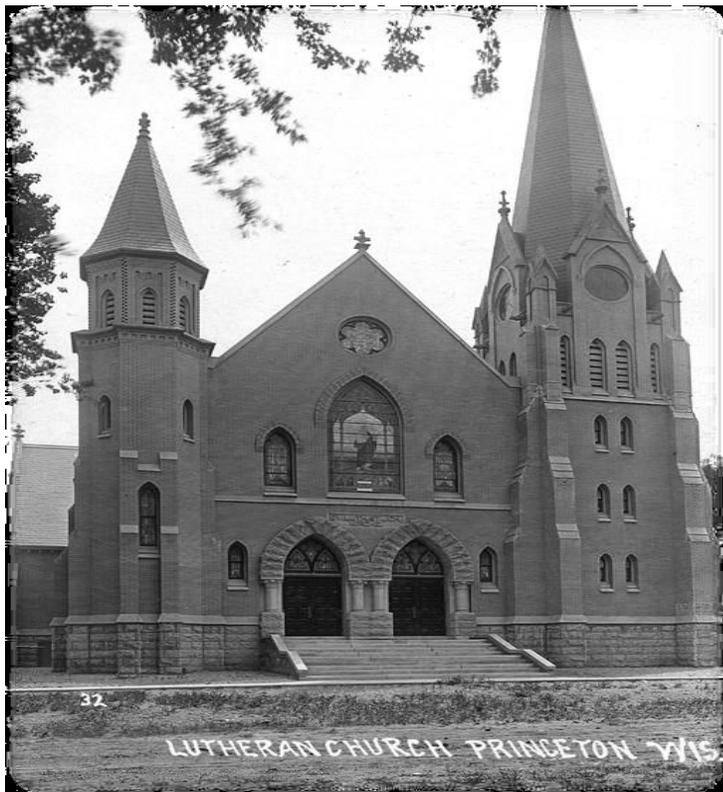


Princeton “Scenes from the Past” St. John’s Evangelical Church 1884 – 1940’s

This 5th in a series of articles is a continuation of the March 23rd story on St. John’s Evangelical Church in Princeton. In that story, we noted several of the original members of St. John’s Church are buried in the City Cemetery. The following underlined names are individual (or family) names buried in the City Cemetery – **Pastor J J Kern**, and the Parish families who organized the first church: Dargatz, **Jahnke**, Persage, Lemke, **Lueck**, Luetke, **Maulick**, Reich, **Schwarz**, Weckworth, **Weist**, Seigler, **Thiel**, Sommerfeldt, **Schwanke**, and **E.T. Yahr**. If any reader has information on these individuals, we would welcome stories or pictures to be added to our permanent burial records.

As the church story continues, Pastor **Johann Hoyer** retired in 1884 and turned the leadership over to his son **Rev. Adolph Hoyer**. The congregation had grown to a point that a new larger church was needed. This second church was to be built in the shape of a cross, made of wood, with much of the construction materials coming from the first church. It was built on the lot that is presently occupied by the school.



In 1907 the “Frauen Verein” (German for Ladies Aid) was organized and these women become very active in serving the church and community. The Ladies Aid supplied the electric lighting fixtures and later furnished the rooms in the basement of the church. The following picture is believed to be a picture of the Ladies Aid, but only had a few names were listed on the back... Nell Shew, Martha, Ella Miller, and Mrs. Berry. If anyone has additional information on the ladies in the photo, please contact City Hall-Princeton.



The congregation continued to grow, and soon the second church was too small. An addition was not practical so the site across the street was selected (the existing church site) and a fund raising campaign for the third church began. The congregation needed a commitment of \$25,000, which in today's market would exceed \$700,000. The funds were raised and the corner stone of the existing church was set on October 18, 1908, just 24 short years after the second church was constructed.

In October 1935, Rev. Hoyer asked the congregation to provide him an assistant and a call went out to Harold Warnke of Platte, South Dakota. Rev. Warnke was installed as the 5th Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church on February 16, 1936. He remained in Princeton until 1949.

During this time, World War II affected many communities nationwide. 75 of St. John's church members served in the Armed Forces during WWII. A Spiritual Welfare Committee was formed to maintain religious contact with congregation members serving in the military. There were two casualties from the congregation - Marvin Bierman who is buried in the Green Lake Dartford Cemetery, and **Donald Kannenberg** who is buried in the City Cemetery. Kannenberg was wounded in action near Hebrovna Belgium and died of his wounds. Research has provided that generally soldiers were buried near the place they fought, however after the war, each family was contacted by the US Government and asked if the family wanted to bring their loved ones back to the states or remain in Europe with their fellow soldiers who died in battle. In this case, it is believed the Kannenberg family asked to have Donald brought back to the US as there aren't any burial record in Henry Chapelle Cemetery or the Ardennes Cemetery in Belgium.



Sergeant Donald F. Kannenberg - Technician 5th Grade, 33rd Armored Regiment, 3rd Armored Division, US Army, WORLD WAR II - Received Purple Heart.

The "Scenes from the Past" articles are published the second and fourth week in the Berlin Journal Newspapers. This story will continue the fourth week of April and will highlight the continued growth in the church and school along with other parishioners from the past who are buried in the City Cemetery. Information for this story came from the 1964 St. John's Centennial Jubilee Book and Marla Janes. The Princeton Cemetery Walking Tour is planned for Saturday, August 26, 2017 (1:30 and 4:00) highlighting several of our forefathers who helped form Princeton's History.

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