

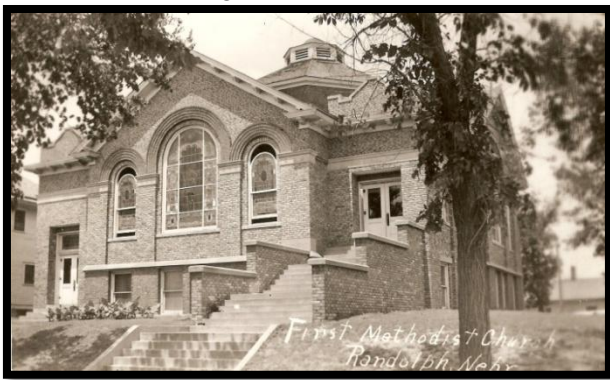
Church Histories

United Methodist Church



The Randolph Methodist Church was organized in September, 1886, following the building of the Omaha Railroad and the beginning of the village of Randolph. It was the first and for a number of years the only religious organization in the Randolph community.

The first services were held in the Omaha depot, but railroad officials soon objected, so the meetings were then held at the Edward & Bradford Lumber Company. Services were conducted there until completion of the public school building.



1917 Methodist Church

In the years 1894-1897, the church secured the services of Reverend Powers and they rented a large tent and held a big camp meeting, but strong winds blew down the tent. Services were then transferred to the unfinished dining room of the Boughn Hotel.

The church received a donation of church ground from the president of the Townsite Company in 1890, and by 1891 a building had been erected and dedicated. A one-story parsonage had been built, and in 1897, remodeled and a second story added.

The Silver Jubilee of the church was observed on January 5, 6, and 7, 1912.

A building campaign was inaugurated, and by July, 1912 a new church was started, since after 20 years, the membership was over 600 and more room was needed. The new church was dedicated debt free in March, 1913.

On the night of September 13, 1916, the church was struck by lightning and burned. All that remained were

the outside walls. The church was rebuilt on the same property and dedicated on July 19, 1917.

In the summer of 1919 a new parsonage was built and by 1924 the church was debt free.

By 1951, the 65th anniversary of the church, many improvements had been made. A new gas heating plant had been installed and memorials, such as a communion table, lighted cross, new hymnals, new carpet in the sanctuary, gas stoves in the kitchen and many more gifts had been given.

The Diamond Jubilee was held on September 17, 1961. It was an all day anniversary service with Bishop Kenneth W. Copeland giving the service.

In the 25 years following the Diamond Jubilee until the Centennial Celebration many more improvements were made. The kitchen and the fellowship rooms were remodeled, chimes were added, a new copying machine and altar covering were installed.



Moving Day for the Methodist Parsonage

After several years without a pastor in residence, it was decided in 2001 to sell the parsonage which found a new home at the John and Kelly Thelen residence. Also, due to the lack of handicap access to the church and the rising cost of utilities, it was decided to raze the current church building and build a new one on the same site.



Controlled burn of the United Methodist Church

In preparation for the new construction, the stained glass windows, pews, altar furnishings, and other materials were salvaged from the building and put into storage to be reused in the new building. Following the deconsecrating, the building was burned. During the new construction, services were held at the Johnson Funeral Home. In January of 2002 the new building was dedicated. A large

celebration was held at the church with Bishop Rhymes H. Moncure giving the address. Members from all Randolph churches were represented at the dedication.

In 2008 a steeple was added and an impressive carillon was given as a memorial. A large bell was also presented to the church. The bell adorns the front lawn of the grounds.

Church members have remained very active in the community, and the fellowship hall is often used for Girl Scout meetings. The United Methodist Women help serve an appreciation meal and program every third year for local firemen, ambulance crew and city officials. They hold a Guest Day each year. Guests are ladies from the Randolph churches and surrounding communities. They remember shut-ins on Valentine's Day with gift baskets, along with various other activities. The Youth sponsor a caroling party at Christmas, hold a work day to help elderly with snow shoveling, clean up and other odd jobs. The Methodist Men hold a prayer breakfast on Saturday mornings during Lent which is open to all members of the community.

In 1984 the church observed 200 years of Methodism founded by John Wesley. In 2011 the Randolph church will observe 125 years of Methodism in Randolph. During the time 37 pastors have served the congregation. When the founders of this church set in motion the force of good, they left not only a priceless heritage for future members, but an obligation as well.

St. Jane Frances de Chantal Catholic Church

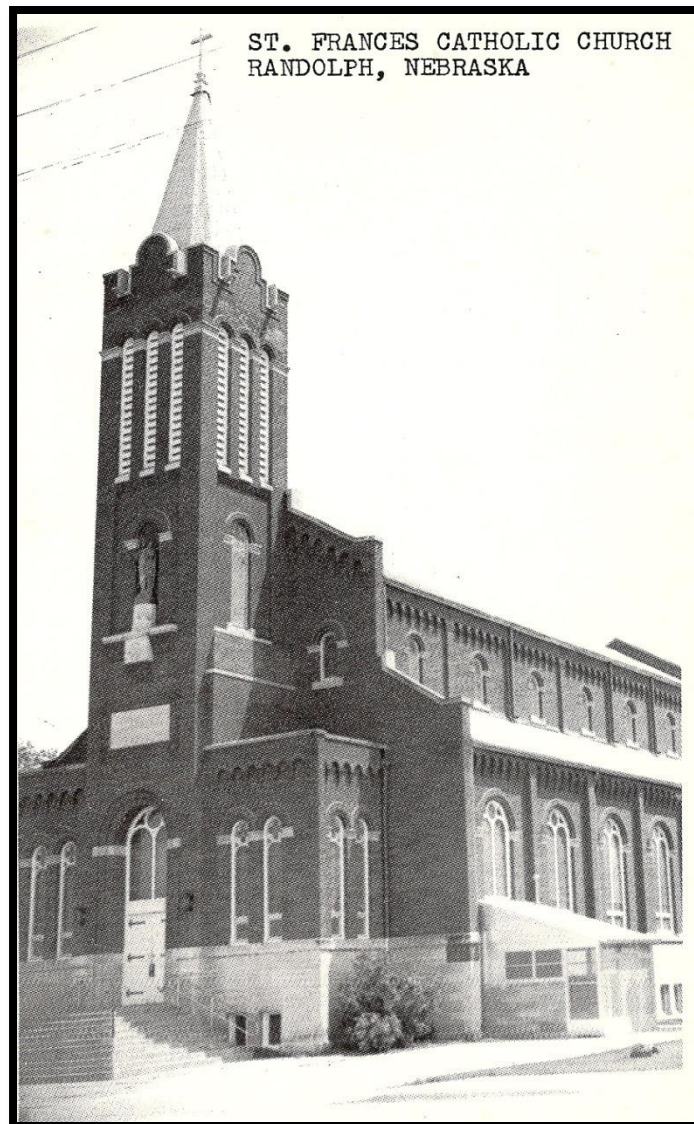
In the formative years of the City of Randolph, the Catholics of the community were served by priests from the surrounding parishes on an irregular basis. Father Charles Mugan made his first visit to Randolph on March 9, 1889, for the purpose of administering baptism to Margaret Lynn, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Lynn. The first Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated in Randolph on April 9, 1889, by Father Mugan. There were only five or six persons in attendance. At this time, Father Mugan was stationed in Wayne. A certain Father Wallace also came to Randolph to celebrate Mass periodically. There is no record regarding his first name or address.

Father Henry Loecker came on a regular basis to Randolph from his parish in Hartington in the early 1890's. Under his supervision, lots were purchased in 1891. On these lots, a small church, 24 feet by 40 feet, was built. It was completed in 1892.

The first Mass was celebrated in the new church on Easter Sunday in 1892. Chris Nepper played the organ. Sedonia Kuhl, Zita Nepper, Mary Wurdinger, Nick Funk and Matt Schmitt formed the choir. According to records, other parishioners in 1892 were: Frank, Henry and William Abts; Frank Burke; John Dwyer; John and Mathias Kuhl; Matt Kunts; Catherine, Frank, Henry, John, Julius, Nick and Peter Lorge; John Pimpel; Peter Reding;

Jake Stukel, Sr.; Peter Vickel; Anton Widerholtz; Peter Wiese; Henry and Reiner Wintz and John Wurdinger, Sr.

The parish was named after St. Jane Frances de Chantal, a French woman who lived in the seventeenth century and who founded the Religious Community of the Visitation for Women to train and provide teachers for young people in her time.



The first resident pastor, Father Albert Hork, came to Randolph in 1894. The community was growing rapidly as families came from Iowa, Illinois and Indiana. "Hard times" were a result of drought, grasshopper infestation and crop failure. The small congregation found it difficult to support a pastor. Sensing this, one Sunday morning, Father Hork packed his belongings, put out the sanctuary light and announced that he was leaving. The enterprising John Lorge, who was a land agent and had been instrumental in bringing many settlers from Carroll and Shelby counties in Iowa, passed the hat and collected enough small change to buy a few groceries. Father Hork decided to give it another try.

Father A. Walbaum succeeded Father Hork in 1897. Bishop Scannell appointed Rev. Casimir Renner as the second resident priest on May 10, 1898.

By this time, additional families had arrived from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Europe. Father Renner saw at once that the modest church was too small and undertook the enlargement which was completed during the winter months of 1898 and 1899. The interior of the barren church was also beautified with the Stations of the Cross, an ornate high altar, statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and St. Anthony, and a handsome organ. The ambition and courage of the shepherd inspired his faithful flock to provide the backbone of a Catholic parish, a parochial school.



Inside View of the original Catholic Church

Erection of the first school was begun in June 1899. It was completed at a cost of \$4,000.00. This included equipment and living quarters for the Sisters. School opened in September with an enrollment of 140 students who came from the neighboring towns of Wayne, Coleridge, Belden and Carroll. The school was staffed by the School Sisters of St. Francis from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. St. Frances de Chantal was their first assignment in Nebraska. Sister Elizabeth was Superior, assisted by Sisters Ethelberta, Leonna and Mathilda.

In September 1907, Father Renner was transferred to Elgin, and Rev. Kaspar Grobbel became pastor. His prime concern was the school, and he made plans to erect a new, larger institution of education. Father Grobbel's pastorate was brief. He labored hard and his health gave way under the strain. He was succeeded by his cousin, Rev. Peter Grobbel, on January 10, 1909.

On April 26, 1909, a contract was let to a Sioux City firm for the construction of a new brick school building for \$17,000.00. The new school was dedicated on July 5, 1910. The brick building was modern and fireproof with a fire escape. The large, full basement was well-equipped with a laundry room, furnace room, and a large dining room for boarders and a smaller one for the Sisters. The large kitchen was well-equipped with a pantry and serving room. The first floor main entrance had a wide hall from which the stairway rose. There were four large, well-lighted classrooms on the main floor. The second floor had two classrooms, a music room, chapel and living quarters for the Sisters. On the third floor were two

dormitories for out-of-town pupils. The floors were well-finished hard Maple, and the woodwork was a selected hard Pine.

Father Peter Grobbel firmly believed and thoroughly subscribed to the adage, "Spare the rod and spoil the child". Many tales are told of the parish horse barn, which was located on the north edge of the church property, serving as a woodshed for deserving or suspected culprits.

On May 11, 1913, a new pastor, Rev. Ferdinand Peitz, arrived. A year later, he was assigned to West Point.

In 1914, Rev. Bernard Lordemann became pastor. Again the school was his first consideration. He opened St. Frances de Chantal High School that same year. The 1914-15 the faculty consisted of Father Lordemann and Sister Julia and Sister Lautencia who taught during the 1916 through 1918 school years. In 1920, the number of teachers assisting Father Lordemann increased to three and, in 1922, to four Sisters.

From 1916 through 1919, the parish worked to secure the money needed to build a new church, since the congregation had grown too large for the wooden structure. In 1917, the present Romanesque brick structure was erected with a comfortable seating capacity for 600 persons in the nave. The Carrara marble altar, placed under a fixed canopy, was imported from Italy at a cost of \$48,000.00. The total cost of the church, including furnishings, was \$75,000.00.

On Sunday, June 30, 1918, St. Frances parish gathered for the first Mass in the new church. The first couple to be married after the Carrara marble altar was installed was Robert Aschoff and Angeline Thieman on December 29, 1918.

Father Lordemann, a gentle man, remained until 1930 when he was promoted to Monsignor and transferred to Hartington. The parishioners were happy for him but regretted to see him leave. He was succeeded by Rev. Bernard Teves who courageously carried on the traditions of his predecessors during the trying Depression years. Father Teves tried to save the parish expenses by celebrating Mass in the church basement to save heat and fuel during the winter months. Four years later, in 1934, Father Teves was replaced by Rev. Joseph Falke. The Depression years, with drought, grasshoppers, dust storms and crop failures, still plagued the farmers. It was difficult to meet running expenses and pay interest on the parish debt. By 1943, when Father Falke was transferred to head the Creighton, Nebraska deanery, the parish debt had been paid. He was remembered as a good school administrator, upgrading the standards of St. Frances de Chantal School.

Rev. Herman Kaup became the pastor on May 29, 1943. He was also excellent as a school administrator. With the parish out of debt, he gave his attention to repairing the church, which had suffered considerable damage during the lean Depression years. The church was repaired

throughout and the interior decorated with the installation of new art glass windows by 1947.

In 1949, the old, one-story rectory was replaced with the spacious residence, formerly owned by Dr. G. E. Hartman and which was moved across town to church property. Living quarters for a housekeeper were added to it. The dwelling was then well-adapted to provide a functional rectory for the pastor and assistant.

Father Norbert Boland was the first assistant pastor, appointed in 1946. At this time, Our Lady of Sorrows Church at Carroll, formerly served by St. Mary's at Wayne, became a mission of Randolph.

Three years later, in 1949, Rev. Paul Fangman succeeded Father Boland as assistant pastor. Father Boland was appointed pastor of the rural parish of Clyde, Nebraska.

Recognizing Father Kaup's sterling qualities of administration, Archbishop Gerald Bergan transferred him to the deanery of West Point on January 3, 1951.

Rev. Raymond Auer was appointed to succeed Father Kaup. During his pastorate, improvements and repairs continued to be made. In 1952, the paving of the street parking facilities were completed. In 1953, the school was rewired with the installation of instant-starting fluorescent lights and a new steam boiler.

Rev. Paul Fangman was replaced by Rev. Peter Zarkauskas as assistant pastor in 1952. Five years later, in 1957, Rev. Michael Kelly was appointed assistant to replace Father Zarkauskas. He remained until 1961.

In June 1960, Father Auer was appointed to head the deanery and was transferred to Hartington. While in Randolph, Father Auer was instrumental in organizing perpetual adoration in the parish. A convent for the Sisters was erected during his pastorate. The convent was completed in May 1957. Rev. Otto Buehler followed Father Auer as pastor in June of 1960. In 1961, Rev. Daniel Galas replaced Father Kelley as assistant and remained until 1964. The next assistant was Rev. Emmett Meyer who served until 1968.

During Father Buehler's tenure, a new school was erected at a cost of \$341,000.00. Building of the school began in 1963 and it was open for the 1966-67 term. The school closed the summer of 1970. The public school district purchased the school, including property on which the rectory was situated. The public and parochial schools combined in the fall of 1970. The last assistant pastors were Rev. Alfred Moseke, 1968-69, and Rev. Robert Eimers, 1969-70.

After selling the property to the public school in 1970, it was necessary to relocate the rectory. The Albert Kuhl residence, located across the street from the church, was purchased to serve as the rectory. The old rectory was sold to Vernon and Beverly Loberg in October 1971 for \$1,275.00. It was moved to the west edge of town.

Due to Father Buehler's failing health, he was assisted by Rev. Anthony Tresnak from the Hartington parish and

Father Thomas Allen, O.S.B., from Elkhorn. After a lengthy illness, Father Buehler died on January 11, 1971.

Rev. Thomas Furlong was appointed pastor following Father Buehler's death. He remained until 1972 when he was appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Omaha. During Father Furlong's tenure, the parish council was organized. It is comprised of nine members. Other committees organized were education, liturgy and activities. Renovation of the church interior was also initiated by Father Furlong.

Because of the absence of a Catholic school, a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) education program was introduced. It has been successful, with parish members serving as volunteer teachers under the direction of a coordinator. The present coordinator is Sandy Thies.

Rev. Benedict LaRocque was appointed to succeed Father Furlong in 1972. The redecorating project of the inside of the church and extensive repairs to the church were continued after Father LaRocque came to St. Frances. A spacious new office and living quarters for a housekeeper were added to the recently-purchased rectory. Schettler Studios of Carroll, Iowa, was awarded the contract for repairing, renovating and painting of the church which was declared structurally sound by Gene Olson, architect. The council voted in favor of making the necessary repairs. The new roofing was done by Friend-Pike Roofing Company of Sioux City at a cost of \$8,517.00. This included heavyweight (380 pound) shingles, tarring of flat decks, caulking, sheet metal work and labor, steeple not included. The sound system in the church was replaced by new equipment, installed by Esco Electronic Supply Company of Omaha at a cost of \$2,814.00.

St. Frances boasted a new look with over-all redecorating, new carpeting, sanctuary furniture, lighting fixtures and revamped new pews with kneeler pads. A new mother's room was added, as well as murals which graced the Holy Family altar and baptistery.

On February 18, 1973, parishioners of St. Frances gathered to celebrate the renovation of their church interior and exterior. In addition to the congregation of St. Frances, the Archbishop and former pastors joined to mark the end of a long period of planning to make the church the beautiful place of worship it now is.

With St. Frances no longer having an assistant pastor, the mission at Carroll closed in the fall of 1973. The parishioners in Carroll transferred to St. Mary's in Wayne and St. Frances in Randolph.

In the fall of 1975, the parish hall was completely remodeled. This project including enlarging and remodeling the kitchen area, paneling and carpeting the dining area, lowering the ceiling, purchasing all new dining room furniture, and changing the steam heating system in the entire structure of the church to a forced air system of heating and cooling.

On April 25, 1976, an open house was held to celebrate the completion of the newly-enclosed entries of the church. The main entry addition to the west served to enclose the stairs, protecting them from the weather. The south entry included an elevator-lift from ground level to the church proper.

These renovations began under the direction of Father Furlong and were completed during the tenure of Father LaRocque. Father LaRocque served the parish from 1972 until 1977 when he was transferred to O'Neill. Rev. Roland Peschel, a kind congenial man, was pastor from 1977 until 1982 when he was transferred to serve the parish at O'Neill.

On October 28, 1979, Vincent Schmit was ordained deacon. The Rev. Mr. Schmit was a valuable asset to the parish. He helped take the pressure off the priest's heavy load. Among his many services, Deacon Schmit conducted a communion service at Colonial Manor each Sunday after the 10:00 o'clock Mass.

By 1981, it was obvious that there was a need for a new organ. After a vote of the parish, it was decided to purchase a new pipe organ to replace the electronic tubular type which had been used for a period of 30 years. At a cost of \$49,765.00, a beautiful new pipe organ, which was especially designed for St. Frances, was purchased by the parishioners. It was installed in February of 1985 and dedicated on October 27, 1985.

Rev. James Ryberg succeeded Father Peschel, arriving in June of 1982 and remaining until the summer of 1985 when he was appointed pastor of St. Leonard's in Madison.

The next pastor was Rev. Richard (Rick) Arkfeld who arrived in June of 1985. The following year, in February of 1986, Father Arkfeld was diagnosed as having lung cancer. Because of his serious illness, his 25th anniversary, scheduled for June of 1987, was celebrated three months early, in March of 1987. Father Rick was appointed to a small rural parish, St. Anthony's, at St. Charles, Nebraska, in June of 1988.

A contract for the renovation-electrification of the three existing bells on the church was drawn up on January 19, 1987. Equipment and installation was furnished by the I. T. Verdin Company of Cincinnati, Ohio. The total cost was \$12,670.00.

Rev. Donald Stortz was appointed to replace Father Rick in June of 1988. During Father Don's tenure, the parish celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination on June 4, 1989. The liturgy involved parishioners, friends and relatives. Father Don remained until June 1991. As in previous years, the parish regretted losing its pastor.

Rev. Jack Hebert of Butte was appointed to replace Father Don in June of 1991. Father Jack, a kind and gentle man, was an accomplished musician. He presented an organ concert in the city auditorium in December 1991. The hall was filled to capacity and the program was enjoyed by all. Also during Father Jack's tenure St. Jane

Frances Parish celebrated their 100th Anniversary as a parish.

Rev. Wayne Schlautman was appointed to succeed Father Jack in June of 1992. He served the parishioners of St. Jane Frances de Chantal until June of 1997. During his tenure the interior of the church was completely repainted and the sanctuary was remodeled.

Rev. Ronald Battiato was appointed to succeed Father Wayne in June of 1997. He served the people of St. Jane Frances until June of 2007. When Father Ron came to serve as pastor he brought with him his own personal housekeeper, Chantelle Schmit. While Father Ron was here Doug Tunink was ordained a permanent deacon in 2001 and Deacon Vincent Schmit passed away on November 27, 2006, so now our parish is only served by one deacon. Father Ron was assigned senior assistant pastor of St. Patrick's in Fremont in June 2007 at which time Rev. John S. Andrews was appointed to succeed Father Ron.

Father John is currently the pastor of St. Jane Frances de Chantal of Randolph and the pastor of St. Mary's of the Seven Dolors of Osmond. He currently resides in Osmond. It was a big change for the people of St. Jane Frances and St. Mary's to share a pastor. It is a good thing that Father John is young, so he is able to keep up with all the activities of both parishes. Beginning in February 2009, St. Jane Frances repainted their sanctuary which was completed in time for Easter Sunday, April 12, 2009, Mass. The painting was done by Reeder Originals, of Norfolk, Nebraska. Karl and Brenda Reeder, are the owners and did the painting. The four canvas paintings show the life of St. Jane Frances de Chantal from the death of her husband until her death. The Holy Family and Baptismal canvas at the front of church were also painted at this time as well as the side walls of the church. The new painting gives the church a cathedral like look.



St. John's Lutheran School on left Church in middle and Parsonage on right

St. John's Lutheran Church History

Although official records at The American Lutheran Church headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota show that St. John's was organized in 1898, the congregation was actually founded in 1889 when Reverend Hefner made the 15 mile journey from Coleridge every three weeks by

horse and buggy. Services were held in the homes of members. At that time, only the M & O Depot and a store graced the present site of Randolph. Later services were held in the schoolhouse or business places, then in the upstairs rooms of what was then called the Boughn Store.

The first pastor, Reverend Conrad Poeckler, from Springfield, Illinois was called in 1897. Reverend Poeckler was a Missouri Synod Pastor. Differences soon arose over membership in the German Lodge (The Sons of Herman) and caused a small group of Lutherans to break away from this congregation in 1898 to form another church called East-End St. Johns. Reverend Poeckler lived in a little cottage near the standpipe, later know as the Tripp House. It was located just west of the German Lodge, facing north toward the present school. It was not until 1898 that St. John's had its own church in which to worship. The first church stood on the lot of the present church site. Reverend Poeckler served St. John's for five years and then accepted a call to Blair, Nebraska. During the brief vacancy that followed, the congregation was served by visiting pastors: Reverend Mantenfel (later a pastor in Carroll, Nebraska), Reverend Hilpert from the Missouri Synod church in Laurel, Nebraska, and Reverend Schwanz from Carroll. Services were held approximately once a month during this vacancy period.



St. John's Lutheran Church- 1960's

In the late summer of 1902, St. John's called its second pastor, Reverend O. E. Matuschka. At that time the parsonage was the home that was later owned by Robert Viergutz. In late 1905 the parsonage was purchased. This parsonage stood until 1975. The winter of 1905 saw Reverend Matuschka accepting a call to Pittsburgh, Kansas. During this vacancy, the church was supplied by Reverend Streeb, who was the resident pastor of the small group of Lutherans on the east end of Randolph. Reverend Fredrick Rabe (from Germany) came to St. John's in February of 1906. Reverend Rabe served a dual parish as he also served St. Mark's Lutheran in Bloomfield. It was Mrs. Rabe who organized the first choir of St. John's, a German choir of men. The Ladies Aid was also organized, with a charter membership of six women.

In 1906 Reverend Rabe called a meeting of Randolph's two small Lutheran churches. Being from Germany, he had no Synodical affiliation, and he advised the group that it was necessary for him to have one. West-end St. John's was a member of the Missouri Synod and East-end St. John's was a member of the former Iowa Synod. The two congregations did decide to merge into one congregation but not to affiliate with any Synod at that time. That merger was to become the beginning of the current St. John's.

The Lutheran congregation at Bloomfield, Nebraska extended a call to Reverend Rabe in 1907, and he accepted the call. He continued to serve St. John's once a month, coming from Bloomfield on the afternoon train. Reverend E. H. Gabriel was called in 1908 and remained until 1912. During this time, the parsonage was remodeled and the second story was added. Reverend Gabriel also served the newly incorporated Hope Lutheran Congregation south of McLean.

Reverend D. H. Franzen returned to Randolph to serve the congregation from 1912 until 1925. Reverend Franzen was 21 years old when he and his parents came to the United States from Aulrich, Germany. The United States entered into war with Germany in 1918. All services and religious instruction had been in the German language until that time. With local pressure being unfavorable to anything German, the first English services were held at the church. German did remain the first language of the congregation and church council minutes were written in German until 1930. Hope Lutheran in McLean was also served by Reverend Franzen, who often walked the six miles to conduct those services.

Reverend H. Stave replaced Reverend Franzen and served from 1925-1927. Hope Lutheran was able to call its own pastor, Reverend A. Trost, and was served separately from 1925-1931. From 1927 until the arrival of Reverend Harold Hoff in 1932, three different men served as ministers for St. John's. They were Reverend Rohlof, Reverend A. Streng, and Mr. Stenfeldt (who was not an ordained pastor).

In March of 1932, the congregation extended a call to Reverend Harold Hoff of Tipton, Kansas. Twenty-two years of service makes him the longest serving minister at St. John's. After Reverend Hoff's arrival and installation in June, 1932, he organized the Sunday School with around eight students. Involving congregational members in the life of the church was a passionate priority for the Hoffs. They began a youth program which provided Bible Study and social activities for teens, which became the foundation of Luther League. Both Reverend and Mrs. Hoff were musically talented, so they reorganized the congregational choir which gave St. John's a reputation of being a singing church. Yearly Christmas Cantatas were the high point of the choir's work.

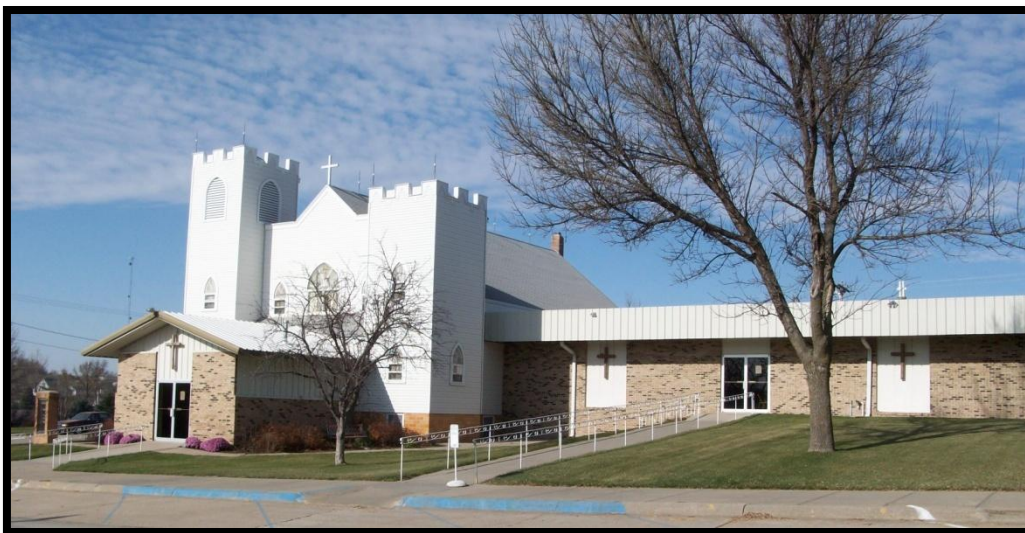
The Hoff's were active in the community as well, teaching in the public schools, and serving in various capacities in the community. The baptized membership grew from 200 to just short of 500, and the confirmed membership from 159 to 390. Reverend Hoff served the Hope Lutheran congregation as well. He continued his duties, although in failing health for several months, until three weeks before his death. On December 19, 1953, Reverend Hoff died.

The cornerstone for the new church was laid in November 1942, but due to wartime restrictions the building was not dedicated until June, 1944. Until this time, the church built in 1898 and the church of the former East-end Lutherans, which had been moved on to the present property, was used for school and services. The building cost was approximately \$16,000. The new church was built on the site west of the old church and is made of wooden construction with yellow brick stonework. The exterior design of the church features twin towers, and the interior arrangement is in cathedral style. This dedication marked the forty-sixth year of the church's existence.

St. John's was served by visiting and supply Pastors until June of 1954. At that time, Reverend David Rath of Jackson, Wisconsin accepted the call to serve St. John's. Reverend Rath was installed as pastor of both St. John's and Hope Lutheran on June 6th, 1954. As the church grew, it was decided to hold two services on Sunday mornings. In the spring of 1956 Reverend Rath discontinued services at Hope Lutheran which was then served by students and faculty from UELC Seminary of Blair, NE. In 1957, the tiny congregation of Hope Lutheran voted to disband. The members scattered to various churches in the area, many of them joining St. John's. In 1957-1958, the congregation built a new parsonage. This building and the parish house (the old parsonage) were dedicated in 1958.

Reverend Rath served St. John's until May of 1962. He then accepted a call to serve the Capron Lutheran Church in Capron, Illinois. Reverend Robert Kloth ministered at St. John's from 1962 to 1964 until Reverend Walter Rossbach was called.

Reverend Rossbach was called from his pastorate in Benkelman, Nebraska and installed at St. John's on May 24, 1964. Reverend Rossbach and his wife Darlene, had eight children, David, Douglas, Daniel, Dale, Darwin, Darlene, Don, and Dwight. On Sunday, July 11, 1965, Reverend Rossbach ordained his son, David, into the



St. John's Lutheran Church 2010

ministry at St. John's. Reverend David Rossbach was the first person since 1889 ordained into the ministry at St. John's. Reverend Rossbach served until ill health forced his retirement in June of 1976.

In 1974 and 1975, under Reverend Rossbach's leadership, the congregation added a new enclosed front, fellowship hall, overflow, and Sunday School rooms. After this addition was completed, the old parsonage that had served for Sunday School and Bible School classrooms was torn down. The total cost of construction was \$102,000.

Mrs. Rossbach, in collaboration with others, in 1989 started a food pantry at St. John's church, for the residents of Randolph. Also with her encouragement, youth programs continued to thrive. Mrs. Rossbach remained in the community and active at St. John's following the death of Reverend Rossbach.

Reverend Ivan Amman was installed in September of 1976. He was called from the congregations of Ithaca and Davey, NE. He served until January of 1993. Reverend Amman and his wife Lois had four children, Beth, John, Mark, and Leah, all of whom were born in New Guinea where he previously served as a missionary.

In October of 1976 a fellowship coffee hour was introduced. In 1984 Darlene Rossbach became the first woman elected to the Church Council. Daniel Rossbach was ordained into the ministry at St. John's in October of 1981.

In 1985, many technological improvements were made. These included additions of a copy machine to replace the old mimeograph machine, and a TV and VCR for use in the Sunday School area. In 1989, old trees around the church were replaced as well as the sidewalk in front of the church. After a severe hailstorm in 1990, several of the stained glass windows needed to be replaced as well as some shingles and siding. Damage was also done to the parsonage siding and awnings.

In 1990, an enclosed back entry was added to the Fellowship Hall to help with the ice problems in the

winter months. In January of 1993, Reverend Amman retired to his home state of Colorado. This left the Church without a minister once again. The Congregation extended a call to Reverend Scot McVey McCluskey who was a Chaplain at a hospital in Omaha. He was installed in June of that year. Before Pastor Scot and his wife Melinda arrived at St. John's, the parsonage was renovated. This included new carpet, kitchen cupboards, new appliances, and the removal of a wall between the kitchen and living room.

Other changes were implemented when 1994 saw the inaugural year of the "St. John's Epistle", our monthly newsletter. Our church office added a new computer and a youth room was added in the basement of the church. It was also decided to hold Vacation Bible School in the evenings to help in obtaining more teacher volunteers. Prior to this, Bible School was held during the morning hours of the weekday. Pastor Scot had a special talent with the youth of our congregation and during his stay our youth programming flourished. Beginning in 1996 Vacation Bible School was the combined community effort including all three churches of Randolph. Enrollment the first year was 185 students!

At a special meeting on July 23, 1995, the congregation voted to remodel and install a new organ at an approximate cost of \$19,500 for the remodeling and \$19,800 for the new organ. Work on the project began on Sunday afternoon, August 13th with more than 30 members of St. John's removing the pews, old carpet, the altar, and old tiles on the wall and ceiling that needed to come down. By late summer, renovations were completed including a new beamed ceiling, lighting, extended chancel area, refinished altar, and new carpeting and paint throughout the sanctuary and narthex. On September 24, 1995, a dedication service was held at both the 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. worship services.



St. John's Parsonage 2010

In October 1996, Pastor Scot accepted a call to St. John's Lutheran Church in Norfolk, NE. Reverend Marcille Jensen of Creighton served as interim pastor from 1996-1998. Pastor Marci was St. John's first female pastor.

Pastor Keith Menter was called to St. John's from 1999 until 2005. Pastor Menter's family included his wife Cathie and two children, Kinzie and Conner. Pastor

Menter was an amazing musician. Often singing acapella, his musical gifts inspired many. Pastor Menter left St. John's in April of 2005.

Reverend Charles Fisch served as interim pastor from 2005-2006, and in March of 2006, the Congregation voted to call the Reverend Derrick Fallon.

The volunteers of St. John's again shifted into high gear, as the parsonage needed extensive refurbishing. For 45 days, dozens of volunteers from the congregation came to help with whatever tasks needed to be done. The entire interior of the home was primed and repainted on both levels. Old carpet was removed throughout, and the upper level received new hardwood flooring in the living room, and ceramic tile in the kitchen and utility room. Existing hardwood flooring in the hallway and bedrooms was refinished. All bathrooms, appliances, lighting, and exterior doors were updated. A wall was removed on the lower level to create a large family room on the south end. An office, guest bedroom, and bath remain on that level as well.

By late May, 2006, Pastor Derrick Fallon arrived in Randolph, eager to serve his first parish. In July, his wife Pam, and sons Colin and Ian joined him. It didn't take long and Pastor Fallon and his family became involved and invested in the community. The family is active in Boy Scouts and school activities. Pastor Fallon brings a caring, inclusive ministry to the community and to St. John's. He has begun a mid-week service and Bible Study (Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.) and conducts weekly services at the Colonial Manor, where a number of our members reside. We continue services on Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 9:00 a.m., with Sunday School following at 10:15 a.m.

It has been a time of re-growth and renewal for us and once again, our youth programs are flourishing, more members are active in the life of the congregation, and St. John's is hopeful and looking forward to many more years together as a congregation.

Presbyterian Church

The Presbyterian Church of Randolph, Nebraska was organized on August 14, 1892 by the Rev. Thomas L. Sexton, Supt. of Mission work in Nebraska, at the call of the following persons: Charles S. Whitman, Mrs. Sadie Whitman, Byron Thownsend, Mrs. Lucy E. Townsend, Albert D. Townsend, Hiram J. Harper, Mrs. Rufina Harper, Miss Maggie J. Harper, Miss Belle Harper, Miss Nina V. Harper, Mr. Robert Macklin, Mrs. Mary J. Macklin and Wm. Conner. The following officers were elected: Ruling Elders, Charles S. Whitman, Byron Townsend and Hiram J. Harper; and a board of five trustees, A.D. Townsend, Robert Macklin, Andrew Mackie, Wendell P. Hill and Hiram J. Harper.

The Articles of Incorporation were duly filed for and recorded with the County Clerk of Cedar County, John Goebel on August 30, 1892, and the Presbyterian Church of Randolph, as it was, officially became a verity.

During the preceding spring and summer this small handful of believers in the Presbyterian Faith had worshipped in the schoolhouse. The Rev. T. P. Howard conducted the services.

In the fall of 1893, the Rev. Howard was succeeded in the Osmond Church by the Rev. G. M. Lodge. Arrangements were made to have services every other Sabbath night. The Rev. Lodge was succeeded by Rev. A. M. McIntoch, a student in the Omaha Theological Seminary. During these two years the roll of members increased slowly. Many times the future looked discouraging and seemed to have little hope. In the spring of 1896, we secured the services of the Rev. R. E. L. Hayes, another student from the Omaha seminary. Through the Board of National Missions, we were given help and the Rev. Hayes served as a full time pastor and we became independent of the Osmond Church.



Presbyterian Church

About this time we were obliged to give up holding services in the schoolhouse and were compelled to seek other quarters, which were eventually found in what was then known as the Benedict building.

During this time a flourishing Sabbath school was maintained, which was then, and always has been, an encouraging part of the church.

In the fall of 1896, owing to the fact that we faced the prospect of having no place to worship, a strong agitation was started for the erection of a building on the lots which had been previously purchased by the Ladies Aid Society. These lots are where the present church now stands. A meeting was held November 1896, to discuss plans and it was voted to make plans for erecting a building. The church building was erected during the winter of 1896 and 1897. It was dedicated practically free from debt in the spring of 1897.

Rev. Hayes was succeeded by Rev. Theo. Morning, who came to us in March of 1897. As the church grew and prospered, it was decided to build a manse. After four and a half years, Rev. Morning was succeeded by the Rev. Devor in 1900.

On January 31, 1906, due to the increasing demands of the Sabbath School and Y.P.S.C.E. and the growing needs

of the congregation, a meeting was held. It was decided to erect a new church edifice at a cost of not less than \$5,000. The building and soliciting committee consisted of W. P. Hill, Emil C. Aegerter, Paul Buol, S.O. Reese and H. L. Peck. Plans were secured and approved and work was begun in the early summer of 1906. The old building was moved from the lots west into the street and services were held there. On Sunday, December 29, 1906, we bade farewell to the old building and moved into the basement of the new church. On Sunday the dedication services were held by one of the early pastors, Rev. Theo. Morning.

Especial praise is due to the Ladies Aid who through their untiring efforts were great contributors to the success of the church.

Since 1906, the Presbyterian Church has continued to be a sanctuary for worship. There have been many trying years and a number of improvements have been made.

Through all the years even though we have been without a Pastor at times, the Sunday School has continued to be an integral part of the Church.

The last ordained minister to serve the church was the Rev. Harm J. Timmer, who resides at Osmond and has charge of both churches. Osmond and Randolph have shared the same pastor many times through the years.

Rev. Timmer resigned as pastor in May, 1966. He has retired and he and his wife, Opal, live in Osmond.

The church continued holding services with supply ministers. Due to a small and declining membership, the congregation voted to dissolve the church December 3, 1967. The last service was held March 31, 1968.

Some members joined the United Methodist Church or St. John's Lutheran Church. *Originally written by Frances Anderson in 1986*

