



Justus Jacob Balthasar

Pastor 1851 – 1852

Called to pastoral duties on February 8, 1851.

Under him, the church purchased land for three hundred seventy-five dollars. It was intended for future church construction. The lot was named the Roedelsberger Place. It was ninety feet by one hundred feet. It eventually became the location for our second church.

He introduced a new hymnal, the Rhein-Bavarian, ordering three hundred copies.

During his tenure, the pastorate and school were separated and the two existing teachers started to receive salaries. It evolved that either the expectations were too high for future school growth or the enlightenment which came in 1848 involved too little self-sacrifice of the congregation or left-over feelings of support for Reverend Wettle festered.

In that environment, Hoppe's salary of two hundred dollars was too little for living expenses. He demanded, rightfully at first, a raise in his salary because the school money that the pastor had earlier received now flowed to the teachers. The congregation could not or would not agree. The conversation turned to the pastor's resignation and such disagreement and quarrel resulted among the congregation that many council members were overthrown, members left in mass, and another group was thrown out. Complaints about peace disturbance and libel were even brought before the civil court and spread by newspapers and fliers were posted in the community.

Discouraged, Hoppe resigned on February 25, 1852 and went back to farming.

Pastor 1856 - 1857

Hoppe was called for the second time by the congregation and took up his post again on February 10, 1856. However, the deterioration once begun could not be stopped by his proven power. Once again, a teacher was hired, but after so many gloomy experiences, the parents preferred to send their children to the public school which Belleville had started in 1856. The church school was closed on April 1, 1857.

A melodeon was bought for the accompaniment of the hymns for one hundred and fifty dollars, but it was hardly used. The tithe collectors gave up their posts one after another, because no one wanted to give more contributions and they didn't want to allow themselves to be laughed at and ridiculed. Finally, the pastor was supposed to collect his own salary. As he rejected this as incompatible with his post, church services were completely discontinued and, on July 23, 1857 the church was rented for sixty dollars annually to the school board as a school building.

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)