

In January, 1988 the Rev. Jerome E. Burce was installed as the new Pastor of Zion. He came to this church from Papua New Guinea with his wife the former Nancy Hileman of Fort Wayne, Indiana, and their four children, Simon, Martin, Elizabeth, and Kathryn. Pastor Burce is the son of a missionary. He was born and raised in Papua New Guinea, attended high school in Australia, and came to the United States for his college and seminary education. He graduated in 1978 from Christ Seminary-Seminex in St. Louis, and in 1980 accepted a call to return to Papua New Guinea. There he worked with the Gutnius Lutheran Church both as a regional advisor and as lecturer and principal at Timothy Lutheran Seminary. During his short term here Pastor Burce has nurtured us with solid preaching, and in the area of our worship life has introduced us to the ancient tradition of using ashes on Ash Wednesday.



*Nicholas Salerno, Walter Kuhr, and Ernst Kuhr*

Mrs. Burce has made a great contribution to the church through her work with the Sunday School. Her talents and creativity have also been expressed in the making of three new banners. Two events of particular significance took place in 1988. The first and greater of these was that the mortgage on the church building was paid off a year ahead of schedule. In a special ceremony during the annual Apple Harvest Festival dinner, Mr. Ernst Kuhr was given the honor of burning the mortgage. Mr. Kuhr is the only male surviving member of the

four families who had offered their own homes as collateral on the loan, and enjoys the distinction of being the member with the longest period of active and elective service to the parish. In the past he served on the Board of Elders and was the Superintendent of Sunday School.

The second event was the construction of a new ramp to replace the original steps at the entrance of the church building. Fred and Walter Kuhr proposed the idea, and it was adopted at a congregational meeting when a member gave \$500.00 toward the project and challenged others to follow suit. Several members did so. The ramp was designed by Helmut Jobs. Evergreen Nursery planned the landscaping, and private contractors did the concrete, iron, and electrical work. Much of the basic labor was performed by Walter Kuhr, who was responsible for bringing the project to completion. The ramp was dedicated in November. Kevin Kuhr cut the bow on his father's behalf.



*Dedication of Ramp, 1988*



## ◆ THE NURSERY SCHOOL ◆

One of the most noteworthy chapters in Zion's recent history began when Pastor and Mrs. Steinke were looking for a place to enroll their daughter Darcy for some pre-kindergarten education. They were eventually led to sit down with a group of parishioners to explore the possibility of opening such a school at Zion. One of these was Ruth LaLonde, who was to become actively involved in the school for most of its history — first as a teacher and later as a member of the board of directors.

In January, 1967, the nursery school opened its doors for the first time, with Sandra Gayda of Cheshire Lutheran Church as director. Mrs. Gayda left this position shortly thereafter and was followed over the next few years by a succession of directors: Sally Lanza, Annette Trizziono, Robin Blashke, and Dee Lugli. Ms. Lugli, in particular, was responsible for getting the school on a solid footing. Under her direction enrollment grew to the point that it became necessary to add afternoon sessions to the program.

When Ms. Lugli left, Dorothy Jarboe, then a member of Zion and a teacher at the school, was appointed director. She continued in that position for well over ten years, and during her tenure the school developed an excellent reputation within the town of Southington. Classes were conducted for four year olds on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, in both morning and afternoon. Tuesday and Thursday mornings were set aside for a three year old program.

Mrs. Jarboe moved away from Southington in 1986, and upon her departure Jeanette McNamara was appointed to the directorship. In 1988 the school's first director, Sandra Gayda, returned to take up the position for a second time. Under her guidance, Zion Nursery School continues to meet the needs of both members and the community.

## ◆ THE STORY OF THE APPLE FRITTER ◆

The story of Zion's last twenty years would not be complete without a brief account of the apple fritter phenomenon. The story begins in 1969 when someone gave a 50 lb. bag of flour to Pastor and Mrs. Steinke. This led Mrs. Steinke to suggest that the congregation should make an apple fritter to sell at Southington's new Apple Harvest Festival. Pastor Steinke asked Dot Czarnota about the idea, knowing full well how she loved to bake. Dot tried first with apple rings, then apple chunks, then wedges, but these failed to pass Pastor and Mrs. Steinke's taste test. Finally, she came up with the present fritter recipe. Dot proceeded to bake a batch for the congregation at the annual picnic. Most of the people enjoyed these fritters and agreed to give their support to the project. During the first several years the work was more tedious than it is now. In the very beginning, Dot, Larry, and their daughter, Cindy mixed and bagged the flour in their own basement. Later as the need increased, this project was moved to the church basement. For the next four or five years flour mixing was mainly done by Dora Kuhr, Ellie Myers, Bertha Miller, and Dot. Al Malcien handled the apple picking and Fred and Dot Barringer were in charge of peeling. During these early years the apple peeling was done at home. Members would be given a basket or two of apples with a sample of the size of apple



required when they were diced. They would then be left to peel and dice away, then deliver the finished product to the booth. The fritters were then mixed and fried entirely by hand using a small fryolator. Spoons were used to drop the fritters into the hot grease. The fritters were sold for ten cents each, twenty-five cents for three and ninety cents for a dozen.

In the very first year of operation one hundred and seventy eight bags of flour mix was prepared with one hundred and twenty bags used. The fryolators held one hundred and twenty fritters per batch. A total of 19,560 fritters were sold.

Ken and Claudia Crooker report that in 1978 forty bushels of apples were peeled and diced by hand. The members themselves picked the apples at Lewis Farms, and stored them in cardboard barrels in the cinder block building. The booth (or as one member tended to call it, “the boot”) was a small tent with no wooden floor. The fritters were still mixed by hand and placed into the hot grease with sherbet scoops.

Three people worked at each fryolator. After the cooking, the hot fritters were picked off of a rack by hand and sugared in a brown bag. They sold for one dollar a dozen.

During the next few years, several mechanical innovations were introduced to make the fritter business easier and more efficient. First came the slicers and dicers, and then a wooden chute for the sugaring process which could fill three shopping bags at a time with cooked fritters. This saved burnt fingers and bagging time. By now we were purchasing the apples already picked.

Certain brave members would bring supplies down to the booth and each night and return with the dirty pans to the church to clean them. It was rare for these people to return to this job for more than one year.

According to Helmut Jobs, in the early 1980's the health department began to threaten to close the booth because they objected to the wooden chute coming in contact with the fritters. This led the Apple Harvest Committee to come up with the idea of a stainless steel fritter hopper, which would not only satisfy the health department but also lead to a more efficient fritter handling process. Helmut drew up the plans for this and found a company in Bristol to manufacture it. The new hopper was installed for the 1983 season. That year the sales and production increased dramatically. By now we were buying 80 or 90 bushels of apples, but the mechanical apple peelers and dicers made the process of preparing them go much faster. All the peeling was now being done in the church basement, and the diced apples were bagged by weight in order to ensure a more “standard fritter”. The next great invention was the “fritter spitter”. This was a donut maker which Roger Ahlquist modified with a special attachment that he designed himself. In Ken Crooker's estimation this was the single most important advance in the whole fritter-making process. It increased production so significantly that the booth had to be enlarged. Zion's apple fritters had now become one of the major attractions of Southington's Apple Harvest Festival, and the annual project of operating the booth is providing a way for members to get to know each other and to work together toward a common goal.



*Dorothy Czarnota*



## ◆ YOUTH ACTIVITY OVER THE YEARS ◆

On October 27, 1928, the following article appeared in The Meriden Daily Journal:

SOUTHINGTON - The Young People's society of the Zion Lutheran church of Southington assembled at the home of Henry M. Wolff, Jr. of south end for their business and social meeting October 23, at 8 p.m. At the conclusion of the business meeting hearty congratulations were showered upon the young man and splendid gifts were presented.

M.F. Mohr, who with Mrs. Mohr, had been unobserved in an adjoining room listening in on the bible readings by Rev. E. Merkel and the Christian Endeavors

of the Young People's meeting now came forward at its adjournment and first of all congratulated the young people for the manner in which they conducted their meetings and wished them success. He expressed his gratification in their work and at having an opportunity to see for himself what they were doing. He was delighted at the number of young people present and said he would say, "Everything's O.K."

"And now," continued Mr. Mohr, opening up the birthday surprise, "I want to congratulate you on your twenty-first birthday,

Henry. I was here with you on your first birthday and am very happy to be here also on your twenty-first."

Congratulations and gifts followed. Cheers were called for, and given with a will. Luncheon was served on a table decorated with flowers and Halloween trimmings and seating 21. A large fancy birthday cake with 21 candles was the center attraction for a time till all lights were extinguished with one blow by the celebrant when it disappeared the way of all sweet things. ■



*Youth Groups Award Winning Float  
Apple Harvest Festival*

As the above makes plain, young people have been actively involved in the life of Zion throughout its 100 year history. A young people's group of one kind or another has almost always been included in the roster of the congregation's organizations.

Many of our present members fondly remember their days in the Walther League, the national youth organization of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, that flourished in the 1950's and '60's. Through the Walther League they were brought together with Lutheran young people from neighboring towns for recreational and service activities

and for occasional weekend retreats. Basketball and bowling leagues were part of the Walther League program, Bible study was emphasized, and the Walther Leaguers were consistently encouraged to find ways of being active in service to others. Strong support was given to the mission outreach of the national church, both at home and abroad. A high point in the history of our youth activities was reached in 1957, when Zion's own Fred Kuhr was elected president of the New England District of the Walther League. He served in that capacity for eight years. In 1965, his final year as president, he travelled to Squaw Valley, Nevada to attend a national Walther League convention.

In the early 1970's the Walther League ceased to exist as an independent organization, and with that the character of youth activity at Zion changed significantly. Shortly after the League's demise a new group was formed at our young people's own request. Gerald McKenney served as its first counsellor. Since then the youth group has remained active under the guidance of various counsellors. In 1978 Zion's youth group entered a float in the Apple Harvest Festival and won the first prize. The youth group breakfast following the Easter Sunrise service has become a standard fixture of our yearly program.

In this Centennial year the youth group has travelled to Allentown, Pennsylvania to attend a so-called Global Mission Event sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The current chairperson of the youth group is Eileen McKenney, with Brad and Julie Andreae serving as counsellors.



# NOTABLE EVENTS OF THE PAST 30 YEARS

- 1960 First session of Adult Bible Class
- 1963 Children's Service presented on Christmas Eve
- 1963 First Advent Meditation sponsored by Walther League
- 1965 Caroling to the shut-ins by the Walther League
- 1965 Zion's first Easter Sunrise Service
- 1967 Establishment of Zion Lutheran Nursery School
- 1975 Elders begin to assist with communion on festival days-Frank Miller, Elder, first communion assistant
- 1975 Zion's bowling team wins first place in the Southington Church Bowling League
- 1976 Zion receives a Certificate of Appreciation from the Chamber of Commerce in recognition of services toward the beautification of the community
- 1978 Zion joins the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches
- 1978 Youth Group Float takes first prize at the Apple Harvest Festival Parade
- 1979 Zion celebrated it's 90th anniversary with a service of thanksgiving and celebration followed by a luncheon.
- 1984 Zion's Sunday School has its first Christmas Program with Pot Luck Supper - also the start of Family Days in Sunday School
- 1984 The first Apple Festival Appreciation Dinner is held at Gene's Kitchen. A night of food and fun for all the hard work put into making fritters.
- 1984 Zion's AAL branch wins his first Gold Star
- 1985 Zion starts with the assistance of Lay Readers
- 1988 Zion enters the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- 1988 The church mortgage is burned
- 1988 Purchase of a V.C.R. and T.V. made possible through a donation and proceeds from the can collection



# CURRENT ORGANIZATIONS & OFFICERS AT ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Chairman	Nicholas Salerno
Secretary	Kathleen Cahill
Treasurer	George McKenney
Financial Secretary	Patricia Manco
Elders	Ruth Kurtz Roberta Kuhr Julie Andreae Heidi Bittner
Deacons	Lois Leach Bernice Wellin Gerta Gaetgens
Trustees	Alvin Andreae Michael Webster Joseph Mallon

## Apple Harvest Committee

Walter and Roberta Kuhr, *Chairpersons*

## Zion Lutheran Women

Dorothy Nicholas, *President*

## AAL Branch

Dorothy Nicholas, *Representative*

## Zion Lutheran Mens' Club

Walter Kuhr, *President*

## Zion Lutheran Youth

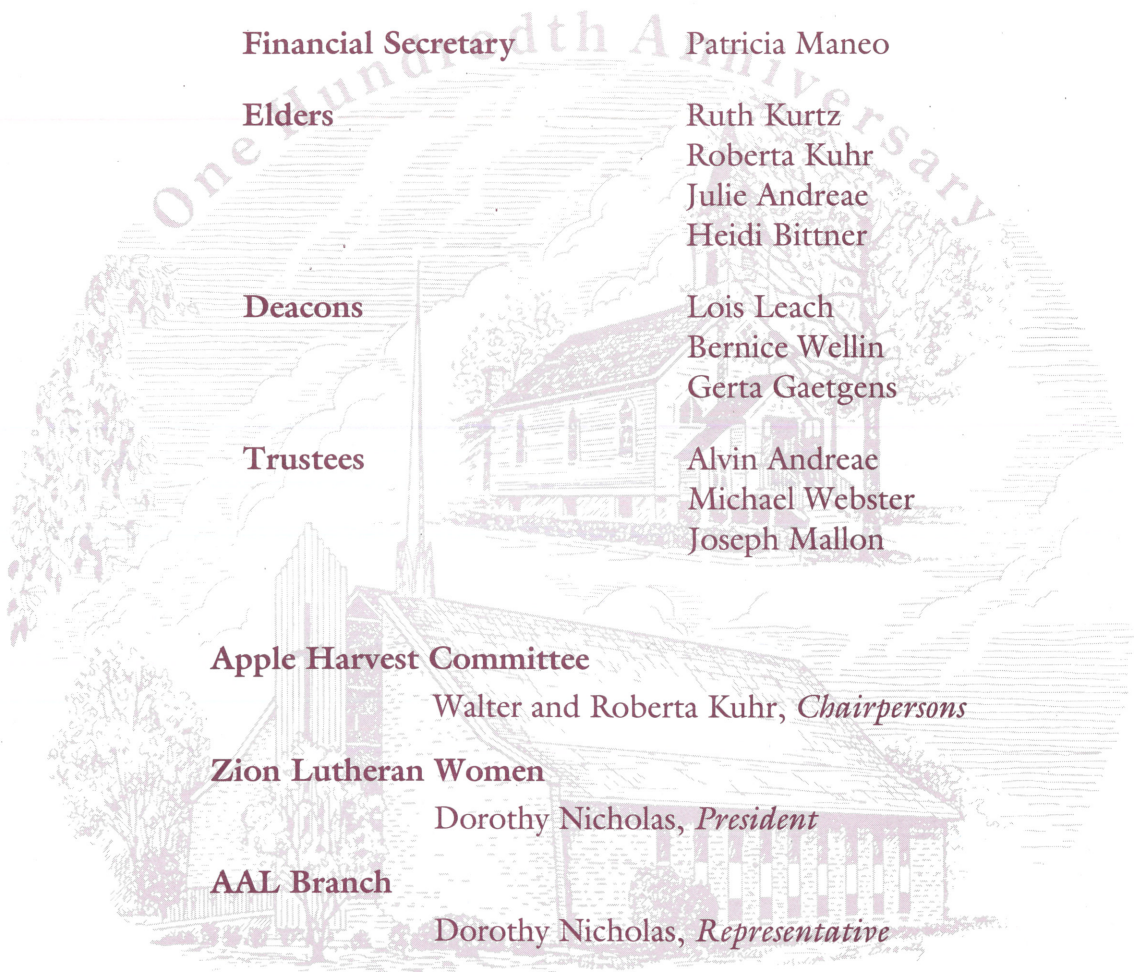
Eileen McKenney, *President*

## Adult Choir

Hildred Renn, *Director*

## Sunday School

Nancy Burce, *Acting Superintendent*





**A Special Thanks . . .** *to all those people  
that have given generously of their time, talents, and energy to make this day possible.*