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PROCESSED BY: Wendy Nilson, April 2006

ACCESSION #: RC96-0088
History

The Trinity Danish Lutheran Church in Gayville, South Dakota, was founded in September 1880 and led by Rev. Mortensen. The first church was erected south of Gayville in 1894 and subsequently destroyed by a tornado that same year. Miraculously, the altar survived unscathed, so it was moved to a new church the following year. In 1940, the church was moved across the road and, a new altar was dedicated in 1950. They celebrated their centennial September 21, 1980.

Scope and Content Note

The Trinity Danish Lutheran Church papers contain materials from its inception in September 1880 to their centennial celebration in 1980. The papers are divided into five series: Parish Registers, Notes, Correspondence, Printed Material, and Ephemera.

The Parish Registers series consists of handwritten log books listing the dates of congregant births, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and deaths. There are also lists of membership rolls. These log books are written exclusively in Danish until 1920. Photocopies were made of the 1892-1945 book for preservation purposes.

The Notes series is made up of handwritten minutes which are divided into four sections: Annual Church Meetings, the Gayville Study Club, the Ladies Aid; and the Sunday School. The minutes of the annual meetings are written in Danish until 1921. The Sunday School section contains related enrollment lists and financial records.

The Correspondence series consists of three letters of resignation from Pastors H.M. Andersen, Thorvald Hansen, and Paul Petersen. There is also a letter from the Growth In Ministry program questioning the church’s decision to discontinue their affiliation with said program.

The Printed Materials series is made up of pamphlets and programs for anniversary celebrations; newspaper articles describing the dedication of the new altar in 1950; the church constitution, the synod constitution and bylaws, and two issues of Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota’s “Smoke Signals” newsletter with a photo of a child. On the back of the photo is “Lanse, bd 2-28-66”.

The Ephemera series consists of two citations of achievement for the Gayville Woman’s Club from 1968-1970 and 1970-1972. These awards were made on behalf of The Community Improvement Program.

Related Subjects
Clay County (S.D.)–History
Gayville (S.D.)–History
Lutheran, Danish—South Dakota—Gayville
Lutheran Church—South Dakota—Gayville—History

Additional Resources


Miller, Margaret. Hay County History: A Story of the Pioneers of Gayville and Meckling. s.l.: s.n., 1972.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Box 1** | **PARISH REGISTERS**  
1880-1891 (written in Danish)  
1892-1945 (written in Danish until 1919)  
1892-1945 – Birth Records (Photocopies)  
1892-1945 – Communicant Records (Photocopies)  
1892-1945 – Baptism Records (Photocopies)  
1892-1945 – Confirmation Records (Photocopies)  
1892-1945 – Marriage Records (Photocopies)  
1892-1945 – Death and Burial Records (Photocopies)  
1892-1945 – Information Unknown (Photocopies)  
1935  
1945–1978  
**NOTES**  
Annual Meetings  
1880-1948  
1880-1948 (Photocopies of pages 1-5 due to tape damage)  
1949-1977  
Gayville Study Club  
1943-1972  
Ladies Aid  
1922-1928  
1938-1943  
1944-1949  
1950-1956  
1957-1966  
1967-1972  
Sunday School  
1945-1976  
1960-1969  
**CORRESPONDENCE**  
Letters of Resignation  
8 January 1946, from H.M. Andersen  
1 May 1965, from Thorvald Hansen  
9 July 1972, from Paul R. Petersen  
Growth In Ministry  
20 August 1974, from Joseph Wagner  
**PRINTED MATERIAL**  
Celebrations, Pamphlets and Programs  
75th Anniversary Program  
14 September 1969  
“Give God the Glory” Centennial Celebration  
21 September 1980  
Newspaper Articles  
September 1950, “New Altar Is Dedicated At Danish Church Sunday”  
30 October 1951, “Gayville Church Is Host to District Danish Meeting”  
No date, Photocopy of photo of church  
Trinity Lutheran Church Constitution  
Red River Valley Synod Constitution and Bylaws |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|         | Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota “Smoke Signals”  
|         | January 1971  
|         | April 1971   |

**EPHEMERA**

- Citation of Achievement 1968-1970
- Citation of Achievement 1970-1972