

Grace Lutheran Church History

- 1892 Rev. Michael Mickelson of Rhinelander made regular pastoral visits to Tomahawk. He requested first meeting of First Scandinavian Lutheran Ladies Aid. Charter members of Ladies Aid – Mrs. C.J. Hanson, Mrs. Ole Berg, Mrs. M. Erickson, Mrs. R. Johnson, Mrs. E.A. Ness, Mrs. H. Moe, Mrs.G. Newborg, Mrs. Simon Hanson, Mrs. O. Thoreson..
- 1893 April 27 – congregation organized, Rev. Mickelson presiding.
May 15 – congregation was incorporated at home of Martin & Ella Erickson on Lincoln Avenue. Charter members – E.A. Ness, J.H. Soli, M. Erickson, C.J. Hanson, G.O. Newborg, Simon Hanson, Hans Moe, Rasmus Johnson, Ole E. Berg, Ole Thoreson, H.P. Hanson, and Jens Petterson.
Rev. J.A. Loftness called.
May 19 – building purchased from German Evangelical Church for \$575. Location was the corner of Third and Washington, present site of Grace Lutheran – H.P. Hanson, C.J. Hanson, and G.O. Newborg elected Building Committee.
- 1894 First funeral, Hans P. Hanson, age 2, child of M/M Simon Hanson.
- 1895 First Communion service – attended by 8 persons.
First Sunday School started – 14 pupils; language used was Norwegian.
- 1896 First Baptism – Ida Johanna Iverson; child of Andrew & Hanna Iverson; godparents were Gustav & Mary Newborg
- 1897 Rev. J.B. Reinertson called
First and second weddings – Mathias Hjelmstad & Ingeborg Halmstad; Adolf Moe & Jonette Johansen.
- 1899 First confirmation – March 26 – class of ten (Mrs. Anna Knudson one of them)
- 1901 Rev. N.G. Knudson called.
- 1902 Rev. Knudson from Rhinelander began visiting homes around Cassian with occasional services in homes.
- 1908 July 15 -- Prairie Rapids Lutheran Church incorporated at the home of Erick Erickson in Town of Cassian, 2 ½ miles north of Bradley Junction.
- 1910 Rev. J.A. Snartemoe called.
- 1911 Sunday School began one class in English and one worship service per month in English.
- 1914 Luther League organized.
Rev. Hjalmar Madland called.
- 1915 Confirmation classes began in English rather than Norwegian.
Choir organized with Carl Bronsted first director.
- 1918 Rev. C. Hougstad called.
- 1919 Rev. C.K. Helland called.
- 1923 Rev. C.M. Horneland called. First pastor to live in new parsonage (\$4,500)
- 1929 Building committee of three (Engel Haugen, Louis Larson, Carl Bronsted) elected at annual meeting to report on much needed enlarging of building -- \$4,579 needed for improvements thought too much.
- 1931 January -- Congregation ceased to be a Mission Church
First Scandinavian became part of three-point parish with Barnes Creek and Merrill (residence)
Rev. J.M. Hestnes called
- 1932 April 4 – nearly unanimous ballot to build a new building – elected committee (Carl Bronsted, Rasmus Johnson, Oscar Newborg, Mrs. Martin Thompson, Mrs. Anna Knudsen), secured architect.
July 7 – bids submitted and Engel Haugen & Ben Paulson awarded General Contract.
July 10 – Congregation assembled to say goodbye to old white building.
September 11 – cornerstone laid for new church building.
November 20 – new church building dedicated at the 40th anniversary service (\$8,000)
Lutheran Brotherhood organized – organization for men.
- 1933 Rev. Hestenes died suddenly in Holy Week.
Rev. S.B. Knudsen called to both Grace and Prairie Rapids.
- 1934 Name of congregation changed officially to Grace Lutheran Church with new Constitution and Bylaws.
L.D.R. formed on April 23, an organization to build faith in young women.

- 1939 Rev. O.A. White, interim pastor. Rev. J.E. Borgen called.
- 1942 Rev. Odean G. Tieman called.
- 1944 Rev. N.J. Holm interim while Rev. Tieman serves chaplaincy in Army
- 1948 Rev. N.J. Holm interim. Rev. A.C. Pikop called.
- 1950 Ladies Aid and Sunday School financed a bus to Bradley and West Kraft for Sunday School.
- 1951 Roger Bronsted ordained at Grace where he was raised – son of Amel and Bertha Bronsted.
- 1952 John Burritt ordained at Grace where he was raised – son of M/M Harry Burritt.
- 1953 60th anniversary celebrated with booklet noting *“again facing inadequacy of our present Church building”*.
Both Sunday School and auditorium are noted as being too small for the present membership with sincere hope the new building project is realized in very near future. Membership at that time was 659 baptized, 461 confirmed, 378 voting members, 196 Sunday School, 28 members in choir. Mrs. Wm. Piehl director, one of Tomahawk’s best choirs
- 1956 Rev. A.H. Belgum interim.
- 1957 Rev. Albin Fortney called.
- 1958 Rev. Sahmih Ismir called.
- 1959 Two services per Sunday started.
Telephone ministry “Dial-a-Devotion” began
- 1960 bus financed to bring children to Sunday School.
- 1962 Rev. E.T. Reiff called.
- 1966 Church remodeled, new education unit added. Dedication held.
- 1967 January – first ecumenical event in Tomahawk; St. Mary’s and Grace sponsored it and met for Christian dialogue during Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
Rev. Reiff dies suddenly. Rev. Carl Musall interim.
- 1968 Rev. Bruce Hanstedt called.
- 1971 Rev. Paul Splett, interim.
Rev. Ray Boyens called.
- 1972 Rev. Jim Reiff, first intern pastor.
Virginia Foreman served as volunteer secretary.
- 1974 Rev. James Reiff, Assistant Pastor called.
- 1975 Rev. Dave Kramer, Associate Pastor called.
- 1976 Lutefisk supper custom revived.
- 1979 Rev. S.F. Iverson called.
Jenny Kerley hired as paid secretary.
- 1980 Rev. Ed. Baumgarten, visitation pastor called.
- 1983 Clayton Schmit ordained. Grace Lutheran celebrates 90th anniversary.
- 1984 Rev. Jeff Tarras, Associate Pastor called.
- 1990 Rev. Gorden Estenson called.
- 1991 Rikka Estneson hired as Worship Director.
- 1992 Rev. Joy Mortensen-Wiebe and Rev. Darin Wiebe called to share associate position.
Georgia Sorenson hired as Worship Director
- 1993 Grace Lutheran Church holds year-long observance of its Centennial Year.
- 1994 Jennifer Denetz, first woman of the congregation ordained here.
Lawrence Haugen bikes from New Mexico to Wisconsin in 10 days as fund raiser for Centennial gift.
- 1995 Rev. Rolf Amundsen called. Rev. Ted Johanson, interim Associate.
Diane Schmit ordained.
- 1997 Rev. Barbara Jorgenson, Associate Pastor called.
- 1999 Rev. Paul Ihlenfeld, interim.
- 2000 Rev. Harvey Jaeger, interim.
- 2001 Rev. Mark Ziemer called.
- 2002 Rev. Gerald Check, visitation Pastor.
- 2003 Rev. Don Cannady, visitation Pastor
Cindy Storm hired as Director of Volunteers and Ministries
- 2005 Melissa Moyle Pohlmann ordained
new sanctuary dedicated
- 2006 Sherrie Nelson Lorbeck ordained