

ZSJ History-The Christ Statue

In 1908 the first Luther League was established @ St John Lutheran, the country church east of town. Thru various fundraisers, including a stage show that cost 25 cents to buy a ticket, the LL purchased a white altar, trimmed in gold, with a statue of Christ in the center. They remained in the church except for a brief period in 1925 when it was sent to Chicago to be repainted at a cost of \$42. When the church was sold in 1948, the altar was placed in the storage shed on the old church grounds and the statue was to be buried in the cemetery. The statue was stored in the shed, but then forgotten, with the all the excitement of the merger of the two churches.

Fast forward to 1972, when the statue was discovered in the shed and it was decided to restore it, rather than bury it. The exterior of the statue was very deteriorated and one of the hands had been broken. After the restoration, it was re-dedicated as part of ZSJ on Easter Sunday, April 22, 1973. It was kept on the Children's altar, in the stage area in the fellowship hall. This altar, the original one for Zion Lutheran purchased in 1916, has since been moved to the Jericho Room in the education wing, complete with the gold candlesticks, purchased in 1911 (for the St John church) and all the altar cloths and paraments. The white altar from St John was moved to the Franklin County Fairgrounds and is still in the church on the fairgrounds. The Christ statue was moved to the narthex after the completion of the narthex addition in 1984. Jesus, with his outstretched arms, now greets all who enter our building.

Special thank you to Otto S and August O who were members of the original LL and who recounted these details. And to Charles S, Oletha A and Ruth W for taking charge of the restoration, with funds provided by the 1973 LL.

