



Zion

**Built on the
Cross of
Christ**

Basement to Attic

July 30, 2017



“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne”

Psalm 97: 2

Basements and attics, the two places where we often store the treasures which bring back memories of years gone by.

The exterior of Zion has changed very little over the 100 years. Most structures built today have basements walls that form the foundation for the structure above it. But that was not how Zion was built. It was built upon a strong foundation that sloped slowly downward toward the sanctuary or altar area.



Handicap Ramp

Great care was taken to not change that foundation even when changes did occur to the exterior of the church. The first alteration of the exterior came when a ramp was added to the south side of the church in July 1982.

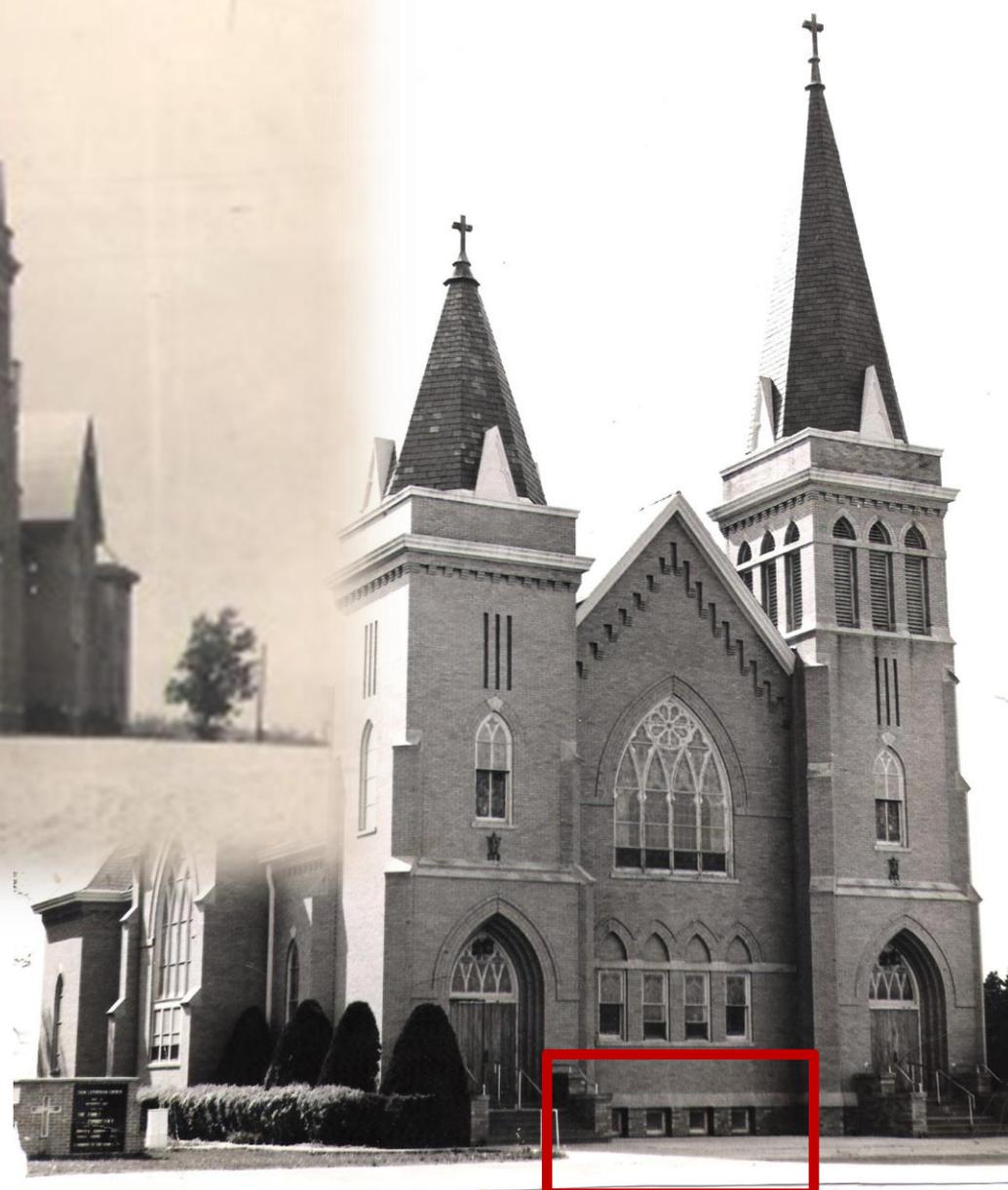
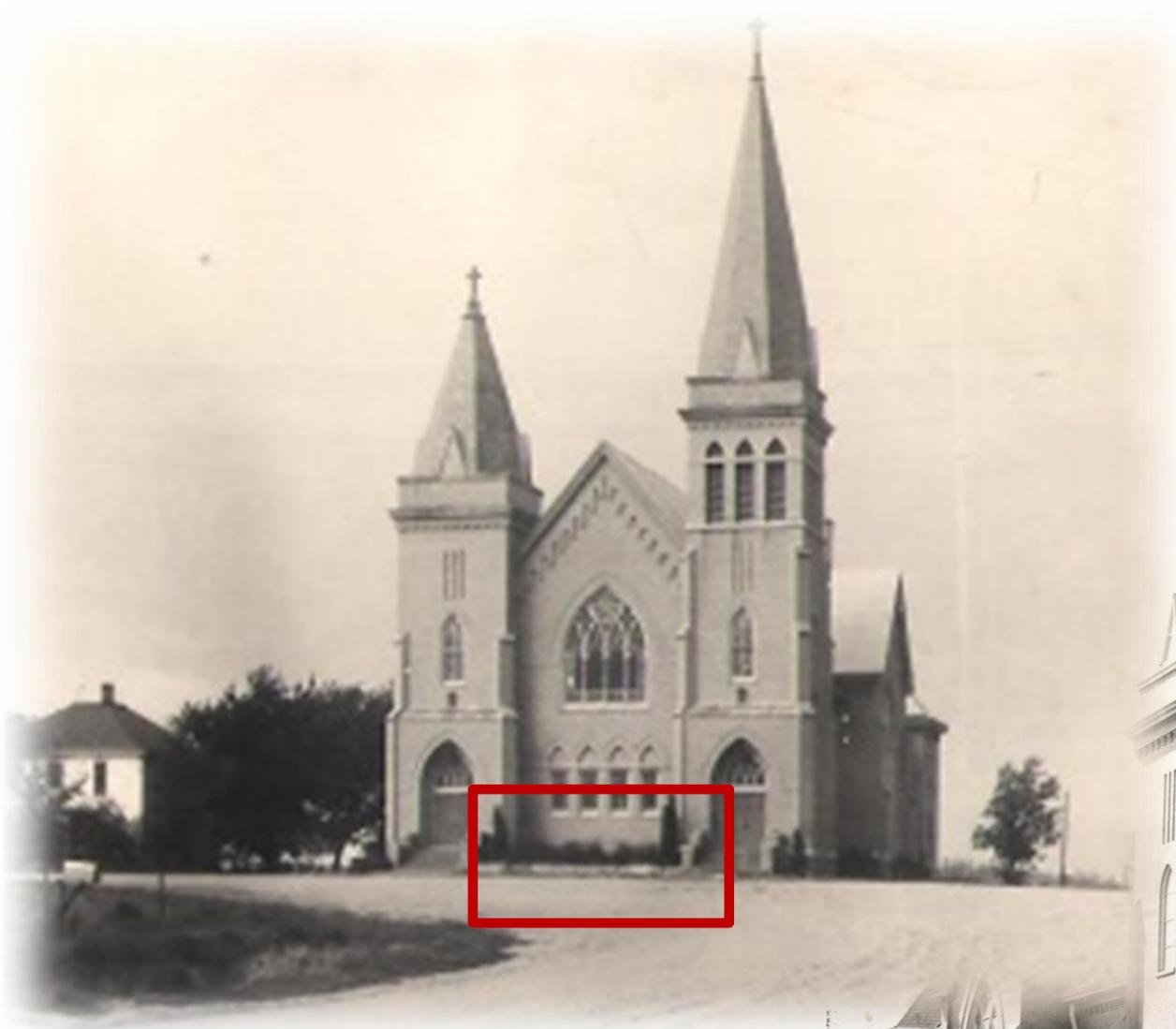


Fellowship Room 2013

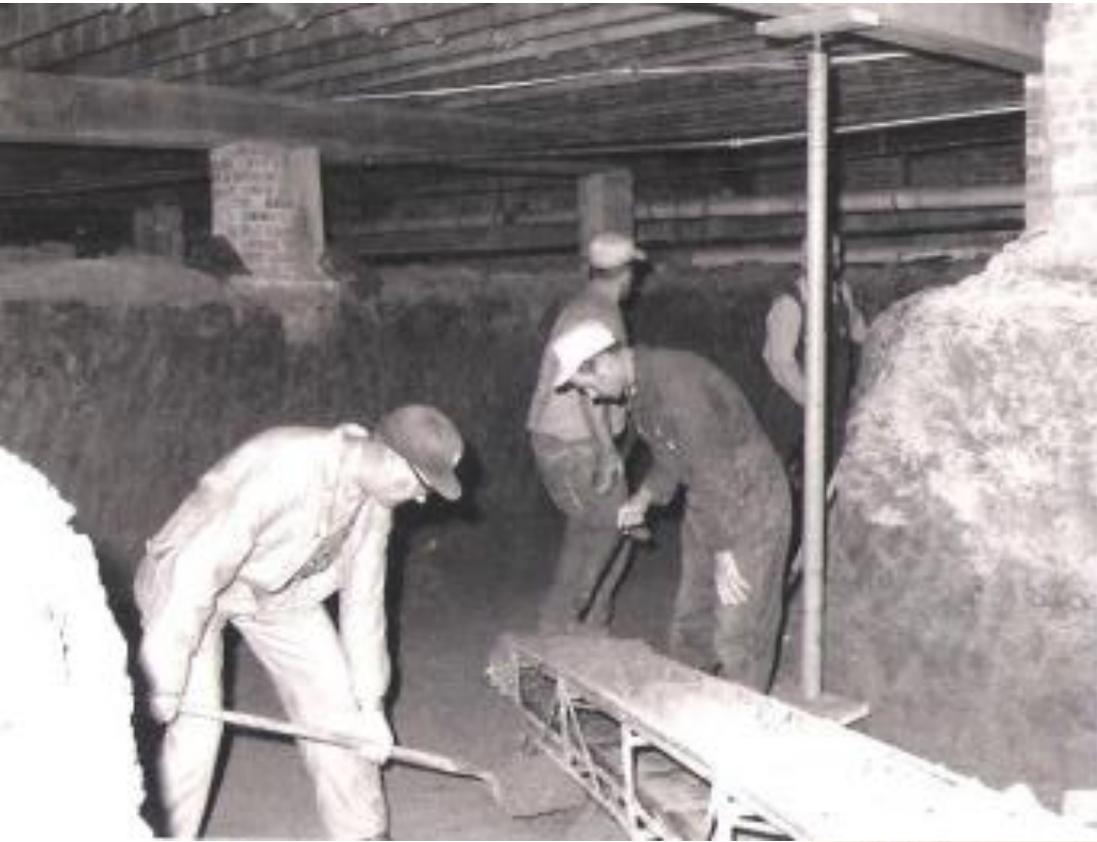
The most major change to the exterior of the church has been the addition of the fellowship room on that same south side in 2013. It made it possible to replace that outdoor ramp with an interior ramp that was protected from the weather elements. When designing this addition, the building committee main focus was how to provide a fellowship space that was easily accessible to ALL directly from the church while not altering the walls or foundation of that 1917 church.

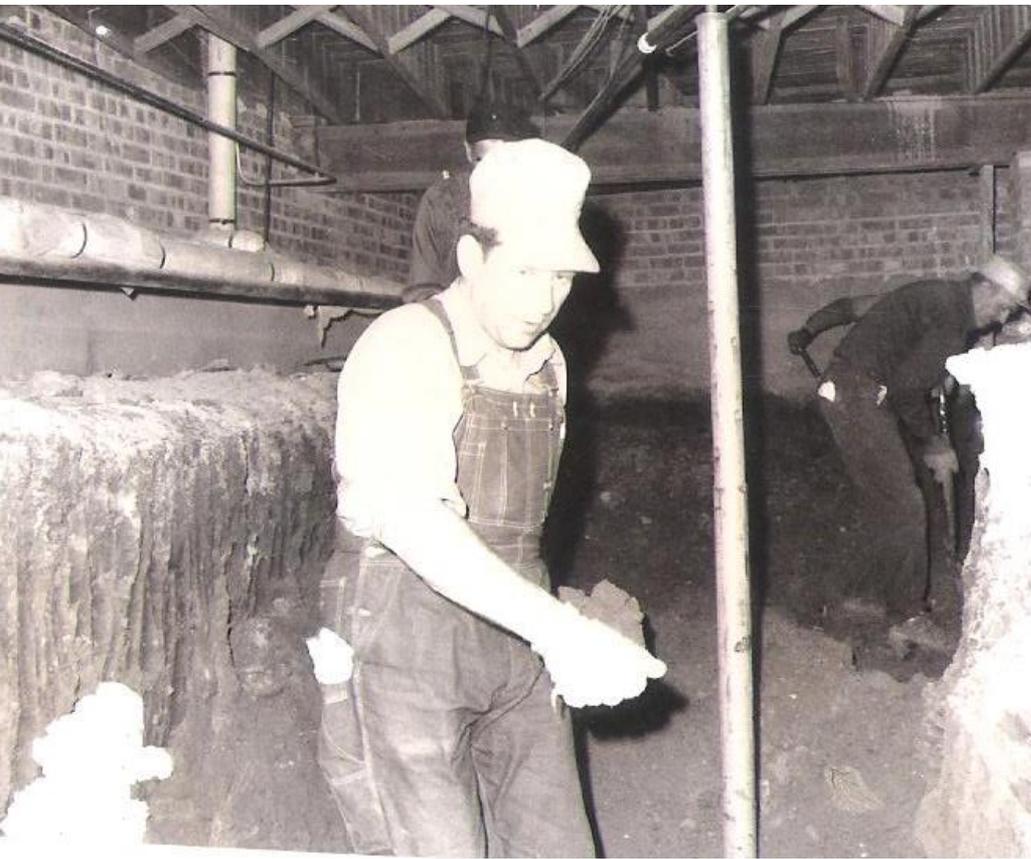


So let's start at that ground level and work our way up to those crosses and see what memories and treasures we can uncover. For 54 years, the only large gathering space in the church was in the nave, the main seating area of the church. That changed in 1971 which is when those four small windows (shown on the next slide) at the ground level became important. Zion members voted in July of 1971 to add a small basement under the east end of the church. The bushes that originally went from one door to the next in front of the church at some point were removed exposing the windows at ground level.

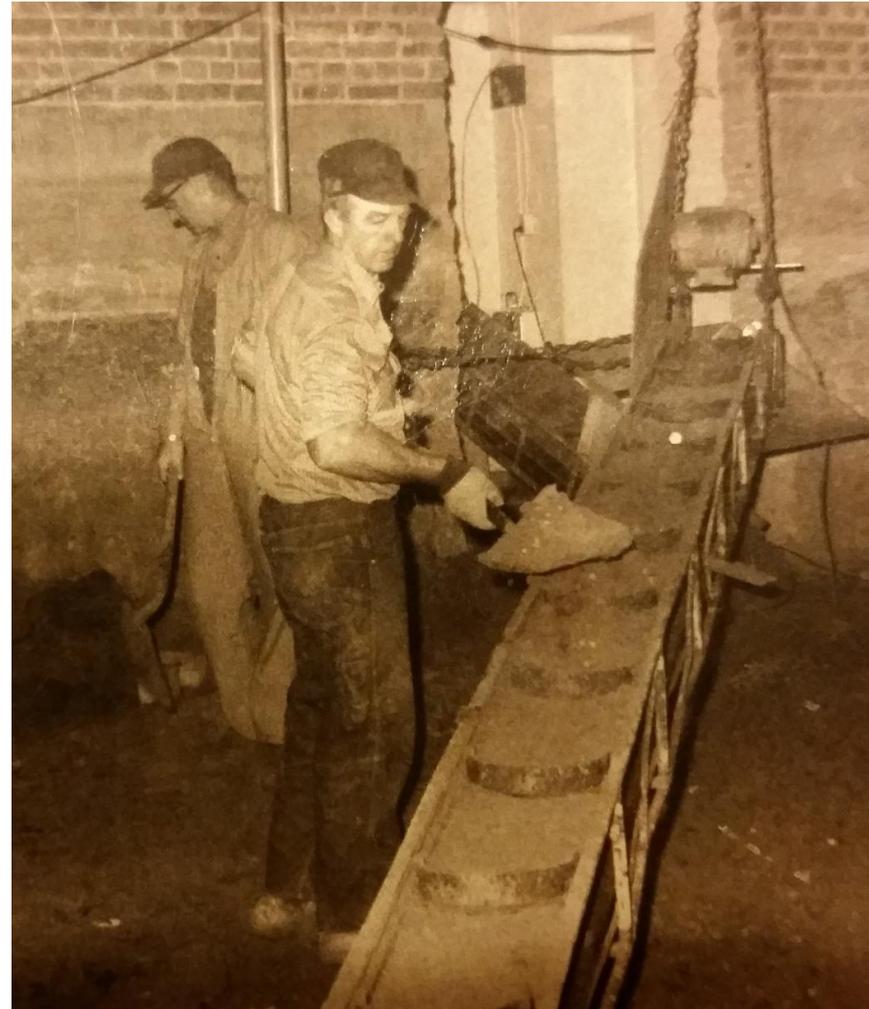


Prebyl Construction submitted a bid of \$15,500 to put in the basement but that did not include the removal of the dirt. Prebyl did not want to be responsible for disturbing the foundation. Prebyl was hired with the understanding that the removal of the dirt would be done by the congregation members. However they were not allowed to remove any of the foundation, therefore, nothing larger than a small wheel barrow could be used for that dirt removal. But Zion volunteers knew that if there was a will, they would find a way. So strong backs and shovels went to work. The dirt was put on this conveyor belt which moved the dirt out one of those small windows to a tractor loader and then to a truck.





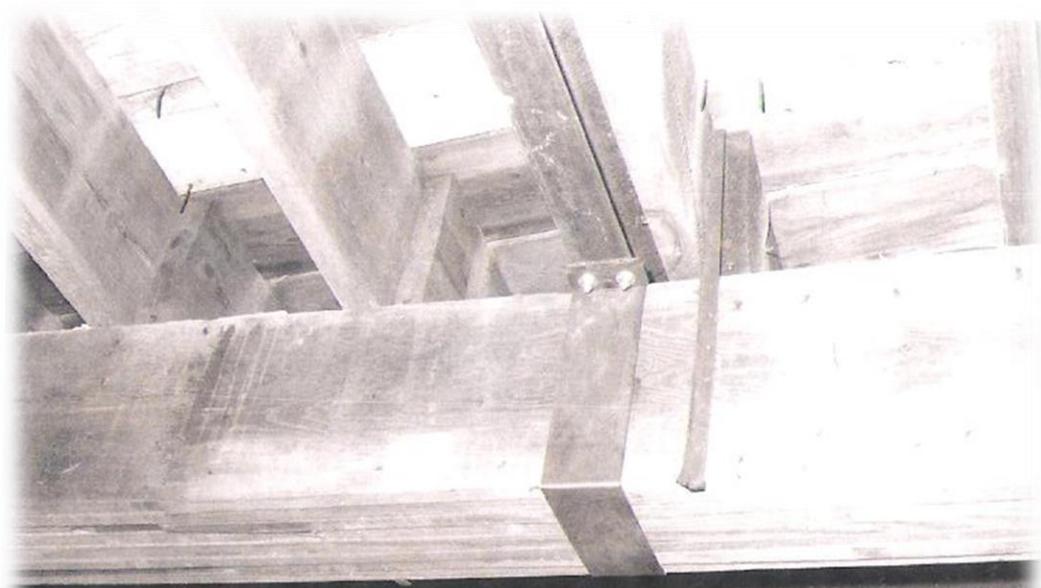
All that wet clay dirt was removed one shovel at a time although Prebyl made sure they did not get within 3 feet of that strong foundation those German immigrants had built in 1916. Digging out that basement was not without controversy. It has been said that people would drive by at night knowing that the church would collapse into the hole!



Once all the beams were in place to support the church above, the walls began to go up. The two restrooms that were built in the lower level were the first ones in the church. Outhouses were the only accommodations available until 1948 when the parish hall was built with the first indoor facilities.

While digging, the men came to these two poles, ones that can be seen still today in the basement. These two poles were put into place in 1916 and support the balcony still today. They were left exactly as they found them. While digging, the men could have kept going the whole length of the church but because of the slope in the floor above them, a step would have had to be created every so often so you wouldn't hit your head. It was felt that steps would potentially be dangerous so they stopped digging about 6 feet west of the poles. Members again were skeptical and many feared the balcony would collapse with the exposed support poles.







In women's restroom

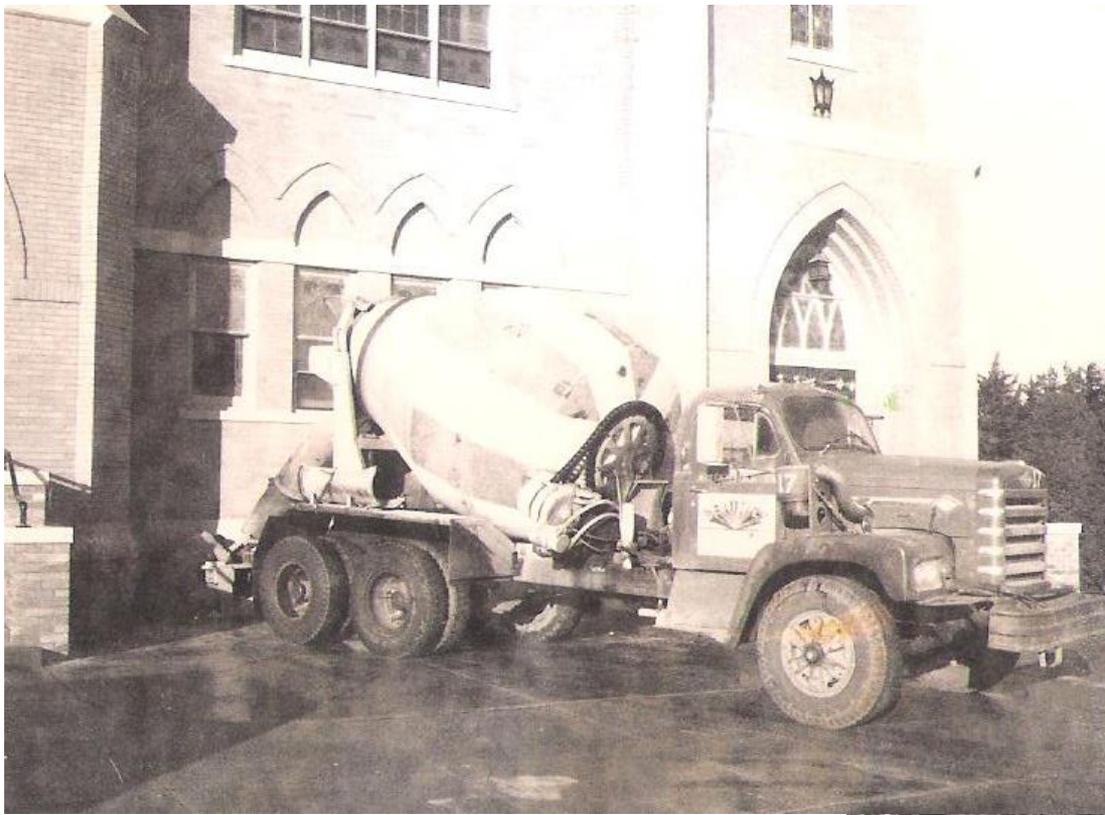


In gathering room

**Two support poles for the balcony
in the current basement**



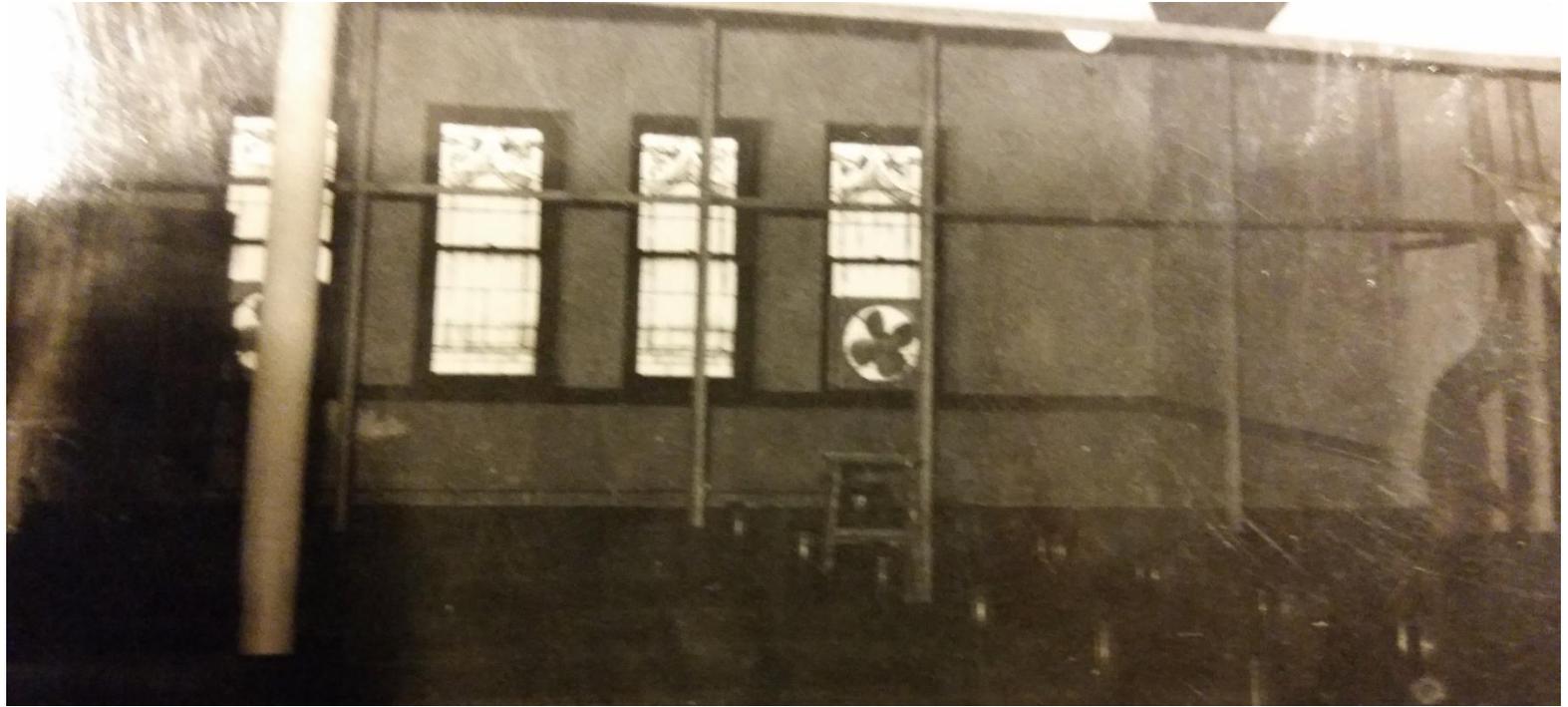
Don't worry you balcony sitters, you are on solid ground. The forefathers of this church made sure of that. No one knows how far down the builders of this church put these two poles. How they managed to get them down that far, who knows.



Once all the dirt was out and the walls were built, that same window was used for the cement work of the interior floor. And of course, the men couldn't forget that last cement work on the outside.



An entrance to that lower level had to be created. On the main floor the two tiered pews under the four windows, where youth who had been confirmed often sat, were removed and the stairway went in. Those pews were moved to the schoolhouse across the road. The handicap accessible restroom that is currently in the unity room was not added until 1983 and has recently been redone.





The space created on the ground level was designated as a mother's room with windows looking into the sanctuary and an audio connection making it possible to both view and listen to the service.

Mother's Room



The unity room also became and is still the place where caskets are placed prior to the beginning of a funeral. Prior to 1971, caskets were placed in the north narthex and the only entrance used for funerals was the south entrance. The first funeral that took place within these walls was that of Jurgen Fossler on September 1, 1917, a 5th generation ancestor of the Fossler families that still currently attend Zion. Jurgen was 33 years old at the time of his death. The land for the cemetery was given to Zion Church in 1875. The care of the cemetery is under the legally incorporated Cemetery Association which was formed in 1948.

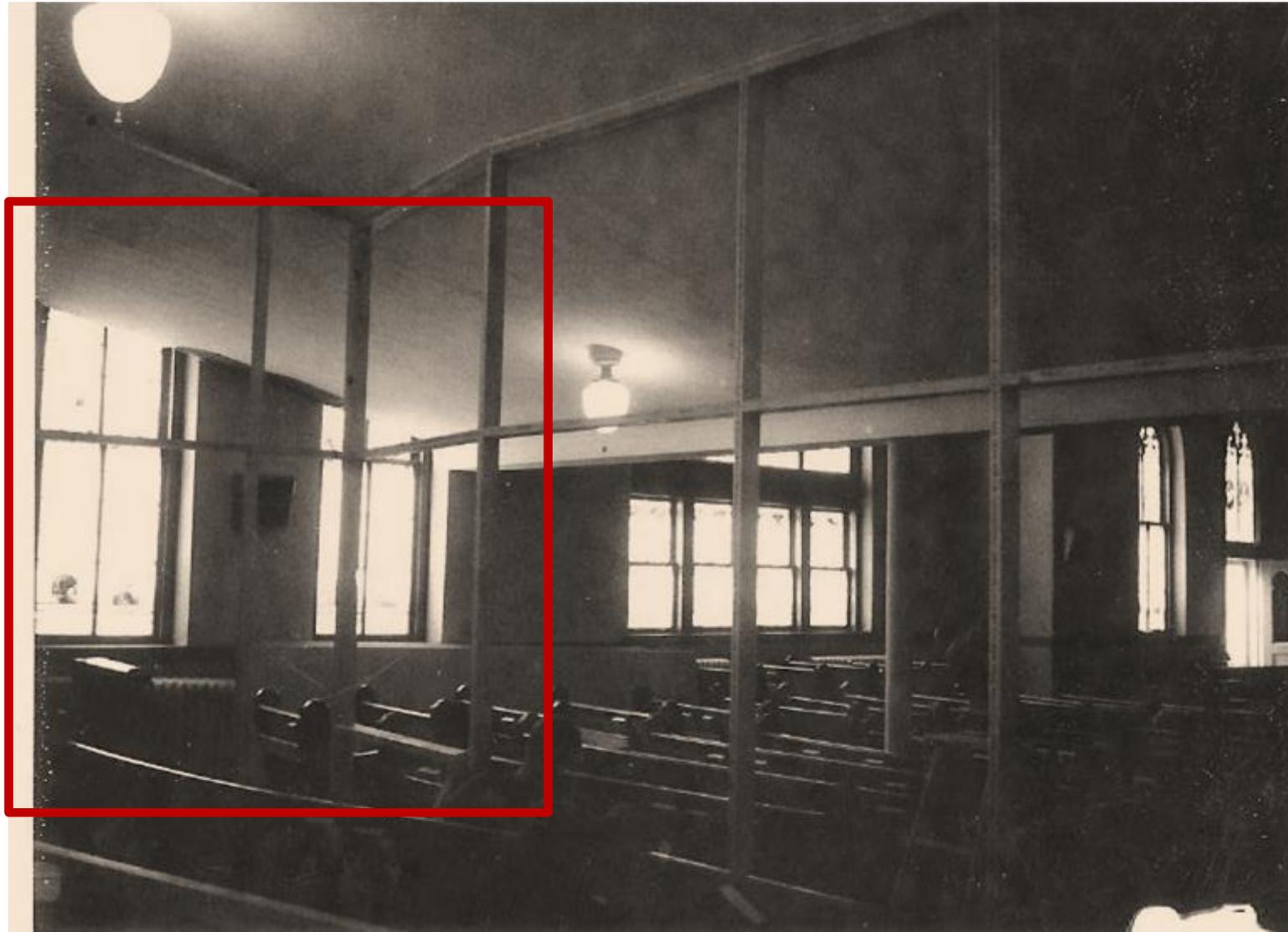


First funeral
Jurgen Fossler



This basement space served many purposes for over 40 years such as family prayer services before funerals, a larger space for council members to gather, choir practices, and adult Sunday School.

Several of these activities now take place in the fellowship room which is now accessible through doors that took the place of these two windows. The window on the left in the red rectangle was the first to be replaced by a door when the outdoor ramp was constructed in 1983. The window on the right became a second door when the fellowship room was added.



Those two windows are the smaller, outer windows shown on the next slide, which can be enjoyed in the fellowship room. This room has made it much easier for all to have fellowship with others, attend adult Sunday School or have family prayer services after losing a loved ones.



Crown of life

The 100 year old windows in that area serve to remind us of the promise given to all believers in Revelations.



“Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life”

Revelation 2: 10

Children's Church



That basement space however has definitely not been forgotten, it has just been repurposed.





“Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

Mark 10: 14

It has recently undergone a transformation thanks to the guidance of our current “painting pastor”, volunteer painters, and carpenter Leonard Buhr who built the children’s table. Pastor Jer has been adding all the finishing details and it is wonderful. It is now a space that can be enjoyed by our youngest Zion members during a “Children’s Church” time during the service. Wonder what treasures the children will find in that new wishing well recently built by Pastor?



Luke 6: 47-49

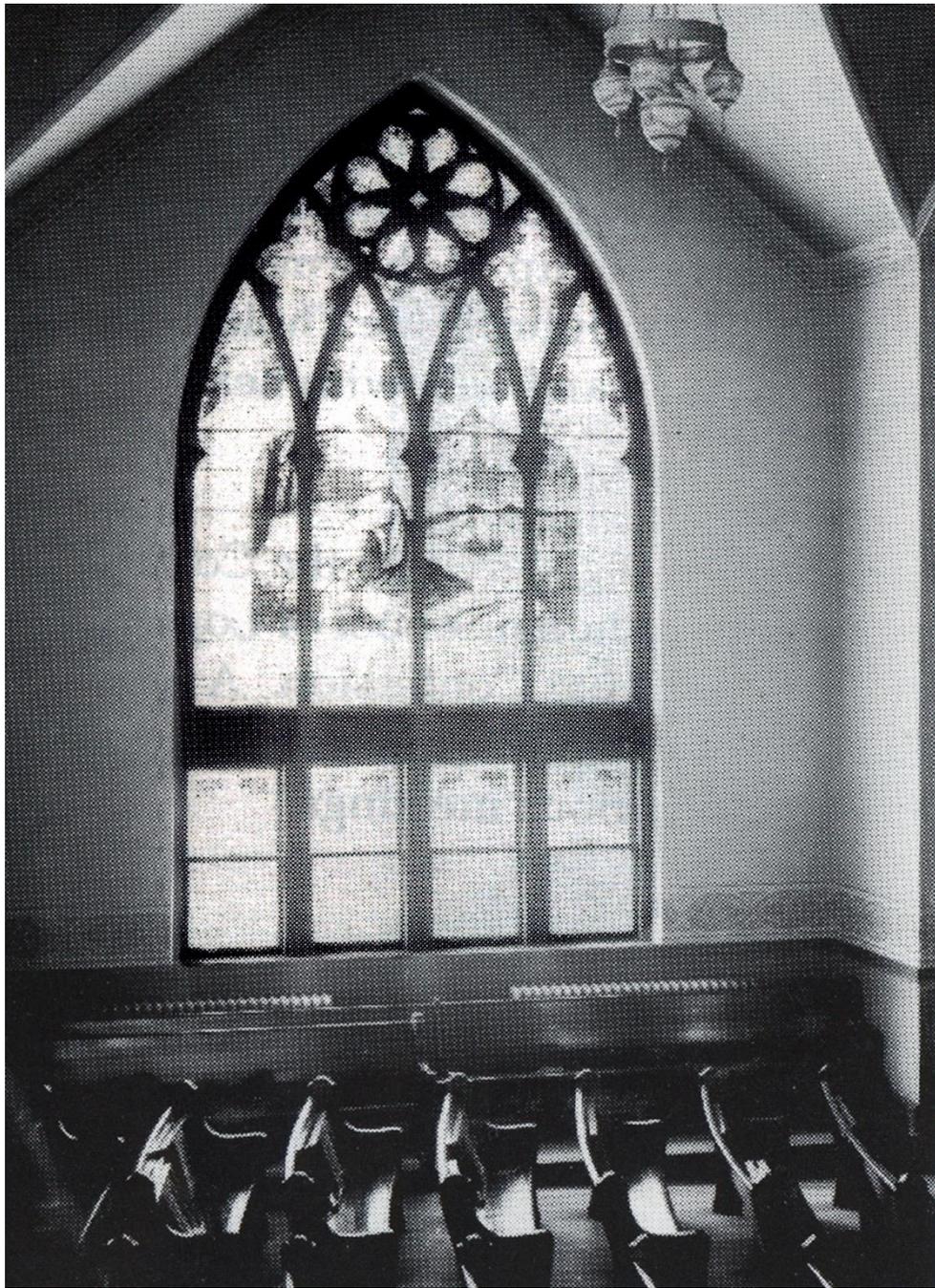
47 “Everyone who comes to Me and hears My word and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like:

48 he is like a man building a house, who dug in deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when the flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

49 “But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.”

Zion has never been challenged by a flood but there have been a few times when tornadic winds threatened its walls. But by the grace of God they were strong enough to remain standing. Let us celebrate the strong foundation we've been given, both in this 100 year old building and in our faith.

Just like the exterior of the church, the main gathering space of the interior has only seen a few structural changes. Besides the unity room being added, the pews under the windows and the choir loft shape were changed as seen in earlier recognition Sundays.



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Heath Griffith

Wm. H. Reents

Harry Fox

Call 107 Beatrice

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BY INVITATION

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
EXODUS: 20—3 THRU 17

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do

any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

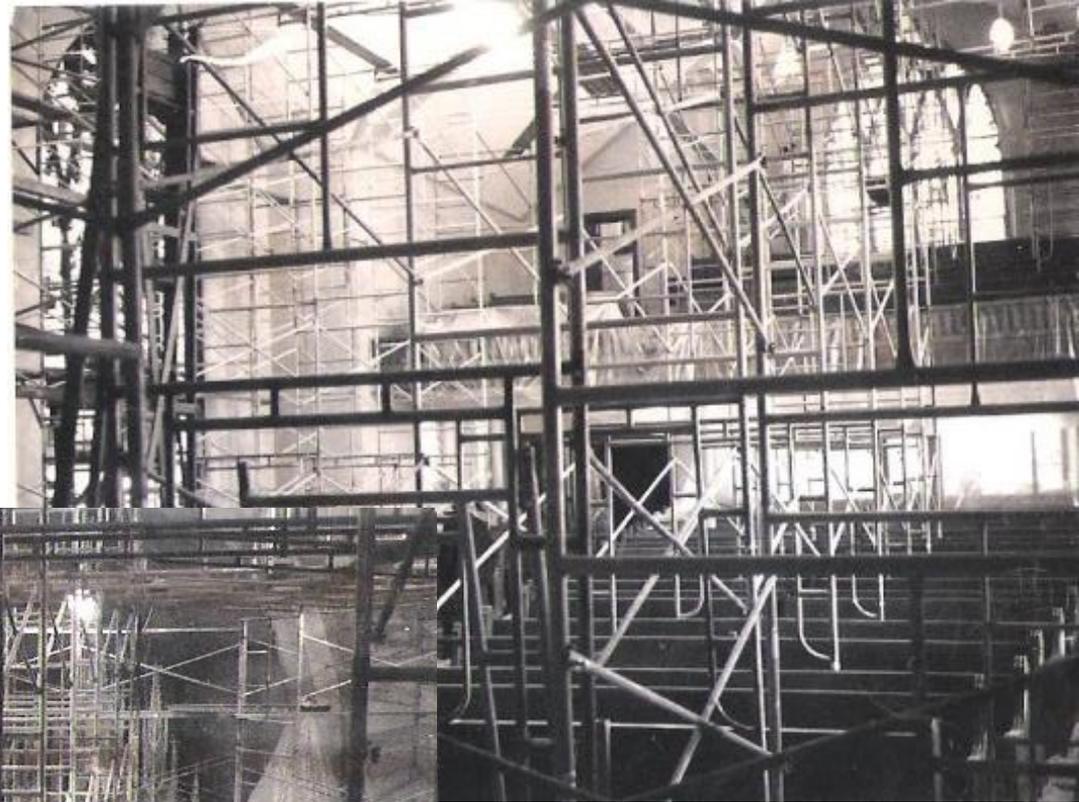
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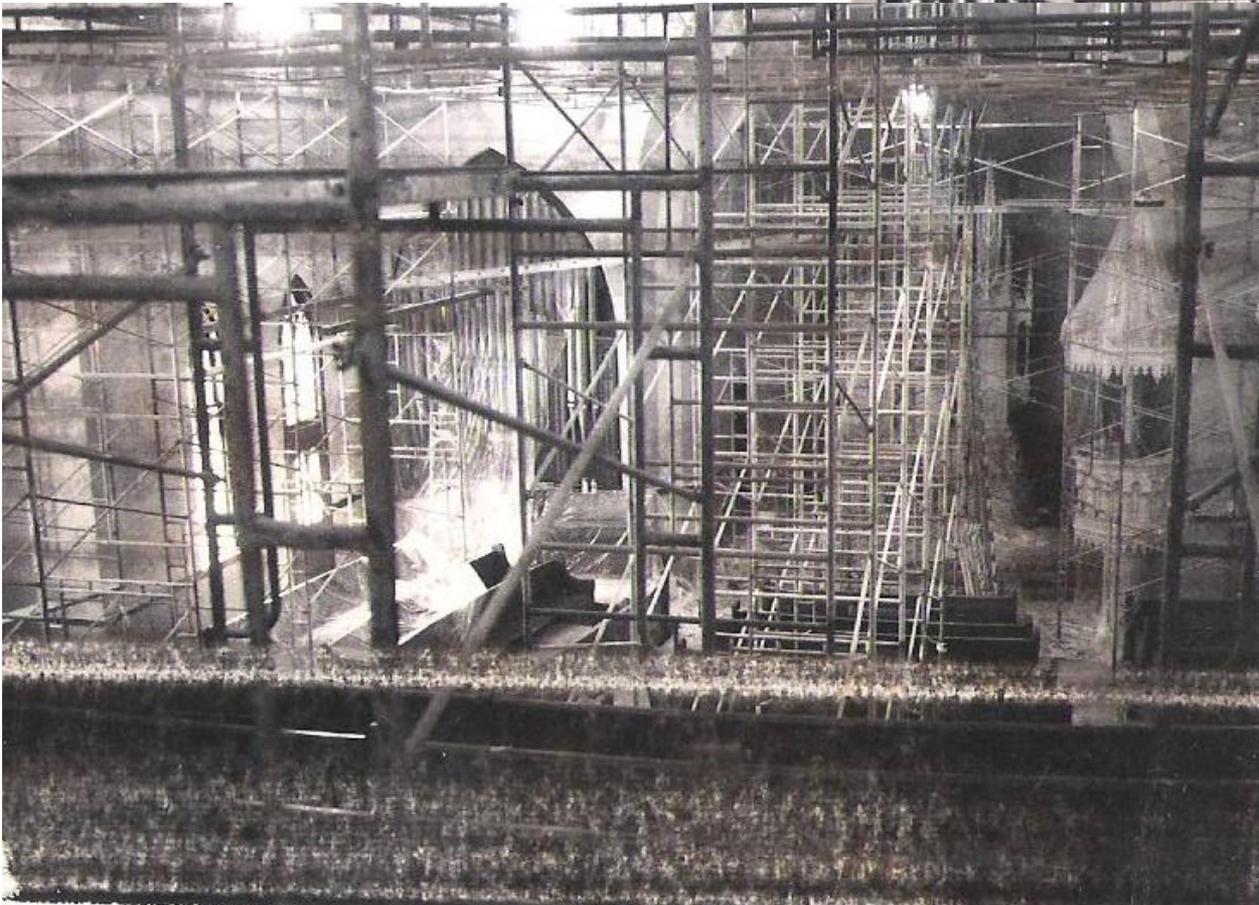
Handheld fans with the Ten Commandments on back

One of the treasures found while cleaning out some areas around the church reminds us of how blessed we are to now have an air conditioned church. The early Zion members had those Commandments literally right in front of their faces as they had to use these fans to cool themselves off during those summer months. Small fans, large fans, and ceiling fans were added throughout the years to aid in the cooling before air conditioning was finally added in 2011.

Repainting the interior

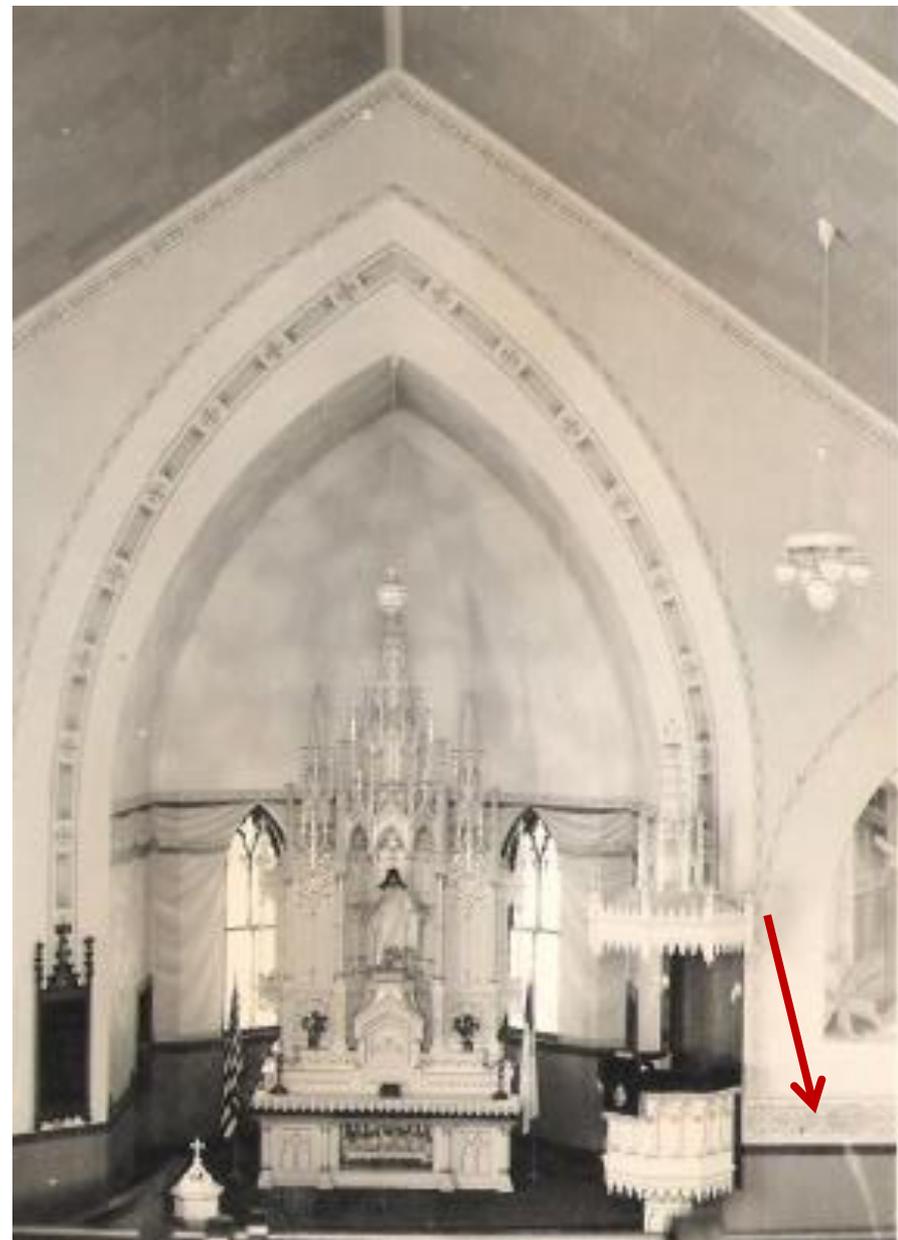
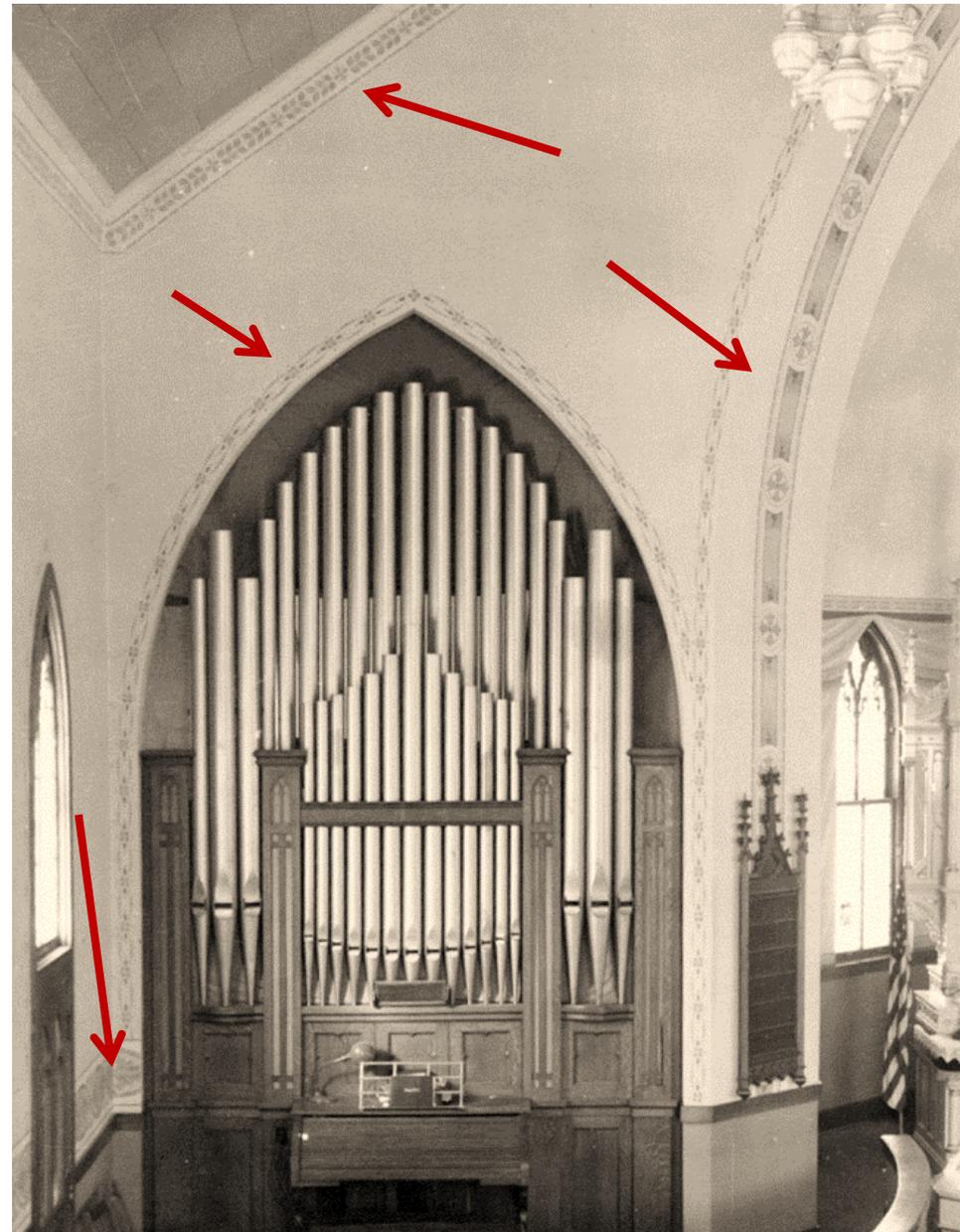


Although structurally the church as seen few changes to the interior, the walls have changed colors several times. Repainting the interior is quite the process as can be seen with all the scaffolding work.



The following pictures are thought to be the first painting and stenciling. Take note of all the different areas where stenciling was utilized; bordering the bottom part of the walls, and around the organ. Also, the dark ceiling was trimmed out by the same stencil pattern that was used on the arch of the sanctuary.

Church in 1928

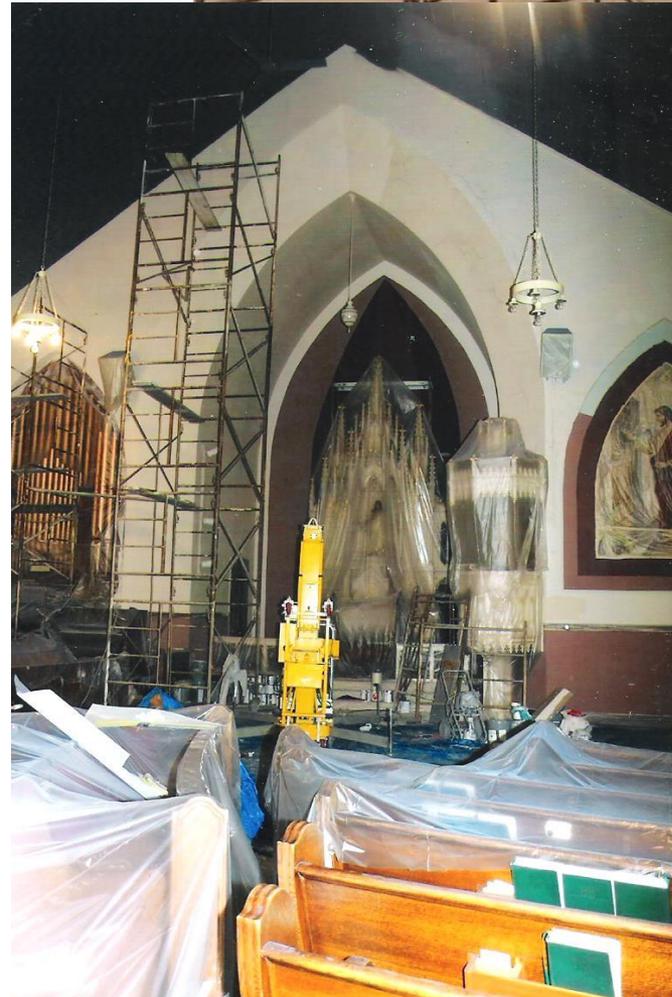


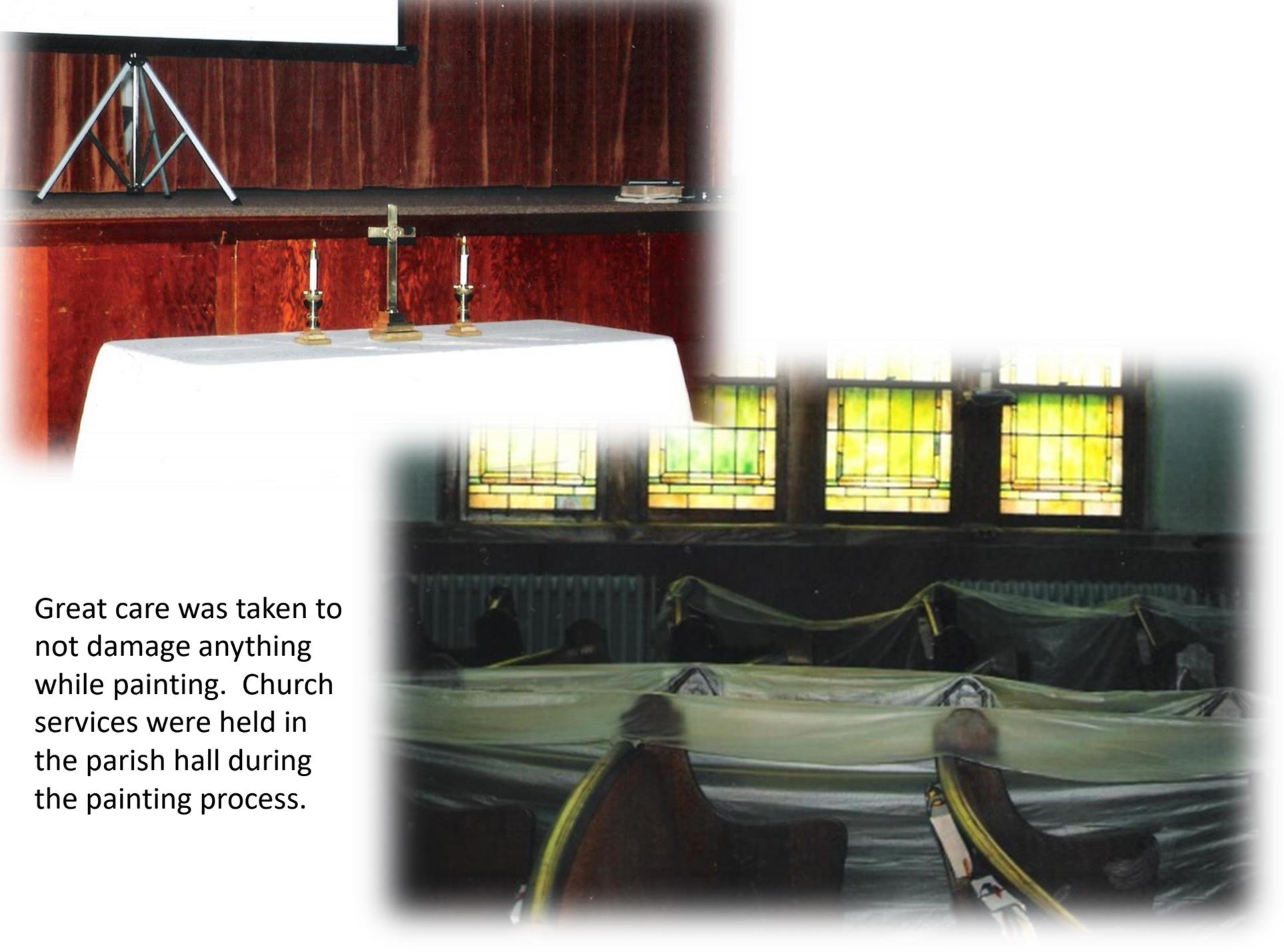
It is unsure how many times the church was painted through the 100 years, however much of that stenciling was painted over. In old church minutes, many times painting seemed to be mentioned in connection with repairing of the cracks and peeling of walls that was created by water leaks in the roof.



Repainting 2008

The last time that the church was entirely repainted was in 2008. The decorating committee used that earliest 1928 picture to make their decisions on how to paint the interior, such as the blue ceiling.



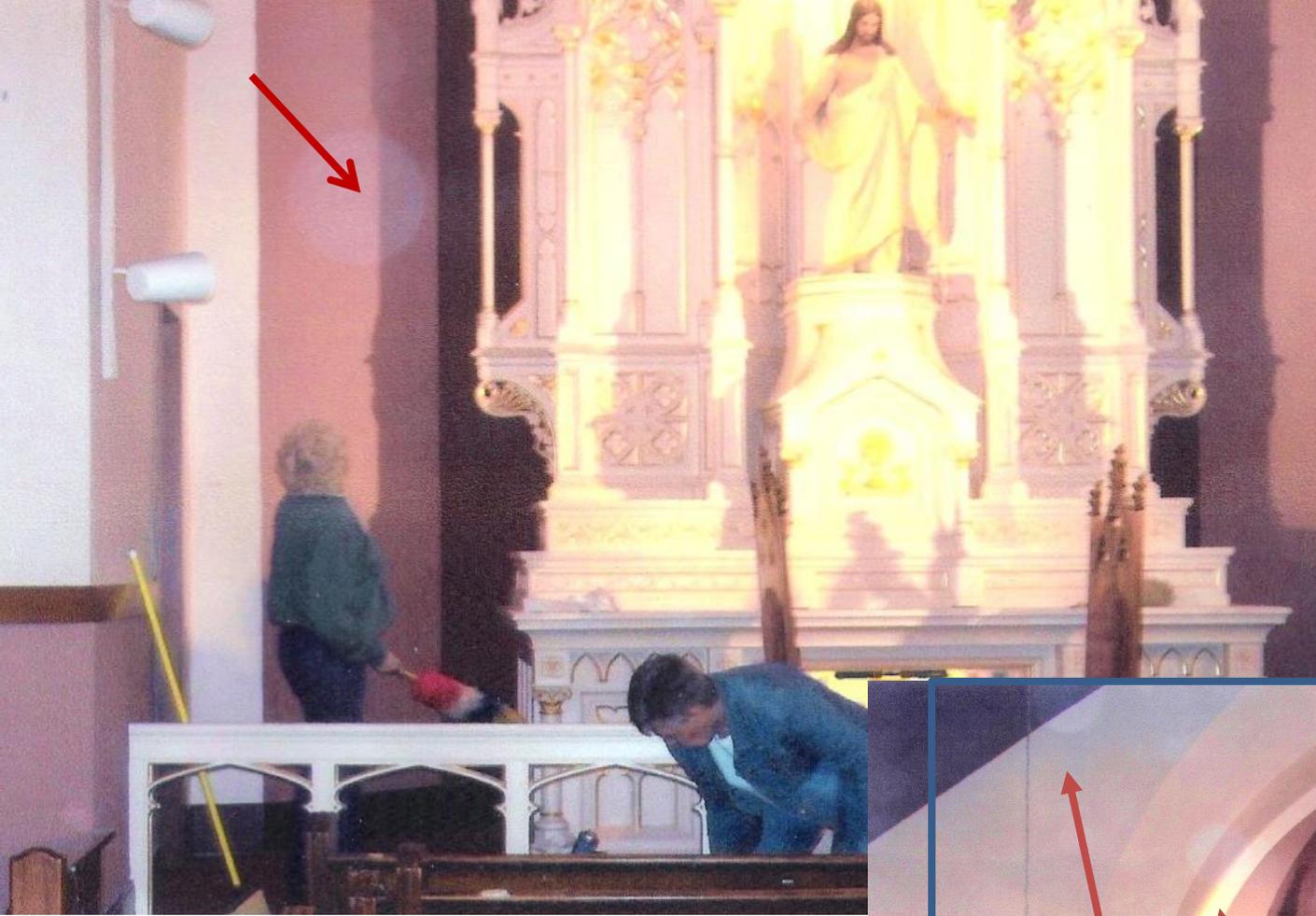


Great care was taken to not damage anything while painting. Church services were held in the parish hall during the painting process.

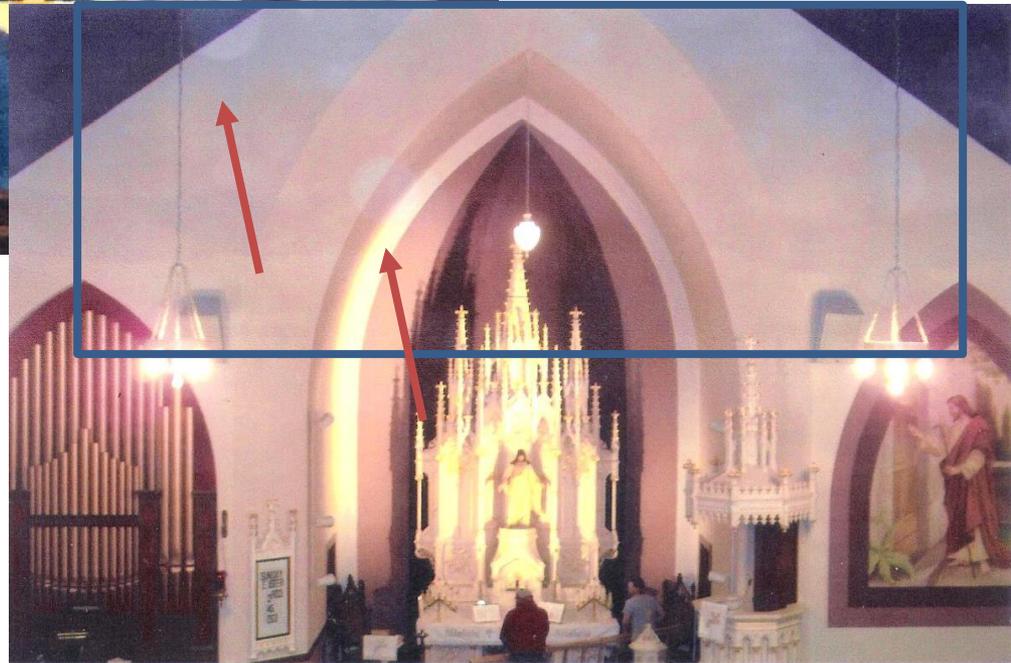
2008 Repainting

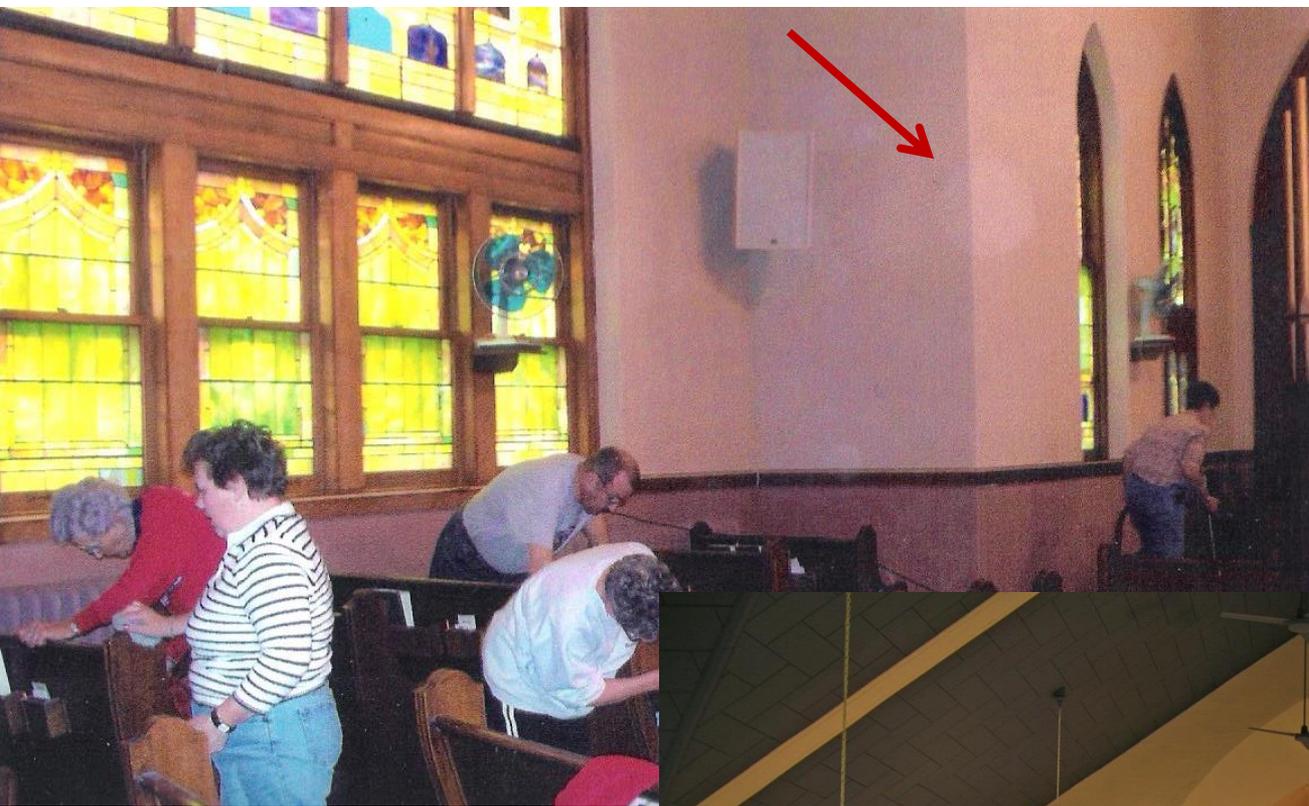


Sometimes treasures we find are unexpected and mysterious as were these orbs that appeared in the pictures taken during that 2008 repainting. Almost all the pictures taken had white circles on them. These are photographs taken by Janet Harms.



At first she thought her film was flawed, that is until she got together with two other people who had taken pictures. They also had the perfectly round circles that appeared throughout the church which could not be seen by the naked eye.





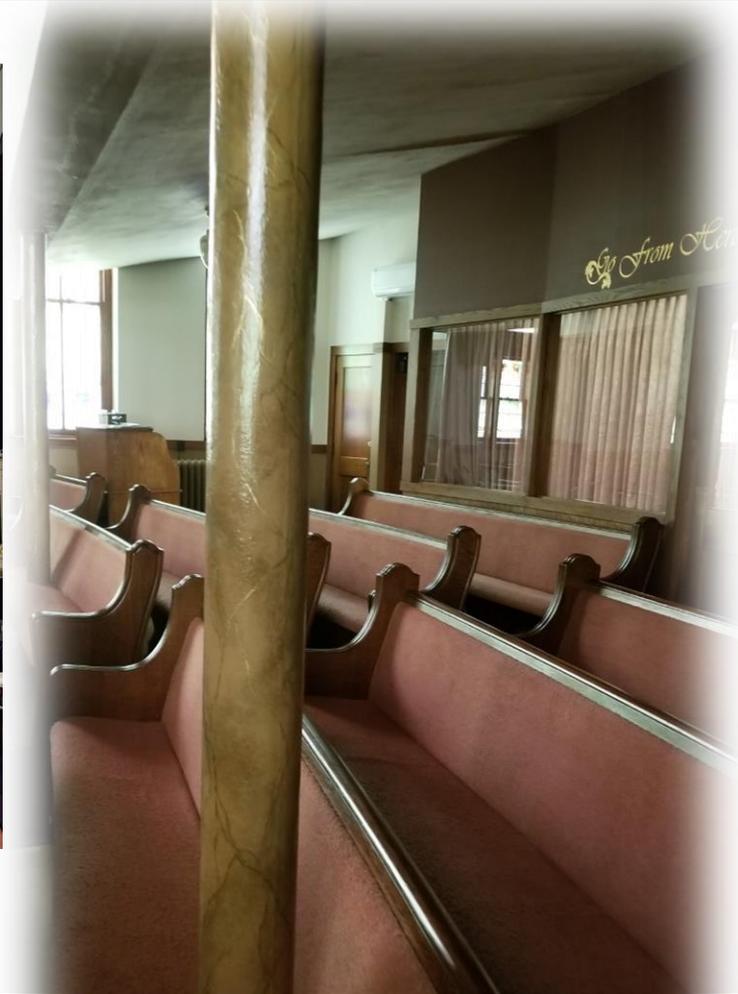
Pastor Sievers, seen here helping with the final clean up, explained the circles were orbs when shown the pictures. There are several theories as to what orbs are but maybe we can think of them as hidden treasures, our forefathers watching over us from above.



The last time the walls were repainted was 2008, however the space behind the altar and the oil painting of Jesus knocking on the door were redone six months later.

The mauve coloring, both behind the altar and around the painting, was not liked. The decorating committee themselves repainted the wall behind the altar to save money. used scaffolding that was still there from the painting process with a few 5 gallon buckets being used for reaching in those extra high points.

Open The Door and I Will Come In
Revelation 3:20



Go from Here and Be God's Disciples

Gospel as told in Matthew

Jesus told them another parable:

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13: 44

As we have been doing some summer cleaning of various storage spots, several treasures have been found. Some of the things we have gathered just need to be stored in different places, other treasures will be shared. More details will be forthcoming on what type of opportunities there might be for the treasures in your basements and attics so start searching.



“If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven.”

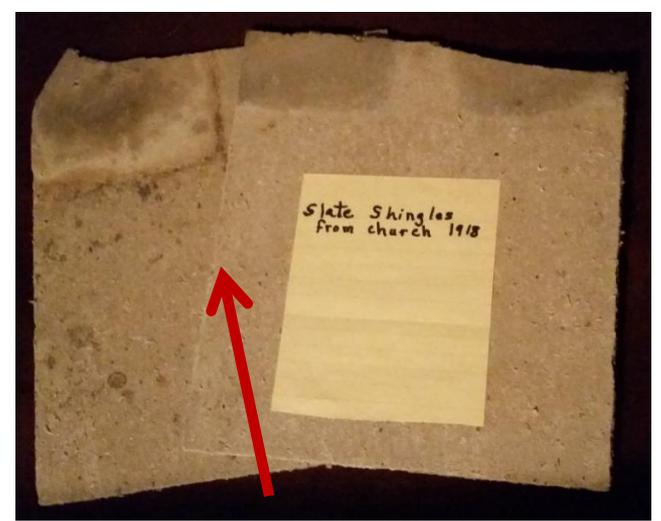
Matthew 19: 21





We have made it to the top. The two crosses on the steeples have always been at the peaks of Zion but apparently were changed in 1949 as indicated by the church minutes of that year. The third cross in the middle was added to the top of the church through a memorial gift. The trouble is that the light has gone dim quite often and creates a safety challenge when trying to repair it. The memorial policy was changed in 1988 in which the church council approves any special project. Any family choosing to gift memorial money to the church may choose from a list of approved special projects. The first special project that was approved was the padding of the pews in 1988.





Slate Shingles from 1918

The original church roof was shingled. When reading old church minutes, there are many entries regarding leaks and having to repair damaged walls. In May of 2000 the congregation voted 81 for shingles and 103 for metal when replacing the roof. Hopefully this would lessen the number of leaks that would occur. The picture on the right is of two shingles that came from the church in 1918. Adeline Cornelius gave them to the committee. She said her Mom saved everything. Who knows what treasure can be made from them.

Entering the Attic

There are several places where someone can enter the attic although many who have gone up feel as Duane Zulauf did when he said “once is enough for me. It is scary”. All the sloped surfaces create walking challenges and the vastness of the open space makes hanging onto something impossible.

Organ Room



Office



Question

How many men does it take to change a light bulb at Zion?

The answer is “at least two”, one to go into the attic and lower the light to the floor and one to replace the bulb. During the early years, the men who went in the attic had to make sure they had a good grip on the cable because if they let go, the light fixture would go crashing to the floor. In the 1970s, a crank system was built that made it safer and easier. The crank however was still in the attic making it necessary, still today, to go into the attic each time a bulb goes out.

Many people think that these ceilings are also the roof line but there lies another hidden treasure. Watch for video from the area between the roof and the ceiling at a later date!





It is possible to climb inside one of these steeples from the bell tower if anyone is feeling adventurous. This is the door that Clarence Zimmerman climbed to from inside the tower and looked out over the countryside. Most people who have gone into the attic space usually have the same first reaction of asking themselves: How was this even possible having only horses and pulleys to work with?



Several people have commented that they have seen a photograph of the horses going east up the hill as far as necessary when putting the beams in place. It has been said that Heye Meints, the member who donated the land, had the best team of horses and would be the lead team when headed up that hill. That photograph is still being sought out by the anniversary committee.

“Dedication of Zion” Sunday
10:00 am, August 27, 2017
with Bishop Brian Maas
as we celebrate our final
recognition Sunday, the dedication
and opening of the Zion doors.



