

Berea's Beginnings Booklet

A Brief History

Berea Lutheran Church

9308 Rich Valley Blvd.,
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

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Berea 
Lutheran Church
& School

"Searching the Scriptures" - Acts 17:10-12

Berea's Beginnings



*"God sets the solitary
in families."
(Psalm 68:6)*



Clifford Schwieger Home in
Minneapolis, MN
(Site of First Service)
October 31, 1959
16 attended

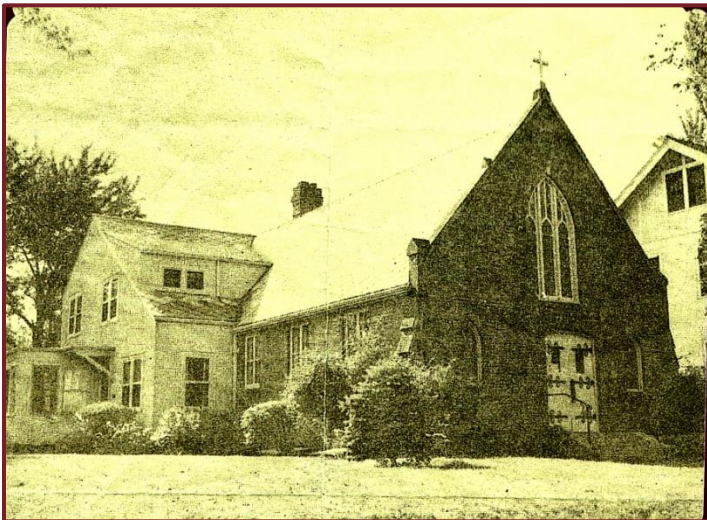
Pastor Gordon Radtke of Immanuel,
Mankato conducted the service.

❖ Berea formally
organized January 3,
1960 (became
member of the
Church of the
Lutheran Confession)

❖ Berea became one of
the mission
congregations of the
CLC in 1961 (subsidy:
\$60/month)



First church altar



Purchased church and parsonage combination on Marshall
Avenue in St. Paul for \$21,000
First Service – March 3, 1960
Dedicated – July 10, 1960



First Berea Pastor Marvin Eibs
Installed: March 6, 1960

1960 - 1969

Relocation

*"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."
(Matthew 18:20)*



Farewell dinner for Pastor Marvin Eibs after he accepts call to Faith, Sanborn, MN April 1970

❖ On October 17, 1973 a milestone was reached as Berea declared itself a self-supporting congregation

❖ As the Lord blessed Berea, discussion and planning began for construction of a new church and fellowship hall on the Inver Grove Heights property.



Home with 6 acres purchased in Inver Grove Heights for \$56,000 (Dedicated: May 9, 1971)



Pastor Paul Larsen accepts call and is installed as Berea Pastor. May 17, 1970



Church entrance



New Rich Valley Boulevard Property Entrance



Worship Services were held in a makeshift basement chapel seating 50 (with additional seating in the kitchen and living room). The Pastor and his family lived upstairs.

1970-1974

Building the Lord's House

*"Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it."
(Psalm 127:1)*



The Building Committee
(Groundbreaking early 1975)

❖ With the help of a loan from the CLC Church Extension Fund, financing was secured.

❖ Extensive volunteer labor kept the cost affordable.

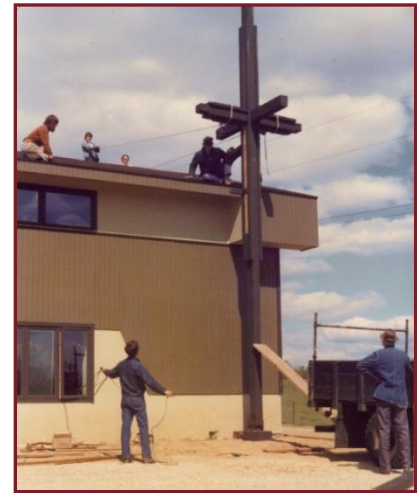
❖ The upstairs was used for worship and the lower used for education and fellowship.



Construction



Our first service Christmas Eve
1975



Construction



Exterior of finished church



Our new church was dedicated on February 15, 1976

1975 - 1976

Our Christian Day School Opens



*"The fear of the Lord
is the beginning of
wisdom."
(Proverbs 9:10)*



Our first schoolroom

❖ The Christian education of their young people has always been important to Bereans. Throughout our history in our homes and families, in our Sunday School, confirmation and youth classes the faith of our children has been nourished and nurtured.

❖ From early on, there was also a strong interest in having a Christian Day School and in using Immanuel Lutheran High School and College for our youth.

❖ In 1980, Beth Nolting was called as a part-time teacher. Eventually, she served as a full-time upper grade teacher.



Marlys Gerth
(First teacher)
1975-1984



Beth Nolting
1980 - 1988



Students



School



Confirmation class

1977 - 1982

Shepherding Changes



Pastor David Schierenbeck
Installed: July 10, 1983

*“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly.”
(1 Peter 5:2)*



❖ In 1983, Pastor Paul Larsen accepted the call to Corpus Christi, Texas. Pastor David Schierenbeck accepted the call to Berea.



Berea Teacherage 1985



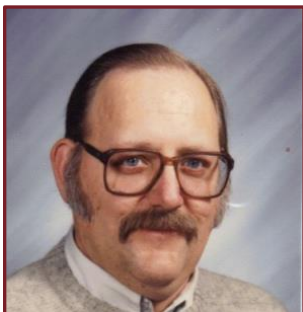
Teacher Susan Rehm
1988 - Present

❖ In 1984, Marlys Gerth accepted a call to Watertown, SD. Beth Nolting served as full-time teacher.



Berea Teacherage

❖ In 1986, Berea built a two-apartment/one home teacherage on the property to save escalating rental costs. The total cost was \$42,000 with most work done by volunteer labor and paid off within five years!



Teacher Robert Snell
1988 - 2003

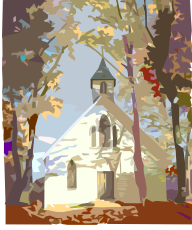
❖ In 1988, Beth Nolting married and moved and David Bernthal accepted the call to Lynnwood, WA. Teacher Susan Carstensen (now Rehm) and Robert Snell from Onalaska, WI accepted the call.



Teacher David Bernthal
1986 - 1988

1983 - 1989

Growing "Joys"



"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord' " (Psalm 122:1)



Our new church



Building Committee
New church groundbreaking
March 29, 1992



Our new church

❖ As the Lord blessed Berea with numerical growth, the 130 seat "upstairs" church was being strained. Planning began for building a larger sanctuary with additional classroom and fellowship space.



Construction 1992

❖ Construction began in the Spring 1992 and continued for one year. The \$345,000 cost was covered by \$50,000 in gifts and the balance from a CEF loan.



Construction 1992

❖ The sanctuary (and balcony) seating is 225 with an enlarged narthex, nursery, office, and classroom also part of the project. Thousands of volunteer hours and labor made this project affordable.



First Service
December 6, 1992



New Church Dedication
June 6, 1993

1990 - 1995

School Changes

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11)



Cathy Augustin
Music Instructor
1996 - Present



Teacher Susan Hulke
2005 - 2006



Teacher Judy Snell
1997 - 1999

❖ New Day School teachers serving terms this time were Cathy Augustin, Judith Snell, and Matthew Thurow.

❖ In 2005, Kindergarten was added to our Day School program. Teachers have been Susan Hulke (2005-2006), Mary Ann Klingenschmitt (2006-2010) and Anne Gullerud (2010 - present).



Teacher Mary Ann Klingenschmitt
2006 - 2010

❖ An extensive school remodeling project in 2005 resulted in two large (upper and lower level classrooms), a workroom, and principal's office.



Teacher Matthew Thurow
2003 - Present

❖ Berea Lutheran Preschool was added in 2013.



New Kindergarten classroom



Teacher Anne Gullerud
2010 - Present



One of the former classrooms



New upper classroom



New lower classroom

1996 - 2006

The Activity Center



*“Whether therefore you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”
(1 Corinthians 10:31)*



Activity Center Building Committee

❖ During these years, both our Congregation (350) and Day School (25) continued to grow.



Construction 2001



Inside Completed

❖ With a pressing need for more fellowship, classroom, kitchen, and activity space, Berea embarked on a \$400,000 project to construct an Activity Center, expand and pave parking at least. This addition is used for many activities and has truly been a blessing to the congregation.



Construction 2001



Activity Center Dedication February 17, 2002



New fellowship space

2000 - 2001

Berea: Past, Present, and Future



*“Jesus Christ is the
same yesterday,
today, and forever.”
(Hebrews 13:8)*



- ❖ In 2007, Berea began holding two Sunday morning services. In 2010, we returned to our one service schedule.
- ❖ Throughout its 50 years, Sunday School, and Bible Class has offered special opportunity for informal instruction and spiritual growth.
- ❖ Only 1 charter member remains for this 50th Anniversary – Donn Kirchgatter.
- ❖ In addition to the countless souls regularly served with the Gospel in Word and Sacrament in our worship service. Many Baptisms, weddings, and Christian funerals have revived and uplifted the hearts of many.
- ❖ Berea has been blessed with many children – the future of our church. It is our prayer that the Lord will use us to help them grow into faithful committed followers of Christ.
- ❖ Amidst the many changes we have seen at Berea in the past 50 years, we give thanks for our unchanging Savior and His unchanging, saving Word in our midst. May He graciously preserve these blessings among us for our children and our children’s children.



Our Jubilee in Christ: Celebrating God’s Grace and Faithfulness

1960 - 2010