

Old Salem Shrine News

1874-1910

June 2019

Vol. 6



Annual Founders' Day
Sunday, June 2
Open House 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Service 3:00 p.m.
Old Salem Shrine
Upper 55th Street (Salem Church Road)
Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota

The following includes excerpts from "Society Happenings" May 1997 Volume 18 Number 2 authored by Bill Wolston, courtesy of the Dakota County Historical Society.

Faith of The Founders

The Old Salem Shrine story began with Jacob Albright, whose parents left Germany in 1732 to escape their homeland's continuous political and religious conflicts.

In America, they farmed near Pottstown, Pennsylvania and joined a growing community of Germans known as the Pennsylvania Dutch. On May 1, 1759, Jacob was born. At age 26 he married Catherine Cope and they raised six children on a 45-acre farm near Hangstown, but a dysentery epidemic claimed all six of their children.



Overcome with grief, Jacob searched for a new meaning in his life and believed he could help others who had suffered adversities. At first, he traveled through nearby towns as an unpaid lay-preacher and established an Evangelical church in a nearby town. With a growing interest in his message he organized three evangelistic classes which became the seed of the evangelical movement and the formation of the Evangelical Association of North America.

Jacob Albright – 1759-1808

When he died in 1808 the Association had thousands of members and a core of preachers traveling throughout the United States and Canada serving German families in pioneer communities. The German families in northern Dakota County would be one of those communities.

Excerpts from Salem EV and Evangelical Congregational Meeting Minutes

2:00 pm on October 30, 1857- The men members of the Salem's Congregation of the Evangelical Association met at an Assembly Hall to discuss congregational matters. This was likely the first annual meeting of the men members of the congregation. Women and adolescents were not invited to this meeting, which established a trend for subsequent meetings. Those in attendance were Brother August Hulster, Brother Fred Zehnder and Andrew Tarnutzer, the first minister of Salem EV.



January 22, 1867 - The first trustee selection was held, and the church was named "Salem's Kirche." The first trustees included Michael Gackstetter, Georg Glassing and Heinrich Schafer. Andrew Strohmeier was the first preacher.

July 6, 1867 - The Trustee Book was presented by Andrew Strohmeier to Brother Michael Gackstetter, the first Trustee of Church Property, described as "Salem's Kirche of the Evangelical Association, Dakota County, Minnesota State, North America." The first nine pages include trustee meeting data from 1867-1870.

The first church building was erected on land donated by the Blasé family in 1867 and by 1869, the congregation was eager to build another church to accommodate future growth.

November 18, 1869 - The congregation of approximately eleven families was roughly split between choosing a new site or one near the existing site.

April 9, 1870 - Michael Gackstetter presented a bill for approximately \$45, which is believed to be the purchase price of the new church site on his farmstead. Each family was to be assessed \$4.50 so that Michael could be paid by November 1, 1870. This transaction was not successful since the congregation would later choose a site near the existing site.

February 1, 1875 - A three-man committee was selected to secure a site to build the church. The church building was to be 20'x32' and was completed August 1, 1876. Member pledges ranged from \$1 - \$10 with a total of \$740.32 raised, of which \$670 covered the cost of church, with \$70.38 left over for a window shutter.

October 27, 1879 - Fire insurance should be secured on the church valued at \$600.

October 1, 1880 - The old church should be sold, and Rev. Herman Bunse bought it for \$5 in cash.

Rules of the Church

April 8, 1871 - The Rules were established for the Salem Congregation. Everyone shall take a seat and keep it from the beginning until the end of the meeting. No one is allowed to withdraw without permission from the chairman. Anyone wishing to speak shall stand and honorably address the chair and speak no longer than five minutes at a time and not more than three times over one objection. No one shall be interrupted in his speech until he has finished.

October 13, 1885 – “It was suggested and upheld that the men and women sit on opposite sides of the church aisle and the preacher should announce it.” The children were to sit in the first benches.

October 25, 1892 - “The Inspecting Preacher was commissioned to have the verse put on the wall behind the pulpit and in one of the meetings should give thanks to the man who did the work.”

November 13, 1894 -Michael Haberoth was elected church custodian for one year for \$15. “For his salary he should clean floor and windows twice a year and do a good job of it.”

December 6, 1900 “It was suggested and agreed that the church be organized.” Thereafter, a treasurer’s report was made at each meeting.

Old Salem Cemetery – “God’s Acre”

December 11, 1876 - George Glassing should write a card of the place of the burials and owners of lots on the cemetery and numbers of lots not yet sold.

October 28, 1878 - Trustees to “see to it that God’s Acre (cemetery) be used to plant tomatoes.”

October 27, 1879 - Each plot on the cemetery should cost \$7 and a single grave should sell for \$1.

October 25, 1881-Trustees to plot the cemetery and quarterly collections should be taken during the year for the upkeep of the church.

October 6, 1883 -Trustees have the right to get the church painted and members build a fence around the cemetery. Each one shall bring six fence posts for the fence.

September 7, 1887 - God’s Acre should be surveyed, the north end should be laid out in family lots, the hill on God’s Acre be cut down, single graves be sold until family lots were laid out, and family lots be raised in price from \$5 to \$10.

February 26, 1888 – Single graves should be raised in price from \$1 to \$2, wire fencing should be used for the fence along the swamp.

September 7, 1889 - Lawyer advised the trustees that they should have a regular deed for cemetery lots and should have one hundred handbills printed at \$7.50. Each lot owner should get regular deed for it. Decided that “whoever wants a lot in our cemetery or a burial place in our cemetery shall pay for it in full before he can bury his dead.”

January 8, 1910- Last entry in the chronicle. “It was suggested that the work of serving the church should be done the same way as the former year. It was accepted.”

Weddings at Old Salem Shrine

Fee: \$200

Contact Jill Lewis - 651- 455-9404.

Contributions to Old Salem Shrine are needed to maintain this beautiful and historic treasure.

Please donate today!

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<https://squareup.com/store/old-salem-shrine>

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Old Salem Shrine Services

Epiphany Service – January 5, 2020 at 4:30 pm
Founder’s Day - June 7, 2020 - Open House 1:00-3:00 p.m. - Service 3:00 p.m.

DVD of Old Salem Church History

A DVD of Old Salem’s history entitled People & Annals of Salem EV Kirche 1857-2011 is available for \$25. It includes an extensive history, biographies, photos and obituaries of the church’s founders and early ministers, notes and letters penned by church members, and photos of both early weddings and those held more recently in the church. To order the DVD contact Jill Lewis at 651-455-9404

Thank you for your generous support of Old Salem Shrine!

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www.oldsalemshrine.org