Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church Papers
[c. 1900-1970]

Descriptive Summary:

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Information on Use:

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**Biographical Note:**
The congregation first met in January 1904 and was known as the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Bethany Church. A place of worship was found and services began in August 1904 at the German Evangelical Church on Michigan Avenue near Main Street. With the congregation growing, they purchased a lot in 1906 and built a church of their own at Ferry Avenue and Twenty-Seventh Street. A part-time pastor served the congregation until June 1929 when Reverend Joshua E. Nelson accepted the position as full-time pastor. With no room physically to expand the church at the present location, the congregation bought a larger piece of property at Hyde Park Blvd. at Porter Road. The church was “physically” moved to this new location in July 1941.

Then, in 1948, the church changed its name to Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church. As the congregation grew in new members, the original church was becoming too small. In the fall of 1957, construction began on a larger church. Designed by local architect Charles F. Obenback, the new church was ready for its first service on November 8, 1959. After a period of sharing a pastor with Zion Lutheran Church located on Michigan Avenue, Bethany Lutheran closed and merged with Zion Lutheran in 1984. The church location of Bethany Lutheran on Hyde Park is now occupied by Word of Life Ministries.

**Scope and Contents:**
Files contain a variety of materials. Please ask an archivist for assistance.

**Inventory:**

Ledgers
- Church Register – Early 1900’s
- Church Directory – 1973
- Book of Remembrance
- Holy Communion Record 1969-1979
- Trustee Minutes 1930-1960
- Ledger of Minutes – 1906-1918