

**St. Martin's Centennial** by Steve Mariano  
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2008 is our congregation's 100<sup>th</sup> year of existence. Organized on April 7, 1908, in the Wallula Christian Church building (located in 1908 on the south side of Polfer Road, in Wyandotte County, about 1 mile East of our current location), our church has been built three times, moved once, had 16 called ordained ministers and 2 Lay-ministers as Pastors, and averaged 98 baptized members every year since its organization. I thought as an introduction to our centennial year it would be interesting to compare the church in 1908 with that of today. Hope you enjoy.



**1908**

Church Address – Usher, Kansas  
96 baptized members  
All church records written in German  
English language services twice a month  
Annual Church Income<sup>1</sup> \$208.08  
Church was in debt \$500  
Offerings taken 3-4 times a year  
Kerosene lanterns for light  
20 pews in the church  
Hot weather? Open windows  
Pastors salary \$3.85/week  
Value of church property - \$3,000  
Church, parsonage, barn insurance - \$49/year  
Coal burning stove for heat  
Outside pump for water  
3 stall barn for Pastors horse & milk cow  
1 hole outhouse  
No basement, narthex, office space  
Church did not own the land it was on.<sup>3</sup>  
Church property is fenced to keep grazing cattle out  
4 room parsonage - 670 square feet  
Elders & Treasurer only elected lay-members  
Elders served as Trustees  
Only men over 21 could be voting members  
Church secretary was the Pastor<sup>4</sup>  
Women & men sat on separate sides of the church  
Communion conducted twice a year  
Pulpit - raised above and behind Alter  
The idea of Sunday School was non-existent  
Cost for a German or English Hymnal - \$0.35  
Sunday Worship services began 10:00 a.m.  
No one came to church in a car

**2008**

Church Address – Basehor, Kansas  
97 baptized members in the register  
All church records written in English  
English language services all the time  
Annual Church income over \$30,000  
Church has no debt  
Offerings taken weekly  
Electric lighting  
20 pews in the church  
Hot weather? Turn on the AC and ceiling fans  
Pastors salary approx. \$650.00/week<sup>2</sup>  
Value of church property - about \$300,000  
Church, parsonage insurance approx. \$2,500/ year  
Two gas furnaces for heat  
Indoor plumbing with hot and cold water  
Asphalt parking/drive for car; milk comes from store  
3 commodes and 2 urinals in 3 indoor restrooms  
Have all plus kitchen, restrooms, storage areas  
Church does not own the land it is on  
Church property is fenced to keep grazing cattle out  
9 room parsonage - 1,960 square feet  
Elders & an elected council of 9 lay-members  
Elders serve as Trustees.  
Men & women over 18 are voting members  
Church secretary is elected  
Women and men sit together  
Communion conducted 2-3 times a month  
Pulpit - in front and to the side of the Alter  
Sunday School is customary  
Cost for a Hymnal - \$20.00  
Sunday Worship services begin at 10:00 a.m.  
No one comes to church riding a horse

Notes:

1. The first full year of accounting was 1 Sep 08 to 31 Aug 09.
2. Salary and housing allowance only. Does not include insurance & retirement compensation.
3. Land was finally purchased in the early 1950's.
4. The Pastors knew how to write German, very few members could.