

Congregation sees church built up, then torn down

After standing on the corner of Lexington Ave. and Woodland Road, for over 20 years, the old part of Our Savior's Lutheran Church is being torn down.

Church members voted during a Sunday service on what to do with the old part, and by a 2/3 majority the congregation decided to have it torn down.

The basement part of the old church dates back to 1948. In September of that year, the congregation moved into the basement after having held church services in a little school house. Through the help of the congregation, the pastors, and a paid worker the church was completed in 1952.

In the August 17, 1972 issue of the Circulating Pines, Eleanor Frischmon recalled a historic occasion for the church. In September, 1948, when the congregation moved into the basement, "...Harold Neu was doing carpenter work in the kitchen. When Pastor Tungseth began the service Harold came in the church wearing his carpenter's apron, laid

his hammer down and sat down to worship with the congregation."

There are diverse opinions now in the congregation as the old church is taken down. Eleanor Frischmon said she realizes it can't be kept forever, and it is not a practical unit. The new unit is more beautiful architecturally, she said. The old unit was also an expense.

She mentioned that when the building permit was taken out for the new unit, the church members decided the old unit would be torn down and the space used for parking. Blaine requires a certain amount of offstreet parking. Until now, nothing had been done.

"We've got to make way for the new," she continued.

Another member of the congregation in favor of the move is Ronald Prazek, a band instructor at the Junior High. Prazek's family have attended Our Savior's for the past 15 years.

Providing offstreet parking, thus keeping their previous com-

mitments was one of his reasons for favoring the tearing down of the building. He also said the cost of maintenance did not warrant keeping the building in use. He said it was not being used effectively and was slowly deteriorating.

To renovate the building would have taken more money than the congregation may have wanted to spend, he continued. The cost would be high, and the contractors did not give an exact estimate. The inside gets worse all the time, he said.

Mr. and Mrs. John Gulbranson, both charter members of the church, were not in favor of tearing it down. Mrs. Gulbranson said they had both put many hours of work into building the church. The ladies of the church did much of the inside finishing and varnishing. She said they saw things differently than many of the younger members.

Ed Bloomstrand, although not a church member, said, "The congregation did a disservice to the community." He referred to

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the decision to tear down the building.

As head of Community Action in the area, Bloomstrand felt the building could be put to use in the community. He said the youth had nothing to do and no place to go, and this was a building that could be put to use.

Mrs. Ida Berg, Lexington, says she doesn't like the tearing down of the old church at all. "I and my children helped build that church."

Mrs. Berg would have preferred to see a new face put on the old building. It would have been a good youth center. "I don't believe in tearing down God's House."

Some of the material which is being taken from the structure has been sold to area residents. One resident apparently has some of the bricks to remind him of the old building.

Material which is not sold will either be salvaged, used for landfill, or burned.

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