



"WE are the end-product of our history."

FLASHBACKS



Revealing glimpses of our creative past

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UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

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IRENE CRAMER NOTES HISTORY OF APPLETON EMMANUEL AT FALL HISTORICAL PILGRIMAGE

Celebrating its 120th anniversary, the congregation and pastors past and present of Appleton Emmanuel and their guests at the annual fall pilgrimage of the United Methodist Historical Society of Wisconsin sensed a deep commitment to the ministry and consecrated service given at Emmanuel "in honor of the Lord, giving thanks to God," according to Irene Cramer, who described the work of that congregation.

Mrs. Cramer noted that the first work toward organizing an Evangelical congregation in Appleton began in 1869 with a survey by the Neenah circuit, extending as far north and west as Seymour. An Evangelical Mission was begun in Appleton in 1870. Besides ministering to the community, the mission attracted members from other Evangelical churches who had moved to Appleton for its beautiful Fox River, promising water power, railroads, paper mills, Lawrence College and its fertile farming community.

Under the guidance of the Superintendent of the Fond du Lac District, the Rev. Mr. H. Schelp, services were held in homes of members; and later in a Congregational church chapel led by the Rev. G. Zellhofer, assisted by the Rev. A. Piepenburg. The congregation was founded in 1871. In 1872, the congregation decided to build a church. Beginning with \$ 700 from the building fund of the Wisconsin Conference, gifts and goodwill from members of the Neenah Circuit, the congregation erected a \$ 2,800 frame building. The congregation replaced its old building in 1901 with a new red brick church on the corner of Franklin and Durkee.

Much of the stone for the wall of that church was hauled by John Boldt, father of Pearl Utschig.

Emmanuel served as host to the Wisconsin Conference Sessions in 1916, 1923 and 1945.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Solomon Cramer, the present site of the church, at the corner of College and Meade, was purchased on December 13, 1945 at a cost of \$10,000. Money was raised for the new church built at a cost of \$ 275,000. In 1970, a new addition provided more educational and office space.

Sons and daughters of the congregation, those men and women who entered the ordained ministry from this church, include Walter Lembke, Marie Finger Bale, Franklin Jordan, Alvin Rabehl, Clarence Knoespel, Lowell Bartel and Clyde Cross. Among the pastors still living who served the congregation are Solomon Cramer, Frank Dauner, Rolland Ferch, Bruce Bartel, Carol Smith, David Warren, and Ruwal Freese, the present pastor.

DR. ROBERT DEWEL WRITES PAMPHLETS ON 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHRISTIANITY IN SAUK COUNTY

Dr. Robert Dewel of Baraboo published in September, 1990, the first of a three-part essay relating to the 150th anniversary of Christianity in Sauk County. Similar pamphlets will be produced in 1991 on the first Christian church service in the Baraboo Valley. In 1992, the third part will describe the formation of Baraboo's first church, the First United Methodist Church.

WAUKESHA SALEM CHURCH HISTORIAN WORKS ON COMPLETE HISTORY FOR CONFERENCE ARCHIVES

Mrs. Mary Jane Hopf, church historian of the Salem United Methodist Church, is in the process of putting together a complete history of the church for our conference archives with more work to be done on the history from 1966 to the present time.

"For the periods from 1856 to 1966, there is a beautiful printed form all finished, she said, "but, from 1966 on, the record had not been completed. I am now at a point that all that is necessary is to get it printed up."

The former Salem Evangelical United Brethren Church, located on the corner of Barstow Street and South Street in Waukesha, was demolished to make way for a new Waukesha County Freeman newspaper building, Mrs. Hopf wrote.

Salem's history goes back to 1865 when worship services were held in homes and circuit preachers came on horseback from afar to preach. In 1866, a church building was erected on Barstow and South Streets. Its name, "Salem Evangelische Gemeinschaft," was changed to "Salem Evangelical Association."

In 1922, the building was renovated on the outside with brick veneer, the Sunday School rooms and auditorium enlarged, repaired and redecorated. A garage was attached to the parsonage in 1923.

In November 1946, the Evangelical Association and United Brethren in Christ merged to become the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Some members of the congregation felt that they should build a new church in a new location, but the majority decided against it. Plans were started to renovate the church in two phases. Phase One was finished in November of 1950 and a note-burning ceremony was held. The dedication was held a short time after.

In 1953, Phase Two was started with the redecorating of the sanctuary and new tiling was laid in the foyer. Exterior trim was repaired and painted. October of 1953 began with two weeks of celebration followed by the Centennial worship service.

Many exciting and important things happened at Salem and the membership became larger, Mrs. Hopf noted. It became necessary to move from the Barstow and South Street site. A new site near Broadway and Highway A was purchased and the building began. On May 8, 1966, the doors of Salem Evangelical United Brethren Church were locked for the last time following the final worship service. The beautiful stained glass windows were removed and sold. The two bells in the tower had been removed in 1965 and the smaller one was refurbished and installed with an electrical ringing system in the new church.

The demolition of the old church proper was started on Oct. 22, 1990. On Oct. 31, the cornerstone was removed and a 10"x10"x4" rusted and damaged metal box was retrieved by workmen. Inside the box was a Bible printed in German and published in 1895; a hymnal printed in German and written in 1877; a Book of Discipline, published in 1901 in both English and German (the German language was used in worship until 1907). There were two Sunday School papers printed in German as well as a church calendar. A Waukesha County Freeman newspaper, dated 1901, was found in the box and an article commemorating the laying of the cornerstone.

The Freeman Company has taken a big interest in the entire event and took pictures of the old church and wrote many news articles. They offered the cornerstone to our present church. Church trustees are considering the removal of the cornerstone from the site.

"We are hoping that some of the items from the metal box that have deteriorated can be restored so they can be placed on display at a future date," wrote Mrs. Hopf.

BRYCE ARMSTRONG RELATES ORIGINS OF CONFERENCE MUSEUM AT OCTOBER PILGRIMAGE

"The story of the Museum of the United Methodist Church of the Wisconsin Conference comes out of the Spirit Journey of the people of God 150 years ago," began the Rev. Bryce Armstrong in his presentation to those pilgrims gathered at Appleton Emmanuel Church for the annual historical pilgrimage sponsored by the UM Historical Society of Wisconsin.

It was on a very cold day in January 1840 that the Rev. John Lutz rode horseback from DesPlaines, Illinois to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His purpose was to seek and find some Evangelical Church friends he had known in Pennsylvania who had migrated to Wisconsin. He found James Martin, Adolf and Christina Meinzer.

Christina was working as a maid in Milwaukee. The Martin family lived on a farm in the Granville area. Christina introduced Rev. Lutz to the Frederick Hegelmeyer and John Esslinger families. Rev. Lutz worshipped with them and returned to DesPlaines. The families continued to worship in their homes and called themselves The Poplar Creek Class. Mr. Esslinger served as the first class leader and then became a minister, serving for 15 years. In 1844, the first German Protestant Church in the state was erected on Janesville Plank Road (now Forest Home Avenue).

The log cabin building measured 28 by 26 feet. Pulpit and altar railings were hand made. In 1868, a Cream City brick church was constructed and the log cabin furniture was installed and remains to this day.

For many years, sermons were preached in German. The Cream City brick building was to serve the Zion Greenfield Evangelical congregation for 71 years before the congregation moved to their present building in 1929. The name was changed to Memorial Church.

The Wisconsin Conference of the Evangelical Church chose the Cream City brick church as the Conference History Building in 1939. Apparently not very much happened for a number of years. The Journal of the Wisconsin Conference of the Evangelical Church in 1946, page 73, item 12 reads:

The Trustees of Memorial Church, Milwaukee, requested the annual conference for clarification of their policy with reference to the Museum. Unless the conference is willing to make more active use of the property, Memorial Church prefers to allow the property to continue in the possession of Memorial Church. Plans for using the building are being considered.

This gentle prodding produced the following results, as reported in the Conference Journal of the following year on page 91, item 4, 1947:

Rev. M.A. Simonsen, president, and Albert H. Meyers, secretary of the Conference Trustees, were delegated to confer with the Rev. H. A. Block, Conference Historian, and the Rev. Melvin J. Roehrdanz, pastor of Memorial Church, Milwaukee, to affect a working arrangement by the Conference Historical Society for use of the building adjacent to Memorial Church, known as the Museum.

The arrangement as affected is as follows: a) In harmony with a previous action of the Wisconsin Conference, the building mentioned above, and officially known as The Centenary Historical Museum, is to be under the jurisdiction of the Conference Historical Board, which includes the repair, maintenance, and insurance protection upon the Museum, and all other items of upkeep necessary to maintain the property in sound condition. b) The Trustees of Memorial Evangelical Church, Milwaukee, are permitted to use limited space in the Centenary Museum for storage purposes. c) The matter of title is left as it is, because the committee feels that transfer of title is not necessary at the present time. d) The deed to the property is now held by Trustees of Memorial Evangelical Church.

Almost a decade elapsed before a fairly concrete plan was developed to establish the Museum as a conference facility. The 1948 Conference Journal carries this action:

May 4, 1948. The Historical Board, p. 80, para. 4. The special committee appointed for the study of the transfer of the title to the Conference Museum Building from Memorial Evangelical United Brethren Church, Milwaukee, to the Conference Historical Board met....Oct. 26, 1947...with several trustees and council members of the Memorial Church with the following clarifications and recommendations:

a) Transfer of the Museum Building by Memorial Church to the Conference Historical Board as recorded in the Journal of 1939 was noted.
b) On the matter of maintenance and use of the Museum Building, the understanding approval by the Annual Conference of 1947 was noted with the following changes:

A look at the minutes (Journal 1947, p. 79) brought this information to light..."The Conference Historian presented a clarification as to the use of the Historical Museum building between the Historical Board and the local trustees which was adopted. (p. 40 of the secretary's record."

"We do not know from the Journal what details were in the motion that was adopted," said Rev. Armstrong. "We do know what changes were made and adopted as noted on pp. 80 and 81 of the 1948 Journal:

c) That item 2 of that report be amended granting the Historical Board exclusive use of the building for historical display purposes and that to secure needed storage space for the local church, the Wisconsin Conference aid said congregation in the construction of additional storage space on their church properties by two-thirds of such cost, not to exceed \$ 250.

d) Whereas maintenance of the Museum building is the responsibility of the Historical Board, the grounds will be maintained by the local church, except that the Historical Board will appropriate \$ 10 annual to the Memorial Church toward the maintenance of said grounds.

"Hopefully," said Armstrong, "someone took the time to discuss the changes with the local church. The Historical Board seems to have had more power than the current respective agency. The 1952 Journal, p. 75, records Board action as follows: Moved and carried, the pastor of the Memorial Church to be the assistant custodian of the Historical Building."

"Yours truly," he admitted, "did not realize that as pastor from 1985 to 1990, he was fulfilling a Board mandate when he tacked down some loose carpeting, swept up dead flies and disposed of a curious squirrel that had come in through the chimney pipe opening and in great panic had tried to chew his way out through the window frame panes until death mercifully ended his travail. The damage is yet to be repaired."

Armstrong reported that as of the time of the pilgrimage, October 6, 1990, the Museum stands in a financially favorable condition to make plans for a renewed and valuable conference museum. The Weiler Memorial funds will provide income for many years, he said. Careful planning is an ongoing need. Consultations with Memorial Church and Conference Boards and agencies need to continue. Committees and task forces need to be called into existence and held accountable to follow through on approved actions. Perhaps, the conference and district chairpersons on Archives and History could be so empowered, Armstrong suggested.

Such actions include moving the electronic organ out of the Museum....If Memorial Church does not need it, donate it to a mission church; form a design committee for kinds of displays that truly reflect our beginnings, made up of persons from our several original denominations; evolution of a new sense of conference ownership.

"The Museum could become a place of information, inspiration, and depository worth valuing for all who seek to appreciate our great heritage," Armstrong said. "We need to know that God was present long before we took our place on this land."

On the day that the log church was dedicated in Greenfield on August 4, 1844 by Bishop John Seybert in the midst of oil lamps and handmade pews, altar rails and pulpit, the Gospel was preached. The sermon theme was "Holiness is the Beauty of God's House." Eight souls were converted and eight joined the church on that Sunday.

Solicits prayer support

LOIS OLSEN REJOICES IN THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD TO HER AND TO THE MAUA COMMUNITY

A holiday letter from missionary Lois Olsen, Methodist Hospital, Maua, Meru, Kenya, sends us her wishes for a blessed New Year, recounts all of the good things that have happened in the past year and the Lord's blessing on her and the Maua community, but she also solicits our prayers.

She asks us to pray:

- for the completion of the buildings under construction there;
- for the continuing financial problems at the hospital and nursing school;
- for the threat of war (now war) in the Gulf;
- for peace in devastated Liberia;
- for Christiansk still there and in exile;
- for the missionaries who had to be evacuated; and
- for friends and family killed, and for those who lost homes and possessions.

Lois told us she rejoices in the many new friends she met in the past year, the work teams that came from all over the United States; the students and instructors from UW-M; Stan and Diane Boyer from Loyola University; dedicated volunteers who built a new premie nursery, painted and did construction and repaired broken windows.

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United Methodist Historical
Society of Wisconsin



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