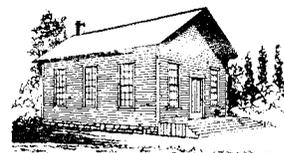




"Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history." — A. Lincoln

FLASHBACKS



Revealing glimpses of our creative past

Official newsletter of the

UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

Vol. I, No. 2

May, 1981

Our new hymn, OUR HERITAGE, which those who have heard it have found thrilling, will help you celebrate 150 years of United Methodism in Wisconsin. See pages 2, 3, and 4 of this issue.

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the United Methodist Historical Society of Wisconsin will be held Thursday evening, June 4, at the Annual Conference. A committee will report on the details of the fall pilgrimage at that time.

THE FALL PILGRIMAGE

The fall pilgrimage for 1981 will be in the area of Mineral Point, Benton, and Platteville. The starting point will be Mineral Point with the dinner served at that point. More information will be available at June conference time.

ON TELEPHONE

In order to eliminate the travel expenses for a meeting of the Executive Committee of the United Methodist Historical Society, business was conducted by a telephone hook-up. At that time plans for the annual meeting and the fall pilgrimage were discussed as well as the possible changes in membership dues.

SESQUI-CENTENNIAL

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1882

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* Ernest Renan
* in
* La Vie de Jesus
*

WORKSHOP FOR LOCAL CHURCH HISTORIANS

Does your church have a local historian who is not sure of her responsibilities? The answers may be found in a workshop planned for Wednesday, June 3 (the afternoon before Conference) from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church.

Should the books be cataloged? What method should be used? Where are valuable records kept? Are any artifacts kept? How are books circulated? What is done about unreturned books? Who decides on books to be ordered?

Send reservations before May 28 to Mrs. Kitty Hobson, 1506 Kensington Ave., Oshkosh, Wis.. A charge of \$1.00 can be paid at time of the workshop.

OPEN HOUSE

* An Open House will be held
* at the Conference archives in
* the Algoma Boulevard United
* Methodist Church of Oshkosh
* from 4 to 5:30 p.m. on June 4.

NEW HYMN CELEBRATES HERITAGE

A hymn, new in both words and music, has been prepared to help Wisconsin United Methodists celebrate 150 years of continuous organized religious life in the state. Entitled Our Heritage, it recalls the process by which we have received our faith in Jesus Christ along with the transformation of the wilderness into settled and civilized communities. It also challenges us to share the faith and the Savior with others, as the early preachers shared it with the settlers.

Both words and music are the products of ministers of the conference. Rev. William Blake wrote the words and the stirring music was composed by Rev. Thomas E. White. It was sung for the first time at the Hymn Sing in Emanuel United Methodist Church, Baraboo, on April 26. Over 400 people joined enthusiastically in giving the new hymn its first rendition.

It is expected that it will be used in services at conference and throughout the state as Wisconsin United Methodists celebrate their sesquicentennial. The author and the composer, who hold copy-rights on it, have agreed to give permission to local churches and conference agencies to reproduce it for their own use. The line "Reprinted by permission" should always accompany its reproduction. The Commission on Archives and History is also considering plans to make copies cheaply available.

1982 MARKS 150th ANNIVERSARY

Celebration of the 150th anniversary of organized United Methodist life in Wisconsin in 1982 was one of the items of business considered by the conference Commission on Archives and History at its spring meeting held Friday, April 24 in the conference headquarters building in Sun Prairie.

Under the guidance of the chairperson, Mrs. Dorothy Brice of Richland Center, the conference agency reviewed the beginning of the evangelical thrust in the state. Three United Methodist congregations, still alive and flourishing, were started in 1832: Fort Howard (now First U.M.C., Green Bay), Oneida, and Platteville. Both the Evangelical and United Brethren organized witness in the state began in 1840 with the organization of the Greenfield Memorial (Evangelical) and the Rutland (United Brethren) congregations.

A number of emphases were planned by the Commission. Conference will be asked to provide a fitting commemoration at its 1982 sessions. A sesquicentennial hymn, Our Heritage, was presented via printed copies and a tape recording, and accepted as the sesquicentennial hymn. The words were written by Rev. William Blake, conference historian emeritus, and the music by Rev. Thomas E. White, commission secretary and pastor of Emanuel United Methodist Church, Baraboo.

The Rev. Wayne D. Helmerich, conference historian, reported that he planned to have the sound filmstrip presenting our history in the state ready for general use during 1982.

It is hoped that local congregations will celebrate the historic landmark by appropriate commemorative services and other activities. It was suggested that a Sunday near July 22 (date of organization of Green Bay First Church) or September 15 (date of organization of the Oneida Church) be set aside in each local charge as Wisconsin Heritage Sunday with appropriate observances. They could include a review of the history of the local churches, and possibly the production of local church histories.

Two years later (1984) the whole denomination will be celebrating the bicentennial of the beginning of the evangelical movement as a Church by the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the "Christmas conference" held in Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1784. Before that step was taken the movement was within the Anglican or state Church, and consisted of societies and bands or classes. The leadership consisted largely of unordained (but trained) lay preachers. By action of the conference of 1784 preachers were ordained as ministers, bishops were elected, and the movement became organized as a separate Church.

OUR HERITAGE

Celebrating 150 years of United Methodism in Wisconsin—1982

PSALM 61:5
WILLIAM BLAKE 1901 -

HERITAGE 87.87 D.
THOMAS E. WHITE 1938 -

1. Sing a song of cel - e - bra - tion For the her - i - tage we share:
2. Cleared the woods and tamed the prai - ries, Built their cab - ins, raised their barns,
3. Gath - ered con - verts in - to chur - ches, Fought the e - vils of their day,

Faith in Je - sus Christ our Sav - ior, And his com - rade-ship through prayer.
Changed the wil - der - ness they found here In - to set - tle - ments and farms.
Won the hearts of man - y set - tlers To the true and liv - ing Way.

To Wis - con - sin's lakes and riv - ers, Prai - ries wide and for - ests deep,
Close be - side them came the preach - ers, Her - alds of Christ's bound - less grace,
Ours is now the faith they brought here, Ours their fel - low - ship of prayer,

Came the pi - o - neers and set - tlers Seek - ing fer - tile lands and cheap;
Braved the newland with its hard - ships, Searched for souls in eve - ry place;
Ours their love for Christ the Sav - ior, Ours to cher - ish and to share. A - men.

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Music Copyright © 1981 by Thomas E. White

Grant us appreciative souls. If the hardships of the world have embittered us until the benedictions have been forgotten, remind us, we pray thee, of all the spiritual assets of life. Make real to us again the background out of which have come the nobler aspects of our heritage, the resources of power within our reach, the friends that have not been untrue, the persons that have not been unkind. Refresh our hope and courage. For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Harry Emerson Fosdick

FLASHBACKS

*Official newsletter of the United Methodist
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Miss Margaret H. Scott, editor

1400 W. Seminary St., Richland Center, Wis. 53581

Material of historical interest, such as church anniversaries, recollections, activities of local church historical committees, and historians should be sent to her at the above address.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Rev. Robert W. Kuhn, president

Mrs. Josephine Rowlands, vice president

Rev. Theodore Jordan, secretary

David W. Chevalier, treasurer (ex officio)

Miss Margaret H. Scott, editor of Flashbacks

Rev. Richard A. O'Neil, membership secretary, P. O. Box 96, Arlington, Wis. 53911

Membership applications and dues should be sent to the membership secretary at the above address.

PAPERWEIGHT KEY TO HISTORY OF A CHURCH

In October, 1980, a paperweight bearing a picture of a crude log church labeled Bethel Methodist Church, Richland Center, Wisconsin; Pastor Rev. Pow was brought to the County Room of Brewer Library, Richland Center, by Mrs. Pickel of Baraboo. After deciding that Richland Center was the mailing address, Twylah Kepler, archivist, began to search for information through the local paper.

It was known that very early there was a Bethel School District in the southern part of Richland County and that up on English Ridge there was still a little frame building bearing the large letters: Bethel Chapel, 1880.

Gradually information came in. The little church was the forerunner of the English Ridge Bethel Chapel built in 1912. A copy of a warranty deed showing the plot of ground was purchased in 1880 from Joseph Robbins was brought in. Mr. Robbins must have lived near for the story is told of the crude structure having wide cracks in the floor boards which increased the squeal and dust disruption when Robbin's dog chased the pigs under the church.

A picture of a boy on a horse came in. No one remembers his name but in the years 1909 to 1912 he rode his horse around the countryside selling postcards and paperweights picturing the church. It was reported that he sold five hundred paperweights at \$.25 each and postcards at \$.10, which won him a prize from Rev. Robert Pow.

The new church was dedicated in 1912 with Mrs. Rosa Berkshire, Mrs. Nina Queen, Edgar Doudna, and Henry Buroker as trustees. In 1969 when the Methodist Conference was to dispose of it, interested parties bought it, where today it stands as a memorial to the past.

AUDIO-VISUAL TO HONOR HERMAN BLOCK

A sound filmstrip on United Methodism in Wisconsin will be dedicated to the memory of Rev. Herman A. Block. Action was taken at the fall meeting of the Commission on Archives and History in Beloit October 25, 1980.

Herman Block was originally a minister of the Evangelical Association, and served for many years as its conference historian, and later as historian of the Wisconsin Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. He was the author of Historical Data -- Wisconsin Conference -- E. U. B. Church, besides a number of brochures, pamphlets, and leaflets dealing with various aspects of the history of that denomination in Wisconsin. He died February 29, 1980 at the age of 100 years.

Materials for the project have been gathered over a period of several years. Rev. Wayne D. Helmerich, conference historian, is presently working on the completion of the audio-visual. When finished it will be available for churches and organizations throughout the state.

In addition to the remainder of the fund contributed by Ideas Unlimited initially for the production of Cross and Flame in Wisconsin, donations in memory of Mr. Block are to be used to finance the venture.

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