

Evangelical Fellowship Church: *History and Activities of the Church*

**Booklet prepared for the
60th Anniversary (October 20, 2013) of the
Evangelical Fellowship Church in Edmonton**





Message from our Pastor

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.” (Psalm 103:13-14)

Sixty years are a long time, in one way – after all, this is ten years longer than I have walked this earth and I’m not exactly a spring chicken either anymore! And yet how quickly have those years flown by! Many have come and gone in those six decades and some have left this old world behind much earlier than we expected. EFC has a rich history with many twists and turns. There is much to be thankful for, looking back at humble beginnings, years of growth, and also now many generations who have been impacted by both the gospel message and by gospel living, no matter how imperfect it may have been experienced at times in the way that it shaped our life personally and as a congregation. We have shared together the ups and downs, the joys and tears, and we have endeavored to walk this journey together listening to the voice of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who knows His own and has promised not to leave or forsake us. And He has been faithful indeed to His own promise!

Mark Twain once said, “History never repeats itself but it rhymes”. There is much truth to that and we find numerous places in the New Testament where we are reminded to learn from the past so that we don’t repeat the same mistakes. One of the biggest challenges that we are facing today is to communicate the good news of Jesus’ saving grace and His transforming power in such a way that people see and understand the compelling truth that remains the only solid foundation we have in a rapidly changing world moving more and more towards globalization. We live in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-faith society and our behavior as Christians is closely scrutinized. More than ever we need to live lives of integrity, practice authentic forgiveness, and share the love of Jesus in meaningful and consistent ways so that our testimony is confirmed by our deeds and our message can gain the trust it deserves.

Our shortcomings and our human frailty should not leave us discouraged but cause us to depend more than ever on God’s compassion and God’s answer to persistent prayer. So I invite you to keep praying – and to keep trusting! – that the Lord may form us and mold us, make us more like Himself, and use our lives to impact many generations still to come!

May He fill us all with His Spirit, with His compassion, and with the peace that is beyond human comprehension and understanding!

Pastor Josh Mueller



Message from our Youth Pastor

A year ago my family answered the Lord's call to come to Evangelical Fellowship Church. It was a big move for us but it has been a huge blessing for our family.

When you want to look at the future of a church, it has been said to look at the youth and you will know where and what the church will look like in ten years. I believe this statement is not a completely accurate picture. A more accurate picture is to look at the families. Youth ministry is not about just working with the youth. It is about working with the family. At Evangelical Fellowship I have seen a lot of strong families and ones that want to grow closer together and deepen their relationship with God.

As a Youth Pastor it is my dream to see the youth mature into the people that our Lord and Savior has called them to be. My prayer for the youth and the families can be found in Ephesians 3:16-19;

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

My Prayer for Evangelical Fellowship Church is that the families here would continue to grow closer to each other and God.

Pastor Kelvin Kehler



Message from the Chairman of the Board of Elders

Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Gordon Gray, married to Anita Gross. When I married her, I became a part of the family that is Evangelical Fellowship Church on our wedding day, June 3rd, 1972. We are celebrating the 60th anniversary of our congregation this year. By faith, God helped us build His house. By belief in giving, our Church has always had the necessary funds to maintain and improve our main sanctuary, the parsonage and Camp Evansburg. Those before us have inspired us by their faith in Jesus Christ, their trust in each other, the power of prayer and the love shared for each other and our Pastors kindled the burning passion we share in God and His Church.

We must also acknowledge and be grateful for the contributions made by our Sisters. And we are not alone in our journey to serve Jesus Christ. Marburg, Germany helped out with pastors in our early days. The Canadian Synod provides leadership and guidance. Liberty Corner and those who serve in their missions give us the opportunity to spread the Word of God.

We should never take what we have accomplished for granted. As challenges and opportunities have presented themselves we have always arisen as a family, each member using his or her gifts and talents to finish the job right. We have always been blessed to have in our family talented tradesmen, singers, musicians, leaders, members with strong minds and backs and passionate youth. Although the members of this family are very different from each other, we are united by our love of Christ, prayer, and a desire to serve. A family that prays together stays together.

In closing I would like to quote Psalm 23:6

“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Allow God to grace each one of your lives forever.

A follower of Jesus Christ,

Gordon Gray

EFC ANNIVERSARY – “60”

Let us remember the past
At this anniversary.
Men and women laid the foundation
For things that we now see!

These were ordinary people,
Working hard to make a living.
Laboring by the “sweat of brow”
Yet to others they were giving.

They showed progress and real vision
To plan and build this place;
A special House of Worship
For the immigrant German race.

There had been so much adjustment,
Coming from their fatherland.
This chance to meet with kinfolk,
In their own church, that was grand!

They all understood the culture,
That reminded them of “home”!
Memories would always linger,
No matter where they roamed!

Family members really bonded
As they gathered in this place.
Here they worshipped, prayed and sang,
There was hardly enough space.

They spent so much time together.
Many young folks met their mate
At youth events or outings,
Then married at a later date!

Soon English became easy.
Children learned at school and play.
Moms and Dads picked up the language,
Became more fluent every day!

EFC remained the focal point
Throughout the many years;
Worship, camp, weddings, funerals,
Intermixed with smiles and tears!

We often hear the phrase,
“Do you remember...when...?”
Things are done differently now,
But we did it like this... back then!”

We are part of this church family,
We’ve been made welcome here.
We have lots of friends, who love us,
And show us they really care!

Time marches quickly onward;
What’s in the future for EFC?
Praise God, Our Heavenly Father
Will faithfully lead you and me!

We ask Him for His blessings,
For guidance we humbly pray.
We commit the future to His hand,
As we obey Him, day by day!

Jesus Christ is the same,
Yesterday, Today, Forever!
He promises to be with us;
He’ll not leave us ever!

by Evelyn Sather

History of Our Church

October 2013 marks the 60th Anniversary of Evangelical Fellowship Church. October 17, 1953 was the date on which the rooms in a house at 10542 – 83 Ave. in Edmonton were dedicated by China Missionary Samuel Schulz. However, the origin of our church goes back much further than that.

Our church has its origin in the “Fellowship Deaconry Movement” of the late 1800s, a true spiritual awakening spreading through various areas of Central Europe. In Danzig in February 1899, Pastor Carl F.



The dedication of the original meeting house (October 17, 1953)
(10542 – 83 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta)

Blazejewski was chosen by a group of Lutheran pastors to start a deaconry for women. He opened the ‘motherhouse’ with four women on October 20, 1899 in Borken, East Prussia, Germany. Pastor Blazejewski died on May 24, 1900 (Ascension Day), at the age of 38, of complications related to diabetes.¹ After his death, his wife, Wilhelmina, took over the supervision of the deaconesses, who now were 8 in number, but Wilhelmina found this task difficult since she also had 3 children to look after. In October 1900, Wilhelmina and the 8 deaconesses moved to Vandsburg, West Prussia, and Theophil Krawielitzki, the pastor in Vandsburg, became the director of what became known as the Vandsburg Motherhouse.

God blessed this endeavour and the number of motherhouses increased. In 1909, the headquarters were moved to Marburg. By this time, several hundred sisters had joined the movement. One of the new motherhouses was located in Lemförde. A seminary for the education of pastors was also started in Marburg in 1909. Vandsburg, Marburg and Lemförde are mentioned here because sisters and pastors came to our congregation from these places. This dynamic and humble beginning was blessed mightily by the hand of God. By 1942 the Fellowship Deaconry Movement, currently known as the Deutscher Gemeinschafts-Diakonieverband (DGD), the German Fellowship Deaconry Union, had grown to approximately 4000 Sisters and Brothers serving the Lord in various countries around the world.

During the 1920s, thousands of German people immigrated to the United States to escape the economic crisis that had gripped their country. While trying to make adjustments to their new home, many people greatly missed the godly ministry and fellowship that had been provided by the deaconesses in Germany. Because of their urgent pleas to Pastor Krawielitzki, then the Director of the DGD, two deaconesses sailed to the United States in October of 1929 and started the work in Liberty Corner, New Jersey. This later became the residence for training deaconesses in North America. From there and also from the German motherhouses, many deaconesses went out to establish local Bible study and prayer groups, many of which grew into actual churches that were able to call and support their own pastors. This was also the case in Edmonton.

The situation in Canada after World War II was quite similar to that of the United States in the 1920s. Many people who had a German background had to flee from their homes in Eastern Europe or were going through great economic hardships in Germany; Canada was a welcome

¹From “C.F. Blazejewski und seine Bedeutung für das Vandsburger Diakonissenwerk” M. Krawielitzki, Reichsverlag des DGD, Marburg (1931).

chance for many to look for work and to start over again. Many immigrants were also very familiar with the Fellowship Movement, but only a very few places in North America had established Fellowship groups. Sister Tatjana Doclaw, a deaconess from the Vandsburg Sisterhood in Germany, born of German parents in Poland, was called to go to Canada in 1936. However, she was not able to obtain a visa until 1940; she therefore served in Liberty Corner for a few years. She then worked for over a decade in Tisdale and Luseland, two small farming communities in Saskatchewan.

In 1952 Sister Tatjana Doclaw followed God's call to serve the many new German immigrants in Edmonton. Initially she stayed with her sister and brother-in-law, Auguste and Gustav Miller, who had also recently moved to Edmonton from their farm in the Westlock area. They provided room and board for Sister Tatjana. She started to hold Sunday evening meetings in their residence. She also started a small Bible study and prayer group, which her relatives and friends attended, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Schulz.

In February of 1953, Sister Marie Klee arrived from Lemförde, Germany to assist Sister Tatjana. The two Sisters soon decided that they needed to buy a house, which could accommodate a large group of people, for their meetings. Thanks to the generous donation of \$6,000 from the Magnus families and other Christians from the Fellowship in Luseland, they were able to come up with a down payment. Late in the spring of 1953, they were able to purchase a house in Old Strathcona, located on 83 Avenue; the total price was \$15,500 and the monthly mortgage payment was \$125. The house they purchased was a three story home, which allowed



Visitors from Luseland with Sister Tatjana and Pastor Simon at house on 83 Avenue



In front of house on 83 Ave

the Sisters to rent out the basement and upper stories to help with the mortgage payments. Also, Sister Marie, who, like many other deaconesses, was trained as a nurse, worked as a Registered Nurse, first at the Royal Alexandra and later at the University Hospital, to help meet the Sisters' financial obligations.

On the main floor of the newly purchased house, the walls separating the living room and dining room were almost totally removed, providing an open space that could

accommodate 80 to 100 people for Sunday evening services. In addition to the Sunday evening services and the Wednesday evening prayer meeting, the Sisters also invited children and young people for meetings, started a guitar choir and later they also encouraged the formation of a brass band.

Most people who attended the Sunday and Wednesday evening services were also affiliated with other churches, mostly Lutheran, because the Sisters were not permitted or not licensed to perform marriages or funerals. However, new immigrants from Germany were pleased to attend Christian services in their



Christmas 1957 in living/dining rooms in house on 83 Ave

'mother tongue' and the attendance quickly increased. For the first anniversary in October 1954, Sister Lina Reuter from Liberty Corner, accompanied by Sister Elfreda Gaertner, was asked to be the guest speaker and to hold additional evangelistic meetings.

In the summers of 1955 and 1956, the choir, brass band and other members of the congregation drove to Luseland, Saskatchewan to visit and worship with the people who had been very helpful in establishing the church in Edmonton. The Edmontonians expressed their gratitude for the generosity of the Magnus families and enjoyed the hospitality they provided during the visits. Everyone valued the services and the fellowship and appreciated the special events, such as the musical presentations and the wiener roasts, and they enjoyed the rural atmosphere.



Visit to Luseland in 1955

In 1956 Pastor Julius Simon, from the Motherhouse in Lemförde, Germany was called to serve the growing congregation. He first held a week of evangelistic services in Luseland, where Sister Erna Kelm was then stationed. His wife Hildegard, daughter Gerlinde and son Herbert arrived in Edmonton in August of 1957 and moved into the second floor of the house on 83rd Avenue. In November of the same year, Sister Tatjana's and Sister Marie's involvement with the congregation that they had started came to an end as they were called to serve in Regina. Following Pastor Simon's arrival, special evangelistic weeks were held every year. Speakers at these meetings included, among others, Director Dohne, Pastor G. Schmauß, Pastor Ziehe, Dr. Kurt Koch, Günter Hopp and Pastor Achenbach. The Lord gave true conversions and the small hall was soon filled to capacity, with 140 to 160 people attending, even sitting in the verandah, kitchen and on the stairs.

The neighbours objected to the large groups that were coming to the house and they appealed to the City, which then restricted the maximum attendance to 30 people. A temporary solution was found in renting the Presbyterian Church on 105 Street and 81 Avenue for the regular Sunday and Wednesday evening services. Evangelistic meetings were moved to the Free Knox Evangelical Church on 104 St. and 84 Ave. However, a permanent solution to this problem had to be found.

The need for a bigger venue resulted in the search for an appropriate lot on which to construct a new church building. A blueprint was drawn up by Architect Schmidt. On November 1, 1957 two adjacent lots on 105 Street and 79 Avenue were purchased and the two old houses, which stood on the lots, were torn down on March 13 to 15, 1958. On March 17, 1958 construction of the new church began. The building was constructed mostly by volunteer labour; volunteers put in over 4,000 hours of labour to build the first church. Because of the low labour cost, the total expenses for the building, including the lots and an organ, was only \$47,000, and all loans and mortgages were paid off within a few years. The new



Tearing down the old houses

church was dedicated on October 26, 1958 and was filled to over-capacity (about 600 people were in attendance); Pastor G. Schmauß was the guest speaker for the dedication as well as for the evangelistic week which followed.



Construction of the church



Some of the volunteers who built the church

The congregation now had a church and a full-time minister and was registered as a church; regular Sunday morning services began on November 2, 1958. Beside Sunday morning and evening and Wednesday night services many other groups met regularly, such as the 'Jugendbund für Entschiedenenes Christentum' (Youth Group for Christian Endeavor), which also met once a month for rededication to the Lord early on Sundays. Also a ladies' mission group, a group for tract missions and elders' meetings, as well as new member orientation, confirmation and baptism classes, were held regularly.



The original church



Inside of the original church



After first service in the church (Nov. 2, 1958)

The teachers of the German Saturday school, which had already been established in the house on 83rd Avenue, continued to teach the young children Bible stories and gospel songs in German along with grammar lessons in the basement of the new church. Praising God with music has always been a part of the congregation, starting with a guitar group and brass band, to be followed by junior and senior choirs and various worship teams. The youth group also encouraged other believers through songs, music and testimonies.

In the 50's, there were regular visits to the Lutheran Church in Barrhead and to the Knodel family in Leduc. The tradition of the annual picnic started in the middle 1950s. The first few

congregational picnics were held at various locations: in Westlock, at Lake Eden, at Half Moon Lake, on the acreage of Mr. & Mrs. E. Wanke and on the property of Mr. & Mrs. Minchau at Mulhurst on Pigeon Lake.

Sisters Tatjana and Marie left Edmonton in November 1957, to serve in other cities, first in Regina and in 1960 in Toronto. Sister Tatjana returned to Regina in 1962 where she stayed until her retirement in 1970. Upon retirement, she moved to Kelowna to live again with her sister, Auguste Miller and later in her own apartment. In 1976 Sister Tatjana moved to the Deaconess Retirement home in Bernardsville, New Jersey where she passed away in her 87th year on February 5, 1987. Sister Hilde Trumpf, who had come to Edmonton in 1958 to help with the work, was forced to retire to Liberty Corner in 1970 because of her failing health. Her replacement, Sister Elfreda Gaertner, although retired now, continued to do volunteer work in our congregation until very recently.

For three consecutive years (1960-62), several choir and brass band members drove to Regina on the May long weekend to participate in the anniversary celebration of the small congregation then being served by Sister Tatjana and Sister Marie. It was to be a tragic trip in May of 1962. Melitta Witzke wrote: "We experienced a blessed weekend. After the Sunday evening service and a quick lunch, we were homeward bound, not knowing that for some it was the final homecoming. On Monday morning, May 21, at daybreak, two of our cars pulled over onto the shoulder just a few miles east of North Battleford to exchange drivers. At this point a large semi-trailer, travelling at high speed, lost control and pulled the two parked cars with him into the ditch. Three occupants, Edith Krentz, 18, Inge Junkuhn, 24, and Erwin Rucks, 24, died at the scene. Gerda Findling, 20 of Kitchener, Ont. passed away several hours later at the hospital. She had moved to Edmonton only about three months prior to the accident and was well known to the Kitchener, now Waterloo, Christian Fellowship Church. The drivers, Edmund Pedde and Karl Rupperecht, suffered severe injuries. To our comfort we knew that all four deceased had been true born again children of God." Those who witnessed the accident were comforted by scriptures in Ecclesiastes 11:3a, 'If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth.' Melitta, Edith's sister, wrote: "Our God may drench us with grief, but He will not drown us with wrath... these words were like soothing ointment for our aching hearts. God's promises and His grace carried us through the dark valley."



Edith Krentz Inge Junkuhn Gerda Findling Erwin Rucks

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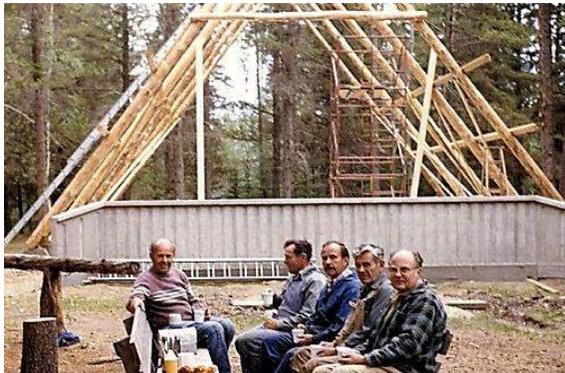
In 1963, on March 8, the church purchased Camp Evansburg from Mr. Joseph Schendzielorz for \$8,000. The property at Camp Evansburg, 100 km west of Edmonton, had already been used by our church for youth retreats in 1957 on a rental basis. Following the purchase of the property, the annual church picnic, which always included a Sunday morning service, organized games for children and a soccer game for the youth, was always held there. For the first few years, every family brought their own lunch. After a few years of this practice, an afternoon coffee hour was instituted; each family contributed to the dessert table and coffee and other drinks were provided. A few years later, a complete lunch was provided at the picnic; the ladies prepared salads for everyone and a couple of men barbequed hamburgers and hot dogs. The individual families no

longer had to bring their lunch but they still contributed to the dessert table. This is the current format which allows members of the congregation more opportunity for visiting.

Camp Evansburg included some older buildings and cabins which were used until 1970 for annual Children's camps, senior and youth retreats. Pastor Simon gave the main building the name 'Elim' (literally: 'great, majestic trees', referring in the Bible to a resting place for God's people – Exodus 15:27). In September 1970 the old buildings were torn down and construction was started on the new building, again mostly by volunteers; it was ready for use by July 11, 1971. In the 1980s an A-frame building was erected at



Volunteer builders of Camp Evansburg



Volunteer builders of the A-frame

Camp Evansburg to offer shelter in case of inclement weather as well as to provide a place to play floor hockey and basketball.



Floor hockey in the A-frame

Camp Evansburg has been a place of spiritual conversions and renewal for many. Various other groups of church members, in addition to the annual church picnic, ladies and youth retreats and three weeks of summer camp for elementary to high school children, have enjoyed the use of the camp. The camp has also been used by groups from other churches as well as by the Girl Guides and Brownies from Evansburg. The camp programs and activities, as well as the maintenance of the property, are again done mostly by volunteer labour.

Pastor Simon retired on April 30, 1973. Although retired, Pastor Simon continued to serve the congregation until his death on February 10, 1980. Pastor Heinz Plaum, Pastor Simon's successor, officially assumed his pastoral duties on June 3, 1973. The parsonage beside the church was under construction at this time. The Plaum family moved into the completed parsonage on July 24, 1973 and Sister Elfreda moved into the small suite in the parsonage on July 30, 1973. It was during Pastor Plaum's ministry that the English services started. Children's Sunday school classes, initially in German, were held simultaneously with the German Service on Sunday mornings in the basement of the church and in December 1976 an English Bible study for adults was added as well.

A new and larger church was built over top of the existing structure in 1979 - 1980, with a large foyer and two offices on the main floor and two larger meeting rooms upstairs. The adult English service was then moved from the basement to the meeting room on the second floor. Various

speakers were invited to minister in these services but families with young adults were urging the Elders to seek a more favourable solution to allow the English congregation to grow. So in January 1985 Joachim Poetzsch was called as full-time English pastor and it was decided to hold German and English services in the main sanctuary, one after the other. Sunday school for children, which had been changed to English, was still held in the classrooms in the basement but they had been moved to coincide with the English worship service rather than the German worship service. In 2012, an Adult English Sunday school class was started at the same time as the German service.



Congregation in front of new church

After Pastor Plaum left in 1986, Manfred Kürschner took over the German congregation. Pastor Joachim Poetzsch continued to serve the English congregation until 1993 when he was called to start a Lutheran Brethren congregation in south-east Edmonton. Pastor Kürschner served until the end of 1998 when he moved to take over a Lutheran congregation in Frontier, Saskatchewan. From Dec. 1993 to 1996, Pastor Zemke was the pastor of the English congregation. After this Pastor Les Sather agreed to serve as Interim Pastor for the English ministries and Pastor Adolf Schlachter took over as Interim Minister for the German services until Pastor Josh Mueller arrived in April 1999 to take over as Senior Pastor. Pastor Sather retired on December 31, 2003; however, he continues to serve our congregation in various voluntary capacities.

Pastor Noel Dwarika was hired on a part-time basis as youth pastor in April 2004; he resigned in July 2006. In December 2006 Jon Pettinger, from Winnipeg, came to serve as youth pastor; he resigned in December 2011 to take over a congregation in Melville, Saskatchewan. It took until July 2012 to replace him with Pastor Kelvin Kehler who also came from Winnipeg with his wife Becki and their three young sons. Three interns also served the congregation over the years: Achim Kemmesies, Ralph Färber and John Dembo.

Several members of our congregation have heeded the call to the ministry; they include: Gerhard Huget, Otfried Czerwinski, Elfriede Helbig, Lillian Heise, Edith Färber (nee Berger), George Hertwig, Martin Berger, Daniel Berger, Karin Dembo (nee Hauser) and David Helbig. Several young ladies from our congregation are married to pastors and are involved in their congregations: Brenda Wutzke's husband Terry Belcourt serves a church in Coronation, Birgit Krampitz's husband Darryl Sam is in Spruce Grove, and Christina Fischer's husband Mike Engbers is pastor in Prince Albert. (More details on our involvement in missions work is given in a section below.)

Evangelical Fellowship Church is a small congregation, but lives are enriched and changed because of the Lord's mercy and blessing. May He continue to uphold and use us for the expansion of His kingdom and glory. His name be honoured and praised!



Our Past and Present Sisters and Pastors

Our Sisters



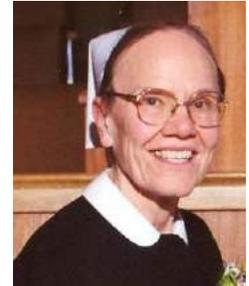
Sister Tatjana Doclaw
(1952-1957)



Sister Marie Klee
(1953-1957)

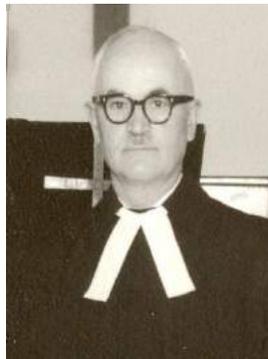


Sister Hilde Trumpf
(1958 -1970)



Sister Elfreda Gaertner
(1970-2013)

Our Pastors



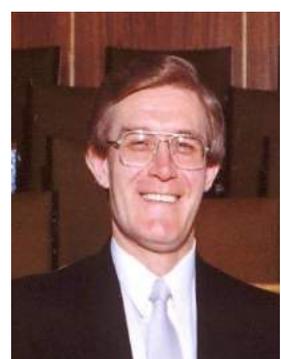
Pastor Julius Simon
(1956-1973)



Pastor Heinz Plaum
(1973-1986)



Pastor Manfred Kürschner
(1986-1998)



Pastor Joachim Poetzsch
(1985-1993)



Pastor Bert Zemke
(1993 -1996)



Pastor Les Sather
(1999-2003)



Pastor Josh Mueller
(1999-present)

Our Youth Pastors



Noel Dwarika
2004-2006



Jon Pettinger
2006-2011



Kelvin Kehler
2012 to present



Mission Activities

Evangelical Fellowship Church has been involved with missionaries and mission work from its beginning. Missionary Samuel Schulz officiated at the dedication of the first meeting place, the house on 83 Avenue. On the first anniversary in Oct. 1954, Sister Lina Reuter, from the Liberty Corner Mission, held two weeks of evangelistic meetings; many accepted the Lord at this time and the attendance at Sunday evening meetings grew significantly. Sisters and missionaries serving in Japan, Taiwan (our congregation has supported many of the physically and mentally challenged children in Taiwan for decades), the West Indies and south-eastern Europe visited our congregation regularly in the 1950s and 60s. These visiting missionaries informed our congregation of their activities and challenges at well-attended meetings by means of reports and slide presentations. Most of the visiting missionaries were associated with the Liberty Corner and Marburg Missions, but others were from the South-East European Mission (Missionary Mueller) and the West-Indies Mission (Missionary Henry Werner). These visits helped to establish close relationships between our congregation and these missions.

Our congregation did not only support the above-mentioned missions financially, but some of our members were called to serve as missionaries and deaconesses. Gerhard Huget and Otfried Czerwinski went to Marburg; Gerhard Huget then spent many years as a missionary in Thailand and Japan, and Otfried Czerwinski became a pastor in Germany. Elfriede Helbig and Lillian Heise joined the Fellowship Deaconry in Liberty Corner as deaconesses and served the Lord in various locations in the USA and Canada. Our congregation had close connections with the mission work in Japan; Klaus and Uta Wanke and their four children were at Camp Karuizawa in Japan from February 1991 to May 1995.



Klaus, Uta, Walter, Sabine, Lillian and Benjamin Wanke in Japan

Camp Karuizawa is a retreat for the missionaries and churches in Japan associated with the Liberty Corner and Marburg Missions. In the following years, four teams from our congregation went to further develop Camp Karuizawa. These teams were: Walter Finkbeiner, Ed Berger, Daniel Witzke, Julius Schulz and Ed Kopf, in 1989; Richard and Edith Pretzlaff, Klaus Wanke, Bernhard and Eugenie Werner and Renate Zielke in 1990; Herb Dietrich, Bernhard and Eugenie Werner and Renate Zielke in 1991; and Herb Dietrich and Bernhard and Eugenie Werner in 1998. After Christmas in 2009 a group of young people, under the leadership of Youth Pastor Jon Pettinger and his wife Katha, went on a 9-day mission trip to the Dominican Republic to help build a church there (more about the mission trip in the section on Youth Groups).



Camp Karuizawa Work team (1989)
(Walter Finkbeiner, Ed Berger, Daniel Witzke, Julius Schulz and Ed Kopf)

Our church is not only involved in foreign missions, but also in inner (local) mission work. The German tract mission (Blättermission) was started in the mid-50s; tracts were distributed to the many German immigrants who had settled mostly on the south side of our city. This provided a good opportunity for members of the small congregation to meet neighbours and make new friends. Many accepted the invitation to our fellowship meetings, which were initially held in the house on 83 Avenue and later in our church, and the congregation grew. In recent years, Paul Fries and Klaus Wanke have been active in an outreach program in the neighbourhoods of our church. Our church has also participated in the Alpha Course program in the past and is currently preparing to offer this course early in 2014. The youth camps at Camp Evansburg have become one of the main outreach activities of our church; many young people, without any church background, have attended the summer camps (more on Camp Evansburg below).

Other local activities have included preparing and serving food at the Mustard Seed Church and providing food to street people. Young and old members of our congregation have been involved in these activities. About three years ago our church became one of the partner-churches in the establishment of the Edmonton Do Likewise Society. The objective of this society is to provide food and clothing, and a warm place in the winter for the many homeless and disadvantaged people of south Edmonton; there are very few such services on the south side. The society opened the Neighbour Centre, the only drop-in centre for the homeless and disadvantaged on the south side, in October 2012. Our congregation has provided financial support and volunteer work to the Neighbour Centre.



The Neighbour Centre, 7221 – 104 St., Edmonton



Camp Evansburg

Camp Evansburg has operated now for over 5 decades, not only as a regular outreach to children ages 8-17 through our summer camps but also as a place for retreat and spiritual growth, for our own congregation and other congregations and ministries who have used it at times as well (see History section above for the history of the camp). We have indeed been blessed to have this place in the beautiful surroundings of God's nature where we can get away from the daily grind and simply enjoy the beauty of creation and spend more uninterrupted time with God. But what makes camp truly special more than anything else, are the people who run it and maintain it. Some of them have started out as young people in this camp themselves and still are serving faithfully as kitchen staff to this day. Many went on from being campers to being counsellors. And when you consider that on average 90-100 children participate in the 3 annual weeks of our summer camps (many of them coming back year after year because they love it there so much), we can only imagine what kind of a lasting impact camp has had on these young lives over the years. Quite a few members of our own congregation can tell stories how their initial decision to give their lives to Jesus had its early beginnings in the way God spoke to them in this place. And who would want to miss our annual church picnic in early June? There's nothing quite like gathering and worshipping outside, enjoying the fellowship and delicious food, and having fun watching the children play.

None of this would be possible without countless volunteers who served here as staff and/or spent much time building, painting, cleaning, and repairing so that people are not only fed spiritually but also fed physically and are able to enjoy a well maintained facility. The outside look and way of operation may have changed a bit over the years as some of the original cabins had to be torn down and many improvements have been added to the main building as well, but the purpose of camp and the reason for investing our time, money and energy into it remains the same. We want to give people an opportunity to meet God and see their lives changed and blessed in that encounter. We want Jesus Christ to be recognized and glorified as Savior and Lord of all. We also want to give an opportunity to use the gifts and talents that God has given us, so that they can develop and be sharpened to be useful in furthering God's kingdom.

We appreciate your prayers and your generous support towards camp but also want to ask those who may have never participated as staff to consider taking the plunge and share in the amazing experience of serving the Lord at Camp Evansburg. You will not regret it!



Pictures of Camp Evansburg over the years



Old main building

This is what Camp Evansburg looked like in 1957/58, before the church purchased it. It was called Pembina Tourist Camp in those days.



One of the old cabins



Camp Evansburg has been used for many types of functions (left, couples retreat; right, annual picnic in 2013; bottom, youth camps)



Fun Activities at Camp Evansburg



The Story of a 1969 Camp Counsellor

I, Rudi Winkelmann, always wanted to visit Edmonton ever since I read Jack London's "Call of the Wild" in my young teenage years in Berlin. In 1965, I immigrated to Canada, and early in the summer of 1969 I came to Edmonton for the first time. I walked and hitchhiked all the way from Kitchener, Ontario to participate in the children camps of Evangelical Fellowship Church. First came the girls' camp and then the boys' camp. I arrived just in the nick of time to meet with Pastor Simon who took me out to Evansburg. He was slightly surprised to see a sunburnt, unshaven and somewhat rough looking fellow in short Lederhosen and army backpack coming to help in the children's camps, but Pastor Hermann Meyer from Kitchener would be doing the devotions at camp and he had recommended me. Also, my two friends from our Ontario Young People's group, Harry Lenkert and Erwin Stamm, arrived later the next morning in their remodelled milk van to also help with camp. We all had quite a wonderful time together with all the children. It really baffles me sometimes that so many of those youngsters still fondly remember the Camp of '69! It was 44 years ago! One particular little incident that continues to stick in most campers' minds – including my own – is the time I climbed up one of those inviting spruce trees to do a bit of swinging up there. Well, the whole tree top broke off and came down together with me; I came down a fair bit quicker than what it had taken me to go up. Thank the Lord – he kept me safe – I very much felt like I was being let down quite gently, nicely landing on a large flexible branch just 8 feet or so from the ground and then safely rolling off into the grass.



Harry, Rudi and Erwin and the Milk Van

After camp, the three of us 'camp directors' left Edmonton in the milk van for our holiday trip. Back home in Ontario Sister Elfriede Helbig, who was stationed in Kitchener, kept encouraging me, without end, to have a heart and help out with the faltering guitar choir in Edmonton and the youth group might also benefit she said. So in October 1969 I returned to Edmonton. This time I didn't walk or anything like that; I arrived in style with my backpack on a 125 cc Yamaha 2-cycle motorcycle. What a reception Edmonton provided for me on October 22, 1969. It was quite a miserable, wet and snowy evening, but Waldi and Hilde Mueller graciously took me in until I got settled as a boarder in the home of Alfred and Irmgard Boss. What a memorable time that was for me! From there the saga continues in the good old everyday-life fashion that is so familiar to all of us.



Rudi Winkelmann on his way to Edmonton

P.S. Rudi still participates as a counsellor in Camp Evansburg to this day.



Music in Our Church

Our congregation has always been blessed with musically talented members. A guitar choir was established even before the official dedication of the meeting rooms on 83rd Avenue on October 17, 1953. Formation of a choir and a brass band followed shortly thereafter. The initial choir was directed by Heinrich Schulz; subsequently, Eduard Lindner, Pastor Simon, Otto Huget, Alfred Schulz, Pastor Sather and Fred Huber directed the choir; Alfred Schulz was the choir director from 1966 to 1993, while Fred Huber was director from 1993 to the present, with the exception of a year-and-half absence when Fred lived in Grand Prairie, during which time Les Sather was the choir director. In the 1960s, an



Guitar and brass band in middle 1950s



The senior choir

additional senior choir was formed which was active for over 30 years. The directors of the senior choir included Eduard Stein, Eduard Schulz, Otto Simon and Hildegard Johns (nee Berger). Choirs regularly participated in wedding and funeral services.



Choir in 1960

The choir also has put on special performances in addition to its participation in the worship services. These special events included special musical programs at Christmas and Easter. The choir has performed its Christmas cantata at the Entwistle Community Church for the past decade, and it has also had the privilege to perform at the Brightview Church. The highlight for the choir in the past decade was the invitation to participate in the 75th anniversary of the Fellowship Deaconry in Liberty Corner, New Jersey. Twenty-seven choir members participated in this trip to the east coast of North America; their performances at Liberty Corner were very well received.



Choir in Entwistle in 2011

The brass band was an integral part of the Sunday evening services in the 1950s – they played every Sunday night. The band has also participated at performances at the Jubilee Auditorium put on by a combination of brass bands from various Edmonton churches. Eduard Lindner was the first director of the brass band. The directors who followed were



Choir in Liberty Corner in 2008



Brass band at Evansburg congregational picnic

Otto Huget, Fred Huber, David Hauf and the current director, Fred Mueller. The presence of the brass band is always a welcomed addition at special occasions, such as Christmas Eve, Easter and the annual Evansburg church picnic.

The guitar choir has been a part of our church since its inception. Sister Tatjana started the guitar choir and it has been part of our worship services and special celebrations ever since. The directors of the guitar choir were Pastor Simon, Rudi Winkelman, Martin Semrock, Robert Koschewski, Dorothee Hauf and, since 1990, Ilse Fech. Sister Elfreda has been accompanying the guitar choir on the piano since she came to our congregation in 1970. The guitar choir has been a blessing to residents of many Edmonton nursing homes. The nursing homes visited by our guitar choir include the Gerald Zetter Centre, the General Hospital, the Hardisty Nursing Home, the Millwoods Shepard Care Centre, the Allen Gray Continuing Care Centre, the Southgate and Millwoods Good Samaritan Care Centres, Strathcona Care Centre, Queen Alexandra Lodge, and the Sparling Lodge. Ilse Fech and the guitar choir have also organized and performed at the annual German Advent celebrations for the past decade.

The church had an active recorder group in the 1960s and 1970s led by Dorothee Hauf and Gerlinde Simon (Sarkar). In the late 1960s, Gerlinde Simon, and Anita and Alfred Schulz led classes which were attended by as many as 20 students. Former members of the recorder choir put on an encore performance at our 50th anniversary celebration.

Worship teams became part of our Sunday morning services in 2001 and participation of youth group members started in 2004. Many individuals have been part of the various worship teams and their contributions to the enhancement of our services are valued by the congregation. The worship teams are a great way to get our youth and young adults actively involved in our worship services.

In addition to the above musical groups, we have enjoyed solos and duets as well as violin, flute and piano recitals by members of our congregation. Numerous guest performers have also sung and played in our church. Many talented individuals have provided excellent piano and organ accompaniment for both the German and English services.

Our church has been blessed with many talented people who have enhanced our worship services and celebrations with music over the past 60 years. The congregation is very grateful to all those individuals who have shared their talents and skills in our church.



Youth Groups

The young people who attended the Sunday evening services in the house on 83rd Avenue also used to meet there on Friday nights; the youth group meetings continued to be held at the house on 83 Avenue until Pastor Simon retired in 1973. Young people aged from their early teens to single people up to the middle twenties attended these meetings. During the meetings, the young ladies sat on one side of the room and the young men on the other side. The meetings usually started with a song and prayer followed by introductory comments by one of the young people on a previously assigned part of Scripture. This was then followed by a general discussion, usually led by Pastor Simon. The young people's group was occasionally invited to meet in the homes of members of the congregation.



Young People's Group (1950s) – ladies' side



Young People's Group (1962) – men's side

Summer camps for the young people started in 1957 with a week-long retreat in Evansburg; this was before the camp was purchased in Evansburg. The second youth retreat took place in Evansburg in 1958, followed by ones in Jasper Park in 1959, with Sister Hilde, and again in 1960, with Pastor and Mrs. Plaum. For the Jasper camps, cabins were rented between Lake Edith and Lake Annette. One of the memorable events of the Jasper retreat was the frequency with which black bears strolled through the camp and around the outhouses – this was before people knew that they should be afraid of bears. Camp Evansburg was purchased by the church in 1963, and the youth retreats were subsequently held at Camp Evansburg.

The format of the youth group and youth camps evolved over the decades. During the early years of the past decade, the youth group in our church had essentially disappeared, partly because there were very few people in that age group, but also due to the neglect of the needs of our youth by our church. To remedy this situation, the church leaders decided to hire a part-time youth pastor. In 2004, Noel Dwarika, the first youth pastor of our church, was hired on a part-time basis; this was later changed to full-time employment. The first function with the youth



Young People's Group 1960s



Youth Group 1990s

group under his direction was held

on April 17, 2004. Noel brought about several changes during his short tenure as our youth pastor before he resigned in 2004. He was instrumental in converting the room above the offices into the 'youth room', starting the youth worship team and changing the Evansburg summer camps from boys' and girls' week into co-ed weeks. Noel also taught Sunday school for a year and volunteered at local schools helping with lunch time supervision. One of his initial actions was to invite

mature young people of our congregation to become youth leaders who helped to plan and run the youth meetings. This proved to be very valuable as these youth leaders kept the youth group going in the months after Noel resigned and before the next youth pastor was hired.

Our second youth pastor, Jon Pettinger (2006 – 2011), invigorated and revitalized the Friday night youth group meetings. He did this by alternating Bible study, often several evenings on a certain topic, with enjoyable and entertaining group activities. He also got the youth involved in the broader community by getting the group to participate in various activities, such as serving meals and assisting during movie nights at the Mustard Seed Church, and helping out at the Edmonton Pregnancy Crisis Centre by doing things like cleaning their parking lot. Fun activities included visits to Edmonton Eskimo football games, the Frontier Lodge in Nordegg, youth retreats in Evansburg and the Corn Maze, having ‘Bigger and Better’ evenings (trading pennies for more valuable items in the neighbourhood), and having groups shoot movies for subsequent discussions (Y-OSCARs). The youth group also met many evenings at the Pettinger home where they enjoyed the cooking and baking of Katha, Jon’s wife. One of the major initiatives by Jon was the mission trip to the Dominican Republic. The youth group had many fund raisers, bottle drives, meal auctions and cookie sales, before they departed for the Dominican Republic shortly after Christmas in 2009. The youth group and their leaders spent 9 days in the Dominican Republic. In the mornings, they helped a growing congregation build a new sanctuary, by digging ditches, mixing mortar, tying rebar and laying bricks. In the afternoon, they participated in vacation Bible school for 100 to 120 children. Jon told stories in English and the interpreter would translate these into Spanish. The story telling was followed by the children splitting into groups and our youth playing games, doing face painting and crafts with the children. Jon was planning another mission trip for the youth when he was called to be the pastor at the First Baptist Church in Melville, Saskatchewan in 2011.



Youth Group (standing) in the Dominican Republic (2012)

It took several months to find a replacement for Jon, but we were fortunate to be able to hire Kelvin Kehler as our new youth pastor; he, his wife Becki and their 3 boys came to Edmonton in July 2012. Kelvin has extensive experience in summer camps and this experience was evident in his participation at the youth weeks in Evansburg this summer. We look forward to the future in which Kelvin will lead the youth to meaningful experiences in their walks with Christ.



Children’s Sunday School

Jesus said “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Matthew 19:14

With the arrival of the Plum family in 1973, Mrs. Plum started the children’s Sunday school during the German worship service. At first the Sunday school was held in German because all the services were in German. However, it became evident soon thereafter that it would be better

to have Sunday school in English because not all the children of members of the congregation understood German and it was also easier to get Sunday school material in English.

The format of the Sunday school has not changed much over the years. The first part of Sunday school consists of singing children's songs and choruses; then, the children are divided into different classes, according to age, for the Bible lesson. The purpose of Sunday school is to teach children about God. The lessons are presented with the aim that children learn to understand the love of God and the salvation provided by the belief in Christ's death and resurrection. It is hoped that the lessons will lead the children to make the right choices in their lives. The material to guide these lessons has been obtained from different sources over the years; currently, we are using material from Gospel Light.

The highlights of each year are the Sunday school Mothers' Day and Christmas programs. These presentations provide opportunities for the congregation to see the children and observe their diverse and remarkable talents. Over the past 40 years there have been some amazing programs, and they seem to get better every year.



Sunday school Mothers' Day performance

The Sunday school is run by volunteers; the various leaders, who have served over the past years, thank those many teachers who gave so freely of their time and gifts which made Sunday school possible. There have been many over the past 40 years, too numerous to mention. It is wonderful to see that some who were Sunday school students have grown up to become Sunday school teachers. The blessing of one generation flows to the next.



Sunday school Mothers' Day Program

Over the past 40 years, many children have attended Sunday school, and it is our prayer that it was a blessing for each one of them. May God's word and spirit lead,



Sunday school Christmas presentation

guide and direct their paths. We cling to the promise of Proverbs 22:6, "Train the child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."



Sunday school Christmas program

We, the Sunday school staff, thank God for His faithfulness over the last 40 years, and ask that you pray for the Sunday school, both for the students and the teachers.



Ladies Fellowship Group

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms... If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.” 1. Peter 4:10-11

From the very beginning of our church, women have faithfully supported the work of our congregation in a variety of areas, assisting in cleaning the church and Camp Evansburg, holding fundraising events, organizing lunches including the annual family picnic in Evansburg, distributing tracts, teaching in Saturday and Sunday school, helping at camp and providing support through prayer and mentoring. The women have met regularly for singing, prayer and Bible study; these meetings were started by Sister Hilde and continued by Sister Elfreda and Mrs. Kürschner. Mrs. Poetzsch also held several week-end retreats in Evansburg during the time her husband was a pastor in our church.

In 2000 there was a need to organize in a slightly more structured way and the Ladies Fellowship Group started with the objectives to:

REACH UP – to become women in worship and prayer

REACH IN – to become women in the Word, applying it to our lives and sharing it with each other in fellowship; and to

REACH OUT – to be women in the world who influence others for Christ

The goal was to do this through:

- **F** – Fellowship with God and each other
- U** – Unite in worship, prayer and praise
- N** – Nurture one another

- **F** – Feed each other’s body and spirit
- O** – Obey God’s Word
- O** – Outreach to others to win them for Christ
- D** – Discipline ourselves in our commitment to Christ

- **F** – Feed those in need
- R** – Read and apply God’s Word
- I** – Invite other women in the congregation
- E** – Encourage one another
- N** – Nourish our spirit
- D** – Devote time for spiritual growth
- S** – Serve others

Some topics of the monthly meetings were: The Armour of God, The Christian Wardrobe, Time Management, Personal, Home and Vacation Safety, Hagar and Ishmael – Abraham’s Other Son, Born to Soar, His Chosen Vessels for a Better Way, and Spread Your Mighty Wings. As attendance to these meetings dwindled, emphasis was put on organizing only a few events during the year – a banquet in late winter or spring, a Mother’s Day Tea, a weekend retreat in Evansburg, a Christmas celebration and monthly luncheons at a restaurant to celebrate the birthdays of attendees. The goal for any of these events was to involve women of all ages and often children were asked to participate as well.

For many years now, the highlights have been the Christmas celebration and the retreat in Evansburg. Instead of exchanging gifts at Christmas, many donations have been received to support relief organizations, missionaries and even individual families connected to our congregation. The 30 to 40 ladies attending the fall retreat have always been blessed with great weather and wonderful guest speakers such as Joyce Rust from Camrose, Birgit Sam who grew up in our church, Lorna Scholz of Action International Ministries, Sandy Semenyina of Evansburg, Sharon Neufeld from Peace River Bible Institute, Ruth Webb from Stony Plain, Bonnie Nikkel from Navigators of Canada, Betty-Mae MacDonald with Arrow Ministries, Donna McDowell of Leduc, Eleanor Damkar, Debbie Palsky and even Deborah Grey, the M.P. for Edmonton North at that time.



Ladies Retreat in Evansburg

Last year a prayer chain was started with five groups of ladies praying for and confidentially passing on many requests from congregational members, and God has been gracious in answering many of the petitions.

The membership of the executive of the Ladies Fellowship Group has dwindled to only eight – all seniors, and it will soon be up to younger ladies in the congregation to take up the task of supporting the work of Evangelical Fellowship Church.



Adult Sunday School

An adult Sunday school was started in January 2012. It is held at the same time as the German worship service. The objective of the adult Sunday school is to study the origins of Christianity and thereby strengthen our faith and be able to justify our beliefs. Peter tells us, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1. Peter 3:15), and Luke reports that the Bereans “received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures to see if what Paul said was true.” (Acts 17:11).

Topics which have been discussed in detail in the last 18 months are:

- Historical evidence for Jesus and the gospels
- Practices of the early Christian church
- Origin of the Old Testament
- The Apocrypha and Christianity
- The Dead Sea Scrolls

Currently, the Origins of the New Testament are being discussed.

Material prepared by Robert Jones, a Presbyterian deacon living in Acworth, Georgia, USA, is being used as a guide for the adult Sunday school lessons. Robert Jones has written, lectured and prepared course material for adult instruction on various aspects of Christianity.

Questions to Christians by non-Christians and widely-held erroneous beliefs are addressed in the discussions. Questions such as: ‘Is there any evidence that Jesus actually lived?’; ‘Were the early Christians pacifists?’; and ‘Why do different Christian denominations have different Bibles?’. Commonly held beliefs by non-Christians, such as ‘The New Testament was written centuries after Jesus lived.’, or ‘The Old Testament was written after the Babylonian captivity.’, or ‘There are many versions of the Bible today and their content is much different than the original.’ are discussed in adult Sunday school. The attendance at the adult Sunday school has been low, typically 6 to 10, but those who have participated have found the material useful, interesting and helpful in responding to such questions and statements.



Saturday School

The German immigrants who came to Canada after the end of WWII soon realized that their children would have to be taught German outside of their regular classes, where they were taught only in English, if they were to embrace the German-speaking church. Sister Tatjana Doclaw and Sister Marie Klee, even before the arrival of Pastor Simon, had gathered the children on Saturday mornings at the house in which they lived at 10542-83rd Avenue. Here the children learned familiar Bible stories and children’s songs in German.

Pastor Simon’s arrival in 1956 ushered in the official Saturday school. Initially it was still located at the house on 83rd Avenue. In the beginning, the sessions were held on Saturday afternoon, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. They were later changed to Saturday morning, from 10:00 to 12:00 am. Even after the church services had to be moved out of the house due to safety regulations, Saturday school remained there until the building of the church on 79th Avenue was completed.

Reading and writing German, besides German Bible stories and songs, was introduced by Pastor Simon. Textbooks and the *Ida und Udo* leaflets were supplied by the German government. The church also received grants from the Alberta Cultural Heritage Division. The amounts of these grants depended on the student enrollment; names of students and teachers had to be forwarded to the government on a yearly basis. The federal government also supplied funds through its Cultural Enrichment Program. The grants paid for school supplies and paid for the first photocopier.



Saturday school in church basement

After moving the Saturday school to the new church on 79th Avenue, it was housed in the basement. The children sat on long benches that were arranged from east to west, just inside the

entrance doors to the big basement room. When the attendance peaked at around 120, the benches occupied approximately half the room.

The first hour of Saturday school was dedicated to prayer, songs and the Bible story, all in German. One of the volunteer teachers with singing ability would lead the children through a number of songs. Many of the songs were accompanied by hand motions. In front of the benches, which are still being used today, stood an easel on which a rectangular board covered



Saturday school class picture in the middle 1960s

with felt was placed. It was used to illustrate the Bible story. Biblical characters came to life when they were placed on this board. In the early years, the Bible story was portrayed by Sister Hilde. When the attention of her young listeners strayed, she would tap the floor with her long stick, which she carried, to restore order. In those days the children were rather obedient. Later on, Sister Elfreda became the teller of the Bible story. Occasionally, one of the volunteer teachers told the story.

The second hour of Saturday school was dedicated to reading and writing. The students were then split up into various groups. Initially they dispersed into various locations, including the kitchen, the main sanctuary, and a small under-the-stairs closet. Later on, room divisions, with removable walls, were built to separate the students. Students were sent home with homework for the next session.

At two annual events, the children were encouraged to express their theatrical talents. The first of these was the Mother's Day Program, and the second was the Christmas Program. A lot of work went into stage sets, sometimes with impressive results. Many dedicated volunteer teachers were involved with these undertakings. However, over the years, Ingrid Maier and Ilse Fech assumed leadership roles in presenting these programs to the German-speaking congregation.

The theme of the Mother's Day Program, although always paying homage to the role of mothers, was more varied than the Christmas Program. Many a proud mother and father waited anxiously for their child to recite the few lines that he or she had learned at home with the help of the mother or father. Occasionally, the child could not be coaxed into uttering a single word. However, even on these occasions, the natural charm of the little ones did not fail to delight the congregation whose laughter was always polite and friendly. Following the pastor's sermon, not only praising mothers but also reminding them of their duties, mothers were treated to a red or white carnation to take home.

Each Christmas, the congregation waited patiently for the parade of children, decked out in their biblical costumes, to appear. Housecoats, towels, and walking sticks turned little boys into shepherds while capes and paper crowns created wise men bearing gifts. Long white dresses and hair ornaments turned little, as well as big, girls into angels. Mary and Joseph, in their special outfits, dominated the entourage. The children, filled with excitement, were led up the central aisle accompanied by their teachers. First came the little ones, who sometimes had to be prodded

along, followed by slightly bigger children with the biggest children bringing up the rear. With a certain amount of commotion, the group would settle in on the stage. The little ones, displaying their total lack of inhibition, never disappointed with their inevitable antics. Each year, with song and words, the Christmas story unfolded, interspersed with vigorous waving and broad smiles from the little ones when they saw someone special seated in the congregation.

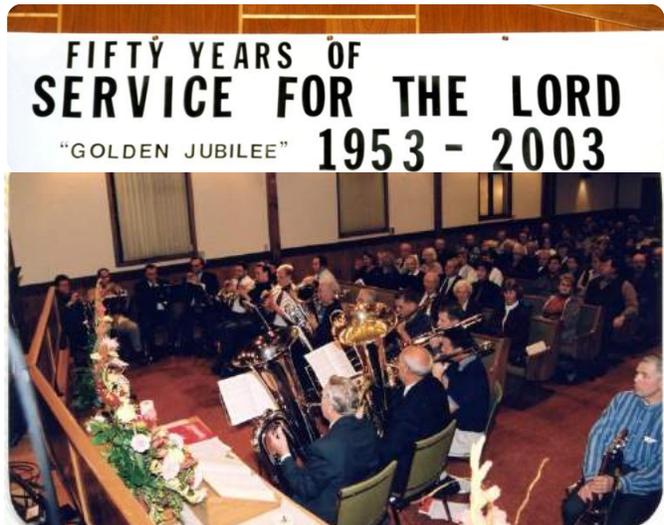
In later years, the Saturday school children went to Evansburg for 'German' weekends. Each year a different theme, expanded with various activities, was chosen. It was all aimed to improve their German and to increase their understanding of Germany. Undoubtedly, many children have many fond memories of these experiences even though quite a number of years have passed.

In 1994, after 38 years, the Saturday school came to an end. Enrollment had fallen off. German Bilingual Schools had come into existence. Also, the immigrants had become assimilated to a very large extent; it became more difficult to maintain the German language. Besides, parents no longer saw the German language as central to their religious aims. The language of worship became secondary to the worship itself.



The Past Decade

What has happened in our church since we celebrated our 50th anniversary ten years ago? One of the most significant actions of our congregation in the past decade was the decision to hire youth pastors. We have had three youth pastors since 2004, and they have been instrumental in revitalizing our youth and young adult programs. Youth worship teams became part of our Sunday morning services in the past decade. Unfortunately, youth pastors do not usually stay very long because being a youth pastor is usually a stepping stone to becoming a pastor. We pray that our youth pastors will continue to be a blessing for the youth of our congregation.



During the past decade, young couples formed several Bible study groups which met in their homes to deepen and enrich their faith. We pray that more such endeavours occur in the decades to come.

Our church has increased its involvement in the Edmonton community by out-reach in the neighbourhoods of our church, by the participation of our youth and adults in preparing meals for the homeless and destitute at the Mustard Seed Church, and by supporting and volunteering at the Neighbour Centre which opened in the vicinity of our church in 2012. We should continue to increase our efforts to help our less fortunate neighbours (Luke 10: 27-37).

A Sunday school for adults was started in 2012. It is hoped that from its modest beginnings it will grow and become a blessing to members of our congregation. Please pray for this new activity in our church.

Many improvements have been made to our facilities during the past decade. The carpets have been replaced on the main floor and alterations have been made to the front of the sanctuary to improve the stage for the presentation of the children's programs. Major improvements and repairs have taken place at Camp Evansburg; the sewage system has been replaced, the interior of the main building has been redecorated, the washrooms have been modernized, and the roof structure has been rebuilt. It is hoped that these changes will enhance our ability to attract people to God's Kingdom. We now look forward to the next decades. We pray that our congregation continues to be blessed and that we continue to do God's work with joy and thanksgiving.



We pray that God continues to bless our church and that we remain committed to God in Jesus Christ, to each other in Christ and to the work for Christ.



Alphabetical List of Contributors to Booklet

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Margaret Drachenberg | Kelvin Kehler | Margot Wanke |
| Elfreda Gaertner | Ingrid Maier | Sieghard Wanke |
| Gordon Gray | Josh Mueller | Rudi Winkelmann |
| Dorothee Hauf | Evelyn Sather | Melitta Witzke |
| Fred Huber | Klaus Wanke | |

This booklet is also available on the web site of our church:
<http://www.efcedmonton.com>

Looking Back

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Sept. 1952 | Sister Tatjana Doclaw started meetings in the Miller's home |
| Feb. 1953 | Sister Marie Klee came from Germany to join Sister Tatjana |
| May 1953 | House at 10542-83 Avenue was purchased |
| Oct. 17, 1953 | Meeting rooms of house on 83 rd Avenue dedicated; this is considered to be the 'official' beginning of our congregation |
| Oct. 1954 | Sister Lina Reuter was guest speaker at 1 st Anniversary and the following evangelistic week |
| July 1955 | Edmonton congregation visited the congregation in Luseland, Sask. |
| July 3, 1956 | Pastor Simon arrived in Edmonton without his family |
| July 13, 1957 | Pastor Simon's family arrived in Edmonton |
| July 1957 | First youth camp was held in Evansburg (rented cabins) |
| Nov. 1, 1957 | Lots for site of church were purchased on 105 Street and 79 Avenue |
| Nov. 7, 1957 | Sister Tatjana and Sister Marie moved to Regina |
| March 17, 1958 | Construction of church on 79th Avenue was started |
| Oct. 26, 1958 | Dedication of church; about 600 people were in attendance; Pastor G. Schmauß was the guest speaker at the dedication. |
| Nov. 2, 1958 | First Sunday morning service of our congregation |
| Summer 1959 | Youth camp in Jasper Park with Sister Hilde |
| Summer 1960 | Youth camp in Jasper Park with Pastor and Mrs. Plaum |
| May 21, 1962 | Four members of our youth group killed in car accident close to North Battleford on their return from visiting Sister Tatjana in Regina |
| March 8 1963 | Camp Evansburg was purchased from Mr. Schendzielorz |
| Fall 1970 | Old buildings were torn down at Evansburg and new building built; new building was ready for use in July 1971 |
| Oct. 1970 | Sister Elfreda came to Edmonton; Sister Hilde had retired earlier due to failing health |
| April 23, 1973 | Pastor Simon retired but remained active in church until his death in 1980 |
| June 3, 1973 | Pastor Plaum became our pastor (served until 1986) |
| March - July 1973 | Construction of parsonage; Plaum family and Sister Elfreda moved in |
| Dec. 1976 | First church functions in English (Bible study) began in our church |
| 1979-80 | Expansion of church to its present form (completed in Feb 1980) |
| Jan. 1985 | Pastor Poetzsch started as first English pastor (served until 1993) |
| Aug. 1986 | Pastor Kürschner became the German pastor (served until 1998) |
| Dec. 1993 | Pastor Zemke became the English pastor (served until 1996) |
| Jan. 1, 1999 | Pastor Sather became English pastor (served until Dec. 31, 2003) |
| April 1999 | Pastor Mueller became the Senior pastor (serving to the present) |
| Oct. 24-26, 2003 | 50 th Anniversary celebration |
| April 2004 | Noel Dwarika became our first youth pastor (served until July 2006) |
| Dec. 2006 | Jon Pettinger became our youth pastor (served until Dec. 2011) |
| Dec. 26, 2009 | Youth Group leaves for 9 day mission trip to Dominican Republic |
| July 2012 | Kelvin Kehler became our youth pastor (serving to the present) |