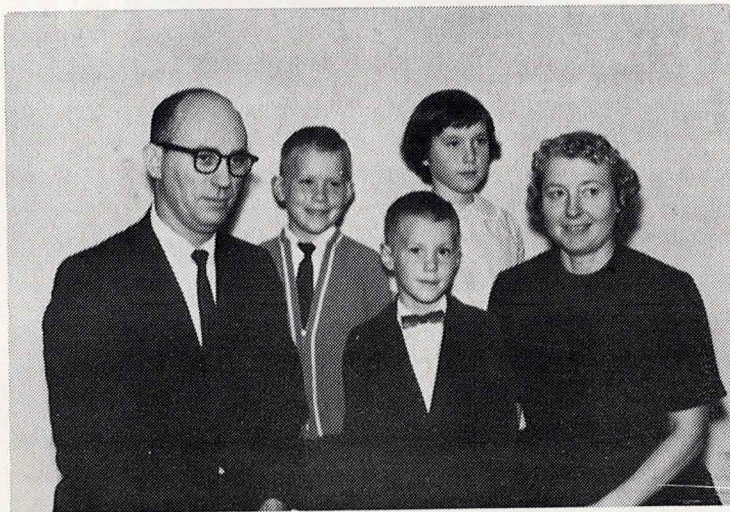


St. Luke, speaking of the early Christian Church in Acts 11:21 says, "The hand of the Lord was with them." In looking back over the history of Bruce Valley Congregation we also can testify that the hand of the Lord has been and is even now with us. It is the Lord who sustains the church wherever it is found, raising up men and women as leaders, raising up men and women who are willing to give of themselves to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. The long life of our congregation is evidence of the fact that we have been so blessed and therefore, it is to God that we give praise and honor and glory for our 75 years of existence as a congregation.

It is a real privilege for us to welcome you who are former pastors, former members, and other friends to this 75th anniversary celebration of the founding of Bruce Valley Lutheran Congregation. It is our prayer that this festive occasion will also be for all of us a time of rededication to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sincerely in Him,
PASTOR HALL



Pastor Hall, Mark Marius Miriam, and Mrs. Hall.

History of Bruce Valley Church

The Bruce Valley Lutheran Congregation, which dates its beginning to the year 1888, was organized as a result of the heart-felt need on the part of its early members for greater spiritual guidance and comfort. The settlers of Bruce Valley were at the time a part of the Elk Creek and West Beef River Congregations, but distance and modes of travel made it impossible to regularly receive the means of Grace and thus there was a desire on the part of the people to establish a congregation of their own. Late in the summer of the year 1888, a meeting was held in the Bruce Valley schoolhouse under the guidance of the Reverend Halvor Heyer at which time the Bruce Valley Congregation was organized. For the next forty-five years it was to be a parish which also included the congregations of Elk Creek, West Beef River, and Price; and the next eleven years was faithfully served by Pastor Heyer.



Rev. Halvor A. Heyer
1888 - 1899

The congregation, during the first years of its life, met in what has come to be known as the "Old Bruce Valley Schoolhouse" and there the Gospel was taught and the sacraments administered in keeping with the heritage that they had received from their church. The first Baptism was celebrated in the new congregation in November, 1888, when Clara (Loga) Kensmoe was received into the church. Willie Wilson, Maggie Wilson, Mary Gunem, Bernt Loga, and Elmer Anderson were members of the first class confirmed July 6, 1890.

The Tom Hauge home became the scene for a very important meeting on April 4, 1897. The members of the congregation gathered to organize the Bruce Valley Luther League, an organization which has continued to the present. The Luther League had as its original purpose the laying of plans and the building of a church in which the congregation could worship. At first the organization consisted of only seventeen members from which Mr. Ole Bergsland was elected president; Mr. Halvor Gunem, vice president; Mr. Tom Hauge, secretary; Mr. Christian Thompson, vice secretary; Mr. Ole Bergerson, treasurer. An offering of \$8.71 was received at this initial meeting, an offering which marked the beginning of a building fund which would thirteen years later erect Bruce Valley Lutheran Church.

In 1899 Pastor Heyer resigned to accept a call to Nebraska and the