

My sisters Bertha Lambert, Clara Harrington, Hannah Rasmussen and myself, Mabel Jorgenson, have many memories of Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church and the Westerville community.

Our Mother, Anna Wold arrived in the United States from Trondheim, Norway in 1882 at the age of 16. Our father Iver Hanson, arrived from there in 1884 at the age of 19. They met and married in Sioux City, Iowa.

In 1895 they moved to Westerville where they became members of Pleasant Valley Lutheran. Six of their seven children were born here, the eldest was born and baptized in Sioux City. The other six were baptized at Pl. Valley. Three of us were confirmed here, the other four at Trinity Lutheran in Vermillion.

Our father was custodian and Sunday School Superintendent at Pl. Valley. He also participated in the Sunday Worship Service always reading the Lessons and offering the first prayer. He attended every funeral, tolling the bell during the procession before the funeral and when the procession went to the cemetery.

Our father was a painter and carpenter and many of the houses and buildings he constructed are still standing in the Westerville area. He built the pulpit for the church. Many years later a new one was purchased, and we have been told that the one he built was given to Bergen Lutheran Church.

At one time a building was erected to the north of the present church which was used to shelter the horses from the weather. Our father was the foreman and of course, the men of the church assisted.

There was the time when the church pews needed to be refinished. The women thought they could remove the finish to help the painter. They used lye, and when the new finish was applied it did not dry, resulting in sticky pews, until the painter, Iver Hanson did the job himself.

I also remember the Sunday when Pastor Warburg did not get to Sunday School. He did arrive in time to conduct the worship service with the explanation that their cow had fallen and broken her leg. He could not let her suffer, so he took the Sunday School time to butcher. Some members of the congregation frowned on that but in the interest of food for their table, I am sure the Lord understood.

The men of the church made all of the decisions. They sat on one side and the women and children on the other. Our Mother was a devout Lutheran, along with the other women of the church was very busy raising a large family, and perhaps did not have the time to be active in the church, had it been permitted. She died in 1952 at the age of 86.

For all of the work he did at Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church, Iver Hanson received a plot in the cemetery as his ~~pay~~

Due to declining health, he moved his family to Vermillion in May, 1911. He died in June of 1914.

My sisters and I have two living brothers. In 1985 the six of us are all over age 80. We attribute our longevity to our Norwegian Heritage.