

175th Anniversary Moment

“He who promised is faithful” (Heb 10.23)

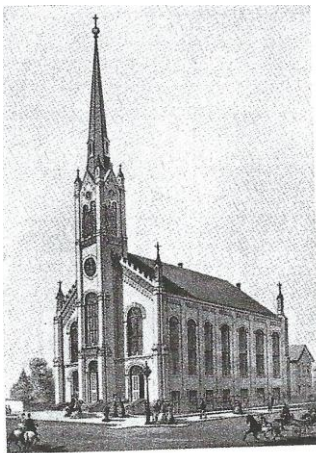
OUTGROWN AND BURNED DOWN: THE STORY OF TWO CHURCHES

Historians might consider the 1849 structure on Grand and Wells as the congregation’s *third* worship space. However, the very first worship space (at Ohio and Wells) predates our official formation as a *Lutheran* congregation. The second space was a “borrowed” room at the city courthouse. Consequently, that third church at Grand and Wells is arguably the *first* permanent church building of *First Saint Paul’s*.

One might expect those German Lutherans to have settled in for a long tenure at the new location, but this was not to be the case. The new church served them for only fourteen years before the congregation outgrew the building. A flood of German immigrants fueled the growth. Pastor Wunder reached out to all the new arrivals, offering not only spiritual care but also help with housing, food, and acclimation to Chicago.



Third House of Worship



Fourth Church

By 1863 a larger structure was needed, and the congregation purchased a lot on the corner of Franklin and Superior for \$5,400. A much larger sanctuary, built at a cost of \$30,000, was dedicated to the glory of God in December, 1864. This, it would seem, could serve the congregation for many years. Only seven years later, however, this church would be destroyed on October 9, 1871 by the great Chicago fire. Despite the devastation, the congregation trusted in God’s faithfulness. They began to rebuild.