

Theodore Klingsohr

Pastor 1859 – 1861

Klingsohr lived in Belleville. He was born in Bavaria in 1808. His wife was named Sophia.

A few administrators of St. Paul's (John Bieser, Christian Kaysing, Georg Brenner, Georg Heberer, Andreas Kissel, Friedrich Baetje, John Friedmann, Jacob Amelung, and Ernst Weissenborn) always tried something new to refloat the congregation.

Finally, along with other faithful members, a new church building began construction to the amount of four thousand seven hundred twenty-one dollars. The location was the church property formally known as the Roedelosberger Place at 115 West B Street in Belleville. It was forty by sixty feet in size. It became known as the St. Paul's Free Protestant Church of Belleville. The church was named after St. Paul's Church in Frankfurt on the Main in Germany where the first attempt had taken place to democratize the German government. It was built on the site of the present Franklin School.

Klingsohr took the helm of the church in December 1859.

The first church service and dedication was held on Pentecost, 1861.

He left later that year in the midst of distressing circumstances for the congregation, financially and nationally in nature, being that the Civil War had begun. The church was burdened with debts of two thousand six hundred and eighty-six dollars in liens and mortgage foreclosure.

The church council members (Heinrich Thebus, Fredrick Mohlmann, John Friedmann, Philipp Wild, Jakob Eisloffel, Friedrich Baetje, Sebastian Kraft, Henrich Kuhn, Peter Thies, and Nikolaus Rhein) succeeded in borrowing enough money to guarantee the immediate debt.

During this time, there was an attempt to untie the St. Paul's and Zion congregations. The Lutheran minister preached twice in St. Paul's and several documents were exchanged. The attempt failed.

He served during the Civil War as the Chaplain for the 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. His address was listed as "Alton" and he was mustered out on August 6, 1864.

In 1864, he served for a short time as the pastor of the St. Paul's German Evangelical Church in Columbia, IL.

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

Research by:

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William P. Shannon IV, Curator, St. Clair County Historical Society, August, 2016

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