

OUR HISTORY AT ST. STEPHEN'S

By Nevin Yeakel, St. Stephen's Archivist

Confirmation

It was interesting to note that since 1897 St. Stephen's has confirmed 1,344 individuals. I also found that it wasn't until 1931, when the church purchased white confirmation robes, that our tradition of confirmation class photos occur.



Our oldest confirmation photo dates to the Class of 1917 and, up until 1930, the class photos were taken in the photographer's studio. Very formal young men in their new suits and young ladies in long white dresses, and some even had large white bows in their hair.

But, with the introduction of the white robes, all class photos have been taken in the church. The photos were in black & white until 1967, after which they were taken in color.

The largest confirmation class at St. Stephen's was shared by two classes. The Class of 1934 and the Class of 1970 each had 25 students.

The confirmation classes were basically a two year program with some variations over the years. Lutheran study material was "Luther's Small Catechism", and taught the same in 1897 as it is today.

Until recent years, confirmation was always held on Palm Sunday and then on Easter we took our First Communion. It was 1943 when I had my First Communion. During that period of time most Lutherans used the common cup.

Over the years, and until recently, confirmation classes gave monetary gifts to the church. But some presented material gifts, such as the Class of 1905 presented a bible to St. Stephen's Church.

I know today's confirmation is held on Pentecost Sunday. I guess it doesn't matter on what Sunday confirmation is held, but I do believe being confirmed does matter.