



HR0543

LRB102 21161 ECR 30174 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives would like to congratulate the congregation of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wheeler on the occasion of its 150th anniversary; and

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WHEREAS, The history of St. Paul Lutheran Church has its roots in the heavy German immigration to Effingham and Jasper Counties in the 1860s and 1870s; and

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WHEREAS, The census of 1870 listed 2795 foreign born in Effingham County, of which 2121 were German; and

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WHEREAS, Among the Lutherans settled in St. Francis Township were two men named Gerhard Siefken and Herman Engelbarts; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Siefken purchased 160 acres of land in 1863 at \$10 an acre, and a part of that land was sold to the congregation for the pastor's pasture land; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Engelbarts purchased 56 acres of land in 1865 and donated ground for the church buildings and cemetery; and

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WHEREAS, At first, services were held in homes and, soon

1 after, in the public log school house, which stood on the
2 section of land opposite the present location of the church;
3 St Paul's congregation was taking on its permanent form and
4 resolved to erect its own house of worship; and

5 WHEREAS, An important day in the congregation's history
6 came on Pentecost Sunday, May 29, 1871, when the new frame
7 church measuring 24x40 feet and costing about \$1,100 was
8 dedicated; and

9 WHEREAS, The church was built by 14 original charter
10 members, consisting of Fredrich Garbe, Fredrich Behrns,
11 Gerhard Siefken, Andrew Blievernicht, August Piel, Carl
12 Hasting, Herman Engelbarts, John Fritz, Christoph Raabe,
13 Christoph Fritscher, August Gust, Fritz Fritscher, Henry
14 Fritscher, and Toenies Harting; and

15 WHEREAS, By 1900, the congregation had outgrown the small
16 frame church and decided to build a new brick church; Charles
17 F. May of St Louis was the architect; and

18 WHEREAS, The new building was to be 60x36x18 feet and of
19 the Gothic style, including a metal ceiling, an extended
20 chancel for the alter, and a slate-covered tower topped by a
21 cross to fit the symbol of the faith of St. Paul's members; and

1 WHEREAS, The first stone was laid on July 2, 1900, and the
2 new church was dedicated on November 19,1900; and

3 WHEREAS, The church records were in German until 1934, and
4 there have been approximately 1300 confirmations in the last
5 150 years; and

6 WHEREAS, Since 1934, there have been 306 baptisms, 121
7 marriages, and 228 burials at the church; and

8 WHEREAS, Church membership is currently 146 and is served
9 by Rev. Dean Herberts; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
11 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we congratulate the congregation of the St. Paul Lutheran
13 Church on the occasion of its 150th anniversary, commend the
14 continued good work of the church within and beyond the
15 community of Wheeler, and wish them many more years of faith
16 and fellowship; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
18 presented to the congregation of St. Paul Lutheran Church as
19 an expression of our esteem and respect.