

Edward Graf

Pastor 1861 – 1866

On October 13, 1861, the site of the first church, the Franklin School location, was sold for one hundred seventy-five dollars. Later, in November, 1864, the building was destroyed by fire.

Dedication of the new church, our present Heritage Hall and Chapel building, occurred on May 12, 1861. The cost of this second church building was four thousand seven hundred twenty-one dollars.

In January, 1864, Graf organized the Ladies Aid group, then known as the Frauen-Verein. This is St. Paul's oldest auxiliary organization being the forerunner of the Women's Day Fellowship.

The Ladies Aid organized St. Paul's first Sunday School that same January.

Graf, along with Dr. Carl Neubert, also organized the first choir at the church. A small pipe organ was purchased for three hundred sixty dollars.

He encouraged congregation members to join the cause of the North during the Civil War and many male members enlisted.

On June 1, 1865, St. Paul's held a community memorial service at the city park in memory of President Lincoln, who had been assassinated. The offering taken at that service was turned over to the Treasurer of the Lincoln Monument in Springfield, Illinois.

During Graf's tenure, church attendance ebbed and declined with spirituality always as the center of contention. Some of the congregation wanted to continue adherence to the old tradition-based service and others wanted a new era of spiritual freedom.

On January 18, 1866, Graf left St. Paul's Church.

Information Sources:

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

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

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