

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

In 1957, the Mission Board of the Western (predecessor of the Missouri) District purchased property on Natural Bridge Road in Bridgeton, Missouri.

Pastor Robert F. Myers came to Bridgeton as a missionary-at-large in July 1965. He and his family had lived in Branson, Missouri, serving St. Paul Lutheran Church. Our first worship service was held September 19 at the Carrollton School on Celburne Lane with 148 worshipers present. Regular Sunday services followed, and a Sunday school was started one week later on September 26 with an enrollment of 41.

During the fall of 1965, the congregation selected the name Beautiful Savior and our congregation was formally organized on November 24, 1965.

Robert F. Myers was installed as the first official pastor, in April 1966. Forty-four families joined as members (47 adults and children received as baptized members and 93 as confirmed members). At the Western District Convention in June of 1966, our congregation was officially accepted as a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Our Groundbreaking Service was held on April 23, 1967. The Cornerstone Laying Service was conducted on September 24. The design of the chancel area accented the name, Beautiful Savior, and expressed the theme, "The Joy of the Believer's Life," in the altar, crucifix, pulpit, baptismal font, and chancel window.

After thirteen years of ministry with the people of Beautiful Savior, Pastor Bob announced his resignation on February 19, 1978, to allow himself more time and energy to complete his doctoral thesis. He celebrated his final worship service as our pastor on June 25, 1978. Pastor Bob received his doctorate on May 25, 1979, and subsequently accepted a call to Living Word Lutheran Church in The Woodlands, Texas.

Through the guidance and will of God, Beautiful Savior called Pastor Paul T. Prange as our pastor in September 1978. He accepted the call and was installed on October 15, 1978.

With Pastor Paul as Shepherd, the congregation grew and a Building Committee was organized to determine the need for expansion of the existing church. Enough need was found for a larger church and the project went forward. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on November 10, 1991, and the new addition was dedicated September 20, 1992. The old sanctuary was turned into a fellowship hall for meetings and celebrations, and the flourishing congregation was well-served by the new sanctuary.

Pastor Paul, after 21 years of service at Beautiful Savior, retired as pastor with his final service August 29, 1999. Pastor Thomas Eckstein accepted the Call of Beautiful Savior, and began his ministry as pastor September 5, 1999. During Pastor Tom's tenure, Beautiful Savior went "hightech" with services being broadcast on KFJO and the creation of a website.

In June of 2005, after almost 6 years of service, Pastor Tom accepted a Call to Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown, North Dakota where he currently serves as pastor.

Pastor David Bretscher began serving as vacancy pastor in June of 2005 as Beautiful Savior began a search for a new pastor to replace Pastor Tom. As it turned out, we did not have to look very far as Pastor Bretscher was called by Beautiful Savior and accepted on July 14, 2006. Pastor Bretscher was installed as the Lord's Undershepherd on Sunday, August 6, 2006.

Despite an airport expansion that virtually eliminated whole neighborhoods, Beautiful Savior has continued to minister to those in Bridgeton, Missouri and beyond, and we look forward to continuing to Reflect the Light of Christ to our neighbors.