



# FLASHBACKS

*Promoting the Ministry of Memory*



The Official Newsletter of

*The Commission on Archives and History,  
Wisconsin Conference, The United Methodist Church*

September 2014, Vol. 40, No.2

## **Archives Retreat: *October 2-3, 2014 Pine Lake Camp***

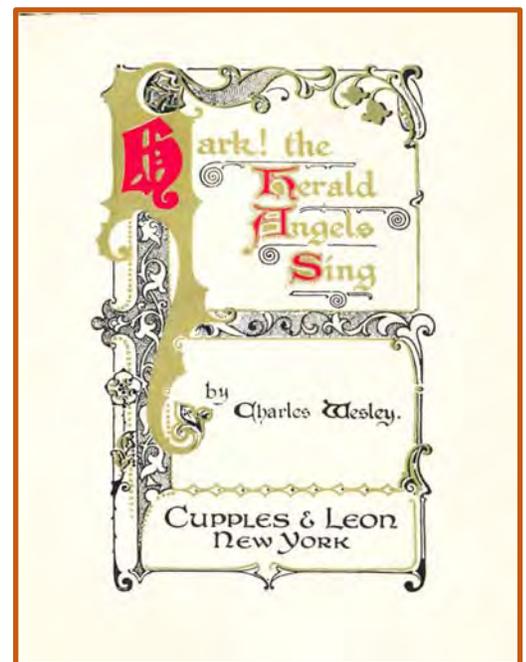
**Our United Methodist Musical Heritage:** Come—and join us—and sing—as we celebrate the rich musical heritage of The United Methodist Church! The Commission on Archives and History is sponsoring a multi-year celebration of and introduction to our shared musical background in its fourth annual Retreat.

In 2014, we will begin with our early British heritage, the hymns of greats such as Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley, as well as touch on other topics from 18th century hymnody and psalmody in Great Britain and America.

Learn the original words to “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” and give thanks to God for George Whitfield who helped rewrite them.

Learn about those funny shaped notes you see in some hymn tunes and discover why they were used. Sing an old metrical psalm as it is lined out to you.

In addition, for our local church historians we will have a workshop focused on such topics as the treasures stored in our Conference Archives, helpful strategies for highlighting your church’s history, and tips on organizing and preserving your church’s precious historical records.



## Schedule

**Thursday, October 2, 2014**

**11 am – Noon:** Check in/registration  
Rader Retreat Center

**Noon:** Lunch in Amphlett Hall

**1:00-5:00 pm:** “Our Musical Heritage, or What the Hark is a Welkin?”

Led by the Revs. Jeremy Deaner and Allie Scott.

**5:30 pm:** Dinner in Amphlett Hall

**6:30 pm:** “Worship Then and Now”

Led by the Rev. Dan R. Dick

**7:30 pm:** Hymn and Psalm sing with

Barbara A. Dick, Facilitator,  
Spiritual Formation Resource  
Team, Wisconsin Annual  
Conference

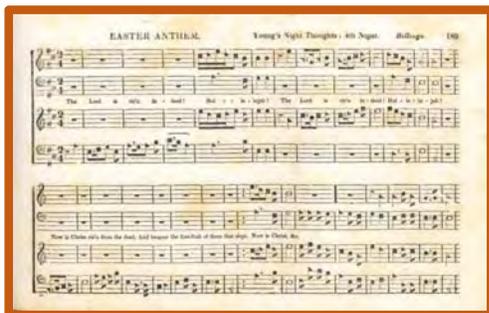
**Friday, October 3, 2014**

**8:00 am::** Breakfast in Amphlett Hall

**9:00 am-Noon:** Local Church Historian  
Workshop

Led by Sandy Kintner, Bev Maser,  
and Lynn Lubkeman

**Noon:** Lunch and send-off



## Archives Retreat Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Church/Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration/ Housing Information:

I would like a:

Single room \$105.00

Double room \$75.00

My roommate request is: \_\_\_\_\_

I have no roommate preference,  
please assign one

Day registration only:

Thursday only \$35.00

Friday only \$35.00

Payment Information:

Please return registration form and payment to  
the Archives Office. Checks may be made  
payable to WI UMC Archives.

WI Annual Conference Archives

750 Windsor Street, Suite 101

Sun Prairie, WI 53590

**Questions: Contact the Archives at:**

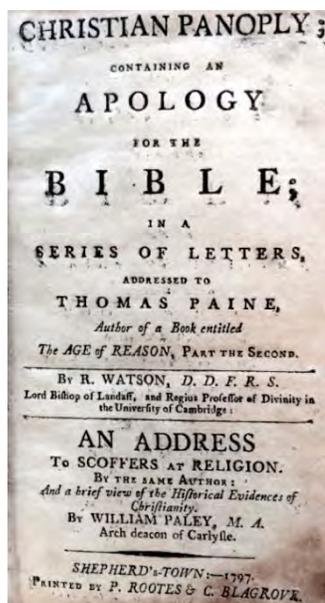
**archives@wisconsinumc.org or**

**608-837-7328**

# From the Archives:

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## A Diamond in the Rough



Recently about twenty file boxes of books, records and memorabilia from the River of Life UMC, Beloit were brought to the Archives. The material is an accumulation of material from former Methodist and EUB churches that have been discontinued or merged with other UM churches. My current volunteer job has been sorting through some of this material to find items that might be of value for the archives. The boxes contained the usual assortment of disciplines, hymnals, bibles, Christian books and church records.

However, tucked amid a group of 1935 Methodist Episcopal hymnals was a book published in 1797. The title page elaborately told the contents of the book. It reads as follows:

*“Christian Panoply: Containing an Apology for the Bible: in a Series of Letters, addressed to Thomas Paine, Author of a Book Entitled, “The Age of Reason.”*  
By R. Watson, Lord Bishop of Llandaff and Regent Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge.”

There then follows 332 pages refuting the beliefs and writings of Paine as written in his popular book of the day, “The Age of Reason.” Thomas Paine was labeled an atheist by some and a "freethinker" by most. He was critical of many societal things of his day including, England’s monarchy, American slavery, as well as religion, the Bible and the church, He was a friend of both Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, and is said to have influenced the writing of the Declaration of Independence.

Richard Watson was a Professor of Divinity at Cambridge for nine years before becoming the Bishop at Llandaff the south region of Wales. He was schooled in both the classics and Biblical studies and writes that his publishing “Christian Panoply” was “the singular service in stopping the torrent of ir-religion which has been excited in Paine’s writing.”

The text of the book is not easy reading because it is written in 18th century English, and the sentences are often long and complicated. Much of what Watson wrote is accusing Paine of not knowing the facts of the Bible, and correcting him. For example, at one point he corrects Paine for writing that Luke was one of the twelve apostles, saying. “You ought to have known that

Luke was no apostle...that he wrote from the testimony of others. If this mistake proceeds from your ignorance, you are not a fit person to write comments on the Bible.” (Panoply. p. 105).

Included in the book is another of Watson's writings entitled “An Address to Scoffers of Religion.” He tells us that his source for this apology is William Paley’s writing “The Authenticity of the Books of the New Testament.” Paley was a noted theologian and natural scientist of the day. Watson includes Paley’s writing, as if to say, “if you don't believe me, here is further evidence for belief in Christianity from one of the leading Biblical scholars of the day”.

Besides being a book that is 217 years old, it is also a treasure because it vividly tells us of a faith controversy of the 18th century, the time of John Wesley (1703-1791). I believe we can safely assume that Wesley knew of both Paine and Watson; that he probably read writing and may have had personal writing or conversation with them. Whoever owned the book we possess studied it diligently evidenced by a table of beliefs he read wrote on the back pages of the fly leaf. The book is one of seven from the 18<sup>th</sup> century that is in the Archives. It is not our oldest book that honor goes to a 1575 book of sermons by various German preachers, a book that is illustrated with outstanding woodcuts. Nevertheless, the Archives is proud to add another 18<sup>th</sup> century book to our collection.

Submitted by Wil Bloy, Archives Volunteer

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## **UMC Musings:**

### **History of The United Methodist Historical Societies in Wisconsin**

In this issue of *Flashbacks*, we will begin a survey of the histories of the various Historical Societies within the Wisconsin United Methodist tradition. Various, because each of our predecessor denominations have had a number of groups whose professed ministry was the preservation of the memories within their respective Conferences, but nearly all had a life that was transitory in nature. Especially in their early history, these groups always seemed to be fighting an uphill battle in their effort to collect and preserve the history around them. The result was an ebb and flow of interest. A Society would form with great energy, dedication and purpose, only to find that they were no match for the apathy from their fellow Conference members, and before long commitment would dwindle and the group would cease to function. Indeed, looking back over the last one hundred and fifty plus years, it is doubtless that a great deal was sadly lost and it is really only because of the dedication of a few forward looking individuals, to be named in the pages that follow, that we have the treasures that populate our current Archives.

Let us begin with the Evangelicals: In 1857, Rev. Wilhelm W. Orwig, published the first history of the Evangelical Association from its beginnings with Jacob Albright in Pennsylvania to what was then present day. It was a project that was twenty years from conception to completion. That same year (1857) the Wisconsin Conference of the Evangelical Association was separated from the Illinois Conference. Perhaps in response to Rev. Orwig's tome, the Wisconsin Conference organized a Historical Society and elected Rev. J. G. Miller, president; Rev. J.G. Escher, vice-president; Rev. C. A. Schnake, secretary; and Rev. Christian Augenstein, treasurer. What work this group might have accomplished, if any, is unknown and they disappeared from the Conference journal after two short years in 1859. It is of some comfort that at the death of their secretary, Rev. C. A. Schnake, in 1876, 14 hand written sheets headed "Story of the Wisconsin Conference" were found among his papers.

These sheets gave the history of the beginning of the work of the Evangelical Association in Madison, Sauk, Jefferson, Lomira, Fox River, Monroe and Two Rivers to 1859. While the eventual disposition of those sheets is unknown, we do know that they were available fifty-six years later when Rev. Gustav Fritsche took on the formidable task of writing his Conference's history. At its 1915 session the Wisconsin Conference passed a motion commissioning Rev. Fritsche to "gather material for a history of the Wisconsin Conference and present it at the next Conference Session," Rev. Fritsche was further instructed to "handle this matter as he thought best." And so he did. In his introduction to his history, Rev. Fritsche relates much of his frustration in trying to collect records or accounts so late after the fact. In response to an inquiry from Rev. Fritsche, Bishop Horn (who served in Wisconsin for a decade) responded,

*"You have before you a painfully difficult task and you are correct when you say that it is high time in Wisconsin that this history should be written. You could have expressed it in stronger language; namely, that unfortunately it is already too late. In most places the interesting activities concerning the beginnings were not recorded and so were lost with the death of the old members."*

And yet, Rev. Fritsche persevered. He especially credited the elderly members of the "Greenfield" congregation and short items that had appeared in the *Christiichen Botschafter* for helping him in his efforts. In addition, he gives credit to Rev. Buehler for writing the sixteen year history from Rev. Lutz's arrival near Milwaukee in 1840 to the inaugural Wisconsin Conference in Helensville, Jefferson County in 1857. Apparently, Rev. Buehler at an earlier date had started the writing of the "Story of Missions in the Wisconsin Conference" for a District Meeting. At any rate, it took Rev. Fritsche until 1921 to submit a finished manuscript to the Conference. The Conference responded by sending it to the Evangelical Publishing house in

Cleveland and having 1,000 copies printed, 500 of them bound, at a cost of \$1,701.40. The sale price was set at \$1.50 per copy, a price that was below what was needed to break even. While Rev. Fritsche bemoans the incomplete nature of his final product and knew that “many consider historical record of this nature superfluous and unnecessary and as a result make disparaging remarks about them,” in the end what he produced is one of the most consulted sources in the Archives.

Following the publication of the “History”, there is no mention of an Evangelical History Society until 1938, when the Conference resolved that a Wisconsin Historical Society be established. A temporary committee was formed consisting of Rev. H. L. Orians, Rev. G. W. Reichert, Rev. F. W. Huebner, Rev. L. A. Kern and, most notably, Rev. Herman A. Block. The following year the committee became permanent and Rev. Block was named Conference Historian. The group’s immediate duties, and indeed the spark for their existence, were preparations for the celebration the following year of the Centennial of the Evangelical work in Wisconsin (Rev. Lutz having visited Wisconsin in 1840). Interestingly, their report also included the following recommendation,

*“That the conference received with gratitude and appreciation the transfer of the old Greenfield Zion church building, located on the grounds of the present Memorial church of Milwaukee. We accept with appreciation the proposal of the local trustees that this historical building be used as a Conference Historical Museum, and refer any legal transactions that may be necessary in its acceptance by the conference to the Conference Board of Trustees”* (the building still serves as the Historical Museum for our Conference).

This was a very insightful suggestion, because having a physical space to store and collect items of historical interest provided a physical grounding that was lacking with the Wisconsin Methodists and United Brethren. It also provided the Evangelical Historical Society a focus and purpose. Undoubtedly, this is one the reasons that it remained active up to the time the merger with the Methodists in 1968. The other reason for the success of Society was the presence and dedication of Rev. Herman Block, who was 60 years old when he was named Conference Historian. What Rev. Block was able to accomplish over the following forty years, until his death in 1980, really can’t be overstated. Perhaps more than any other single person, Rev. Block’s efforts profoundly shaped the collection at the Archives. More on Rev. Block’s unique contributions in the next *Flashbacks*.

*Sandy Kintner, Conference Historian*

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## Local Histories:



### The Evangelical Association in Brooklyn, Wisconsin

*Friedens (German for Peace) Church is an example of a small rural Evangelical Association congregation that never grew large enough to support their own preacher, but were always “yoked” within a circuit. We do know that it was originally part of the Center Mission or Circuit, which was formed in 1887 by division of the Juda Circuit, and included congregations in Montrose and Evansville. In 1910, the Circuit’s name was changed from Center to Evansville. The following was submitted by Sharon George and is the only known history of this small faith community. (editors)*

The church was built in 1886. According to Conference records, Rev. John Schneller was appointed and presumably was present at the church’s 1<sup>st</sup> business meeting- February 22<sup>nd</sup> of that year. Rev. C. Brendal presided and Rec. C. Punzel recording the session. The group decided to name the church, ‘Friedens Church’ on the March 11<sup>th</sup>; only having German services.

At that March meeting, the decision was made to purchase the acre that would surround the proposed church from the present landowner, William Krause. A cemetery was established to the rear of the church building. Everyone that donated to this project was granted a lot in the cemetery. The building committee (trustees of the church) were August Asmus, August Kleinschmidt, Ferdinand Hess, and George Lange. The structure was completed and dedicated on September 26<sup>th</sup> (cost- \$1,127.23). Bishop E. Dubbs was invited to bless their beginning. The contract for the construction was F.G. Clifford for \$250. The mason work (\$3.50 per-cord of stone). Two heating-stoves (\$12) and 6 lamps (3 on each side) and a chandelier (\$10) were added. The building and its contents were insured for \$800.

The first marriage at this church was Mr. and Mrs. Herman Peterson from Albany. During the years of World War 1, there was public animosity towards the German population locally. Giving support, the group from the Gill School District joined the church. At that time, they started to use English and changed the name to ‘Peace Evangelical.’ Celebrating their 51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary in October 1937, the church was re-painted outside, the interior re-decorated and a new fence put along the cemetery border. Reverends G.E. Zimmerman of Brodhead and Charles

Bender of Madison spoke during their 4-day celebration. Twenty-six years later, new pews were installed on each side forming a wide aisle covered with new carpeting. Lightning struck in 1930 and 1938 prompted a decision to install lightning rods the following year. Electric lights were installed in 1942. Some may remember the oaken Bible stand at the altar with the carved dove- it was carved by Tom Dreher of Evansville. The conference made some changes over the years for the church. In 1921, the church was yoked to the Brodhead Circuit.

In 1969, following the merger with the Methodists, Rev. Luther Jose from the Brooklyn UMC served Peace Church on Sunday mornings preceding the services at Brooklyn. In 1974, the church was served by the Albany UMC. Preceding the church's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the exterior entrance ramp was built and Bishop Marjorie Swank Matthews, the first woman United Methodist Bishop, spoke; another proud achievement. The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lasted three days, starting with a 'lawn supper' on Thursday, a special music service with Sharon Magee and Randy Krause on Friday night. Linda Knuckles accompanied the sister and brother with many old favorites. On Sunday, appearances of former ministers were heard; Gibson, Meracle, Wagoner, Jordan and the son of a past minister, Nathan Bartel. The last appointed pastor was Rev. Krystal Bartlett (2008-09) during her education at Janesville. She remembers twenty-four people on the rolls and truly 'a family church' (consisting of three families). Most of them had family in the nearby cemetery. Parking was always difficult (slippery from ice or stuck in the mud). And, no running water! Krystal learned how to handle the procedures of church, committees, and write sermons and bulletins at Peace. She found the people 'quite self-sufficient and family orientated.' Jeff Wiswell, a lay speaker from Madison, came quite frequently too.

At the Annual United Methodist Conference in 2010, it was recorded that the church merged with Evansville (then, called the Evansville Peace UMC).

No more services, the church was empty. The 'For Sale' sign was seen. Tim Rundle purchased the building and grounds in 2013. Later he sold to Frank Simpson.

Submitted by Sharon George

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## Simpson Chapel



*Simpson Chapel is located northeast of Dodgeville. It is a fine example of the many small church buildings that used to dot the Wisconsin countryside. With the advent of the automobile, many were abandoned before WWII and often the lumber used for other purposes. At Simpson, however, local people took an interest and the building survives until today. (editors)*

About the middle of the nineteenth century, a group of Welsh immigrants left their homes in Holyhead North Wales, Great Britain and came to what is Dodgeville Township. They settled in the farming and mining area northeast of Dodgeville and named it Holyhead in honor of their homeland. In 1861, a small building, built in a carpenter's shop in Dodgeville and used for a while by a German Congregation, was bought and moved to serve the spiritual needs of their rural community. On an improvised sled, Mr. Benjamin Elam cracked the whip at four yoke of oxen (Dick and Bright were the names of two of the oxen). At the time of moving of the church, most of the young men of the community were serving in the Civil War, so the moving of the church became their father's task. It was pulled four miles east of Dodgeville, along the Military Ridge road and set upon a rock foundation. At the time the church was served by Methodist Episcopal circuit riders who also served Bloomfield, Westly, Survey and Plum Grove churches. The preacher would preach one Sunday a month but on other Sundays a local preacher or a local framer would preach the sermon. It isn't known when the church was dedicated, but they choose the name Simpson in honor of Bishop Matthew Simpson of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Simpson oversaw the Conference of 1863 for the West Wisconsin Conference so perhaps this was when the name was chosen. Indeed, the deed for the land is dated, June of 1862. On the other hand, during the summer of 1860, Bishop Simpson made an unofficial visit to the Conference, holding informal District Conferences in most of the districts. His counsel to the preachers outside of the hurry and business of Annual Conference made quite an impression and it is possible that it was this memory that sparked the naming.

Simpson Church claims to be the second smallest church in the United States. Rev. Eugene Cook who served the church the longest, in the mid to late 1920's, is quoted as saying that he like to preach at Simpson because he always spoke to a "full house." The building was

said to be full at forty but at times as many as seventy five crowded in. Unfortunately, any records kept before the early 1900's have disappeared. No water, electricity or toilet facilities were ever added to Simpson Church, although a potbelly stove and oil lamps provided heat and light. Regular services were discontinued in the early 1940's, but the congregation from the Grace United Methodist church at Ridgeway held services there on Saturday nights for several years. Three weddings was known to be held at the church including Brad Phison and Angie Fromming who were looking for a church for their wedding after the tornado in June of 1982 destroyed the Barneveld Lutheran church.

Perhaps the biggest impact of Simpson Church congregation came through the ministry of Sunday school and Ladies Aid. Preaching service or not, every Sunday there were classes held for adults and children. Sometimes three or four classes were held in the small space. It must have sounded like a confusion of tongues, but never the less, much of the fundamentals of our religion were learned there. In 1913, James Mitchell suggested to his wife, Maude, that the ladies of the area would be benefitted by forming a ladies aid to which anyone could belong if they so desired. And so December, 30, 1913 Maude and ten other ladies met in her home and the name Simpson Ladies Aid was adopted for their group. They took as their purpose "to better the social conditions of Simpson and to aid the church financially and otherwise as the society sees fit". Over the years the group took on many projects such as making scrapbooks for the boys of WWI and WWII that were in the hospitals and the writing of letters. They also supported the Christian home at Council Bluffs for orphans. Quilts, eggs, clothing and money was sent to help care for the children. Ladies Aid was active through the early 1960's. At this time, the deed was transferred to the Dodgeville UMC. Upkeep however was been provided by Melva Phillips along with a group of friends (members of the Grace UMC and Iowa County Historical Society). Currently, it is proposed that the deed be transferred to the Simpson Chapel Society for future use.

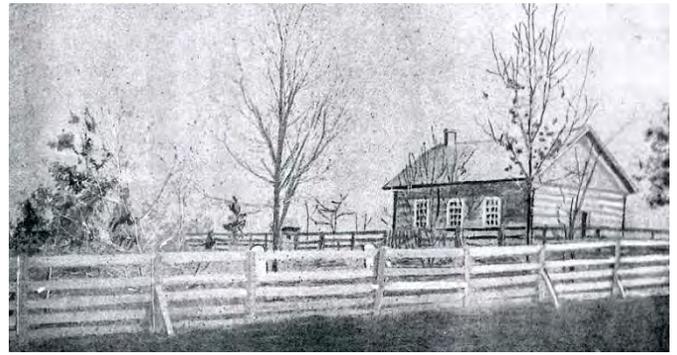
*Adopted by Sandy Kintner from histories written by Sarah Bennett for the 125<sup>th</sup> and 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of Simpson Chapel*

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## **Denzer United Methodist Church**

The Denzer Church began as an Evangelical Church, stemming from the Honey Creek Church, that church being established in 1844. In 1861, William Denzer donated land for a church, school and a cemetery, and so the village was named after him. The first record of a church building was November 3, 1864 when the male members met there for a business session. It was a log building and stood where the cemetery is now. The financial report of

1871 gave an income of \$19.61 and expenses of \$22.32. With a sum left from the previous year, there was a balance of \$4.60.



The present church building was dedicated on December 3, 1884. Bishop Escher and four other ministers officiated. The Journal described the building as a beautiful church with a tower and bells, and dimensions of 34' by 40.'

The first Sunday School was 1889, and while today there are 6 members, in 1920 there were 76 enrolled. Until World War I all services were in German. Records show there have always been great Christmas programs and times of fellowship.

Major remodeling took place in 1925-29, with the installation of a furnace and stained glass windows. At that time families began to sit together, rather than men on one side and women on the other. The present altar furniture was purchased in 1994.

In 1967 Denzer Church began helping Blackhawk put on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations. In 1968 the Evangelical United Brethren Church joined with the Methodist Church to become the United Methodist Church. In 1970 the gas furnace was installed, so the old horse shed used to store wood removed (Therefore, no more dramatic plays at ice cream socials using the shed as a stage).

In 1995 a new town hall was built where the schoolhouse stood. In exchange for land for a parking lot, the church received the privilege to use the restrooms (no more outdoor privy), a retired contractor, designed the aesthetic ramp to make our church handicapped accessible. As we celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Pastor Carol Quinn serves our church and the North Freedom church. There are 50 members. Harvey Accola is the oldest member, but Albert Zick, age 90, has the most years of membership. Clarissa and Jacob Brickl are the youngest of the congregation. Many changes occurred, but God and His goodness never changes. We give thanks to God and all the dedicated people who made this congregation possible.

Submitted Allegra Zick, Historian

