

‘WE are the end-product of our history.’

# FLASHBACKS

Revealing glimpses of our creative past

*Official newsletter of the*

**UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN**

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## **MARY SCHROEDER**

To step down as Conference archivist

As of January 1 2004, Mary Schroeder will retire from the position of Conference Archivist. However, she will continue in the role of researcher for five hours a week. The Commission on Archives and History wishes to thank Mary for all her years of tireless service to the Archives. The Archives of the Wisconsin conference of the United Methodist Church was formed in the fall of 1969 with the uniting of the Evangelical United Brethren and Methodist Churches. Until 1983, the Archives were housed in the basement of the Algoma Boulevard Church in Oshkosh under the direction of Kitty Hobson. In 1983, the Conference purchased a building in Sun Prairie and room on the third floor was put aside for the Archives. Kitty didn't want to move to Sun Prairie so a new archivist had to be hired. Mary was working as a secretary in the office involved in fund raising for the new conference building and, hearing of the position, applied for it, Mary was hired and began work on Jan 1, 1984. For the past twenty years, Mary has worked three four-hour mornings, researching and answering the many (over 150 a year) inquiries she receives Over the years, Mary's most memorable moments have been when she has been able to assist in solving family mysteries. In the end, however, Mary counts the relationship with the Conference staff as her greatest blessing."It has left me with a memory of many good friends and good times."

## **EDITORIAL COMMENT.**

I want to thank Mary for her gift of friendship her cheerful spirit and always her willingness to help me. It has been a g good relationship and we shall miss her. Lois

## **ARCHIVIST**

Effective January 3,2004. Lynn

Lubkeman will be working as the archivist an average of ten hours per week. Lynn has a Ph.D. in history, worked previously in the Archives Division of the Wisconsin Historical Society, and has many years of experience doing the archival work with several different organizations. Lynn will bring to her work with the Conference not only her experience, but also a passion for determining the overall organization of the Conference Archives and helping us to move forward in that effort.

## **2003 ESSAYS**

Three essays were submitted for the contest of 2003. All three essays will be printed in

this issue. The prize essay was written by Bernice Abrahamzon of Frederic, Wisconsin.

## THE LAY PREACHER

My husband, Ken, was a lay preacher (or lay speaker) in our Methodist church located in Northwestern Wisconsin. Speaking was right up his alley, as his primary job was being a Speech-English teacher in the Twin Cities. He came home weekends to our farm, where I lived with our three sons.

Pastor James Everson served the three point Methodist charge of Atlas-Lewis-Siren from 1945-1963. He was a devout, dedicated minister, and he and his wife, Olga, often favored us with a duet during the Sunday church service.

No matter what the text was he always managed to quote, "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you." It was a verse that meant a great deal to him.

My husband had his Bachelor's degree and also his Masters degree, and for a time, seriously considered going into the ministry. He had already started reading the recommended books for such a major career change.

In 1957, there was a shortage of pastors, and one was needed for the three-point Methodist charge of St. Croix Falls-Taylor Falls-Wolf Creek. The District Superintendent asked Ken if he'd be willing to fill in until a full time pastor could be found. Ken agreed to do it, taking three services every Sunday morning. To get there he bypassed the communities of Frederic, Luck, Milltown and Centuria, a distance of thirty miles.

He spoke first at St. Croix Falls, a typical, big, old-fashioned church in the middle of town. Then he progressed to Taylor Falls across the state line into Minnesota. The church was a classic white building dating back to the late 1800's, located on Angel Hill. It stood to the historical Fossum House. The church pews were painted white with the choir loft in the rear. The third church in the circuit was a one-room school building in open country. It was heated by a stove in the middle of the building with a long stove pipe running the length of the room. (In later years the Wolf Creek Church was moved into a more modern school building).

All congregations were friendly, and they welcomed my husband. In a preliminary interview with the Pastor-Parish Relations committee, one man, who was a pillar of the church, asked Ken, "Do you preach from the Bible or from the newspapers the way some of these fellows do?" He had a very unusual name of Velsey Woollsey. I think he was the same man who later reminded Ken, "You know, young man, there are other books in the Bible besides Proverbs."

I was unable to accompany my husband on his Sunday rounds as I took our children to church and Sunday school in the Methodist church in our own little town. I do remember attending Christmas programs in all three churches however. I remember, too, that Easter morning when we had a heavy snowfall, and Ken had to drive through drifts all the way,

Ken's year was completed, and the Rev. Bervie Scott was hired to serve the three churches. Meanwhile, the Rev. James Everson was growing older and had a heavy schedule, so Ken was hired to serve the church in Lewis, Wisconsin for \$50.00 a month. He often endorsed his check and turned it back into the church coffers.

He had charge of Sunday services for almost five years, often basing his sermons on his study books. He was apt to quote from literature as often as he quoted from scripture. He was not

permitted to “marry or bury” or offer communion. That was the Rev. Eversons’s responsibility, and Ken and I had a very good relationship with Jim and Olga.

During this periods, Esther Schallenberger was in charge of teaching the confirmation classes at the church or at the home of Ina and Karl Abrahamzon as the church was not heated during the week in the winter. Ina was church organist and also choir director, and Ken and I both sang in the choir.

I was surprised one day when a rickety, old car sputtered up our bill into our yard. A family was on the way to Hayward and almost out of gas and money. I dug in my purse and found some gas money for them so they could reach their destination.

Another time a car came into our yard and the driver said they had no food or money. I came into out house and grabbed whatever I could find to help them, fresh fruit, cookies, etc., and some cash so they could purchase groceries. This was an eye-opener, as I had not realized that hungry, desperate people came to the preacher’s door for handouts, even in the days of lay preachers.

One Sunday afternoon, Ken and I were outside working in our garden, and a car came into our yard. A man and woman got out, and he said they’d been driving around and they noticed that our church needed painting. He wasn’t telling us anything we didn’t know. He also said, “The church lawn need mowing, too.”

I was a bit taken aback. My husband had a full time teaching job in the city, and he directed three full length plays each year, plus emceed the Miss North St. Paul Pageant. He also built stage sets for all school productions. He wrote sermons, delivered them and sang in the choir. Our eldest son, thirteen years old, often mowed the church lawn with an old push mower.

In those days, only the front church lawn was mowed. The back was like a meadow with tall grasses and two outhouses under the pine trees. It was what we called “the rough.” Ken’s mom, Ina, had dreams of having shuffle board courts there some day.

While the couple stood in the yard scolding us, our dog approached, and for some strange reason lifted his hind leg and wet on the man’s leg. I was embarrassed and pretended not to notice and the man was so busy talking, he seemed oblivious to what was going on. Ken and I said afterward that what our dog did must have been like an editorial comment. The couple in effect shamed us, but then turned around and donated money toward painting the church.

That plus other factors were enough to convince Ken that the ministry was not for him that he had all he could do with a teaching job plus the farm to run.

In 1963-64, Pastor Richard Pilgrim added Lewis to his Frederic-Lorain charge with a student pastor, Russell Giese, assistant.

Once in a while I think of those early days. Today we are fortunate to have a modern church building, all on one level, with constant heat, inside restrooms, a modem kitchen, small library and pastor’s study. The entire lawn, front and back, is cut by a riding John Deere mower, operated by lay persons.

We are blessed with an energetic, enthusiastic pastor, Steve Ward and countless willing volunteers, Very few are left who still remember the early days that were often very hard and demanding. Still those days are part of our Methodist history.

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The following two essays were submitted this year. The first was submitted by Larry and Bev Lambie of Seymour and was written by Mrs. Peter Tubbs.

## **THE EARLY DAYS OF THE SEYMOUR CHURCH**

When we moved to Seymour in 1868 there were no churches but religious services were held in the log schoolhouses. There were only three houses where the city of Seymour is now. T. B. Bullock, a student at Lawrence University, used to come and preach to us once in two weeks. He walked through the wood on Saturday and walked back again on Monday unless he would catch a ride with someone with ox team. We had no horse teams here then.

The first parsonage we had was in the town of Osborne. Old father Lewis, as we called him, was the first minister that lived here. He had a wife and two girls. He used to go out and work as carpenter work to help make a living, as the people were so poor they could not pay him enough to live on. Rev. Banta was next. He was great on preaching services at our schoolhouse. It was two o'clock and many a time the sun would be down before he would quit. He said once he got to talking to God, he didn't know when to stop.

We lived in a board shanty the first winter and on Sunday about one o'clock, I was in bed sick, my husband said, "Here comes Brother George Sharp with someone." I got up and there were Mr. and Mrs. George Anderson and I had to get dinner for them. I had bread, butter, tea, and three eggs. I told my husband on the side he shouldn't take one egg. They went over to the schoolhouse and I went back to bed and cried to think I had nothing better to give them.

We used to have Revival services. I remember Rev. Yarwood (1873) held meetings in our schoolhouse for six weeks. People stood around anywhere they could. He had an old horse that had pink eye and epizooties. Made you think of a rabbit. But the minister kept to the work and visited the people, and did all he could to help us to a better life.

The year B.F. Sanford (1882) came the people had built a Parsonage where our church now stands. That was 63 years ago. The house was not painted inside. So they came to our place and Rev. Sanford and my husband went to painting. So as soon as it was done and dry they went down and moved. The first thing Mrs. Sanford said was "Frank, why did you paint it red?" The woodwork was all bright red. They were going to make it light pink by mixing the color in.

When Rev. Conah were here the church was moved to Seymour. The officers of the church voted on it. The people in Osborne did not want it moved but as the railroad had just gone through Seymour and had depot were settling all around. The majority voted for Seymour. It made a very bitter feeling among the people, those who wanted to keep it where it was. Some of them moved to Nebraska.

When Rev. Hutchins came, he had been through the Peshtigo Fire 1871. His old horse had both ears partly burnt off and half his tail. They had a terrible experience only a few escaped with their lives. All their worldly goods were packed on a backboard and drawn by their old horse when they came to Seymour.

We had a Church Society and were doing better every year. The people all around went to church and enjoyed the Services. We were all Friendly and poor. We had no other place to go but to church. Our church got small for the congregation. So Rev. Sanborn came 30 years ago. He went into the parsonage and said it wasn't fit to live in. Stamped around broke a board on the

floor, said "You have to have a new parsonage. I won't bring my family here till you do." So the parsonage was moved to the present site. A room was added and then he began to plan for a new church. Rev. Sanborn went out soliciting. He was the right man in the right place. He would talk and reason with them till they just had to pay. Everybody helped handle the sand, gravel and timbers in the winter so the material would be ready in Spring. Our hired men each gave \$25 and our school teacher, Amy Boyden, gave \$25. Her salary was \$30 a month. The concrete was let to the Walkam's brothers. They did a fine job as you can see who came to our church.

We used to have leaches 40 years ago, If one got \$5.00 we felt we were doing fine. Most of the people of those days have gone to their reward. Its left to you people to carry on the work. They are gone and you are now getting the benefit of. So stand by the Methodist Church, do all you can to make it better and better every day of your life.

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The third essay was sent by Ulonda Dietmeier of Monroe.

### **BETHEL'S BERESHIT**

While on his journey to Haran to seek a wife, Jacob camped about eleven miles north of Jerusalem. That night he had a vision of angels which he believed was a message from God. To Jacob, the site was holy ground," and he called that place Bethel." (Gen. 28:19) In Hebrew, the name Bethel means," a home of God." Later in English, it referred to a chapel of nonconformists. Please join me as we unravel the strands of history for the Church called Bethel.

Established conferences in Illinois and farther east, commissioned missionaries to carry their ministry to the frontier. John H. Peck, a resident of Rock Spring, Illinois, wrote in his pamphlet, "An Emigrants' Guide," the "American Sunday school Union has set as its goal to establish in every place practicable throughout the valley of the Mississippi a Sunday school in the next two years." A copy was deposited, 27 May 1831, with Jno. M. Davis, District Clerk in Massachusetts.

George W. Wiley, a first settler in section 9, Clarno Township, patented 240 acres which included the sites of a future church building and cemetery. James Hawthorne came from the lead mines in 1833, purchased land near by and obtained government patents, 16 July 1834. Peter and Abigail Shrake purchased land from Wiley, 16 November, 1842, then gave a quit claim deed to Green County 30 July 1847. so that a 1 1/2 acre plot would become a public cemetery, because they had buried Grandpa Frederick Shrake, age 80, there in 1845. There were a series of Shrake mortgages from 1843 to 1850, but the next mention of the cemetery was, 24 March 1859. when Shraques deeded 181.5 acres to their daughter and son-in-law, the Wm. Bullocks whose nine year old daughter was now buried there- and noted: "except cemetery." On the same day, 24 March 1859. Wm. and Rebecca Bullock deeded their farm to Levi Starr. Wm., aged 36, and Rebecca, age 25, both died and were buried there in autumn 1859. Starrs sold to Abner Drake, 8 March 1864 and he to Jacob Adams, 21, August 1865. Each transfer made an exception for the cemetery (generic, no title) until Jacob Adams sold to Alfred and John Hawthorne, 13 March, 1876, when it is named, "United Brethren Cemetery." The mortgage Treat held, 19 March 1925, also labeled the exception as the United Brethren Church and Cemetery. However, 19 November 1928, when Green County gave a quit claim to the United Brethren Church (UBC) Cemetery Association, it was for Hawthorne Cemetery. The mortgage release from the Commercial and Savings Bank, 11 June, 1936 excepts the United Brethren Church and Cemetery. Not one transfer used the name Bethel!

If those owning the property abutting the cemetery were not consistent with the name,

what did those with loved ones interred there call it? Alexander Campbell buried his mother-in-law in Bethel Cemetery but T. J. Millman (Married to Ella Hawthorne) said his parents were buried in Hawthorne Cemetery. T. J. Anderson buried his four children in Hawthorne Cemetery near the United Brethren Church but Martin Heinzelinann interred his child in the UBC Cemetery. The Atlas labeled them Hawthorne Cemetery and Bethel Church. In 1902, they were named UBC Church and Cemetery. Now the Cemetery Association's sign reads: Bethel-Hawthorn Cemetery.

There was much early activity by the UBC missionaries. On May 14, 1847, it was recorded that Asa Church became a Preacher of the Gospel of the UBC. 15 August 1840. at annual conference in Green County, Wisconsin, with J.J. Glasshuner, Bishop, presiding. A class held meeting in the old log school house in Monroe, as Francis Atkinson's story says he joined the UBC there,

Isaac and Mary Millman Chamness came from Indiana, 3 October 1843. They bought 80 acres, 23 September 1844 from Edward and Kezia Church for \$250. In 1842 the Rev. James Davis organized the first UBC class in Wisconsin at the Chamness home. James Davis, Preacher of the Gospel, was ordained an elder by Harry Kimelier, Bishop, at the UBC annual Conference, Fulton County, Indiana, 27 September 1831 and recorded in Monroe, 31 May 1845. Other members of Davis 'first class were: Edward Church and wife, Win. and Elizabeth Millman. Evidently memories were faulty as there are conflicts in the data from various sources.

Over the years, Isaac and Mary Chamness negotiated land transactions in section 32 and 33 in Monroe Township. Albert M and Elizabeth Taylor Dye came from Indiana, 14 April 1855, and bought Chaniness homestead. The Chamnesses wrote a contract with Cyrus Dye for 20 acres in section 32 on 23 April 1855. And on 21 May 1866, Isaac bought 107 acres from Charles and Mary Foster in section 33. Cyrus Dye married Chamness daughter Louise, 10 April 1856. I found no copy of lease or deed but Isaac's son, William leased one acre of Dye's purchase to School District Number 9, as a building site, 17 October 1856. Cyrus Dye received a release of his mortgage 1 June 1864. And Sarah J.Hill signed a lease 20 November 1874, with Trustees Dye and Clarno for School District 9 for a new building site. Likely the earlier house was log as it was replaced in just 17 years. There are problems with this log building on Chamenss;' property being the UBC class meeting place, It was erected fifteen years after the class was organized and it was called "Liberty" a very secular name for a house of worship.

Hiram and Marcia Rust received a patent for their claim in Section 33 in 1843 and a log school building, known as Bethel, was erected in District 10, section 33 in 1843. Why was it given a religious term as a name? Hadn't their generations of antecedents striven from beginnings until 1833 to achieve separation of church and state? Weren't these the children of those who represented the dissidence of dissent, the protesting of Protestant? They had the revolutionary spirit of their forbearers, so could be hard and indomitably intractable. They came to the frontier for less rigorous church discipline, freedom from taxes to support a government established church, and a more flexible state of society to in which to function. The Rust's denominational affiliation is unknown until the Universalist Society of staunch abolitionists was organized in Monroe in 1860. On 1 June 1868, the Rusts received \$20 for their site for the erection of a frame building. There is where Albert Deppler erected his home on Youth Cabin Road. He shared that when the Bethel building was removed, the stumps remained under it from when the site was cleared. Mr. Deppler donated the Bethel School House to the Green County Historical Society which moved it into Monroe beside the old Universalist Church building which they use as a museum. Bethel was refurbished and dedicated 31 October 1861 but there was no history of the building in the 1 November 1971 article in the Times;. The original records were destroyed by rain seeping through the deteriorating roof.

Roosevelt School was about a half mile north of the UBC Cemetery. At the annual

meetings, 28 September 1868, it was voted to raise a sum of \$40 for repairing the building. So the red brick house was not new in 1868. "The Clarno Town House is a brick structure, located on the corner of section 16 It was erected in 1857, at the cost of about \$1,200. The building committee, which was formed in April 1857, was composed of Alpheus DeHaven, George Adams, and Hiram Tichner." George Adams was actively involved with the town house erection. Could the use of red brick for it have influenced the choice of construction material for Roosevelt? John and Hannah Bryant deeded the land, 28 January 1860. In 1895 they voted to build a frame house. The board members were Edward West, Jacob Huffman and George Bailey.

The entries in a diary of a frontier missionary, Henry Howe, help us understand a circuit rider's life. To support his family, he claimed 200 acres in Stephenson County. Mt. Pleasant School house was his "home" church building- They carried the pulpit in from the woodshed for preaching- and he buried his family in its cemetery. Howe records difficulties: impassable road, long distances to travel, crops to be raised, thick ice to be chopped so converts can be baptized (immersed!) and personal relations: "not good feelings" or had to "reconcile and overhaul" or "gave proclamation that services must be held every Sunday;" and competition: there was a con-artist at the Monroe Court House, the school was occupied so stayed to listen; and triumphs: could obtain \$300 for preaching, counted 68 members at Sugar Grove, got sleigh mended and the sheep-skins made into a robe. He often mentions preaching at Bethel but identifies no specific location for it.

Population increased. Each family came with their personal beliefs. Denominations sprouted like mushrooms after a spring rain. Circuit riders competed for souls to save, persons to baptize. Every available school record tells of a frame house erected and no more preaching allowed in the school building.

North of Hawthorn Cemetery, the Eastern District of the Wisconsin Conference established a UBC Campground. At the organizational meeting the officers elected were: H. Deal, D. R. Grover, Win. Evans, and Alexander Campbell. Memberships were \$1 a year but \$25 to be a lifetime director. The bylaws provided for a vigilant committee and the society would give protection for animals, wagons and buggies, harness and tack.

P. Jacob Adams gave an executor's deed for Martha Moreland to John and Alfred Hawthorne, 13 March 1876. They had the high bid of \$4,590 for her estate. On the 24 February 1877, the UBC class in Clarno held a conference shared by G.G.Nickey. The trustees elected to guide the process of organizing a church and erecting a building were Jacob Huffman, Levi Deal, and George Beach. The Hawthorn brothers, Alfred and John, gave a quit claim deed, 7 June 1879, to the UBC trustees for one dollar. Kittie Mae Whitehead, daughter of the Homer Andersons, grew up on farm on today's County B and recalls walking to morning worship at Bethel. There was afternoon Bible study and Christian Endeavor for youth in the evening.

The Rev. R. D. Glover assisted by evangelist, George Little of Pennsylvania, organized a class of about fifty persons in Monroe in 1888. They worshipped in the Congregational building and held Sabbath School with them. After giving notice in Clarno, the Monroe Church of UBC was organized, 5 December 1888. The elected trustees were George Beach, T. J. Smith, and Wm. Tertin. They purchased the German Evangelical's second frame building and moved it to 13 Avenue. First Church of the UBC was incorporated 13 December 1907. In 1923, the UBC church, having 145 members, laid the cornerstone for a new red brick edifice when the Rev. J.T. Agema was pastor. The Guy Weckerly home was purchased to use as a parsonage.

Mrs. Edna Senn, aged 86, who was raised west of Jordan Lutheran Church, tells that the family was good friends of the Henry Frisley family who owned a farm on County M, north of Browntown. One beautiful summer day when she was eight years old, her mother and Mrs. Frisley picked, washed and hulled many strawberries. Later that afternoon in 1925, the men

returned to Frisleys with their wagons loaded with lumber. They all ate strawberries before returning home for chores. That summer a barn was erected and Bethel's building became a part of it. The farm is now owned by Rudy Haskee. The date is confirmed by Thomas Schuetz. His family moved from the Gratiot area the fore part of December, 1925. He and his brothers mistakenly attended the Roosevelt School for the remainder of the term. And there was no church down by the cemetery. A Frisely grandson, living in Argyle, remembers riding on the lumber, building the barn but not the date. Alberta Drake Boss, born in 1911, recalls placing flags on the veterans' graves on Memorial Day when a child but Bethel's building was abandoned then. It was here her parents had attended when growing up. Mrs. Marge Schilt remembers playing on the steps when she was a youngster attending Roosevelt. That was all that remained south of the cemetery to remind one that this was the site of a house of worship called Bethel.

On Sunday, 20 May, 1968, the Rev. Burton Holling conducted the final services at Monroe's Bethel Church. (The First Church had become Bethel!). Locally, the UBC Church, Bethel, merged with the Evangelical Church, Immanuel, where they worshiped together. The Bethel Church's building was sold and dismantled.

We have discovered and traced many strands in the life history of a group who called themselves Bethel. Frontier settlers worshipped in Chamness' home in section 32, Monroe Township, then in a log cabin School. The first area log school was erected on Hiram Rust's claim in 1834 in district 10. Its name, Bethel, which is a religious term, strengthens the probability that this is where the UBC class met. Liberty School House, erected in 1859, on Chamness's land is too late and too secular a name. The Roosevelt School District in Clarno Township, erected their red brick house in 1860, but it is likely that there was denominational strife very early in this district. The Honey Creek (which flowed west of the Bethel sites) Methodist Episcopal Class met in the old Enterprise building over east on today's County B until they were forced to leave and erected their own building on Drake's land. On all their legal descriptions, the cemetery, and later the campground, where were established prior to the erection of the church building, are designated as UBC except when Green County deeded the cemetery to the UBC Cemetery Association and named it Hawthorn. In Monroe they incorporated at First Church of the UBC but it, too, was commonly called Bethel. Because all the organizational meetings' minutes are missing we can only surmise that the name Bethel came with them from Indiana and was of great significance.

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## WAUPUN

Many local church histories have crossed my desk in my time as editor of *Flashbacks*. Some are only one page, others are bound as books. Some deal only with the church buildings, ignoring organizations, pastors or dedicated members. Occasionally there is a description of a tragedy as when lightning struck the church or a fire consumed the building., Rarely do they deal with finances.

Recently a wonderfully detailed history was sent to me. It is the history of the Waupun United Methodist Church, lovingly written by Jean G. E. Wiese and carefully completed after her death, by her son Tom. I'm not sure which feature delighted me the most: the detailed biographies of all sixty-two pastors who served the church: the wealth of photographs, the itemized lists of church musicians, catechism classes, women's society presidents; and many other thoroughly documented facts

The author, Joan Grube Ellsworth Wiese was born in Springfield, Ohio on June 3, 1926.

She was a graduate of the nursing program at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. She was married to Robert Ellsworth in September 1949 and was the mother of a son and three daughters.

In 1954, the family moved to Waupun where Robert worked with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Both Jo and Bob were active members of the local Methodist church and both sang in the choir for many years.

A daughter Beth was killed in a car accident in 1973 and Bob died in 1986. Jo was remarried to a long time friend, Paul Wiese, in 1989. Jo was a gracious hostess. Among her other interests were genealogy and church history. Her obvious ability in the latter are demonstrated in this wonderfully detailed history of the local Waupun United Methodist Church. She died on July 30, 2001.

The opening pages of the book include a brief history of the origins of Methodism starting with John and Charles Wesley and the organizing of the Christmas Conference in Baltimore, Maryland in 1784. This was the first conference of the American Methodist Episcopal Church. A diagram of the united branches of the churches of united Methodism is included. Throughout the history, a variety of hymns from the United Methodist Hymnal are included.

The first meeting of Methodists in Waupun came in 1844, when Silas Miller, a local preacher, formed a Methodist Class meeting. The members of the Class were the members of his own family. Miller, a lumberman by trade, had emigrated from western New York State to the west bank of the Rock River in Wisconsin. In September, 1844 Silas and his son, Wesson, walked to Fond du Lac to attend a Methodist Quarterly meeting. There they were able to have the Waupun class included in the Fond du Lac circuit. While Silas continued as a local preacher, the Rev. Samuel Smith, also ministered to the congregation.

Wesson Gage Miller, the son of Silas, was soon assigned to the Brotherton Indian Mission. In 1845, he was accepted on trial by the Illinois-based Rock River Conference. He was assigned to the Green Lake Mission, which included Waupun and twelve other preaching places.

By the end of the year, he had increased the number of preaching places to twenty-four, and the next preacher was assigned as assistant to help handle the load. Wesson Miller tells of traveling forty miles and preaching as many as four sermons on a Sabbath. (p. 13)

The Waupun history includes sketches of the sixteen pastors who have served the congregation. The early pastors often served only a year before they were stationed to another area. There are fascinating glimpses of these early men. For example, Alexander Pope Allen is described as *“an eccentric preacher with a genius for oratory... (He) was of a decided talent but so full of queer ways and witty sayings that these seemed to give him status in the general estimation of people.”* (W.G. Miller, p 271)

Samuel W. Martin who served in 1849, married a woman who owned a slave and he was forced to withdraw from the conference in 1860... James Lawson served from 1853-55. A native of Yorkshire, England he was admitted on trial in the Wisconsin Conference in 1852 and received Elders orders the next year, He, with P. S. Bennett, wrote a detailed history of Wisconsin Methodism.

James C. Robins served from 1857-59. *“He believed in a hell for sinners a heaven for saints, in conversion, in holiness of heart and life, in a divine call of duty, and of the endowment of power from on high. Brother Robbins was well known for his powerful voice that could be heard two blocks away from his pulpit.”* (p 25)

Some pastors had other professional qualifications. William Window (1871-72) was a physician who alternately served as a doctor and a preacher. Edwin Famham (1875-78) was the principal of a Delavan school before joining the conference. George Trevor (1884-87) studied comparative theology and philosophy of religion and taught at both Lawrence College and Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. Edward Saunderson (1911-13) served as a missionary in India from 1905-09.

The brief biographies give insight into the wide-ranging interests of the pastors. Many of them carried responsibilities in the annual conference. They were involved in civic responsibilities. Still others were involved in the social concerns of the wider church. Also included are items about the wives of the pastors, their activities as well as information about the children in the parsonage. The first woman pastor was Doris Hanson (2000-02). Ms. Hanson worked for several newspapers before she was ordained as a Presbyterian minister and in 1989, transferred to the United Methodist Church.

## **BUILDINGS**

The first building used for services was a log meeting place which was used by several denominations as well as the community schoolhouse. In 1855, a frame building was erected with an addition placed in 1858. The building was replaced in 1890 with a fellowship hall added in 1898. In the fall of that year, the Methodist East Conference met in the new building. In 1935, the congregation inherited a bell which had been cast in Troy, New York, then used by the Burnett Corners' Methodist Episcopal Church and then used by the Horicon Church. A pipe organ was installed in 1938. There has been extensive remodeling in 1952, 1965, and 1984.

## **CELEBRATIONS**

The congregation has been diligent in observing local and denominational celebrations. Both the 50th and the 100th anniversaries of the congregation were celebrated. For the latter program, there was a pageant written by one of the members and included a cast of forty. In 1984, the congregation celebrated the 200th anniversary of American Methodism which included a visit from "Bishop Asbury" who helped to present insights on the growth of frontier Methodism. The celebration lasted over several months.

In 1989, the centennial celebration of the erection of the church building was noted on three Heritage Sundays. On the first Sunday, the bronze bell was rung 100 times to welcome the worshippers. A second service was held under a tent on the banks of the Rock River. On the third Sunday, Bishop David Lawson preached.

In 1994, the Sesquicentennial of the congregation was marked by a repetition of the Pioneer Skit which had been prepared for the Centennial celebration in 1944. The sermon on celebration Sunday was given by Bishop Zimmerman Rader.

A lengthy and detailed history of Camp Byron is included. The earliest meeting on the Byron ground was held in 1848. Camp meetings attracted large crowds and in 1872, it was reported that about 5000 people crowded the grounds. Originally, campers lived in tents and ate food brought from home. By 1893, cottages were erected. Early transportation to the camp was by horse and lumber wagons. In 1877, a narrow gauge railroad was built from Fond du Lac to Iron Ridge, which provided a stop at Camp Byron. By 1894, a dormitory and preacher's platform was built and in 1907, a tabernacle was built, large enough to seat 1000 people.

Camp Byron was closely associated with the Waupun Church. Several pastors were camp directors. In 1937, the deed and assets of the camp were handed to the Wisconsin Conference.

## CONGREGATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The history contains details about the various organizations within the congregation such as the Sunday school and Vacation Bible School. The members of the confirmation classes, starting in 1915, are listed. From 1958 onward, there are also pictures of the classes.

The author states that music has always played a major role in the church. A singing leader was identified as early as 1867. The first instrument installed in the church was a melodel (a small reed organ.) There is a mention of a choir in 1865. In 1900, a reed organ was installed. There were frequent concerts given by the Lawrence College Glee Club as well as the Wisconsin Conference Quartet. Elbert M. Smith, a member of the congregation became a noted organist as well as a composer. He taught at Lombard College in Galesville, Illinois, Knox College and Grinnell College in Iowa. In 1938, a Barton pipe organ was installed. This was replaced by a Baldwin electronic organ in 1962.

A review of the actions taken by the administrative organization of the church show some interesting items. On several occasions, the board dwelt with serious moral issues. One board member was appointed to prefer charges against another *member*: *slander falsehood and refusing to support the Gospel.*" (p,216)

Financial matters figure prominently. Often the pastor's salary had not been paid fully by the time he had been assigned to the next appointment. Occasionally, the pastor was allowed to keep some of the parsonage furniture in lieu of salary. That meant that the next resident of the parsonage was short of furniture.

In 1872, women were named to the committees for the first time. In 1930, the Lamartine church became affiliated with the Waupun church. In 1970, there was an effort to unite the United Methodist Church and the Union Congregational Church but the merger was defeated by both congregations.

To me, one of the most fascinating sections is the one entitled "Christian Social Concerns." There was the concern of the congregation over slavery and the Civil War. The Waupun Congregation joined the general church in the condemnation of the use of alcohol and tobacco. A W.C.T.U. unit was organized in the church. The congregation passed a resolution in 1894, requesting "an ordinance to require saloon keepers to remove all shades and screens from their windows and doors after regular closing hours in the evening and on Sundays." (p 247)

As early as 1872, there is a mention of missionary interest. This was enhanced by the Rev. Edward Saunderson who had served as a missionary in India. In 1917, Archie and Eva Richards became missionaries in China under the auspices of the Holiness Missionary Society of Chicago. They served there until 1942, when their mission station was confiscated by the Japanese. After the war in 1947, they returned to China but were forced to leave again in December 1948.

Interest in missions through the years is evidenced by the lengthy list of missionary speakers, Included was Bishop Abel Muzorewa of Southern Rhodesia. Julie Aberg Robinson, a member of the congregation, served as assistant to the Bishop of the Central Conference in Zaire from April 1986 to June 1987. Among her other responsibilities, she worked with women to increase their basic income learning skills.

Congregational organizations included: men's groups, organized in 1911; women's groups, 1872; Epworth League, 1892; and Methodist Youth Fellowship, 1942. The women's societies included the Ladies Aid, 1877; Ladies Building Union, 1878-79; Women's Foreign Missionary Society, Women's Home Missionary Society, Women's Society of Christian Service

and finally, United Methodist Women. In addition to society activities, names of the officers in the various organizations are listed.

The final section of the book provides details about noted members of the community.. Harold E.Uehling was a psychologist on the staff of both the Green Bay Reformatory and later at Waupun State Prison. In addition to scholarly works, he won a writing award for the “Years of Yesteryear,” Grace Turner Smith wrote poetry, which was published nationally. Edgar Mattel Beach distinguished himself during the Civil War where he was attached to the Union Ordinance Department. He later served as trustee and treasurer of the Wisconsin Methodist Conference. He also served on the Board of Lawrence College.

This history of a local church is tribute to the persistence and enthusiasms of a dedicated lay member. Thank you. Joan G.E.Wiese.

This history of the Waupun church can be ordered from the United Methodist church for the cost of \$25.00 which includes packing and shipping,. The church address is 199 East Jefferson St., Waupun, WI 53963-2028

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## HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The executive Committee of the United Methodist Historical Society have proposed a change in structure of the society. The proposal is to have the society function as a committee under the Archives and History Commission of the Annual Conference. The committee would have responsibility of publishing and distributing *Flashbacks*. “Subscription” would be substituted for the annual “dues” Current “Life” members would become life time subscribers. The Historical Society account with the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation, which serves as a repository for Due/Donations and provides funding for the Publication of *Flashbacks* would remain restricted to that purpose.

The committee would also be responsible for planning and carrying out Pilgrimages to sites of historical interest to Wisconsin United Methodists and conducting workshops for Local Church Historians.

The proposal has been submitted to membership of the society and will be considered by the Commission on Archives and History.

## WISCONSIN’S LITTLE CATHEDRAL FREDERIC

The village of Frederic was one of those many small sawmill towns in northern Wisconsin. And like many such villages, the need for worship and a church was one of the first recognition’s. In 1902, Louis Copland, founder and president of the First National Bank of Frederic, with his new wife, began Sunday school meetings. The first meetings were held in the sawmill boarding house.

The Methodist Church officially organized a new congregation with four members in April, 1903. It was called St. Luke’s. Plans for a new church building were drawn and ground was soon broken. Construction continued through the summer until funds were low. In the spring of 1904, the building continued with volunteer labor. The building was completed and dedicated, debt free, in October 1904.

In 1947, a “spark was kindled” in the Frederic Masonic Lodge *One lodge night, a friendly argument ensued about what made a healthy community. Worthwhile suggestions included topnotch schools, better parks, good businesses, and civic promotion for home industry and employment. Then someone declared that a church could be a powerful and predominant factor in a small community. The men began thinking about this seriously. As a result, the pastor was astonished, perhaps shocked, when 28 men rose at services on Sunday morning during the altar call to join the church. These men were among the leaders of the village. Church affairs ran better after that.*<sup>1</sup>

During the night of January 28, 1934, with temperatures of 30 degrees below zero, the building went up in smoke. The new building was designed by an architectural firm from Minneapolis They would design a gothic English country side church, authentic in the pitch of the roof, the height of the building, and the beam construction. It was finished by December 1934, and was dedicated from June 13th through the 16th, 1935.

The nave has mitered gothic beams of western fir. The crowning glory is the Great Window, 12 feet high and seven feet wide. It is a reproduction from the Cathedral of Chartes, France. Outstanding features of the building are the handcrafted altar, brass candlesticks from Manchester, England, candelabras and series of stained-glass windows. The windows were gifts from members and friends and depict important events in the life and teachings of Jesus. Laughing gargoyles adorn the timbers and engraved animals are laid in the tile floor.

Adjoining the nave is a fireside room which includes a huge fieldstone fireplace. Above the mantle is a cut relief of Bishop Frances Asbury mounted on his horse.

Outside the building is a 700-pound bronze bell. Atop the belfry is a narrow spire, donated by the Sunday School The front entry to the church is embedded with the great netherstone from the Loudon Mill in Trade Lake, which ground the flour during the earlier days of the community.

With limited funds, the exterior of the church was covered with heavy roofing material and remained so until the spring of 1944, Then hand burned cull brick was used to cover the building. The memorial brick wall and bell tower leads north from the front of the building and encloses the courtyard. The rededication service was on October 22, 1944, led by resident bishop of the Wisconsin Conference, Bishop Schuyler Garth.

The congregation celebrated the Centenary on April 27, 2003. On that day, the new organ was also dedicated. The service was attended by former pastors and their wives. The service was led by Pastor Rich Hutchinson. The afternoon service included a presentation by Greta Wiseman, who spoke briefly of her lifelong connection and support from St. Luke’s during the years of her service in missionary work in Pakistan.

Material taken from the Inter-county Leader of April 9, 2003 and April 30,2003.

<sup>1</sup> Inter-county Leader, April 9, 2003

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## **SOURCES OF HISTORICAL MATERIAL EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN**

The center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage publishes a news letter twice a

Year, it is entitled TELESCOPE-MESSENGER. It can be ordered from the United theological Seminary, 1810 Harvard Blvd. Dayton, Ohio 45406-4599

### **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN.**

This year the 135th anniversary of the founding of missionary societies in the United Methodist Church is being observed. A large amount of information can be found on the Women's Division's website: <http://gbgmumc.org/umw>. A number of books have been issued on the history of the organization. These can be ordered on a CD-ROM: Ten Best Books on the History of United Methodist Women. The cost is \$40.00 (#02829) and can be ordered from the Service Center, 7820 Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. I hope to deal with the history in the next *Flashbacks*. The November 2003 issue of *Response* Magazine has a good amount of material on the history of UMW.

### **JOHN WESLEY'S BIRTHDAY**

2003 was the 300th anniversary of John Wesley's birth. The United Methodist Reporter mentions that a Google.com search resulted in 1.3 million entries on John Wesley. I will mention only a few.

#### **John Wesley : Holiness of Heart and Life**

is a spiritual study sponsored by United Methodist Women: <http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/wesley>.

**Christian** classics ethereal **Library** at <http://www.ccel.org/w/wesley/> offers a biography of John Wesley ,along with a study of Wesleyan hymns and their literary relationships.

### **A CLOSING WORD OF ADVICE**

‘Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thine.?’ I ask no further question. ‘‘If it be, give me thy hand.’’ For opinions and terms, let us not ‘‘destroy the work of God.’’ Does thou love and serve God? It is enough. I give thee the right hand of fellowship. --John Wesley. *The Character of a Methodist* (1742)

I humbly and heartily thank Thee for all the favors Thou hast bestowed on me: for creating me after Thine own image, for daily preserving me by Thy good providence, for redeeming me by the death of Thy blessed Son, and for the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit; for causing me to be born in a Christian country, for blessing me with plentiful means of salvation, with religious parents and friends, and frequent returns of Thy ever blessed sacrament. I also thank Thee for Thy temporal blessings; for the preservation of me this night, for my health, strength, food, raiment and all the other comforts and necessities of life. --John Wesley