CHURCHES AND CEMETERIES
SPRINGDALE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Submitted by Norma Baker

The first Norwegian Lutheran religious service in Springdale was held at the home of Thore Spaanem in an outdoor meeting under a large tree on March 27, 1850, with the Reverend J. W. C. Dietrickson from Koshkonong conducting the service to an audience which had gathered from great distances. The service was largely attended by Norwegians in the surrounding settlements.

At this first meeting, 18 children were baptized. Among them were Andrew Grinde, Betsy Grassdal, Halvor Sorensen and Soren Sorensen. Older children also were catechised at this service.

Ole and Knud Sorensen were among the charter members of the Springdale Lutheran Church, which organized on December 1, 1852. The first church building was erected in 1861; the spire and bell were added in 1877, which remain today. The present church was built in 1895.

When the present Springdale Lutheran church was built, Andrew Grinde drove a team of horses to Milwaukee, and brought back the church bell. In 1883, the Springdale congregation became a member of the then organized parish of the Springdale, East Blue Mounds and Vermont congregation until 1963.

Affiliated with the church during the past years have been the Springdale Ladies Society, the Young Ladies Aid; later reorganized as the Luther League and sectional Dorcas societies.

During 1853-1888, the congregation was a member of the Norwegian Synod, and from 1888 to 1890, a member of the Anti-Missouri Synod. From 1890 to 1917, the congregation was a member of the United Lutheran Church, and in 1917, became a member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. On June 14, 1946, the name was changed to the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

On January 1, 1961, Springdale became a member of the American Lutheran Church because of a merg-

er of several Lutheran synods. In 1963, the association of Springdale Lutheran Church with Vermont Lutheran and East Blue Mounds came to an end. East Blue Mounds closed its doors, and Vermont realigned with Black Earth. Springdale then joined with Immanuel Lutheran Church of Mt. Horeb on January 31, 1963.

On January 1, 1988, Springdale became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the uniting of several Lutheran churches into a new Lutheran Church body.


In March of 1996, Pastor Mark Sabin tendered his resignation to the parish, and on July 1, 1996, Springdale Lutheran Church took a giant step forward by voting to dissolve its 33-year partnership with Immanuel Lutheran Church, be self-sufficient and hire its own pastor.

Pastor Matthew Dollhausen accepted our call, and became our new pastor on August 25, 1996, with the rite of ordination and installation held at Springdale.

In July of 1997, the congregation voted to purchase five acres of land adjoining the present church property to the north and east from Norman and Gwen Bathamier.

May Springdale Lutheran Church continue to grow and proclaim God’s love, being a constant voice for Christ into the 21st Century.

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**Zwingli United Church of Christ**

Submitted by Walter Brink

The Mt. Vernon Swiss Reformed Church and its congregation date back to 1888. In February, 1912, under the leadership of Reverend Elliker, the Zwingli Mt. Vernon congregation, consisting of about 20 families, mostly Swiss farmers and cheesemakers, was formed. In the spring of 1912, Reverend Fred Hoernemann accepted a call to serve Mt. Vernon, in addition to two other churches. He lived in Belleville. An old horse, Billy, provided the transportation. Reverend Hoernemann’s yearly salary was $700, and he was supplied with living quarters.

Without a suitable place to worship in Mt. Vernon, the first services were held in the church of the Evangelical Association, which was located two miles east of Mt. Vernon at the intersection of County Highway G and Messerschmidt Road. On July 13, 1913, the church was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. For the next year, the Zwingli congregation used the Baptist Church, which had been organized in 1869 to worship in, on Jackson Street in Mt. Vernon. The Baptist Church was destroyed by fire in 1954. (Note: A marker was erected at the site.)

On November 16, 1913, the Zwingli Swiss Reformed congregation voted to build its own church. In the spring of 1914, construction began on the land which had been donated by August Koch. With the donated labor of church members and $5,437, the church was built and completed in February of 1915.

Reverend Hoernemann was followed by pastors Walter Grosshuesch, George Grether, Herman Lehman, Walter Clausing, Zane Pautz, George Bohner, Terry Williams, Paul Scheele, James Eckblad, Brooke Wichliff, Douglas Pierce, Barbara Rudolph (from Germany) and the present pastor, Jeff Sartain.

After several denominational mergers had taken place, on June 25, 1957, the Mt. Vernon Church became known as Zwingli United Church of Christ. The church presently draws its members from Mt. Vernon and the surrounding communities.

The congregation of Zwingli United Church of Christ observed its golden anniversary on October 20, 1963, with Zane Pautz as the pastor. A dinner was served by the Women’s Guild after the morning service. Mrs. Lawrence Anderson, Blue Mounds, made the “church cake.”

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**Springdale Snippets**

It was reported in 1900 that the Riley Church collected money to convert Italy to Protestantism.
The Women's Guild serves dinner after the morning service. From left to right: Mrs. Henry (Alma) Moe, Mrs. Carl (Eleanor) Erb, Mrs. Carl (Clara) Wittwer, Mrs. Arthur (Louise) Kollath, Mrs. Violet Bigler, Mrs. Marion (Mary Ann) King, Mrs. Noel (Audrey) Way, Mrs. Mound (Emma) Sowl, Mrs. Frieda Schmid, Mrs. Garfield (Delores) Stamm, Mrs. Walter (Hilda) Losnegger, Mrs. Herbert (Hedwig) Hankel and Mrs. Walter (Ruth) Brink.

On July 29, 1979, an addition was built onto the original church. In 1940, because of deterioration, the original steeple had to be removed. In the summer of 1995, an entirely new roof was added to replace the old tin roof, and in September a beautiful new steeple was built and mounted onto the new roof of the church. The steeple was built by a 35-year member of the church, John Beutler. On September 12, 1995, Dave Nelson hoisted the new steeple up with his crane and Wayne Klosterman and Doug Dahl placed and secured the new steeple. The project was the last work of John Beutler, who passed away on March 27, 1996.
OAK HILL CEMETERY

The Oak Hill Cemetery is located at the southwest corner of the intersections of Highways G and J and Kollath Road in Section 26 in the Town of Springdale. The cemetery is the original site of the first McPherson School. In 1847, the acre of land was deeded to the cemetery association. The cemetery used to be referred to as the "Scotch Cemetery." There had been a Scotch Presbyterian Church about 2½ miles east of the cemetery on Highway G.

Previous to 1994, the last burial had been in 1952. Recently, lots have been sold in the cemetery. There have been four burials in the last three years, one in 1994, one in 1995 and two in 1997.

In 1996, the Dane County Historical Society erected a sign honoring the Scottish settlers. This sign reads:

PIONEER SCOTTISH SETTLEMENT

"Highland Clearance" and 300% hikes in farm rent prompted many Scottish farmers to sail to America in the mid-1800s. Some displaced Scots settled in Springdale and Verona townships on both sides of the Military Ridge. This rural community known as Scotch Lane established a Presbyterian Church, a post office, and the Henderson and McPherson/McGregor Schools. Nearly 100 families had settled here by 1870, some of whom rest in this early "Scottish Cemetery."

Members of this community were prominent in state and county government, including County Board Chairman James McPherson and Frank Stewart; State Legislators Thomas and John Stewart and Joseph Henderson; State Senator and Secretary of State John S. Donald, the "Father of Wisconsin's Roads Law."

In later years, neighboring Swiss, German and Norwegian families acquired many of these farms. Few Scottish descendants remain on the homestead.

"From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad."

Robert Burns

Some of the names of the families buried in this small country cemetery are appearing in this book. The readable headstones have names for the following families on them: Rashford, Robinson, Gausmann, Messerschmidt, Regge, Niehus, Adamson, Beard, Brink, Miles, Henderson, Morch, Kollath, Weise, Wright and Lester.

SPRINGDALE LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY

Submitted by Norma Baker

The first Norwegian cemetery in Springdale, and the oldest in Western Dane County, is located in Section 8 on a high elevation in the northwestern section of Springdale, and at that time, close to the first Norwegian settlement of the township.

This cemetery was established in 1847, a year after the first Norwegian settlement had begun. It is unknown who was the first person buried there. The first interment record is that of Ingebrit Berge who died September 7, 1849. He was the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. John I. Berge. There are more than 50 members of pioneer families interred there.

The location of many of the graves was originally marked with simple wooden markers that soon decayed and gradually disappeared, and with the tilling of the soil over this burial ground, the exact location of the graves is unknown. This burial place continued in use until the year 1863, when a cemetery was established adjoining the Springdale Lutheran Church, located about one mile south.

In 1900, a movement was started by A. K. Sorensen to establish a permanent monument to be erected at the original burial place. Funds were raised and a monument was erected there on September 15, 1901. The monument is 17½ feet high. On the east face of this monument is engraved the following Biblical passage, "I am the resurrection and life. He that believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live." On the north side is found the following inscription, "The first Norwegian Cemetery — Erected in 1901 to the memory of those buried here from 1847 to 1863." On the west side is the inscription, "Among the fifty or more dead buried here are the following:"

Kari Berge Sorensen • Harald Brager • Soren Sorensen • Kari Lunde • Gustave Sorensen • Anton S. Lunde • Ingebrit Berge • Tore Grasdalen • John Berge • Dora Kalskat • Johanna Urdahl • Ole A. Lee • Kari Bingham • Anna Levorson • Marie Bingham • Marie Levorson • Annie Bingham • Ole M. Skindrud • Ole D. Shuvvet • Olea M. Skindrud • Ole Thompson • Olene Skindrud • Hermond Soren • Andrew Bohle • John Nelson • Johan H. Hoff • Knud Spaunum • Arne Roang • Ole Spaunum • Halvor Roang • Aslang Spaunum • Beota Roang • Marget Grasdalen • Knut E. Bang • Halvor Grasdalen •

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