

Remembering Ladies of Holy Trinity

By Susan Exley

In March of 1940, when the Council met, they had to deliberate carefully to allow Esther Shearouse's name to be nominated for assistant Sunday School Superintendent. She was the first woman to hold an elected position in the Sunday school and our church. Esther (Shearouse) Pruett went on to be the first female council member and was a very active member paving the way for women's roles in our church. Prominent in the Women's LCW (Lutheran Church Women – later known as WELCA) in our church and region, Esther taught young people for years in Sunday School and was advisor for Luther League among her many other roles.

Ida Gnann was church organist for many years and was very active in the LCW. She and Lorene Rountree played great roles in the 1960s overseeing the making the first Chrismons for our Christmas tree that are still use to this day.

Isabel Kieffer saw the need for a storage cabinet for our church paraments. She helped design and oversaw husband Newton's building and donation of the first custom cabinet in a side room just off the chancel with rods to store the paraments crease free.

Our LCW ladies took on projects to raise money for items including paraments for the chancel, draperies, kitchen items, etc. Today our women have donation dinners. Back in the 1950s and 60s the ladies served meals for a fee to the Lions Club for ladies night, class reunions, wedding rehearsal dinners, etc. They served the meals with plates and glassware that had to be hand washed, teaching young girls of the congregation about proper table settings, decorations and serving. Charles Hinely remembers when Pauline Weitman, Lois Arnsdorff, Rebecca Wilson and his mother Lois Hinely would "put on the dog" serving fancy items in elaborate meals. Individually molded congealed salads on lettuce, layered dessert in parfait glasses, raisin sauce over baked ham, beautiful meringue pies and so much more came from the Holy Trinity kitchen.

Lula Ford, a faithful member, was custodian for many years. She made and decorated beautiful wedding cakes and lots of cake squares for many events at our church.

The Janie Bowers Circle disbanded a few years ago when the membership dwindled as members died and Beverly Smith moved away leaving only member Willie Tebeau, now 101 years old. That group including Hattie Carr, Nellie Gnann, Pearl Ford, Madeline Sutton, Ruth Seckinger, Ruth Shearouse, Mildred Marchman and others, prepared worlds of health kits to go overseas, quilts, bibs for the nursing home and so much more during their lifetimes.

Esther led the way for a host of women who followed and are still the backbone of Holy Trinity today.