

March 1, 2012

Nis Nielsen Family and other Danish Church Folks,

As some of you know Phyllis (Kloster) Krumrey made one more attempt to find the old Danish Lutheran church records last summer, and lo, and behold, they appeared in the archives of Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque over Christmas!!! A staffer remembered seeing them as things were getting moved around. Halleulujah!! We had searched for them for so long! It was truly a Christmas miracle!! Thank you, Phyllis!

There are four books in the archives. In the (attached) picture with Dean, they are from left to right:

- 1. The 1838-1964 Pastoral Acts: baptisms-burials-marriages, confirmations, communion, etc.**
- 2. The 1898-1938 Pastoral Acts: baptisms-burials-marriages, confirmations, communion, etc.**
- 3. A small Young People's Society secretary's book for only four years: 1926-1932**
- 4. The complete church secretary's book (1898-1964) of the annual congregational meetings and semi-annual council meetings.**

Dean and I traveled to Dubuque in January. Dean took photographs of every page of all four books (400-500 photos). I have typed up each page and put the information in either a Word document or an Excel spreadsheet so it will be available to anyone wanting information.

Of course, the first 50 pages of the church secretary's book were in the Danish language! Our good friend, John Michaelsen in Denmark offered to translate. "Send them over," he said. I sent all 50 photos to John for translation. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude! I don't see how we can ever repay him. If you have forgotten, his Michaelsen family married into our Kloster family. John has also spent much time researching the Danish censuses and church records for information on the early members of the church.

There are still some missing church books, however. We know there was a treasurer's book for the congregation. It would be very nice to have it in the archives. We also assume the Dorcas Ladies Aid had a secretary's and treasurer's books. In the early years the ladies' organization was called the "Fra Kvinde Foreningen". There might be other secretary's and treasurer's books from the Young People's Society and also the Luther League. There are probably records for the Sunday School and there may be pastors' annual reports too. Please keep your eyes peeled for these books, but we are very thankful for what we have now.

Computer Files for You

Below is a list of computer files that have been transcribed from the old church books so you can have the information. There is a natural break in the year 1938 when the church was renamed Gethsemane Lutheran.

1. **Baptisms 1898-1938 (old book).** Excel spreadsheet. Includes baby's name, birth date, baptism date, parents and sponsors.
2. **Baptisms 1938-1964 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes year, name of parents, name of baby, birth date, baptism date and sponsors.
3. **Burials 1898-1938 (old book)** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes year, name of deceased, death date, burial date, age, death place, birth place, sometimes the cemetery.
4. **Burials 1938-1964 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes name of deceased, date of birth, date of death, date of burial, cause of death, text of sermon (not all) and mourners (not all).
5. **Communion 1898-1938 (old book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes a list of individual communicants on each Communion Sunday, except years 1915-1925 and 1926-1935 when only the date and number of communicants is listed.
6. **Communion 1938-1948 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Individual names are listed and an "x" is made on the Sundays when they took communion.
7. **Communion 1940-1948 (new book).** These are additional new member names added to File # 6.
8. **Communion 1948-1953 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Individual names with "x"s on the days they took communion.
9. **Communion 1956-1958 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Individual names with "x"s on the days when they took communion.
10. **Confirmations 1898-1938 (old book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes year, date, name of confirmand, birth year, parents, birth places.
11. **Confirmations 1938-1964 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes year, name of confirmand, date and place of birth, date of confirmation, confirmation Bible verse, place of baptism, remarks.
12. **Marriages 1898-1938 (old book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes year, wedding date, church member whether bride or groom, age, birth place, witness; their bride/groom, age, birthplace, witness, wedding place.
13. **Marriages 1938-1964 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes year, name and residence of groom, age, name and residence of bride, age, date of marriage, witnesses.
14. **Membership 1898-1937 (old book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Includes name, birth date, birth place, confirmed, family head, Right to vote, date joined congregation. Not all are listed, I don't think, especially in the 1920's and 1930's. All of the membership lists are like "snap-shots in time".
15. **Departures 1899-1902 (old book).** Small Excel file on four families who transferred in those 3 years.

- 16. Transfers 1898-1927 (old book).** Small Excel file. Sketchy on dates and places.
- 17. Membership 1938 (old book).** Excel Spreadsheet. (This 1938 list was written in the old book) Includes name and an “x” if confirmed.
- 18. Membership 1938 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. This 1938 list was written in the new book. Besides Nis Nielsen family members, list includes Andrew Juhl, Bert Nielsen family, Albert Seglem family, Herman Miller family, Paul Petersen, Emil Johnson family, S. L. Jordahl couple.
- 19. Membership 1948 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Besides Nis Nielsen family, included Sam Lund, Donald Lund family, Herman Miller family, Ray Bogh family, Farley Petersen, Paul Petersen, Emil Johnson family, S. L. Jordahl’s, Maurice, Peggy, Pam & Brian Boever, Craig, Donna, Mark & Cynthia Shadlaw,
- 20. Membership 1957 (new book).** Excel Spreadsheet. Besides Nis Nielsen family, includes Ray Bogh family, Emil Johnson family, S. L. Jordahls, Sam Lund and Donald Lund family, Herman Miller family.
- 21. List of officers from 1938 (new book)** (and also a small list for 1958). Excel Spreadsheet.
- 22. Record of Church Services 1898-1914.** These are still in Danish, but appear to give dates & sermon texts for each Sunday. They did not have church every Sunday in the early years. Includes a short description of church dedication and installation of Pastor Dasmkov. For the first sixteen years only. There are 19 photos to transcribe if anyone wants to give it a try.
- 23. Young People’s Society Minutes 1926-1932.** Word Document. Includes bylaws, membership list and secretary’s minutes. Secretaries included Erma Anderson, Mrs. Niels Mortensen and Andrew Juhl. Besides Nis Nielsen family members, 1926 membership included Raymond Bogh, Alfred Juhl, Robert Lundgren, Anderson girls. Dagmar Soe.
- 24. Complete Church Secretary’s Minutes Book 1898-1964.** Word Document. Includes about 320 pages of annual congregational meetings and semi-annual church council meetings (about 50 pages were in Danish). Some minutes of later years were written on separate sheets of paper instead of in the book itself, but they are also included. The majority of the minutes have to do with the election of officers – a little disappointing that there wasn’t a lot of “newsy” stuff. Secretaries included Walter Kloster, Herman Laurits Jensen, Hans C. Andersen, Jens A. Kloster, Herbert L. Larson, Niels A. Kloster, Axel Petersen, Elmer Nielsen, Herman Miller, Norman Kloster, Roy L. Bouma, Bill R. Bogh.
- 25. Dorcas Ladies Aid Cookbook from 1951.** Word Document. This cookbook is not from the archives, but was reprinted a few years ago from a cookbook that someone had (about 50 pages). It includes a list of Dorcas Aid members in 1951.
- 26. Articles of Incorporation (1898) and Amendments (1938).** Word Document. Three pages including signers’ names of the Articles of Incorporation (J.P. Larsen, C. P. Kloster, N. J. Hendrickson, H.W. Hansen and N. Nielsen) and the signers of the Amendments of 1938 (Niels A. Mortensen, Nis N. Mortensen, Hans Miller, B. A Nielsen, J. A. Kloster and Alfred Lassen). Typed up by Rev. Calvin Rossman in 1964.

27. Le Mars Newspaper Articles about the Danish church from 1878-1941. Word Document. Not from the archives. This is a 36-page collection of a variety of newspaper articles (in chronological order from the 1800's) that were in the Le Mars newspapers concerning School # 6, the "Dickinson School" (where the Danish church met before the church was built in 1898) and the articles about the Danish Lutheran Church until it was moved to Oyens. It's not meant to be inclusive. If you have other articles, I will add them. It's a work-in-progress.

28. The Golden Jubilee Booklet. The archives had a copy. I have not typed this up into a computer file, but it should get done. It was the 50th Anniversary of the Church.

29. Dean's Photos of Original Church Book Pages. We can email you any of the 400-500 photos that Dean took while in Dubuque. It will help to know the book, person's name, event, date, and file number above.

How Can We Help You?

A. Email. I can email any or all of the above files and photos to you. Please specify the ones you want. I am using Microsoft Office 2010. If you can't seem to open the Excel or Word files, don't hesitate to say so. You might have a previous version of Office. We can try a pdf or something else.

B. Research Questions. If you have questions about your ancestors, let me know and I'll try to do a little research for you.

C. Viewing Hard Copies. I have all the above files printed and put into 3-ring binders and will bring to the Nis Nielsen Reunion this year (2nd Sunday in July at Beck Park, Remsen).

D. No Snail Mail. Sorry, but I can't print and send files and photos by regular mail. Too costly. The old yellow color in the photos of the church book pages really uses up the ink cartridges.

How Can You Help Us?

We are compiling a book on the Danish church for history's sake. We need the following:

A. Biographies of Early Families

B. Biographies of all Pastors

C. *** Memories of the Church. So important! Your memories are something I can't research.

D. Photos of the Church. Hand-drawn sketches of the inside/basement of the church.

D. General information on Danish religious heritage.

E. Pictures of the Dickinson school house #6.

F. Information and photos on moving the church to Oyens in the last week of July 1941.

G. Pre-1898 Events. There were many religious events that occurred BEFORE the congregation was officially organized in 1898. For example, Dean's grandma, Herlig (Kloster) Petersen, was born to Thorvald and Anna Sophie Kloster in 1892. Where was she baptized and by whom? We'd like to include a chapter in the book on these pre-1898 events. Can you list all the events that would have occurred in your ancestor's family between the date of immigration and 1898?

This gets to be a brain-teaser. In the case of the Nis Nielsen family, we know that the oldest daughter, Maren (later Mortensen), was confirmed in Skrydstrup, Denmark, in 1880. The family came to America in 1883. Where and when were the other 3 daughters confirmed?

We know from an obituary, that Thorvald and Anna Sophia were married in 1890 at the home of Ralph Swanson on Hwy 5 west of Oyens. We don't know who performed the ceremony. Where were other couples married?

Church Members who Emigrated to the USA from Denmark:

1. Andrew Kloster - 1883 (lived in New York for 3 years)
Marie (Raven) Kloster - abt. 1873
2. Thorvald Kloster - 1886
Anna Sophia (Nielsen) Kloster - 1883
3. Walter Kloster - 1887; Wife, Tina Johnson, was born in USA
4. Chris Kloster - 1890
Christine (Nielsen) Kloster - 1883
5. Jacob Bergholt - 1890
Annie (Johnson) Bergholt, born in USA
6. Iver Nissen Johnson - 1865 (first living in Ohio and Clinton Co., Iowa) *Not sure he was a member.
Anna Sophie (Lund) Johnson (sister to Herlig Jespersen Lund) - abt. 1867
7. Nis Nielsen - 1883
Herlig Jespersen (Lund) Nielsen - 1883
8. H. P. Mortensen - 1882
Maren (Nielsen) Mortensen - 1883
Chris Mortensen (brother to H.P.) - ?
9. J. P. Larson - 1884
Engeborg (Nielsen) Larson - 1883
10. Andrew Juhl - 1873 (lived in Clinton. Co., Iowa, for two years)
Maria Christina (Kaalund) Juhl - ?
11. H. C. Anderson - 1894
Lena (Miller) Anderson - born in Marion Twp., Plymouth, Iowa in 1875
12. Nelson & Kristinen Miller (parents of Lena Miller Anderson) - bet. 1866-1872 (lived in Wisconsin for several years)
13. Niels Hendricksen - ?
Kristine (Miller) Hendricksen - ?
14. Hans W. Hansen (church builder) - ?
Maria (?) Hansen - ?
15. Mathias Sorensen (first church president) - ?
Kirstine (?) Sorensen - ?
16. Jens/James Anderson (brother to H. C. Anderson) - ?

- Hilma (Swenson) Anderson - wife, born in South Dakota
17. Soren Husum Lasson - ?
 18. Joergen Juhl - ?
 - Maren (Bredall) Juhl - ?
 19. Eskild Haahr - ?
 - Anna Maria (?) Haahr - ?
 20. Aksel Petersen - 1906
 - Herlig (Kloster) Petersen – born in Fredonia Twp.
 21. Greggers Friis – ?
 - Martha (Johnson) Friis – born in Clinton, Co, Iowa (daughter of Iver Nissen Johnson)
 22. John Anderson - 1904
 - Anna Marie (Anderson) Anderson) - 1904 (half-sister to H. C. Anderson)
 23. Bonde Nielsen - 1911 ?
 - Tine (Kloster) Nillesen – born in Fredonia
 24. Jens Kloster – born in Fredonia
 - Thora Marie (Nielsen) Kloster (sister to Bonde Nielsen) - 1906
 25. Carl Miller - ? Did Carl belong to Marcus?
 - Tina (Kloster Miller) – born in Fredonia
 26. Ole Andersen - ? Did Ole belong to Le Mars?
 - Charlotte (Kloster) Andersen – born in Fredonia
 27. Hans Miller - ?
 - Christine (Kloster) Miller – born in Fredonia
 28. John Nielsen - ?
 - Herlig (Kloster) Nielsen – born in Fredonia
 29. Carl Marquard – ? Did he belong to Marcus?
 - Boline (Mortensen) Marquard – born in Fredonia
 30. Henry Husted - ?
 31. Niels Sorensen - ?
 32. Axel Jensen - ?
 33. Hans Pedersen - ?
 34. Trine Thornson - ?

This is just a start. There are more. Let me know if you have some immigration dates for your families. Boy, if I could just go back in time to those 20 years before the church was built!!! (with my laptop, of course). Please check your resources (Family Bible's, newspaper articles, marriage & baptism certificates, etc.) and see if we can't patch together some pre-1898 Fredonia history.

G. Remsen Cemetery. I am also documenting the Remsen City Cemetery. My books will include gravestone photos, lot/plot maps, obituaries, lot sales & owners, veteran info, and more for all 1650 gravestones. Many Danes are buried there. Any help with obits would be greatly appreciated. See if your obits are already listed by looking in the cemetery section on:

<http://www.iagenweb.org/plymouth/>

*****Deadline for submissions to the book is the Nis Nielsen Reunion 2012*****

Little Tidbits we learned.....

1. For quite a while, I've known there was a Chris Mortensen living in Oyens in 1897 because he was the only Mortensen listed in a small 1897 Plymouth County Directory that I have. His occupation was listed as "buttermaker". He was also a charter member of the church, but I couldn't find a link with the main Mortensen family. I assumed he was not related, BUT, then, John Michaelsen looked up some church & census records in Denmark and he found out that Chris was a younger brother to H. P. Mortensen. The other siblings were Boline, Hanne Marie, Niels Peder, Niels Peder, Karen Marie, Niels Peter and Lars. The first two Niels Peder's died young. Chris's actual name was Jens Christian Mortensen.

2. Newspaper Article. "VANDALS AT WORK. Thieves Purloin Valuable Altar Cloth From Danish Church. Thieves entered the Danish Lutheran church northeast of Oyens several days ago and stole an altar cloth. The cloth taken is all hand embroidery with a cross and lily design and is valuable. The theft was not discovered until last Sunday. The church doors have never been locked on the theory that no one would steal anything in a church building." – Le Mars Semi-Weekly Sentinel, July 10, 1931, page 1.

3. Newspaper Article. "Andrew Kloster was in Le Mars on Saturday securing subscriptions to aid in the building of a Danish Lutheran church in Fredonia township and during the brief time he was here he met with ready responses from the business men. The society has about \$500 on hand and expect to put up a building to cost about \$800. The work will commence as soon as they have \$600 and the balance will be raised later. They propose to build the new church a little south of the centre of the township." – Le Mars Globe, March 23, 1898, page 4.

Med venlig hilsen,

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Sharing with Others. We would like to make these church records available to all descendants of the Danish church members. If you can help us out with contact information, we thank you.

Name _____ Email _____

Street Address _____ Town _____ State _____

Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Name _____ Email _____

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Phone _____ Cell Phone _____