

The Our Savior Story

On December 31, 1960, a group of 23 lay people in Newton sent a formal petition to the Iowa District East of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, requesting the initiation of a new mission in Newton. The first worship service was scheduled for January 15, 1961, in the United Auto Workers' Hall with 62 persons in attendance. Rev. Carl Lueders of Peace Lutheran Church in Des Moines led this service.

On Maundy Thursday of 1961 the congregation observed its first celebration of Holy Communion, through which 29 believers received this spiritually edifying meal. On July 23, Pastor Larry E. Brelje was installed as Our Savior's first pastor. Pastor Brelje faithfully served our congregation until 1973, when he accepted a call to Zion Lutheran Church in Hiawatha, Iowa. At the IDE convention in August of 1961 the congregation was accepted into membership in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

On September 9, 1962, the cornerstone of the church was laid into place at the present North 4th Ave. E. Location. At this time the congregation numbered 106 members. The first unit of the present building was dedicated to the Lord's glory on March 24, 1963. It soon became apparent that the need for educational space was urgent. In July 1967, ground was broken for an addition that would extend south and east of the church. On January 7, 1968, the dedication for our new education wing was held.

In December of 1974 Rev. Jerry Doellinger, pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Waterloo, was called to be Our Savior's second pastor. The Lord led Pastor Doellinger to accept this call. He was installed on December 1, 1974, ending a 13-month pastoral vacancy.

In 1978, after several years of study a building program was begun, which added educational space, a kitchen, and church offices. This building addition was dedicated to the Lord on October 29, 1978.

Although this history has stressed dates, and the building programs, these are not the important parts of a Christian congregation. In the follow pages we have illustrated in picture form the true blessings God has bestowed upon our friendship ... namely His precious people.

To our God alone be all glory!