

History of Parkston Congregational Church

Many of this region's settlers arrived in Dakota Territory needing an organization for spiritual growth and fellowship. And the first organizing meeting of the General Conference of German Congregational Churches was held in Crete NE in 1883.

*The first church organized in the Parkston Parish -- **Hoffnungsburg Church** with Rev. E. Jose. -- met in the Gottlieb Winter home on June 29, 1884. Services were held there until 1890 when the first sanctuary was built. The congregation voted to disband on Nov. 18, 1946, and most members joined the Pilgrim Church of Tripp and the Salem Church of Parkston.*

***Friedensfeld Congregational Church** was organized on Aug. 6, 1884, at the Henry Mogck, Sr. home, with Rev. E. Jose. Eleven members were present. The first church built in 1889 was destroyed by a storm in 1901. The congregation rebuilt and dedicated their new church that same year. Members met on June 4, 1946, and then voted to disband on Nov. 17, 1946. Many joined the Salem Church of Parkston and the Pilgrim Church of Tripp.*

***Zion Congregational Church** was organized in the Gottlieb Tiede home on Aug. 31, 1884, with Rev. Emanuel Jose. At the same time another group organized three miles north in the Christian Fischer home. That group decided to become part of the Zion Church and joined in 1885. The first church was built in 1885. However, on June 7, 1928, lightning struck the steeple. The congregation voted to rebuild and dedicated the new church on Dec. 28, 1928. The congregation continued its work until Dec. 20, 1947, when it disbanded. Each of the three country churches sold their properties and gave proceeds to the Pilgrim Church of Tripp and the Salem Church of Parkston.*

***Pilgrim Congregational Church** was organized at the Solomon Brost home on Sept. 7, 1943 with 18 families represented. In 1963, the congregation voted to join the United Church of Christ and changed its name to **Pilgrim United Church of Christ**. The church remained with the Parkston Parish until 1970 when it was proposed to close the Tripp church and be a one-church parish. Since the Tripp members did not accept the agreement, it was terminated on April 30, and in May they became a yoke parish with Bethany United Church of Delmont.*

***Salem Congregational Church** was organized in 1892 in the Christian Winter, Sr. home, with Rev. G. Scheurle. Through 1946, the four churches of the Parkston Parish had one minister serving them.*

During the pastorate of Rev. Rueben Koehler the three country churches disbanded, creating an increase in membership of Salem Church, and a building fund was established in 1946. Ground-breaking was held on April 2, 1950, with the cornerstone laid June 18, 1950. The building was dedicated on June 3, 1951, with a total cost of \$86,152.

*In 1963 the congregation changed the name from Salem Congregational Church to **Salem United Church of Christ**. In the following years, improvements included a chapel, office and a*

large fellowship hall with library and kitchen. The basement was also remodeled into solid-wall Sunday School rooms.

*After some discussion that the beliefs of the UCC Conference and national UCC were no longer in line with the local church, it was voted in 2018 to terminate affiliation with the UCC. Following a Church Council recommendation, membership voted on April 29, 2018, to join the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference. By verbal vote, members agreed to change the name of the church to **Parkston Congregational Church**.*

Since 1882, 29 pastors have served Parkston Congregational Church, with Rev. Dan Davey accepting the call to PCC in 2022, following Rev. Wayne Uppendahl, who served as interim pastor for 2 ½ years. May we continue to work and serve together with love, faith and praise to Our Lord for guiding us on our spiritual journey.