

Lutheran Churches

Folden Lutheran, (Lutheran Free Church)

A community meeting established the first church congregation on August 17, 1884. Christian T. Saugstad served as pastor. Saugstad



traveled to mission churches from Crookston into Marshall and Polk Counties. He agreed to hold services in New Folden homes or schoolhouses once a month; between visits members of the congregation shared the

responsibility of delivering the sermons.

In spring of 1886 Elias Aas accepted a call to be the pastor in the northern half of Pastor Saugstad's mission. Aas served congregations in St. Hilaire, Landstad, Norden, Folden, Bethania and Alma.

By 1887 the growing congregation divided into two separate groups. The congregation in New Folden kept the Folden name and the western congregation formed Westaker Lutheran.



Westaker Lutheran

The first members of Westaker Lutheran met on February 13, 1887 at the home of Soren Sorenson. Shortly thereafter, a log church was built in Section 20 of New Folden Township and served until 1899 when a new framed church

was built two and a half miles southwest of the eventual town of Newfolden. Construction costs were \$1200.

In 1963 the Lutheran Free Church (LFC), the synod to which Westaker belonged, merged with the American Lutheran Church (ALC). That same year Westaker Lutheran moved to Melgaard Avenue in Newfolden. In 1994 a large gift from a member gave the church the opportunity to build a new church large enough to accommodate future growth.



Rev. Hans Ostgulen

Bethlehem Lutheran

In 1889 many small parishes were served by Rev. H. Ostgulen who lived in Warren, MN. Soon after the town of Newfolden was established, Pastor Ostgulen encouraged a group of women to form a Ladies Aid. In 1905 six women organized a Ladies Aid who met in the home of Ole Kleppe. The following year a small group of people drew up a constitution formally establishing Bethlehem Lutheran on March 12, 1906.

It is not known where the congregation initially met, but in September 1908 the group voted to purchase the District No. 49 school building which was located on the south side of the Middle River. The building was eventually moved to the north side of the river.

Later the congregation used the Swedish Lutheran Church for its services and activities. In 1922, a basement was constructed, and in that year the first service was held on Thanksgiving Day. However, it wasn't until May 1927 the church was dedicated.

As the congregation grew, a group of members split from Bethlehem Lutheran and formed New Hope Lutheran.



New Hope Lutheran

In August 1987 an informal meeting at the Christian Lifeline Center (formerly the Kleppe building and now the Newfolden Cafe) explored the possibility of forming New Hope Lutheran Church. Quickly moving forward, the first worship service was held in September 1987 with Pastor Steve Estrem officiating. New Hope Lutheran became an official member of The American Association of Lutheran Churches (TAALC), and the first TAALC church in Minnesota in November 1987. A new building was constructed, and in December 1989 the first worship service was held in the sanctuary. A fellowship hall was added in August 1996. A part of New Hope's ministry is its missions interest in Haiti.

