

ZSJ HISTORY 1996-2000



In 1996, the church joined our state in celebrating the 150th anniversary of Iowa statehood, with a worship service from the past, including long dresses and hats for the ladies and fancy suits for the gentlemen. Parts of the service were in German and some older hymns were sung. In 1997, the new sign by the



Gilman Street parking lot was installed. By the spring of 1998 a memorial marker was erected at the entrance of the old St John church grounds and cemetery. This year also marked the purchase of the 5-octave set of handbells. Each bell handle contains the names of treasured family members who are remembered every time these bells are played, both in rehearsal and worship. This same year was also the 50th anniversary celebration of the merger of the two churches. An outdoor service was held at the St John church site, inside the foundation of the original building and included bringing a piano, the former Zion Church altar and the Christ statue for the worship. And of course a potluck BBQ and ice cream social followed in the current fellowship hall. The



old Zion altar was donated to the Franklin County Fairgrounds church in 1999. Also that year the church began a new youth initiative with the hiring of Maren Larson

as youth director. ZSJ youth activities included many service projects, like painting the Sharing Shoppe exterior and cleaning up yards and numerous fellowship times almost all involved eating! The adult fellowship group L.I.F.E. did many service projects and fundraisers to support various church needs. Also during this time ZSJ sponsored multiple overseas missionaries and various mission congregations here in the states. This group also helped with the creation of the outdoor nativity scene, which was first displayed in 2000. The church continued celebrations with the 125th anniversary on July 30, 2000. A cookbook and quilt were created and a trip to Germany for 30 members hosted by Pastor Mechler and his wife. Doves representing each of the baptized members of this church were hung in the



sanctuary and a memory book was created and is in the church library. The theme was "Sharing the Spirit."

Other notable historical events were:

1996-Atlanta hosts the summer Olympics; 12 climbers die on Mt Everest in a sudden snowstorm; Dolly the sheep, the first cloned mammal, is born; Prince Charles and Princess Diana divorce; Bill Clinton is re-elected president; Iowa celebrates sesquicentennial; Fred Hoiberg is drafted by Indiana Pacers; Iowa's all time record low of -47F is set in Elkader.

1997-Israel concludes the handover of West Bank to Palestinian control; Madeline Albright becomes 1st woman US Secretary of State; Red River in ND and MN floods causing \$2 billion in damage; WNBA plays its 1st game; Hong Kong is now governed by China; Woolworth's closes; Netflix is founded; Princess Diana dies in a car crash in Paris; the oldest person to ever live, Jeanne Calmet, dies at age 122 years and 164 days; Mother Teresa dies; Bobbi McCoughey gives birth to 7 live babies in Des Moines.

1998-House of Representatives impeaches Bill Clinton for lying under oath and obstruction of justice; *Titanic* is best picture; Northern Ireland and British governments agree to end their 30 year conflict; 2 earthquakes devastate Afghanistan, killing over 10,000; Hayden Fry retires as coach of the Iowa Hawkeyes, Kirk Ferentz is hired to replace him; Eastern Iowa experiences a mesocyclone (we now call derecho), with winds over 100 mph.

1999-King Hussein of Jordan dies; Columbine massacre in Littleton, CO HS results in death of 13 students and 1 teacher; Y2K computer issues begin to surface; F5 tornado in Oklahoma City kills 36 and results in highest recorded wind speeds on earth; JFK Jr dies in a plane crash; Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification is signed by the Catholic and Lutheran Church; Dr. Tom Davis leaves IA Hawkeye BB program; A Keokuk house fire tragedy kills 6, including 3 firefighters.

2000-PS2 is released; Al Gore files numerous recounts in FL in protest of the presidential election results; Dot com bubble bursts; Final *Peanuts* comic strip is published after the death of author Charles Schultz; Vladimir Putin is elected president of Russia; USS Cole is badly damaged by terrorists in Yemen, with 17 crew members dead; Tom Vilsack is now governor of Iowa.