

Celebration Moment #3 German Connections

In 1911, Herr Pastor Hayden and Frau Pastor Haas would have greeted you with the words Guten Morgen, und Wilkommen zu Deutches Evangelische Friedens Kirche. And you would be singing Lobet den Herren from this little Gesangbuch. It is hard to imagine that at first, all of the services were conducted in the German Language.

Many of the charter members of Friedens immigrated from Germany to Indianapolis in the late 1800's. Almost a third had come from the same area in and around the little town of Wehdem, in northern Germany, and many of those families were related.

Shortly after the founding of Friedens, approximately 25 additional young men and women from the Wehdem area immigrated to America. Some of them established small truck farms around the area of Madison and Southern Avenues, near where Manual High school is located, and most joined Friedens. This resulted in a strong feeling of family in the church, since so many were actually related to each other.

This feeling of belonging to a loving and caring family continues today as the church has adopted so many into this wonderful family of God's people we call Friedens United Church of Christ.

Currently we have about 650 members in our congregation, and we have approximately half that many families. Surprisingly, about 1/3 of the families in our present congregation still are related to each other in some way. Now with the marriage of Adam Hayden and Whitney Roehling, even Pastor Marc and his family are now related to one of those original German families.