The second pastor was Philip Koehler who served from 1858 to 1859. About 1859, it was decided to build the first church. The land was donated by Jacob Grimm.

The first resident pastor was Pastor C. Gausewitz, Sr., who had immigrated to America in 1859. He and his wife stayed with Louis Rusch and Jacob Grimm families for long periods of time.

In the year 1860-61 the members of the St. John on the west side of Reedsville decided to dissolve. The majority joined our congregation. October 7, 1861, we decided to incorporate under the name — St. John and St. James Evangelical Lutheran congregation.

Plans were made for a parsonage. In 1865 it was complete. Pastor Marcus Braun who came in 1864 was the first to enjoy the new home.

He was succeeded by Pastor Albert Kluge in 1866, who remained until 1880. The membership had outgrown our little church. There were more than 70 members.

The present church building was erected in 1870. Everyone helped as much as he could to keep the cost down. They hauled bricks with their wagons.

In 1860 Adolph Toepel became the pastor and served until 1887. During his time the first resident teacher was called. On January 29, 1881, it was decided to build a teacherage.

Pastor G. Philip Brenner came to be the pastor in 1887. A new parsonage was built in 1888 for $1950 by F. Stelling. This is the present parsonage.

On January 6, 1896, we decided to buy the west side cemetery.

In 1898 it was necessary to purchase a new heating system. So much excavating needed to be done. Also in that year, redecorating was done.

November 27, 1904, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the new church.

In 1907 Pastor Henry Koch began the longest ministry which lasted until 1934. September 30, 1907, it was decided to have an English service once a month with German services on other Sundays.

In 1908 colored church windows were installed and electric lights came into use.

In 1919 the parsonage and teacherage were modernized with electricity.

In 1930 we observed the 50th anniversary of the church. It was redecorated, new linoleum was installed and the lighting was improved.

In 1934 Pastor H. H. Eckert came to minister to the spiritual needs. In 1949 Pastor Elwood Habermann was installed. Pastor Wendland was here from 1954 to 1962. He was followed by Pastor Harvey Heckendorf from 1962 to 1967 and Pastor J. S. Hering from 1968 to 1970. The present pastor is Harlyn J. Kuschel.

In 1962 both the teacherage and parsonage were remodeled. The steeple was redone in 1971 and a new heating system installed in 1972. Then in 1975 the complete interior of the church was redecorated and rewired.

German language services were gradually reduced and finally dropped in January 1971. The evening worship services were added in the summer of 1973.

St. John, St. James Lutheran School

At the time of the founding of the congregation, there was no Christian day school. With the enlarging of the parish due to the closing of the St. John Church on the west side, a full time facility for the Christian training of the children was needed.

In May of 1867 the congregation decided to create a school fund. Each member was requested to contribute 25c for the acquiring of school equipment. In 1874 Pastor Albert Kluge began to teach about 30 students. A small frame building which stood on the sight of the present parsonage served as both church and school. Slates were used instead of
blackboards. Long benches with six inch boards extending out from the back on top served well as both church pews and school desks. All subjects were taught in German. Many of the early Lutheran schools were in fact called “German Schools.”

It was not until 1887 that our congregation decided that both English and German were to be taught in school. Until 1889 our pastors also served St. Peter’s of Collins. During those early years, many of the children from Collins walked the distance to our church and school. When the present church building was completed in 1879, the school was moved to approximately its present location, south of the church.

Pastoral duties often called Pastor Adolph Toepel from the classroom during the school day. When this happened, the school was left in charge of honor students. These students would list the names of those who misbehaved on a slate and pastor would mete out punishment to the offenders when he returned. Needless to say, this system was not a happy one. Some days the names listed on the slate included every student in school.

The members of the congregation agreed that the pastor should be freed from his full time teaching duties. Mr. Henry Pautz of Hika, Wisconsin, became the first resident teacher. Members moved him and his belongings in express wagons. Teacher Pautz served from 1881 to 1887.

Mr. Arnold Luehthy served from 1887-1907 and was to teach the first English courses in our school.

On January 5, 1903, our voters approved plans for a new school. Work progressed rapidly and the new school was dedicated on November 22, 1903. This is the two-story brick building that today constitutes the oldest section of our school. Total cost of the building was a little over $4,000.

Soon after the new school was built, enrollment reached the 90 mark and a second teacher was added to the staff.

By the late 1940’s the enrollment had outgrown our two-room school. In 1949 committees began to work on laying plans for an addition to our school. On May 7, 1950, the congregation voted to accept the plans of Edgar A. Stuberhagen, Sheboygan, and voted to build immediately. On August 13, 1950, the cornerstone was laid. In July 1951 the building was completed. It was dedicated on August 16, 1951. Total cost was $72,000. Pastor of the congregation at the time of this major building project was Rev. Elwood Habermann, the school principal was Mr. Earl Rolloff.

In 1957, when the congregation celebrated its centennial, enrollment had risen to 159, taught by four teachers. By 1960 there were 154 children in grades 1 to 8 and an additional 20 in spring kindergarten. Again the congregation had to plan for expansion of its school, this time under the direction of Pastor J. J. Wendland and Principal Arvid Kramer.

At the annual meeting in 1961 the church council was authorized to select a building planning committee. The architectural firm of Sauter and Seaborn of Appleton was engaged. Since it was found not to be structurally feasible to add a second story to the 1951 addition, two rooms were added to the south of the school at a cost of about $443,000. A fifth teacher also was hired. On September 24, 1961, the new addition was dedicated and by October the rooms were ready for occupancy.

For five years in the early 1950’s, the congregation was served by two male teachers. This arrangement was made permanent in 1960. After Mr. and Mrs. Ray Behmner had accepted calls to Crete, Illinois, the voters resolved to call two male teachers because of increasing administrative duties. This led to the calling of Arvid Kramer as principal and Earl Brassow as the second male teacher. Following Mr. Kramer’s departure in 1966, Mr. Brassow was called to serve as principal, a position he still occupies today.