kubina** was discussed in May. A congregational meeting decided to modify the **garage** by redoing the roof, adding slab space, and doing an extension. **Roger Utter** would pour the slab for the **garage** later in the year. **Roger Utter**, **Ralph Utter**, **Edward Norman**, and **Oscar Hauge** would all play a part in that **garage** renovation. And a **pig roast** was part of the festivities for **ordination service** of **Pastor Bill Peacock** on May 26.<sup>280</sup>



**Figure 52.** Heritage Day float from 1987, Lawrence and Lillian Moseley's grandchildren among the riders.

Members of **Zion** have been accustomed to seeing a concrete table in the church yard. It was 1987 when that **concrete table and benches** were purchased to cover the church's **septic tank** to keep cars off the tank. It has since been moved north adjacent to the new **Fellowship Hall** added in the early 2000s. It was paid for with **Sunday School** offerings. In mid-1987 the church used **Fish Fry** proceeds to assist **Becky Utter Childress** with her kidney transplant costs. **Marilyn Williams** received church permission to allow a support group for the mentally ill to meet at **Zion**. **Pastor Danielle D'Aunay** served this year as guest pastor in **Pastor Jolliff's** absence.<sup>281</sup>

**Pastor Jolliff** noted in his interview concerning pastoral pulpit supply that "**Zion Lutheran Church** was **LCA** and then **ELCA** in terms of affiliation. It had no relationship with **Missouri Synod** churches because the two church groups never had agreement on anything." That is, pastoral supply came from within the ranks of the **LCA** and then the **ELCA**<sup>282</sup>

<sup>279</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>280</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>281</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>282</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).



**Figure 53.** Long-term Treasurer Victor Kubina was acknowledged for his service in 1987.

**Eleanor Nitteberg** was busy in June checking on plane fare to **California** to pick up the rest of the **stained glass windows**. She wanted to rent a U-Haul truck to bring them back. Would you believe finance problems? **Zion Church** was spending more than it was taking in. A hold on spending takes place, the **garage** renovation being placed on hold. And now **Pastor D'Aunay** requested **Zion** to loan funds to buy a car. Problems! In July **Zion** agreed to pay half of **Pastor D'Aunay's** car repair bill and the **LCW** the other half of \$100.<sup>283</sup>

More problems! **Shirley Mateja** resigned as **organist** about this time and the church could not find an **organist** replacement. A **Zion men's group** was functional at this time and was studying the liturgy to help with services when **Pastor Jolliff** would be gone. More positive, **Zion** would have a **float** in **Heritage Day** events in **Silverhill**. The **Fish Fry** this year involved **Ralph Utter** cleaning fish, **Marie** taking care of the outside Coke machine, and **Henri Burnett** doing blood pressure checks.<sup>284</sup>

**Zion** honored outgoing **Bishop Troutman** and two assistants, **Dr. Thompson** and **Pastor Sillik** with a \$100 gift. The **Cub Scouts** were given use of the renovated **garage** on Monday afternoons. **Nanette Henderson** requested that her **Girl Scout** troop be allowed to meet at church and access was given for this activity. **Charlotte Zander** and **Mildred Havel** served as delegates to the **Alabama Conference**. **Victor Kubina** was honored at the November 8 service with a congregational dinner after.<sup>285</sup>

On November 20 **Eleanor Nitteberg** left for California to pick up the **stained glass**--airfare was picked up by the **LCW** and the church (\$750 each). **Bishop Troutman** would come on December 9 to dedicate those **stained glass windows** and the **Sunday School** would provide a roast pig for the event.<sup>286</sup>

<sup>283</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>284</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>285</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>286</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Synod** benevolence was at a 21% level. **Ms. Clara Weiss** and **Bill and Alice Seymour** were added to the membership in December. In 1987 **Pastor Jolliff** began attending the **South Central Baldwin Ministerial Association**. By mid-December the church would donate \$50 per month and **LCW** \$25 per month to the **South Central Baldwin Ministerial Association** fund and would make donations to the **Covenant Church food shelf**. One Sunday a month was set aside as **Food Shelf Sunday**. **Paula Rockwell** became **organist**.<sup>287</sup>

**Pastor Jolliff** remembered in 2004 that, **Zion** had a relationship with **Second Harvest** or a similar program using a gleaning concept program in the late 1980s. Basically **Zion** did food packets for eight months or so. "Eventually the **Methodists** took over the project. The project was very labor intensive and taxing on those involved for those eight months."<sup>288</sup>

## 1988

The **Pastor D'Aunay** from the **Board of American Missions** met with **Zion** in 1988. This is the year that **Zion Lutheran Church** received its **grand piano** donated by the **Pastor Clarence Daniels Family**.<sup>289</sup>

**Zion Lutheran Church** was well known for its **fish fries** during **Heritage Day** in **Silverhill**. It was **Eleanor Nitteberg** who spearheaded those annual events with both a **Fish Fry** and a **bake sale** during **Heritage Day**. The first year for these **Heritage Day** festivities was 1988, but they would continue annually until 1998. **Eleanor** would come the day before to set up and begin to cook the baked beans. Son **Charles Nitteberg** and husband **Robert Nitteberg** would set up tents and picnic tables outside.<sup>290</sup>

**Zion Lutheran Church** formally affiliated with the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**, successor to the **Lutheran Church in America (LCA)**, its home since the early 1960s.<sup>291</sup>

The **LCW**, still sewing, repaired another **sewing machine**.<sup>292</sup>

The **Annual Meeting** of 1988 recorded the passing of **Pastor Clarence Daniels** in 1987 and noted that the **processional cross** used in the **Peacock** ordination was given in honor of **Martha Jolliff** by the **Peacock children**. The concrete slab for the garage-**Sunday School** was completed by the January meeting. **Pastor Jolliff** reported that he would not pursue **ordination** because of personal family business. **Mrs. Clarence Daniels** had donated the **Daniels' baby grand piano** in 1987 and it was formally acquired in 1988. The church set up a **Constitution Committee** to study a new **ELCA** congregational constitution. **Pastor Jolliff's** contract was to continue another year.<sup>293</sup>

In his **Annual Report** **Pastor Jolliff** noted that **William Peacock's ordination** was the first in the **Gulf Coast** area in the **LCA**. The **LCA** would soon be history at the time of ordination, essentially making it the only ordination in the area that **Zion** is aware of. **Pastor Jolliff** felt that **Sunday School** attempts were moderately successful, and that the **men's group** with attendance at three to five was meeting regularly. He noted that the new windows were completed by **Lee Nitteberg** and installed by **Charles and Robert Nitteberg**. Procurement had come through donations and gifts of members and friends of the congregation. **Communion vessels**, a memorial to **Philip Meyer**, and a processional cross made by members of **Haven Lutheran Church of Salisburg, NC**, and given by the **Peacock children** in memory of **Martha Jolliff**, were all received in 1987 and acknowledged in early 1988.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>287</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>288</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>289</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003).

<sup>290</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>291</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>292</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.].

<sup>293</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>294</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



**Figure 54.** Pastor Daniels' family donated Zion's Baby Grand Piano. He is the pastor that recruited Charles Jolliff for Zion Lutheran Church.

The **Council** meeting for January 17, 1988, revealed that **Mr. Harold Wells** was serving as congregational **President**, **Mrs. Henri Burnett** was **Secretary**, and **Mr. Ernie Burnett** was **Treasurer**. **Mr. Fred Langenbach**, **Mrs. Marilyn Williams**, and **Mrs. Eleanor Nitteberg** served as **Council Members**. **Pastor D'Aunay** continued to fill in for **Pastor Jolliff**. By the end of February the **Daniels' baby grand piano** was in place, but not yet tuned. **Wes Ellis'** wife began typing **bulletins**. Insurance Agent **Phil Owens** was seeking data on stained glass windows value for insurance purposes and settled on a value of \$10,000. **Zion** was supporting the **Synod** at a 21% level. A **candle lighter** was received from **Ethel Jolliff** in memory of **Pastor Jolliff's wife, Martha Jolliff**.<sup>295</sup>

The tradition of placing **three crosses** by the church at **Easter** was in place in 1988, because the **Easter crosses** were removed by **Fred Langenbach's** son in April. **Lillian Moseley** and **Charlotte Zander** served as **SE Synod Convention** delegates this year. **Pastor Carl Warren, Assistant to the Bishop**, was designated as the contact to **Zion**. At a **Special Congregational Meeting** in April the church decided to remove the gate and kneeling portion of the **altar railing** to allow easier access to the **altar chancel dais** area. Another old church **organ** sold! **Bishop and Mrs. Skillrud** were welcomed to **Zion** June 3. The **Church Council** noted that there was no acknowledgment from **Synod** about its contributions in 1988. With **Bishop Skillrud's** visit came a request to increase benevolence to the **Synod**. There was a move to provide a **Lutheran Magazine** for every member; ultimately there were four ordered from the church and four for **LCW**.<sup>296</sup>

On an ominous note, **Ernie Burnett** for the first time requested the **constitution** be read to determine settlement of church property if **Zion** were to disband. In 1988 the **Silverhill Covenant Church** invited **Zion** to join in **Vacation Bible School**. **Buddy Wigstrom** serviced the **air conditioners**. **Fred Langenbach** was authorized to buy **air conditioning** for the **Fellowship Hall**--\$229 was contributed by the **LCW**. **Pastor Jolliff** was to begin putting a summary of **Council** meetings in the **bulletin**. The church at a **Special Congregational Meeting** authorized disbursement of \$500 to any church in the district needing **financial aid**. And there was more **Synod** fund raising.<sup>297</sup>

In late 1988 the **South Central Baldwin Ministerial Association** chose to no longer fund the **United Fund**, moving its support to **Catholic Social Service** because of bookkeeping issues. **Silverhill Covenant Church** and **Zion** moved to cooperate more closely in the coming year. There was more work on that **garage** project: **Fred's** son was to furnish drywall and insulation; **Sunday School** kids were to furnish the interior; and **Eleanor** was to decorate the church yard for Christmas with the help of children. **Robert Nitteberg** has continued that tradition with some of those **decorations** annually since that time.<sup>298</sup>

<sup>295</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>296</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>297</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>298</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

## Zion Lutheran Church Begins Formal Outreach Program to Northern Snowbirds

1989

As the church got more deeply involved with **Heritage Day** festivities, there was need for **outdoor facilities**. The former **parsonage garage** was updated to a combination **Sunday School and outdoor cooking facility**. Midweek **pancake suppers** were held in conjunction with **Lenten services**, initiated by **Eleanor Nitteberg** who was also the cook. Success often brings problems. The **Baldwin County Health Department** informed the church that it needed a bucket close by for washing hands when cooking outside. This is the year that the **LCW** finally purchased a new **sewing machine**. **Catholic Social Service** located in **Robertsdale** presented its program to the church women, and formal involvement with **food baskets** began. Midweek **pancake suppers** in conjunction with **Lenten services** were held.<sup>299</sup>

1989 is a pivotal year for **Zion Lutheran Church** for a number of reasons. This is the year that **Pastor Jolliff** encouraged the **outreach** program into **Gulf Shores** that would result in **Grace Lutheran Church in Gulf Shores (ELCA)**, **Peace Lutheran Church in Foley (Augsburg Lutheran Church Synod, ALC)** and **Trinity Lutheran Church in Daphne (ELCA)** by 2004. **Pastor Jolliff** enlisted **Zion** members to carry its hymnals down to **Gulf Shores** to get this **snowbird ministry** started. It is perhaps noteworthy that this ministry which was begun with **Zion Lutheran Church** support, was taken over by the **ELCA** when **Jolliff** resigned when **Zion** was in the process of leaving that national church body in 1995. **Trinity Lutheran in Daphne** apparently grew out of **LCA** thinking stemming back to church planting ideas of the 1970s and 1980s. The **LCA** had purchased land at one point for the potential congregation. A congregation was ultimately developed there with **Pastor Jolliff's** assistance after early attempts to set up a worship site in **Loxley** for **snowbirds**, but under **ELCA** auspices.<sup>300</sup>

**Pastor Jolliff** explained the **outreach** this way. The **Gulf Shores outreach** came about because of a desire to advertise the church. He recognized the need to promote the church and attempted to get the church to advertise for perhaps 12 years. When the **Midgardens** got involved at **Zion**, **Peter** agreed to get some signs up. As a result, some families started to come up from the **Gulf**. These **snowbirds** asked **Zion** to help get an **ELCA** church in **Gulf Shores**. **Zion** experimented with services set up for 5:00 p. m. on Saturday at an **Episcopalian** church with the stipulation that **Zion** would always have someone to accompany **Pastor Jolliff** and do appropriate greeting. The program began in the summer with not much success, but when the **snowbirds** came in the fall, the **outreach** ministry in **Gulf Shores** blossomed.<sup>301</sup>

The minutes of the **Annual Meeting** of 1989 recognized **Robert, William, and Charles Nitteberg** for putting the roof on the **Sunday School** building and **Roger Utter** and **Oscar Hauge** for doing the cement slab work in 1988. The congregation joined in suppers prior to **Lenten services**. The renovated garage was designated the **Annex Building**. A **Constitution Committee** was appointed to report to the **Annual Meeting** which was to be moved to November.<sup>302</sup>

It was noted that **Zion Lutheran Church** excelled in its support of the work of the **ELCA** on a per member basis. This was in addition to its giving \$50 per month to the **South Central Baldwin Ministerium**. The budget for the year was set at \$17,729. The **Church Council** now consisted of **Mr. Harold Wells--President, Mr. Ernest Burnett--Treasurer, Mrs. Henri Etta Burnett--Secretary, Mr. Peter Midgarden--Secretary, Mrs. Marilyn Williams and Mrs. Eleanor Nitteberg--Council Members**. (Confusion as to **Presidency** results from the **Chairperson** sometimes being designated the "**Vice-President**" in minutes in these later years. We have arbitrarily designated the **Chair** of the **Council** as the "**President**.") Business during the year included a new **constitution** and an **ELCA** model discussion, new **signage** being prepared, a **VCR video program** the third Wednesday evening of each month, a special

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<sup>299</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.] Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Interviews with Ernie and Henri Etta Burnett and Robert Nitteberg by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 18, 2003).

<sup>300</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>301</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).

<sup>302</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



offering for **Catholic Social Services**, and the establishment of a "**preaching point**" in **Gulf Shores** for winter tourists at the request of **Pastor Jolliff**.<sup>303</sup>

With the advent of the **ELCA, synodical delegates** now were limited to a man and a woman from each congregation. It was noted that the **Bishop** was exploring the needs of small parishes in the **Synod**, parishes like **Zion's**. **Mr. Farlow** was painting **signs**--he was a retired preacher. There was a **tornado** with no apparent damage to the church. The **mini-blinds** for the east side of church were installed after removing **candle holders**. The church was actively recruiting retired pastors for pulpit supply but could identify none interested in preaching at **Zion**.<sup>304</sup>

Many may remember the savings and loan association fiasco of the late 80s. Well, would you believe that the church funds needed to be moved before its savings and loan closed? The old **speaker system** in church was evaluated that summer. It did not work. **St. Paul's** gave the church a **duplicator**. By August the **Church Council (Harold Wells, Ernest Burnett, Fred Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Eleanor Nitteberg, Marilyn Williams, and Pastor Jolliff)** determined that there were enough funds now in the church to complete the "**Sunday School Building-Garage-Annex**."<sup>305</sup>

As noted, **Dorothy Daniels**, wife of **Pastor Clarence Daniels**, of **Florida** had donated the family **grand piano** after his death. A **plaque** was obtained in 1989 for the **Daniels' piano** donation received in 1988. The **piano** had been picked up in **Harold Wells'** truck by **Harold Wells, Ernie Burnett, Victor Kubina, and Pastor Charles Jolliff** at a retirement home between **Tallahassee** and **Jacksonville, Florida**.<sup>306</sup> **Ernie Burnett** again proposed beginning another **men's group**. **Charles and Martha Canning** and **Laura Buchinger** were welcomed as new members. The **old brass offering plates** were replaced because they would no longer take a polish. The new **constitution** was not ready for the **Annual Meeting** now scheduled for November. The December **Council** meeting for 1989 reported that **Pastor Jolliff** was asking the **Synod** for training for **new member recruitment**. And yes, **Synod** giving was increased, now at 22.5% where it would remain for several years.<sup>307</sup>

## 1990

**Zion Lutheran Church** became involved in the **Robertsdale Fair** in the 1990s and took a number of **ribbons** for its **church booth**. This was the year that the **LCW** booth took second place at the **Robertsdale Fairgrounds**.<sup>308</sup>

The minutes to the **Annual Meeting** of 1990 was depressing on one hand, **Sunday School** attendance averaging two children and six adults, and positive on the other, **Aleda Midgarden** coordinating **Sunday afternoon services** in **Gulf Shores**. **Harold Wells** and **Mildred Havel** were elected to the **Church Council** for three year terms. Reports appended to the meeting minutes showed that the women were involved with pancakes prior to **midweek Lenten services** in 1989.

**Baby clothes** had been sent to **India**. A **stove hood** vent was installed in the **kitchen** for **Heritage Day**. **Zion** provided five families with turkeys on Christmas.<sup>309</sup>

Organization of the **Church Council** after the **Annual Meeting**, showed **Harold Wells--Vice President, Ernest Burnett--Treasurer, Fred Langenbach, Mildred Havel, Marilyn Williams--Council Members, Pastor Jolliff--President, and Peter Midgarden--Secretary**. **Pastor Jolliff, Ernest Burnett, Mildred**

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<sup>303</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>304</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>305</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>306</sup>Johnson, "Church Council and Treasurer's Report Archives" (February 11 and 18, 2003). Interviews with Ernie and Henri Etta Burnett and Robert Nitteberg by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 19, 2003).

<sup>307</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>308</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.]

<sup>309</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Havel, and Marilyn Williams** would attend a Synodical event for **outreach** called, "**Evangelism for Small and Rural Congregations.**" Those **brass offering plates** were now replaced by refinished wooden ones, courtesy of **Fred Langenbach**. New shingles were being investigated and plans for a **wheel chair ramp** were put on hold.<sup>310</sup>

As noted before, the balance of **delegates** to **Synod** were now gender-balanced. Early **Council** work in 1990 set goals for the year for finishing the **Sunday School** building and establishing a **preaching point in Gulf Shores**. **Pastor Robert Warren** from **Synod** was to do training and assist in **outreach** in March. By March **Pastor Jolliff** had contacted the Episcopal priest in **Gulf Shores** about using its building for **Lutheran snow-bird outreach**.<sup>311</sup>

The church ordered the six new **spring-loaded candles** we currently use on the **altar** when there is no communion. The **Church Council** designated \$500 for seed money to set up the **preaching point in Gulf Shores** to begin the end of April at **Holy Spirit Episcopal Church** at 5 p. m. Saturday evenings. The **Council minutes** are careful to state that the effort was for **congregational outreach**, that all attendees were to be invited to **Zion**, and that the effort was not to start **new church**. **Zion** determined that the work in **Gulf Shores** needed to be under the direction of a **Lutheran pastor** and sought to enlist **Pastor D'Aunay** if she were available. As a fallback position, **Zion** proposed to enlist **Pastor Winter from Silverhill Covenant Church**. By the end of May, **Pastor Donnell** committed to conducting services. In June the **Council** decided to spend \$270 for a quarter page add to be taken in the **Gulf Coast** newspapers in July as part of this **outreach**.<sup>312</sup>

Even as this effort was being developed, the **Church Council minutes** of July reveal a concern about **long-term members** drifting away. **Judy Borden** subbed while the regular **organist** was gone. **Signage** on AL 59 and AL 104 was found to be in violation of state law in August and was taken down temporarily. **Pastor Jolliff** was asked to help at **St. Paul's**. More **church ads** began on the church page of local newspapers in September. The congregation provided another \$200 for the **Gulf Shores outreach**. The church submitted its application to be a **historical site for Baldwin County** at this time. And, the church **treasurer** rented a **safety deposit box** for the first time.<sup>313</sup>

In October, **Pastor Jolliff** sent a letter to the **Bishop** concerning the limited support of the church. **Pastor Jolliff** reported a month later that his letter to the **Bishop** was returned unopened. About this time the **Council** accepted a **Robertsdale Episcopal proposal of covenant** to share buildings for services.<sup>314</sup>

## 1991

In 1991 **Zion Lutheran Church** alternated **Lenten services** with **St. John Episcopal Church of Robertsdale**.<sup>315</sup> The **Sunday School** building renovation was nearing completion with help from **Lutheran Brotherhood**. **Zion** and **Holy Spirit Episcopal Church of Gulf Shores** entered into a covenant which was affirmed on January 13. The officers of the **Church Council** for the year were set: **President--Peter Midgarden, Secretary--Harold Wells, Treasurer--Ernest Burnett; Rachael Hoffman** was to serve as the specific public relations person. Coordination of activities with other churches was seen as a need. A prayer week was to be established with **Silverhill Covenant Church** and mid-week **Lenten Services** with **St. John's Episcopal Church of Robertsdale**.<sup>316</sup>

The recent work on **signage** required no permits. The congregation committed to purchase 50 **hymnals** for the **Gulf Shores** ministry in February. At its March meeting the **Council** reported that the **Baldwin County Historic Development Commission** had designated **Zion Lutheran Church** a formal historic site.<sup>317</sup>

<sup>310</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>311</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>312</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>313</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>314</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>315</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights Abstracted from the Women's Groups Records Archives" (February 12, 2003). [Supplemented with Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens on February 12, 2003.]

<sup>316</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>317</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

The March meeting noted that **Paula Rockwell** would serve as **organist** at the **Gulf Shores** ministry when **Mrs. Roston** would leave. In April it was reported that the **Gulf Shores** ministry was in the black. Remember those **bathrooms** in the historic church building? It is 1991 when those two **bathrooms** get hot water. The long-term effort to obtain ordination for **Pastor Jolliff** continued in May with a formal letter to **Bishop Chilstrom** seeking **Jolliff's** ordination. In June the congregation provided a **Ministers Desk Edition** to **Pastor Hamilton**, a retired **ELCA snowbird pastor**<sup>318</sup>, for use at **Gulf Shores**. In July the **Reverend Ronald Warren, Assistant to Bishop Chilstrom**, advised that **Pastor Jolliff** needed to formally apply for ordination. Constitutional revisions, presumably related to the merger into the **ELCA**, were discussed in August. Church upkeep was again ongoing, two new **gable crosses** to be installed in September.<sup>319</sup>

## 1992

The last formal **Sunday School records** were archived in 1992. Support for the **Gulf Shores** ministry continued in 1992 and a **pig roast** with proceeds to be used to buy **communion vessels** was set in February. In March of 1992 **air conditioning** for the church was discussed and an architect gave an okay for it in June. **Zion** began initiating some **structural recommendations** from an experienced **building contractor**, e.g., removal of the old **chimney**, installation of 2 x 6 **bracing beams** in the **attic**, etc., in October. By September 50 more **hymnals** were purchased for the **Gulf Shores** ministry. People who admire the **ceramic chalices and paten** in our **Church Museum** may note that **Mr. and Mrs. James Potmesil** donated them in October. In November the **Synod** advised the **Council** that certain **constitutional changes** had to be done. The church changed its yellow pages ad, but no **attendance** improvement was noted in January 1993.<sup>320</sup>



**Figure 55.** Those Zion Fish Fries recruited many. Here is Oscar Hauge in 1991, fish in hand.

<sup>318</sup>Name recalled by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

<sup>319</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>320</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



**Figure 56.** Fish Fries required careful supervision.

**Zion Lutheran Church** co-sponsored a **vacation Bible school** with **Little Welcome Baptist Church** about this time. It was nominally successful, but subsequent planning and coordination did not materialize.<sup>321</sup>



**Figure 57.** Zion Lutheran Church was designated a historic building in Baldwin County in 1991. Note the building date of 1916 on the plaque. 1916 is the year of dedication. The church appears to have been occupied to some extent already in 1915.

<sup>321</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004).



**Figure 58.** Here's that kitchen in 1992 that will be replaced a decade later. Long-time members will be able to identify Mildred Havel, Charles Jolliff, Ella Kubina, Aleda Midgarden, Martha Canning.

## 1993

**Zircon Pictures of Mobile** used **Zion's sanctuary** for part of its comedy movie, "**West from North Goes South.**" Well-known actors included **Shawn Thompson, Larry Linville, Phyllis Diller, James Brown, and Lawanda Page.**<sup>322</sup> In February of 1993 the parish again sought to call a **summer intern for evangelism.** The church ordered a **door cabinet** and recognized that the **kitchen roof** needed replacement. That **Gulf Shores** communion set was scheduled to be dedicated in March. **Zion** now attempted to recruit a **seminary student** for the 1993 summer with the help of **Pastor Warren.** The **Church Council** could provide no representatives to the **Synod Convention** this year. In April the **Council** received a bid to sheetrock the church **nave,** a project that was not initiated. In retrospect, the sense was that sheetrock's weight would compromise the structure of the historical church building.<sup>323</sup>

It was about this time that the church became aware of an emerging **homosexuality position** developing within the **ELCA.** **Pastor Jolliff** had sought to spare the congregation from this divisive issue. In May the **Council** sent a letter to **Bishop Chilstrom** regarding **homosexual issues** in the **ELCA.** A second letter was sent from **Zion** to **Bishop Harold Skillrud** of the **Southeastern Synod.** The specific issue will be of historical significance, since **Zion Lutheran Church** had major reservations regarding apparent **ELCA** support of a **Gay March in Washington, D. C.** Late in May **Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom** responded. In early June the church was advised that no **intern** was available for the summer.<sup>324</sup>

**Zion** apparently underwrote the costs for the **Gulf Shores** ministry's worship services to be added to the yellow pages. The **Community Thanksgiving Service** was held at **Zion** in 1993. Efforts at rehabilitation of **Zion's** worship space were still in the discussion phase at the end of the year. In reviewing 1993, the **Council** found that the congregation was over budget by 12%.<sup>325</sup>

<sup>322</sup>Jackie Jackson, Liz Springer, "Making movies in Baldwin: Mobile film company shoots scenes in county" (Foley: *The Onlooker*, August 18, 1993).

<sup>323</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>324</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>325</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



**Figure 59.** Despite the dearth of records in the 70s, 80s, and early 90s, we know that a number of baptisms and marriages took place. In this photo from September 5, 1993, pictured at baptism (l to r) are Harold Wells, Clareen Wells, Pastor Charles Jolliff holding Rebecca Kerensa Flores, Merrily Yvette Flores, Ysidro Flores.

## **Zion Lutheran Church Part of Realignment in Lutheranism in the USA, Affiliates with Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC)**

1994

The **Ladies Aid** had become the **Lutheran Church Women** at the time of the **mergers** in mid-century. The church and the **society** had changed by 1994. The **LCW** ceased meeting.<sup>326</sup>

Other activities remained positive, e.g., the **outreach** to **Gulf Shores** and the **snowbirds** continued. **Valerie Weaver** would report in a piece for the **Baldwin Press Register** that the "**Snowbird** ministry outgrows church: Coastal congregation outnumbers parent **Zion Lutheran** membership four to one." She noted that **Pastor Charles Jolliff** never expected in 1989 that the **outreach to Gulf Shores** would grow larger than **Zion's** ministry. **Weaver** would record **Jolliff's** words, "Five years ago we managed to get some signs up on the road leading to **Zion**. That year 10 couples came." Before that time only one or two couples made the 40 mile one-way trip to attend **Zion Lutheran**, the oldest **ELCA** church in southern **Alabama**. **Jolliff** would remark that the **ELCA** was considered a liberal branch of the **Lutheran** denomination. The church ultimately met at **Holy Spirit Episcopal Church** in **Gulf Shores**. **Attendance** was as high as 160 during peak **snowbird season**. Tuesday **Bible Study** was headed by **Carlene Overholt**. Both she and her husband, **Dr. Hugh Overholt**, were active with the mission congregation in 1994.<sup>327</sup>

However, back in **Silverhill**, shortfalls in **pledges** begin to emerge. One member formally requested that none of his offering be sent to the **Synod**. The **Church Council** scheduled meetings to discuss the **ELCA's "Task Force on Human Sexuality,"** a major compounding issue for members. By June the **Council** determined to send the **Synod** formal feedback on its sexuality study. In August the congregation was investigating sharing a part-time pastor in conjunction with **St. Paul's**. The **Church Council** set up a

<sup>326</sup>Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 12, 2003).

<sup>327</sup>Valerie Weaver, "Snowbird ministry outgrows church: Coastal congregation outnumbers parent Zion Lutheran membership four to one" (Foley: Baldwin Press Register, [January 26, 1994]). [Subsequent Correction: "A story in the Jan. 26 Baldwin Press Register contained incorrect information concerning the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" (Foley: Baldwin Press Register, [n.d., 1994]).]

congregational retreat to discuss ongoing issues. It was scheduled for November 11 at **Camp Beckwith**. In this flurry of activity, the **Church Council** accepted **Pastor Charles Jolliff's** resignation and formally acknowledged his health problems.<sup>328</sup>

On October 4 the **Council** set a **Congregational Meeting** for October 23 to accept the **Jolliff resignation**. Apparently the **Synod** was unaware of all details of **Zion's** love for **Jolliff** or of its acceptance of his **resignation** with special reference to his health needs, for on November 9, **Bishop Skillrud** sent a letter to **Pastor Jolliff**, advising him that the work he spearheaded in **Gulf Shores** under **Zion's** auspices was now separated from **Zion**. However, there must have been some awareness since he noted that since **Jolliff** had separated from **Zion**, the **Bishop** was assigning him to a one year appointment to work in **Gulf Shores**. "I have assured **Mr. Midgarden** that **Zion Lutheran Church** certainly may continue a ministry in **Gulf Shores** as well, if they should choose to do so, but it will be necessary to secure a new location." **Bishop Skillrud** penned a letter on the same day to the **Rev. Dennis Baum** at **Holy Spirit Episcopal Church** advising that "**Zion** now separated from all **outreach** through **Holy Spirit**" and that the ministry in **Gulf Shores** was now part of the "**Division for Outreach of the ELCA**."<sup>329</sup>

One day later **Bishop Skillrud** lay out his letter of law on **Pastor Gary Schimmer's** status as official pastor under **ELCA** rules. **Pastor Schimmer** from **St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Mobile** must be at all official congregational business. Furthermore, decisions reached concerning the leaving the **ELCA** to this point were not valid, because no pastor was there. On November 22, **Interim Pastor Schimmer** determined that all actions at **Zion's** retreat were valid with the exception of the **decision to leave the ELCA**.<sup>330</sup>

The life of the congregation continued during this turmoil and on December 4 at its **Annual Meeting** **Zion** prepared a plaque in honor of **Jolliff**, authorized a \$1000 gift to **Jolliff**, and purchased an artificial Christmas tree. And yes, the congregation held a "legal" **vote to withdraw from the ELCA**. Five days later **Zion** formally covenanted with **St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Mobile** for interim pastoral ministry via **Pastor Gary M. Shimmer**. On December 13, **Zion** advised **Bishop Skillrud** formally by letter that the congregation was in the process of withdrawal. The **Bishop** advised the congregation that he would be present on January 22, 1995, for the formal motion and vote.<sup>331</sup>

## 1995

Congregation members in **Silverhill** first began to be concerned with that "liberal branch of the **Lutheran** denomination" in 1994. Now **Zion Lutheran Church** was seriously considering leaving the **ELCA**. **Pastor Jolliff** continued to have a desire to remain within the **ELCA**. Remember now, a new parish record book had been initiated by **Pastor Jolliff** and **Mrs. Sandell** in 1973. That book was now surrendered at resignation by **Pastor Jolliff**. Essentially, all **births, deaths, baptisms, confirmations, and marriages** had not been entered into the **official records** of the church since 1973. Membership records specifically were incomplete! Records began anew in 1995 as a new period of church history commenced with the congregation's trek to **church autonomy** and independence from the **ELCA**. Pastoral care would fall to **Pastors Hoeferkamp, Moore, Farlow, and Smyth** until 1997.<sup>332</sup>

The **Council** meeting of February 22, 1995, reveals both the consequences of that January vote to leave the **ELCA** and also that the congregation was actively continuing its mission to the community. One person reportedly initiated a transfer from the congregation in order to stay in the **ELCA**. Other business was "routine," a new dishwasher installed, yellow pages ad to delete "ELCA" from the ad, announcement of Special Meetings, etc. In March the church **door locks** were changed, letters of **resignation** approved, and potential Lutheran bodies for affiliation were examined: **Association of Free Lutheran Congregations; American Association of Lutheran Churches; the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod; and, Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod**.<sup>333</sup>

In a letter on March 27 the congregation advised **Bishop Skillrud** of **Zion's** withdrawal from the **ELCA** and of its desire to join the **AFLC**. In April there was a resignation from the **Church Council** and replacement by long-term member, **Lawrence Moseley**. **Pastor Schimmer** was assisting the congregation and provided

<sup>328</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>329</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>330</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>331</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>332</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>333</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

names of potential interim pastors. There was a transfer of a parishioner to **St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mobile**. The **Council** appointed **Charles Canning** and **Harold Wells** as designated representatives to the **Gulf Coast Conference** with respect to ongoing dialogue with the **ELCA** regarding disposition of church property.<sup>334</sup>

By this time **Pastor Klepatz** was providing pastoral services to **Zion**. Routine work in the church continued. The church needed to repair a plugged **culvert** in front of church, the same **culvert** that was plugged at the end of 2004. **Grace Lutheran of Gulf Shores** bought the hymnals that had been "on loan" from **Zion** at this point for \$5 each. On May 2 a letter to **Bishop Harold Skillrud** was drafted under the signature of **Interim Pastor Gary Schimmer** warning the **ELCA** of potential suit if it did not let **Zion** out of the **ELCA** with its property.<sup>335</sup>

On May 9 **Zion Lutheran Church** sent a carefully crafted letter to the **Members of the Council of the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA** summarizing why the congregation wanted to withdraw including these data:<sup>336</sup>

At a **congregational retreat** (11/11/94) most congregational members wanted to withdraw.

At formal meeting (12/4/94) presided over by **ELCA Interim Pastor Gary Schimmer** 23 members voted to withdraw from the **ELCA**, 3 were opposed, and 1 abstained.

At a formal congregational event (1/22/95) **Bishop Skillrud**, who officiated at worship and directed discussion with the church, was unpersuasive in his arguments for **Zion** remaining within the **ELCA**.

At yet another meeting (3/19/95) **Bishop Skillrud** delivered a long formal presentation concerning the consequences of withdrawal, yet the vote was 23 to leave, 8 opposed, and no abstentions. The congregation voted to join the **AFLC** which felt it could help the congregation in its ministry goals.<sup>337</sup>

On May 11 **Pastor Hoferkamp** was contacted to fill in while **Pastor Klepatz** was away. **Michael Coleman**, now Professor and Doctor of Music at the **University of West Florida**, was appointed **Director of Music**. The **Church Council** reviewed legal options should the **ELCA** require **Zion's** litigation. The congregation prepared for a **Special Congregational Meeting**. In just a few short days the congregation would receive the May 11 letter from **Bishop Skillrud** to **Pastor Gary Schimmer** acknowledging **Zion's** activity to withdraw and the status of **Pastor Klepatz** administering communion at **Zion**. A second letter followed dated May 21 from the **Bishop** advising **Zion** that it was still in the **ELCA** and still bound to the **ELCA constitution**.<sup>338</sup>

Meanwhile, in a letter dated May 23, the "bishop" of the **AFLC**, **President Robert Lee** noted the forfeiture of property rider attached to **Zion's** formal departure from the **ELCA**, and stated that there was no **AFLC** claim on any church property should the church affiliate with the **AFLC**. On June 11, **Zion** formally sought **AFLC** affiliation, but noted that the congregation's status with the **ELCA** was still unresolved. It is at this point that **Bishop Skillrud** sent an interpretation to the effect that **Zion's** property should be released to the **ELCA** if **Zion** disbanded (letter of July 1, 1995). This proposal was rejected and a counter proposal was initiated by the **Council** on July 11.<sup>339</sup>

Meanwhile a new family was accepted into membership. A formal **letter of protest** was sent to the **Bishop of the ELCA**, the **Rev. Herbert Chilstrom**, particularly protesting **Zion's** treatment as being different from other churches withdrawing from **ELCA**. On August 8, **Bishop Skillrud** requested **Zion's** building if it were to disband within ten years. The turf battle was formally over when the September 28 letter from **Bishop Ronald B. Warren** of the **Southeastern Synod** formally recognized the withdrawal of **Zion Lutheran Church**. The church was so thankful. A letter of appreciation was sent to **Pastor Gary Schimmer of St. Paul's** expressing thanks for his service from December 1, 1994, to September 8, 1995, during the long withdrawal process from the **ELCA**.<sup>340</sup>

<sup>334</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>335</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>336</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>337</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>338</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

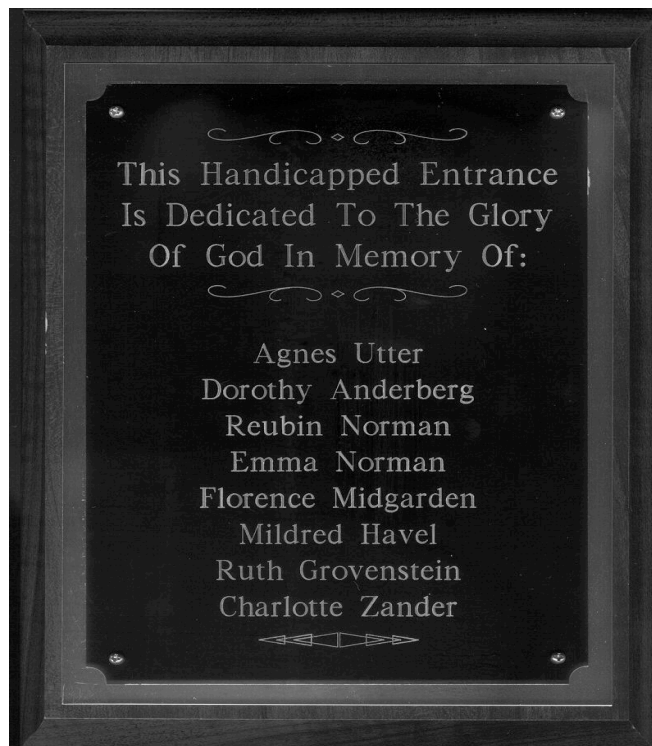
<sup>339</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>340</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



In November and December the **Church Council** reviewed options for calling an **AFLC** pastor, but there was no consensus on strategy. In December new "**AFLC Hymnals**" arrived for use in 1996. The **Council** asked **Pastor Klepatz** to continue until a regular pastor became available.<sup>341</sup>

Remember "out with the old"? It is at this time that **June Langenbach** and **Lawrence Moseley** completed work on selling three old church space heaters. Old wooden chairs were to be sold. In a major move the church begins funding the **AFLC** benevolence at a 10% level.<sup>342</sup>



**Figure 60.** Contributions used for the handicapped ramp and door were acknowledged with a plaque.

The **Church Council** elected **Peter Midgarden as Chair, Charles Canning as Maintenance Chair, Ernest Burnett as Treasurer, and Darlene Tasso as Secretary**. The first meeting of the year revealed **painting** was again needed. A new **record book** was now being used effective with date of release from **ELCA**, i.e., September 8, 1995. **Lawrence Moseley** was appointed to chair a **Call Committee**. The church had been advised that if it continued its **Fish Fry** activities, the **Baldwin Health Department** required a new sink. Specifications for a **handicapped ramp** were now being drawn up by **Peter Midgarden**. The congregation was added to the "City Hostess Service" packet distribution service to new residents. Yellow pages and **Mobile Register** ads were updated to reflect affiliation with the **Association of Free Lutheran Congregations**. The **Council** decided to poll the congregation at the January 14th **Congregational Meeting** as to whether **Zion** should become an **AFLC Home Missions** congregation or should choose its own pastor.<sup>343</sup>

## 1996

By 1996 **Zion Lutheran Church** had officially left the **ELCA** and begun a search for a new **Lutheran** synodical home, ultimately affiliating with the **Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC)**. **Harold Wells** is credited for first identifying the **AFLC** as a potential home for the congregation through an internet search.<sup>344</sup> Remarkably, a church in **Indiana** opted out of the **ELCA** at the same time as **Zion**. **Vine and Branches** noted that **St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Whitestown, Indiana, and Zion Lutheran**

<sup>341</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>342</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>343</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>344</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Church of Silverhill, Alabama**, both voted to leave the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA**, and unite with the **Association of Free Lutheran Congregations**.<sup>345</sup>

There were complications. While the **ELCA-Southeastern Synod** granted the **Alabama** congregation the right to leave with its property, the **Synod** had initially sought to require **Zion Lutheran Church** to pass a resolution promising that it would transfer title of all property and assets to the **ELCA** if the congregation disbanded, failed to hold regular Sunday worship services each week, or joined a non-**Lutheran** body before June 1, 2005. Sensing that the **Synod** was beyond the law as well as its constitutional authority in seeking to control the life of the congregation for 10 years after its withdrawal from that **Synod**,<sup>346</sup> **Zion** continued negotiations with the **Synodical Council** of the **Southeastern Synod**. **Zion** was ultimately free to unite with the **AFLC**<sup>347</sup> and leave with its property to "look forward to new life as a free and living congregation upholding the infallible, inerrant Word of God" in the **AFLC**.<sup>348</sup> **Zion Lutheran Church** negotiated a commitment that promised, upon failure of **Zion** to be a viable congregation, it would deed the church property as a **historical site** to the **Silverhill** community at the suggestion of Fred Langenbach. This **stipulation** was only to be valid for ten years.

The **Congregational Meeting** decided that the congregation should call a pastor and not be an **AFLC Home Missions** church. The church had been advised that **Pastor Klepatz** was not eligible under **Home Missions** rules to serve **Zion**, and he was interested in serving the church. **Pastor Klepatz** was in process to be admitted to the **AFLC Clergy Roster**. The formal **Call Committee** was established with **Lawrence Moseley (Chair), Henri Etta Burnett, Della Sandell, Ray Tennent, Harold Wells, and Marilyn Williams**. By the end of January the recommendation came that **Pastor Klepatz** should be called to pastor the congregation.<sup>349</sup>

In February it was determined that a **handicapped ramp** would mean addition of a door to the west side of the church building. It was a cold winter. Gas bills exceeded estimates because of cold. But church hearts were warmly expecting growth with **AFLC** affiliation. The **Council** ordered new offering envelopes in expectation of congregational growth. **Clayton and Jodie Weaver** became members.<sup>350</sup> The congregation did call **Pastor Herbert Klepatz of Mobile** in February with the stipulation that he apply for status with the **AFLC Clergy Roster**. He accepted the call.<sup>351</sup>

By March the **Council** determined that its new ramp would cost \$700. Other changes were coming besides the new church **record book** discussed earlier in the year. Changes in worship order would bring **Announcements** to the end of the service, **communion** to the first and third Sundays, **communion cups** to be filled before the service, and the Pastor to read Gospel lessons beginning in April. During the tenure of **Pastor Jolliff**, the congregation had utilized the **common cup for communion**. **Pastor Klepatz** attended an **AFLC** meeting in **Minneapolis** late in March. Meanwhile on the **Eastern Shore**, the **ELCA** mission in **Fairhope** offered to purchase the **old Zion hymnals**, \$2.50 per **hymnal**. **Ernie Burnett** continued to look for other buyers. The **copy machine** was having problems.<sup>352</sup>

In April the **Council** discovered that the "City Hostess" packets would not be printed. **Pastor Klepatz** was going to another **AFLC** meeting regarding admittance to the **Clergy Roster**. And those **Fish Fry** needs? A new **sink** would cost \$600.<sup>353</sup>

By June **Ernie Burnett** had arranged that 90 **hymnals** would be sold at \$5 each with proceeds used to procure **AFLC Ambassador Hymnals**. **Lutheran Brotherhood** was now meeting at the church on

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<sup>345</sup>David Barnhart, "Two Congregations Leave ELCA, But Property of One Held Hostage" (Vine and Branches, [1995]).

<sup>346</sup>Barnhart, "Two Congregations Leave" ([1995]).

<sup>347</sup>David Barnhart, "ELCA Relents--Allows Alabama Church to Leave with Its Property." (Vine and Branches, [1995]).

<sup>348</sup>Barnhart, "ELCA Relents" ([1995]).

<sup>349</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>350</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>351</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>352</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>353</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

occasion. A possible congregational **newsletter** was in the discussion phase. The congregation agreed to support **Sherry Klepatz** in a community "Precept Bible Study" to begin in September.<sup>354</sup>

**Pastor Klepatz** was on vacation in September, and **Pastor Hamilton Moore** was obtained fill in. The **Church Council** acknowledged that the **Klepatzes** had donated a variety of books to **Zion**. **Fish Fry?** Yes, the **sink** was installed by September and the church's new **ramp** installation began with work on the **door** in September. **Memorial funds** would cover costs and a **plaque** would be placed at the door. Soon the church would have a **wireless mic** and a functional **newsletter** up and running. The focus of the **newsletter** was every family unit in the parish. A **Fish Fry** was scheduled to help defray **Inez Langenbach's** medical expenses.<sup>355</sup>



**Figure 61.** Angele and Pastor J. Hamilton Moore served the church periodically in the absence of a regular pastor beginning in 1996.

In November it was decided to return the **Annual Church Meeting** to January. The "Precept Bible Study" had started out with 29 enrolled, but attendance averaged 14 each week.<sup>356</sup> As an aside, the "**white board**" for teaching was obtained at this time and placed in what is now our **Church Museum**. It was moved to the Fellowship Hall at the time of the **2004 Missions Conference**.<sup>357</sup>

## 1997

During the period of transition and ultimate affiliation with the **AFLC** (1995-1997), **Pastors Hoefferkamp, Moore, Farlow, and Smyth** provided pastoral services, but **Pastor Herbert Klepatz** (1997-1998) began as regular pastor with the church in 1997.<sup>358</sup>

**Council Minutes** for January 1997 showed that all **ELCA** hymnals were sold. The emphasis on spiritual gifts surveys had yielded 14 completed surveys for the congregation. At the **Annual Meeting Ray Tennent and Clayton Weaver** were elected to **Church Council**. The congregation received a kind letter from **Harold Skillrud, Bishop Emeritas**, in February. The church became proactive in March, joining the

<sup>354</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>355</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>356</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>357</sup>Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

<sup>358</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Central Baldwin, Eastern Shore, and South Baldwin Chambers of Commerce** in March. The congregation was sending \$25 a month to the **Central Baldwin Ministerial Association** for charities. In April the **Council** opened bids on the **church roof** repair, low bid \$6300. There was discussion concerning representatives from the church attending the **AFLC Annual Conference, Red River flood relief**, and development of **evangelism packets**.<sup>359</sup>

The **Church Council** discussed the dilemma of no children in **Sunday School**. **Pastor Klepatz** decided to talk on **evangelism** in a church workshop in late summer. **Peter Midgarden, Charlie Canning, Harold Wells, and Ernie Burnett** were to attend the **AFLC Annual Conference**. The congregation was to receive seventy books concerning **Alabama Swedish immigrants** from the **Friends of Swedish Immigrants Society**.<sup>360</sup>



**Figure 62.** Charles Canning (l to r), Emil Sandell, Ernie Burnett, Darlene Tasso, Pastor Klepatz, Clayton Weaver, Ray Tennant, and Peter Midgarden at Council installation in 1997.

In late summer the **Council** investigated the feasibility of bringing a **Bible School Barnabas Team** to **Silverhill** and a commitment was made for 1998. There was discussion concerning development of a **snowbird article** for the **AFLC Ambassador**. The **Council** investigated obtaining insurance help for roof repairs post **hurricane** and repair was underway by October. A new **brochure** was to be used at **Heritage Day** with a door hanger operation in conjunction with the annual **Fish Fry**. **Pastor Klepatz** preached at the **Community Thanksgiving Service** held at the **Silverhill Covenant Church**. By November, **Debra Stults** had become another new member. **Optional pledge cards** were still in use in 1997. The **Council** readied **constitution** recommendations for the **Congregational Meeting** in January 1998.<sup>361</sup>

## 1998

**Pastor Herbert Klepatz** continued his service. By January 1998 the **Council** was still figuring out how to get potential names of new residents via the various **Chambers of Commerce**. **Ray Tennent** would report in February that the **Chambers of Commerce** had many helps for recruitment of new members.<sup>362</sup>

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** recorded a number of details: 6 members were added in 97 by pastor report; the **Lutheran Church Women** were active with a missionary family, food basket, **Save-a-Life**, flood relief, fair booth, and **Fish Fry**; the new **constitution** was accepted; **Lent** was to have a potluck

<sup>359</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>360</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>361</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>362</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

before each midweek service; and, the new members to the **Council** were **Ralph Utter, Marilyn Williams, and Dennis Langer**.<sup>363</sup>

**Pastor Klepatz** left the congregation in spring of 1998. The pastoral services of **Pastor Moore** were procured for Sunday services. **Pastors St. Pierre, Delgehausen, and Billy Godwin** were to be on-call. A new **Call Committee** was established with **Linda Allen, Darlene Tasso, Ernie Burnett, Pete Midgarden, Jody Weaver, and Ralph Utter** as members. In mid-1998 **Rick and Virginia Thomas** became new members. **Harold and Linda Allen** represented the church at the **AFLC Annual Conference**. The church welcomed the **Southern Barnabas Team** the summer of 1998. By November there was a congregational meeting to call **Paul E. Jeklin** as pastor. **Optional pledge cards** were still in use at the conclusion of 1998.<sup>364</sup>

The **Church Council** welcomed the **Lamberts** as new members. The minutes of the **Annual Meeting** showed there had been 5 baptisms in 1998 and 4 new members. Revenue from the **Fish Fry** event brought in \$900. **Pastor Jeklin** would begin serving the church on February 1. Worship changes introduced included **readers** introducing the **Creed** and the **Prayer of the Church** delivered by congregation participants. Congregational participation in prayers continues at the time of this writing. **Chamber of Commerce** commitments were renewed.<sup>365</sup>



**Figure 63.** Miss Carol and Pastor Paul Jeklin, circa 1999.

## 1999

The **Zion booth** took first place at the **Robertsdale Fairgrounds** winning a prize of \$100.00. The theme was "Fan the Flames of Your Spiritual Life." **Pastor Paul Jeklin** was welcomed to the church.<sup>366</sup> By March 1999 two **websites** had been established for **Zion Lutheran Church: community.al.com/cc/zionlutheran** and **hows.net/36576zlc**. Yet another **website** was to be established by **Harold Wells** by mid year. Fliers were now being delivered in a number of communities. The **Council** accepted a painting from **Aleda Midgarden** in 1999 which replaced the "Risen Christ"

<sup>363</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>364</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>365</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>366</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

painting of the mid-century in the Nave. Pastor Jeklin committed to attend the **AFLC Annual Conference in Fergus Falls**. The congregation purchased **pew Bibles** in memory of **Emil Sandell**. The **Council** continued to struggle with **Sunday School** issues and it was recognized that **Zion Lutheran Church** needed to invite children and families to build any **Sunday School**. **Shirley Stephens** was invited to serve as substitute **organist**. The first **Fish Fry** benefit to support the surgical needs for little **Whitney Fritz** was scheduled for May. The **Council** recognized the need for baby **changing stations** to become more child-friendly.<sup>367</sup>



**Figure 64.** The Zion Lutheran Church Women have been a dynamic force through much of the history of the church. Here they were involved with a baby shower for Kay Langer's Kaitlyn in 1999.

There was a 1999 attempt at **Daily Vacation Bible School**, but no data were reported. The **church interior** was painted with funding through the **Aid Association for Lutherans** chapter support. The congregation was to host a missionary family. Volunteer cleaning activities by **Lillian Moseley** and **Violet Buonauro** ended in mid year. The congregation met for a **church picnic** at **Camp Dixie** in September. More **signage** and more pledge cards were discussed in November. **Copy machine** problems continued and a new machine was needed for 2000.<sup>368</sup>

## 2000

The **Zion booth** again took first place at the **Robertsdale Fairgrounds** winning \$100.00. The theme was "The New Millennium."<sup>369</sup> **Clayton Weaver** continued as congregational **President** in 2000; **Darlene Tasso** was **Secretary**; and the congregation authorized establishing a **Building Fund** in early 2000.<sup>370</sup> A

<sup>367</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>368</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>369</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003). Interviews with Henri Etta and Ernie Burnett, Violet Buonauro, and Margaret Stephens by Pastor David Johnson (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, February 12, 2003).

<sup>370</sup>Annotation by the Editorial Review Committee comprised of Ernie Burnett, Charles Canning, Pastor Dave Johnson, Inez Langenbach, Peter Midgarden, Lawrence Moseley, and Neysa and Ralph Utter on April 5 and 6, 2005.

formal **needs assessment** for space for the next five years was itemized in March: fellowship area for 200; 2 restrooms; 2 classrooms for 50 people each; larger narthex; nursery cry room. The **Council** began looking to tour other churches re space planning. **Lighting** in the sanctuary was a particularly sore item and the addition of **ceiling fans** to lights was investigated and ultimately installed by June. Specific building concerns were brought to **Marshall Lambert** for preliminary sketches and recommendations.<sup>371</sup>

The **church parking** area was compromised by the long-standing ditch on the south side of the church. A **culvert** was installed by the **Town of Silverhill** to allow more parking at a cost to **Zion** of \$539.05. **Carl and Jackie Stumer, Irene McFadden, and Roger Matthews** were added to the membership in May. The June **Council** meeting received sketches from **Mr. Lambert**, and **Ralph Utter** proceeded to get some estimates. The church began an **evangelistic outreach** as teams of two visited the community. One team discovered that the church was identified as that "gay church," bringing back memories of homosexual issues in the early 1990s with the **ELCA**.<sup>372</sup>

The **Church Council** formalized the **Building Committee** to include **Charlie Canning, Mack Gibbs, Pete Midgarden, Larry Poland, and Roger Matthews**. It would address classroom space needs and office space needs by the end of the year. Continuing care of the **historic church building** involved evaluation of **handrails by the altar**, but they were found to be infeasible. The window blinds were in need of repair in 2000. The church dropped further membership in the **Central Baldwin Chamber of Commerce**.<sup>373</sup>

## Zion Lutheran Church Initiates Its First New Building of the New Millennium 2001

In 2001 there was an initial decision to build an **auxiliary building** on the site of former **parsonage garage**.<sup>374</sup> The working **Building Committee** was comprised of **Ernie Burnett, Charlie Canning, Mack Gibbs, Roger Matthews, Peter Midgarden, Larry Poland, and Ralph Utter**.<sup>375</sup>

At a **Special Congregational Meeting** on January 7, 2001, the **Building Committee** presented drawings by **Tom Stults** and building cost estimates via **Charles Canning**. The decision of the congregation was to pursue further plans and estimates. It was just after this meeting that **Pastor Jecklin** requested a "peaceful release letter" from his ministry at **Zion**. **Pastor Jeklin** resigned to accept a call in the **Northeast**.<sup>376</sup>

At the **Annual Meeting** two weeks after the **Special Meeting**, membership was reported at 60 baptized, but there had been a net loss of 7 by the end of year. Of 57 communicants, there had been a net loss of 6 by end of year. The 2001 **Church Council** consisted of **Treasurer Ernest Burnett and Council members Darlene Tasso, Linda Gibbs, Pete Midgarden, Harold Wells, Larry Poland, and Ralph Utter**. Soon \$500 was reallocated to **evangelism**. When the **Council** formally organized itself in February, **Peter Midgarden** became **President** and **Darlene Tasso, Secretary** of the congregation.<sup>377</sup>

A new **vacuum** and 150 St. Mark **audio tapes** were purchased for **evangelism**. By July **Charlie Canning** presented revised plans and estimates for a **new building** which were brought to a **Special Congregational Meeting** on July 29. The congregation voted 17 "yes" and 10 "no" for building a new building. By the end of the year **pledges** would amount to \$25,256. **Mack Gibbs** was given the task of finding appropriate financing. By the end of August **Pastor Paul Jecklin** officially resigned to go to **St. John's Lutheran in Pennsylvania**. He had advised the **Council** of his sense that his ministry was drawing to close earlier in year.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>371</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>372</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>373</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>374</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>375</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>376</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>377</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>378</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

**Pastor Rupert St. Pierre** would begin filling in October and a new **Call Committee** would become functional in November. The **Council's** attempt at **evangelism** allowed it to recognize that there was a sense in the community that **Zion Lutheran Church** did not want to change and that a building program would help **Zion's** negative image. The church was seeing growth in its **Building Fund** and in average Sunday **attendance**. The **Council** was concerned about debt and began pursuing non-debt options for the **new building**, ultimately concluding that no building could begin until \$70,000 was in hand.<sup>379</sup>

New members were received in the fall: **Vera Avera, Margaret Stephens, and Shirley Stephens. Harold Wells** was designated to represent **Zion** at **First Baptist Church of Silverhill** for the **Community Thanksgiving Program**. As the year wound down, there was **Council** recognition that hearing assistance was needed and that the existing public address system needed work.<sup>380</sup>

## Zion Lutheran Church Implements Website [www.LutheransInSilverhill.com](http://www.LutheransInSilverhill.com)



**Figure 67.** Pastor Dave Johnson was formally installed October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Cindi Johnson joins Pastor Dave in front of the Zion Church Sign in front of the church.

## 2002

The 2002 **Annual Meeting** was noteworthy for direction and focus. **Pastor Jecklin** reminded the congregation that its resources should work for the cross and not for savings. The congregation embraced a **building plan** to finance \$51,000 after reaching a **Building Fund** total of \$70,000 on hand. The **Call Committee** reported on its initial work. **Loreli Walker** was added to membership.<sup>381</sup>

**Pastor Dave** and wife **Cindi Johnson** arrived from **Minneapolis, MN**, upon accepting a call from the congregation in the spring.<sup>382</sup> November 19 the **Silverhill Planning Commission** met to consider **Zion's**

<sup>379</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

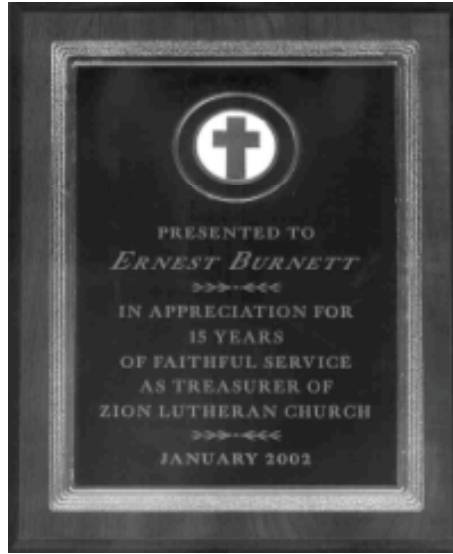
<sup>380</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

<sup>381</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

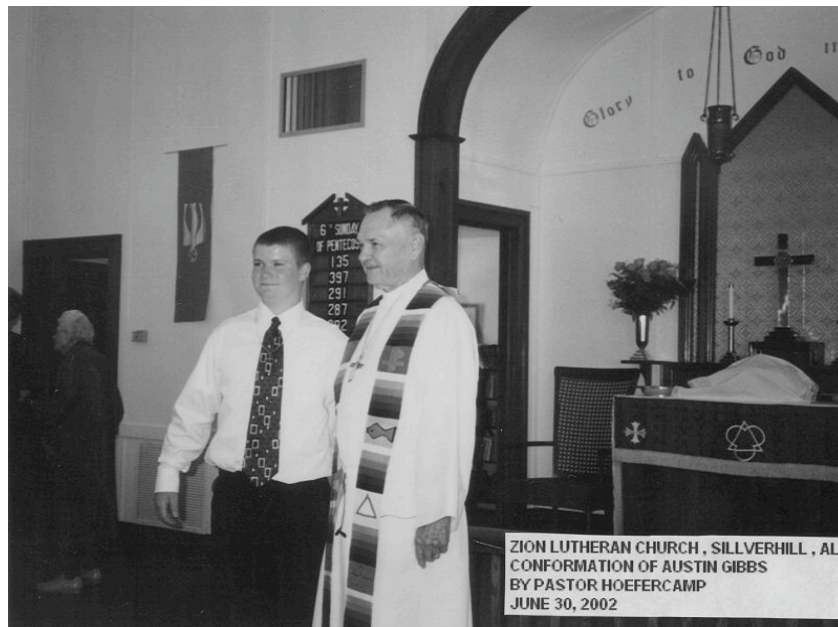
<sup>382</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).



**Fellowship Building** proposal. After an initial response that **Zion** would need to file an appeal because it did not have a detached minor building and the area was not zoned for commercial use, the Lord opened a door.



**Figure 65.** Long-time Congregational Treasurer Ernie Burnett was recognized by the church in 2002.



**Figure 66.** Confirmation class of 2002. Austin Gibbs with Pastor Hoeferkamp.

What is now called the "**Fellowship Building**," so long in congregational consideration, was deemed an "accessory structure" which would replace the "**Annex-Garage-Sunday School-Fish Fry Building**." The limitation? The new "replacement" structure had to be at least 5 feet from the **Zion** property line.<sup>383</sup>

**Zion Lutheran Church's** new website, [www.LutheransInSilverhill.com](http://www.LutheransInSilverhill.com), was initiated in the fall of 2002 by **Pastor Dave**. Within several months, **Debbie Owen** volunteered her services to work with the

<sup>383</sup>David Johnson, Annotation for the Meeting of the Silverhill Planning Commission Meeting of November 19, 2002 (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, November 19, 2002).

website, quickly adding a dimension of quality and integrity to **Zion's website** which would be over a hundred pages within a year or so.



**Figure 68.** Congregational President Peter Midgarden formally recognizes Debbie Owen for her work on Zion's Website, [www.LutheransInSilverhill.com](http://www.LutheransInSilverhill.com), at Zion's Annual Meeting, January 23, 2005.



**Figure 69.** On March 23, 2003, Zion Lutheran Church broke ground for its new Fellowship Building. Pictured left to right, Pastor Dave Johnson, Lawrence Moseley, Charles Canning, Ed Engel, Ernie Burnett, Mack Gibbs, Linda Gibbs, Vera Avera, Ralph Utter, and President Peter Midgarden.

## 2003

Long-time **Zion** member **Fred Langenbach** would pass away and be remembered in a funeral service within the sanctuary in which he had so often labored over the last half century. But the congregation was finally on a move in terms of a new building. The congregation had the old **parsonage garage** moved from its site in early 2003. The congregation broke ground for construction of its new **auxiliary building** in March

and dedicated its **Fellowship Building** with **AFLC President Robert Lee** officiating in November. By the time the project began, **Zion** had approximately \$60,000 in hand and obtained a loan for the balance from **Thrivent for Lutherans** (the former **Aid Association for Lutherans** and **Lutheran Brotherhood** companies) for this new \$120,000 edifice.<sup>384</sup>

The wedding of **Bettina and Barry Langham** took place in October in the historic church building with a reception in this new **Fellowship Hall**. It was 98% completed. **Cindi Johnson** was joined by a number of church women in inaugurating a **women's Bible study**.



**Figure 70.** Carl Stumer of Foley, AL, (l to r), AFLC President Robert Lee of Minneapolis, MN, who presided over Fellowship Hall Dedication, Mack Gibbs of Elberta, AL, Charlie Canning of Magnolia Springs, AL, Austin Gibbs of Elberta, AL, and Jackie Stumer of Foley, AL, enjoy fellowship and refreshments following dedication of the new fellowship building at Zion Lutheran Church, Silverhill, Alabama.



**Figure 71.** The congregation of Zion Lutheran Church gathers in front of its new fellowship building on Sunday, November 23, 2003.

<sup>384</sup>Johnson, "Church Highlights by Year" (February 11, 2003).

## 2004

A **men's fellowship ministry** called "**Men's 710 Second Tuesdays**" began in January. This monthly breakfast program incorporated a short devotional, and a speaker with a men's topic. The **first major activity** in Zion Lutheran Church's new Fellowship Hall was a **Valentine's Celebration** in February.



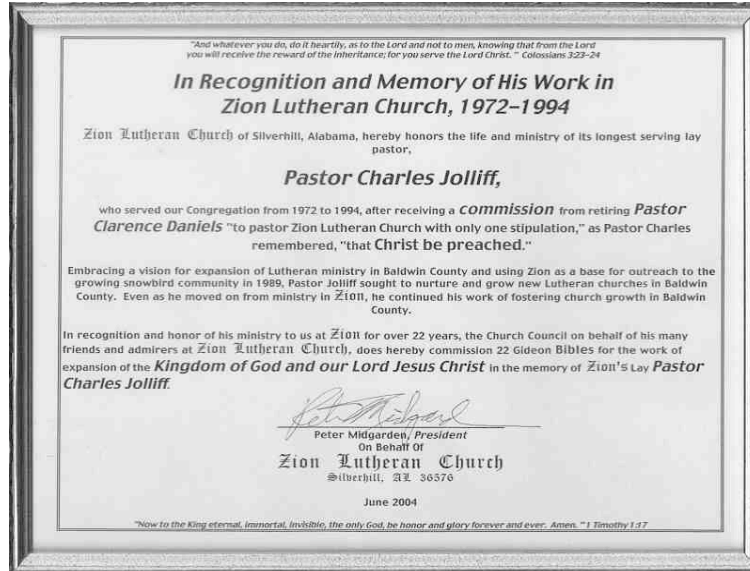
**Figure 72.** What a contrast from the old kitchen-fellowship room at the back of the church. Here (left to right) Milt and Thelma Luoma, Henri Etta Burnett, Emma Lauser, and Ed Dornow pose in the foreground. A careful look will reveal Margaret Mack Gibbs, Margaret Stephens, Ed Engel, Wayne Pitcher, Debbie and Phil Owen, Linda Gibbs, Shirley Stephens, and a several unidentified, in the background.

Midweek **Lenten Services** utilized a "Soup and Sandwiches and Lenten Vespers" format and the new kitchen was fully put to work. A full set of **kitchen cabinets** would be completed by year's end. A **Lutheran Missions Conference** was sponsored in March entitled, "**God Restores the Broken-Hearted: A Lesson in Evangelism from Russia and Eastern Europe,**" using **Pastor Don Richman** from **East European Missions Network** in **Minneapolis** as conference speaker. The congregation commissioned a **commemorative medallion** in honor of its first hundred years. Five hundred **medallions** were distributed before year's end and a second five hundred were ordered for use in 2005.



**Figure 73 a and b.** Zion Lutheran Church commissioned a Centennial Medallion in 2004. The face of the medallion portrays the historic church. The reverse carries a message of God's faithfulness and love in words dear to a Lutheran Christian. Zion's website is prominent at the coin's base.

Zion Lutheran Church of Silverhill honored the life and ministry of its longest serving lay pastor, **Pastor Charles Jolliff**, in June, noting that he "served the congregation from 1972 to 1994, after receiving a commission from retiring **Pastor Clarence Daniels** 'to pastor Zion Lutheran Church with only one stipulation, that Christ be preached.'"



**Figure 74.** Zion presented a duplicate recognition to the Jolliff Family upon Pastor Charles Jolliff's passing.

In recognition and honor of his ministry, the **Church Council** donated 22 **Gideon Bibles** to the work of expansion of the Kingdom of God and our Lord Jesus Christ in the memory of **Zion's Pastor Charles Jolliff**. **Pastor Jolliff** had served the congregation for 22 years.<sup>385</sup> **Pastor Jolliff's** daughters, **Margreta Martin** works with **Lutheran Services of Missouri in St. Louis** in a **Missouri Synod-ELCA** joint activity and **Dallas** works as Executive Director with **Lutheran Conference Centers of SC**.<sup>386</sup>

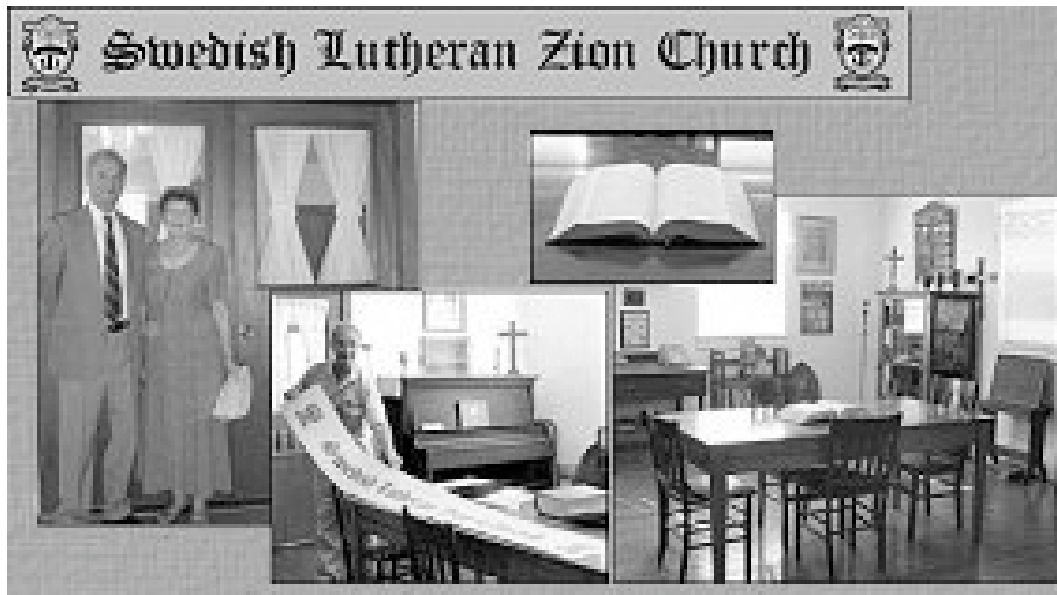
With the freeing up of the "old kitchen" space in the historic church, **Henri Etta** and **Ernest Burnett** took on the task of developing a **Church Museum** to house a century of artifacts.



**Figure 75.** The Zion Lutheran Church Museum was developed in the former kitchen-fellowship area at the rear of the historic church building in 2004.

<sup>385</sup>David Johnson, "Church Council Highlights for June 16, 2004, from the Archives of Zion Lutheran Church" (Silverhill: Zion Lutheran Church, June 16, 2004).

<sup>386</sup>Charles Jolliff Interview (April 27, 2004). Dallas Shealy, [Personal E-Mail] (March 31, 2005).



**Figure 76.** Museum curators Ernie and Henri Etta Burnett have spent many hours organizing artifacts from Zion Lutheran Church's first hundred years.

## 2005

And that gets us to the beginning of the one hundredth year. The congregation has established a **parking lot** paving fund in hopes of blacktopping its soggy parking area. Council member Loreli Walker resigned from the Council in Spring and was replaced by Milt Luoma.

At the time of this writing, **Zion** plans to celebrate its Centennial with a variety of activities culminating in **AFLC President Robert Lee** joining the congregation for events October 29 and 30, **Reformation Sunday** weekend.



**Figure 77.** The full number of confirmation classes over the last hundred years is unknown. The vast majority of records prior to 1915 were not archived. Zion looks forward to renewed Confirmations in its second hundred years.

