

**ROUND TOP LUTHERANS
OBSERVED THREE-QUAR-
TER CENTURY OF PROGRESS
SUNDAY**

A three-quarter century of progress was celebrated Sunday when the Bethlehem Luth. Congregation of Round Top observed the diamond jubilee of the founding of their church.

Rev. W. Kralik, pastor of the church, arranged an interesting program for the festive occasion, and several hundred former parishioners who now reside in other parts of the state were present, as well as a large local attendance.

The history of the church dates back nearly 90 years.

The first Lutheran pastor to visit Round Top was Rev. Philip Zizelmann, a young missionary who came from Germany in 1851. He was one of six missionaries who came from the old country in response to an appeal made by German settlers without church connections in Texas. Mr. Zizelmann decided to locate in La Grange and Nov. 18, 1851 preached the first Lutheran sermon ever heard there. After several years of missionary work in and around La Grange (including the Round Top community), Rev. Zizelmann left this area and later organized what is now St. John's Luth. Church of San Antonio.

In 1856, Rev. J. G. Lieb of the first German Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Texas gathered the Lutherans in the vicinity of Warrenton and Round Top to form a congregation. A church was built south of Round Top, at about the point where the Drawe cemetery is now located. This congregation was known as, the St. John's Church of Round Top.

When, in 1861, Rev. Lieb moved to Serbin in Lee County, the congregation extended a call to Rev. A. Neuthard, and it was he who was responsible for the organization of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Adam Neuthard was born in Baden, Germany, Sept. 11, 1828. He attended the Lutheran Theological seminary at Chrischona, Switzerland and graduated with high honors. He began his missionary work at Round Top in 1863 and was minister to the St. John's congregation until 1865. In this year he moved to the town of Round Top where he founded the Bethlehem Church and the majority of the St. John's members joined the new congregation.

Before the congregation was formally organized, Mr. Neuthard built the church which is still standing today. The church was built of stone quarried just behind the building, and the benches, which served over a half century were made from cedar which grew nearby. Cornerstone for the building was laid May 6, 1866, and Oct. 26 of the same year the church was dedicated to the service of the Triune God.

Organization of the congregation took place Jan. 13, 1867, and Carl Schultze, Conrad Schueddemagen and Sigismund Bauer were elected the first trustees.

The beautiful pipe organ—the first pipe organ in any Lutheran church in Texas—and now almost famous throughout the state—was built and donated by Fraugott Wanke, a member of the congregation.

Rev. Neuthard served not only the Bethlehem congregation, but also preached at Carmine, Haw Creek, Latium and La Bahia. In addition, he found time to teach congregation school for a period of 27 years. He died in 1902, and was buried in the church cemetery, in the

shadow of the building which he labored to build. Evidence of Rev. Neuthard's busy ministerial life is the fact that he baptized 2,450 children, confirmed 1,450 and preached nearly a thousand funeral services.

Pastors of the congregation since Rev. Neuthard were: Rev. F. Brächer, 1902 to 1905; Rev. John Harder, 1905 to 1916; Rev. A. H. Falkenberg, 1916 to 1926; Rev. A. Dziewas, 1926 to 1928; Rev. J. Wendt, Oct. 1928 to February 1929; Rev. E. Hannemann, 1929 to 1930; and Rev. W. Kralik, 1931 to the present.

Present trustees of the church are Henry Giese, who has served in this capacity for 40 years, Henry Leonhardt, Alfred Spies and William Noak.

Present baptized members number 351, and supporting members, 80. The Sunday school has 84 pupils and eight teachers, with Robert A. Richter as superintendent. The Ladies Aid, of which Mrs. William Lanik is president, has 50 members.

During the past 75 years, 3,306 persons have been baptized, 2,309 have been confirmed, 864 couples were united in marriage and 362 funeral services have been held.

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