

# **1853-1866 Church Register [*Kirchenbuch*] Extracts** **German Evangelical Congregation of Boonville, Missouri**

(1855 Constitution and By-Laws; 01 January 1858 & 1869 Council Minutes [*Protocoll*];  
1854 Baptismal [*Tauf*] Register, and 1853-1866 Marriage [*Trau*] Register Extracts)



**[English Translation by Jürgen F. Schopp and Heli Mäntyranta, Tampere, Finland]**

# Church Register of the German Evangelical Church in Boonville, Cooper County, Missouri



## Constitution & By-laws of the German Evangelical Congregation in Boonville, Cooper County, Missouri

We, the undersigned, intending to uphold the Evangelical faith of our fathers and to hand it on to our descendants, have jointly agreed as a Christian congregation, and for the sake of order, bind ourselves to the following articles.

### Article 1.

The name of our Christian assembly shall be, and shall remain: the German Evangelical Congregation.

### Article 2.

The purpose of our Congregation shall be: The promotion of Christian faith and life according to the teachings of the Evangelical Church on the basis of Luther's catechism.

### Article 3.

Any ordinary member who is an Evangelical Christian shall be eligible and entitled to vote. By an Evangelical Christian we understand the following:

1. Anyone who, from his personal and free conviction, confesses to the great Evangelical principle that the Bible is God's Word, the only guideline of our faith and life, and that we, wholly without merit of our deeds, through mercy and faith, can be saved.
2. Anyone who never misses the public divine service without reason and in general endeavors to lead a life that is decent in outer respects.
3. Anyone who assists, to the extent of his abilities, in bearing the burden and tasks of the Congregation and commits himself to complying with this Constitution, by personally setting his hand unto this the Constitution of the Congregation.

Article 4.

The business leadership, as well as the administration of church property, shall be delegated to the council of the Congregation, in which the Pastor shall be a member entitled to vote, by virtue of his office. The Pastor and the councilors shall be elected by a majority of the members entitled to vote, for as long as this relationship may peacefully continue.

Article 5.

Only such persons shall be eligible as councilors who commit themselves to promoting the flourishing and welfare of the Congregation to the best of their abilities, and to not forgoing public divine services because of negligence or [illegible] neglect the business, and who shall further, together with the Pastor, endeavor to make the church more a community of true Christians, so that no one shall speak blasphemously, disturb and show contempt of public divine services and the ecclesiastical order, be involved in fistcuffs and brawls or surrender to the temptation of drink and indecency. Whoever makes himself guilty of such things shall, if necessary, be excluded from the Congregation by the council.

Article 6.

Anyone who excludes himself from the Congregation, either intentionally or unintentionally, shall thereby lose all existing rights arising out of the membership.

Article 7.

Whenever possible, the council of the Congregation shall meet once every quarter, to discuss the welfare of the Congregation and to make such disposals as it considers necessary.

Article 8.

The office of a spiritual guardian in our church may only be held by an Evangelical pastor who can furnish sufficient proof of having been ordained and of his Christian character.

Article 9.

The Pastor shall be remunerated by the stipend determined for him, which shall be collected by the council and paid out every quarter by the treasurer.

Article 10.

The Pastor shall conduct his office according to the directions of the Gospel. In particular, it shall be his duty to ensure that this Constitution of the Congregation is complied with and that, as far as it is in his power, all things proceed in good order.

He shall also make careful entries in the church register [written in a different style] and, at the request of the council, present the register at the annual meeting.

Article 11.

Those who pay their annual contributions but do not sign this Constitution, shall be considered associate members and may be served by the Pastor, but shall not be entitled to vote.

Article 12.

Those who are not entitled to vote and pay no contributions nor belong to the family of one who does, shall not take part in Holy Communion, unless they have asked the Pastor and been granted approval by him to do so.

Article 13.

The annual meeting shall be held each New Year, and there the council shall account for its administration. General meetings may also be held during the year, if considered necessary by the majority of the council. At such meetings, however, only ordinary members entitled to vote shall have the right to speak and to vote.

Article 14.

If the council should lose a member during the year, it shall have the right to appoint a new member to serve until the annual meeting next following, though only in compliance with the qualifications mentioned in Article 5.

Article 15.

In the interests of keeping the peace, suggestions and complaints shall be submitted in writing to the council for its consideration.

Article 16.

Holy Baptism shall be conducted publicly in the church, unless for reasons of poor health this is not possible. It shall also be ensured that at least one of the parents is a member of the Evangelical church, as far as circumstances allow this, and also that the godparents are not obviously non-Christian.

Article 17.

This Constitution of the Congregation may be amended whenever necessary, if two thirds of the members entitled to vote are in agreement about it and such amendments are not in conflict with the obvious pronouncements of the Holy Scripture.

Article 18.

This Constitution shall be publicly read aloud at every annual meeting.

Unanimously adopted by all Council members at the annual meeting on January 1, 1855

[and signed by ...]

[Signatures of the 30 'Founding Members' of the Boonville Church]

- |                                      |                          |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Johann Wettle Pastor & Secretary. | 16. Jacob Dauer          |
| 2. Georg Vollrath                    | 17. J. E. Hoflaender     |
| 3. J. H. Boller.                     | 18. David Rau            |
| 4. Paul Stegner                      | 19. Sophia Hein          |
| 5. Philipp Back                      | 20. Friedericke Reinhart |
| 6. Wilhelm Gemmer                    | 21. Erhard Hirrlinger    |
| 7. Peter Back                        | 22. Jacob Neef           |
| 8. Jacob Seibel                      | 23. Georg Goller         |
| 9. Lorenz Nicolai Schmidt            | 24. J.J. Holzmueller     |
| 10. Otto Köhnike                     | 25. Adam Sandrok         |
| 11. Adam Stegner                     | 26. Friedrich Metz       |
| 12. Johann Georg Blumenroedher       | 27. Johann Mittameier    |
| 13. Ernst Stegner                    | 28. Phillipp H. Stahl    |
| 14. George Debusmann                 | 29. Johann F. Fickel     |
| 15. Gottfried Back                   | 30. Johannes Lotz        |

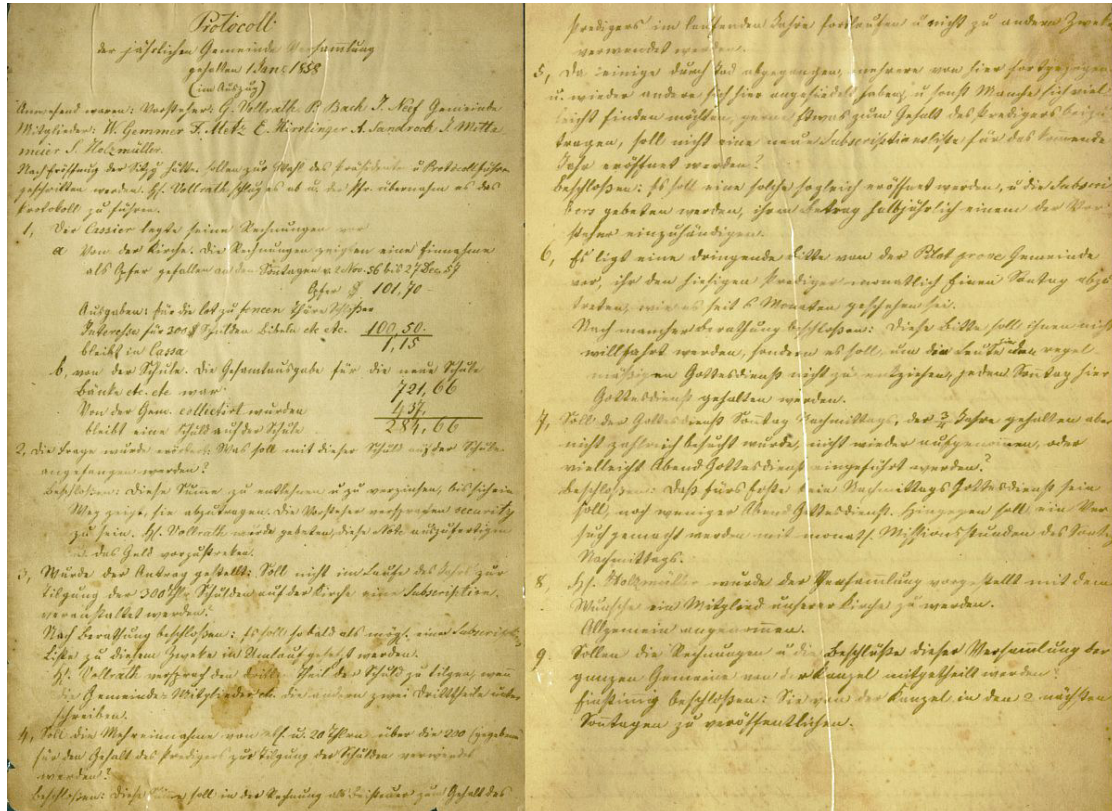
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[Signatures of other January 1, 1855 congregational members]

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cristian Schach         | Nicolaus Friedrich [?]    |
| John Adam Koenig        | Albert Berndt             |
| George Roeder           | Erhart Lauer [?]          |
| John Zschirpe           | William Stoll [?]         |
| Charles Hirrlinger      | Friedrich Angerman[n]     |
| George Wenk             | Peter Stegner             |
| Friedrich Mittelbach    | A.M. [?] Dengolessky      |
| John P. Neef            | David T?                  |
| Georges Wellek [?]      | <del>Georg Wenk</del> [?] |
| August Mary [?] Durr    | F. [illegible]            |
| Charles Wagner          | Friedrich Weiss [?]       |
| John S. Damraster [?]   | Henry C. Hoppe            |
| Jacob Dremer [?]        | John Kritz [?]            |
| Georg Klug              | Johann M. [illegible]     |
| Lorenz Pieper [?]       | Georg [illegible]         |
| John C. Kirchner        | John Geo. B[illegible]    |
| Peter Walter [?]        | J. X. E[illegible]        |
| Welk Schröder           | Johan Georg Neubauer      |
| [Illegible]             | Friedrich A. Neef         |
| Mari Sallinger [?]      | Paul Hoflaender           |
| Nikolaus Sauer          | [Charles] Carl Fiedler    |
| Heinrich Zim[m]erman[n] | J. A. Klug                |
| Elisabeta Bach          | Leonhard Klein            |
| Friedrich W. Mueller    | John Rentschler           |
| Charli Drechsel         | Elisabette Neef           |
-



# Minutes [Protocol] of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation Held on January 1, 1858



Those present:

Council:

G. Vollrath, P. Back, J. Neef

Congregation members:

W. Gemmer, F. Metz, E. Hirrlinger, A. Sandrock,  
J. Mittameier, S. Holzmüller.

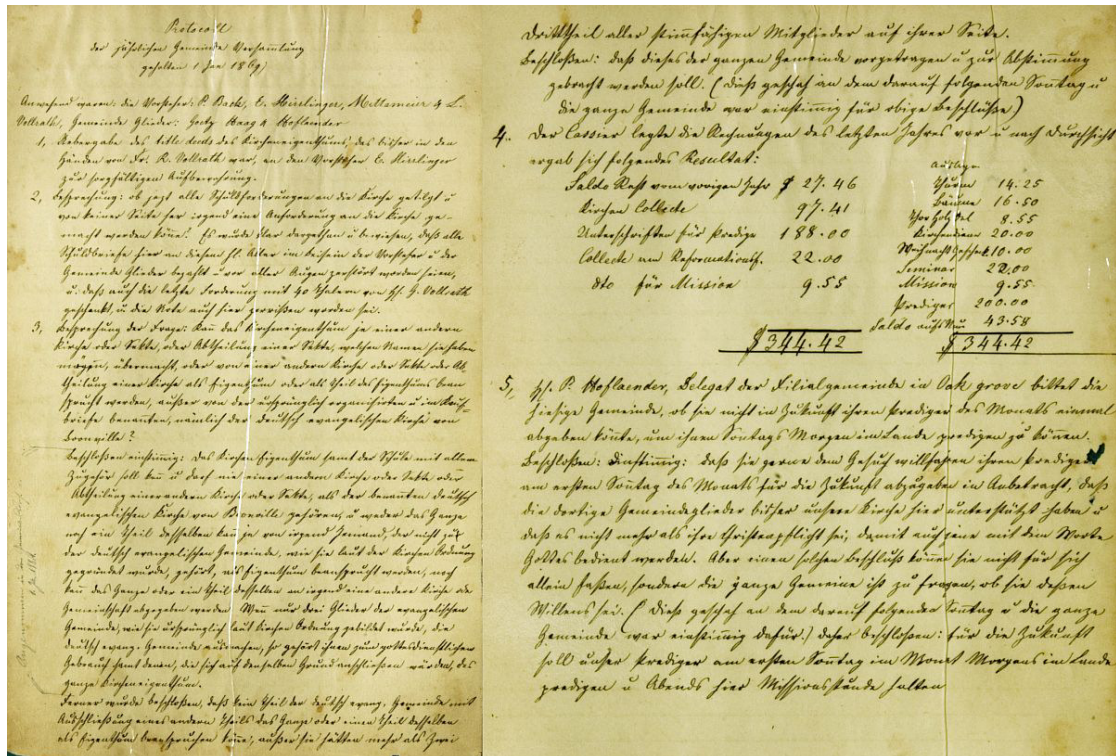
After opening the meeting, the Chairman and the minute-keeper were to be elected. Mr. Vollrath declined, and the Pastor agreed to keep the minutes.

1. The Treasurer presented his accounts.
  - a. Of the church. The accounts showed a surplus.  
Offerings on Sundays from Nov. 2, [18]56 to Dec. 27, [18]57  
Offerings \$101.70  
Expenses: for the fence, doors, locks  
Interest for the debt of \$300 for Bibles etc. etc. \$100.50  
Cash remaining \$1.15
  - b. Of the school. The total expenses for the new school

Benches etc. etc. were \$721.66  
Collected from the Congregation \$437  
Debt remaining for school \$284.66

2. The question was asked, What should be done with this debt from school expenses?  
**Decision:** This sum shall be borrowed at an interest, until a way is found to pay it off. The council promises to furnish a security. Mr. Vollrath was requested to prepare this note and to advance the money.
3. The proposal was made: Should not a subscription be organized during the year to pay off the \$300 debt for the church?  
After discussion **it was decided that:** As soon as possible, a subscription list for the purpose shall be circulated.  
Mr. Vollrath promised to pay off one third of the debt, provided that the Congregation members etc. take responsibility for the other two thirds.
4. Should the surplus of eleven [?] and 20 dollars from the 200 collected for the preacher's stipend be used to pay off the debts?  
**Decision:** This sum shall be kept towards the preacher's stipend for the current year and not used for other purposes.
5. Since some members have passed away, several have moved away and yet others have settled here, and otherwise there might be many who would like to contribute to the preacher's stipend, should not a new subscription list be opened for the coming year?  
**Decision:** One shall be opened immediately, and the subscribers shall be asked to hand in their contribution half-yearly to one of the councilors.
6. The Pilot Grove Congregation has urgently requested that our preacher could visit them once a month on Sunday, as has been the case for 6 months.  
**After a lengthy discussion it was decided:** This request shall not be granted to them; instead, in order not to prevent the people here from having a regular service, a service shall be held here [in Boonville] every Sunday.
7. Should the Sunday afternoon service, which had been held for  $\frac{3}{4}$  years, but had not been sufficiently popular, be resumed, or should perhaps an evening service be introduced?  
**Decision:** That, firstly no afternoon service, let alone an evening service, be held. Instead, a monthly mission hour shall be held on Sunday afternoons.
8. Mr. Holzmüller was introduced to the meeting, expressing the wish to become a member of our church.  
**Universally accepted.**
9. Should the accounts and the decisions of this meeting be published to the whole Congregation from the pulpit?  
**Unanimous decision:** They shall be published from the pulpit on the two following Sundays.

# Minutes [Protocoll] of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation held on January 1, 1869



Those present:

Council:

P. Back, E. Hirrlinger, Mettameier & L. Vollrath

Congregation members:

Goety, Haag [Haas?] & Hoflaender

- The title deeds of the church property, which until now had been held by Mr. R. Vollrath, were handed to councilor E. Hirrlinger for safekeeping.
- Discussion:** Have all debts for the church now been paid off and can no demands be made on the church by anybody? It was explained and made clear that all IOUs had been paid off at this holy altar in the presence of the councilors and the Congregation members and destroyed before the eyes of everyone, and that also the final claim for 40 dollars had been donated by Mr. G. Vollrath and that even that note had been destroyed.
- Discussion:** May the church plot ever be handed over to another church or sect, or the division of a sect, whatever its name might be, or could it be claimed as the property or the part of property of another church or sect or division of a sect other than the one originally organized and named in the deed of sale, that is, the German Evangelical Church of Boonville?  
**Unanimous decision:** The church property, as well as the school with all its equipment, shall, can, and may never belong to another church or sect or the division of another church or sect, except to the named German Evangelical Church of Boonville, and neither the whole nor a part of it may ever be



claimed as possession by anyone who does not belong to the German Evangelical Church, as it was constituted according to the Church Order; nor may the whole or a part of it be handed over to any other church or community. Even if [there remain] only three members of the Evangelical Congregation, such as it was originally formed according to the Church Order, for the German Evangelical Congregation, the entire church property belongs to them for use for divine services, as well as to those who wish to join them on the same basis.

**It was also decided** that no part of the German Evangelical Congregation could claim as their property another part of the whole or of a part thereof, unless they have more than two thirds of members with the right to vote on their side.

**Decision:** That this shall be presented to the entire Congregation and brought to a vote. (This was done on the Sunday next following this and the whole Congregation agreed unanimously to the above decision.)

4. The Treasurer presented the accounts for last year; the result was as follows:

Balance from previous year: \$27.46  
 Church offerings: 97.41  
 Subscriptions for preacher: 188.00  
 Offerings from reformation festivity: 22.00  
 Mission offerings: 9.55  
**= \$344.42**

Expenses:  
 Doors: \$14.25  
 Trees: 16.50  
 Timber for gate: 8.55  
 Church upkeep [costs for the verger, or sacristan]: 20.00  
 Christmas gift: 10.00  
 Seminary: 22.00  
 Offerings for mission work: 9.55  
 Preacher: 200.00  
 New Balance: \$43.58  
**= \$344.42**

5. Mr. P. Hoflaender, representing the daughter Congregation in Oak Grove, inquires of our Congregation whether we could not, in future, lend our preacher once each month, in order to allow him to preach on Sunday morning in the country.

**Decision, Unanimous:** That we will be pleased in future to lend our preacher on the first Sunday of each month, as the Congregation members there have until now supported our church, and that it is our Christian duty as councilors to do so, so that those [people] could also be served with God's word. Yet we cannot make such a decision on our own; the whole Congregation should be asked whether they would agree to this. (This took place on the following Sunday, and the whole Congregation agreed unanimously.) **So the decision:** In future, our Preacher shall preach in the country on the first Sunday of the month, and then later hold a mission hour in the evening here in Boonville.

**Register of Baptisms [*Tauf Register*]: 1854**  
**(Church Register, Started by Pastor Johann Wettle)**

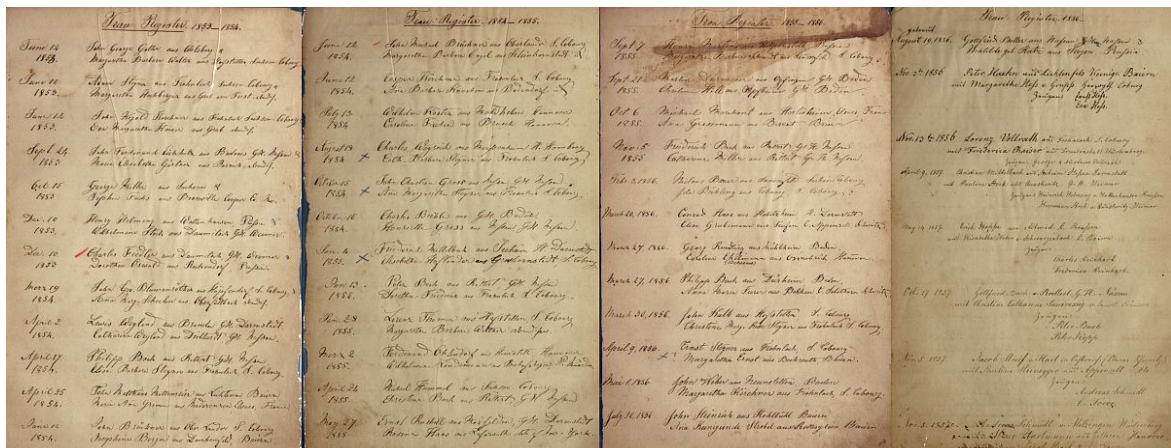
<b>Name of child, date of birth and baptism</b>	<b>Name and place of birth of parents</b>	<b>Godparents</b>
<u>Cath. Caroline</u> Born Nov. 1853 Baptized August 13, 1854	Henry Quint from Mecklenbourg, Hanover Elisabetha Vorier from Lengarich, Prussia	Cath. Krötens [?]
<u>Cath. Philippine</u> Born May 9, 1854 Baptized August 13, 1854	Wilhelm Gross from Holzhausen, Prussia Sophia Holl from Bedendorf, id. [?]	Cath. Schupp Philipp Wagner.
<u>John William</u> Born May 28, 1853 Baptized August 13, 1854	August Kirsch from Philippsthal, Electorate of Hessen Mery Ross from Cooper Co., Missouri	John William Miller.
<u>Cath. Elisabetha</u> Born June 17, 1853 Baptized August 13, 1854	Conrad Kirsch, Philippsthal, Electorate of Hessen An[n]a Clara Schlotzhauer likewise	Elisa. Remsperger [?] Cath. Schlotzhauer
<u>Rudolph</u> Born July 25, 1854 Baptized August 13, 1854	Conrad Kirsch, Philippsthal, Electorate of Hessen An[n]a Clara Schlotzhauer likewise	Parents
<u>John Henry</u> Born April 27, 1854 Baptized August 13, 1854	Martin Holzhäuser, Rollat [?], Hessen Dorothea Oswald, Westerfeld, Hesse	Parents
<u>Pauline Leweine</u> Born February 2, 1854 Baptized September 9, 1854	Henry Hemning, Hattenhausen, Prussia Wilhelmine Stock, Da[u]mitsch, Saxe-Weimar	Pauline Stock
<u>John Hermann</u> Born September 1, 1852 Baptized September 17, 1854	Henry Hemning, Hattenhausen, Prussia Wilhelmine Stock, Da[u]mitsch, Saxe-Weimar	Herrmann Stock
<u>Leivis</u> [Louis] Born August 10, 1851 Baptized Oct. 16, 1854	Charles Fiedler, Daumitsch, Weimar Dorothea Oswald, Rockendorf, Prussia	Gottfried Boller.

Tauf-Register. 1853. u. 1854.		
Name des Taufes & Datum d. Geburt & Tauf.	Name der Eltern & des Taufamtes.	Paten.
<u>Cath. Caroline</u> geb. Nov. 1853 getauft. August 13, 1854.	Henry Quint von Focklenburg, Hannover Elisabetha Vorier von Lengerich, Preussien	Cath. Kretzschmar
<u>Cath. Philippina</u> geb. Mai 9, 1854 getauft August 13, 1854.	Wilhelm Gross von Holtzhausen, Hessen Sophie Holtz von Bedendorf, id.	Cath. Schnapp. Philipp Wagner.
<u>John William</u> geb. März 28, 1853 getauft August 13, 1854	August Kirsch von Philippsthal, Curhessen Mary Ross von Cooper Co, Missouri	John William Miller.
<u>Cath. Elisabetha.</u> geb. Juni 17, 1853. getauft August 13, 1854	Conrad Kirsch, Philippsthal, Curhessen Anna Clara Schlotzheaver, Wundtzen	Elis. Aemspurger Cath. Schlotzheaver
<u>Pauline</u> geb. Juli 25, 1854 getauft August 13, 1854	Conrad Kirsch, Philippsthal, Curhessen Anna Clara Schlotzheaver, Wundtzen.	Die Eltern.
<u>John Henry</u> geb. April 27, 1854 getauft August 13, 1854	Martin Holtzhäuser, Rottent, Hessen Dorothea Oswald, Westersfeld, Hessen	Die Eltern.
<u>Pauline Lewine</u> geb. Febr. 2, 1854 getauft Sept. 9, 1854.	Henry Helming, Mattenhausen, Preussien Wilhelmine Stock, Lamitsch, Sachsen-Weimar	Pauline Stock
<u>John Hermann</u> geb. Sept. 1, 1852 getauft Sept. 17, 1854.	Henry Helming, Mattenhausen, Preussien Wilhelmine Stock, Lamitsch, Sachsen-Weimar.	Herrmann Stock
<u>Levis</u> geb. August 10, 1854. getauft Oct. 16, 1854.	Charles Piethel, Lamitsch, Weimar Dorothea Oswald, Rockendorf, Preussien	Justus Piethel.



## Register of Marriages [*Trau Register*] 1853–1866

June 12, 1853	John George Goller from [illegible] & Margaretha Barbara Walter from Hofstetten, Saxe-Coburg
Married Jan. 22, 1865	August Gihl [?] from Boonville, Mo. with Christine Smith from Boonville, Mo. Witnesses: Elisabeth Gross & Fried.[rich] Boller
Married Jan. 24, 1865	Joseph Hess from Antlibuch Canton, Lucerne, Switzerland with Elisabeth Barbara Günstler Appenzell Canton, Switzerland Witnesses: Georg Raepple & Sebastian Scherer
Married Jan. 31, 1865	Jacob Rentschler from Ober Reichenbach, Württemberg with Amanda Steiner from Boonville, Mo. Witnesses: Aug.[ust] Stegner & Georg Hoflaender
Married Feb. 14, 1865	Georg Rentschler from Ober Reichenbach, Württemberg with Crescentia Hegle/Stegle [?] from Wiel, Baden Witnesses: David Rentschler & Aug.[ust] Stegner
Married Feb. 21, 1865	Jacob Zaehring from Rothweil, Württemberg, with Catharina Weber from Elbersreuth, Bavaria Witnesses: J. Jegglin and Fr. Schach
Married June 20, 1865	Erhard Lauer from Seehof Rhein, Bavaria [= Kurpfalz with Francis Dümphil [?] from Ruaschwitz [?] Witnesses: Charles Fidler, Walter Williams and Erasmus Sauer [?]
Married June 22, 1865	John Laros from St. Mathaeus Trier, Prussia with Elisabeth Storch from Liethart [?], Nassau Witnesses: Gottfried Back and Peter Rohein [?]
Married July 11, 1865	Christian Bauer from Altenburg, Saxony with Johanna Angermann from Litzelbuch, Saxe-Coburg Witnesses: Joh. Georg Neubauer and Barbara Neubauer
Recorded	
Married Dec. 13, 1865	Johannes Haag from Schlierbach, Hessen-Darm.[stadt] with Elisabeth Frank, Philippsthal, Hessen Witnesses: Nicolaus Haag, Nicolaus Miller
Married Feb. 2, 1866	John Henry Rabien [?] from Rothenkirchen, Oldenburg with Maria Krohn from Gross Kan[n]statt, Saxe-Coburg Witnesses: Paul Hoflaender, John Koehnke





## Notes on the English Translation

The text in this digital publication of 1853-1866 extracts from the founding Church Register [*Kirchenbuch*] of the German Evangelical Church of Boonville, Missouri (now the 'United Church of Christ of Boonville') has required the painstaking labor and expertise of several people, to whom sincere thanks is gratefully extended.

The process began in 2011, when Volumes I and II of the founding *Kirchenbuch* (which are well-preserved for documents more than 1.5 centuries old, although faded and fragile) were photographed by Harry Enderle of Boonville, as commissioned by John Hopkins, with the enablement of (then) church secretary Theresa Krebs. The images were then sent to John Hopkins in Finland, who began to search for a means to translate the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century handwritten German into 21<sup>st</sup>-century English.

This task was far from simple. Modern German differs considerably from the dialect used by the church's founders in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The orthography and penmanship differed even more. There are few scholars anywhere with the historic and linguistic expertise to meaningfully decipher mid-18<sup>th</sup> century German dialectical handwriting, especially from photographic images of a faded, partially torn, and sometimes illegible manuscript.

A two-stage solution emerged, employing the near-heroic efforts of two of John's long-time colleagues in the University of Tampere Department of Translation Studies, Jürgen F. Schopp and Heli Mäntyranta. Dr. Schopp first studied the scanned *Kirchenbuch* images and, over the following 18 months, transliterated the 1850s German script into modern German, aided by John Hopkins' knowing many of the names [Boller, Dengolesky, Gmelich, Hirrlinger, Mittelbach, Neef, Pieper, Rau, Schlotzhauer, Vollrath, etc.] and thus how many of the 1850s handwritten German characters corresponded to modern German. Dr. Schopp's transliteration was then in turn translated into English by (Ms.) Heli Mäntyranta. The final digital version of the booklet was edited and compiled by John D. Hopkins.

Separate digital editions of the scanned pages of both volumes of the original German books are also being published to accompany these English extracts.

The original Constitution and By-Laws, and the two sets of minutes in this file are complete, as recorded in the *Kirchenbuch*. However, only single pages of the Baptismal and Marriage records are in this file. As the Baptismal and Marriage records mainly consist of personal names, dates, and place names, they may be relatively easily understood without 'translation', unlike the other texts.

Sincere thanks to all those mentioned above for their painstaking efforts. Without their time and expertise, this insight into the early years of the church would not exist. Thanks also to Chris Burbach of Palm Springs, CA, for the identification of his great-great-great-grandfather Charles (Carl) Fiedler and son Leivis (Louis), now noted on pages #5 and #10, and corrected spelling for the hamlet 'Elbersreuth' (page 12, cf. the original 'Elberskreit', which is how the name had been recorded).

Possible additions or corrections to this digital version will be made to the current online file, with the revision history indicated by the 'update' field below.

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John D. Hopkins  
Lielahdenkatu 40 E 19  
33410 Tampere, Finland  
<John.David.Hopkins@gmail.com>