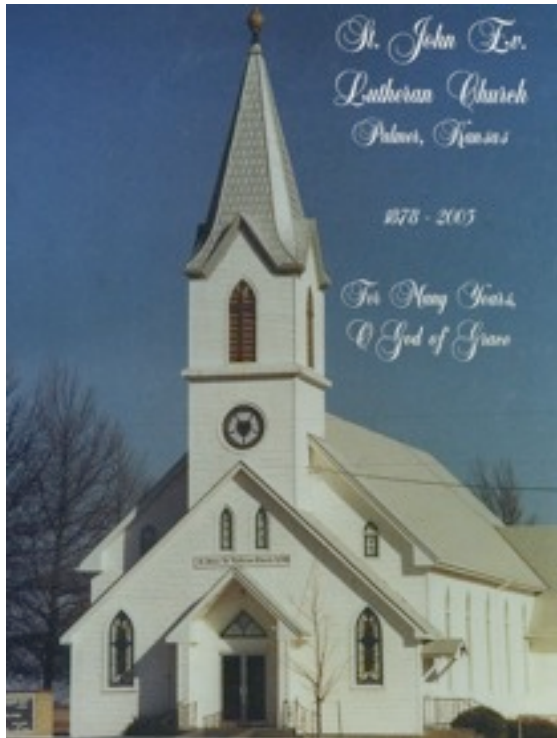


For Many Years, O God of Grace



The founding and growth of St. John Lutheran Church, Palmer, Kansas, is closely associated with the immigration of colonists from Muden in the Luneberg District of Germany to Concordia, Missouri in 1871. Two brothers, William and J. Christopher Hornbostel, selected Washington County because the long grass found here seemed better than the short grass around Wichita. William traded a span of oxen and a wagon to a homesteader for eighty acres located one and one half miles west of St. John and the settlement was initiated.

At nearly the same time in 1872, D. C. Meyer, H. C. Meier and Peter Meier arrived by way of Illinois, from the same identical region in Germany and settled near St. John. Three friends of the Meier's and the Hornbostel's - Henry Herra, Henry Kohlmeier and Henry Schroeder came from Crete, Illinois, during

the same spring to settle in Strawberry Township. Even though all these settlers soon exhausted their financial resources, they laid the foundation for the ongoing religious life of the community.

In 1873, the search for a German Lutheran pastor began. Several interim pastors from other congregations came to Palmer to conduct services as more and more German Lutherans began to move into the community. Rev. F. J. Jungck, who had retired for health reasons, bought land and took up farming. When his health improved, he began to hold services in the homes of several members. In 1878, he was installed as pastor of St. John's. Each member agreed to contribute 100 pounds of flour, 25 bushels of corn, 50 pounds of meat and \$5.00 in cash to be delivered to the pastor before May, 1879.



In September, 1878, eight families and Pastor Jungck assembled to discuss and adopt the Constitution of St. John in the home of D. C. Meyer, thus forming St. John

Evangelical Lutheran Church. As more immigrants arrived the church grew and went through several building projects. Over the years the church was destroyed by tornado and fires and each time it was quickly reconstructed. Rev. J. G. B. Keller served the congregation for fifty years from 1884 to 1934, serving as teacher in the school and helping organize other Lutheran churches in the area.



The present church was built in 1905 and remodeled in 1953, 1977-78 and 1994. St. John Lutheran School was constructed in 1936. Since 1944, confirmation classes have been instructed in English. In 1990, the school closed and St. John students went to school at a neighboring Lutheran school in Linn. In 1994, the school building was moved and connected to the church building, becoming a fellowship hall with classrooms for Sunday School.

- Exerpted from the 125th Anniversary Booklet