



Bethel at Pearl & Cass Streets (1864)

Dedication Bethel History Room

May 4, 2025

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today we seek God's blessing as with thankfulness we come together to dedicate this Bethel History Room. Within this room are many papers, items, and photographs showing the history of Bethel Lutheran Church from the time it was organized in 1856 in Cicero, Indiana, to the combining with Olive Branch and Mt. Pleasant in the 1930s to become the Bethel Lutheran Church we know. In 1997, the church moved to its present location and added the Christian Education Wing in 2008. In the following years, Bethel joined the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) becoming part of the Heartland Mission District, added the Outdoor Shelter, the Meditation Circle, and Peace Trail with Stations of the Cross. We have a strong Care Ministry as well as our Food & Baby Pantry. The Columbarium is a beautiful addition to and for those who have gone before us. Bethel has a rich history. This firm foundation helps us as we continue to follow in Jesus's footprints.

P All your works praise you, O Lord.

C and your faithful servants bless you.

P Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe. Your gifts are many, and in wisdom you have made all things to give you glory. Be with us now and bless us as we dedicate this Bethel History Room to your praise and honor. Give us joy in all our works, and grant that this room may always be a place where your will is done now and forever. May your name be glorified as we live the way you have guided us at Bethel all these many years. This through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

C Amen



The Bethel Story continues to be written... *blessings of so many in Mission & Ministry!*

~ **Credit and grateful thanks to the History Committee** ~

Stan Renner, John & Glenda Grimes, Lon Mills, Vicki Cooper and Mary Jo Mikulski.

The following pages are a **brief history of Bethel's incredible Story**, take a look...

THE BETHEL STORY



Bethel Lutheran Church & Christian Education Building
206th & Cumberland Rd., Noblesville, IN 46062

The present Bethel congregation has evolved from three sources. In the first half of the last century, many pioneers who settled the northern part of Hamilton County were German Lutherans who migrated from Germany or Pennsylvania.

The earliest source of our current congregation was the Mt. Pleasant congregation established November 1837, 1 1/4 miles southeast of Arcadia.



Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church
(Cicero, IN) Pict: 1909—
Organized in 1837
Merged with Bethel in 1936

The 15 charter members erected a building in 1839 and replaced it with a larger facility in 1862. Mt. Pleasant experienced a split prior to the Civil War over the issue of the use of the English language used during services. Those members opposed to English left and formed their own church 1/4 mile south of Mt. Pleasant, later becoming the present Arcadia Lutheran Church.



Bethel Lutheran Church
(Jackson St, Cicero, IN)
Organized in 1856—2nd Location
Building Dedicated in 1930

Church in Cicero in November 1856.

The 8 charter members, under the leadership of A.H. Scherer, met in a broom shop and later in the Cicero



Bethel at Pearl & Cass Streets
(1864 to 1930)

school until they built a brick structure in 1864 (which is still standing) on the corner of Cass and Pearl Streets

(now an apartment building.)



Bethel at Pearl & Cass Streets (1864)

The building cost \$1,427.85 and included a bell tower and bell. (This bell has been brought with



Bell Rededicated
Aug. 27, 2006

us and was re-dedicated Aug. 27, 2006.)



Pastor A.H. Scherer

A.H. Scherer was pastor of Mt. Pleasant during this time and eventually helped establish 21 churches in central Indiana. (The 2 beautiful

Jesus stained glass windows on each side of our sanctuary were brought with us and installed in our new building.) They were in memory of Rev. Scherer.



Jesus Stained Glass Windows
were moved and re-installed at
206th & Cumberland Rd.

The third source for our present congregation was actually a mission congregation started by Bethel to serve the area south-east of Cicero. Before the Civil War, several Pennsylvania Germans and a few families directly from Germany settled near a community centered around two focal points.

These points were the Baton Rouge School located on the northwest corner of the intersection of 206th St. and Cumberland Rd., directly across the road from where we are currently located, and the Zimmer



Olive Branch Lutheran Church
Organized in 1895
Merged with Bethel in 1932

Cemetery, 1½ miles east of the school house. In 1895, under the sponsorship of Bethel, a frame building was erected on the southeast corner of 206th Street & Cumberland Rd. This congregation was named Olive Branch and shared pastors with Bethel, and at times with Mt. Pleasant.

The coming of the automobile made the four miles between Cicero and Olive Branch shrink. This pulled the two churches closer together. By the 1920's, the two churches were not only connected by a common faith and pastor, but also by family relationships.

During the mid 1920's it was very apparent that a new church facility was needed to meet the growth of the Bethel congregation in Cicero. Thanks to generous gifts and much sacrifice, a lot was purchased on Jackson Street and construction began despite the National Depression in 1929. The ladies of the Olive Branch church worked long and hard to support the new Bethel building. The new \$20,000 structure was dedicated in October 1930, and has been a point of pride for the congregation ever since.

By this time, the 3 separate congregations were already cooperating through a common church council, Luther League, and shared pastors. It followed naturally that within the decade of the 1930s, both Olive Branch in 1932 and Mt. Pleasant in 1936, would merge with Bethel to form one united congregation. While the closing of the two country churches could have been a sad event, for most it was an opportunity to unite their faith and families in a beautiful new building in Cicero. Until the 1980's, it was still possible to identify some of the members that had come from the 3 separate churches. However, even for them this no longer seemed as significant as simply being part of Bethel's growing congregation.

During the 67 years that Bethel called 220 W. Jackson Street home, the congregation and building evolved in change with each new decade. A new pipe organ was installed in 1947 and an educational wing in the 60's. Bethel celebrated its centennial in 1956, 125th year in 1981 and 150th years in 2006!

In 1994, a decision was made to purchase 10 acres at 206th Street and Cumberland Road in Noblesville. It was a long and hard process to come to that decision. However, our debt for this property was paid off in 16 months. (One of the means of raising money was selling building blocks @ \$26.44 each.) Then on a rainy Sunday afternoon in June 1997, we dedicated the land and broke ground. Mission Building families arrived in late July and began the building process that took a year and a half to complete. Because we had sold the Jackson Street property, the congregation spent six months as guests of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Our first worship service in our new building was held in June of

1998 in the Fellowship Hall. The sanctuary and narthex was completed five months later. Dedication of our new building took place on Reformation Sunday in 1998, a year to the day that we had moved out of our old church building in Cicero.

The "new" building is has become a hub of activity in a seven day week ministry. Bethel has met new opportunities as well as new challenges. Bethel continues to change and adapt to serve the Lord and to reach out to our members and community with the timeless Gospel.

In September of 2008, the 2 story education wing addition was dedicated to the glory of God and has been a blessing to the congregation and greater community who use this space.

In 2012, Bethel joined the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). Pastors and members have been active at the national level as well as in the Heartland Mission District, and Bethel has hosted the Heartland Mission District Convocation several times.

In June of 2014, we were able to replace our worn out playground with a wonderful, vastly improved play set. The new set includes 2 towers, 2 slides, a bridge and some fun steps. We were also able to add a "car" rider and a small teeter totter. A wonderful sitting bench enhances the area.

Our Care Ministry has grown and increased interactive activities for our members. Growth of the Missions Ministry continues and is being used as a model by the national church (NALC).

For 2016, our projects include Lord of Light-replacing lights throughout the buildings & parking lots, updating the kitchen & AV tech to Fellowship Hall, and completion of the Bethel Peace Trail. Later additions of benches, Stations of the Cross.

Healing Services were started in 2017. The Columbarium and outdoor patio were added in 2020.

When the opportunity arose to acquire the adjacent farm property, Bethel purchased it, and Marilyn's Place is making great use of it serving the community.

Bethel's AV systems have grown from one person sitting behind the band to AV Teams at each service, and an Audio-Visual system that produces a hi-def live stream and video recordings for 2 services every Sunday as we continue to reach out beyond Bethel.

Every year since joining the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), the Bethel congregation has reached out to help people, organizations, and Mission Partners illustrating that Bethel is a Mission-Driven congregation always striving to be Christ-Centered and actively following Jesus wherever He leads!



The Bethel Story continues to be written... *in Mission & Ministry!*

~ **Ministry** ~

Blessings Beyond Bethel
Boy & Girl Scouts
Legacy Preschool
Classical Conversations Home School

Women Bible Fellowship Study
Women on Wednesday
Men's Sausage & Scripture



~ **Mission** ~

International

EECMY Congregation, Senbete, Ethiopia
Education
Operation Christmas Child
Water Missions

US

Disaster Response (NALC)
Epiphany Lutheran, Pensacola, FL
His Light Ministries San Pedro, Miami, FL
Living Faith Lutheran, Wabash, IN
Lutheran CORE
Servants of Christ Lutheran, Robins, IA
West County NALC, Ellisville, MO

NALC

North American Lutheran Church
NALC - Great Commission Society
NALC Seminary/Theological Education
Heartland Mission District

Local Outreach

Backpack school supply drive
Bethel Angel Tree
Bibles for Mission Partners
Blood Drive
Creative Spirits
(baby blankets & prayer shawls)
Fight Hunger
Food & Baby Pantry
Juvenile Jail Ministry
LMVFM - Veterans
Marilyn's Place
Reading Buddies
Serve Noblesville
Visiting NALC pastors
Wreaths Across America



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Noblesville, IN 46062