

# Memories

## **Anna Adelmund (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

With me being the first kid here for Vacation Bible School (my Mother was Director), I was able to encourage other kids to start coming not only to church but also to Sunday School.

## **Carol Andersen**

What a shock! In 1966 I was elected as the first woman to serve on the Fredsville church council. I was not too knowledgeable as to what that would entail but learned right away. I became the secretary which was not too surprising since being a woman others assumed I was qualified. There were six council members at that time and most of the men were long-time members of the church so were aware of some of the dynamics of the congregation. Being a mother of three young kids, I was able to add a new perspective. While I was intimidated about being a trail blazer and learning the ins and outs of the council, the men were nice enough although they had a tendency to not notice my contributions. I served my term and learned a lot. In 1983 I put that council experience and other committee experiences to work and became the first woman to be elected council president at Fredsville. It was all very humbling and educational as I learned about serving the congregation. I appreciate that I had the opportunity to offer my skills to the church and hopefully opened doors for other women to share their skills.

## **Edwin (Ed) Andersen** – Arlan Andersen's brother

Fredsville Lutheran Church and Sunday School During WWII

The Fredsville Lutheran Church was adjacent to our farm on the Fredsville corner. On the West side of the road opposite the Fredsville Kirke was the parsonage and auditorium and a large grassy lawn which our farm surrounded. Down the hill toward the corner was three small houses, the little brick house for our hired man, the Hoffman/Sorensen house and the little yellow sexton's house. There had been a blacksmith's shop and a creamery with a steam driven cream separator. The shed that housed the butter barrel makers shop had been moved near the windmill and now served as the chicken house for our laying hens.

The church auditorium was used for the children's Sunday school classes, young people's gatherings, vacation bible school, Christmas parties and social events. During 1940 our neighbor Sophus Hermansen led the effort to construct a proper basement under the auditorium which only had a partial cellar below. Many of the church members brought a team of horses and a slip scrapper to dig the basement. The slip scrapper was a U-shaped steel tub, open at one end 3 feet wide, 18 inches deep with wooden handles on each side. The front open end had a sharp lower edge that would dig into the soil as the driver directed the horses forward. As the tub filled with dirt the driver would lower the handles and the tub would slip slide on top of the dirt until they were ready to deposit the dirt and then the driver would flip the handles forward and the tub would tip forward and drop the dirt. The horses and driver would then circle back and take a new load of dirt. These horse and driver teams started at one end of the auditorium, dug down about eight feet and then dug under the auditorium. When progress was made new concrete footings were laid and Arnold Mikkelsen laid the concrete block walls to hold up the auditorium. It was great fun for us youngsters to watch this cooperative effort by many church members. Work progressed and the concrete walls were completed under the auditorium. On completion there were restrooms with flush toilets, a large furnace, a large room with dining tables and a kitchen with gas stoves, hot water, and refrigerators. Now social events with good Danish food, coffee and music were featured in this auditorium.



AUDITORIUM AFTER REMODELING 1940

Sunday school classes were held in the main hall and basement table areas. We would open each Sunday school session with an opening song and a short message by the Sunday School Superintendent, then break into grade level classes where we memorized the bible verse for the day and talked about the lesson. The last ten minutes we would return to the main level and each class would stand and recite their bible verse and close with taking an offering and singing a closing hymn. This occurred when across the road Sunday church services were held in the old Fredsville Church.

Vacation Bible School was also held each summer for three weeks in the auditorium. We would begin each day much as the weekly Sunday school with separate grade level classes and a general session where each class would stand and recite their memory verse for the day. Next there was folk dancing and gymnastics to keep us physical active all though farm children were already physically active. The Sunday at end of the summer session featured a big picnic held on the big grassy lawn surrounding the auditorium. After a concluding program by the participating children, they were rewarded with games on the lawn and tanks of water with ice cold soda pop and treats for all.

The auditorium housed the confirmation classes and the young people's groups. Weekly confirmation classes were conducted by the Ministers. In 1943 Rev. and Mrs. Svend Kjaar left Fredsville for a call to a church in Salinas, CA. In 1944 Rev. and Mrs. Marvin Nygaard accepted a call to serve the Fredsville Lutheran Church. During 1949 I was confirmed by Rev. Nygaard.

### **Eric Andersen**

As a kid growing up, I would ride my bike to Vacation Bible School. Back then, it was held in the mornings for a week. I and several other neighborhood kids would ride their bikes and we would meet the rest of the guys that were dropped off. We always got there early so we could play softball. Our "diamond" was on the north side of our current church. We would lay something down for home base and then use the trees for first and second base. Third base was the corner of the church. We also played after Vacation Bible School got over too. However, I was careful not to play too long as dinner was at noon and I couldn't be late!

### **Julie Andersen**

Fredsville was a strong presence throughout my growing up years. We lived on the farm around the corner where my grandparents had lived before, and my brother and sister-in-law live now. Our roots run deep in Fredsville physically, spiritually, and socially – with a true sense of place and community.

One of the many things I value about the sense of community that Fredsville provided were the opportunities to learn, try new things, and stretch myself. I saw both of my parents deeply involved in many aspects of the church, including seeing my mom be the first woman to be elected to the Church Council. She inspired me to also be first at something and challenge the status quo. So, at about age 12, I and my friend Kim Kruger were the first females of any age to be ushers for a church service. Maybe other women or girls had ushered before, but I was never aware of them. I felt important being the first in this role. I also remember both Kim and I being excited and nervous. Would we be able to get the candles lit? Would I remember which pews to pass the collection plates down? What would others think of us? My memory is that we were warmly welcomed in that role and soon other girls were serving as ushers and eventually women as well. I appreciate that Fredsville could simultaneously honor many of its cultural traditions and stretch and welcome other types of social and cultural development. May Fredsville continue to acknowledge its roots and stretch its branches toward ongoing growth.

### **Sara Andersen (VanVlack)**

One of my favorite Fredsville memories is attending Luther League (the name given to the high school youth group when I was growing up) in the early 1980's. Pastor Seibert was in charge and there was a core group of 8-10 high schoolers that were regular attenders. I liked that I could go to the meetings and be myself. Upon reflection as an adult, I now know that it was "good for my soul".

### **Aubrey Asche -6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I've got a great memory! My confirmation mentor - Jean Loger, asked me to go with her to the Humane Society to pick up a foster dog. We had lots of fun together!

### **Tiffany Asche**

We are so glad we found our Fredsville Family!! In 2018, we were looking for a church that was closer to home so that our kids could attend confirmation and grow in the church. The JAM and WINGS programs run by Fredsville drew them in and once we attended services led by Pastor Lisa, we decided to join. She is amazing at delivering sermons and is so personable.... And she also gives the best hugs!

Once we decided to join the church, we were blessed to have Mariah and Aubrey lined up as sticky buddies with LuAnn Jones and Susan Sherwood. They took us all in as their own. Mariah and Aubrey enjoyed special activities throughout the year with these ladies. They grew in friendships and in their spiritual lives. I am so thankful for these two ladies!

Through our years at Fredsville we have had two children in the confirmation program. The first year as Mariah's confirmation, we were able to attend many service activities, a synagogue, a mosque, among other activities. Pastor Lisa always made things so dynamic for the kids and they enjoyed their fellowship amongst their peers and mentors. We have enjoyed getting to know their mentors and spending quality time in and outside of church. We have also met many special friends. Being a part of something bigger than yourself surrounded by God loving people is such an awesome experience!

I have enjoyed singing solos during Sunday services. I was blessed to have the Sunday school children (including my girls) sing back up for me during a Christmas program. I will never forget singing the solo "Oh Holy Night" On Christmas Eve in 2019. Pastor Lisa had warned me of how overwhelming it was to look out that night. Boy, was she right! As I finished up the song and looked out at the entire church with faces looking at me lit by candlelight, I was moved to tears. What a beautiful sight!

We have felt the love of the Fredsville congregation over this past year and a half. Mike ended up going to the hospital twice within a year and Mariah had surgery for a torn ACL. So many members reached out with care and concern, including sending cards, gift cards and money. We especially felt the prayers and the support to help carry us through. The notes were encouraging and helped lift us. We love our Fredsville family! And we are looking forward to being a part of this church for many years to come!

## **Caeden Bakker – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

One of my favorite memories at Fredsville has been watching all of my little cousins get baptized.

## **Carl Bakker**

My favorite memories of Fredsville were most certainly the Christmas programs during my childhood years. Not only was there the feeling of accomplishment after what seemed (as a child) to be long, LONG days of practice; there was also the fun of celebrating afterwards with peanuts, apples, and candy canes - and, of course, running around downstairs while the "boring adults" socialized!

I have to say that a very close second comes from my time as the youth director (late 2000s while I was in college). We would have pizza parties, held in the Youth House (the small house to the east of the church), with the confirmation students. It seems to me that by the time we enter college (the stage of life I was in as the youth director) we lose the simple joy of good movies and good pizza with friends. It also takes a *lot* to get a middle schooler to laugh, which made for an even rarer joy when they couldn't contain it during a funny movie. I would encourage everyone to take time out of their days to walk alongside a middle schooler and experience that kind of fun again!

## **Ethel Kjaer Barker**

My father, Svend Kjaer, was pastor at Fredsville Lutheran Church from approximately 1937 until January of 1943 when we moved to Salinas, California. There he served St. Ansgar's Lutheran Church, also of the synod called Danish Lutheran Church in America. Dad left his home in Denmark, coming to America in 1913, where he attended Grand View College and seminary and then served churches in Perth Amboy, New Jersey; Ringsted, Iowa; and Dwight, Illinois, where I was born. When I was two and a half years old, the family moved from Dwight to Fredsville. My earliest memories of those childhood days in Fredsville bring me great delight. Fredsville was, in my mind, the most beautiful place in the world.

Several years ago, after many years away I visited the Fredsville church and attend a lovely Danish luncheon. It is still a beautiful place, although the scene of my childhood has been totally transformed. All that remains from my memory is the cemetery. The bell from the early church remains on display before the empty space where the church of the pioneers once stood.

In the Fredsville of my early childhood, a white wooden church appeared like a tower of strength surrounded by the cemetery, its high pointed steeple pointing directly towards heaven. The bell was in the tower. All of the buildings and surroundings, including the parsonage, the gym hall, the barn, the chicken house, the huge strawberry patch, the enormous vegetable garden, the park-like expanse in front of the parsonage, and the pretty little houses down the road have vanished. There were beautiful old trees, a perfect lawn, and what we called the rock garden, which was a large, raised bed filled with flowers and surrounded by a round rock wall. All of this is so firmly implanted in my mind. It is as if I could run outside and play with my siter, Ruth and make pies under the catalpa tree using those big leaves for a double crust pie with the catalpa beans in the middle. Mother was always willing to give us an old metal pie tin for our play.

Our mother cleaned and painted an old shed near the parsonage so that Ruth and I could use it for a playhouse. One stormy day, a whirlwind (perhaps it was a small tornado) picked up this small structure; then tossed it hard against the ground, smashing it into pies. When it was safe to do so, nearby farmers came quickly to clean up the mess. Neither the parsonage nor any other buildings were disturbed. Mother suggested a plan for our older brother, Ted's employment. He quickly went to work using the now empty space for an outdoor grocery store. He built shelves, a counter with cash register constructed from old wood and a warped board, installing a sign above the cash register with giant printed letters, "Kjaer's Krafty Grocery." Mother saved empty cans, jars, bread wrappers to be stuffed with newspapers etc. We spent many hours and had a jolly time playing store.

Any day expect Monday (wash day) we were allowed to throw a blanket over the clothesline, stake the four corners to the ground, and behold! We had a new playhouse. Mother gave us magazines from which to cut out

pictures. We pinned them to the cloth walls. Boxes and throw-away items became our furniture. For us it seemed a cozy little home.

In autumn, from the enormous front lawn, Dad and Ted raked leaves into piles to be burned. They saved several bushel baskets of these leaves for Ruth and me from which we could make outlines for a house and divisions for rooms. We could always find bits of wood or natural materials for furniture.

We often played in the deep ditch, picking wildflowers, rose hips, bits, and pieces from the natural world for our future use. It seems, in my memory, that there was no end to the fun we could have, enjoying the gifts of nature and our fertile imaginations.

Ruth and Ted went to country school at the bottom of what then seemed like a steep hill. I also attended country school for kindergarten. When I last visited Fredsville, the hill no longer seemed so steep. I recall, when I was very young, riding my tricycle down the narrow sidewalk from parsonage to gym hall, then out to the gravel road, where I stationed myself until throngs of children happily spilled down the school's front steps. I could not contain my joy at seeing my siblings, Ted, and Ruth, walking towards home, swinging their dinner pails on what seemed to be such a long journey. I realize today that the distance was about the length of a city block.

Ruth always remembered to bring her precious first grade "Dick and Jane" reader, and we soon entered into a routine that simply thrilled me. We would go directly to the living room, plant ourselves in the small red chairs at our child-sized red table; Ruth called the meeting to order, and we played school. She taught me to read in such a delightful way. By the time I was to be a first grader at Dike Consolidated School, the teacher called me into the principal's office and promoted me to second grade. All of that was thanks to my wonderful big sister, Ruth!

Sunday school was delightful, always taught from little children's hard covered books with beautiful pictures. We met in the gym hall, divided into classes to suit our age. We also enjoyed Bible school each summer in the same building, and at the end of the session, a wonderful picnic with the entire congregation at tables on that spacious front lawn. There was always a pop stand, and some kind old man was bound to see my longing and buy me a bottle of orange pop. Such a splendid treat!

Our father, Svend Kjaer was a quiet, unassuming man whose entire being seemed to be of the spirit. Sunday mornings Mother laid out our best dresses. She was an excellent seamstress and sewed all of our clothes, even coats and hats. Our nicely polished shoes were set out for us on Saturday night. In spite of his serious work preparing Sunday's sermon, he always took time to shine our shoes. We three children sat up front in church with Mother. We tried to be quiet and look pious as was expected of preacher's kids while the church bell rang. After all, we should not bring disgrace upon our father. The old pump organ played the beautiful hymns that even today I still love to sing. We listened carefully to the holy words from the Bible and Dad's heartfelt sermons. It was an adult message, but I tried very hard to pay attention and understand. The feeling of a holy day in a holy place was always present whether I had understanding or not.

Afterwards we went back to the parsonage for a special Sunday dinner, usually fried chicken. Since there was that nice chicken house near the barn, Dad raised tiny chicks that grew to become our Sunday dinners. These were served in the lovely dining room, always very special on Sundays.

I am now eighty-five years old. Ruth is eighty-eight. Brother Ted has gone to meet our loved ones in heaven. It has been a wonderful life. Of course, as in almost every life, there have been times of sadness, but the beginnings of my spiritual life continued to benefit me all through my life, giving me joy, even in times of sorrow. This joy-filled view of life, in all of its aspects, began in those early childhood days lived in beautiful Fredsville.

I often reflect upon those early days. The memories help me to understand better my current very positive views on life and death. My attitudes and feelings were planted like little seeds in what to me is that sacred spot called Fredsville. I learned a special love of nature, a respect for farmers and their way of life, a way to relate to others, and especially a love of God and all the elements of the spiritual life.

The last time I visited the Fredsville cemetery, paying special attention to the graves I had known as a small child, I once again found the children's graves with little lambs above the tombstones, reminders of the hazards of pioneer life, and the privileged time in which I have been blest to live. The current, beautiful, modern church building will perhaps, in another one hundred fifty years, be thought of as old. Maybe, like the original church, it will be torn down and replaced by a new (modern for that day) building, but the graves will remain forever and remind us that while for all of us, life on earth is temporary, the Good Lord has prepared a wondrous place for us in heaven. In my mind that place will be much like Fredsville.

Thanks be to God for all his many blessings!

### **Carlyn Baugus**

When I was growing up, my Aunt Rose and Uncle Marienus Nielsen were the church custodians. They lived in the house that is now referred to as the Vicar's Villa. In fact, it was my Uncle Marienus that built the garage that is attached to the house. Emly Steege was the next custodian. She lived with her twin sons - Dean and Glen, in this house also. Emly was the "Best of the Best" as far as being the Church Custodian. After Emly retired, I became the Fredsville Custodian. This was during the time that we had Pastor Don Feuerhak, 2002 – 2010. While I cleaned, I often thought of how I was "Cleaning for the Lord." An inside joke was when people would ask me, "Did you get all the dead flies picked up out of the windowsills?" Picking up dead flies was always a constant battle! When I retired from cleaning Fredsville, Angie Wibben replaced me. Besides having a larger church to clean, Angie has the additional task of using the Sterilaser machine to disinfect for the COVID germs.

### **Donovan Benson**

Whenever I moved from one parish to another, I insisted (to myself) that I wanted new and different experiences, unlike experiences I'd had in previous parishes! Fredsville, I was certain would be a lot different from large congregations I served in Sioux City and Mason City! And Fredsville for me WAS different – and exciting!

Memory #1: Certainly, I remember now experiences I had living in your parsonage! Most of all I remember standing in the front yard, or in the cemetery across the street, and marveling at the quiet and the peacefulness! It was stunningly beautiful! Years later though, I was to learn that it could also be a bit scary living alone in the country! One night, there was a pounding on my door at 1:30 a.m.! I feared a break-in, maybe even violence! It was a lady whose car was disabled, who'd walked to the nearest house (mine) and needed me to drive her to Parkersburg!

Living in the parsonage also located me some distance from getting help myself if ever I were to need it! (scary). I remember now thousands of lighting bugs in the fields- a magnificent sight! I also remember the snow drifts in winter, so high I could barely find a passageway to walk from the parsonage to the church!

Memory #2: At Fredsville, I gained a new acquaintance of pigs! On my second morning in the parsonage, I received a phone call from the Andersen's! A new litter of piglets had been born during the night! Did I wish to see them? If so, said Carol, come here in your oldest clothes! Pigs are smelly! Well, of course, I wanted this experience! So, I went! Did I want to hold a baby piglet? Well, of course! But, when I did, the piglet squealed so terribly, I was afraid I was causing it pain! (The piglet simply was afraid!) Hastily we took a picture of me and the piglet, and we returned the little thing to its mother! Later, when the photo was developed, we sent a copy to Mason City! There, the photo was posted on a church bulletin board with the caption underneath: "Can you believe Pastor Don is doing this now?"

I liked little pigs! But later my new "appreciation" of them was to include the smell of a "honey wagon"! Quickly I learned that that was a day, to go shopping in Cedar Falls or hospital visiting in Waterloo!

Memory #3: I loved learning "Danish traditions" at Fredsville! Some specifics:

- a) holding hands and dancing around a Christmas tree, singing "Nu Har Vi Jul Igen!"
- b) I loved our bake sales and bazaars, especially eating strips (prune, almond, raspberry, and apricot)! Also, I loved our aebleskiver, breakfasts and dinners!
- c) And I loved our singing at funerals "Our Father Has Lights In His Window."

Memory #4: Without question, the unhappiest experience I had during my years at Fredsville was my four heart bypasses surgery! Allen Hospital was wonderful! I'm so grateful to its doctors and nurses! They pulled me through a week of extreme pain in intensive care! (My breathing was so shallow fears were that each breath I took might be my last!) Eight weeks of recovery followed! My mother flew from Washington, D.C. to be my chief caregiver! Fredsville members gave her rides to the hospital so she could see me (only 5 minutes per hour.) Then Fredsville members frequently baked casseroles and brought them to the parsonage; also made sure mother and I knew of the grocery delivery service of Randall's! The parish limited the number of folks who phoned me, giving me opportunity to rest! But someone was appointed each day to check on me! People knowing my situation saw to it that I received super care!

Memory #5: Let me recall one worship experience we all shared! Countless times people told me how much particular sermons meant to them! They'd even tell me when children commented on something I'd said from the pulpit! If it were put to a vote, I feel sure most of you would select as my most memorable messages: A Christmas Eve Meditation, when I told a parable, likening "Barrington Bunny" to Jesus! I don't know how many people were emotionally moved to tears, but dozens of you have told me that story greatly deepened your already strong gratitude and love for Jesus! (Barrington saved a mouse, as Jesus saves us! Remember?)

Finally, time permitting, I could add to this list: baptisms, confirmations, weddings, communions, funerals, occasions I'll remember! I could mention the Washington Redskins having won the Super Bowl, and your astonishment when I decorated my office with red and gold streamers and articles from the sports section of the Washington Post!

I could mention your kindness in arranging a lovely day, celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my ordination!

I could mention my chartering a Hawkeye Stages bus and taking the 40 of you who singed up to Northfield, Minnesota for a Christmas concert by the St. Olaf College Choir! Many of you told me that concert was among the most beautiful music you ever heard!

I'll close now, by saying simply! I thank God for the friendships I enjoyed at Fredsville! My smaller parishes: you, and Iowa Falls, and Joice, are just as special to me as Sioux City and Mason City! Always love for you will remain in my heart! I'll hope simply that you'll say one more goodbye to me when you bury me, in our cemetery, and you'll say at least one more hello to me when we see each other again in Heaven!

### **Jodi L. Bergmann**

My favorite Fredsville memories include the Aebleskiver meals, the craft sales and visiting after church. I also enjoyed the Christmas programs and dancing around the Christmas tree.

### **Karol Boike**

My family moved to the Dike area when I was in 8th grade. We rented a house a little over a mile from Fredsville, but my family chose to go to Nazareth Church, because that is where the rest of my dad's family went. So, I went to school at Dike, and was the only Dike student in my confirmation and Sunday School classes. I grew to hate Luther League because I had no friends there. I don't blame the other kids; it was only natural that kids stick with the friends from their school. After about a year, a Fredsville friend and I decided to see if the church would allow me to join Luther League at Fredsville. I was welcomed with open arms, and had a wonderful time. I loved helping with Aebleskiver dinners and doing all the other Luther League activities. I am very thankful the Fredsville family took me in.

### **Donna Bruhn**

I taught Sunday School in the late 70's and early 80's. I taught kindergarten or second grade. There would be anywhere from 4 to 10 children in the class.

I would start Sunday School by taking a collection. Carol Andersen or Raymond Johnson would pick up the collection. I would read a Bible story and then we would do a craft project. I would bring a snack for the children to share.

The month of December we would practice for the Christmas program. The Christmas program was held on a Sunday night and the church would be full of people. We would go into the fellowship hall and dance around the Christmas tree and sing Christmas songs. The children would get a sack of candy and fruit.

### **James Bruhn**

I'm the fourth generation to be a member of Fredsville Church.

I remember going to Sunday School in the late 40's and early 50's in the old auditorium. Eddie Sherwood was the Sunday School Superintendent. He would ring a handbell when Sunday School was to start and end. Sunday School was held in the basement of the auditorium and the classrooms were divided by curtains.

I remember the Sunday School program being on the stage in the auditorium. Then after the program we would dance around the Christmas tree and sing Christmas carols which included the song "Nu Har Vi Jul Igen"! Afterward Eddie Sherwood would pass out sacks of hard candy, peanuts, and an apple.

I remember going to Bible School in the early 50's. We would listen to Bible Stories, do crafts, sing songs, and learn Danish dancing. We would have a program of songs and the Danish dances we had learned.

I remember being confirmed in the middle 50's when I was 14 years old. The confirmation class was held in a room at the back of the auditorium. Pastor Stub was the teacher and minister that confirmed me.

My great grandparents were the first generation to go to Fredsville. They came over from Denmark to the United States in 1877. They made their way to Clinton, Iowa first. They left Clinton traveling by covered wagon, pulled by a team of oxen., with a milk cow tied on the back. They settled on a farm 2 miles south of Fredsville. Years ago, the neighborhood was called little Denmark because of all the Danish families that lived and farmed in the area.

I remember dad and I were out in the field one morning and we heard the church bell ring. I asked dad what that meant. He said, "someone must have passed away in the congregation." The bell is tolled for every year of their life.

### **Amy Camarata**

In Feb 2012, my family and I visited Fredsville as we had recently moved to Dike from Waterloo. 10 years later...Wow! We have had many wonderful memories, but I must mention the meaningful mission trips for our daughter Katie, college scholarships and many Candlelit services on Christmas Eve with standing room only. I have also had the opportunity to run the projector in the past and read lessons and they are both simple ways to give back to your church community. Looking forward to many more memories. Thank you Fredsville.

### **Jim Campbell**

Confirmation class has changed a lot since the early 1960's. When I was in confirmation then class was held every Saturday morning with the Pastor at 9 a.m. for about 3 hours. This was the schedule for three years. How times have changed!

### **Chuck and Jane (Bruhn) Christensen**

In the mid 1950's until the late 1950's, while attending vacation Bible School at Fredsville Lutheran Church, we had a Bible school program. Following the 2 weeks of learning God's word and festivities, the kids would perform for their parents and other attendants outside the old auditorium on the west side of the building in the grass. Chairs were set up so parents and friends could sit or stand to watch the kids sing and dance. During the 2 weeks of Bible school classes, the kids were taught Danish dancing. There were different dance instructors over the years and two that come to mind are Donna Koch and Alma Johnson. Fond memories of these dance days still bring us a laugh. We remember times where the dance teacher would get upset with the boys because they would lock arms with their girl partner and swing them around fast in a circle, either letting them go or swinging them so fast they would get dizzy.



Years later, after we were married, we also Danish danced with other members of Fredsville performing at the Dike Diamond Jubilee as well as dancing for members of the Cedar Falls Lutheran Home (now New Aldaya Lifescapes).

### **Brenda Cooper**

One of my favorite memories is when we had a church picnic and the Dall's brought out their ponies for the kids to ride on.

### **Cooper Dall – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

My favorite memory is being with my friend and family at Fredsville, learning about God's creation and having fun

### **Doug Dall**

I have two favorite memories. The first is watching all three of my boys getting baptized. The second memory is having the honor of being asked to give the church sermon when Pastor Lisa is gone.

### **Pastor Lisa A. Dietrich**

Greetings,

Welcome to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration book of memories for Fredsville Lutheran Church.

In these pages you will hear lots of different stories from members, pastors, previous interns, and friends of Fredsville. In these pages you will hear many stories of aebleskiver dinners, youth events, weddings, baptisms, in general the daily living together that a congregation and a people of faith participate in. I too, have a million memories I could share of Fredsville, watching my daughter walk down the aisle, being able to teach my youngest about God through mission trips and confirmation classes, the privilege to introduce the congregation to teaching interns so that they might be good strong pastors, more than doubling the size of the congregation, four building projects including the “new” addition, and so many more. Yet, the most holy of things that occurred in these walls, was the people of God gathering week after week to worship the God of grace. A church’s most holy calling is to gather faithfully to offer up worship and praise to the God of all creation. Times are not always easy in the history of congregations. That is also true for Fredsville. The most recent years of navigating the Covid pandemic has placed a huge strain on the ministry and on the people of faith not just at Fredsville, but globally as well. I invite you as you read these stories, to read between the lines. That as you read, you also hear the stories of struggle, of steadfastness, of forgiveness, of what it means to be a community of faith. God has called us in the words of Matthew 28, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” That is the calling of the people of faith. That is the calling of the church. May God bless Fredsville for another 150 years as they continue to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Blessings!

### **Kim Farley**

When I first came to Fredsville, I was greeted by so many friendly faces. Immediately, I felt welcomed and was invited to help with the youth activities. I have so many memories of the youth activities, from Vacation Bible School, to Aebleskivers, to Sunday School. But what stood out most in the beginning was how accepting the congregation was of the children. The children were invited to acolyte, sometimes this wasn't pretty, children running down the aisle with fire can be pretty alarming, but no one seemed to mind. The smiles on everyone's faces as the children attempted to reach the candles, some people would be in position to jump up if anything went wrong, but everyone was thrilled to see the children involved.

On one occasion, my daughter, who was probably 8 or 9 at the time, was in charge of acolyte. She walked proudly down the aisle with her candlelighter, arrived at the altar, and reached up to light the candles. Only, the taper had run out, and instead of lighting the candles on fire, the flame fell onto the altar. In a panic, I began to rush to the front of the church, but Pastor Lisa calmly walked to Anna, tapped the flame out, and sent her back down the aisle with a smile, as if nothing had happened.

### **Barbara Feuerhak**

Thank you for the opportunity to greet you all on the 150th anniversary of the church. I wish Pastor Don could be here to write his own greeting. He died February 13th of 2020. That was a tough year for so many of us.

Don and I were at Fredsville Lutheran for a little over 10 years. We both enjoyed learning the many Danish customs and foods. Christmas and Aebelskiver were especially fun. Coffee was really important.

Don and Phil Heath worked on Fredsville history. Both loved history and appreciated all the hard work that went into Rev. Clausen establishing the church and the congregation building it. We traveled to St. Ansgar to learn more about the early church at Fredsville.

A bus trip was planned to the Danish museum in Elkhorn where we watched a one-woman play written by a granddaughter of an early Fredsville pastor about life in the parsonage.

Don arranged for the youth group to paint and place a little lamb on the graves of each of the children buried in the cemetery. The youth group got to know the cemetery, and some shared their Halloween treats on the graves.

There were so many good times that it is difficult to talk of just a few. Thanks to the people of Fredsville for 10 good years!

### **Linda Petersen Freese**

Congratulations Fredsville on celebrating 150 years! My grandparents and parents were members at Fredsville. I grew up here, was baptized, confirmed, and married here. Fredsville continues to be my home church. My first and foremost memories are of Sunday School Christmas programs-the monetary gifts wrapped as ornaments that we placed on the tree as we walked in, individual verses recited, roles played in the nativity, the Danish tradition of young and old dancing around the Christmas tree. In my youngest years, the tree was in the old auditorium. The top of the tree nearly always reached to the ceiling. Nu Har Vi Jul Igen was sung and if you did not know the words you pretended as if you did! The Christmas sack we received had an apple, peanuts in the shell, and candy inside. I also remember Bible School. I can picture Pastor Sibert standing at the main door ringing a handbell signaling the start of the day. There were crafts, softball playing in front of the church during breaks, and always a program performed on the final day. I have memories of Confirmation classes along with its requirement of sermon notes, Luther League youth group meetings and activities, and the annual aebleskiver supper and its aroma! My most cherished memory of Fredsville is Pastor Sibert marrying Merlin and I in 1973 and our reception that followed in the fellowship hall.

### **Jerry Green**

Sue and I started attending Fredsville after we got married in 1998. What made it easier for people to get to know us, was that we often rode our bikes to church and that gave them something to talk to us about. In 2007, Pastor Don Feuerhak asked us if we would lead a bike ride in conjunction with the picnic that his Couples Bible study was having, and we said yes. We met at Pfeiffer Park in Cedar Falls. Pastor Don took care of bringing fried chicken and subs with everyone else bringing a dish to pass. We had twenty people at the picnic with most going on the bike ride. It was so much fun that we decided the next summer to host another bike ride.

The next summer, we had another beautiful day for our bike ride and picnic- although it was rather hot and steamy. That didn't deter 32 people from showing up. Half rode. Our route took us on the Southside River Trail, over the river and back through George Wyth State Park on the north side. Scott Watson, who was 11 at the time, wrote in the church newsletter, "The bike ride with my church family was fun! I really thought that the ride was at least 50 miles long, but it was only 7 miles."

We were fortunate to have beautiful fall days for our rides/picnics in 2009 and 2010. In 2010, we changed the location and met at Big Woods Lake. It was most enjoyable for Sue and me to lead these bike rides. Besides the fun of biking, they gave us the chance to get to know our church family better.

### **Bryson Grider – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I like watching when a baby gets baptized. I like making aebleskiver. And I like going to Confirmation. The night we had the Fredsville Confirmation Olympics was extra fun!

### **Kaitlyn Griffith - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

My favorite Fredsville memory is of a very recent night at confirmation. We competed in the Olympics (which were currently on TV). It was so much fun! We had several different events like ice skating, curling, and other events. For one event, we used pop can boxes as our skates and raced around the course. We also had a figure skating event where people danced and there was a panel of judges to give scores. It was fun watching everyone trying to get ahead of the other people. Everyone (confirmation students, their mentors, and their parents) competed in the games. It was great to see younger and older people having fun together.

The winners of the event got gold, silver or bronze stars that hung on ribbons. At the end of the evening, all the confirmation students got their picture put on a cereal box just like the ones you see in the store. It was so much fun being with my church family! I will always remember the fun time we had!

### **Renee Griffith**

One of my favorite memories at Fredsville is the Aebleskiver meals that we would put on for the surrounding communities. I enjoyed learning about this tradition. It was nice seeing the Fredsville members coming together to put this meal on. The confirmation students would be the servers, helping people with their plates, and also getting them additional things, they needed once they were seated. There would be a station for mixing up the batter and stations for cooking. No matter where you were working you could hear stories being told about different family traditions associated with the Aebleskivers. I had never had an Aebleskiver until we started attending church at Fredsville. It was something unique to me.

### **Sharon Hemmen**

Ed Sherwood would mention Fredsville Lutheran Church every time he saw my husband, Herman which convinced us to join the church. Lorraine Crotty encouraged me to join the choir which I enjoyed, and I also participated in the Ruth Circle. I am so glad that we joined Fredsville Lutheran Church.

### **Jana Hermann**

Our time at Fredsville started with our daughter, Macy going to Wings in 3rd grade with Luann Jones. We had just moved here, and I was glad there was an opportunity to hang out with new friends in a faith-based program. Then Meredith Sandlin asked Macy to participate in the hand bells and so she performed for the Christmas service. While we were there, we saw some familiar faces and felt welcome. My husband, Cory had previously met Larry Bakker and he and his wife, LeAnn made a point to talk to Cory during our first visit. Eric and Darla Andersen were also there and showed the boys the replica of Fredsville and shared some history.

After the service Jackie Bakker asked us who we were and if we were new. Jackie and I chatted about our faith, being raised Catholic and finding a common ground at a Lutheran church. Fredsville is a nice small community that cares about one another and is practically in our back yard so that helps too. (Somehow, we are still never early)!

### **Danielle Husmann**

My favorite Fredsville memories are attending Confirmation with my daughter Alana. The night she was being fed baby food is my all-time favorite.

### **Vernon Johnson**

I was born in 1940, and when I remember growing up in the Fredsville Church community I think of the whole church campus.

The center was the old church which was the place of worship until I left for college in 1958. Ground for the new church was not broken until 1960. The benches were hard, Reverend Stub's sermons sometimes were long, but deeply insightful, and the sound of the church bell was a beautiful call to worship.

The surrounding cemetery still provides a contemplative space as I walk and remember many of my ancestors. As a child I would help my mother, Helene, plant flowers, mostly geraniums, in each of the plots by the grave markers of my grandparents and great-grandparents.

The parsonage was a drafty old house. God bless the pastor and spouse for enduring the cold Iowa winters. The first room that you entered from the enclosed porch was the pastor's study. Reverend Stub had as many books as some libraries. There was a large desk and in the air a slight scent of either cigar or pipe tobacco.

As a child the building in which most time was spent was the Auditorium. Sunday School was held in the large room in front of the stage. Ed Sherwood was the Sunday School Superintendent and would lead the opening before we adjourned to grade level small groups. The kindergarten kids were in the first row, and each year you would move back one row until you graduated to confirmation in seventh grade. Confirmation class, led by Pastor Stub, was held on Saturday mornings from 9:00 to noon in the small room formed by a folding wall. Summertime Bible School with classes, crafts, and folk dancing made use of all the facilities of the building.

Aside from education, the Auditorium was also the center for much of the social life of the congregation. The Sunday School Christmas program was always held on December 27<sup>th</sup>. The stage was used for the Christmas program, followed by singing around the Christmas tree. The tree reached nearly to the ceiling; some two stories high. We then waited in line to get our treat of an apple or orange and a paper bag of hard candy.

Once you were confirmed, you became a member of the Young People's Society, at some point this became Luther League. Meetings were held in the Auditorium on Sunday evenings. The Auditorium was the sight of congregational dinners, Aebleskiver suppers, and other entertainments. As a small child I remember going to a play, possibly performed by the young people.

In earlier times, I think that the Church was a more comprehensive center for community life. A couple of years ago my sister, Lorraine, found a hand-written program for a play that was put on by the young people at the Auditorium. My father, Clarence, and my uncle, Art, each had a role. There is no date, but this must have taken place in the early 1920's. For many of these young people, my father and mother included, formal education ended at eighth grade, and the church served both a religious and social center for their young lives.

As we think of 150 years of activity on the Fredsville hill, we can only imagine what a vital role this place served for young immigrants coming to a new country. Fredsville provided a place to worship as well as a community to support their new life in this new land.

### **Rev. Barb Jones**

Intern Barb's Reflections of her time at Fredsville – 2014-2015

I came to Fredsville the summer of 2014. Excited and nervous for this next chapter in my seminary journey, the warm greeting and helpful hands that met me and that big rental truck at my new "home" quickly subdued my apprehensions! The smiles, laughter, willing hands, and open hearts that met me that day were but a taste of what was ahead of me.

Those first months found Pastor Lisa, Secretary Sue and I sharing a corner of the fellowship hall as our office space. Let me tell you, communication was pretty easy! No walls or doors, we could just share the highs, lows, schedules, and concerns as we sat there. There might have been a few conversations about adult children and an adorable first grandchild for Pastor Lisa also! (There's so many grandkids to talk about between the two of us now, we'd have a hard time finding time to get anything done!) ☺ This arrangement continued as the building project continued.

Day after day I continued to meet people with a history and a heart for Fredsville Lutheran, some long-time members and some just checking it out, experiencing God's mission in action. It wasn't just at the church building, but in town with the children's programs, at school events, during Watermelon Days, home and care center visits. It was clear that Fredsville Lutheran had both a beloved history as well as a vital current presence in the community, both of which were being nurtured and supported by Pastor Lisa and the ministry partners of Fredsville. God's mission globally was also supported by the faithful quilters and their blankets of blessings, health kits and adorable pillowcase dresses that once adorned the walls of the sanctuary.

I'm so glad to have experienced my internship "pre-pandemic", being able to enjoy wonderful gatherings in the fellowship hall. Of course, a highlight would be the Aebleskiver Dinner. What fun! (and soooooo good!) Again, the best part was seeing everyone come together to share in beloved tradition. Oh, and learning how to "strip" from the Fredsville ladies . . . yep, I did! ☺ ☺

Being an intern pastor in the midst of a long-awaited building addition was such a great experience. Observing, listening, being part of update meetings, painting, shopping, wondering, discussing, painting, seeing the anticipation, joy and wonder on faces week after week as the progress continued and painting! How fascinating it was hearing about the history and process of desires, needs, brainstorming, planning, compromises and working together to make a reality out of a dream, but the best part was living into our call to share the Gospel in this new welcoming, accessible space, providing space for so many different events and gatherings in this new space built together.

So many, many wonderful people, and memories, I can't begin to mention them all in fear that I would forget to mention some. A few highlights would be --

--being invited into your homes, sharing conversation, listening, laughing, and crying.

--observing the ministry of the Baptized – led and shepherded by Pastor Lisa, God's mission at and through Fredsville Lutheran being lived out by ALL the ministry partners.

--music and drama! The choir, the bells, the Christmas musical (I still have that "Tomara" costume and just might have worn it at Halloween a couple times!!)

Thank you, Pastor Lisa, for your patience, your guidance, your teaching, your inspiration, your example of living into being a bold, beautiful, creative, and compassionate woman pastor.

Thank you, people of Fredsville, for your welcome, your support, your sharing of stories, your listening, your service in God's mission. Blessings on all that the future holds for you.

Soli de Gloria!

### **Dick Juhl**

I remember sitting in an empty pew at church listening to Joann practice the organ for Sunday morning service.

I remember always letting my track team leave practice early so they could go out to Fredsville to eat many, many Aebleskivers.

I remember mowing our church cemetery with my sons and looking at the names on the tombstones.

### **Joann Juhl**

I enjoyed playing piano for the junior choir.

I enjoyed playing organ/piano duets with Jeanne Thuesen.

I enjoyed playing bells in the bell choir and when the choir rode on a float in the Dike parade.

I enjoyed making Danish strips for the annual Fredsville ladies bazaar.

I enjoyed baking aebleskivers (2 pans at a time) in the Fredsville kitchen at our annual Aebleskiver supper.

### **Jeri Karr**

Gary and I transferred to Fredsville in the spring/early summer of 2013. I had belonged to Zion Lutheran Church in Waterloo for 53 years. I was married twice in that church, both my children were married there, and the funerals of both my parents were there.

My daughter, Amy, moved to Dike in 2012 and became a member of Fredsville. She told us we had to visit Fredsville because Pastor Lisa was "awesome". We visited a couple of times and made the decision to transfer our membership to Fredsville. We found not only was Amy correct about Pastor Lisa, but the members of the congregation were very friendly and welcoming. We traveled to Fredsville from our condo in Waterloo until we moved to our present home in Dike in 2017.

Being a CPA, Gary was welcomed with open arms. He was a Quickbooks Pro Advisor and helped Holly Kruger with the Quickbooks program she was using. He had been to her house several times and knew where the files were, etc. When she suddenly died, we felt there was a reason we were here. We always said it was a "God thing". Gary was able to easily transition into the position of Treasurer.

We became members of the choir, we were both communion assistants and lectors, and I entered the contributions into the system. We have enjoyed making new friends at Fredsville.

Some of my favorite memories are performing in several musicals. (I remember on one of our driving trips west, we listened to and sang along with a disk of one of the musicals so we would be ready to practice when we came home.)

We will be forever grateful for the time Pastor Lisa spent with us in the hospital prior to Gary's unexpected death on January 9.

It was a good move....both to Fredsville and Dike.

### **Dennis Koch**

Fredsville started out as an all-Danish settlement with the congregation meeting in people's homes until they saved enough money to build the church building. Services were held in Danish. My first memories of church are of the transition to English services except for one Sunday a month when the service was still in Danish. Lots of people spoke Danish to each other at fellowship. I remember fondly Pastor Stupe who was a good old Dane and his wonderful wife. He delivered the once-a-month sermons in Danish.

The auditorium was a big part of the fun as we got out of church to go to Sunday school which was held there. The auditorium was huge and had a gymnasium with climbing bars on the wall, a balcony, and a stage. I also remember pictures on the walls of a basketball team, I think they were called the Flying Danes. The auditorium was the location of another Fredsville memory – Bible School. We went in the morning for two weeks in the summer. We learned the old Danish folk dances (I never got to choose my partner, so I didn't like this) and then got to play softball during recess which was my favorite. My kids have great memories of the auditorium too. It was a special building.

Fredsville was a part of the Danish Synod, and Grand View College in Des Moines was the college for all of the Danish Synod churches and the seminary for the future Danish Synod ministers. Many Danes from Fredsville went to Grand View and other Danish Synod churches sent their parishioners from all over the country there too. My wife, Donna was from a Danish Synod Church, Danebod, in Tyler, Minnesota, and we met at Grand View and made some great friends with other students there from all around the country - and also from right here at Fredsville. Ray and Alma Johnson and Arlan Andersen were Grand View alumni, and we all sang in the choir there and then Ray, Alma and I continued in the choir here at Fredsville. Music is a huge part of my church memories as all our

kids (Denise, Karla, Paul & John) participated in the children's choir and Denise played the organ on many Sundays. We had a family joke that church let out earlier when Denise played because it was her mission to never let the music drag so she kept the tempo up. Lastly, Karla and Paul sang a duet as special music one Sunday – a Burt Bacharach song "What the World Needs Now is Love, Sweet Love" when they were 10 and 8. Not exactly a good old hymn but the sentiment works.

### **Ruth Kjaer**

We two sisters were close in age and were always spoken of as "Ruth and Ethel" like one word. We still speak of Fredsville as "those glorious childhood days."

Fredsville was not a town, no general store, nothing but four corners for the one-room schoolhouse for all 8 grades which meant we were at recess much of the time! I found it fun to direct the games! I suppose this made the white steepled church on the hill even more prominent. It was the cemetery, like a jeweled necklace surrounding that church, which stood out. No grass – but fine pebbles throughout. Each grave had a granite perimeter and within that was packed every kind of flower, annual or perennial. These were meticulously tended so it became a place to gather with friends and to take a stroll on that hill through the total garden at sunset – the golden hour. And yes, we played our games dashing in and out. Two graves were said to be of distant relatives, each decorated with a beautiful conch shell. Are those still there, I wonder. And yes, I also recall the tiny lambs 1,2,3,4 in a row leading to the church door which planted or became touchstones of empathy throughout life.

One major thing happened at that time. I learned to play the piano! Mother propped a paper guide behind the keys to indicate middle C, also the following keys of the octave and away I went! Ethel was kind enough to watch for the school bus (schools now consolidated) while I studied those keys. So, the arts were brought into my life, specifically music and later the visual arts.

These memories, among many others, were firmly planted before we, the family, deserted for the next exciting adventure in the life of PK's (preacher's kids). California, the central Monterey Bay coast, a total contrast, full of its' own unique adventures and little Danish Church – St. Ansgar.

### **Dennis Kruger**

I was married Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, 1960, in the old Fredsville church across the street from our current Location. We were one of the last two couples to be married in the old church. I watched as they laid the cornerstone for the new church 60 years ago.

My wife Holly was an active member of the church for 35 years. She was the church treasurer for approximately two years. Holly passed away unexpectedly on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015, at the young age of sixty-five, she is deeply missed.

### **Luella Larsen (age 97)**

My memories of Fredsville go "way back." I was baptized and confirmed at Fredsville. My parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins attended Fredsville. They are buried in the Fredsville cemetery along with husband's parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. My Grandmother, who lived with us, spoke mostly Danish and therefore, when I was very young, I spoke Danish too. However, I soon forgot it once my Grandmother passed away.

Sunday School was held in the Auditorium, which was located across the street from the original church. There was a big stage in the Auditorium that had heavy curtains. The curtains were like velvet. This is where our programs and plays were performed. The Auditorium had a big sized balcony. Sometimes, a few of the boys would run up to the balcony and hide. At the beginning of Sunday School, we all sat together and sang. Then we went to our classes. I remember Neta Dall, Mabel Thuesen and Alma Johnson teaching Sunday School. Ed Andersen was our Superintendent.

I would ride my bike 4 ½ miles each way, every day to attend Bible School. My little brother rode on the handlebar or on the fender. Our Confirmation classes were held on Saturday mornings for two years. These classes

were held in the kitchen of the Auditorium as it was warmer there. Besides our weekly lessons, an important part of confirmation was memorizing Bible verses and the Catechism. (Note: Catechism is a summary of the principals of Christian faith in the form of questions and answers.) We all worked really hard at memorizing. Once you were confirmed, you were old enough to attend the "Young People's Meeting." We did lots of dancing – Danish folk dancing. Warren Maag would be playing a piano accordion and my Uncle Will would be playing a harmonica. Our meetings always included a lunch. We had "Young People's Meetings" on Sunday nights once a month.

In December, a Christmas tree was set up in the Auditorium. It was always a very large tree. They would have to set it in what I remembered looked like a big wagon wheel. The Sunday School children would have a Christmas Program with everyone dressing up in their best clothes. It was a special time. We all had a piece to say. Afterwards, all the children were given a sack with an apple or an orange, peanuts in the shell and ribbon candy.

The old church was beautiful inside. When it was time for the pastor to preach, he went up a few stairs to a raised pulpit. I don't remember who played the organ, but I do remember that there was quite a large group that sang in the choir. The women always wore hats to church and then they would take them off to go up for communion. I remember one faithful couple who attended church every Sunday. The husband always had a nap during the sermon. The Pastor wasn't paid much money so people would give him food. On special occasions, the men would walk up around behind the altar and give a special offering to the Pastor. The old church was torn down once the current church was built. It was decided that it would have taken too much money to maintain.

My Aunt Annie and Uncle Will Christiansen be the custodians for the church. It was Uncle Will's job to ring the bell. I was fascinated by the bell. One time, Uncle Will let me ring it. I was small and when hanging onto the rope, it lifted me off my feet! Fortunately, my Uncle Will was there to catch me!

I remember the chicken suppers. These were held in the basement of the Auditorium. There would be crowds of people who came to eat. They would sit at tables with benches. Besides the chicken, people would eat mashed potatoes and homemade pies. Esther Stage was usually in charge. She was a little woman, but she sure could stir up a big kettle of mashed potatoes. The chicken dinners were a money maker for the Ladies Aid.

For many of us, Fredsville has been our "home." It is where we grew up, worshipped together, played together, and worked together, creating many wonderful memories. It will always hold a "special" place in my heart.

### **Jean Loger**

Who remembers the finger/hand game we learned in Sunday School or Bible School? You intertwine your fingers and say, "Here is the church, here is the steeple, open the door and here are the people."

As organist, choir director, worship planner and leader for some 40 years there are lots of memories. It has been fun to read and hear people share their stories about what makes Fredsville special. In reality, it all comes back to the people and community. Community in Christ. In our unique ways - witnessing and drawing others to Christ. Our beloved community.

My parents, John & Bernice Craig, often commented that it was the people that brought them to Fredsville. The Danes welcomed them in spite of their German and Irish ancestry. They worked together in the farming community as outdoor projects needed the strength of the men. Pastor Stub hosted Sunday School planning meetings with wonderful treats hand made by Mrs. Stub. Great foods were prepared and served from the auditorium basement kitchen.

What is special for so many of us:

Weekly worship. Hearing, sharing, learning. Being together. For me worship planning could be tedious and invigorating at the same time. Always necessary and best done with the team. Always intending to allow our people an opportunity to experience God and grow their faith.

The "big" worship services - Christmas and Easter. The Word, the singing, the special music, the family reunions. Christmas in the barn. Sunrise services. The decorated sanctuary. Sunday School Christmas programs always amazed us and reminded us of the beauty in the innocence of children.



Of course, there are regular, special events - weddings, funerals, confirmation, and baptisms. Each event was special and unique as we honored families. Always in love. What an honor to be a part of these beautiful services. Community in our joy and our sadness. Community in our growth and in our loss.

Choirs. Over the years I am thankful for all the members who came together faithfully and regularly to prepare music. Our music was for the congregation, but we often found our songs to be inspiring on a personal level as well. I remember certain songs and I remember crying when the emotions were just too much to hold inside. We went caroling to help lift someone's spirit. I remember fondly the musicals we presented in the most recent history. Who knew we could do this? And the people came and enjoyed. Some learned. Many were inspired. God was with us in story, song, and fellowship. Junior choir - loud and possibly too rambunctious! Handbells added a "new" sound to our worship and provided another opportunity for service and community. How blessed we've been!

VBS - so much work but so fun!!! So much love! Traditions! Danish dancing?!

Sunday School and Confirmation - perfect times to learn more and experience more together.

Shared services with the local churches were always special.

The Aebleskiver Supper. Delicious food! Great fellowship in planning, cooking, hosting, and cleaning up. "How many did we serve this year?" "I got to visit with someone I haven't seen since last year!" "Is that young man helping in the fellowship hall really "so and so's" son?" How we all had sore muscles and tired feet the next few days - and we could still smell the "aroma" in the church the following week. Community in our shared exhaustion and exhilaration.

Bazaar. Welcoming guests and taking pride in our traditions. "What is a Danish strip?"

Food! If you feed them, they will come. The "mystery" of the open-faced sandwiches. How much coffee should we prepare? Doesn't the fellowship hall look nice?

Outreach and support for others through quilting, pillowcase dresses and the Family Closet. Teacher meals. Our recent commitment to hosting future pastors as they served as interns. How lucky we were to get to know these people and have them become a part of our story. Our youth leaders and teaching volunteers cannot be overlooked in their dedication and impact.

The building and remodeling projects. The cemetery gardens. Commitment and vision. Always - how do we meet the needs of our people and enhance their connection to God and each other? The cemetery gardens truly add to the peaceful setting of our little spot in Grundy County, Iowa. A good place for rest. Sweat for the beauty and, in my opinion, worth the sacrifice.

My view from the organ bench gives a unique perspective. Often, as I look out to the congregation my heart is humbled by you all. Your stories. A memory that I will always call upon as "special" is any Christmas Eve when the candles are being lit within the congregation and the lights shine on every face. So powerful. God's light truly shines in each of us. As we acknowledge the past, let us continue to dedicate ourselves to our mission to love and lead. Fredsville is special, but it's only a pretty building on a pretty setting if it weren't for the loving, sacrificing, and working together of our members. May we continue to be a beloved community in Christ

### **Lance Loger**

In the 1980s, when I was running track in high school, with Dick Juhl as my coach, on the night of the Aebleskiver Supper (it was held on a weeknight then), the boys on the Dike Track team who attended Fredsville got to skip practice and run instead to Fredsville. We ran on the gravel roads to stay safe; It was a little over 3 1/2 miles. Once at the church, we would help serve the meal and do the cleanup. In exchange for helping out, we got to eat for free. It was common for us to have an Aebleskiver eating contest, with the winner eating over 30! Lucky for us, after eating all of those Aebleskiver, we didn't have to run back to the high school. Instead, we all piled into a car

and caught a ride. Running out to the Aebleskiver Supper then helping out was something that I (and the rest of the Fredsville boys) looked forward to every year.

### **Melissa Loger**

One of my favorite Fredsville memories is being in charge of the care packages that are assembled and sent to the Fredsville members who are attending college. The care packages are sent every fall prior to the student's final exams and usually sent again at the end of the spring semester. Traditionally, the fall package is bigger and consists of items such as Gatorade, microwave popcorn, puppy chow, granola bars, school supplies, Chapstick, earbuds, etc. and a really great gift card for the college student. The spring packages are usually a gift card with a note. Members of the congregation sign up to donate the items or donate cash to cover the postage costs. These care packages are put together by either confirmation students (who would also write the college students notes) or by a few church members. The college students always lovingly remember this touching and meaningful gesture.

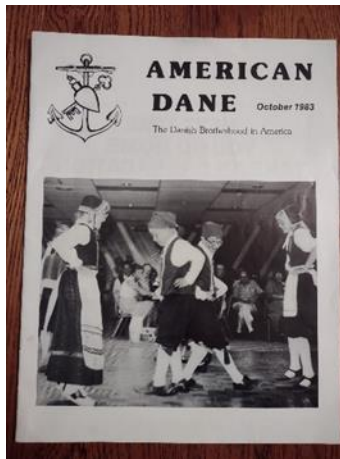
### **Art Lupkes**

Our daughter was married at Fredsville in the middle of July. The church wasn't air conditioned at that time, so windows were open and there were fans to help keep things comfortable. The alter area was decorated with flowers and ribbons on the candelabra. Candles were lit, the guests were seated, and it was almost time for the wedding party to enter when a breeze caught one of the ribbons, blowing it into the candle flame and the decorations began to burn. Fortunately, a guest spotted it, quickly went up and knocked the ribbon to the floor, stamping it out. (A slight scorched spot remained on the carpet for years until it was replaced.) I was Cedar Falls Fire Chief at the time and if our friend hadn't been so quick to react, I can only imagine the news article "church catches fire at Fire Chief's daughter's wedding!"

### **Bev Lupkes**

For a few years in the mid-seventies a group of Fredsville couples learned and participated in Danish folk dancing. We learned the dances and wore traditional style costumes. Some participants even wore authentic items passed down through their family. As I recall, we performed at the Dike Diamond Jubilee and perhaps at some Danish Brotherhood events. There was quite a repertoire of songs, including "The Finger Polka," "Shoemaker's Dance," "Ace of Diamonds," "Lotte Walked," "Napoleon," "Feder Mikkell," "Carrousel," and "Little Man in a Fix." That last one was especially fun. The men were in the center of the circle with their hands around the women's waists on the outside. They would run quickly around, swinging the women so they were completely off the ground, legs swinging out in the air as the men circled around. So much fun!

In the early 1980's a group of the 10- year-olds also performed the folk dances. I'm not sure how we parents convinced them to participate, but they, too wore costumes and the boys even danced with the girls. They performed at The Cedar Falls Lutheran Home (now NewAldaya) and at the Iowa Minnesota District Danish Brotherhood Convention. They were even on the cover of The American Dane magazine



### **Mary Kay Madsen, daughter of Harold and Lenora Madsen**

There are many memories of experiences with Fredsville that I have as a young person. I remember our two weeks each summer at Vacation Bible School where we would learn Danish folk dances, sing songs from A World of Song and end with a program for our families. I can still sing the Danish Hiking Song, Walking at Night, the Ash Grove, the Little Ole and so many more songs! Many of the songs that we sang grew as folk songs out of the folk life in Denmark. They have a common origin in the life and experiences of the common people and the Danish-American immigrants. To this day I enjoy singing.

Another memory is about confirmation classes. Each Saturday morning, we would meet at the auditorium during the school year. When Pastor Stub was the minister, we would have Bible passages that we had to memorize each week, and we also had to memorize at least the first verse of a hymn each week. The words from those many hymns still float through my head on occasion. When Pastor Sorenson came, we used lessons from the book Called to be a Christian and we didn't have to memorize Bible verses any more! We were confirmed in May, 1962.

### **Marcia (Thuesen) Michaelson**

Growing up, Fredsville was a big part of my life from 1947-1965. Mother played the organ and dad was always involved in church "business." A few bullet points document some of my memories:

#### Sunday School

- "Little kids" sat on small wooden chairs for opening activities. As we grew, we graduated to metal folding chairs. This was in the old auditorium.
- Ed Sherwood was superintendent and made opening announcements including awarding of pins for attendance milestones. I never really understood the system, but I was a bit jealous of my good friend, Mary Kay Madsen as she always seemed to have a higher number to add to her pin. (Wish I still had that little pin.)
- Lorraine Eriksen played the piano as we sang *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, *Can a Little Child Like Me*, *Jesus Loves Me*, and other favorites.
- We dressed up for Sunday School and wore patent leather shoes. I had offering coins tied by my mother into a corner of a handkerchief.
- Sunday School papers with colored pictures of Bible stories. In addition, flannel board stories were popular.

#### Christmas Program

- The program was performed on the stage in the auditorium.
- The nativity scene with a doll in the manger was always featured. Shepherds and wisemen in bathrobes completed the scene.
- Those of us not cast in "leading roles" were given verses on a small slip of paper. These were to be memorized and recited at the appropriate time in the program.

- I remember one year wearing white capes and carrying a candle as we proceeded to the stage. I felt very pious!
- Afterwards we danced around the Christmas tree and received paper treat bags with fruit and candy.

#### Vacation Bible School

- Every summer we had a fun time attending Bible School. There were Bible stories, games, Danish folk dancing (“Ace of Diamonds” and “The Shoemakers Dance”), but most of all crafts. Each attendee received a craft kit to work on. Sometimes there were wonderful projects like wooden crosses that needed to be sanded and shellacked.
- Mary Kay Madsen and I usually worked together to memorize the books of the bible or 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. A friendly competition.
- The finale of Bible School was a family fun time on the lawn between the auditorium and the parsonage. A large water tank with ice held a wonderful selection of pop in bottles. This was a rare treat. I usually chose grape or cream soda. We were also treated to ice cream cones dished out by VBS and SS leaders.
- There was opportunity to wander through the cemetery and hear stories of those who had passed. I was intrigued by one little lamb stone. We were taught to be respectful – never walk on the grave, no running through the cemetery and no loud talking or hollering. It was a somber time.

#### Church Service

- In the old church sitting on dark wooden pews with Dad and Granma and Grandpa Thuesen while mom played the organ.
- I was always intrigued to see Pastor Stub in his long black robe disappear and suddenly reappear in the raised pulpit to begin the sermon. I wondered what that secret passage must be like. I don’t think I ever found out.
- Narrow creaky steps led up to the balcony. I never sat there for the service.

#### Confirmation

- Study for confirmation was held in the auditorium on Saturday mornings.
- The confirmation ceremony was a very big deal. Afternoon parties were held, and many congregation members went from house to house to congratulate each new confirmand.
- It was usual to serve decorated sheet cake squares along with punch and coffee, nuts, and mints. At that time, it was so big and important an occasion as high school graduation.

#### Church Camp and Luther League

- Mary Kay Madsen and I routinely attended summer camps and winter retreats. Always good to have a friend along!
- As teenagers we attended Luther League activities and met with members from other synod churches in the area.
- I remember both Mary Kay and I had crushes on a couple of boys from the Bethlehem group. I’m pretty sure neither of them even knew we existed. However, the fantasies and dreams of teenage girls left plenty for Mary Kay and me to talk about.

Growing up as a member of the Fredsville family was a wonderful way to learn about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I am forever grateful.

#### **Cole Mikkelsen - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

My favorite part about Fredsville has been lighting the candles at the beginning of service. I like being able to help during the service, so I don’t get bored. And I like being able to collect the money too. It was also really nice when everyone sent me cards when I was sick and in the hospital. I hung them all up in my hospital room on the door so I could see them while I was there.

### **Shannon Mikkelsen**

On Jun 2, 2017, we received the worst news we had ever received regarding our son, Cole. We were told our 5-year-old had cancer, leukemia. This news rocked us to the core... but the outpouring of support we received was immense and immediate. One of my first phone calls was to Paster Lisa Dietrich. She prayed with me, she checked in, when she happened to be in the area she stopped by, and when she wasn't, she sent over one of her close friends, a chaplain at the University of Iowa. The church was quick to mobilize, sending notes, cards, letters of encouragement. Many delivered homecooked meals and gift cards and even monetary donation. And I know the prayers sent up on our behalf made a true impact on all of us. The church shared Cole's story and had tips available to help him and our family readily available in the church pews. As a mother, I can never truly express the gratitude I felt for all the support we received. The power of the prayers, the love we felt, the outpouring of support was beautiful and cherished, and meant so much to us. This church, our Fredsville family, embraced us even though we had only been members for a short time, and they made sure we knew they were there to help us every step of the way.

Today, Cole and his brother Tanner are both thriving. Back to school and back to living life to the fullest is the only way Cole knows how to live. I can still only express a heartfelt thank-you to everyone who helped us through such a difficult time in our lives. Fredsville is a special community and will always hold a special place in our hearts.

### **Tanner Mikkelsen - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

My favorite part about Fredsville has been the candlelight services at Christmastime and singing the Christmas carols. I really like it when the lights go off and we all light the candles. When Christmas service was in the barn, I liked that it smelled like a barn, and I could hear and see the animals. It was kind of like when Jesus was in the manger. I also really like VBS. I used to dance around and sing at the top of my lungs. I liked that we could bring friends with, too.

### **Todd Mikkelsen**

The Mikkelsen Family has a long history at Fredsville, beginning with Earl and Helga Mikkelsen, my paternal grandparents who lived ½ mile East of Fredsville. Earl and Helga had 3 children, Clark, Dennis and LeAnn, who grew up attending Fredsville as well. My parents, Dennis, and Janeene (Thuesen) were married at Fredsville and soon after I was baptized there. Earl, Helga, Dennis, and Clark (and his wife Judy) are all buried at the Fredsville Cemetery. We - I, Shannon, Tanner, and Cole- returned back to Fredsville Lutheran Church in 2015. It has been fun to get to know the congregation and I really enjoyed it when one would approach Shannon and I to share a story and some history about my family. Returning to Fredsville has allowed for me to reconnect with some distant relatives, both local and some that were visiting from Denmark. When someone would approach us saying, "I think we are distant cousins..." or one of the little ladies would come over and say, "I used to have a crush on your dad, Dennis, when we were in high school..." it always made me smile. The overwhelming support we received from the church and its members with Cole's health issues, was significant and really meant a lot. I look forward to what Fredsville has to offer, including the confirmation of my boys when the time comes.

### **Heidi (Loger) Mounce**

One of my favorite memories of growing up in the Fredsville church is going to the Christmas Eve services with the candles lit and seeing everyone's faces. I also loved singing in the junior choir each Thursday. We practiced in the overflow room and the whole room would be full of children. We would sing our hearts out. It was so much fun! My final memory from my youth is that I loved the Easter Sunrise Service. Before sunrise, we would come out to church. We would eat donuts, let balloons go and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### **Miles Mounce – 11<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I have two favorite Fredsville memories. The first one is the Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. The second one is the children's Easter Egg Hunt.

### **Violet Mounce - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Easter is my favorite day at Fredsville. When I was little, I loved racing the other kids to get candy at the Easter Egg Hunt. And, of course, celebrating that Jesus has risen is very important! Easter will always be a core memory for me.

### **Linda Nielsen**

Financial reporting has changed through the years

For several years the church treasurer was responsible for the bookkeeping of the General, Memorial and Building funds which were maintained in three separate bank accounts. It was uncertain how many other committees had separate bank accounts through the years as they each had a separate Treasurer and maintained their own financial records. The church council was given the balance in the checking accounts for the General, Memorial, and Building funds and if all the bills had been paid for the month. At the end of the year each committee had a different person examine the financial reports submitted for the annual report.

In 2015, a six-member Finance Committee was formed to provide guidance and oversight to the Church Council and other committees as to financial matters and procedures. All of the separate bank accounts of all the committees were combined into one bank account. The accounting system for the church books is now based on fund accounting, which is used by non-profit organizations. Each committee has an account which is called a fund and is responsible for their business, but the funds now run through a single bank account, recorded by one Treasurer, and is tracked through a master software. The Church Council receives a Balance sheet and a Profit and Loss Statement for all of the funds on a monthly basis. At the end of the calendar year there is an examination committee of two or three people that examines the financial records and reports submitted in the annual report. This new procedure has provided for more accurate uniform reporting and has a higher degree of security and accountability.

### **Wanda (Doddema) Nielsen**

Two of my childhood memories of Fredsville are:

#1 - Sitting in the Choir loft in the old church while my three older sisters played the organ.

#2 - Attending Sunday School with all my classmates. I especially liked attending with Iona Christensen. Those were great days in the balcony of the Old Sunday School.

### **Beth Petersen**

My favorite Fredsville memory is when our three daughters (Drew, Mallory & Brynn) got baptized.

### **Bryn Petersen – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

My favorite Fredsville memory is being in the Christmas program when I was younger.

### **Letha Sorensen Petersen**

Member since 1946 - 76yrs

My first memory of Fredsville Lutheran church was either 1946 or 1947 when my sister (Betty) and I were baptized. I remember standing at the baptismal font in the front of the old church. Mom had crocheted us identical dresses. They were peach colored, and we wore those for a long time. She could just crochet on the bottom when they got too short.

I remember going to Sunday School every Sunday and I still have my pin which shows the number of years we attended. We would walk up the hill since my parents had bought the house at the bottom of the hill. (No longer there) We would have a closing every Sunday when our classes were over. I can still see Eddie Sherwood standing in the front of the auditorium directing our singing and Lorraine Erickson playing the piano—and could she play. She would pound on the piano, and everyone sang their heart out. I am sure they are both singing in Heaven. This all took place in the Old Auditorium which was located directly across the road from the old church. This was where the church activities took place, and there were many. We always

had a big Christmas program on the stage on December 27 (the third day of Christmas). After the program everyone danced around the Christmas tree singing Christmas carols and of course Nu Har Vi Jul Igen. Every child received a bag with an apple, candy and nuts. There was a balcony where parents could sit if the first floor was full.

I was also confirmed by Pastor Stub after three years of classes every Saturday morning during the school year.

While in high school I taught Sunday School. What I remember most about that was the beginning of every month all the teachers would meet at the parsonage and Pastor Stub would go over every lesson for the month with all of us. It was very helpful for us to know what to teach. We would end with a delicious lunch served by Mrs. Stub.

What I remember about the last service we had in the old church was the whole congregation walking from the old church across the road to the new church and continuing the service. That was in 1961.

Don and I were married December 30, 1961. We were the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> couple married in the new church. Our wedding was in the church and then everyone had to walk next door to the auditorium for the reception. It was a cold walk-in subzero temperature and a lot of snow. There was a long flight of stairs to get down to the dining room. As I remember the reception went well and also the marriage. We just celebrated our 60th anniversary.

Both of our children were baptized (1963 and 1967) in the church and both were also confirmed in the church. I have been a member of Fredsville Lutheran Church for 76 years TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

### **Mallory Petersen – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

I love watching all of the cute babies get baptized at church.

### **Merlyn & Catherine (Nielsen) Petersen**

We truly feel blessed to be writing this article together. We have both been members for over ½ of the 150<sup>th</sup> years our church was founded. We were both baptized, confirmed, and married at the church.

We have many fond memories of the auditorium building across the road from the little white church. We never attended church as Sunday School was held in the auditorium at the same time as church. Sometimes we had over 100 children in attendance. Ed Sherwood, our Sunday School Superintendent taught us the love of singing. Lorraine Ericksen accompanied on the piano.

Both of us were baptized by Pastor Nygaard. Confirmation classes were also held in the auditorium. Pastor Stub was our teacher and we attended classes for three hours every Saturday morning, September-April. Bible School was held for three weeks in June from 9 a.m. till noon. Following our program in the evening we had pop floats.

We were married on September 4, 1965, by Pastor Sibert. We were the first couple he married at Fredsville. He apparently did a good job because we have been married for 56+ years.

We remember very well the building of the new church on the south side of the road. We both sang in the choir as we attended the cornerstone laying ceremony. My father, Harlan Nielsen, was President of the Council and I remember how hard my mother, Marlis, worked to prepare a lovely dinner in our home for the dignitaries attending the celebration.

When they moved in the new church a very bad decision was made to tear down our little white church. Most of the lumber was salvaged and sold. Many of the old square nails were sanded and made into crosses and are still hanging on members' walls.

We have an interesting story about saving the bell that was used to call members to worship and communicate that someone had died in the congregation and was rung the number of years-old the member was. Catherine remembers when she lived on the hi-way, stopping, and listening to the number of rings. The bell was salvaged by lowering it from the bell tower by rope and pulley and anchored by a tractor on the other end. The tractor was a 1953 33 MH owned by Catherine's father, Harland Nielsen. We still own this tractor, and it is now used for parades and tractor rides.

The second Friday in October was Fredsville's Bazaar, and they came from near and far. The ladies worked so hard! In about September when I would go visit Grandma Anna Nielsen and couldn't find her in the kitchen, she could be found in the back bedroom making bib aprons for everyday use – made out of pretty prints, but nothing fancy and sold at the Bazaar. When Grandma saw a car coming up her driveway, she would quick go to the hall closet and put on a clean apron and then put her false teeth in (stored in a coffee cup by the kitchen sink). I also remember Grandpa Carl Nielsen on the stepladder washing wall for Lady's Aide. Two days off the combine for Bazaar. Tillie Olson and I made all the lunch loaf sandwiches and I would make bread, Danish coffee strips and cardamon coffee cakes, and two coconut cream pies. Merlyn would polish sacks of apples, pick ear corn for squirrels, and wash the squash to also take to Bazaar.

Another memory I have is the fall harvest they had – bringing loads of corn, hay, straw, etc. up to the church and they would all be lined up in front of the church to be sold.

Church council members would go house to house to collect your yearly donation to the church budget and what you gave was printed in the annual report for everyone to see.

In the past we both served on the church council, taught Sunday School, and Catherine – Bible School, sang in the choir, Friends of Youth, and served at many aebelskiver suppers.

Our children: Paul, Dan and Molly were all baptized and confirmed at Fredsville.

Lastly, Merlyn's great-great-grandfather, Rasmus Larsen was a sounding member of the congregation!

### **Ryan Petersen**

I have a couple Fredsville Memories

1. Going to church softball games in Stout, Iowa as a kid and waiting for home runs and foul balls to return to the concession stand in return for a snow cone. As kids we would go and watch our dads, uncles, cousins play against other churches in our area. As I got old enough to play, I always had a lot of fun playing ball with the Fredsville team, especially when my Uncle Merlyn was the manager. In the '80s and 90's lots of church members would come to the games and especially to the big Fourth of July tournament that would end with fireworks.
2. When I was in elementary school, Ryan Sloth, Phil Kruger, and myself would try to hide somewhere in the church when we were supposed to go to Sunday School back when Sunday School students would get let out a little before the church service was over. Sometimes we would hide in the nursery, sometimes under the steps in the East Entrance or in a storage room. We always thought we were pretty clever young boys when we didn't get caught, but I am guessing nobody tried too hard to find us some days :)
3. My all-time favorite Fredsville memory though was marrying Beth on a beautiful fall day in 2002.
4. A close second favorite Fredsville memory was the Baptism of our daughters.

### **Jeff Sandlin**

In May of 2015, DB Acoustics presented a proposal to the technology committee trying to sell the church on \$5,000 worth of video recording equipment plus \$400-600 per month for cloud storage. Meridith said that we could probably do it without spending nearly that much.

That summer, Intern Barb Jones, Emily Mugge, Meridith, and I met to try some things out like Google Hangouts, but they weren't good enough. I looked into some options and decided that a piece of software called Wirecast would be the best solution.

We did a private test live stream of worship in June 2015, just trying to live stream from the church to our house. The video was choppy, and the audio wasn't quite in sync with the video. We figured out we needed better equipment to handle the processing, and that Fredsville's internet service couldn't handle live streaming, as we are



at the end of the CFU line where we get their worst service.

Meridith and I were about ready to get a new computer anyway, so she and I got a new MacBook that was powerful enough to handle the demands of recording an hour-long video with screen graphics feeding into it; and we mounted our old webcam above the exit sign at the back of the church. With this equipment plus a digital camcorder on a tripod that I moved manually, we recorded and published our first worship recording on July 5, 2015. Since we didn't have any copyright licenses yet, Meridith (as organist that day) was careful to play only music that was not copyrighted. The video turned out really well.

We were ready to begin regular recording at that point, however, there were a lot of concerns from the church council and worship and music committee. The copyright licenses we needed were approved, but the Wirecast software purchase was tabled. Worship and music committee members were concerned about getting enough volunteers to do the recording. The church council wanted to know what other churches were doing. So, the tech committee gathered data on the frequency of other churches posting videos (if they were at all), where they posted, what they were doing with their camera shots, and how those things compared with their average weekly attendance.

A \$2,600 proposal for buying a computer, camera, software, congregational microphone, and miscellaneous equipment was presented to the church council in September 2015. The council voted against the purchase for the time being.

Using my own equipment, I recorded additional worship videos periodically in service to the Fredsville congregation and beyond, mainly for baptisms and special services. After Pastor Ron Poe got copyright permission for it, I recorded and edited Fredsville's fall 2015 musical *Are We There Yet*, which has over 1,250 views as of March 2022.

For Christmas Eve 2016, we tried something new and sent the live worship video feed into the fellowship hall and gathering space. The video feed was slightly behind the audio, however, and the main complaint we were receiving from this was that the words on the screen were too small for worship participation when the screen was split with the video of what was happening in the church.

When the council requested budget proposals, we submitted additional requests to purchase video equipment, possibly purchasing pieces of it slowly over several years so it wouldn't be as much all at once. The council voted against buying video equipment in the fall of 2016 and 2017. A proposal was not submitted in 2018. The technology committee's proposal submitted in the fall of 2019 was included in the 2020 budget initially presented to the congregation in December of 2019. However, that budget was not approved, and the video purchase was among the items cut as the council prepared an adjusted budget to propose to the congregation.

When the Covid-19 pandemic started in March of 2020, Pastor Lisa and Intern Andy chose to record the "Worship at Home" videos on their own using Zoom and publish them unedited. They were very overwhelmed at the time and just wanted to get something online, choosing not to mess with having anything additional being done with the videos. Enhancements to online worship were discussed periodically via electronic communication amongst worship leaders and also the worship and music committee. However, no changes were made in the technological process until August when I started to make a few minor edits to what they recorded to enhance the Worship at Home experience. Jean Loger, Pastor Lisa, Meridith, and I met on Labor Day to look at video editing technology. Following further discussion and e-mail chains, the worship and music committee submitted a proposal to the church council to add a "video technician" paid at the same rate as an organist. The council asked the Finance Committee to review the proposal.

For the remainder of 2020, I recorded the weekly Sunday worship services during the weeks we could meet in person and posted the videos online. Due to all the past work, we had done with recording worship services over the prior 5 years, we were uniquely positioned to already be set up to accomplish this very easily. When we were unable to gather in person due to Covid numbers, I assembled the video by combining the PowerPoint slides with recordings from Pastor Lisa, Intern Andy, and the musician for the day (either Meridith or Jean). In addition to worship videos, we did a "Fredsville Kids Give Thanks" video for Thanksgiving and a virtual "It Wasn't Supposed to Happen Like This" Christmas program that I made by combining videos that parents recorded of their children.

At the annual meeting in 2021, the congregation finally approved spending money on worship video production by adding the "video technician" job, which the Council then hired me to do. I recorded all but two and edited all of the 2021 worship services to post on our Fredsville YouTube page.

Since making a commitment, the church purchased a robotic camera, now mounted above the control booth in the back of the sanctuary, that is controlled from the recording computer. This allows us to get good close-up shots of the pastor and worship leaders at the front of the sanctuary, without requiring me to reach over the top of the projection computer to manually adjust a video camera every time the close-up shot needs to change, such as moving from the altar to the pulpit. I also found a free alternative to Wirecast called OBS, which has saved us some money.

All this has led us to where we are now with our Fredsville video technology and recording all our worship services for online viewing, where they will stay!

### **Rev. Patricia L. Shaw**

It's the inclusive hospitality, the welcoming, that I remember so well at Fredsville Lutheran Church, now expressed so beautifully and wonderfully in the remodel of the gathering space (narthex) that naturally invites the people to be in community. Of course, it's the people in that fertile place on a hill, where the crops grow up to the back door, that ultimately keeps me coming back. I enjoyed my first experience with the Danes as they happily danced around the Christmas tree after Christmas Eve worship. Another first for me was the experience of watching the preparation and production of the aebelskiver and the drawing in of people from all around the area to eat that unique treat. And the open-faced sandwiches, and learning there is a very specific way of preparing them which required training, especially in getting the butter all the way to the edges. I had always wanted the inspirational experience of leaving the church building after a funeral service and walking to the cemetery for the committal service with the people in mourning who followed directly behind. I experienced that at Fredsville. I appreciated the importance of music in worship and the practice of attending to detail throughout worship. I was an Interim Pastor at Fredsville, my first, at a difficult time in the church, and I received the best training I could ever have expected through the leadership and desires of the people to live and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am forever grateful for the experience.

### **Linda Sloth**

My father, Gordon Sloth was on the committee to build the new church in the late 50s. I think he said it was built in 1960. There is a time capsule in the brick in the front left-hand side. Our family information is in it.

### **Pastor Steve Solberg**

Dear Ones of Fredsville, grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord & Savior, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Thank you for your invitation to celebrate 150 plus years of ministry at and through Fredsville Lutheran Church! I continue to praise God for you!

It feels but yesterday that I was considering joining you in ministry. I had been told by the bishop's office that Fredsville was situated upon a beautiful, wooded hill amidst an ocean of corn and soybeans. Dick Stampe, then president of the congregation, called and invited me to interview, so Marcia, Anna, and I came to investigate. I remember sitting with the call committee in the fellowship hall, both parties working through another round of what may have seemed speed dating, asking, and answering each other's questions, pondering a potential life together.

Well, we did come together, and many would be the transitions that would unfold for us all in our years together. As for my family, my Marcia would set aside being an Associate in Ministry in favor of a "parenting sabbatical," as she called it. With your encouragement, Marcia spent precious time with our daughters, was welcomed into the life of the church (including the weekly studies and quilting sessions), and even went on to begin her studies toward her D.Min. and eventual ordination to the Ministry of Word & Sacrament. Our eldest daughter Anna, still a baby when we first came to you, would start school at Dike, the same school we later discovered her great-great-grandmother had attended years before. Our daughter Sara would be born, baptized, and learn first steps in your midst. I cherish my memories of Ann Reinicke, Bernice Craig, and others helping Marcia with our girls during worship, Jack & Mary Mommer donating fencing from one of their properties to place around the parsonage backyard as security for my girls, and Arlan & Carol Anderson and Eric & Darla Anderson inviting us to pick sweetcorn from the field out back as we wanted. You all welcomed us into your lives, your homes, your hearts, and cared for us. Thank you!

And how would Fredsville be blessed? Together we moved from a time of sensitive grief and pain to sensing once again a future where our Lord's abundant life could be lived.

- What blessing and privilege to be your pastor during those years!  
We began with an every-member visit, or as close as one can get to such things. Barb Chapman was my secretary at the time, and I gave her my calendar to schedule the home visits. She proceeded with Spirit-led discernment as she set those connections over the opening weeks, months, and years of my pastorate. I was privileged to hear first-hand your stories, your griefs, your joys, and your hopes.
- We would heal and unify and dream once again as we grew to the point of adding a youth director position to our staff, Shanda Van Riesen being the first, coming to us from Tentmakers. What a gift that was for our youth and young families!
- You would use your many and varied spiritual gifts in the planning and doing of our ministries together. From musicians to teachers to coaches to farmers to shop workers to homemakers to plumbers to sheriff deputies to engineers and more, you shared Jesus' incredible love and peace through your giftings. Fredsville lived up to its name.
- We held each other in the midst of challenges, sicknesses, dying, and death. We depended on the hope of Jesus' resurrection that even breaks into the here and now, and we celebrated its weighty reality.
- Together we took lead in our conference congregations, coordinating and conducting workshops and other resources for all to grow in ministry.
- On a lighter note, you even connected me to some of my Danish roots – yes, my spit sample sent to 23&Me would later reveal I'm not just Norwegian in ancestry, after all! With fondness I remember dancing around the Christmas tree in the fellowship hall singing Nu Har Vi Jul Igen and hosting our annual aebleskiver dinners, serving more than 800 people, as I recall, with aebleskiver frying stations extending from the church kitchen all the way to the parsonage garage. Together the happy Danes rejoiced and enjoyed tasty tradition.
- New things were introduced, as well - a new organ and handbells come to mind, the latter starting with a 3-octave set loaned from my mother and sister. Jean Loger, Joann Juhl, Jeanne Thuesen, and many more led us instrumentally and vocally. Did you realize how blessed we were to share together God's praise in such powerful ways?
- And while I'd like to lift up many, many more dear ones, I'll highlight our dear sister and sexton Emily Steege with her sweet, loving smile that lit up her eyes with tenderness. During our planning meetings for Sunday School or VBS, we'd wonder if Emily would mind some glitter or other mess during upcoming teaching times, but there was no need to fret. Emily loved the children and didn't mind any clean-up in

the service of their knowing Jesus! I also recall a time when I caught Emily atop an extension ladder in the church's northeast entryway, Emily's typical entrance from her sexton's house. She had spotted some cobwebs up high, so at 85 years of age she ventured up with dust rag in hand. I gently scolded her for doing something that another could easily do for her. And, of course, she took me at my word, later sending a dust rag up the ladder with me to dust the sanctuary cross as I placed the black veil there for Good Friday. Truth be told, the best gift we could have gotten her was a hydraulic lift that could have zipped her into all those hard-to-reach crevices. What a dear one! What a blessing to Fredsville and to me and my family she was!

There are so many more people, memories, and stories I'd like to share. Whether I've mentioned you or not in this greeting, know that I cherish our time together, six short years in length. With a desire to get closer to aging parents struggling with dementia, I accepted a call to First Lutheran Church in Manitowoc, WI, leaving Iowa behind physically, but never in my heart. We went on to minister 10 years in Manitowoc, followed by 13 plus years at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Negaunee, MI. My Marcia got her D.Min. from Luther Seminary and, following ordination, would serve as pastor with me both in Manitowoc and Negaunee. In the first year of moving here to Negaunee, Marcia began her battle with ovarian cancer and died 8 years later. Words cannot express how deeply I miss her. As for my other dear women: This year there will be two more graduations in the Solberg household. Anna will complete her PhD from Kent State University in human geography and Sara her MFA from Northern Michigan University in creative writing. We await their next steps in life.

In closing, I'll share one more story. I suppose I could opt for a funny one...like the Sunday of my Sara's baptism when someone saw a snake's tail extending down from one of the sanctuary light fixtures. Had they imagined it? No, the snake came visiting our secretary on Monday.

Now, I'll share a story that profoundly shared the meaning of Fredsville with me...from our confirmation ministry. In those days, we used the Faith Inkubator confirmation model, gathering on Wednesday evenings in the sanctuary for large group teaching (newsprint for cartooning taped up front on vertically positioned 8-foot tables) and small group conversations, service, and prayer. A day or so before one of those Wednesday nights, I received a visit from one of our confirmands and her mom in my study. Slowly that dear pre-teen shared with me her story. At school she had been a victim of bullying; furthermore, it had come from some of girls who were with her in confirmation. My response? I shared Matthew 18 with her, inviting her to consider going face-to-face in conversation with these girls, even doing so in confirmation small group time that Wednesday night. To my surprise that young, incredibly brave sister-in-Christ agreed. And so, it was on Wednesday night I gathered two of our girls' small groups together for a time of mutual honest sharing, naming, challenging, confessing, and granting absolution. Each took time to hear and see the others' perspective. Following mutual confession, they pronounced forgiveness to each other in Jesus' name, and we established healthy next steps of caring support and check-in. By night's end I was moved to tears as I watched that dear, brave pre-teen and the other girls, repentant sisters in Christ, go to our baptismal font together. Fingers were dipped into the water for the etching of Christ's cross upon each other's foreheads, blessings and hugs shared one with another. This is Fredsville! I thought. This is who we are. Yes, there are real troubles in the world, in our lives, but we are Fredsville, a place of Christ's own peaceful rest.

I praise God for all of you as Fredsville, continuing to share through 150-plus years Christ's peace and rest.

*Matthew 11:<sup>28</sup> "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

### **Nancy Stage**

I joined the handbell choir the very first day it was organized, many years ago. Members came and went, but the group blossomed into a very congenial unit. Its strong point was that everybody helped one another with any musical issues, as there were various abilities and experiences among us. Enjoyable highlights included performing at various churches in the area, at Dike Memorial Day services, at a member's wedding, and Christmas Eve and Easter services at Fredsville. Occasionally, a challenging piece of music would prove to us that we were more capable than we thought!

## **Roy & Audrey Stefan**

Roy and Audrey Stefan's best Fredsville memory has always been their wedding day in December of 1997 when they were married by Pastor Solberg. We were fairly new members, the church was beautifully decorated for the Christmas holiday, and we began our life together in this church.

## **Audrey Stefan**

My favorite memories of Fredsville are the various ways I have been able to serve others through ongoing programs or projects here at the church. After retiring, I discovered the joy of quilting with the Thursday morning quilting ladies, enjoying these wonderful, new friends, and developing a true passion for helping to contribute to the needs of World Relief with these "bundles of love and warmth." Then, there is the group of ladies I join to sew the "pillowcase" dresses which we send off to hundreds of impoverished little girls around the world. In more recent years, several crafters gather at the church and share our love of quilting, cross-stitch, knitting, etc. Christian fellowship and fun at its best!!

## **Roy Stefan**

Pastor Don Feuerhak loved to drive to NE Iowa and go fishing on his day off. Sometimes, Pastor Don would ask my two boys - John and Eric and me to go along with him. My favorite time was the day we drove to the Elgin area to fish and then afterwards we stopped to eat at the Irish Shanty at Gunder. What was so special about eating at the Irish Shanty at Gunder? Well, you could order a Gunder Burger which was a whole pound of hamburger! What more could four fellas want than to each order a Gunder Burger!

I have always appreciated that the children/teenagers were encouraged to participate at Fredsville. Looking back, I remember John helping Pastor Don Feuerhak wash the windows in the fellowship hall. John also helped his math teacher - Mrs. (Sue) Green paint the upstairs of the Youth House (now referred to as the Vicar's Villa.) Eric played his trumpet one Sunday for the Special Music at church. As a 9th grader, he gave the sermon at the Sunrise Service on Easter. Then, a few years later, Eric shared his experiences from when he attended the National ELCA Youth Conference for the Sunday morning sermon. That service was held outside, in front (North side) of the church.

## **Angela Syhlman**

I always enjoyed helping with Vacation Bible School. I liked watching the children praise God at the top of their lungs and having fun.

## **Josey Syhlman – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

One of my favorite Fredsville memories took place last summer at Vacation Bible School. Anna Adelmund and I taught the children some of the songs we learned when we went to church camp, along with some of the Vacation Bible School songs.

## **Jeanne Thuesen**

Some of the fondest memories I have of my years at Fredsville are those years I was involved with the handbell ministry when I directed the handbell choir for 19 years from 1997 to 2016.

Handbells were introduced to Fredsville Lutheran Church in 1997. Our Pastor at that time, Steven Solberg, loaned to us a set of bells owned by his family so that we could start a bell choir at Fredsville. When he later moved on to his next church, our congregation purchased its own set of bells.

We enjoyed playing music to enhance our worship services. We also performed at events in the community outside of our own church as an outreach. These activities brought great joy and satisfaction to me and to all who participated. There was a real sense of camaraderie among the choir members.

Every year a number of us would attend local ringing events, festivals in our 5-state area, and even national seminars. In our class sessions we worked with experts to improve our skills. We were inspired as we heard concerts by the best choirs in the nation.

I am grateful I had the opportunity to serve in this way and I have good memories of that special time in my life at Fredsville Lutheran Church.

### **Joan Thuesen**

When Harlan and I married in 1954, Fredsville's family and community life still centered around the Danish culture to a great extent. I grew up in a mixed American culture. Our four children were baptized in the little wooden church located next to the cemetery. By the time we were married the church services were what I considered Americanized with Danish undertones.

It wasn't unusual to be asked if I was Danish by people with Danish heritage. When I had to admit I was not Danish, I am sure they felt sorry for me.

Christmas was celebrated differently from what I was accustomed to. Presents were opened Christmas Eve not Christmas morning. Before opening the presents you danced around the Christmas tree by walking briskly around the tree singing Nu er det jul igen. I was introduced to the Danish Nisse. In Harlan's family duck must have been the Christmas meat of choice as I remember that is what his mother fixed.

I was introduced to open faced sandwiches, and I learned you carefully buttered the bread from crust to crust. Other foods that *were* new to me was frikadeler, rullepolse, kransekage, tvebakker, pebbernodder, liverpostej, aebleskage, kringle, rodgrød med fløde, and aebleskiver. We were given an aebleskiver pan as a wedding gift.

Americanization was important to the early Danish immigrants, but they still wanted to celebrate and remember their Danish heritage.

### **Angie Wibben**

My favorite memory of Fredsville was in 2018 when I chaperoned the Mission Trip to Las Vegas. It felt very good to see the kids' helping others at the Soup kitchen. I also enjoyed watching the kids have fun with each other.


### **Carol Watson**

In the fall of 1996, I saw an article in the Waterloo Courier in regard to the Fredsville Lutheran Church having an organ recital and that the public was invited. I attended and was asked to stay for refreshments. During the refreshments, I was invited to come back for their Sunday service. Emmett and I did come back for their Sunday service and the rest is history.


Please note that the Danish song repeats over and over. Once a person masters the way people sing it in Danish, it becomes very elementary.

The translation: Now it is Christmas again, and now it is Christmas again. And Christmas lasts until Easter. Now it is Christmas again, and now it is Christmas again. And Christmas lasts until Easter.

### Nu Har Vi Jul Igen



Nu har vi Jul i - gen, Og nu har vi Jul i - gen, Og



Jul - en var - er ved til Paas - ke. Nu har vi jul i - gen, Og



nu har vi jul i - gen, Og Jul - en var - er ved til Paas - ke.

306 **Our Father Has Light In His Window**

9,7,8,7,9,7,8,7

1. Our Fa - ther has light in His win - dow, It shines thro' the dark'ning  
 2. Our Fa - ther has light in His win - dow, It shows us the way a -  
 3. Our Fa - ther has light in His win - dow, It beck - ons thro' storm and

night And car - ries a friend - ly greet - ing To  
 cross The val - ley of death's grim shad - ow Which  
 gloam And, beam - ing with lov - ing kind - ness, It

all from the Lord of light. Our Fa - ther has light in His  
 Je - sus has built for us. Our Fa - ther has light in His  
 bids us: Come home, come home! Our Fa - ther has light in His

win - dow, It bright - ens the dark - est road, It  
 win - dow, When to - ward His light we move He  
 win - dow, That light is His bless - ed word, The

com - forts in need and sor - row And points us the way to God.  
 send - eth His angels to lead us To mansions in heavn a - bove.  
 word of His love and mer - cy Thro' faith in Christ Jesus, our Lord.



