

Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin County Historian

Centennial 5-2-86

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Medina

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"Ancient as the home is the temple; ancient as the work-bench is the altar...ancient as the soldier is the priest. Older than the written language is spoken prayer; older than painting is the thought of a nameless one. Religion is the first and last - the universal language of the human heart. Differing words describe the outward appearance of things; diverse symbols represent that which stands beyond and within. Yet each man's hunger is the same, and heart communicates with heart. Because we are human, we shall ever build our altars; because each has his yearning, we offer everywhere our prayers and anthems."
-W. Waldemar W. Argow

On Sunday, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church will celebrate its centennial. A service of remembering and thankfulness will take place at the church beginning with an organ recital at 2:30 p.m., followed by the service at 3 p.m. At 5 p.m. a supper will be served at the Shelby Fire Hall to those attending the festivities. The public is most cordially invited to attend these activities and participate in this joyous celebration of 100 years of religious heritage at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Many of the facts contained in the following history were compiled by the late Helen Allen during the 1970's.

"German people were not among the earliest settlers in the Village of Medina but about 1880 some German families of Lutheran faith came to the area. Among them was James Kams who had evidently lived in Buffalo before moving to Medina. He was a devout man who wished to worship God in a Lutheran Church as he had in the past. He had talked with the Rev. John Sieck of St. Andrew's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Buffalo and elicited from him a promise to help such a church in Medina. In keeping with that promise, Rev. Sieck asked the Rev. A.T. Hanser, Lutheran Missionary in Lockport, to visit the village and investigate the possibility of forming a church. On Feb. 14, 1885, Rev. Hanser made the trip and found that there were, indeed, a number of families interested in having a Lutheran Church in Medina. After making necessary arrangements he came back on May 10 and conducted the first Lutheran worship service in the village in Loke's hall on Main Street.

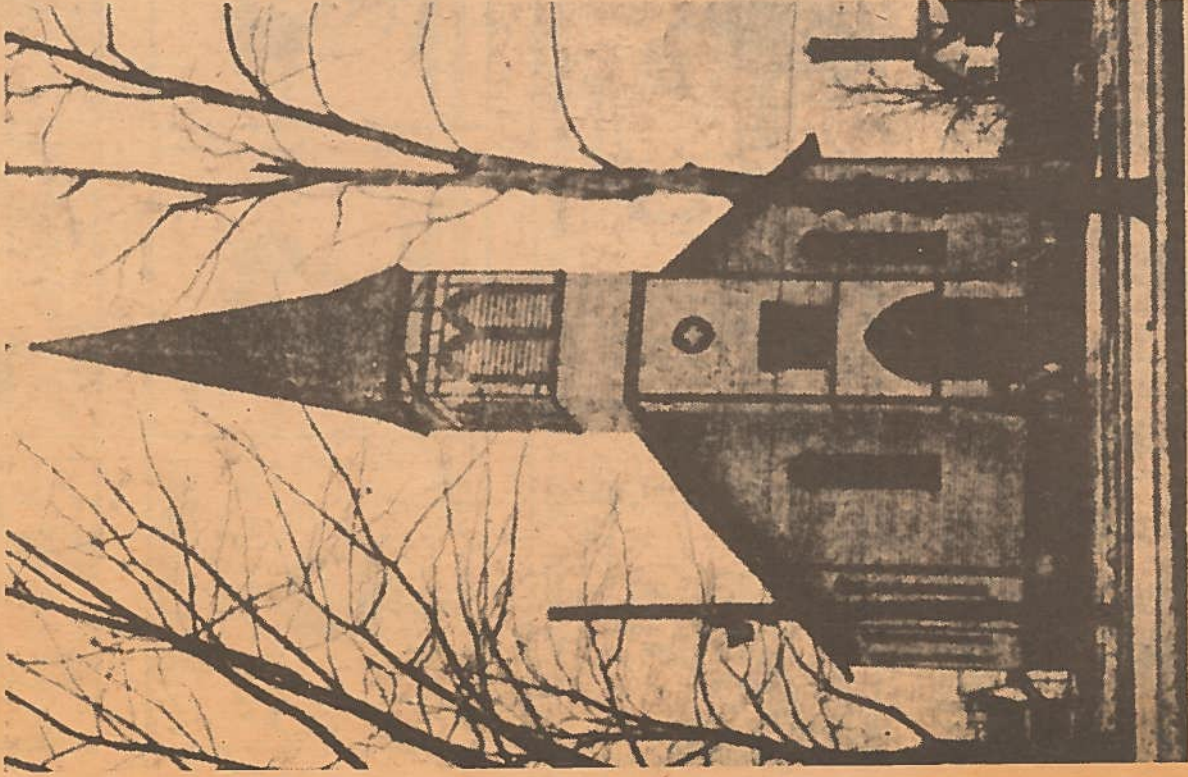
"Encouraged by the attendance of 40 at the service, Rev. Hanser continued to come to Medina to lead the people in worship and on May 2, 1886 organized a Lutheran Church with the following members: John Kams, Frederick Boots, Sr., C.F. Lindke Sr., William Lindke Sr., William Ewald, W. Rahn, Carl Koch, K. Greier, W. Pronath, William Fieritz, John Strebe and August Weald. The next year, the Rev. George Bartling became pastor on Oct. 31, 1888, the members voted to incorporate "The Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Congregation, U.A.C., at Medina, Orleans County, New York." At this time plans were being made to build a church on an acre of land on the west side of West Avenue in the southern part of the village that was purchased for \$300.

"Under the leadership of Pastor Bartling, construction was begun in the spring of 1889 with the cornerstone being laid on April 29. Work proceeded rapidly and the congregation was able to move from the rented third floor meeting hall on Main Street to the new church in late July. It had been built at a cost of \$2,700, including the steeple and Altar niche. Dedication services were held on July 28, 1889. At that time, only a little over three years after it was organized, membership was reported as 160 baptized members, including infants, 96 communicant members, of whom 26 were voting members. Noting the small number of voting members, investigation revealed that women were not allowed to vote in church meetings until a new church constitution was adopted in 1968.

"The church continued to grow in membership and to increase their programs of worship, Bible study and religious instruction during the passing years. By the mid 1940's the original building had become too small and plans for providing more space had to be considered. Designs for remodeling the old church and building additions were adopted. The work was completed in 1951 under the direction of the pastor, Rev. R.E. Maite. The steeple was removed, a vestibule with attractive entrance was added to the front, the nave enlarged to accommodate the increased congregations, and an addition at the rear provided a pastor's study and rooms for Sunday School classes and other church activities. The entire building was faced with buff brick, and dedicated to the Glory of God in October 1951."

The accompanying photo shows Trinity Lutheran Church before its remodeling of 1951.

The church continues to "carry forward the Savior's work...in cooperation with the Missouri Synod, of which Trinity is a member." The present pastor is the Rev. Gene Ott.



'Old' Trinity Lutheran Church