

## ✚ HOLY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE HILL OVERLOOKING ROBESONIA ✚

### OLDEN DAYS SCANDAL!

William Wilberforce Kramlich was our Pastor from 1892-1901.

Reverend William Kramlich was born on January 22, 1866, in Kutztown, PA. He received his preparatory training at Keystone State Normal School, now Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, in Kutztown. He spent one year (1882) at Chambersburg, then entered Muhlenberg College in Allentown. After his graduation in 1887, he entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He graduated from the seminary on May 19, 1891, and was ordained on May 26 of the same year. On June 14, 1894, he married Ida Ahrens of Reading, and they had one daughter, Clara Virginia.

During the first year after his ordination, Rev. Kramlich assisted his father, Rev. Benjamin Elias Kramlich. He then accepted the call to the Womelsdorf Parish, then consisting of Zion in Womelsdorf, St. Daniel's (Heidelberg), St. John's in Host, and Zion in Strausstown (also known as Blue Mountain Church). Reverend Kramlich served this parish until the latter part of November 1901.

Rev. Kramlich's nine-year pastorate at St. Daniel's was marred. In his later years of service, the congregation pressed charges against him before the President of the Ministerium and requested an investigation. Rev. Kramlich, in turn, demanded an investigation of the charges. The President of the Reading Conference appointed a committee of three who subsequently recommended suspension of Rev. Kramlich. The President of the Ministerium officially suspended him on November 4, 1901. A request by Rev. Kramlich for reinstatement was denied in 1903. The suspension was ultimately removed and he was restored to the ministry on December 28, 1905.

Though our 1751-2001 church history book provided the commentary on Rev. Kramlich's suspension, I have not been able to determine where that information originated or any further details. It was not for a lack of investigation! There is no documented explanation in the available online records about the cause or circumstances of a suspension of Rev. William Wilberforce Kramlich from the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. What I've read is that major denominational histories of the Pennsylvania Ministerium generally do not highlight individual suspensions unless they involved highly prominent controversies, which suggests his suspension was likely for local or administrative reasons. Hmm...

After his restoration, Rev. Kramlich did not return to the Womelsdorf Parish. He accepted a call to the New Ringgold Parish in 1907. From there he moved to Christ Church in

Freemansburg, PA, in 1912 and then to Weissport, PA, in 1915. After Weissport, he spent two years at St. Luke's in Noxen, PA. His last church was at Herndon, PA, to which he was called in 1921.

Rev. Kramlich died at the age of 61 in the Geisinger Memorial Hospital in Danville, PA, on November 29, 1927. He is buried in Fairview Cemetery in Kutztown.

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John W. Early was our interim Pastor for parts of 1901-1902.

Rev. Early served St. Daniel's as interim pastor for approximately one year between the pastorates of Rev. William Kramlich (ended October 1901) and Rev. Oscar Pfleuger (began November 1902). It appears he is the Rev. John Early that later in life prepared and published, "Lives of Lutheran Ministers of Berks County."

Notable events during Rev. Kramlich's and Rev. Early's ministries at St. Daniel's:

- December 18, 1892: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker" premiered in Saint Petersburg, Russia.
- March 4, 1893: Grover Cleveland was inaugurated as 24<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (2<sup>nd</sup> term).
- September 19, 1893: New Zealand becomes the first country to grant all women the right to vote.
- October 6, 1893: Nabisco Foods invents Cream of Wheat.
- Summer 1894: The first documented poliomyelitis (POLIO) epidemic in the US broke out in Rutland, Vermont. Further major epidemics occurred in 1907, 1916, and throughout the 1940s and 1950s.
- September 1894: The US Congress designated the first Monday of September as a legal holiday, Labor Day, to mark the contributions of labor, in part as a peace offering to the labor movement following the crackdown on the Pullman Railroad Strike.
- July 4, 1895: Katherine Lee Bates published "America the Beautiful."
- 1895: Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, arranged in his will for his estate to fund the Nobel Prize. He died on December 10, 1896. The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in Stockholm on December 10, 1901.
- January 1, 1896: German physicist Wilhelm Röntgen announced his discovery of X-ray.
- January 4, 1896: Following Mormon abandonment of sanctioned polygamy, Utah was admitted as 45<sup>th</sup> state of the Union.

- April 1896: The first modern Olympic games, the idea of Pierre de Coubertin, were held in Athens, Greece.
- February 1, 1897: The first auto insurance policy in the US was issued, by Travelers Insurance Company.
- March 4, 1897: William McKinley was inaugurated as the 25<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.
- April 30, 1897: English physicist and head of the Cavendish laboratory J. J. Thomson announced his discovery of the electron.
- May 26, 1897: "Dracula" by Irish author Bram Stoker was published in London.
- July 1897: The Klondike Gold Rush began in Alaska.
- September 21, 1897: The NY Sun ran the famous "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus" editorial in response to a letter from eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon.
- February 15, 1898: The American battleship U.S.S. Maine exploded in the harbor at Havana, Cuba, a mysterious event that would lead to the US declaring war on Spain on April 25, 1898. A peace protocol ending the war was signed on August 12, 1898.
- August 29, 1898: The Goodyear tire company founded.
- December 21, 1898: Scientists Pierre and Marie Curie discovered radium.
- November 6, 1900: U.S. President William McKinley was re-elected, defeating William Jennings Bryan.
- September 1, 1900: L. Frank Baum published *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.
- September 6, 1901: President William McKinley was shot by Leon Czolgosz at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, NY. He died on September 14th. Vice President Theodore Roosevelt was then sworn in as 26th President.
- October 24, 1901: Seeking fame and fortune, 63-year-old Annie Edson Taylor became the first person to survive a trip over Niagara Falls in a barrel.
- December 12, 1901: Guglielmo Marconi sent the first transatlantic radio signal.
- July 17, 1902: Willis Carrier invented the first modern air conditioning unit.

What an amazing and enduring history we share! Sometimes history is hard!

Follow this space throughout the year for snippets of St. Daniel's history from 1751 to 2026.

Historical details taken from the 'Saint Daniel's Evangelical Lutheran Church "Eck Kirche" 1751-2001' church history book written by the St. Daniel's History Committee in celebration of the 250th anniversary. More detail regarding this topic is found in Chapter 3 – Pastors. Kramlich history and timeline details researched on the internet. Photos of St. Daniel's archives except for the Presidents.

**#StDaniels #StDanielsLutheranChurch #EckKirche #CornerChurch  
#OnTheHillOverlookingRobesonia #RobesoniaPA #1751StDaniels2026  
#275thAnniversary #HolyHighlights #History #OurHistory #ReverendWilliamKramlich  
#ConfirmationCertificate #HowardField #SamuelMardernas #ReverendJohnEarly  
#ALotHappensIn275Years**



Rev. William Wilberforce Kramlich,  
Pastor of St. Daniel's from  
January 1892 – October 1901.



Grover Cleveland,  
24th President (2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
March 4, 1893 – March 4, 1897



William McKinley,  
25th President  
March 4, 1897 -  
September 14, 1901

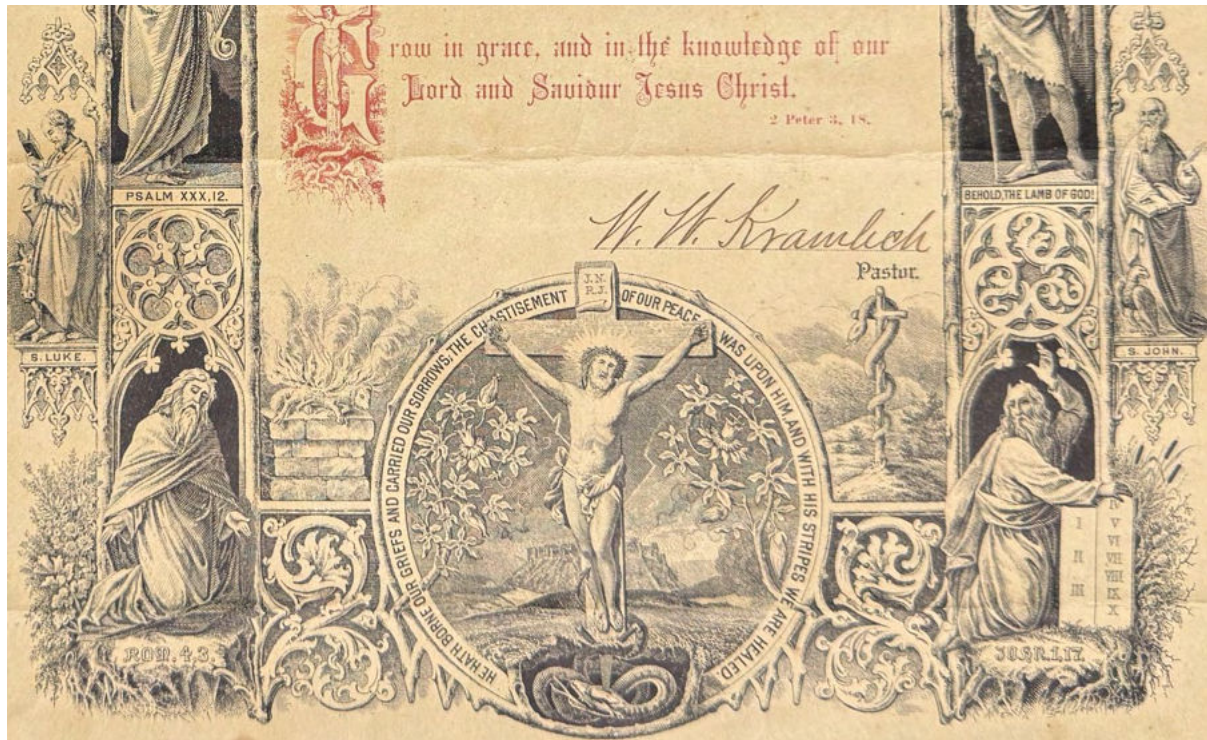


Theodore Roosevelt,  
26th President  
September 14, 1901 -  
March 4, 1909





Closer view of the top of the Confirmation certificate.



Closer view of the bottom of the Confirmation certificate.



Printed photo of a Confirmation certificate for Samuel Mardernas, October 12, 1901, confirmed by Rev. William Kramlich.