

North New Hope Lutheran Church dates its roots to the Norwegian pioneer settlers of the New Hope Township (1856) who, despite being welcomed into the already established church community in Scandinavia, soon wanted to start a church of their own, one more accessible in distance by ox travel and the poor roads of the day. The congregation organized and incorporated in 1857, worshipping in members' homes at first. The early congregation grew through Norwegian immigration and family increase, so that by 1880 the membership was approximately 1200 souls. Served by temporary area pastors for several years, New Hope's first resident pastor was N. B. Berge in 1870, and a parsonage was built for him. The first church building at New Hope had been constructed in 1864 on the site of the present New Hope cemetery, a white wooden structure. It was subsequently moved to its present location in 1901, with the former site as its cemetery.



### **HISTORY OF THE NORTH NEW HOPE CONGREGATION**

The New Hope congregation had an early history of surviving active synodical dialogue and doctrinal controversy, resulting in the establishment of several smaller area church congregations of like mind in the area. In 1888 the New Hope congregation itself split into two groups over church doctrine; the larger group retained the building and became known as the North New Hope congregation.

In 1924, the church building was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. The present brick structure went up in 1925. Norwegian services gradually gave way to English; the final Norwegian service was conducted in 1970. In the 1960's the North New Hope congregation and the Faith congregation (formerly Rosholt-Alban-Galloway) became a two-point parish. This arrangement continues to the present. In another fire, the church's parsonage was destroyed in 1945 and was never rebuilt on the church land. New Hope's property bordering Sunset Lake has been leased to the Portage County Park Commission since 1965; other tracts are now used by the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station.

New Hope Lutheran Church has faithfully served its people through the years with active organizations: men's and women's groups, Sunday school, children's and young people's groups, confirmation instruction; and the administration of sacraments. Its present membership includes descendants of the original pioneer families as well as people from the new families in the area. During this decade the church looks forward to celebrating 150 years of existence. To God be the Glory!