

A Guide
to the Microfilm Edition
of the Records of
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio,
1843-1994.

Processed by
Michael McCormick

Edited by
John J. Grabowski

This Microfilm Edition was generously supported in part by Mr. &
Mrs. Donald A. Knuth, and Mr. Gerhard Hoelter.

Filmed at: The Western Reserve Historical Society
10825 East Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Camera operator - Bernard Watford.
1994.

THE WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
LIBRARY - MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, organized April 14, 1843, was the first German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cleveland, and "mother church" to other congregations in the metropolitan area. Also, congregants took part in the meetings, beginning at Zion's temporary quarters in the Concert Hall in September 1845, that led to the formation of the Missouri Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Zion has been affiliated with this Synod since 1852.

The congregation grew rapidly during the years of German immigration to the United States, from 45 members in 1843 to 1,375 in 1913. Services were offered primarily in German until 1913, when Pastor T.F. Schurdel implemented greater use of English in both church and the school. In 1853, the Church began offering Lutheran education, and maintained a elementary school until 1971. As its German speaking congregants moved to other neighborhoods, membership dwindled. In 1994, the Church, re-located several times, stands at E. 30th Street and Prospect Avenue in Cleveland.

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Records, 1843-1994, include extensive name and address lists of congregants, actions of the several governing councils of the church, church bulletins, pupil lists of the school, and historical accounts of Missouri Synod Evangelical Lutheran activities in Greater Cleveland.

The collection is arranged in four series, Church Records, School Records, Historical Miscellany, and Structural Blueprints. Series 1, Church Records include the complete sacramental records of the church; membership records, 1901-1993; minutes of the Voters' Assembly, 1878-1962; minutes of the Ladies' Aid Society, 1906-1950; financial accounts, 1896-1974; and church bulletins, 1958-1994. Series 2, School Records, includes correspondence; minutes of the Zion Board of Education, 1916-1930; financial records, 1888-1970; student attendance records, 1855-1943; scattered gradebooks, 1919-1933; scattered yearbooks, 1952-1971; and Sunday School registrations, 1939-1950. Series 3, Historical Miscellany, includes minutes of the Voters' Assembly found after the initial review of the collection; a 1961 survey and address by Pastor C.T. Schuknecht on the transition from German to English language usage in Cleveland German Lutheran churches; and histories of Cleveland Evangelical Lutheran Churches. Series 4, Structural Blueprints, include architectural records of both the church and school structures built at the Prospect Avenue site.

The records, many of which are in German, will be of use to historians of religion, ethnicity, immigration, and urban development. The sacramental records, membership lists, and pupil lists will be of use to genealogists and family historians. The names lists of congregants and pupils generally also include address information, allowing both positive identification of