



Vistula Church

1875 Historic Building offered for sale

Sunday, December 5, 2010: A decision reached

Built in 1875

Vistula Christian Church, located north on CR 35 off State Road 120 East is in the tiny unincorporated town of Vistula, Indiana in York Township.

Farm Village

Laid out in 1865, the village was originally called Middlebury Station, and was a depot and shipping point for the town of Middlebury. But when a post office was established in 1865, it was renamed Vistula after the old Vistula Highway/Trail, which became State Road 120. The church was built 10 years later.

Centennial Church

Named to this honor in 2007 by the Elkhart County Agricultural Society, it was evident that as the congregation of the church aged, fewer and fewer members could get to the services on a regular basis. Pastor Paul Koepke (since 1996) was quoted as saying that if 15 people were able to arrive for Sunday worship, it was a good Sunday. However, he and his wife Judith found this ministry to be a very meaningful experience as they helped to keep the church active.





Saturday, May 15, 2010 - Raising maintenance funds

Sale of treasured items

By May of 2010, the members decided to hold a BBQ Chicken, bake and yard sale at the church to help with maintenance costs. Not a wealthy community, long-time members who were grateful for what the church had meant to them, left their possessions such as a set of Tischenreuth (Bavarian) china, an antique love seat and a mission style rocker to the Church.

Close-knit group

Through the years, a well-equipped lower level kitchen and dining room were the scene of many breakfast, lunch or dinner events that brought together members and served as a way to invite the community into their congregation. Their yearly holiday craft and baking shows attracted many shoppers, and since Vistula cooks are considered among the best in the world (says Pastor Paul), they published and sold their "Tastes of the Country Cookbook," in 2001.



December 17, 2010 - Listed for Sale

Now on the market

By December, the decision was made to list the church building including everything from choir robes, kitchen supplies, organ, piano, and pews, all ready to begin services.

Seeking a new congregation

The members are hopeful that a new and perhaps considerably younger group will want to start or move their own congregation here. They pray that the property remain a church.



Memorable events from the past 10 years

2001

Long-time member Agnes Blakesly welcomed three of her sisters back to the neighborhood where they lived as children. Pearl Boling, Huldah Burk and Berniece Exposito.



2002

Marian Kline and her Aunt Blanche Kline proudly display the cookbook they helped to produce. It consisted of over 300 recipes from 75 individuals. Blanche, at 93 in this photo, was a member of the church since the age of seven.



2003

Vistula's famed cooks served breakfasts and lunches during their yearly Holiday craft and bake sales in their well-equipped kitchen and dining room.



2006

The Detwilers, a long-time farm family in the Bristol area, with a large extended family, filled the church at the 2006 wedding of their daughter Diana Detwiler to Troy Patten. Pastor Paul Koepke provided the pre-marriage counseling for the couple.