

# Meyer Family



The Meyer name has more than one source by which it came to this area. William Herman Marcus Meyer was born October 5, 1868 in Fairfield, Illinois. He was the third child of Heinrich and Maria nee Dammas Meyer, immigrant farmers from the Kingdom of Hanover. When young Herman, as he was called, was two years old, his father was killed in a farm accident.

Two years later, his mother married Henry Kuhlman. That marriage was blessed with two daughters, Dorothea and Sophia. Dorothea would later marry teacher Herman Friedrich Bunjes. They came to Frankenmuth in 1912.

Herman Meyer worked as a farm laborer until the age of 19, when he had saved enough money to enroll at the Lutheran Teachers Seminary in Addison, Illinois. Graduating in 1893, he accepted a call to the Lutheran School for the Deaf in Detroit.

The house parents at that school were Johann and Wilhelmine nee Wesch Ketel, who had come to America from the Duchy of Mecklenburg. On November 7, 1894 Herman married their daughter, Elisabeth. They were blessed with four sons and six daughters: Herbert, Valinda Maves, Alma Fischer, Elsie Geyer, Herman, Harold, Walter, Emma Kolch Chase, Esther Fischer and Ruth Hoerauf.

As the congregation of St. Lorenz and the community of Frankenmuth grew, their commitment to Christian education remained strong. The ever increasing circle of farms in those pre-automotive years required the establishment of several one room district schools.

Although the districts were technically unified under church sponsorship, each had its own school board, established its own salary schedule and called its own teacher.

It was the rule, rather than the exception, in those early schools, to maintain discipline by the free exercise of corporal punishment.

In 1910, a teaching vacancy occurred in the northwest district on King Road. The board decided that the new teacher should be dedicated to a more patient method of instruction. Considering the patience required in the teaching of hearing impaired students, they extended a call to a member of the faculty of Detroit's Lutheran School for the Deaf.

After teaching in Detroit for 17 years, Herman Meyer accepted the call to teach in the northwest district of St. Lorenz. Arriving in Saginaw's Potter Street Depot in the late summer of 1910, the family was met by Pastor Meyer and Pastor Voss and conveyed by horse and buggy to Frankenmuth, where they were provided a snack of cheese and crackers at Gugel's store.

Teacher Meyer would go on to serve St. Lorenz for the next 33 years. He particularly enjoyed sharing Bible stories with his first graders. He also sponsored several youth groups, handled the purchasing of books for the congregation, served as organist for St. John's Church, and was master of ceremonies for many community celebrations.

One son, Harold, died in an auto accident at an early age. The other three sons all served in the Lutheran ministry. A daughter, Emma, was a teacher and principal in the Saginaw School system.

Among the seventeen grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren of Teacher Meyer's, several chose to follow the teaching profession.

