Elim Lutheran Church Research

From the *Calumet Index*, Monday, June 20, 1949: "It takes foresight and resourcefulness to undertake the project of organizing and building a church. On December 2, 1885, 135 persons of the Lutheran faith met in Room 53 of the Arcade Building in Pullman and organized the Elim Evangelical Lutheran church. They adopted the Constitute for Congregations of the Augustana Lutheran church of America.

“The following year George M. Pullman donated two lots on which to build the church. The congregation planned the whole project and it took two unhurried years to complete the building at Calumet Avenue on the north side of 113th street.

“In 1904 the church building was moved to its present location, 113th and Forest, in order that Palmer Park might be constructed.

“The church was completely remodeled on the outside transforming it from a wood structure to one of brick and stone in 1935.”

A BRIEF ELIM HISTORY

On December 2, 1885, 135 persons of the Lutheran faith met in Room 53 of the Arcade Building in Pullman and organized the Svenska Evangelisk Lutherska Elims Församlingen. They adopted the Constitute for Congregations of the Augustana Lutheran Church of America. Incorporated on March 17, 1886, the congregation received a gift in 1887 of two lots at 113th and Calumet Avenue from George M. Pullman. The church building was designed by Solon S. Beman in the style of a Swiss mountain church. The cornerstone was laid in June 1888 and the first service was held in December 1888.

Around 1900, branches of the Elim Sunday School were established in West Pullman and North Pullman under Rev. Tengwald. In 1904, the church building was moved to its present location at 113th and Forest Avenue because the Chicago Park Commissioners wanted to create Palmer Park using forty-two acres which included the two church lots. In 1918, the church began conducting services in English and Swedish and continued with services in both languages until about 1935. In 1931, the name of the congregation was changed to Evangelical Lutheran Elim Church. The church building was completely remodeled on the outside in 1935, changing it from the original wooden structure to one of brick and stone. At that time, an organ and electric lighting were also installed.
The Elim Church building has been moved to its present location.

The Svenska Evangelisk Lutherska Elims Församlingen marriage records were extracted from a microfilm of Swedish-American church records in the United States filmed by the Emigrant Institute of Vaxjo, Sweden in 1969. For further information on this microfilm or other Swedish-American church records in the project, contact the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Archives, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631.

In 1972, Elim consolidated with People’s Lutheran Church to form Reformation Lutheran Church. This congregation is located in the Elim Lutheran Church building at 113th and Forest Avenue.