



A Brief History of **Pine Street Evangelical Lutheran Church**

(Adapted from various articles and histories of the area.)

It seems that occasional sermons were preached to a few people around Danville in the late 1700's and early 1800's.

In 1803 Lutheran and Reformed worshiped in Mahoning Township under the Rev. Johann Paul Frederick. From 1810 to 1816 the Rev. J. F. Engle conducted services. The Rev. Mr. Kistler was pastorship of all churches in Columbia and Northumberland counties. In 1820 the Rev. Kessler Doeled and the Rev. Kistler helped to develop a "Community of Lutherans". In 1828 Lutheran and Protestant Episcopalians lay the cornerstone for a building, which was dedicated in 1829 as an Episcopalian Church.

In 1830 (the date that we can assume is most accurate) is when the Rev. Jeremiah Shindel organized the scattered Lutheran members into a congregation at the Courthouse. Rev. Shindel left in 1836 to accept another position.

In 1843 the Rev. Elias Schwartz began his service in Danville. Sometime in 1844 a building was built and dedicated under the name of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Danville, later St. John's Lutheran Congregation. The Rev. F. Ruthrauff and M. J. Alleman serve the congregation. In 1850 the Rev. P. Willard was Called and during his first communion 142 attended. In 1854 the congregation swells to 370 members and a new larger house of worship is needed. One group proposed building an English Lutheran Church on the same

site. This greatly upset the German speaking elements. The congregation decided to build on a new property. One group sought to build on one side of the Canal (North side) and another on the other side (South side) of the Canal. In 1856 the majority faction purchases a lot on Pine Street near Lower Mulberry Street. Pastor Willard resigns and on September 1, 1856 Pastor M. J. Stover began to serve the North Ward (Pine Street).

This account is according to the most authentic records written by the Rev. Stover (pastor from 1856-1860), who was here at the time of the cornerstone laying on May 4, 1858. It appears to be the basis for the story of "Pine Street" Evangelical Lutheran Church as recorded in the two volume history of Columbia and Montour Counties printed in 1915. (Check at the town library.) If you stand on the sidewalk in front of our church and look up, you will see a block that reads, "English Evan. Lutheran Church erected A.D. 1858".

In 1859 Trinity Lutheran Church was organized and located on the South side. Therefore, in 1859 there were three Lutheran Churches in Danville, St. John's German Lutheran Church, Pine Street Lutheran Church and Trinity Lutheran Church. In 1860 the Rev. Eli Hulper tried to reunite Trinity and Pine Street but failed.

There were four different pastors from 1861 to 1874 when the Rev. Martin Shindel began his Call of 32 years. The Rev. Lloyd Walters served 1906-1909. Under the ministry of the Rev. J. H. Musselman from 1909-1919 there was extensive remodeling done. The Rev. David Burnite served from 1919-1922. In July of 1922 the Rev. Walter E. Brown began his 32 year ministry. During his time is when extensive remodeling took place due to fire damage and the church was rededicated. Also during Pastor Brown's ministry, the property at 407 Pine Street was purchased and used as a parsonage until 1968.

Under the ministry of the Rev. Robert E. Picking, who was Called to Pine Street in 1955, the church purchased the property at 409 Pine Street to use for education purposes. It was dedicated as the Schwartz Building until 1971 when it was rededicated Luther House. In 1958 Pine Street celebrated its centennial with special services. In 1965 Pastor Hans B. Jentsch was Called and served until October of 1967 when he suffered a heart attack and died in February of 1968. The Rev. Herbert D. Cressman was Called in 1968. During his ministry a new parsonage was purchased at 11 Maple Ave. and the 1st floor of the church building was remodeled and a new pipe organ was purchased. In 1976 the Rev. Ray E. Jones began his ministry of 14 years. The church was in financial difficulty when Pastor Jones resigned. The Rev. Deane Shively served as Interim until the Rev. Edwin K. Rehrauer began his ministry in May of 1990. Under his leadership the church managed to come back to good standing. Major renovations were completed on the Luther House. After Pastor Rehrauer decided it was time for him to move on, the Rev. David R. Hauck served as Interim until the Call of the Rev. Jeffrey G. Bohan in 1997. During his pastorate we had to do major repairs to the steeple/bell tower because the beams were rotting (some are still there since the fire) and water was leaking onto the sanctuary ceiling. He resigned June of 2004. Pastor Melody Sell served as our Interim pastor for 13 months and brought us through more renovations. This brings us to our current pastor, Reverend L. Keith Pittsnogle who was called to Pine Street in April 24, 2005 and began his ministry August 1, 2005. His official Installation Service was on September 24, 2005.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.