



"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

Vol. 21 No.3

July 1995

CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the United Methodist Historical Society of the Wisconsin Conference was held on Thursday, June first at UW-Stevens Point. President M.J.Hoeft presided. The Rev.Robert W.Kuhn was appointed chairperson of the nominating committee. Officers will be elected at the time of the fall pilgrimage. The business meeting was followed by a discussion on genealogy led by Mrs.Ruth Steffen.

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

1995 Historical Convocation of the United Methodist Church. August 25-28, 1995 Epworth by the Sea, St.Simons Island, Georgia. Some thirty major papers will be presented. The keynote speaker will be Justo Gonzalez. S.T.Kimbrough will discuss Charles Wesley's Georgia diary. In addition, there will be workshops on local church history research and records management of the annual conference. There will be opportunities to visit nearby places of historical interest.

To register or for further information, contact Susan Warrick, GCAH, P.O.Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940

Annual meeting, North Central Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History, Central Illinois, July 10±13. Contact Richard O'Neil, 212 W Church St. P.O.Box 127, Shullsburg, WI. 53586-0127

1995 Fall Pilgrimage, Saturday, September 30. Wautoma, WI. Send reservations by Wednesday, September 20 to: Pastor Merlin J hoeft, P.O.Box 1126, Wautoma, WI 54982-1126. (Further information on page 2.)

1996 Fall Pilgrimage, Emmanuel Community, Menomonee Falls

FALL PILGRIMAGE

Grace Church of Wautoma will be the site of the 1995 Fall Pilgrimage. The church suffered extensive damage when a tornado struck the town on Saturday, August 29, 1992.

The devastating tornado with winds up to 200 miles per hour ripped through twenty-one miles in the Wautoma area at approximately 8:40 p.m. . As the tornado dragged along the ground, it cut a path of devastation causing estimated damage of \$10 million.

The tornado touched down just west of Grace United Methodist Church. Four homes were swept away, others were damaged. One woman was killed. The church suffered extensive damage. The sanctuary wall was ripped out except for the fragile stained glass windows. Ceiling boards were dislodged, organ pipes were blown away and debris was spread around the church. The swirling winds created a vacuum inside which sucked out the ceilings in the education wing. The roof was severely damaged.

Clean-up and repairs began early the next day and continue until mid-March 1993. Repair costs were about \$276,000 and were covered by insurance money as well as the many donations received. United Methodist churches in Wisconsin donated money for the repair of the church as well as to assist members of the congregation in their recovery. Funds were also distributed to local residents who suffered damage.

The fall pilgrimage of the Wisconsin Conference Historical Society will be held on Saturday, September 30, 1995. The church is located at N2133 Southgate Terrace in Wautoma. The church is located about one mile south of Highway 21, on the west side of HWY 22.

The program will begin with moments of worship at 11:00 a.m. There will be a business meeting with election of officers. This will be followed by a video of the tornado. After lunch at the church there will be a guided tour of nearby Camp Lucerne.

Cost of the luncheon is \$5.00 per person. Please send reservation by Wednesday, September 20, to Pastor Merlin J. Hoeft, P.O. Box 1126, Wautoma, WI 54982-1126.

HISTORICAL PILGRIMAGE

Saturday, September 30, 1995



Grace United Methodist Church
N2133 Southgate Terrace, Wautoma
(about one mile south of Hwy. 21
on the west side of Hwy. 22)

The Schedule:

- 11:00 a.m. Moments of Worship
11:20 a.m. Business meeting (election of officers)
11:35 a.m. Video of the tornado - August 29, 1992
Where did the money go?
12:30 p.m. Lunch at the church
1:30 p.m. Guided tour of Camp Lucerne
Cost of the noon lunch is \$5.00 per person.
Please send reservation by Wednesday, September 20 to:

Pastor Merlin J. Hoeft
P.O. Box 1126
Wautoma, WI 54982-1126

Please make check payable to:
Camp Lucerne

Sponsored by the United Methodist Historical Society in Wisconsin

YORKVILLE

The Yorkville United Methodist Church traces its Wesleyan origins to John Wesley's converts in Cornwall, England. Elizabeth Foxwell Shephard, who with her husband Hannibal, settled in Yorkville in 1841, traced her Methodist heritage to her maternal great-grandfather and her paternal grandfather, both of whom belonged to Methodist Societies. When the Shephards established their home in Yorkville, that home became the setting for the first Methodist worship service in 1842. At that first gathering, the Shephard's son, Thomas Foxwell Shephard, was baptized.

The Wesleyan Methodist Association was organized and retained a connection with the organization in England through the "Connecional Committee".

By 1844, the group had grown large enough so that it seemed necessary to construct a building that could be used for worship. Construction of what was called the Mud Chapel was begun in the summer of 1844. The building was made of stone to the height of the window sills while the upper walls were made of clay and straw. There was provision for a burial ground next to the church.

In 1845, the Yorkville Circuit had been organized and included Yorkville, English Settlement, Beaumont, Caledonia, Paris and Brighton. During the next few years, a number of additional preaching points were established. Most of the preaching was done by local preachers who were taken on trial and then underwent intensive examination in reference to "Doctrinal Sentiments" before they could be licensed.

The Rev. William Drummond was the first full-time minister. He came from England in response to a request from the Yorkville Circuit. The Wesleyan Methodist Association in England paid the passages for him and his family but the \$250 annual salary and lodging were provided by the Yorkville Circuit.

The first Sabbath School was organized in 1856. Classes were held for one and a quarter hours on Sunday afternoons. In the Wesleyan tradition, in addition to Sabbath worship and school, there were weekly class meetings. Attendance at class meeting was required while attendance at Sunday worship was not so essential. Membership at class meetings was limited to twenty people. Singing was an important part of the class meetings.

By 1856, the congregation had outgrown the Mud Chapel. This building was razed and a white frame building was erected on the site.

There was a strong women's organization within the church which underwent a series of changing names. In 1882, it was

called the Church Sociable Organization and later became the Ladies Sewing Circle, then the Ladies Aid Society. This was supplemented by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. Later, these two groups merged into the Woman's Society of Christian Service in 1940.

On 1860, the congregation ended its relationship with the Association in England and formed an alliance with the Bible Christian Connection. This association ended in 1884 when the circuit joined the Wisconsin Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1913, the congregation realized that a new building was needed. A new site was donated by two of the members. The building was constructed of red brick. Ground was broken on April 13, 1914, and the building was dedicated on October 13. The total cost of the building was \$8000, an amount secured by pledges. A stained glass window was donated by the Duckett family as a memorial to Hannibal and Elizabeth Shephard.

In 1929, Yorkville became part of the six church that were the Racine County Larger Parish. These churches were served by two pastors. The combined churches were able to conduct activities that could not be done by small individual congregations. A parish newsletter was published, a parish choir was organized, youth rallies were held and leadership training events were organized. The Larger Parish was disbanded in 1935.

The union of the several denominations were accepted by the local church. Several building improvements were made. A new parsonage was built in 1953. An addition was made to the church building in 1958.

In 1973, another effort was made to develop a larger parish, this time called the New Hope Larger Parish. Six churches were included in the Parish including two United Church of Christ churches. The parish was served by three full-time pastors. In 1982, one of the full-time pastors was replaced with a student intern from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. Ives Grove and Yorkville congregations united in 1983. In 1982, the Larger Parish was dissolved and Yorkville was joined with Paris Corners to become a two point charge.

Yorkville Church celebrated the 150th anniversary in 1992. The celebration included a birthday dinner in March, a replication of the Mud Church was a part of the Union Grove Fourth of July Celebration, and an old-fashioned worship service and picnic in August. In October, there was a special Sunday School Service, a worship service and a banquet to commemorate the beginning of the congregation.

The current pastor is Paul Armstrong.

PARIS CORNERS

The Paris Corners United Methodist Church was organized by the early Welsh settlers. The first church was Bethany Primitive Methodist Church, where the first services were held in the 1840's. The first building was constructed in 1853 or 1854 when a Methodist circuit rider, Thomas Lester, built a frame church. In 1878, Bethany Primitive Methodist and Paris Freewill Baptist church merged.

From 1879 to 1886, the pastor of the Burlington Union Methodist Church also served as the pastor of the Paris Corners Church. From 1929 to 1935, Paris Corners was a part of the Racine County Larger Parish.

The old frame building was in use for almost one hundred years. In 1952, the congregation voted to purchase a new site and to construct a new building. Ground was broken on December 17, 1952 and the first service was held in the new building on January 24, 1954, led by Bishop H. Clifford Nothcott. Parish Corners is currently part of a two-point charge with Yorkville.

CLINTON

In 1844, a group of five people met in a home at Summerville to organize a Methodist Society. Pastoral leadership was supplied by the Rock River Conference for Illinois. Rev. F. Flanders was the first pastor to lead this new congregation. By 1855, the need for a building was apparent. Twenty-nine families pledged \$2282 toward the new building. As a part of his pledge, the Rev. Joseph Anderson gave the acre of land on which the church was to be built. In the following year, the Clinton Circuit was created within the Racine District. The church building was completed in 1857. A parsonage was built two years later. The Sunday School addition was built at the end of 1879.

For many years, the church was served by student pastors, shared pastors, retired pastors and short-term pastors. In 1975, the church became a one-point charge with a full-time pastor.

The 150th anniversary of the church was held on October 23, 1994. The morning worship was conducted by Rev. Kenneth and Margaret Zinn, who had served the church between 1973 and 1981. The worship service featured a commissioned Country Gospel song, composed and sung by Dr. Robert Sullivan, entitled "Little Country Church and Sunday School." In the afternoon, a reception was held in honor of Bishop Sharon Rader. This was followed by a banquet served in the church fellowship hall.

The evening service of celebration featured a hymn written by Mary Bittner of Naperville, Illinois, commissioned for this service. Bishop Rader preached the anniversary sermon.

CLINTON (Continued)

Additional services were held throughout the rest of the year and included affirmation of wedding vows, a prayer and healing service, a new member recognition service and ended with an Epiphany party in January of 1995.

RACINE EVANGELICAL

In 1844, three German-speaking friends invited another friend to a prayer meeting in Racine. This was the seed of the Evangelical Church. A few months later, in September, the church was officially organized by the Rev. Matthias Hauert, a traveling Evangelical mission pastor. There were ten members in the original congregation.

Meetings were held in private home and later in a school house. In 1848, the first building was constructed on Chippewa Street (now Park Avenue.) The building cost was \$400.00. The congregation became a member of the Wisconsin Conference of the Evangelical Church in 1856. The second building was begun in 1870, also on Park Avenue at the cost of \$10,105. A new parsonage was also built.

A Sunday School was organized shortly after the establishment of the congregation. A choir was begun in 1864, the first Women's Missionary Society in 1888 and a Young People's Alliance in 1893.

The present building at 212 Eleventh Street was dedicated in June 1951. A prominent feature of the sanctuary is the Wadewitz Memorial Organ.

The Women's Missionary Society had a prominent place within the life of the church, under a series of changing names. The names reflected the close association with women missionaries serving the general church. The first group was named after Lois Kramer who served in Japan. The Girl's Circle carried the name of Susan Baurenfeind, also working in Japan. The Lucies recognized Lucy Rowe, working in Nigeria. Melva Siedschlag, working at Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, was recognized by the Melva circle. The Donnas were named after Donna Bischoff, wife of the superintendent at Red Bird.

Irene Haumerson exerted a great spiritual influence in the church, particularly for the children. She established a Junior church program and directed it for almost fifty years. She had influence far beyond her local church, both in the district and the states. From 1940-45, she was president of the Wisconsin Women's Missionary Society.

The 150th anniversary celebration was held in July of 1994 and included a banquet and a special worship service.

DENMARK

This church had its beginnings in 1875 in a small brick building there the Zion United Methodist Cemetery is located. south and west of the town of Denmark. It was known as East Cooperstown Evangelical. It fell into disrepair and was later razed. In 1915, a group of people met at the Farmer's Equity Hall and planned for a new building.

The bell in the tower and the clock in the narthex came from the original church. A parsonage was built in 1922 and a new one purchased in 1993. The church school addition was built in 1978.

Two members of the congregation became pastors: the Rev. Raymond Hansen became an army chaplain and was killed in the Normandy invasion in 1944. The organ was dedicated in his honor by his parents. The Rev. Lloyd Handsen, who is now eighty years old, serves a church in Jamestown, North Dakota.

The congregation celebrated the 80th anniversary on April 23, 1995.

MEET THE MISSIONARIES

Fred and Joyce Brancel were both born and raised in Wisconsin. Fred spent his childhood on the family farm near Briggsville. His professional education included a degree in agricultural education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and graduate studies at Cornell and Hartford Seminary in Conn. Joyce grew up in Madison and attended Iowa State College in Ames.

Fred began his missionary career as an agricultural missionary in Angola from 1952-61. From 1962-63, he was the Peace Corps Heifer Project Director in St. Lucia, West Indies. From there he went to Zimbabwe where he worked in education.

In 1965, both Joyce and Fred were widowed. They were married in 1968 and went to work in Zaire. Joyce taught and Fred continued his work in agriculture.

After their return to the United States in 1972, Fred served as the Lay Associate of the University United Methodist in Madison while Joyce worked as the Senior Citizen Coordinator at the Madison Community Center. From 1972-88, the Brancels managed the Whispering Pines United Methodist Camp at Frederick, WI.

The Brancels have been busy in retirement and have traveled extensively. They maintain their interests in the work of the church outside the United States as well as the camping program of the church. They are currently living in Eandevor, WI

The United Methodist Church
Wisconsin Annual Conference
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Material of historical interest, church
anniversaries, recollections, activities of
local historical committees and historians,
should be sent to her at the above address.

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