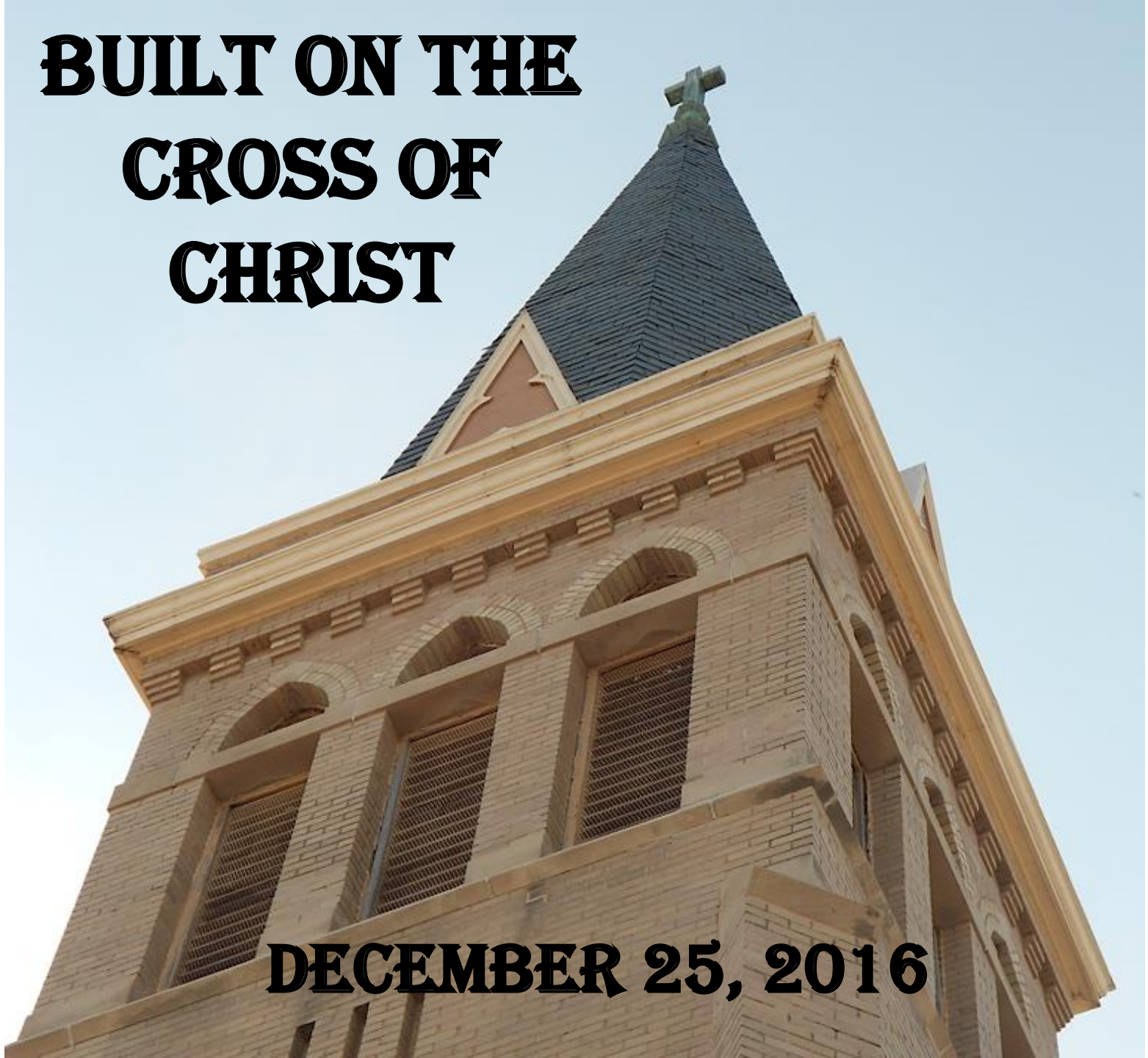


# **BUILT ON THE CROSS OF CHRIST**

**DECEMBER 25, 2016**



1916

15

## Expenses for 1916

September 16 Paid to John J. Buhr 23.98  
Twenty Three 98/100 for Freight Paid  
on one car of Sand Shipped from  
Beatrice to Eiley

September 29 Paid to John F. Wipke 500.00  
Five Hundred 00/100 in part payment  
on Brick Mason Work on Church

October 6 Paid to Martin Albert 500.00  
Five Hundred 00/100 for expenses  
and Carpenter Work on German  
Church

October 13. Paid to E. Bigler 20.57  
Twenty 57/100 for Hardware

October 13. Paid to Henry W. Chmura 40.00  
Forty 00/100 - to Ballast Painter in Beatrice  
a part payment on getting the Two  
Cages in place

October 13. Paid to B. H. Siefer 18.66  
Eighteen 66/100 dollars for Freight on  
Steel and 12.00 to Mack Sisco  
for Raising Bells in Church

October 26 Paid to B. H. Siefer 349.03  
Three Hundred forty nine 03/100 for balance  
due to the Omaha Structural Steel Co.



The cornerstone for this church was laid on May 28, 1916. When completed it was to have two spires- one would have a height of 115 feet with a 14 foot cross, while the smaller spire would measure 85 feet with a 10 foot cross. The north, taller tower was to house the bells. On October 13, 1916, a transaction was recorded in the treasurer's ledger- see red box.



The first bell raised into that tower was probably this big bell,  
35" tall and weighing 2,000 lbs.



**FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL**



It came from the bell tower of this church, the first church that was built on the site where the current church sits. A 65 ft. bell tower was added to this first church in 1898 when the church needed to be enlarged to accommodate a growing congregation. This first bell was purchased for \$338.37.



Some of the words inscribed on this bell are “Zion Church, Hanover, Gage Co. Nebr”. This the bell with the lower tone.



When the decision was made in 1915 to build a new, much larger brick church, that bell was the only item kept from the old church. It was moved in 1916 to the bell tower of the new church. Some publications state that this tower is 105 ft tall, others state 117 ft. Either way, it is almost twice as tall as the first bell tower it rang from.



A second smaller bell was raised into the new bell tower also. It measured 28" tall, 7 inches smaller than the old church bell.



You can see that by looking at the brackets that are next to each other. The bell was ordered from Studktede Foundry in St. Louis, Missouri and was donated by Henry T. Jurgens. Mr. Jurgens was one of the seven members of the 1916 Building Committee. He is the grandfather of one of our oldest current members, Dena Trauernicht, and is the ancestor of many of our members. The name of Henry Jurgens is inscribed on this smaller bell.

# For whom and when did the bells toll?



So now to answer the question, “For Whom did the bells toll?” Toll the bells or Ring the bells? Is there a difference?

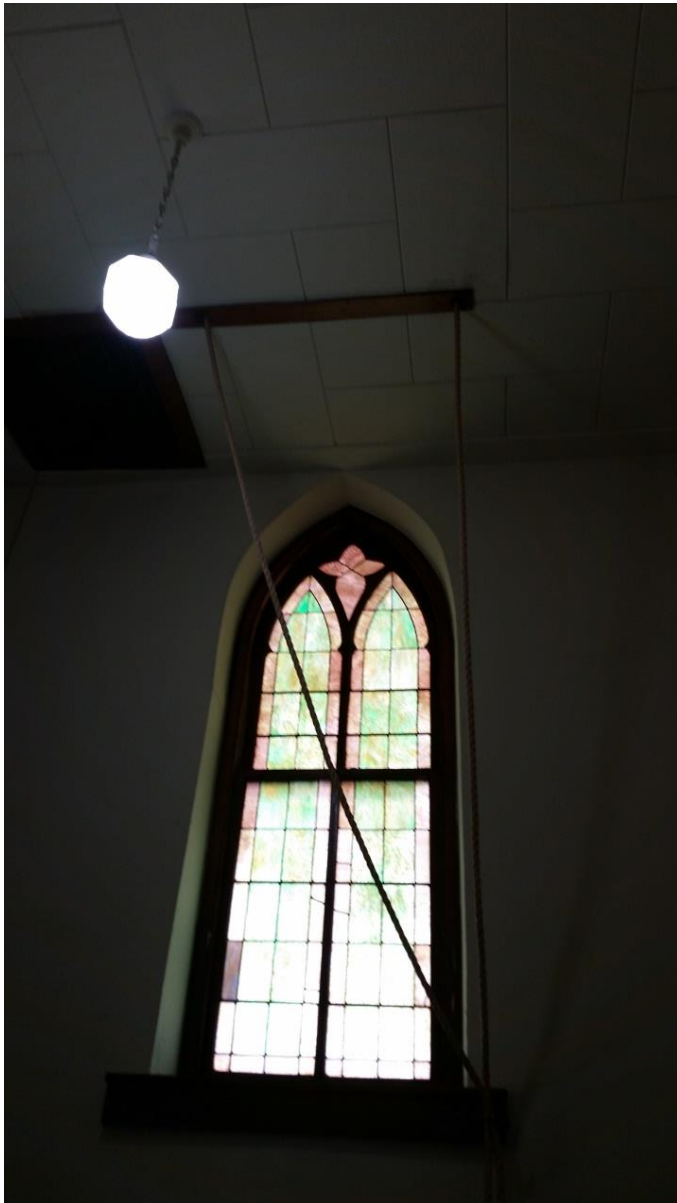


# Church bells are rung in three basic ways: normal (peal) ringing, tolling, or chiming.

## ***Ringling:***

Normal ringing refers to the ringing of a bell or bells at a rate of about one ring per second or more, often in pairs reflecting the traditional "ding-dong" sound of a bell which is rotated back and forth, ringing once in each direction.

Ringling the bells signifies a happy event. Bells can be rung at weddings, baptisms, and etc. Ringling the bells is done to inform area residents for such things as upcoming church services. Many Zion members still recall how in the early years the Zion bells rang on Saturday evenings and early Sunday mornings. If you were here early enough this morning, you heard the bells ring 10 minutes prior to the service starting.



# The Ropes



Many council members through the years have learned how to use the ropes. Robert Hieronymus shared how he, as a youngster, had to ring the bells for his father Pastor John Hieronymus at sunset on Saturday nights.



This is the hatch leading to the bell tower.





Robert talked about ringing the Angelus. The Angelus was a prayer and was usually accompanied by the ringing of the Angelus bell. The angel referred to in the prayer is Gabriel messenger of God who revealed to Mary that she would conceive a child to be born the Son of God.

Along with Saturday nights at sunset, in the early years the bells also rang shortly after dawn and then 10 minutes before the service began.

# The “Mother Church” of Zion

## St. Barbara Church in Strackholt, Germany

The tradition of ringing the bells on Saturday evenings and 10 minutes prior to the service followed the Bear Creek settlers from their home church, St. Barbara Church in Strackholt, Germany which was built over 700 years ago. The purpose for the 10 minutes prior to the services in Strackholt was that most members lived only about 10 minutes from the church.



When residents heard the bells, they knew they had just enough time to get to the church. Betty Johnson Daubendiek knows all about that because she had the same experience growing up being within earshot of the Zion bells. Even now she looks forward to hearing the bells ring on Sunday morning and misses it when she doesn't hear them.

***Each man's death diminishes me,  
For I am involved in mankind.  
Therefore, send not to know  
For whom the bell tolls,  
It tolls for thee***

Ernest Hemmingway

## ***Tolling:***

Tolling is somber. It is also used to announce or summon. A toll is usually done with one large bell and is rang slowly at regular intervals.

Tolling the bells is done on somber occasions such as funerals. For whom the bell tolls" refers to church bells being rung when a person dies. Before there was an organized telephone system, the tolling of the big bell was one way to announce a death of a church member. It would toll the age of the person who died. Several members shared the memory of the death of Gerhardt Dorn. He had a car accident on a Sunday evening. When area residents heard the bell toll 18 times, they knew instantly that a young member of their church family has perished. Ernest Hemmingway in this passage was suggesting that we should not be curious as to for whom the church bell is tolling for. It tolled for all of us in the death of Jesus on the cross.



# The Hatch leading to the Tower



The original big bell from the old church is the one with the lower tone and was the only one used for many years when tolling at the announcement of deaths and at funerals. The sheer weight of that bell makes it hard for one person to control the clapper.

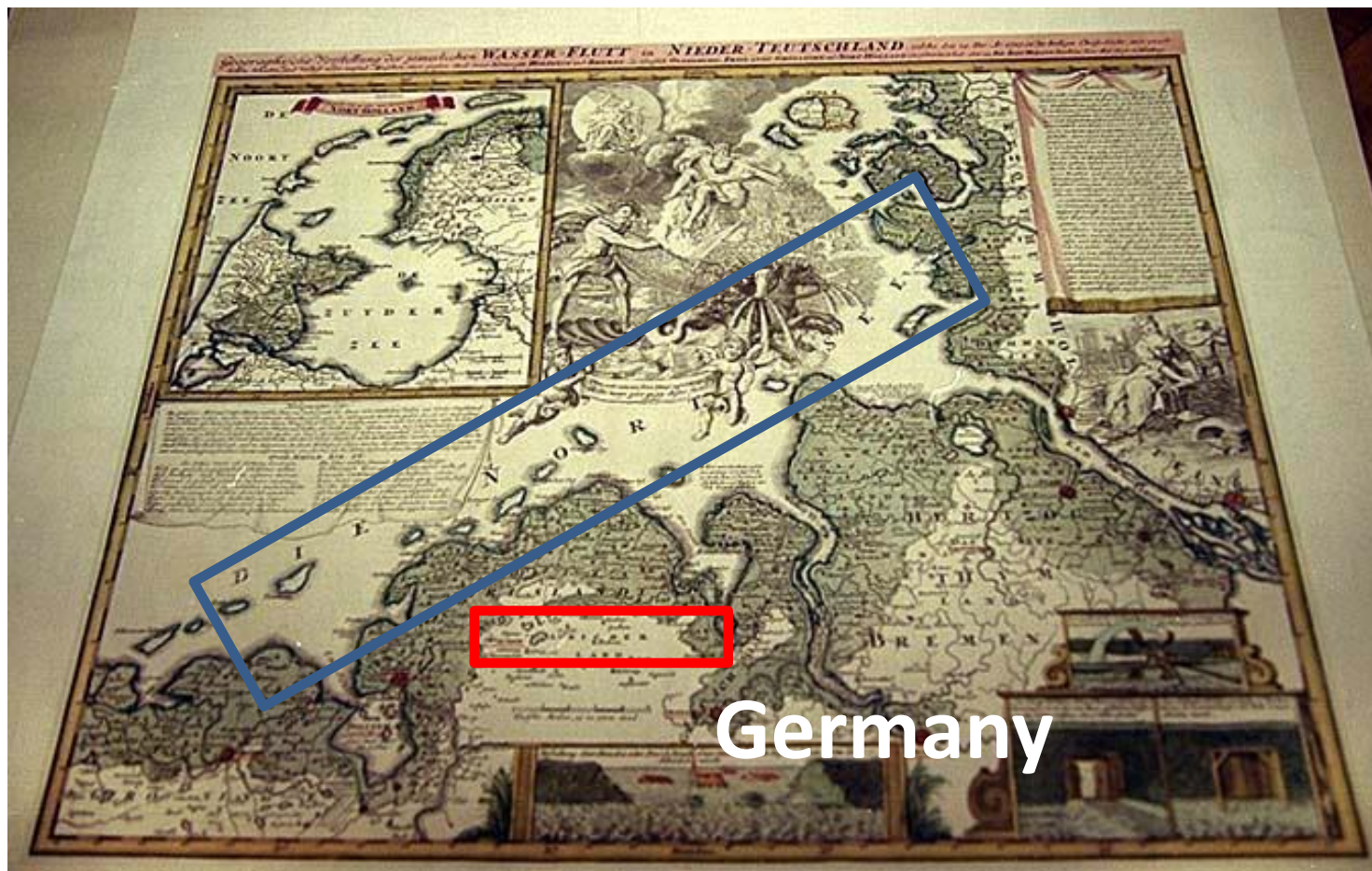
Kim Thornburg had an “uplifting” experience when ringing the bells for the first time as a new councilman. While ringing the bells, the rope literally lifted him over the banister railing of the stairway.



The 3 bells of the immigrants' home church were housed in a belfry that was located at ground level alongside the church. The church's bells were originally located on top of the church but because of the marsh lands of East Friesland and flooding caused by the North Sea, a separate belfry was constructed thus lessening the fear of damage when ground was saturated by flooding. One of those floods was the one that occurred in the very early hours of Christmas morning 299 years ago.

Strackholt Bell Tower



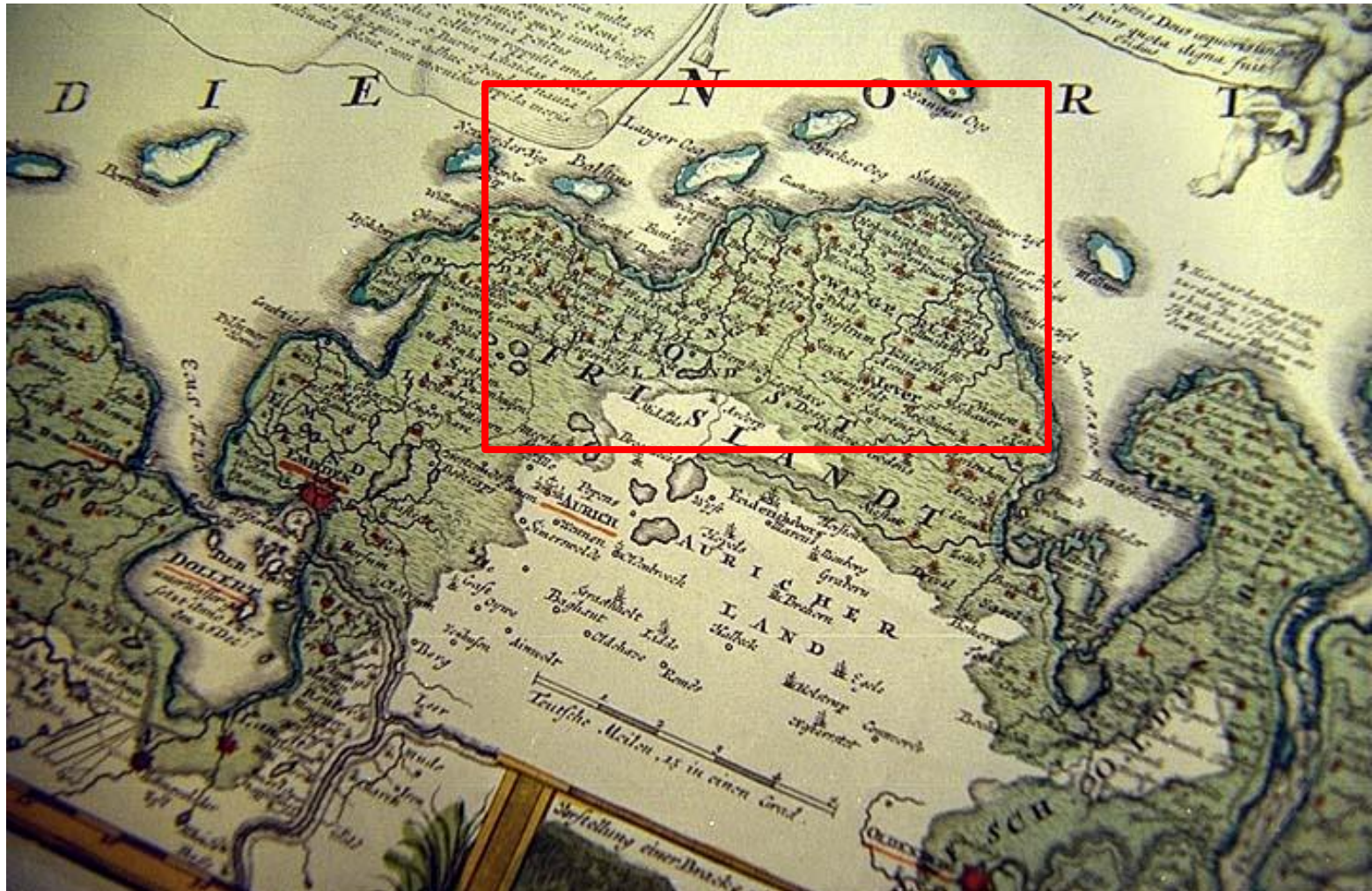


Germany

It was around 1 o'clock on Christmas morning 1717, when floodwaters first washed across a large swath of farms and cities stretching from [Holland](#) to Denmark. The raging torrent swept thousands of people right out of their beds and sent many more scrambling for safety in trees and tall buildings. There they awaited rescue as [severe thunderstorms](#), rain and hail continued to pound the soggy landscape until water levels reached as high as 10 feet. It wasn't until the next morning that the storm began to weaken before mustering one last violent punch later that afternoon. The red rectangle is a label for East Friesland while the blue rectangle shows the North Sea.



Many of those who initially survived the floodwaters had perished from exposure. When skies finally cleared on Dec. 27, 1717, as many as 13,700 people were dead, and countless livestock and homes were lost. It was one of the worst disasters not just on Christmas, but in all of modern European history.

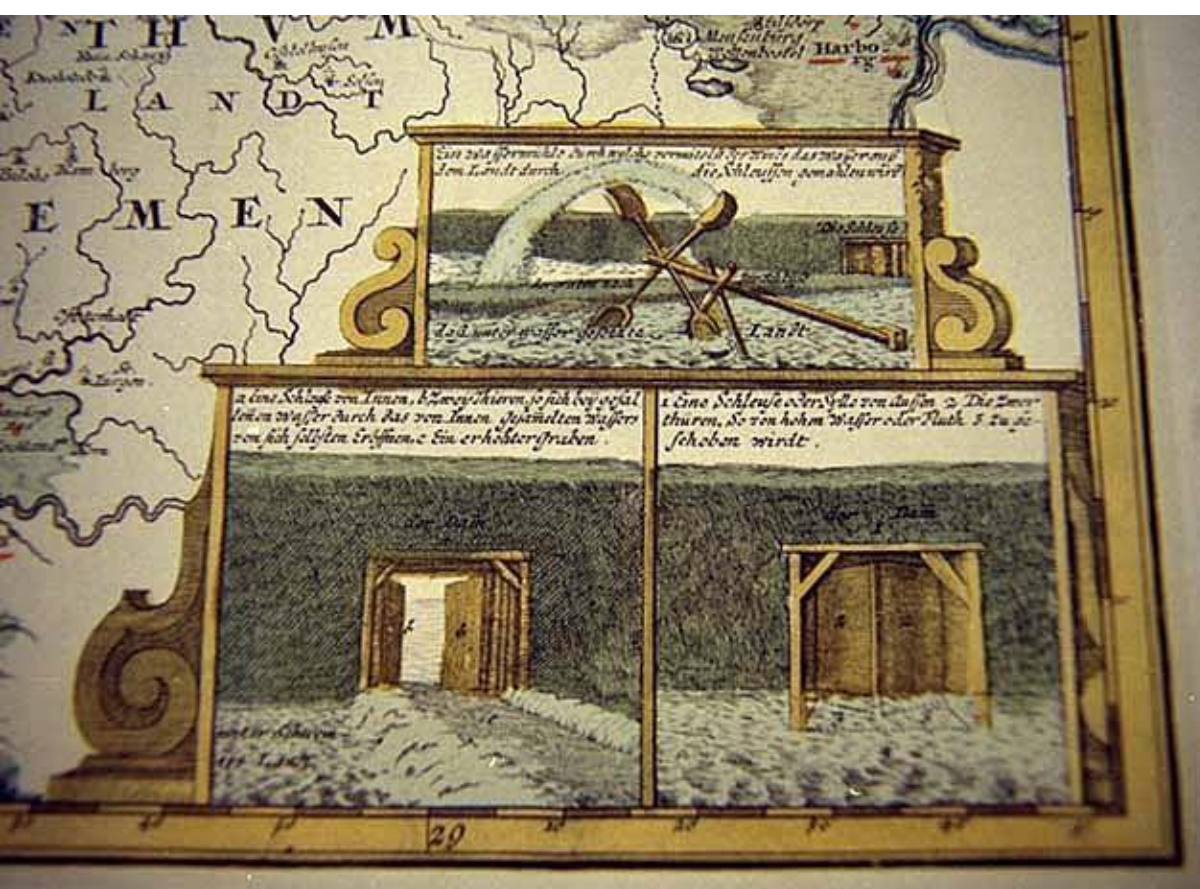






Dykes were built off the Germany coastline but were often broke by incoming storm tides of the North Sea

The local communities had to cope with population loss, economic decline and poverty. Everywhere dyke breaches were followed by wide flooding of the flat country. The principality of East Frisia was one of the worst affected areas.



Attempts were made to reclaim the farmland from the Sea which you can read more about in today's insert. Much of the work that needed to be done was left to the "Commoners", the poorest of the poor. They were the ones who dug out and sold the peat that was created by the floods in an effort to reclaim farmland. These commoners were the ancestors and families of many of the Bear Creek settlers.

What does this have to do with Zion's history, you may be asking. First it explains why, facing shrinking farmland upon which to make a living, so many East Frislanders embraced the opportunity of coming to the United States and homesteading land in Nebraska. But also it speaks volumes about the work ethic of these immigrants that came to the Bear Creek area, who were able to organize and build such a beautiful church, one that would look just as amazing 100 years later as it did the day it opened its door.



# Preparing for the Season



And beautiful it is especially during the Celebration of the Birth of our Lord. It all begins in the preparing for the season. It is hard work but always worth the end result!



The tree is up,  
all that is  
needed are the  
decorations,  
which in 1966,  
came in the  
form of  
'Chrismons.'

# Chrismons

- What is a Chrismon?
- It is a Christian symbol representing Jesus Christ. The word comes from a Latin phrase “Christ monogramma”, meaning “monogram of Christ”

[wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chrismon)



Pastor Bergtresser initiated the Chrismon symbols in 1966 when he mentioned his wish of having a Chrismon tree to Minnie Miller, who was working at the church on an Advent Wreath. That is all it took for Minnie to go into action. A committee was formed, led by Minnie Miller.





# Chrismon Committee

Two women from each circle were appointed to be on the Chrismon committee each year. Their job was to create and repair the Chrismons.

This committee spent hours and hours creating from patterns the Chrismons you still see today on the tree because Minnie was VERY precise and particular when making the Chrismons.



**Organized by :**

Minnie Miller (with Tonya Busboom)

“I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”  
Revelations 22: 13



Each Chrismon has a special meaning. We are highlighting a few of those Chrismons in this slide show.



Chi Rho is the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ. The symbols for Alpha & Omega together with Chi Rho represent the eternity of Christ as the Son of God.

# Cross Chrismons



This cross on the top of a sphere symbolizes Christ's dominion over the world.

You will see several cross chrismons on the Zion tree.



## **The Jerusalem Cross symbolizes unity of all Christians.**

The Jerusalem Cross was unearthed, by a team of American archeologists, in the hidden tomb of the first Christian King of Jerusalem. Scholars have found that the large central cross represents the strength of Christianity. The four smaller crosses represent the spread of Christianity to the four corners of the earth. The ladies of the committee glued all the beads by hand. You can definitely say these ornaments were made with hands of love.



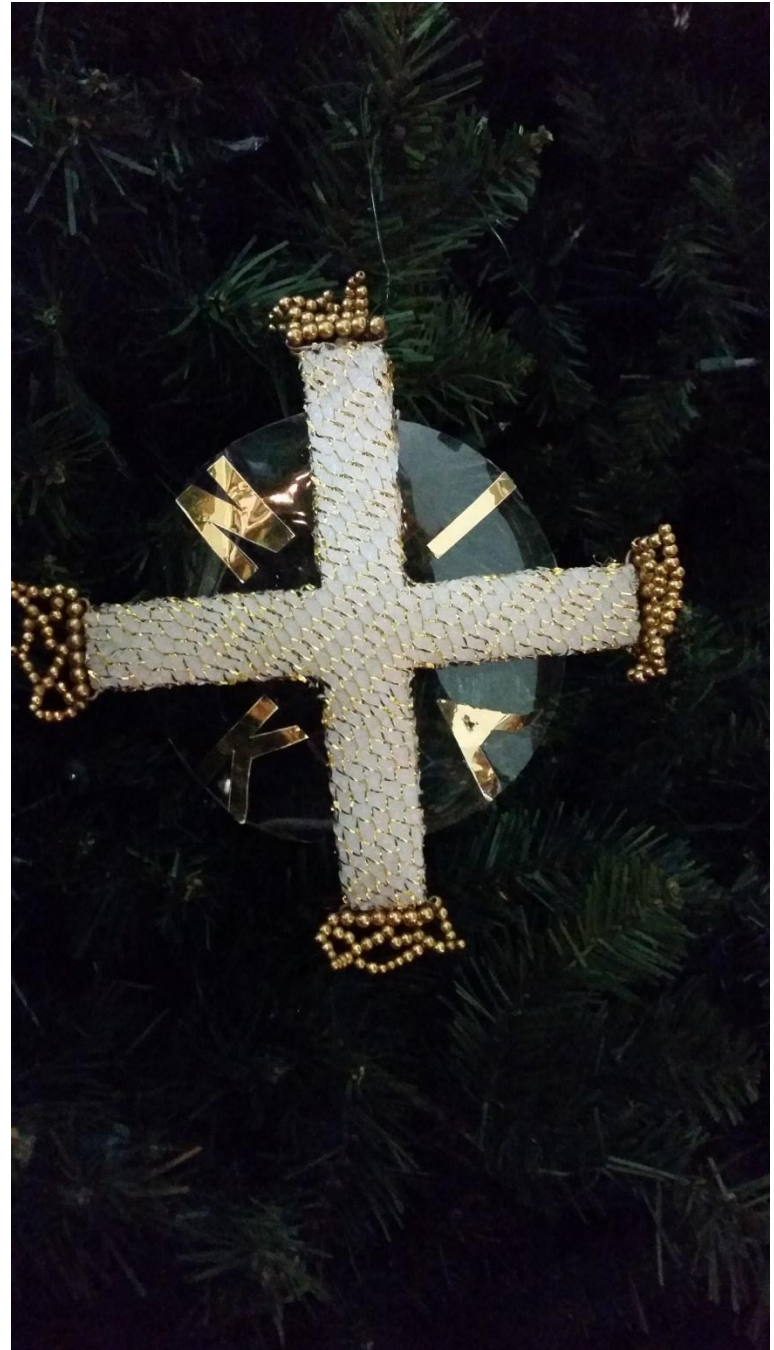
This cross was worn  
by the crusaders  
going to Jerusalem.

“Therefore go and make disciples of  
all nations.”

Matthew 28: 19

# The Cross and the Crown

On this cross, we are reminded  
that if we want to have the  
crown of eternal life, we must  
take up the cross of  
Christ. The Letters "NIKA"  
spell out the Greek word for  
"victor."



# 6-pointed Star

## Matthew 2: 1-2

“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

The Mogen David, or Star of David, has six points and refers to the appearance of, and the revelation of Jesus as the Messiah, the descendant of David.

## Star of David





# 5-pointed Star

**Revelation 22: 16b**

**“I am the Root and the Offspring of David and the bright Morning Star.”**

The Five-pointed star represents the Epiphany Star, which is the Manifestation of Jesus as King of Judah to the Wise Men. Jesus is also referred to as the bright morning star in Revelation.

With heart and soul we rejoice, for the Star reminds us of God's morning star, rising over our lives.

**Epiphany Star**



## Adding the crismons to the tree.....



Before the Chrismons were created, the Luther Leaguers decorated the Christmas tree. Then because of the delicacy of the symbols, the Chrismon committee took that job over. Now it is Joy circle that has the pleasure of hanging the Chrismons each year.



Large chrismons of some of the symbols were made by Minnie to display in the sanctuary.

Several years ago the company that services our organ requested that nothing be displayed in front of the pipes because it affected the air flow and tones of the organ..





It now has become a tradition that the sanctuary is prepared and beautified by the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents, led by Sunday School teacher Marilyn Folkerts.



# Advent Season

The church is decorated in time for the annual Candlelight Service, held on the 2nd Sunday of Advent.







Hopefully with more searching, these large Chrismons can be found and displayed during future advent seasons





# Prepare for the Season

2 Beatrice Daily Sun, Beatrice, Neb., Fri., Dec. 1, 1961



## *Annual 'Advent in Song' service*

(The Sun's Own Service)

PICKRELL — The Junior and Cherub Choirs of Zion Lutheran Church, south-east of Pickrell will give their annual "Advent in Song" service at the church, Sunday evening at 7:00 p. m.

The 43 - voice children's choir features little known Advent hymns and Christmas carols in its hour long program, the purpose of which is to serve as a prepa-

ratory service for the Advent and Christmas season. The children sing all of their selections from memory.

Jeff King, Beatrice, will assist with trumpet accompaniments. Mrs. Richard Fruehling is the director, assisted by Miss Sharon Fruehling, Miss Alnora Wallman is organist.

Picture above, left to right:

Front row: Wayne Busboom, Wayne Parde, Debra Ehmen, Rose

Marie Zimmerman, Bettyjo Trauernicht, Gerald Ideus, Dean Siefkes, Jane Siefkes, Carol Johnson, Shirley Meints.

Second row: Kathleen Johnson, Janet Trauernicht, Duane Jurgens, Kenneth Ideus, Shirley Parde, Conley Waltke, Cheryl Jurgens, Bruce Jurgens, Janet Busboom, Berleda Schoneweis.

Third row: Carol Parde, Carol Meints, June Ideus, Ladonna Parde, James Fruehling, Judy Bus-

boom, Ruth Johnson, Carol Jean Busboom.

Fourth row: Devonna Trauernicht, Sandra Ehmen, Kathy Remmers, Janice Carstens, Jean Waltke, Donna Jean Ideus, Robert Jurgens, Darrel Jobman

Fifth row: Pastor and Mrs. Fruehling, Alnora Wallman.

(Not in picture: Robert Ehmen, Linda Ehmen, Carol Jurgens, Marcelene Leners, Lyle Jurgens, Richard Paben.)

One of the past traditions of Zion was to have the "Advent in Song" service which was a one-hour performance from the 43 member children's choir led by Sharon Fruehling, wife of Pastor Richard Fruehling who served Zion. They sang little known Advent and Christmas hymns which all were known by memory. Geneva Parde and Dena Trauernicht have special memories of the choirs always singing the Hallelujah Chorus and how John Parde always made everyone sing "Oh How the Rose Is Blooming" in German of course.

# Candlelight Service



Now a cherished service for many of our members is the Candlelight Service which begins the Advent Service and shows the beauty of the sanctuary at night.





## Displayed two trees

At one time in Zion's history of decorating the sanctuary, there were two trees set up in the sanctuary. If you look close at this picture you can see this was when a stage was created for the program where participants still used both side rooms to enter the stage. This Christmas program was prior to the windows behind the altar being dry-walled over.



# Candlelight Service



Take note of the tree on the right side. Can you imagine the fire marshal allowing us to light real candles on a live tree inside the sanctuary? That was the tradition in the earliest years of a Christmas Day service, when there was no electricity.

# Many years of a real tree



Electric lines came through in 1927 which probably led to candles being replaced by electric lights on the trees.

# ANGELS AMONG US

A real tree was placed in the sanctuary until the fire risk and insurance requirements made it necessary to use an artificial tree . Maybe “angels were among us”, as was sung by Jeff Gronewold at the Christmas Eve program throughout those years.





It is always  
good to see  
the  
sanctuary  
filled for the  
traditional  
Christmas  
Eve  
program.



# Cleaning and Polishing the Bells



Dean Siefkes and Billy Harms spent some time up in that tower with those bells as members of the property and management committee. The louvers of the bell tower were in such bad shape that birds were entering freely and making Zion their home church also. But their nest and droppings were leaving behind a mess in the bells and towers.



# Preserve the memories

## Preserve the bells



Much elbow grease was needed to make those bells shine once more.





# Repair on the bell tower



And to keep those bells shining, property and management set out to repair the mortar and louvers that were in desperate need of repair. Greg Robinson, a member of Zion, went to work replacing the wooden louvers with steel ones which was quite an undertaking but the finished project was amazing.



## Inside and Outside



But the mortar joints on the tower had deteriorated to a point that loose bricks were everywhere. Adam Kuhl who is doing the tuck pointing on the church said he would not have been surprised to have picked up a newspaper some morning and seen that the tower had collapsed. Mortar was just poured into the inside joints. All this preservation work will hopefully make it possible for those bells to keep ringing for years to come as stated in the following poem, written for the 100<sup>th</sup> centennial celebration of the organization of the Zion congregation.

**Ring out ye bells! Happy am I today.**

Sweet is the song I'm singing, cheer me  
along the way.

**Our church was built a century ago.**

Zion Lutheran is the name we know.

**Our forefathers are of German descent,**

Who settled on this North American  
continent.

**Hardships were there, many a frontier  
to be crossed,**

That man's religious freedom not be  
lost.

**It was fortitude that replaced their fears,**

And kindled the torch of the pioneers.

**Our church of Zion is called the  
"mother Church"**

It seemed to be the center of the  
pioneer search.

**A great determination, with a firm and  
ample base,**

Bell towers ascending, strong and sure  
marking their place.

**Do you remember the church bells  
ringing at dawn?**

Or on a warm summer evening when  
cares of the day were gone?

**Maybe at noontime as notes echoed far  
and wide in the yester year**

Bells ringing the sounds of gladness, or  
the sounds of fear!

**Ring out ye bells! Continue your song.**

**Ring into the next century, our voices clear and strong.**

Elmyra (Dorn) Graham



ZION - A PLACE TO



BELONG

ZION - A PLACE TO



BELIEVE



ZION - A PLACE TO

BECOME





# “Let the Children Come” Sunday

## January 29, 2017

We be recognizing the baptismal font and Zion’s Christian education history.

