

**Memorial Booklet for the 50-Year Anniversary
Of the German Reformed Church of St. Paul's
Wheatland, Iowa**

Rev. John Gatermann, 1911
Translated from the original German and with comments by
Paul Riedesel (Minneapolis) 2011

1861

Denkschrift

1911

zum

Fünfzigjährigen Jubiläum

der

Deutschen Ref. St. Pauls Gemeinde

zu Wheatland, Iowa.

Pastor J. Gatermann.

Gefeiert am 8ten, 9ten und 10ten September 1911.

Gastprediger:

Pastor G. Baum, D. D., Galion, Ohio, Pastor D. Link, Slater, Iowa,
Pastor G. G. Bips, Loveland, Colorado, Pastor G. Riedesel, Poland, Indiana.

Translator's Preface

This document includes translations and notes on the original material that appeared in German. Some pages were in English in the original and are not duplicated here. The booklet is the primary source of information about the early history of St. Paul's.¹ It has been selectively mined for later histories, but to my knowledge has never been rendered in full into English. Not only are German speakers now rare in the community, but the old *ſraftur* ("blackface") type used in the booklet is a further barrier to understanding. It is my pleasure to make the full text available.

While this booklet is an important source of the congregation's history, it is no substitute for that written by Rev. Harold Koenig in 1986 on the occasion of the church's 125th anniversary (*To the Glory of God Alone*). Koenig was able to draw on a much larger body of primary documents and personal recollections.

I have tried to avoid a completely literal translation, opting instead to capture the meaning of Rev. Gatermann's words in literary English. Learned German writing from this time was famous for its long, complex sentences. I am not so adept in either language as to try to replicate them exactly. Any [bracketed] text is not in the original but has been added for clarification.

Identification of Photographs

Following the "short history" of the congregation are photographs and sometimes additional translated excerpts from the *Denkschrift*. Emma Wetter Hobbs (1867-1963) wrote a foundational history of a few of the founding families of the German community in Wheatland. Her copy of the original *Denkschrift* included handwritten identifications of most of those pictured. That copy is now lost but I have a photocopy. I cannot vouch for the correctness of all the identifications, but Mrs. Hobbs knew the first and second generations from Wunderhausen and was no stranger to Wheatland.

¹ In 1978 the diary of the first pastor, Rev. J. C. Klar, was discovered in the farmhouse built by founder L. Henry Riedesel. The diary contained some fresh information, but only for the first three years (1861-64) that Rev. Klar served the church.

A Short History of St. Paul's German Reformed Church of Wheatland Iowa

On the occasion of such an anniversary celebration, one must look back over the preceding years, over the old times, but also look with hope to the future. From the vantage point of time we can see where the paths of the Lord have led us over the past fifty years. Oh what feelings of both joy and pain have stirred in the breast. As a community, we bow in the dust before the Patriarch Jacob and acknowledge that "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant" [Genesis 32:10].² What the future, the next fifty years will bring, we do not know and may not want to know. However, there is one thing which we ask as one, which is the mercy that the Lord had promised to Moses and his people. "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" [Exodus 33:14] and "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee" [Exodus 33:19].

The Lord has done so much for the community over the past fifty years. He has supported them with gentle patience and blessed them both within and without.

It was only a small group that first came together among the scattered homes to create a church. Today we count 324 members in communion. The first steps toward the creation of a German congregation in Wheatland took place in November 1857 when the following persons came together: Ludwig Duerr, L. H. Riedesel, Franz Homrighausen, Ludwig Riedesel, John George Schneider, George Schneider, Samuel Acker, Carl Penningroth, Wilhelm Riechmann, John Riechstein, John Koch, Heinrich Mohr, Dietrich Konrad, Wilhelm Brandt, Wilhelm Sackhof, and Adam Gedelmann.³

Pastor R. Oswald was called as the interim minister. Because most of the members had come from Wunderhausen where they had been raised with the strict Heidelberg Catechism⁴ and were devoted to the teachings of the Reformed church, one condition of Pastor Oswald's employment was that he use the Heidelberg Catechism and Reformed songbook. With the selection of Ludwig Duerr and Carl Penningroth as Elders, the founding of the First German Presbyterian Church of Wheatland, Iowa was complete. On May 4, 1858 a meeting of the congregation was held at which time the request to Mr. Bennett for two lots was granted, and L. H. Riedesel donated a half acre of land for the church cemetery. At the same meeting, a building committee was appointed consisting of Ludwig Duerr, Henry Schneider and L. H. Riedesel. They were charged with building a church 26x36 insofar as funds permitted. Sums in the amount of \$15, \$30, \$40, \$80 and \$100 were subscribed. Those were great sacrifices that were brought forward, for the founders were very poor. They had hardly as many pennies as one has dollars today. We understand as did those who once struck up the 84th Psalm (Song #1): "I long for thy altars where I may praise thee O Lord, O Lord Zebaoth, O thou my king and my God, with my brethren."⁵

In spite of the promise made by Pastor Oswald, the Heidelberg Catechism was not being used for purposes of instruction and he wished not to use the Reformed songbook. Appropriate

² All scriptural quotes are presented here in the King James translation. Gatermann was using Luther's translation, still the standard in Protestant Germany. It must be said that Luther's language is more direct and simple.

³ The first seven were closed-related emigrants from the village of Germany. That they were listed first and together probably has some significance. It was they—not their fellow congregants from other parts of Germany—who ultimately broke away to found St. Paul's.

⁴ The full English text of the catechism is available at <http://www.ccel.org/creeds/heidelberg-cat-ext.txt>.

⁵ The hymn from which this quote comes only paraphrases Psalm 84 in places.

measures were then taken to separate from the Presbyterian Church and to repay the support that had been sent. The members of the congregation convened on October 17, 1861 to organize a Reformed church. Articles of Incorporation had been prepared and the name “German Reformed Church of St. Paul” was adopted. Three Trustees were selected: Ludwig H. Schneider, Ludwig H. Riedesel and L. H. A. Schneider. Ludwig Duerr was elected as the Delegate to the Iowa Assembly [Klassis] which had sent an invitation to join it. It was also decided to purchase the property of the Presbyterian Church [which they had been using] and to take over the burial grounds. On January 14, 1862 the Trustees reported that the Trustees of the First German Presbyterian Church had agreed to sell the property for the sum of \$230. With the payment of this sum, the congregation was separated from the Presbytery.

The first idea for heading west [to Iowa] no doubt came to the brothers George and Henry Riedesel.⁶ It must have been 1851 when the brothers set out on foot from Crawford County, Ohio for Iowa. A long time passed with no news from them. Finally after three months a letter was received from Iowa. Both had found and secured a good piece of land.⁷ But instead of returning by foot to Ohio, they took a ship from Davenport down the Mississippi and then back up the Ohio River to Cincinnati, and then took the train.

The Riedesel brothers brought good news from the “promised land” of Iowa, and so Father J. G. Schneider and his family attempted to move there in 1852. Initially they took the same route their kinfolk [Riedesel brothers] had until they reached Davenport. At that point Father Schneider and his son Henry set off in a northerly direction with their flintlocks on their shoulders.

Since the Schneiders were able to confirm the reports of the Riedesel brothers, other families were to follow: Acker, Duerr, Homrighausen, Penningroth, the other Riedesel brothers, and others.⁸ They had made no poor choice, and came to enjoy the prosperity with which God blessed them. For instance, Judge P. B. Wolfe wrote in his history of Clinton County at that time “In early days, where now stands the German church there was harvested wheat that averaged forty bushels per acre.”⁹

Many of these folk had become acquainted with the American Reformed church back in Galion, Ohio. Their pastor there, Rev. Max Stern, had a zeal for mission work in the new territories to the west¹⁰ where his parishioners had moved, and wanted to further the preaching of the Word there. He encouraged Pastor J. C. Klar to take up service in the newly founded Reformed congregation in Wheatland. This was realized on October 17, 1861 at which time Ludwig H. Schneider, Ludwig H. Riedesel and L. H. A. Schneider were elected as Trustees,

⁶ A full account of the emigration of the larger Riedesel family and their Schneider kin cannot be given here. The essential details are that five Riedesel siblings came as young adults to Crawford County, Ohio, in 1844-1845. With them were their elderly parents, three spouses, and a few children. Their first cousin, Ludwig Dürr, was also part of the group. J. G. Schneider and his family joined them in 1848. Over time, all came to Wheatland as did dozens of other relatives and neighbors from the same village of Wunderthausen in the ensuing 40 years.

⁷ Their farms lay along the Wapsipinicon just east of Wheatland. L. Henry’s land was owned and farmed by the late Paul Riedesel (1921-2009). George’s land was farmed for many years by his descendant, Don Ott of Wheatland.

⁸ The Ackers and Penningroths were not from Wunderthausen, but had been part of the German settlement in Crawford County, Ohio.

⁹ This quotation is in English in the original.

¹⁰ “West” meant Iowa at the time.

Ludwig Duerr and J. G. Schneider, Sr. were elected as Elders, and L. A. Schneider and Franz Schneider were chosen as Deacons.

From the Minutes of the first year it can be seen clearly how selflessly the poor settlers contributed to the building of a parsonage and a small church. Pastor Klar appears to have carried some of the burden himself. In a document from May 25, 1863 we read: The congregation had a discussion about being in arrears on its payments, and decided to make good the deficit—amounting to three-quarters of the compensation—as soon as possible. Arrangements were also made for the following year. Pastor Klar was asked if he could make do with the same compensation, or would need something more. Considering the difficult circumstances of the community, he agreed to accept the same salary: \$200. The community further volunteered to supply him with the necessary potatoes, flour and wood.

At a congregational meeting on August 18 of the same year [1863], Johann Koch reported that he had already collected \$250 toward the construction of a school, whereupon the community spoke with one voice to thank God on high for his gracious help and to implore His assistance in the future. This was done in the name of all Germans who could yet draw breath for the purpose of the development of the children. The schoolhouse was erected that same year. Pastor Klar departed from the church in the fall of 1865 and returned to Ohio.¹¹ A note in the very last record of Pastor Klar states that after a short vacancy, Pastor Friedrich Hullhorst took over the care of the congregation. After 18 months in May 1867, he left the congregation.

The next Minister was Pastor John Rettig who was called by a meeting of the congregation on May 8, 1867. He was offered a salary of \$300 and \$150 worth of foodstuffs.

The records of his service from 1867-1876 show that Brother Rettig not only proclaimed the Word but strove to develop the community and by the discipline of the church correct those who strayed from the ways of the Lord.¹² At this time, the first steps were taken to establish the Reformed Church of St. John at Smithton, twelve miles north [of Wheatland]. Here lived the Dieckmann, Sieben, Ott, Steineger, Tienefeld, Burrichter and other families.¹³ The first service was held on September 1, 1867 in a schoolhouse. In late fall of that year eleven children were baptized at a service: Anna Sieben, Margaretha Sieben, Albert Sieben, Anna Ott, Lena Ott, Barbara Ott, John Ott, Maria Ott, Georg Ott, Wilhelm Mohr and Heinrich Stoffregen. Brother Rettig served this congregation for a long time as well. After resigning his position at Wheatland [1876] he moved to a nearby farm. Later this congregation [St. John's] was served temporarily by Pastor George Rettig of Monticello, Iowa and also by Pastor C. Fuerer. In 1886 this congregation became affiliated with the Wheatland Parish and has been served since then by Pastors Baum, Zipf, C. Riedesel, Link and Gatermann as preachers of the Word.

Still living [1911] among the founders of this congregation are the Burichter brothers and their wives, Peter Mohr, Mother Dieckmann, Mother Sieben, and the very old Father Ott. Numbered among the surviving members of the Wheatland congregation are reckoned Philip

¹¹ This was not the end of the relationship. Twenty years later Rev. Klar's daughter, Mary, would marry Philip Riedesel, son of J. Ludwig Riedesel.

¹² This was a particularly difficult sentence to translate. I read in hints of "moral" problems within the congregation but nothing more is said.

¹³ They were German to be sure but not from the Wunderthausen area. Those "fresh off the boat" would have had difficulty understanding each other's dialect.

Schneider , Ludwig Schneider, Mrs. George Wetter, Mrs. Philip Schneider from Lowden, Heinrich Heiner, Mrs. Penningroth, Miss Susanna Riedesel, Mrs. Katharina Holmes, Florentina Schneider, Elisabeth Riedesel, Florentina Riedesel, Margaretha Mohr.¹⁴

On February 27, 1876 Pastor Friedrich Dieckmann was called as the minister with a salary of \$600. He took up his duties on April 20 and was officially installed on May 24. At that time the congregation numbered 145 communicants.¹⁵ During his tenure the membership continued to grow to the point that the little church was simply too small, so the congregation voted to purchase four city lots that now belong to the parish. The old church and the school house stood next to the old parsonage. Steps were also taken to collect donations to build a new church. Pastor Dieckmann and Elder Franz Homrighausen worked tirelessly to collect subscriptions for the new church; their efforts were rewarded by the generosity of the congregation. It was possible to dedicate a large, magnificent \$4,000 church in June 1878 that was free of debt. Contributions were received from outside the community and from those who had never been members. We are reminded of the building of Noah's Ark. Could Noah and his three sons have built the Ark by themselves? I think not.¹⁶ Without a doubt, others had provided help.

Let us not imagine that we are in the Ark when we are in church or are members of the Christian church, for the Ark is Christ. Unlike the papist church we do not say: Outside the church there is no salvation. Rather we say: Outside of Christ there is no salvation.¹⁷ We do not claim that a man cannot belong to the invisible church simply because he is a member of no physical church. What we offer is the means of Grace. Through His great love and wisdom God has given us the preaching of the Word, the sacrament of baptism and of Holy Communion¹⁸, and Christian education which is to be cherished and diligently received. The communion of saints will come forth.

From near and far streamed the families to the church. Those were “the good old days” as the elders like to say. Almost all families—young and old—attended services faithfully. They would load up the lumber wagon with the entire family to come to church, or did not hesitate to walk a long ways to get there. Who or what is to blame that this is no longer the case? The Word of God? The preacher? The methods of teaching?¹⁹ To those who are of God Psalm 119 says “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea sweeter than honey to my mouth” [Verse 103]. Of them John 8:47 says “He that is of God heareth God's words”, but of the others the second part of that scripture warns “Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.” What concerns those of us in the ministry can also be read in the prophet Isaiah 6:5 “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips.” Our tongues must be touched with the burning coal from the altar of the Lord so that we can be proper servants.” And the question raised by the same prophet in Chapter 53 is with us now and will be until the end of time: “Who hath believed our reports?” [Isaiah 53:1]. Much could be said about the manner in which the elders have tried to share their wisdom. But there can be no doubt that it would be better if the elders took to heart

¹⁴ Fuller identification of these individuals appears elsewhere in this translation.

¹⁵ A translation of this list with later comments was transcribed by Rev. Koenig.

¹⁶ This is by far the shortest sentence in the entire essay.

¹⁷ The next sentence runs to a full ten lines in the original German! I have parsed it into simpler sentences.

¹⁸ These were the only two sacraments recognized by the Reformed Church.

¹⁹ The German word is *Erziehungsweise* and is used again below. “Teaching methods” sounds awkward but I cannot think of a better translation. It is one of those compound words that German permits even though it does not appear in a dictionary.

the wisdom of Solomon: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” [Proverbs 22:6]. Likewise Isaiah 45:11 “Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.”

In the course of his first year of pastoral activity—specifically from April 27, 1876 to December 3 of the same year—Pastor Dieckmann performed 26 baptisms and gathered 45 new members into the congregation. Unfortunately no records exist from the balance of his ministry to document the course of the congregation. Pastor Dieckmann resigned in early 1884 and his successor, Pastor C. Baum, took up the office on May 10 of the same year. At the annual meeting of the congregation that June, a proper Call was issued by the Board. His salary was set at \$500 with the hope of raising it to \$600 if funds permitted.²⁰ Pastor Baum seems to have come to the West animated by a missionary spirit. In the second year of his service, the Smithtown congregation was taken in as an affiliate of the Wheatland parish, from which time it has continued to be served in this fashion. A mission was also begun to Dixon, lying eight miles south, but it was not successful. At a regular meeting of the congregation on January 25, 1885 it was decided to erect a new parsonage. A committee consisting of Pastor Baum, F. Wirth and M. Hoffman was charged with collecting the necessary financial means. This committee was to work in collaboration with both the Trustees and the Building Committee and commence construction as soon as the funds were secured. At the next meeting of the congregation, the committee could report that pledges in the sum of \$894.38 had been raised. The small deficit of \$57 was easily covered by other voluntary donations.

Pastor Baum served the community 4½ years and gave his farewell sermon on December 16, 1888. He was then called to Lima, Ohio. During his time in office, 76 children were baptized, 31 weddings were performed, and 55 persons were buried. After Pastor Baum came Pastor Carl Gustav Zipf, who arrived in Wheatland from Chicago on January 16, 1889.²¹ On the following Sunday he gave his introductory sermon and on May 5 of the same year he was formally installed in his position by Pastor E. E. Grünstein of Monticello, Iowa in association with the Ursinus Klassis.²² In the second year of his service the parsonage was repaired and an extension was added.

At this time the congregation had in its midst a candidate for the ministry in the person of Carl [known more often as Charles] Riedesel, who was later to marry the daughter of the minister.²³ Riedesel preached for a period at Big Rock and Smithton before taking up his first settled ministry. In the meantime the congregation was to have another promising pupil in the Mission House. Student William Beckman wished—God willing—to enter seminary.²⁴

Pastor Zipf resigned in April 1900 having served his shepherd’s post for eleven years. During his ministry 185 baptisms and 70 weddings were performed, and 90 persons were buried.

²⁰ Note that Pastor Dieckmann had started at \$600/year.

²¹ The oldest surviving—and perhaps first systematically kept—records of baptisms, funerals and weddings date from the pastorate of Rev. Zipf.

²² The “Ursinus Klassis” was the association of German-speaking congregations that broke off from the English-oriented Reformed synod in Iowa.

²³ This was Elise Marie Zipf (1871-1949). Charles was the youngest child of pioneering member L. Henry Riedesel and his second wife, Elisabeth Schumacher.

²⁴ The dates in this section are unclear. “Bill” Beckman did graduate from seminary in 1914 and went on to a distinguished career as a parish minister and as a professor. Mission House was a ministerial training school.

Pastor John Link of Schaller, Iowa, was selected as the successor, and he served the congregation from 1901 to the end of 1908. In the course of his first years, important repairs were made to the church at the cost of \$303. In 1904, a new 20x28 stall was built for the sum of \$225. And “cement sidewalks” [English in the original] were laid on the east side of the parsonage and west side of the church.

Pastor Link served the congregation for eight years and shared many blessings. In turn, the congregation bestowed on him and his ailing wife their respect and love. However, the pressure mounted to offers sermons in English as did the need of his wife for a change in climate. Pastor Link resigned in December 1908 and later accepted a call to Slater, Iowa.

During the eight years of his service, 85 persons were buried and 112 were baptized. Surely more than the eleven recorded marriages were celebrated.

Following Pastor Link was Pastor J. Gatermann [the author of this essay]. The latter had resisted the entreaties of the Board to give a guest sermon. An earlier preacher had warned him of the difficulties a minister would have in the first years. There was also the issue of serving three congregations. On Saturday the invitation came again from the Board to preach on December 13 in Wheatland, with the request to let Elder Louis Schneider know either through a telephone call or telegraph message whether he would be able to come. The message also communicated that the Big Rock congregation had fallen away. There remained only Wheatland and Smithton, so the position had become easier.

We understood that Big Rock was 12 miles distant, so after an hour we telegraphed a reply: God willing, I will be there on the 13th. On the appointed day we were there, and also in Smithton, and were in service to the Word. Since the people were unanimous about giving us a try, we came again in February of the New Year [1909] to a friendly reception. We will remain as long as the Lord gives us strength, courage and joy, and the people will listen to the Truth and deal with us as well as they have to date. A mere two and a half years have we been here—and have come through several storms.

In addition to proclaiming the word of God and the firm profession of truth, we also sought to improve the well-being of the congregation through word and deed. The congregation had already made great efforts to get the church property in good condition for the anniversary. It was without doubt a step in the right direction when the congregation gathered in a special meeting on July 18, 1909 to take up the building of a new parsonage. At this meeting it was decided that a committee consisting of five members would be charged with ascertaining how much the congregation could get from the sale of the old parsonage. The aforementioned committee included J. Gatermann, Ed. Riedesel, H. D. Riedesel, F. Schneider and Geo. Homrighausen. They were also given the assignment of finding out how much the members would be willing to subscribe for the building of a new parsonage. The second task proved not to be a difficult one. On the following Sunday the committee was able to report in morning services that in the course of one week, \$1,800 had already been subscribed.

Thanks to this very favorable report, the assembly spontaneously organized a meeting of the congregation although it had not been formally announced. It was unanimously agreed that the Trustees were authorized to sell the old parsonage property as long as it could fetch around

\$2,400. It was further decided that as of July 18 the committee would begin to function as a building committee and that construction should begin as soon as possible. The congregation's desire was to commence building soon so that all would be ready by the time of the 50-year anniversary, and that the lawns would be looking attractive.

The church is also supplied with good gas lighting. The new jubilee bell is already hanging in the tower and with reverential tones invites the community to services.

The old bell had faithfully served the community in joy and sorrow for the better part of 50 years. As it rang for the last time, it was as if it were distinctly and lovingly calling to the St. Paul's congregation: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" [Matthew 23:37].

May the grace of God prevent what the Savior once warned of with these words: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." [Matthew 23:38]. May it not come to pass for the St. Paul's congregation what came to pass in Jerusalem.

All of the ministers who have watched over the house of Israel in this congregation in these 50 years have without doubt fulfilled their great responsibilities and labored in accord with the gifts and grace given to them. "(Paul) planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God must give the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." [1 Corinthians 3:6-7].

"Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." [1 Corinthians 3:8].

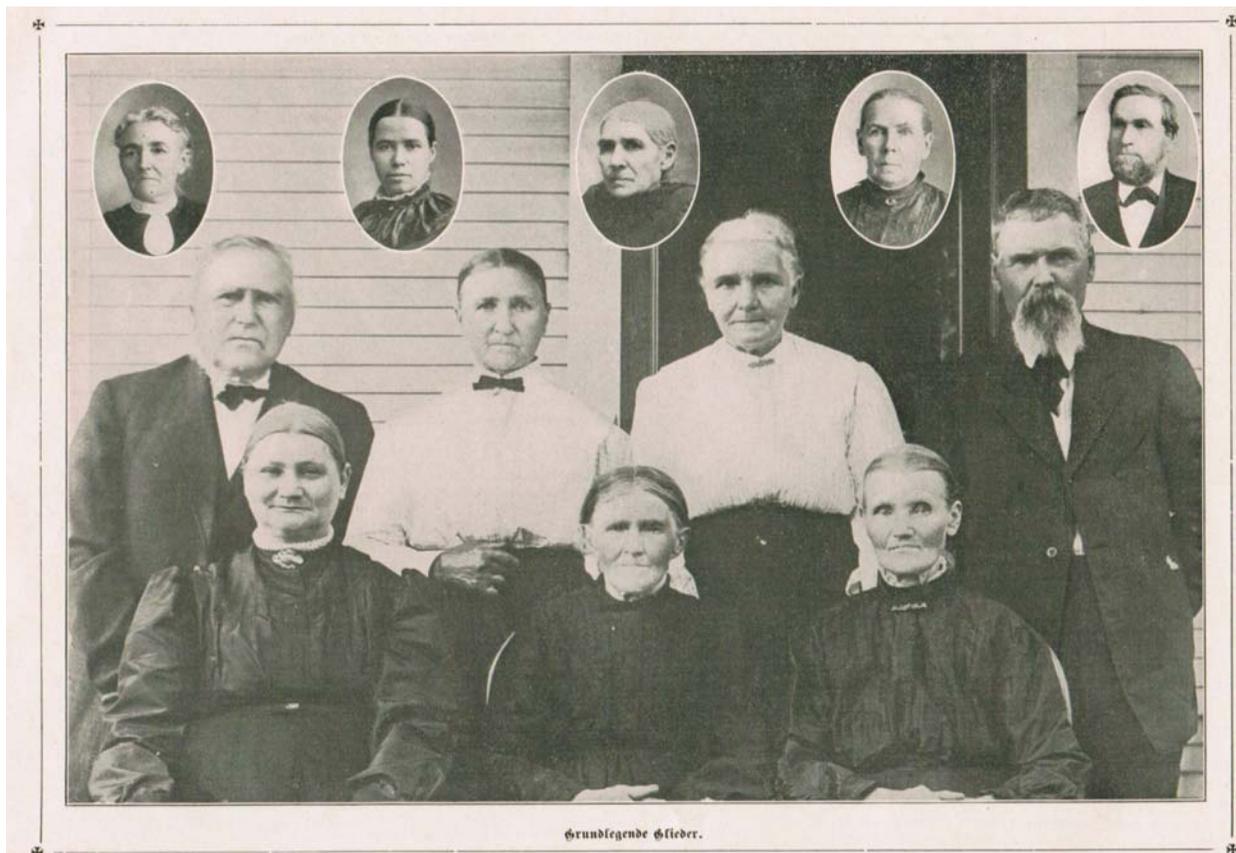
In 1 Corinthians Paul professes: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." [1 Corinthians 3:10-15]

We implore with Moses, that man of God: "May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands." [Psalm 90:16-17]. And you, dear St. Paul's congregation, do not forget what the Lord God has done for you in these fifty years. "Be thou faithful until death", says the Lord, "and I will give thee the crown of life." [Revelation 2:10].

O, may that which was written to the Philadelphian community also apply to you as stated in Revelation 3:8, 10-13: "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name . . . Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I

come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Grundlegender Glieder (Founding Members): Page 4



Names in bold were those entered by Emma Wetter Hobbs. The translator has provided all the other information.

- Front/seated: **Mrs. Philip Schneider** (Probably Luise Bernhardt, 1842-1921, from Wunderthausen, husband below)
 Florentine Schneider (Probably Flora Beitzel, 1831-1911, from Wunderthausen, widow of Henry A. Schneider, 1826-1889)
 Elisabeth Riedesel (1835-1923, born Elisabeth Knoche in Wunderthausen, widow of John Riedesel, 1929-1904)
- Standing: **Philip Schneider** (1839-1916; born Johann Philipp in Wunderthausen)
 Mrs. Penningroth (Probably Johanna Laumeier, widow of Friedrich Penningroth of Lowden; no Wunderthausen connection)
 Maria Strackbein (Probably Maria Homrighausen, 1847-1933, from Wheatland, widow of Louis Strackbein, 1836-1919)
 Louis Schneider (Probably Georg Ludwig from Wunderthausen, 1842-1925)
- Cameos above: **Catherine Holmes** (1845-1940, daughter of J. Franz Homrighausen, wife of Erastus Holmes)
 Susie Riedesel (Aunt Susie; 1847-1942)
 Wilhelmina Keller (1838-1929, born Wilhelmina Schneider, 2nd wife of John Keller, 1831-1907)
 Flora Riedesel (1841-1920, born Elisabeth Florentine Schneider in Wunderthausen; widow of Henry Riedesel, 1834-1898)
 Heinrich Heiner (No further information; no Wunderthausen connection)

Page 5 of the booklet names two others—Mrs. George Wetter (Emma's mother) and Margaret Mohr—who are not pictured. The names of Mrs. Keller and Maria Strackbein do not appear in the printed list though they are in the photograph. The text on page 5 translates as:

The number of founding members is becoming smaller and smaller. Afflicted with sorrows and infirmities, they await the hour in which the Lord will take them away from the struggles of life into the church triumphant.

Their names are as follows:

Phil. Schneider
Ludw. Schneider
Mrs. Geo. Wetter
Mrs. Phil. Schneider of Lowden
Heinr. Heiner
Mrs. Penningroth
Miss Susanna Riedesel
Mrs. Kat. Holmes
Florentine Schneider
Elisabeth Riedesel
Florentine Riedesel
Margar. Mohr

The picture on the opposite page is a fond souvenir, and their gray heads confirm that they are already fifty years closer to Eternity. Let there be light for them even in their twilight.

Der Kirchenrat (Church Board): Page 18



Names in bold were those entered by Emma Wetter Hobbs. The translator has provided all the other information.

Front: **George Ott** (1866-1940)

Frank Riedesel (1876-1950, son of Henry D. Riedesel)

Theodore Riedesel (1859-1941, son of L. Henry Riedesel)

Middle: **August Kramer** (1856-1948)

Geo(rge) Homrighausen (1854-1915, born Georg Heinrich in Girkhausen)

John Hocker (1851-1925; often spelled Hoker)

P. A. Schneider (1864-1932, son of Henry A. Schneider)

Back/Standing:

Henry (F.) Riedesel (1865-1932, born Heinrich in Wunderthausen)

Rev. Gatermann (1865-1945)

Ferdinand Schneider (c1875-1947, son of Louis Henry Schneider)

Edward Riedesel (1875-1923, son of George Riedesel)

Page 19 translates as follows.

The leadership of the congregation lies in the hands of the church Board [or Consistory]. It consists of the Pastor as chair, three Elders and three superintendents [or directors].

The First Church Board

At the time of the founding of the congregation in 1861

Elders:

J. G. Schneider Sr. Ludwig Duerr

Deacons

H. A. Schneider F. Schneider

Present Church Board, 1911

Elders

P. H. Schneider J. Hocker
Aug. Kramer Geo. Homrighausen

Deacons

F. Schneider H. F. Riedesel
F. Rowold L. Fox

First Trustees, 1861

L. H. Schneider L. H. Riedesel L. H. A. Schneider

Present Trustees, 1911

Geo. Ott F. Riedesel Theo. Riedesel

Treasurer of the Congregation

Edward Riedesel

We recognize today the Elders who have died during their years in office:

Ludwig Duerr [bold face in original]

Franz Schneider

Heinrich Riedesel

John Riedesel

Georg Riedesel

Ludwig Riedesel

August Lohmann

Martha Aid Society: Page 22



Names in bold—with a couple of corrections—were those entered by Emma Wetter Hobbs. Many were single at the time the photo was taken, but Mrs. Hobbs supplied their later married names. The translator has provided all the other information. These are mostly younger women no older than 30. They are second- or even third-generation. The accompanying notes were printed in English.

Front/Kneeling:

Rosa Hamdorf Pratt (1889-1992, daughter of Henry Hamdorf, wife of Harry Pratt)
Alma Lohmann Martens (1891-, daughter of Ferdinand Lohmann, wife of Erwin Martens)
Sophia Bicknese (1892-1951, daughter of Henry Bicknese)
Velma Horstman Wagner (1892-1979, daughter of Henry Horstman, wife of William Wagner)
Mary Bicknese Conklin (1890-1970, daughter of Henry Bicknese)
Clara Werder Kramer (1893-1963, daughter of Herman Werder, wife of H.G. Kramer)
Esther Riedesel Dennie (1891-1977, daughter of Theodore Riedesel, wife of Melvin Dennie)

Middle/Seated:

Emilie Schneider (1868-1950, daughter of Louis Schneider)
Lena Penningroth Reinking (1879-1955, daughter of William Penningroth, wife of Charles Reinking)
Ida Hillman Rix (c1889-, wife of William Rix)
Edna Kramer Bicknese (1886-1967, daughter of August Kramer, wife of Conrad Bicknese)
Minnie Fox Riedesel (1891-1991, daughter of **Fred** Fox, wife of George L. Riedesel)
"Sophia" Lohmann (I believe this was Minnie Lohmann, c1883-, daughter of August Lohmann)

Back/Standing:

(Not identified)
Louisa Kramer Burrichter (1888-1967, daughter of August Kramer, wife of Albert Burrichter)
Mabel Dieckmann Schneider (1891-1924, daughter of Albert Dieckmann, wife of Walter Schneider)
Ruth Riedesel (1894-1983, daughter of George L. Riedesel, later wife of Rudy Wiese)
Mrs. Gatermann (Emma Heuer, 1877-1945)
Norma Lohse Theile (1895-, daughter of Adolph Lohse, wife of Walter Thiele)

Choir: Page 24



Names in bold were those entered by Emma Wetter Hobbs. The translator has provided all the other information. The accompanying text was also printed in English.

Front/Seated:

Henry (F). Riedesel (1865-1932, born Heinrich in Wunderhausen)
Ferdinand Schneider (c1875-1947, son of Louis Henry Schneider)
Albert Dieckmann (1862-1925)
Albert Wagner (1881-1864, born Albrecht in Wunderhausen)
Theodore Riedesel (1859-1941, son of L. Henry Riedesel)

Middle:

Clara Werder Kramer (1893-, daughter of Herman Werder, wife of H.G. Kramer)
Reuben Riedesel (1892-1988)
Esther Riedesel Dennie (1891-1977, daughter of Theodore Riedesel, wife of Melvin Dennie)
Louis Wagner (1894-1970, son of Henry Wagner)
Velma Horstman Wagner (1893-, daughter of Henry Horstman, wife of William Wagner)
William Wagner (1891-1962, son of Henry Wagner)
Louisa Beckmann (1892-, daughter of Dietrich Beckmann, later wife of John Bicknese)

Back:

Norma Lohse Theile (1895-, daughter of Adolph Lohse, wife of Walter Thiele)
Mabel Dieckmann Schneider (1891-1924, daughter of Albert Dieckmann, wife of Walter Schneider)
Henry Kramer (1891-1978)
Mrs. Gatermann (Emma Heuer, 1877-1945)
Walter Thiele (1896-1982)
Ruth Riedesel (1894-1983, daughter of George L. Riedesel, later wife of Rudy Wiese)
Lena Wagner Morgan (1887-1981, daughter of Henry Wagner, wife of Walter Morgan)

Die Sonntag Schule: (Sunday School Officers and Teachers): Page 26



Names in bold were those entered by Emma Wetter Hobbs. The translator has provided all the other information.

Front/Seated:

Mabel Dieckmann Schneider (1891-1924, daughter of Albert Dieckmann, wife of Walter Schneider)
Esther Riedesel Dennie (1891-1977, daughter of Theodore Riedesel, wife of Melvin Dennie)
Louisa Beckmann Schneider (I think she is actually the Louisa, 1892-, wife of John Bicknese)
Lydia Beckmann Schneider (1885- ; sister of Louisa, 2nd wife of Walter Schneider)
Minnie Lohman (c1883-1938, daughter of August Lohman)
Lillian Werder Riedesel (1883-1968, wife of Edward Riedesel)

Middle:

Mary Sherer Nieman (Probably -1940, wife of Henry Nieman)
Lizzie Schneider Theile (Probably 1871-, daughter of Henry Schneider, wife of Henry Thiele)
Mrs. Gatermann (Emma Heuer, 1877-1945)
Mrs. John Hocker (Probably Susanna ___, 1853-1935)
Mrs. John Riedesel (Probably Emma Webbles, 1867-1945, wife of John E. Riedesel)
Mrs. Winkler (Minnie ___, 1879-1934, wife of Reinhold Winkler)

Back:

Theodore Riedesel (1859-1941, son of L. Henry Riedesel)
Rev. Gatermann (1865-1945)
Henry (F.) Riedesel (1865-1932, born Heinrich in Wunderthausen)
Louisa Kramer Burrichter (1888-1967, daughter of August Kramer, wife of Albert Burrichter)
Ida Hillman Rix (c1889-, wife of William Rix)
Emma Voss Rowold (1877-1946, wife of Ernest Rowold)
Edna Kramer Bicknese (1886- , daughter of August Kramer, wife of Conrad Bicknese)

Translation, page 27:

The Sunday School

The school is under the direction of the minister and the assistant superintendent. The work of Christian Education is very important in every congregation. Youth are the future of the Church, so if they are properly nurtured, they will carry on the life of the church.

Unfortunately our community finds itself in a time of transition from German to English. Where there is no church school in which to cultivate the German language, it cannot long endure.

Most children no longer understand the German language. In Sunday school, they should be learning religion rather than language. Our children learn the language at the expense of religion. Students who are distracted by learning their A-B-Cs could still learn the Bible stories and the Word of God in the English language. Our Sunday school up until now has been completely German. Confirmation classes are partly in German. The children must be instructed in a language which they are able to read.

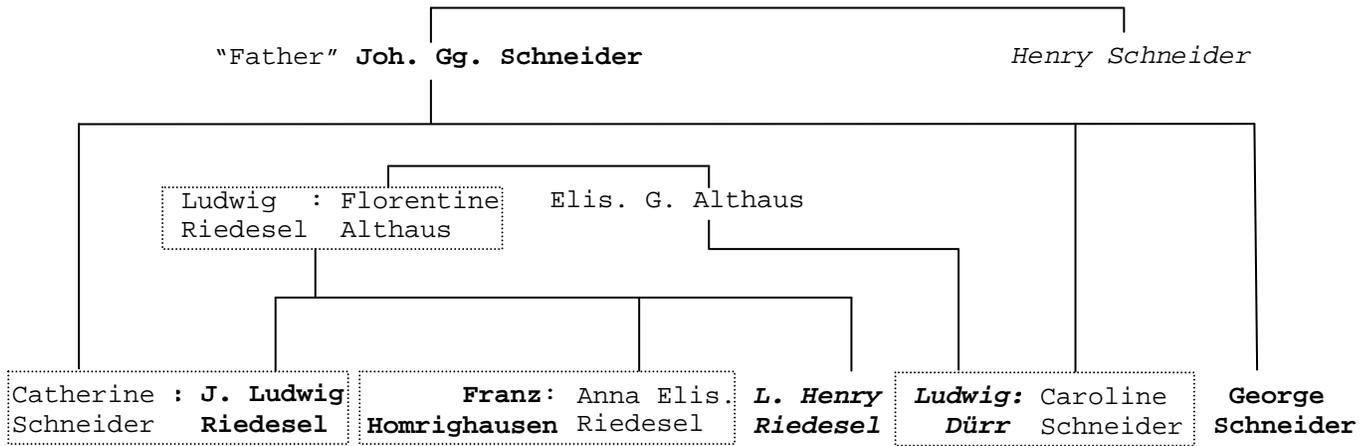
There have been efforts, so we have heard, to restore a German language (public) school, but to no avail.

Our Sunday school counts 112 students and 18 officers and teachers. The officers are:

Pastor J. Gatermann, Superintendent
Theo[dore] Riedesel, Assistant Superintendent
Luise Kramer, Secretary
Reuben Riedesel, Treasurer

On the opposite page is a picture of the gathered teachers and officers of the Sunday school.

Kinship of Selected Founders of St. Paul's Church/ All From Wunderthausen



Married : Couple
(Not all spouses are shown)

Names in bold were founders of the Presbyterian Church in 1857.

Names in italics were lay leaders when St. Paul's Reformed Church was founded in 1861.