

St Peters Evangelical and Reformed Church
St Peter's Evangelical Church
St. Peter's United Church of Christ
Pleasant Grove, Missouri

8:45 a.m. Morning Worship

Township:	T-47-N	Organized:	1848
Range:	R-15-W	Disbanded:	No
Section:	9	Active:	Yes
Map:	Click Here	Updated:	July 19, 2005

Cemetery: There is a cemetery associated with this church.

Area: Southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of the section about four to five miles northeast of Prairie Home, Missouri.

Records: These church records were microfilm in the late 1950s by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

History:



Sketch from "Cooper County Church Sketches" by F. Chestnutt

St. Peter's German Evangelical Church

From "History of Howard and Cooper Counties Missouri", 1883

St. Peter's German Evangelical Church - Is located on Section 9, township 47, range 15, in Prairie Home township. The church was organized in 1848 by Rev. Charles Hofneoister. The

constituent members were Jacob Schilb, Sr., and wife, Godfried Kaempfer and wife, - Becker and wife, George Knorp and wife, F. W. Schenk and wife, Henry Mayer and wife, Andreas Spieler and wife, Godfrey Spieler and wife, Thetobald Miller and wife, David Huth and wife, Peter Diehl, Sr., and wife, Jacob Schilb, Jr., and wife, Ernest Kirschman and wife and Henry Webber and wife.

The old church edifice was erected in 1849. The new building was built in 1872 at a cost of \$900. The interest in the church about the year 1875 flagged, and in January, 1877, the church was reorganized, and incorporated in 1879. David Schilb, Adam Schilb, Sr., Jacob Schilb, Frederick Schilb, David Schilb, Jr., Adam Schilb, Jr., Adam Andrews, Wendell Graff, Otto Speiler, Jacob and John Plank, Charles and Ernest Kirschman, John G. Speiler, Jacob Warmbrodt, Rudolph Segesser, Gustave Hefferburg, and the wives of the above, with the exception of Charles Kirschman and Gustave Hefferburg, constituted the organization. Jacob Schilb, Jr., John Plank and Ernest Kirschman are the elders. F. Woelfle was the last pastor.

St Peter's Evangelical Church
From "History of Cooper County Missouri" by W. F. Johnson, 1919

St. Peter's Evangelical Church at Pleasant Grove was the first church organized by the German speaking people of Cooper County and was organized in 1849 under the ministry of the Reverend Kewing, who for some time remained as pastor, being succeeded in turn by the following pastors: The Reverends Rauchenbush, Hoffmeister, Lange, Streit, Von Teobel, Dellwo, Kraft, Woelfie, Mohr, Leutwein, Klingeberger, Alber, Egger, Rasche, Jennrich, Lehmann, Bredehoeft, Leibner and Beissenherz, the latter of whom was installed as pastor in the fall of 1917 and is now serving the congregation.

The first meeting house erected by the congregation of St. Peter's was a little log church building, which served the needs of the pioneer congregation until a more commodious edifice could be built. The present building was erected in 1877. The charter member of St. Peter's Evangelical church were the following: Adam and Jacob Schilb, Nicholas Blank, George Knorp, Fred Stock, J. A. Spieler, J. G. Spieler, William Baker, F. Schenck, T. Miller, E. Kirschman, Jacob Schilb, Jr., Henry Meyer, H. J. Meyer, A. Kaempfer and William Hobrecht, with their respective families.

May 20, 1918, the congregation at its semi-annual business meeting voted to discontinue the use of the German language entirely. So time brings its changes, always to remind us that nothing is permanent.

Pleasant Grove church also believes in its Sunday School and for many years has taught the Bible to both old and young. The following have been superintendents in their time: David Schilb, J. E. Derendinger, K. M. Seifert, John J. Blank, F. N. Blank, and H. Spieler, the present incumbent.

St. Peters Church has lately been re-roofed, repainted, and a few years ago a first class piano was bought and in the spring of 1919 the church was re-decorated on the inside. Several new members joined again recently, all of which goes to prove that the St. Peters congregation is still a very live one.

Pleasant Grove St. Peter's United Church of Christ
From "Memorabilia of Cooper County", 1990

Organized in 1849, St. Peter's Evangelical Church at Pleasant Grove was the first Congregation to be established by the German Settlers in Cooper County, Missouri.

As early as 1846, two circuit-riding Evangelical pastors had held occasional Services of Worship among the Germans of Moniteau and Cooper Counties. Sixteen heads of families were the "founding fathers" for St. Peter's Church. They erected a small, sturdy log structure about five miles northeast of the village of Prairie Home; a building which served as church and school until

1877. In that year the present frame church building was erected. It remained essentially unchanged until 1950 when the men of the congregation dug a basement and installed a modern furnace. Modern restroom facilities were provided in preparation for the congregation's 125th Anniversary in 1874. Since that time, yearly improvements have been made, the latest being the laying of a new concrete front porch floor, replacing the old wooden one, and installing a new grey outdoor carpet in celebration of our 140th Anniversary in 1989.

Until the time of the First World War the German Language prevailed. On May 20, 1918 the congregation determined that all Services of worship should be held in English.

The people of St. Peter's Church, I am sure, in the early years, experienced difficulties which often confront small congregations in isolated communities. But, nevertheless, they have managed to maintain church building and cemetery with care and concern. Moreover, they have been generous in support of the Larger Kingdom Work. The 23 Communicant members of the congregation annually contribute about \$1,000 for denominational benevolences. This small congregation is very caring in terms of supporting one another and helping in difficult times within their community.

Serving as pastor is the Rev. Troy Gardner. He is a modern day circuit rider who also serves St. Paul's Church and Advent Church, both in the vicinity of Jamestown, in nearby Moniteau County. Rev. Gardner has a "full" Sunday morning. He conducts a 8:45 AM service at St. Peter's Church; a 9:50 AM service at St. Paul's Church, and a 11 AM service at Advent Church.

God has richly blessed St. Peter's and with his help shall carry on.

"Happy Birthday" Pleasant Grove as you celebrate your 140th year.

by Helen Knierim

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
From "Cooper County Church Sketches" by F. Chesnutt, 1993

St. Peter's Pleasant Grove Church was the pioneer Church for the German Evangelicals who braved the cold Atlantic and the snags of the Missouri River to settle here in the 1840's. It is known as the first church organized by the German-speaking people in Cooper County.

Pleasant Grove is located in Prairie Home township. Rev. Charles Hofneister organized the congregation to be known as St. Peter's Evangelical Church. Charter members were: Adam Schilb, Jacob Schilb, Nicholas Blank, George Knorp, Frederick Stock, J.A. Spieler, J.G. Spieler, William Baker, F. Schenck, T. Miller, Ernst Kirschman, Jacob Schilb, Jr., Henry Meyer, H.J. Meyer, A. Kaempfer, and William Hobrecht. Also listed were: Godfried Kenepfer, Becker, Andrews Spieler, David Huth, and Henry Webber, and wives of the above.

Their first house of worship was made of logs, replaced by the present building in 1877. German was the language of worship and conversation. On May 20, 1918, the congregation voted to use English.

In the early years, the Pleasant Grove congregation was part of a triple charge with Moniteau Advent, Jamestown and Pleasant Grove. In 1893 Moniteau voted to be independent.

The name of the congregation has changed over the years. The Evangelical Church of North America and the Reformed Church joined to become the "Evangelical and Reformed Church." A number of years later, this union merged with the Congregational Christian Church and is now the United Church of Christ.

In the spring of 1919, the building was extensively improved and again in 1951 when a full basement was dug a short distance away from the building. The building was then moved and set in place over the basement. At that time it was equipped with a wood burning furnace, recently converted to gas.

The first Christmas tree and program ever presented at the church was on December 25, 1883.

In 1914 the pastor's salary was raised to \$300, providing he could preach equally well in German and English. The question of providing feed for the minister's horse was left unresolved. However it was voted to rebuild the hitching rails.

In 1917 it was decided to lower the pulpit to the level of the rostrum floor and at once with no cost to the church. The old organ was replaced with a new piano, Emil Pfeiffer and Henry Spieler having solicited the \$230 in donations.

www.mogenweb.org/cooper