

1867 — 1967  
CENTENNIAL SOUVENIR

St. Luke's Ev. Lutheran Church  
RIDGEWAY, ONTARIO



*Commemorating the  
100th Anniversary of the Dedication  
of the former  
Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church*  
SHERKSTON, ONTARIO



PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED AT EMMANUEL  
AND AT ST. LUKE'S

Rev. A. Kuhs.....	1863-1869
Rev. H. C. Kaehler .....	1869-1874
Rev. F. Ehinger .....	1874-1877
Rev. J. H. Freemyer .....	1879-1887
Rev. Thos. Snyder .....	1887-1898
Rev. J. Badke .....	1898-1902
Rev. A. Gruhn .....	1902-1909
Rev. H. E. Beutler .....	1910-1924
Rev. C. F. Duwe .....	1924-1926
Rev. H. E. Hoessel.....	1926-1930
Rev. E. W. Sattler .....	1930-1937
Rev. P. P. Wilt .....	1937-1948
Rev. B. H. Walck .....	1949-1950
Rev. W. C. Ohrt .....	1951-1956
Rev. R. Binhammer .....	1956-1961
Rev. H. Saabas .....	1961-1965
Rev. E. G. Goos .....	1965-

## *The Heritage of a Century*

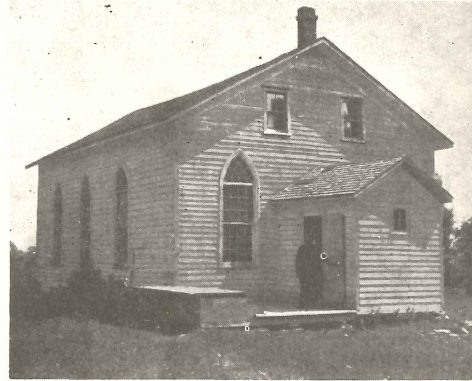
In this year of Canada's Centennial it is most fitting that we look also at our religious heritage and ponder what the Lord has done with the seed that our pioneer fathers in the faith planted more than a hundred years ago in our area.

Long before there was a Lutheran Church in Ridgeway Lutheran services were conducted in the Sherkston community. The Reverend Philip Mayerhoffer, who came from Buffalo, N.Y., to serve the people here with Word and Sacrament, mentions among four congregations which he served 'one on the Limestone Ridge' (Sherkston). These services date back to 1827.

He was followed by the Rev. John Keller from 1835 to 1845. There is a lapse of records here; but we know that services continued to be conducted from time to time in the homes of the settlers. It was not, however, until 1862 that steps were taken to have regular services and to secure a pastor to serve the field. A visit of the Rev. C. W. F. Rechenberg, then president of the German Lutheran Canada Synod, in St. Paul's Lutheran Congregation at Humberstone provided the occasion for a visit with the Lutherans at Sherkston. At a service in the home of John Near the congregation decided to become a part of St. Paul's Parish at Humberstone. A senior student at the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, Pa., Mr. A. C. Kuhs, was called to serve the parish. He took charge of the field June 16, 1863.

Services were now regularly held in the homes of William Michael Sr., Joseph Near, and John Near. The home of John Beach was used for catechetical instruction and for singing practices. On Christmas Day, 1863, Emmanuel Lutheran Church was formally organized, the first class of catechumens confirmed, and the Lord's supper celebrated. A year later the congregation decided to build a church edifice. The site was determined when on April 24, 1865, John Near donated an acre of his land. The men cut logs on their properties, had them sawed into boards at the mill, and, though there were many delays, the first church was finally completed in the spring of 1867, and the ceremony of dedication took place on Pentecost Sunday of that year.

It was not always easy to secure a pastor. Those that served cared for a large area. The Rev. H. C. Kaehler served the congregation from Black Creek (Snyder) 1869 to 1874, followed by the Rev. Frederick Ehinger 1874-1877. The first resident pastor was the Rev. J. H. Freemyer, 1879-1887. During his ministry the congregation built a parsonage, a barn and sheds for the church attendants' horses. Nevertheless, we find the congregation again served from outside by the Rev. T. Snyder, 1887-1897, followed by the Rev. J. Badke, who was pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Humberstone.



FIRST EMMANUEL CHURCH

At the turn of the century the Rev. John N. Grabau was called in to advise the congregation. Then students from the Martin Luther Seminary at Buffalo, N.Y., served the congregation for a time. During the ministry of the Rev. August Gruhn, 1902 to 1909, a new church was built and dedicated July 4, 1909.

It was during the ministry of Rev. H. E. Beutler, 1910 to 1924, that the first Lutheran service was held in the Township Hall at Ridgeway, July 2, 1911. About 25 persons attended. On December 1, 1911 St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church



FIRST ST. LUKE'S CHURCH

was formally organized. Rapid fire development brought the cornerstone laying of a church edifice on December 17 and the dedication of the church building on March 24, 1912. Of its charter members, Mr. Gilbert Claus, Mrs. William Athoe, Mr. Norman Smith, Mr. Elra White, Mr. Albert Yaeck are still living.

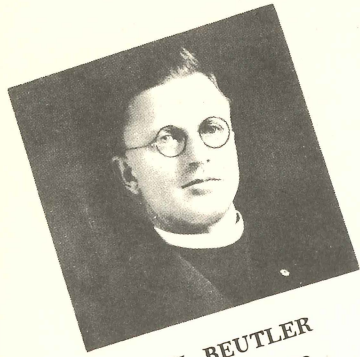
Cost of the church was \$2,800 and at the time of dedication all except \$200 had been paid or at least pledged in a building fund drive. In the fall of the same year a shed was built for the horses with a reserved section "for the exclusive use of the pastor's horse." Very soon after the church was furnished with a bell and an organ. The first memorial gift recorded at St. Luke's was in 1913, when Mary S. Smith contributed one hundred dollars for a crucifix and a candelabra.

So far the pastor had lived at Sherkston though Ridgeway had been repeatedly mentioned as a better place for the pastor to reside. In 1929 a parsonage was built at Ridgeway and from that time the pastors always lived here.

In 1940 a basement was placed under the church as a meeting place for the Sunday school. A little later washrooms were added. During Pastor Wilt's eleven year's ministry too a mission was initiated in Fort Erie. In 1942 the mission was discontinued for lack of support, but later resumed again.



**PASTORS AT ST. LUKE'S**



**H. BEUTLER**  
1910 - 1923



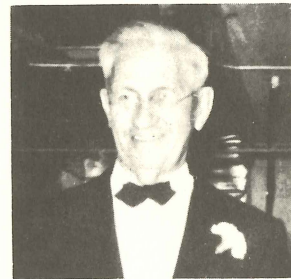
**C. F. DUWE**  
1923 - 1926



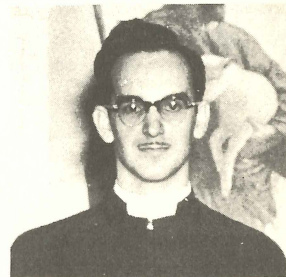
**H. HOESSEL**  
1926 - 1930



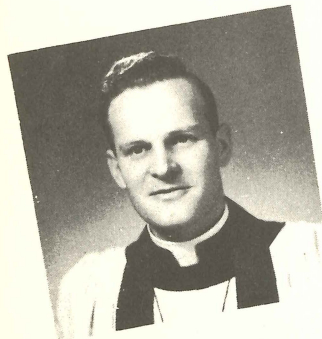
**E. W. SATTLER**  
1930 - 1935



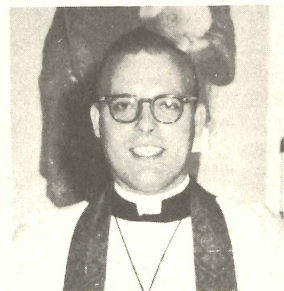
**P. P. WILT**  
1935 - 1948



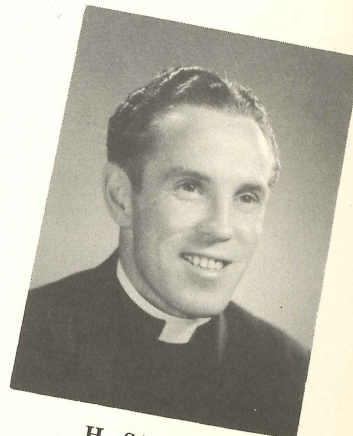
**B. E. WALCK**  
1945 - 1950



**W. OHRT**  
1951 - 1955



**R. BINHAMMER**  
1956 - 1961



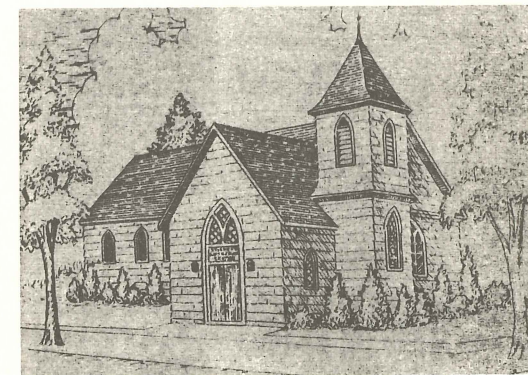
**H. SAABAS**  
1961 - 1965

The shift of population from the farm helped St. Luke's, but adversely affected Emmanuel. Faced with a constantly declining membership, Emmanuel proposed to merge with St. Luke's, with services to be continued only at St. Luke's.

The proposition was favourably received by St. Luke's, and on January 1, 1951 the two congregations that had for years been served as one parish by one pastor became a larger and more virile St. Luke's.

Without any illwill or complaint against the American Lutheran Church to which the congregations had belonged, the merged congregation sought release from the American Lutheran Church, to join the Canada Synod whose headquarters were much closer, at Kitchener, Ontario. Pastor Walter C. Ohrt became the pastor in 1951.

On October 15, 1952, renovation and extension of the church was authorized. An extension, 28 feet by 36 feet, permitted a new chancel and sacristy with full basement underneath for a nursery. Entrance to the church was changed to face Prospect Point Road. New stained glass windows and a new pulpit were installed. Willing gifts from the increased membership left only an indebtedness of \$9,000.00 out of a \$20,000.00 renovation program when the church was rededicated on June 27, 1954. This indebtedness was wiped out in 1962, and the mortgage burned on November 25 of that year.



**RENOVATED ST. LUKE'S**

After Pastor Ohrt left, August 2, 1955, to follow a call to Zion Lutheran Church at Stratford, Ontario, the congregation was vacant nearly a year. In June, 1956, a recent graduate of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Robert Binhammer, became pastor. To give the ministry at St. Luke's a boost, The Board of American Missions assisted the congregation for a period of five years.

An evangelism mission helped the congregation to reach out into the community.

Pastor Binhammer followed a call to St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Brantford, Ontario in February 1961, and in June of that year another graduate of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, the Rev. Helmut Saabas, was installed as pastor. In that year also the congregation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with special services through the summer months with former pastors serving as guest speakers.

A new pipe organ was installed in 1964, and in April, 1965 Pastor Saabas resigned to accept a call to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church at Brockville, Ontario. The congregation was vacant until the Rev. Ernest G. Goos, of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Regina, Saskatchewan, began his ministry November 26, 1965.

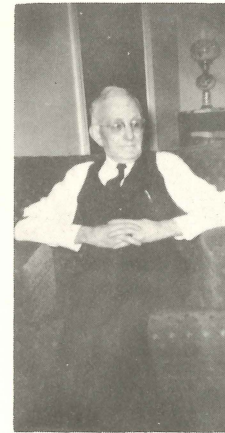
During the vacancy the congregation had made plans to build a new parsonage and to convert the old parsonage into a parish house for use in parish education and for group meetings. The contract was let in the summer of 1965 to Niagara and Erie Builders, and on February 5, 1967 the president of the Eastern Canada Synod, Dr. Albert W. Lotz, came to dedicate the new parsonage.



NEW PARSONAGE

As the congregation grew in numbers, it also increased in its missionary concern. Two evangelism missions have deepened its sense of mission. It wants its apportionment quota met in full. In 1962 it greatly oversubscribed its quota in the Centennial Seminary Appeal. Its Lutheran Church Men group established a fund to help a seminary student, and in 1966 the congregation rejoiced in the ordination into the ministry of one of its sons, Rev. Orval Jansen.

We rejoice that old and young work together harmoniously in the work of the Lord that transcends time. Though some of our aged are confined to their homes, others are as regular at worship and at the Lord's table as they have ever been.



TWO NONAGENARIANS

FAITHFUL OLDSTERS

Looking back over a century of blessings we thank and praise God. With a vision of greater things yet to be accomplished, let us consecrate ourselves wholly to our Lord's service. The promise which the Lord once gave to a church in Asia Minor, Revelation 3:8 surely applies to us also if we will be faithful.

"Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut."



PRESENT PASTOR



Dedicated to the glory of God and in loving memory  
of the faithful departed of Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran  
Church and of St. Luke's Ev. Lutheran Church