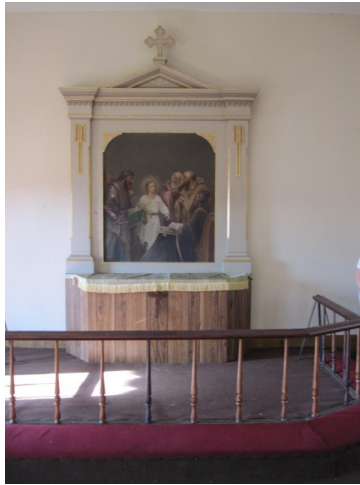


Across Oceans, Across Time® ...
Stories from the Family History & Genealogy Center



The heritage of many Danish Americans includes the many small churches, particularly in the Midwestern states and those of the Upper Plains, where their immigrant ancestors founded congregations and succeeding generations gathered to worship. In many instances, as congregations dwindled or members moved away, these churches merged with others nearby, retaining their 'Danishness' to a greater or lesser degree; others grew smaller to the point that they could no longer support a minister and eventually closed down. The original buildings often remain on their original site, unused, a silent sentinel of bygone history. In such cases they, and sometimes their adjacent cemeteries, regrettably become targets for vandalism. Such is the lamentable fate of the Ingemann Danish Lutheran Church nestled in the picturesque Loess Hills near Moorhead, Iowa. Founded in 1884 and listed on state and local tourist brochures as a "must see" attraction, visitors to the church as late as this past summer might get a sense of the no-frills environment in which local Danish Americans worshiped: solid oak pews, pulpit and communion rails, the altar painting added by a pastor in 1916, and a simple painted baptismal font. Less than two months later vandals had struck: the top of the baptismal font was gone, having been forcibly wrenched from its base, and several panes in the tower rose window facing the adjacent country road had been shot out, leaving the weathered structure even more open to the elements. - Genealogists and others interested in their heritage often make pilgrimages to the places their ancestors lived. Not all structures such as churches and Danish Brotherhood halls can, or should be, preserved, but if they still exist perhaps they are worth an effort to be preserved and protected. What is the state of the historic Danish church or community center near you?

The Danish Immigrant Museum

Your Museum in the Heart of the Continent
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