



Wilhelm (William) Flickinger

Pastor 1839 – 1842

German immigrant of early 1800s. Induced to move because of political viewpoint. He was in support of the first democratic government movement in Germany.

Studied theology in Germany at University of Erlangen

Leader in movement to establish a German Protestant church in Belleville. Soon, shortly after the establishment of the Freie Protestantische Gemeinde (i.e., the Free Protestant Church) on August 1, 1839, he was elected by the congregation as its first resident pastor.

The first church began construction on September 7, 1839. Land was donated by Theodore Kraft, who later became the first mayor of Belleville upon its incorporation as a city in 1850.

A carpenter by the name of Kirkpatrick and Edwin Abend, an apprentice carpenter and head of the city's Savings Bank, constructed the building "without chairs, pulpit, glass, and lock work" for four hundred thirteen dollars. It was built on the present Franklin School site.

The little wooden building was dedicated before winter. Services were held every Sunday and school during the week.

Flickinger gave up his pastoral duties because his annual salary of one hundred fifty dollars did not meet living expenses for he and his family. Belleville village had four hundred residents in 1842. The congregation did not foresee expansion and they couldn't afford to give him a raise.

He retired to farming.

Later, he was a pastor in Johannesburg, Illinois. Founded Concordia congregation in Stookey Township, where the building was nicknamed the Flickinger Church.

Died in 1866 and buried in the church cemetery.

#### Information Sources:

1909 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Booklet of St. Paul's by Reverend Otto F. Pessel. Translation from the German by Lynn C. Koehler of our congregation, 1973

The Church History portion of the Saint Paul United Church of Christ Pastoral Position document, 1984

Moments in History pamphlets compiled by Archivist Alice Jerome for insert to St. Paul's Church Service Programs during the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year (1989)

Milestones of Our Heritage, St. Paul's publication celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, 1989. Proof copy.