

Women's Role in the Church

The role of the men and the women in the church were very different and most likely this tradition was brought with our German ancestors from the old country. They sat on opposite sides of the church with the men on one side, the women on the other until the present church was built in 1859 when family seating was permitted. This change in seating was not received well from the older members of the church. Men had their own Sunday School class and the women had their own. The men were elders of the church and they made all the decisions in the operation of the church. The women were expected to do more social arrangements...providing food and drink, arranging church dinners and picnics, etc. The roles of men and women in the church were very different

In the 1800s, the Lutheran women led through service; they brought food to those who were sick and cared for them. If there was someone in need they provided the best way they could. They were interested in international missions for Lutheran church bodies and we have on record the missions that the women of Zion supported in finance and in prayer. Another words, they saw needs and met them. After caring for their own family this is where the heart of a Lutheran woman rested. The men lead worship, were the choir director, the organist, and the teachers.

During the Civil War many women of Zion were very active in caring for the wounded that were brought to Zion; two in particular were even mentioned in the New York Times in September 19, 1862, Miss Haupt and the other name is unreadable. The women of the town provided a wonderful Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings for those injured soldiers remaining at the church. They meet the needs of the community.

But big change appears in the church records of 1889. The congregation voted to permit women of the Church to vote and to participate in the revision of the Constitution. Things have changed since then! We have had woman organist, women teachers, women on council, women leading in worship, we have a daughter of the congregation go into ministry, and Zion has its first female pastor. We have come a long way Baby!

Zion Daughter's and Men's Bible Class

Our heritage of faith has been such an important part of our community and those who lead the charge into the 20th century was the Men's Bible class. There is no date recorded that states when the class actually began but there is references to this class back to 1910 and could very well be older than that. In the early records it appears that the Pastor taught the men's Bible class. At one point there were nearly 200 men in this class. After the chapel addition was built in 1929, the men met on the east side of the chapel (where the library is today.) We have many pictures in the archives with the class standing on the front steps of the church.



Zion's daughter class was formed around the war years. One of the members of that class was asked a few years ago "How did the class begin?" The answer was, "We didn't want to go to the Sunshine Class where our mothers went." After the chapel was built the women gathered in the center part of the building.

These two classes will not go down remembered only for their well known and delicious apple butter, the hands that served at countless funerals and dinners, but having done so much for Zion in monetarily ways, educationally and through their many acts of service. Although today their class size has dwindled down in numbers their kindness and love for Zion and its people have not waned. **THANK YOU** for all that you do!