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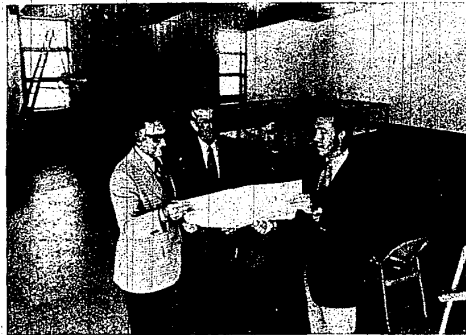
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CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH'S rebuilding committee looks over the blueprints for its rebuilt sanctuary, to be rededicated Sunday. From left are Jack Cassidy, Erwin Poelka, Keith Goodnough and the Rev. Jerry Stroud. (Observer photo by Harry Mauthe)

Church Rededicates After Fire Tragedy

By MARGARET MILLER

A Redford Township church that has rebuilt from the ruins of a devastating fire will rededicate its building and congregation Sunday, Sept. 16.

The service is planned at 10 a.m. in Christ Lutheran Church, 14350 Wormer, and

for most of the members attending there will be grim memories along with new hope.

On a cold Saturday last November, the church suffered the blow that cost the life of one of its members and made its sanctuary and fellowship hall useless for months.

"There was a leak in the roof," recalled the Rev. Jerry Stroud, who had come to Christ Lutheran as pastor just a year earlier, "and several of us were trying to fix it."

"We had a bucket of melted tar, but it was cold and the tar kept getting hard. So we put it on the stove to soften it. Then Bill Molnar Sr. went to get the bucket off the stove - we don't exactly know what happened, but the tar spilled on him and the fire started."

Before the flames were extinguished, the sanctuary and fellowship hall adjoining were reduced to little more than charred walls.

Molnar died of his burns after several days of hospitalization. But the congregation, at a cost of \$86,000, now is in the final stages of rebuilding, and the service Sunday will celebrate that fact.

"This tragedy has pulled the congregation together and has had a strengthening effect on the people," said Pastor Stroud.

"Now, as the rebuilding program is completed, Christ Lutheran wants to renew its dedication to almighty God."

The Rev. Clarence Beireis, who was founding pastor when the church was organized in November of 1960, will come from his present home in Creston, Ohio, to preach the rededication sermon. His topic will be "Faith's Children."

There will be two anthems by the senior choir and two solos by Eugene Dyer, vocal music director at Redford Union High School.



"And during the service," Rev. Stroud said, "we're going to distribute paper and pencils to our children and ask them to write a message of their faith. These messages will be put in helium-filled balloons which we'll release at the end of the service."

In rebuilding, the congregation placed the planning and decision-making in the hands of a four-man committee composed of Erwin Poelka, Jack Cassidy, Keith Goodnough and Pastor Stroud.

"The committee put in hundreds of hours - we had no idea of the time involved when we started," the pastor said.

Some changes were made. Instead of the portable kitchen equipment that had divided the cooking area and the fellowship hall, new appliances were built into one end of a new, large room.

Einar Salomonson and Eli Becht, two congregation members who work with wood, built a couple of new large crosses and new altar rails.

The church's youth group put in a lot of hours repairing some of the fire-damaged chairs, tables and lamps.

"That saved us quite a sum of money," Pastor Stroud said, "and there was enough left in the insurance settlement to send the kids to a Lutheran youth convention."

Taking charge of the rededication is a committee including Elaine Lempe, Margaret Patsch, Margaret Feigert, Helen Koberstead, Sandy Branstrom and Velma Sarkady.

After the service, the young people will be enrolled for Sunday school, and then everyone will be served a complimentary buffet luncheon in the new kitchen and fellowship area.

"But the important thing," Pastor Stroud said, "is that this isn't just a rededication of the building. It has to be rededication of ourselves, too, because a new building doesn't make a church."

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observing life

Musselmans Wed 50 Years

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Musselman of 10 Mile, Farmington Hills, are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary Saturday, Sept. 15. Married in St. John Lutheran Church in Flint, they lived in Birmingham for 13 years before moving to the Farmington Hills home they have occupied for 37 years.

Mr. Musselman was employed by General Motors Corp. for 24 years. He also worked for a time for Kelsey

'Future Shock' Set By AAUW

"Future Shock," a film documentary based on Alvin Toffler's best-selling book, will be viewed by the Livonia branch of the American Association of University Women Tuesday, Sept. 18.

The meeting, season opener for the AAUW group, will be held at 8 p.m. in the choir room of St. Paul Presbyterian Church, 27475 Five Mile, Livonia.

Following the film there will be a discussion led by a reaction panel including Mrs. Marilyn VonWald, Sister Margaret Basso and Mrs. Martha Jurma.

Sale Is Set

A rummage sale sponsored by Beta-Sigma Phi sorority will be held Friday, Sept. 14 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 15 from 9 a.m. to noon.

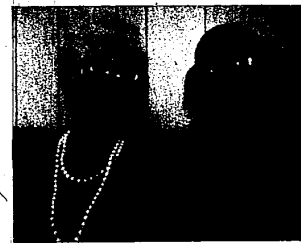
The sale will be held at 15021 Marsha, in the Five Mile-Newburgh area.

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Pair Wed In Memphis

Virginia Anne Sears and David Grant Countryman were married in a Sept. 1 ceremony in Memphis, Tenn. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sears of Memphis and the bridegroom's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Edward Countryman of Hemingway Avenue, Redford Township. The couple honeymooned in Arkansas and will live in Millington, Tenn. The bridegroom has been serving in the U.S. Navy for a year.

Coffee Begins Sorority Year

A coffee will open the year's activities for Gamma Phi Beta Sorority on Wednesday, Sept. 19 at 10 a.m. in the home of Mrs. Donald K. Tyler, Jr., 29741 Rambling Road, Southfield.

Christmas card albums, a project which helps fund camps for underprivileged children, will also be distributed.

Reservations may be made by contacting Mrs. F. Thomas Schroyenber, 14855 Randlewood Drive, Livonia.

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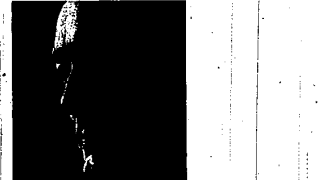
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