

OUR HISTORY



Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church (BSLC) began as an idea of two people prior to the first official meeting held on July 26, 1988. This first meeting along with the ten that followed, was held at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Stevens Point. Thirteen people, including a part time mission pastor, attended these first eleven meetings. Several people from the St. Paul congregation joined us, even though they kept their membership at St. Paul, to help us get off to a good start. Temporary officers were chosen on September 25, 1988 to serve until a constitution was adopted.

It was actually quite strange in the way we came to a decision to start our own official Sunday services. A person, who was contemplating joining us, came to one of our meetings and wondered what we were waiting for, and that we should find a worshipping spot and get going. This person did not join our congregation but supplied us with that needed job to get

going. After some research for a spot by the members, it was decided at our November 20th meeting, to start worship services as a mission group beginning on January 8, 1989.

We began holding our services in the music room at the Plover-Whiting school. Signs were made and placed out on the roadside, in front of the school every Sunday to let the public know we existed. The makeshift altar was set up every Sunday by several of the members along with the distribution and collection of the hymnals. The hymnals came from a congregation in Mellen, Wisconsin. They had just picked up new hymnals and had no need for the old ones. It just so happens that our members had come to the decision early on that our church would stay with the old Lutheran hymnal in preference to the new version. So it paid for us to ask around because it led to our getting our own hymnals.

Treats for fellowship time following each service were brought by every family on a rotating schedule. Every member was glad about starting this new church and gladly chipped in to handle each and every new step we encountered.

During this period many business meetings were held in the homes of the members as well as at a local restaurant. As a result, many things began to happen. A telephone survey of the Plover area was formulated and carried out, not only by our members, but with the help of members from St. Paul congregation. A small choir was formed and began singing on a regular basis. Sunday school was organized along with an adult Bible study. The district office, (North Wisconsin District of LCMS), supplied us with altar paraments and other necessary altar materials for indefinite use.

It was a joy doing this because we were experiencing first in everything we did. First worship service, first Holy Communion service, first Lenten service, first Easter service, first Vacation Bible School, and our first annual picnic, just to name a few. One of the

biggest first for all of us was the privilege of selecting our own name. We decided to have all members of the congregation take part by writing down names, with an election to follow in three weeks. On that Election Day we had voted down to two names, and the name that won wasn't really one of the two. The competing names were actually "*Christ Lutheran*" and "*Savior Lutheran*" and a woman suggested putting the word "*Beautiful*" in front of "*Savior*." Everybody thought it was a great idea and the new name was immediately voted in. It was a great day and we now had a "*Great*" name.

On August 29, 1989, the Articles of Incorporation were signed with Charter Sunday on September 17, 1989. We had a nice crowd and began getting many visitors. Visits and services were now being conducted by a newly hired lay minister and a local retired minister along with two people because of the resignation of the first pastor. Our congregation size as now 31 total men and women and children from ten families.

All during this time, we were constantly looking for a more permanent church home. We looked at quite a few places and even considered buying but decided against it because the time was not right. We eventually did move to 2008 Green Drive and occupied a 900 square foot area in the lower level of the Town Hall Centre on the 5th of November 1989.

As a result of this move we began to be in need of furnishings, so we began buying chairs and tables. We made a temporary altar and lectern but soon had a beautiful permanent oak altar and lectern, thanks to a family that had recently joined us.

Securing a minister was the next step we encountered as a congregation. The circuit counselor for our district was contacted and a meeting was held on October 10, 1989 to inform us on the call procedure. The first call meeting was set to be held October 23, 1989. A timetable was set for names to be turned in so that the necessary background information could be compiled by the

counselor for the meeting. The counselor provided a list of candidates at the meeting and after going through each candidate and answering questions about them, we voted for the person we felt would best serve us. We called Pastor Steve Hulke in May, 1990. He accepted our call with his installation set for August 19, 1990. All the members worked hard to get prepared for the installation. Invitations were sent to all district churches, a choir number was prepared, the food responsibilities were handled, and banners were made, plus much more. The congregation numbered 19 families at this time.

Our new pastor was in need of a house. We started house hunting in earnest to get houses lined up for him and his family to look at when they came to town prior to his installation. Once a house was found, several men volunteered to paint the interior for them prior to their arrival to town.

Shortly after the installation, we began work on a constitution. It was quite a job but we kept at it and completed it, even though we had some differing opinions as to the wording involved. Several congregational meetings were held to review the progress and get feedback on the completed material. The members had much to offer and many good suggestions. We had our personalities who wanted certain language and policies but we came to a consensus after a year of hard work. With the constitution completed, we began our elections to fill the positions of all the necessary boards. Members volunteered to run for the positions when the election was held.

We were now faced a new and exciting challenge—building our own church on Cleveland and Maple. A planning committee was formed and many meetings resulted in leading to the hiring of an architect to plan the structure to be built. The plans had just passed state inspection and were now ready to be cleared by the village board. The congregation first accepted the plans at a

congregational meeting and accepted the financing procedure to be used.

We began to clear the land and cleared 170 trees and sold them for \$38 chord. A lot of members came on two Saturdays to help with the clearing. We organized our crew with some cutting and trimming, some hauling brush to be burned, and some carrying and piling the one hundred inch sticks. Members chipped in by also bringing meals and goodies to the site for the workers. Being able to help and to have had a hand in the building of this church was very satisfying and gratifying to the members involved.

This new building process involved a group called "*Laborers for Christ.*" It included one foreman and four carpenters who have retired from similar jobs, but who now go around the country helping to build churches where and when they are needed. They pulled their campers on the site and work at minimum wage. Each member of this congregation chipped in to help. Some would help with the building aspect and some would see that a meal was brought out to this crew two days a week. Saturday was always a pot luck day for all workers, each bringing a dish to pass.

When the new sanctuary was built, prior to putting the plaster on the walls, the whole congregation was called in to write messages and Bible passages on the plywood boards. Underneath the plaster on the walls behind the altar is written Philippians 1:27b - That you stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel."

Today we not only have the original sanctuary dedicated Nov 8, 1992, which is now our fellowship hall, but a new sanctuary built in 1998. On September 5, 2010 we dedicated a new wooden cross made for our altar area. Thanks be to God - on December 30, 2014 we celebrated 25 years as God's church on the corner of Maple & Cleveland!! God has richly blessed this mission plant and His work

through BSLC. We are incredibly thankful to God that the church mortgage was paid off in the Spring of 2017!

OUR CALLED PASTORS

Pastor Steve Hulke 1990 to 2002

Pastor Dan Czech 2002 to 2005

Pastor David E. Ficken 2007 to present