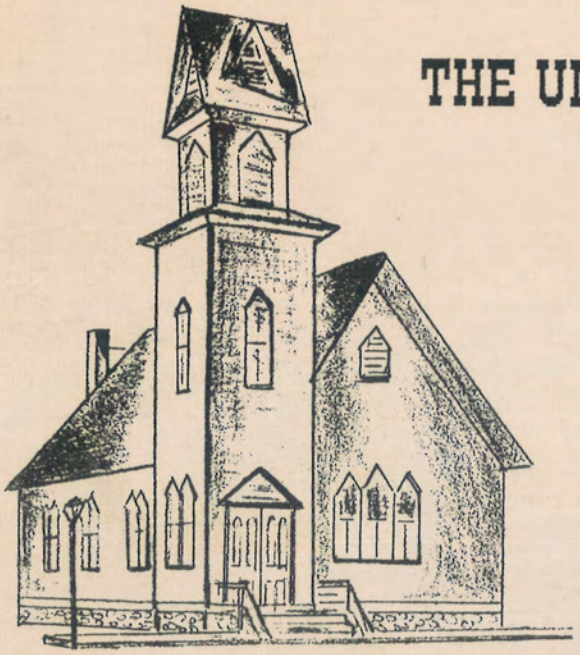

THE UNION CHURCH
1886

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1986

100 YEARS IN MINISTRY

ALTOONA, WISCONSIN

This Indenture, Made this Seventeenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty six BETWEEN Joseph H. Hall (unmarried) of Altoona in the County of Eau Claire and State of Wisconsin part of the first part, and the Trustees of the Union Church of Altoona part of the second part

Witnesseth, That the said part of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of One hundred and fifty ( ) Dollars, to him in hand paid by the said part of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, ha s given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed and confirmed, and by these presents do s give, grant, bargain, sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said part of the second part, their successors ~~heirs~~ and assigns forever, the following described real estate situated in the County of Eau Claire, and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

Lots number Seven (7) and Eight (8) in Block number Eleven (11) of the Original Plat of the Village of East Eau Claire now called Altoona as platted and recorded in the office of Register of Deeds for the County of Eau Claire

Together with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances thereto belonging, or in anywise appertaining; and all the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever of the said part of the first part, either in law or equity, either in possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to Hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said part of the second part, and to their successors ~~heirs~~ and assigns forever.

And the said Joseph H. Hall for himself his heirs, executors and administrators, do ~~s~~ covenant, grant, bargain and agree to and with the said part of the second part successors ~~heirs~~ and assigns, that at the time of the ensealing and delivery of these presents he is well seized of the premises above described, as of good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance in the law, in fee simple, and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever

and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceable possession of the said part of the second part successors ~~heirs~~ and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the whole or any part thereof, he will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, The said part of the first part ha s hereunto set his hand and seal ~~the day and year first above written.~~ this 17th day of March A. D. 1886.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

Grant Fredricks

D. B. Travis

Joseph H. Hall (Seal) [L. S.]

[L. S.]

[L. S.]

State of Wisconsin, Eau Claire ~~COUNTY OF EAU CLAIRE,~~ } ss.

Be it Remembered, That on the Seventeenth day of March A. D. 1886, personally came before me the above named Joseph H. Hall

to me known to be the person who executed the said Deed, and acknowledged the same to be his free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

D. B. Travis

Justice of the Peace

Eau Claire County

RECEIVED FOR RECORD the 24th day of March A. D. 1886, at 11½ o'clock, A. M.

W. J. McDougall Register.

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INTRODUCTION

As I reflect on the Centennial Celebration for the Altoona United Methodist Church, as a part of the former Union Church in Altoona, I am struck by several things. The history of this congregation is deeply tied to the City of Altoona and to its historic employer, the railroad. Even at this present time, there are active employees of the Chicago and Northwestern who are a part of the congregation.

A second impression of this congregation is that this is a congregation that is resilient. It has survived the stress of the changing economic fortunes of the City, the stress of having the Church building burn down in 1926, having to rebuild after that fire, and the changing nature of the City of Altoona.

That second impression leads to perhaps the greatest impression of this congregation I have formed in my three years as its pastor; this is indeed a group of Christian people who can and will pull together to make things happen!

My hope and prayer for the Altoona United Methodist Church as it enters into its second century is that it will take the strengths and tenacity it has and focus in on the future, striving to continue to meet the needs of the changing community and congregation. Let's celebrate the Centennial by making the second century even more exciting than the first.

Michael D. Gray-Elmar

HISTORY OF ALTOONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

(The historical record from 1886 to 1900 was written by Rev. E. D. Upson. It was brought down to 1950 by Wm. Kersten, George Wright and Mrs. Zelda Connell, Committee on Church Records.)

On February 27, 1886, at a meeting of the inhabitants of Altoona, Wisconsin, the organization known as the "Union Church of Altoona, Wisconsin" was formed and the following officials were elected and the society incorporated:

President.....Mr. A. E. Freeman
Secretary.....Mr. Eugene Keef
Treasurer.....Mr. C. E. Bryant
Directors.....Mr. G. K. Ives and Mr. M. Stockwell

During the year 1886, a church building was erected and furnished at a cost of nearly $1128.00. In 1888, the church was more fully furnished at a cost of $300.00.

During the years from 1886 to 1895, the church was used by the pastors of the Eau Claire churches; various denominations alternating their services. Occasionally, some theological student would supply during the summer months. The following denominations were the ones holding services here: Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Episcopal, German Lutheran, and Scandinavian Lutheran. In the fall of 1895, R. H. Stokes, a local preacher of the Methodist Church was sent to serve the people as settled pastor. Since 1895, the church has been supplied by pastors of the Methodist Church though other denominations continued to hold occasional services in the church. In 1896, Rev. F. G. Drake took charge and served for one year. In 1897, Rev. W. E. Monroe was sent and served two years. During his pastorate, the railroad shops were moved to Elroy and the church lost a number of its best workers. Removals were constantly taking place and the church suffered in consequence of the loss of members. The work was kept up by a few faithful workers, and by the help of those who were friends of the church, though not members. The first trustees were Mr. J. Holt, Mr. J. Botsford, and Mr. A. D. Shane. The first stewards were Mrs. J. Botsford, Mrs. J. H. Duncan, and Mrs. J. Holt. The first members were Mrs. J. Botsford, Mrs. J. Holt, Mrs. Eliza Murray, Mrs. Sarah Miller, Mrs. Caroline Travers and Mrs. E. D. Upson. Some of the attendants and friends at this time were the families of W. Connell, J. Diely, J. Duncan, J. Green, C. Hawker, S. Ives, A. Rick, J. Sires, W. Schilling, F. Shute, J. Sontag, H. Tinker, H. Wells, G. Whitefield and J. Walton.

Our first Sunday School Superintendents were Mrs. George Whitefield, Mrs. Wells and Mrs. Dieley.

Rev. E. D. Upson served from 1900 to 1904 at which time four churches made up the Altoona charge. These were the Wheaton Church, Rock Falls Church and Mount Hope. Rev. E. Trimm of Chippewa Falls was Presiding Elder. The missionary work of the Methodist Episcopal Church was world-wide at this time. The Altoona Church was asked to raise $36.00 for missions - not just for preaching of the gospel in foreign lands, but for educating the children, feeding the starving and clothing the naked.

(The above was written by Rev. E. D. Upson)

Some of the pastors who served for the next few years were: R. L. Leaks (1904), John Hainer (1905), G. J. Kelly (1906), W. R. Tanner (1906), John Howe, W. T. Scott (from Colfax), J. H. Kelly, John Harris, C. W. Every (Eau Claire), W. H. Rittenberg, E. T. Steele, and E. E. Horth (Eau Claire). Mrs. Brown served as pastor in 1918.

During some of the lean years of our church, the attendance was rather low. Some Sundays only four or five would be present, but services were held.

Mr. A. L. Johnson was a very active layman in the early days of the

church and served as minister quite often. Different church groups were formed such as the "Busy Bees" and the "Willing Workers." These groups would put on plays and social gatherings to help finance the church.

For the next two years, no pastor was assigned to the church. The public was served by Eau Claire pastors and laymen.

Rev. Lehman served in the years 1921-22-23. During his stay, a Men's Club and Women's Society were working hard to improve the church. A basement was dug by the men - most of the work being done by hand except for the use of Botsford's team. The women were busy putting on suppers and doing anything that would bring them a dollar, as the minister's salary at that time was $100.00 a month. Mrs. Connell and Ham Kersten were often referred to as "Christian Beggars", as they went from place to place collecting pledges and gifts so that the minister could be paid.

Rev. E. A. Helwig was our next pastor, and he was followed by Rev. Samuelson who was appointed September 25, 1922. It was during Rev. Samuelson's stay in 1926 on a cold Sunday morning that our church caught fire and was completely demolished. It was a sad day in Altoona for a lot of people - people who had given so much - to see it all go up in smoke, that is all except their faith. Mrs. Connell lost her new oil stove that she had loaned the church for a supper.

During the time we were without a church, services were held at the German Lutheran Church. Many children attended Sunday School at the Episcopal Church.

Many people can still remember the inside of the old church; the oil lamps that hung on iron racks and the old stove that was held up by three legs and a stone; the stove pipe running the entire length of the church.

Rev. John Sainty was pastor in 1928 and 1929.

Almost three years after the fire, in October 1928, a group of people met at the home of Herman Kersten to make plans for a new church. In the group were Mrs. and Mrs. W. Connell, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Carroll, Mr. Wilcox and Mr. Louis Peterson. Oscar Carroll was chairman of the Building Committee. Oscar Nelson was hired as contractor. The sum of $245.00 was received from the West Wisconsin Conference in three different payments. $1500.00 was borrowed from Oscar Carroll. Judge Blum drew up the mortgage and the work was started. The cost of the building, the pews, and the furnace came to $4681.47. The Ladies Aid paid for the wiring of the church. The new church was built on the old foundation and services were held in the basement until the upstairs was completed. Dedication of the church was April 14, 1929. On that day, $415.00 was pledged and paid. The Ladies Aid pledged $100.00 and completed the pledge in two payments. Oscar Carroll donated $175.00 with the understanding that this church would never be sold and would remain a Methodist Church.

Rev. John Sainty stayed with us until September 1930, at which time Rev. Fred J. Jordan, pastor of the Eau Claire Church, gave us services. Under his direction, Howard Hovey served as pastor for two years, and in 1933 and 1934 was appointed by Conference to serve Altoona.

In 1935, Rev. J. A. Fredine (Baptist) served. In 1936, Altoona was again left to be supplied by other churches. Rev. Colby (Baptist) came to us at this time. Rev. Obed Asp of Colfax was appointed to Altoona in 1937 and served in 1938 and 1939. During his pastorate, the last payment on the mortgage was made on January 3, 1939. He was followed by Vernon Ramberg, a student pastor, who was appointed in 1939-40. Mr. Norman Bailey of Eau Claire State Teachers College came in 1941 and served until 1944 at which time we were again left to be supplied. It was at this time that C. Argesinger came from Colfax.

In 1945, Rev. G. W. Finch of Chippewa Falls came to Altoona and served until 1949 at the June Conference. In September 1949, Rev. Fred J. Jordan, who was serving as Area Secretary of the Advance for Christ and

His Church, agreed to serve our Altoona Church of 42 members. On December 4, 1949, twenty-eight new members joined our congregation. A Men's Club was formed and became very active under Dr. Jordan's leadership. A Confirmation Class was begun with Ralph Walker as teacher. Under the superintendency of Mrs. H. Valska, the Sunday School continued to grow. Other leaders were Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Harmon - Young People; Mrs. T. Brown - Organist; Mrs. M. Martin - Choir and Womens Society; T. J. Brown - Treasurer.

On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1950, the membership of the church was increased to one hundred.

Plans for remodeling the church were suggested by the Pastor, Dr. Jordan, and work was begun under the supervision of Mr. Joe Freid.

This brings the story of our church up to 1950

What will our story be for the next half century?

Wm. Kersten, George Wright, Zelda Connell (Committee)

***Editor's note: Ham Kersten and Herman Kersten are two names for the same person.

In order to have a readily obtainable source of information about our church's history, we have documented the facts in chronological order in this section of the book. The information was gathered by researching the local newspapers, church records and other publications. The data was recorded as found and no attempt was made to edit. The photographs were furnished by members and friends of the church.

1885

December 29 Meeting held at A. E. Freeman's and the Union Church Erection Association formed. Officers elected: President, Miss Lizzie Cross; Vice President, Mrs. A. E. Freeman; Treasurer, Mrs. C. T. Bowman; Secretary, Mrs. C. E. Bryant. (from The Eau Claire News).

1886

February 27 Meeting held and Union Church of Altoona, Wisconsin formed. (from Church records).
March 17 Lot 7 and 8 Block 11 Warranty Deed to the Trustees of the Union Church of Altoona from Joseph H. Hall.
April 6 North 1/2 of Lot 7 and 8 Block 11 sold to John S. Green.
June 27 Church dedicated. Rev. W. A. McKillop of Eau Claire conducted service. (Eau Claire News).
September 27 Church mortgaged to Eau Claire Lumber Company for $147.17.

1887

April 26 Rev. Thomas Barland intends, in a few days, to hold religious services in Altoona. He will occupy The Union Church twice a week. (The Eau Claire Argus).
July 1 Mortgage satisfied.

1895

Fall A settled minister, Rev. R. H. Stoakes, was sent by the Methodist Church to serve the church.

1897

Rev. F. G. Drake replaced Rev. R. H. Stoakes.

1898

Rev. W. E. Monroe replaced Rev. F. G. Drake.
April 23 Church property deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church of Altoona, Wisconsin.

1899

Rev. T. Bigger replaced Rev. W. E. Monroe.

1901

Rev. E. D. Upson replaced Rev. T. Bigger.

(The following five pages are excerpts from a church book published in 1903)

WHEATON CHURCH.

ALTOONA CHURCH.

ROCK FALLS CHURCH.

MOUNT HOPE CHURCH.

SOUVENIR

AND

HISTORICAL RECORD,

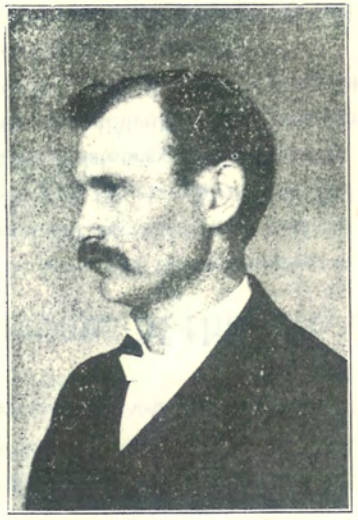
of the Churches of

. . ALTOONA CHARGE. .

West Wisconsin Conference,

of the

Methodist Episcopal Church.



REV. E. D. UPSON, Pastor,

Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

REV. E. TRIMM, Presiding Elder,

Chippewa Falls, Wis.

W. L. Botsford. J. M. Botsford.

BOTSFORD BROS.,

Dealers in . . General Merchandise,

And the Cheapest Place in the County to Buy Your Groceries and all Other Supplies in their Line.

Also Selling Agents for the Celebrated

CHASE & SANBORN'S TEAS and COFFEES.

ALTOONA, - - WIS.

F. A. SHUTE,

Dealer in

Dry Goods, Groceries, Notions, Hats, Caps, Furnishing Goods and Hardware.

ALTOONA, - WIS.

OLIN MEGORDEN,

Dealer in

Choice Beef, Mutton, Lamb, Veal, Pork, Hams, Bacon, Corned Beef, Etc.

POULTRY AND GAME IN SEASON.

Altoona, Wisconsin.

S. Kann. *L. Friesem.*

Fine Driving and Draft Horses.

If you want to buy a Good Horse go to

KANN & CO., *The Old Reliable Horse Firm.*

EAU CLAIRE, WIS.

NEW HARDWARE STORE.

W. W. LUEBKEMAN,

DEALER IN

Hardware, Mill Supplies, Paints and Oils.

Fishing Tackle and Fine Cutlery.

303 S. Barstow St., EAU CLAIRE, WIS.

Next Door to New Bank of Eau Claire.

Purpose of this Record.

This Record is published for the purpose of preserving in an attractive and permanent form the history of the several churches. In writing the history of the church at Rock Falls and at Wheaton we have had to get the assistance of the old settlers, as no early records exist. It has been very difficult to get them exact and there may be some slight mistakes, but they are as complete and exact as it is possible to make them at this late day.

Further it is our aim to so present the various phases of the work of the church that the members and friends may know what the church is doing, what our "BENEVOLENT ENTERPRISES" are and how our work is supported.

To give each one a list of all who are members of the church, and to give them some thoughts which may prove of help to them spiritually.

The advertisements were secured for the purpose of meeting the expense of the publication.

J. H. Tifft

Printer of Everything.

309 S. Barstow St., Eau Claire, Wis.

ELLISON & HOWE, Fine Shoes, Eau Claire, Wis.

Altoona Church.

Historical Record.

On February 27, 1886, at a meeting of the inhabitants of Altoona, Wis., the organization known as the "Union Church of Altoona, Wis." was formed and the following officials were elected and the society incorporated: President, Mr. A. E. Freeman; Secretary, Mr. Eugene Keef; Treasurer, Mr. C. E. Bryant; Directors, Mr. G. K. Ives, Mr. M. Stockwell. During the year 1886 a church building was erected and furnished for use at a cost of $1128. In 1888 the church was more fully furnished at a cost of nearly $300. During the years from 1886 to 1895 the church was served by the pastors of the Eau Claire churches; various denominations alternating their services. Occasionally some theological student would supply during the summer months. The following denominations were the ones holding services there: Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Episcopalian, German Lutheran and Scandinavian Lutheran. In the fall of 1895 R. Stoakes, a local preacher of the Methodist church was sent to serve the people as settled pastor. Since that time the church has been supplied by pastors of the Methodist church, though other denominations continue to hold occasional services in the church. In 1896 Rev. F. G. Drake took charge and served for one year. In 1897 Rev. W. E. Monroe was sent who served one year. He was followed by Rev. T. Biggar in 1898 who served for two years. During his pastorate the railroad shops were moved to Elroy and the church lost a number of its best workers. Removals are constantly taking place and the church has suffered in consequence of the loss of members. The work is kept up by a few faithful workers and by the kindly help of those who are friends of the church, though not members. In 1900 Rev. E. D Upson took charge of the church and has served until the present time.

G. E. RICHARDSON,

Dealer in

Marble and Granite Monuments.

418 South River St.,

EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN.

Altoona Church.

Officers.

Trustees.	Stewards.
Mr. J. Halt	Mrs. J. Botsford
Mr. J. Botsford	Mrs. J. H. Duncan
Mr. A. D. Shane	Mrs. J. Halt

Members.

Botsford, Mrs. J.
Halt, Mrs. J.
Murray, Mrs. Eliza
Miller, Mrs. Sarah
Travers, Mrs. Caroline
Upson, Mrs. E. D.

Attendants and Friends.

Ball, Mr. F. and family
Bennett, Mr. J. and family
Botsford, Mr. J. and family
Botsford, Mr. W. and family
Brewer, Mr. D. and family
Brown, Mr. F. and family
Calkins, Mrs. Lou
Cartwright, Mr. I. and family
Clark, Mr. R. and family
Connell, Mr. W. and family
Cross, Mrs. Caroline
Davis, Mr. S. and wife
Diely, Mrs. Jessie
Dodsworth, Mr. W. and family
Duncan, Mr. J. H. and family
Enockison, Mrs.
Follett, Mrs.
Gale, Mr. J. and wife
Gardner, Mr. S. and wife
Green, Mr. J. S. and family
Hawker, Mr. Chas. and family
Ives, Mr. S. and wife
Keef, Mr. F. E. and family
Kneeland, Mr. H. and family
Megorden, Mr. O and family
O'Marah, Mr. P. and family
Palmer, Mr. T. D. and wife
Palmer, Mr. G. and wife
Rice, Mr. G. B. and wife
Rick, Mr. A. and family
Sieglehurst, Mr. C. and family
Sires, Mr. I. A. and family
Shane, Mr. A. D. and family
Shaw, Mr. M. S. and family
Shillings, Mr. W. and family
Shute, Mr. F. A. and family
Sontag, Mr. J. W. and wife
Tinker, Mr. H. and family
Tribbe, Mr. M. and family
Ulberg, Mr C. and family
Wells, Mr. H. and family
Whitfield, Mr. G. and wife
Walton, Mr. T and family

Our Harness are the Best Made.

Manufacturers of Tents and Awnings.

SCHWAHN & CO.

403 South Barstow Street.

Harness of all Kinds & Styles From $6.50,—up.

Complete Line of Horse Furnishings.
Lap Cloths, Whips, Fur & Plush Robes.

Opposite Opera House.

Eau Claire, Wis.

Benevolences.

What they are and what they do.

Missions

The missionary work of the M. E. church is world-wide. In foreign fields our work is being carried on constantly; not in the preaching of the gospel only, but in educating the children; feeding the starving; clothing the naked; caring for the distressed and orphaned children; giving medical aid to the sick, and albeviating suffering and misery whenever possible. At home we are doing the same things for the poor and neglected in our large cities. More than this we are also providing for the work in weak charges when the people are unable to furnish the entire support of the pastor. During the present year the West Wis. Conference, of which you are a part, receives from the missionary society $3,918.00, all of which is given to help the work on the weaker charges. Your own charge receives, this year, $70, to assist you in supporting your pastor. This year we are asked to raise $36, for missions; let us meet it in full and more if we can.

Conference Claimants.

This fund is for the support of our aged preachers; their widows and orphans. These men and women have given the best years of their life for the good of others; working for small salaries they have not been able to provide for old age, or for misfortune, and now no longer able to work we ought to care for them while they remain with us. Let us not fail in raising the small amount we are asked to contribute.

Episcopal Fund.

Our Bishops have no pastoral charge to support them while they are caring for the interests of our great church, and we should not fail to pay the part assigned to us for their support.

Church Extension.

This society is helping the weak charges to build and own their houses of worship. There are thousands of churches that have been helped by this society; many of them are in Wisconsin. Help is given by loans and by donations. The churches which were helped in the past are now helping others. Let us add our offering to the work.

Freedmen's Aid Society.

This work is for the education of the poor in the south, both white and black. They are taught all kinds of trades, as well as book knowledge. The girls are trained in house work. Our apportionment for this year has been meet in full and more·

Benevolences. (Continued.)

Education.

In mission fields and frontier places, where the need is great, primary schools are supported; and when needful each Conference may have one or more advanced schools, or academies, and then receive help from the society. It also gives aid to our Methodist colleges and universities where our children may be educated by christian teachers and surrounded by christian influences. Our famous Lawrence University is in this state and should receive our hearty support.

Asbury Hospital.

Many patients pay their expenses, but many poor are treated and restored to health free of charge. Our gifts to this hospital will bring relief and health to some one. Shall we fail to raise the $3 we are asked to give?

American Bible Society.

Provides for the free distribution of God's word among the destitute of our own land, and among the heathen of other lands. God's word is precious to us; let us help in sending it to others.

Children's Fund.

This fund is for the purpose of aiding our young people in meeting their expenses in college. It is loaned to them and after they graduate they repay the loan as soon as possible and it goes out to help some one else. Thus it is constantly doing good. Thousands of young men and young women are being helped every year who, were it not for this help, could not otherwise take the course in college. Let us add to this fund.

Sunday School Union.

This fund is used to help needy Sunday schools on the weaker charges, and in new settlements, when it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to carry on the work, owing to lack of money to pay expenses. Supplies are furnished free of cost to such schools until they are able to pay for their supplies. In this way we are able to do much good work among the children where without this fund we could not do anything.

Tract Society.

The distribution of tracts has accomplished great and lasting good. Many have been led to live a christian life because of some tract. If you find it hard to ask souls to become christians and to be holy then put into this fund some small offering and ask God's blessing upon it.

Pastor's Greeting.

DEAR FRIENDS:

In presenting you this "Souvenir and Historical Record of the Churches," I also extend to you my hearty greeting. During the time that I have served you I have been made to feel that I had your good will, and your cordial support. You have opened your hearts as well as your homes, and received me as a friend and brother. You have done much to lift the burden of the work, and my months of labor have been full of pleasure. In return I hope to be of use to you. I am your servant, not your master. It is my earnest wish that you may grow in grace and in spiritual power. To do this you need to feed your soul; by daily reading of God's word, by private prayer and by meditation Remember you are an ambassador for Christ. He has called you his witness. You are his worker and God has need of you. Find your place in his vineyard and then fill your place. No matter how lowly the work may be do it faithfully, and God will see that you do not loose your reward.

It is my hope that we may so labor together in His work that we shall be approved by God.

The advertisements in this souvenir have made it possible for me to present free to you this historical record of the churches. I hope that in return, when you have trading to do, you will remember those who have advertised, and give them the preference whenever possible.

Hoping that our cordial relations may continue as pleasant as in the past. I am

Your Pastor,

E. D. UPSON.

I have constantly on hand a supply of GOOD BOOKS from the METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE, for sale at from 35 per cent. to 60 per cent. discount from list price. Wholesale prices to any one on my charge. The profits go to the Superanuated Preacher's Fund. Ask me about them.

E. D. UPSON.

How to Kill a Church.

Do not be too sociable with strangers.

Do not praise your pastor to others, but tell them his faults.

Do not attend the devotional meetings; they will be so dull you will not enjoy them.

Tell everybody how much more you have done for the church than others have done.

Do not take any part in the singing or responsive services. Let others do that.

Never have anything to do with the Sunday school; that is for children—— other people's.

Always spend a large part of Sunday in reading the Sunday newspapers: it is the Devil's best ally.

Do not let the Pastor know when you are helped by his sermons or visits, he might get vain.

Try and do your visiting on Sundays when the weather is fine, for you can stay home when the weather is bad.

Do not help in the church work unless you can have everything your own way. You will not be appreciated if you do.

Frequently go to hear other preachers and then tell the other members what a lovely sermon Dr. Blank preached and what a grand meeting it was.

If church matters are running smoothly, stir them up; even if you make trouble by doing it. The church needs something stirring in it.

Always have a stock of complaints on hand, then when the Stewards ask you for money to pay the preacher you can "Give it to 'em"——the complaints, not the money.

When you are sick send for the doctor. Let the pastor find it out for himself; if he does not you can tell everybody how he neglected you when you were sick.

Never pay your pastor a large salary: the smaller the better. Keep him poor and he will be humble. If times are hard don't pay him all you promised. The Lord will take care of him.

Always wait until your children are around you before you criticise your pastor or the members of the church. By so doing you will help your children ——— downwards.

The above rules if faithfully obeyed are guaranteed to kill any church, but you are requested to habitually break every one of them.

1904

Rev. L. R. Leaks replaced Rev. E. D. Upson.

1905

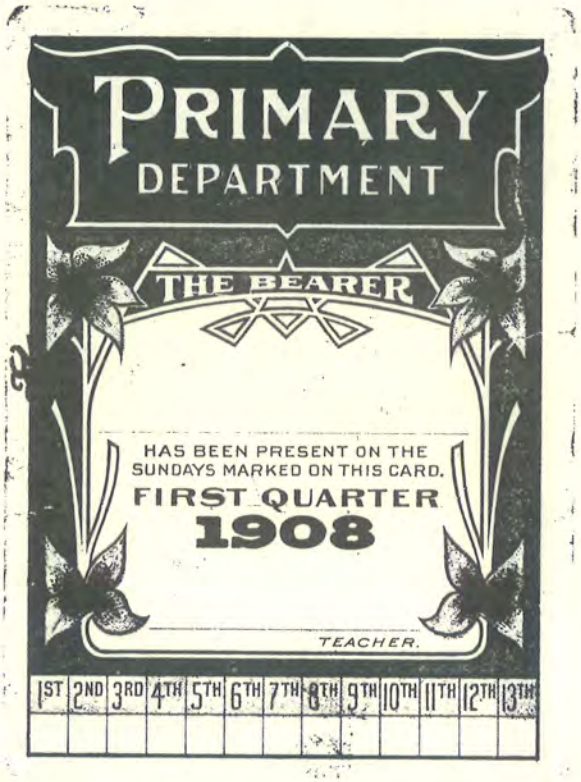
Rev. John Haines replaced Rev. L. R. Leaks.

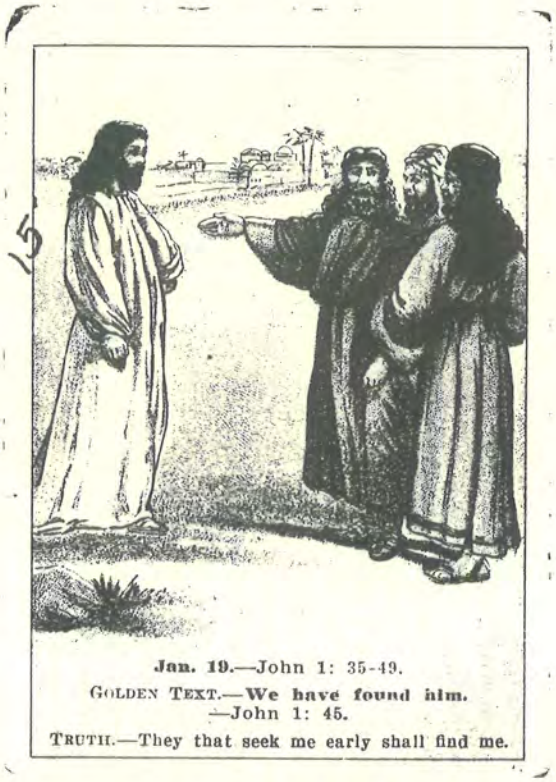
1906

G. C. Kelly and W. R. Tanner replaced Rev. John Haines.

1907

John Howe replaced G. D. Kelly.





Lesson picture cards used in the early years of the Sunday School.

1909

J. W. Scott replaced Rev. John Howe.

1910

J. Harry Kelly replaced J. W. Scott.

1912

John Harris replaced R. W. Kelly.

The following ministers served from 1912 to 1918. The actual years each served is unknown.

C. W. Emery W. H. Rittenberg E. J. Steele E. S. Horth

The Church as it appeared about 1918.
Note: basement not yet added.

1918

Mrs. Brown replaced E. S. Horth.
No minister assigned from 1919 to 1920.

1921

Rev. Lehman came.
Basement built under church and remodeling done for a cost of $5,250. A total of $3,813.45 was collected; the remainder borrowed. Labor costs were from 70 cents to 80 cents per hour. (from Church records.)

1922

January 16 Church mortgages for $300 to the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
April 7 The Epworth League voted to lower their monthly dues from 13¢ to 10¢.
May 23 List of active members in the Epworth League were:

Ruth Johnson	Mrs. A. Lehman	Mr. A. Lehman
Mrs. Carroll	Mrs. A. L. Johnson	Mrs. Rittenburg
Ruth Schultz	Mr. A. L. Johnson	Lillian Green
Glen Hampton	Mrs. C. Haggard	Mr. C. Haggard
Lucille C. Pettis	Mr. Rittenburg	

Officials were: Pres., Carl E. Haggard; Vice Pres., Miss Schultz; 2nd Vice Pres., Mrs. Carroll; 3rd Vice Pres., Mrs. Johnson; 4th Vice Pres., Mrs. Haggard; Secy., H. A. Kersten; Supt. of Junior League, Mrs. A. D. Lehman.

Men's Club taken sometime in early 1920's. Exact date unknown.

Row 1: Herman Schilling, Al Cowles, Dist. Supt. Tomlinson, Oscar Carroll, Rev. Lehman, Louis Peterson, Guy Green.

Row 2: R. Thompson, Art Thompson, Charles Turner, Chet Hampton, Art Carroll, Rittenburg.

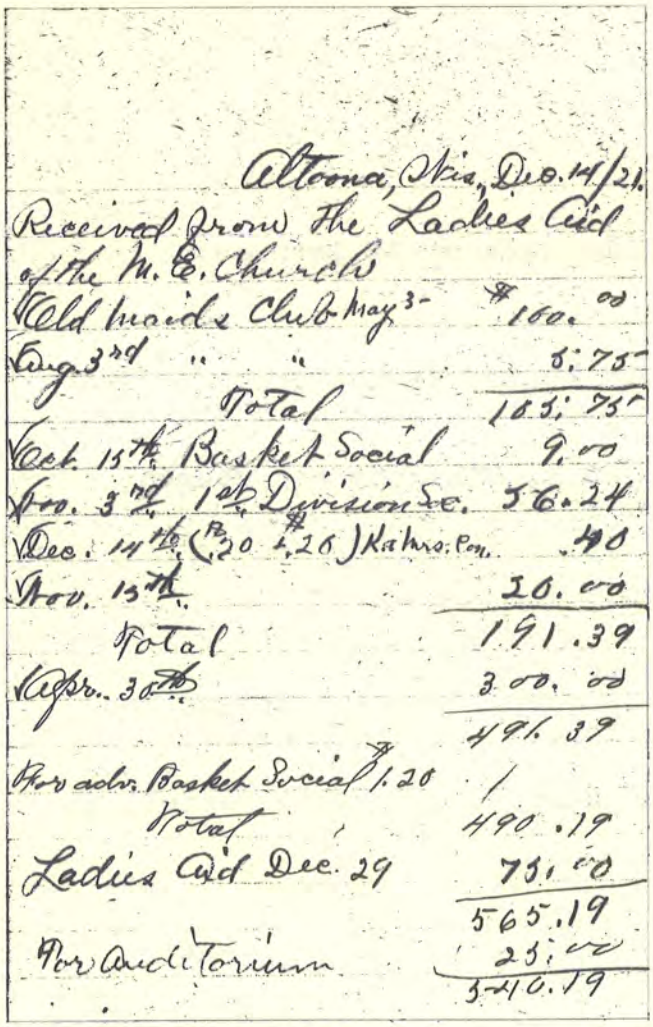
Row 3: Claude Schilling, Mr. Johnson, Barbar Thompson, Perry Carman, B. Edgel, Junet, Shippie Sires, Mr. Erickson, George Green.

Row 4: Louis Bonie, Harry Bonnell, Ham Kersten.

Ham Kersten's Sunday School Class waiting for the street car at corner of Sixth and Spooner Ave. to go on a picnic at Irvine Park in Chippewa.

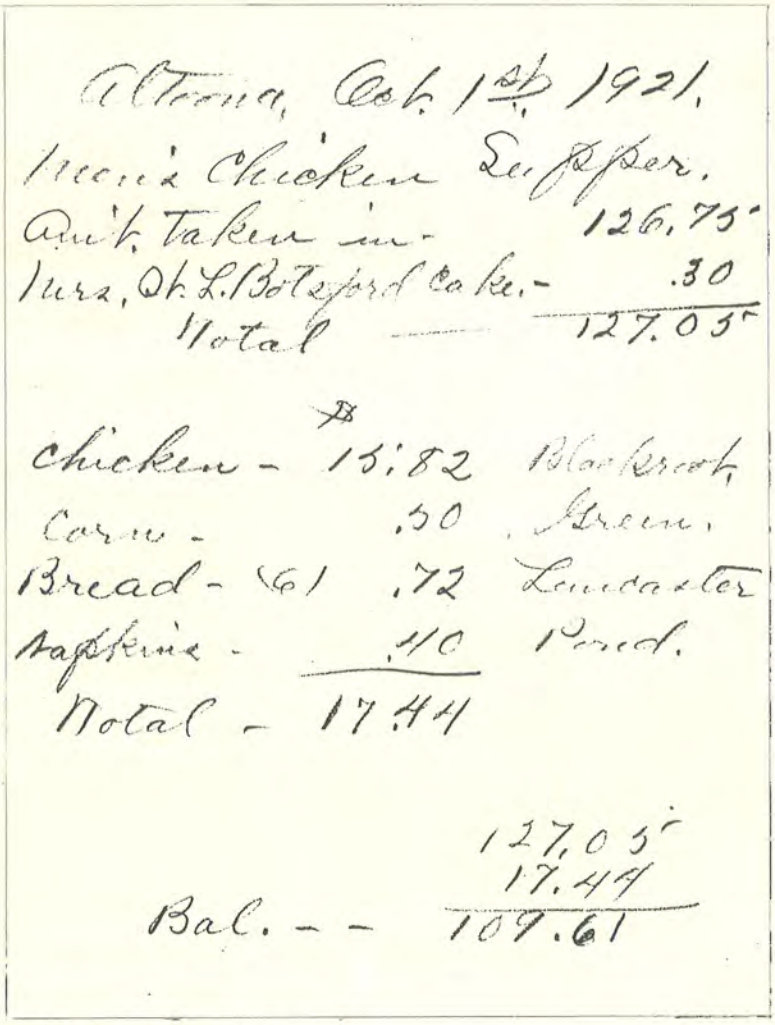
Students pictured from left to right: William Kersten, Loren Schilling, Darrell Woodington.

Man in back is unidentified.



Altoona, Wis., Dec. 14/21.
Received from the Ladies Aid
of the M. E. Church

Old Maids Club May 3	$100.00
Aug. 3rd " "	5.75
Total	105.75
Oct. 15th Basket Social	9.00
Nov. 3rd 1st Division Sec.	56.24
Dec. 14th (Pa 20 + $1.20) Ka Mrs. Con.	.40
Nov. 15th	20.00
Total	191.39
Apr. 30th	300.00
	491.39
For adv. Basket Social $1.20	/
Total	490.19
Ladies Aid Dec. 29	75.00
	565.19
For Auditorium	25.00
	540.19



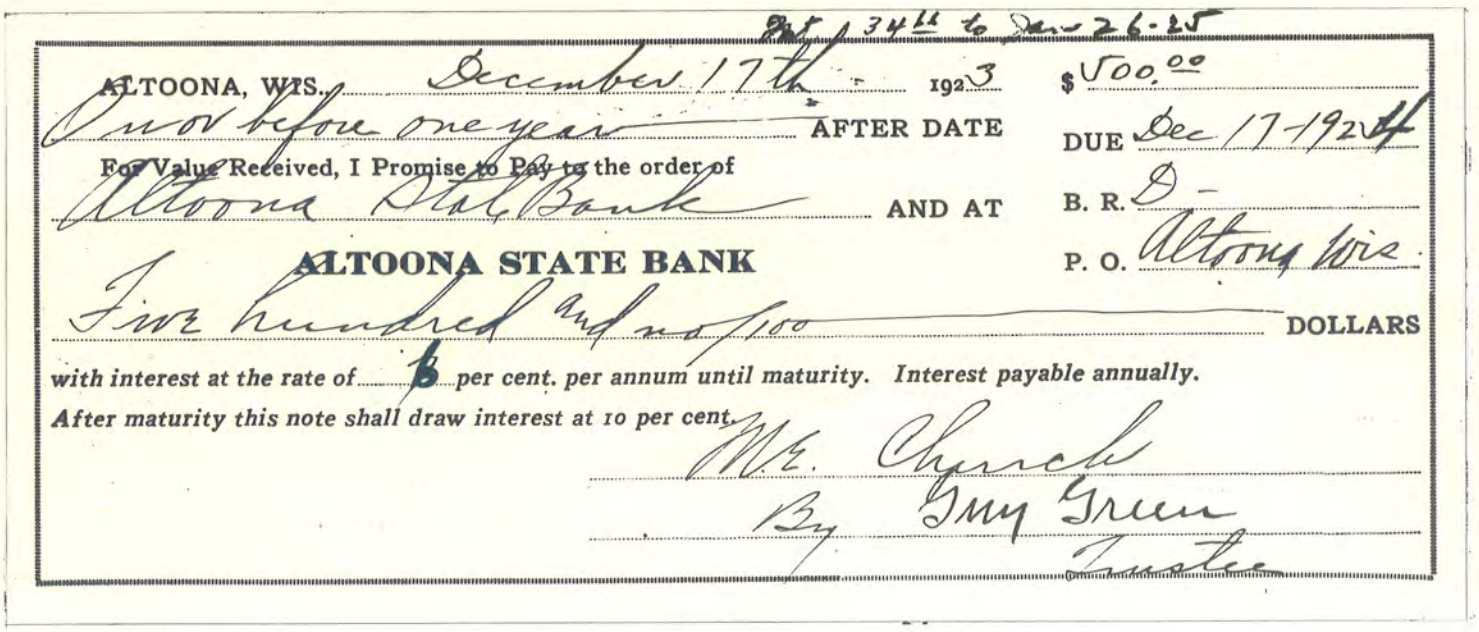
Altoona, Oct. 1st 1921.
Men's Chicken Supper.

Amt. taken in	126.75
Mrs. St. L. Botsford Cake	.30
Total	127.05

Chicken	$15.82	Blackroot,
Corn	.50	Green.
Bread (6)	.72	Lancaster
Napkins	.40	Pond.
Total	17.44	

	127.05
	17.44
Bal.	109.61

Old Church records and a menu for a chicken supper



Int. 34.66 to Jan 26-25

ALTOONA, WIS. December 17th 1923 $500.00

On or before one year AFTER DATE DUE Dec 17-1924

For Value Received, I Promise to Pay to the order of

Altoona State Bank AND AT B. R. D-

ALTOONA STATE BANK P. O. Altoona Wis.

Five hundred and no/100 DOLLARS

with interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum until maturity. Interest payable annually.

After maturity this note shall draw interest at 10 per cent.

M. E. Church
By Guy Green
Trustee

1923

December 17 $500 borrowed from the Altoona State Bank at 6% interest.

1924

Rev. Helwig replaced R. W. Lehman.

1925

Rev. Samuelson replaced Rev. Helwig.
August 27 $357.49 borrowed from Altoona State Bank at 6% interest.

1926

March 7 On a cold Sunday morning, the church burned to the ground. The fire was believed to have started from an overheated furnace in the basement.
April 20 Mortgage satisfied to the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

1928

Rev. Sainty came.
October Building Committee formed to construct new church.
October 2 The Ladies Aid of the Methodist/Episcopal Church reorganized Thursday afternoon. They will meet again October 3 at the home of Mrs. Oscar Carroll. (Eau Claire Leader).
November 23 Church mortgaged for $1,500 to Oscar H. and Pearl Carroll at 6 percent interest.

1929

April 14 Newly constructed church (built on foundation that was constructed in 1921) was dedicated. Many articles for the church were donated including the kitchen sink which was donated by Walter J. Kohler, Governor of Wisconsin (Eau Claire Leader).

1930

September Rev. Sainty left and we were served by Rev. Fred J. Jordan.

1933 and 1934

Howard Hovey served as student pastor under Rev. Jordan.

1935

Rev. Fredine came (Baptist).

1936

Rev. W. Cole (Baptist) replaced Rev. Fredine.

1937

Rev. Obed Asp replaced Rev. W. Cole.

1939

January 23 Mortgage satisfied to Oscar H. and Pearl Carroll. (Last payment made January 3).
Student Vernon Ramberg was appointed pastor.

1941

Norman Bailey (from Eau Claire Teachers College) served the church.
September 18 Prof. Hornback delivered Sunday Church message.
October 9 The Ladies Society of Christian Service of the Methodist Church completed a quilt at the home of Mrs. H. C. Underwood.
November During the month of November, church services were held at 8 a.m.
November 6 Ladies Society of Christian Service plan a "Guest" party in Methodist Church parlors Wednesday, November 12. A patriotic program is planned and lunch will be served. (from local newspaper.)

1942

April 23 Methodist Ladies serve supper for Oxford Club of Eau Claire State Teachers College. Oxford Club is a body of college students who belong to the Methodist Church.
May 15 Girl Scouts entertained their mothers at their annual Mother/Daughter banquet Friday, May 15, at the church parlors.
July 2 Leonard Haas will conduct services Sunday evening at 8:00 in the absence of Norman Bailey.
August 12 The Ladies Aid held a picnic Wednesday afternoon on the Clyde Woodington lawn.
October 1 Smallpox and diphtheria immunization held at church - 75 people vaccinated.
December 8 Methodist Church Bazaar/Supper - 35¢. Listed officials: Pres., Mrs. Major Martin; Vice Pres., J. Saurs; Secy., Grace Lapage; Treas., Mrs. Clyde Woodington.

Ladies Aid meeting at home of Strucks (house next to the old Post Office, now a beauty shop)

Left to right: Claire Johnson, Signa Harmon, Clara Board, Lucille Woodington, Laura Martin, Esther Struck, Zelda Connell, Dorothy Beach, Florence Nelson, Nettie Underwood.
Back: Grace Lapage, Elsie Pettis, Lela Sauer, Ruth Bredesen, Grace Woodington.

Dr. Fred Jordan,
District Superintendent

1943 - 1949

After retiring, he served as our pastor until 1959.

(Picture taken in 1942)

1943

March 18 Rev. Jordan was guest speaker at the midweek Lenten services at 7:30 in Methodist Church.
April 15 (from Altoona newspaper) Methodist Church holds special Lenten Program. Representatives of Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal and Methodist. Pot-luck supper at 6:30; Lenten Program at 8:00; solo by Lowell Pettis. Pre-Easter Services Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. Easter Sunday Service at 7:30 a.m. followed by breakfast.
May 27 Girl Scouts entertain mothers at Mother/Daughter Banquet. They put on a play and "... rendered musical numbers."
September Church dedicated service flag at Sunday Church service. Men's Club served parish breakfast after service.
October Pancake supper served by Men's Club in church parlors from 6:00 to 7:00. Price: 35¢ Adults, 20¢ children.
November 18 Women's Society of Christian Service have thrift sale at church parlors.
December 8 Christmas Bazaar held in afternoon followed by sauerkraut supper. Adults 50¢, children under 12, 35¢.

1944

February Seventeen women received diplomas for Home Nursing which was under direction of Mrs. Ed. Peterson. (weekly classes had been held)
March Women's Club held open house at church. Jane Lewis gave a reading of "The Necklace." There were various musical solos. Altoona School Band played several musical numbers.
June 7 Rev. C. Argetsinger came.
Twenty-eight people pledge to support the church. The largest pledge being $1.00 per week.

1945

Rev. G. W. Finch replaced Rev. Argetsinger.

1948

Centennial Styles Members of the Altoona Women's Club presented a style show of the clothes worn in early days at their guest night. Those who dressed in gowns of that era are, left to right:
Front row: Beulah Erickson, Mrs. Henry Carney, Loren Schelly.
Second row: Belle Benson, Faye Blake, Ada Wilcox, Harriet Cole, Mrs. Fred Lange, and Mrs. Fred Garnett.
Third row: Louise Kopplin, Laura Martin, Signa Harmon, unknown, Ruth Bredesen, Grace Woodington, L. R. Kofhed, Mrs. George Holisak, Mickey Woodington, Joyce Brandsteder, unknown, Elsie Pettis.

1949

September Dr. Fred Jordan became supply pastor.
September 18 A Men's Club was formed with 31 members.
October It was decided at the Board Meeting that George Wright and Joe Fried be responsible for laying of the basement tiling.
December 11 A committee was appointed for the improvements of the church and especially to see about getting toilets in soon. Members: Rev. Jordan, Joe Fried, Darrell Woodington, George Wright, Mrs. Clyde Woodington and Mrs. Major Martin.

1950

January The Policy Committee presented plans for rest rooms, to replace basement windows with glass blocks, a new center entrance with steps enclosed for front of church. Change front of church to worship center with center altar, cover walls with gypsumboard, make Olsen rug for platform and aisle, new altar furniture, refinish pulpit chairs to match, shingle or paint outside of church, and change side entrance.
March 1 Fifty new chairs were purchased through the City for a cost of $380.00.
On Easter Sunday, 20 new members joined the church.
July 17 J. Fried was appointed contractor of the renovation program. It was also authorized that the Trustees get a loan of $3,000.00 for same.
November 17 Sunday, a rededication service was held with the completion of the redecoration of the church. Bishop Northcott spoke at 2:30 p.m.
November 12 (From the Official Board Meeting). It was suggested that the school janitor be instructed to clean the church basement Friday after school, for church activities on the weekend. School classed were being held in the church until the new school was completed.
The Women's Society has 45 members with Mrs. Major Martin as President.
The Sunday School has 70 members enrolled including eight in the cradle roll.
The Men's Club raised and spent $673.36 on church and community projects.
The Budget for 1950/51 is $2,500.00
The Sunday School purchased a colored glass window for the church.

THE CHURCH
IN
1950

1951

Renovation almost complete - added steel rods to strengthen building, new lighting system would also hide rods, build new altar rail, install stained glass windows, and provide six new pews for growing congregation. Total cost of renovation was $10,061.62.
The church budget for 1951 was $3,500.

1952

January 8 The church library is now open with 54 books available to lend out.
January 13 Banks were distributed to all church families. If every family banks 10¢ per day for 1 year, the church will be debt free.
April 7 It was reported at the Board meeting that to date $10,061.62 had been spent on the remodeling project. Joe Freid agreed to accept payment of $150 per month on the $3,759.76 still owed him by the church. Interest would be at 2.5 percent per annum on the unpaid balance.
May 5 The School Board wishes to pay for any and all damages to the social room and toilets in the way of redecorating at the end of the school year.
October 5 A recommendation was made by the W.S.C.S. to the official Board that the wood stove in the kitchen be removed.
October 28 A church Couples Club was organized. Their first project was to run the nursery during service.
December The Men's Club sold 880 Christmas trees at their annual sale. They made a profit of $502.12.

1953

May 3 Victory Day Celebration. Church is now debt free.
New stove and equipment was purchased for kitchen. Renovation project was paid for in full and over-subscribed by $130.11 in May.
The budget for 1953/54 was $5,500.
Sunday School enrollment total - 98; average attendance - 66.
May 16 Six confirmation grads from Ralph Walker's class united with the church.
September 13 Rev. Jordan reduced his salary from $2,100 a year to $1,800 to help balance the budget.

THE CHURCH

IN 1953

Circle Meeting at Rowe's cottage on Lake Wissota sometime in mid 1950's.

Front Row: Left to right: Elna Peterson Bonell, Elsie Pettis, Laura Martin, Elsie Nelson.
Top Row: Grace LaPage, Ruth Holden, Ann Williamson, Mrs. Rowe, Rilla Welch, Francis Kolbrak, Lucille Edgell Berggren.

1954

January 10 At the monthly Board meeting, Rev. Jordan discussed church attendance. Out of 143 members to count, 54 were present, or 30 percent. He said something must be done about this serious matter.

1955

A total of 109 family units in our memberhip and 210 total members.
May 8 Special Board meeting was held after church to discuss the report from the Music Committee in regards to purchase of a new organ. Motion was made by Ruth Holden to accept recommendation and buy new organ. Motion carried.
June A Consonata Electric Organ, serial #2120, was purchased.
August 1 $1,300 was borrowed from the Altoona Credit Union to pay for the purchase of a new furnace from Zenith Sales.
October 16 Dr. Jordan reported that our first church was built in 1886 and cost $1,168. He suggested that we plan for the 70th anniversary to be held February 26, 1956.

1956

New front doors were installed on the church by Carl Hehl of Hehl-Grohn Company for $259.
December 11 New Choir robes have been ordered and are on the way. Eighteen new members along with seven confirmation class members joined the church this year.

MEN'S CLUB PICNIC AT LAKE ALTOONA

Left to right: Charlie Compton, Harry Bonnell, Major Martin, Ralph Ely. Louie Bonny, Lawrence Kolbrak, Don Foss, Ernie Erickson.

1957

125 people received communion on Thursday evening of Holy Week - about 70 percent of possible attending membership.
A new map of the city showing location of each Methodist family has been prepared by the Evangelism Committee.
April 27 The Men's Club made $157.30 at an auction they held at the City Auditorium.

1959

Ralph Walker answered the call to the ministry and left the Altoona congregation for a wider field of service as an Ordained Approved Supply Pastor.
Dr. Jordan and his wife left Liverpool, England 50 years ago, April 9, 1909, for ministry in the United States. Three wars later, and many science achievements later, he is retiring and leaving Altoona because of poor health.
Rev. J. Chris Everson replaced Dr. Jordan as pastor.
September 2 The North 1/2 Lot 7 &8, Block 11 (Lot north of church) was purchased.
September 22 Parsonage bought for $14,500.

1960

June 6-17 Fifty-eight pupils attended summer Bible School; 33 of them had perfect attendance. Mrs. June Doescher served as Director.
July 9 A Roofing Bee was held at the parsonage. The women served a noon lunch.

1962

James L. Witsaman replaced Rev. Everson as Pastor.

EARLY 1960's KITCHEN CREW

Left to right: June Board, Fern Ness, Ila Hall, Dorothy Wright, Eleanor Vaughn, Marilyn Potter, Anita Regis, Helen Ely.

1963

Rev. George Agema became our Pastor.

1964

May 14 The church became incorporated as the Altoona United Methodist Church.

1967

Maxine Case became our organist.

1970

Cabinets were built on east wall of social room by Dave Pietenpol.

1971

A new coat rack was constructed in narthex and the old one moved to basement.

1972

Spring Kitchen was remodeled; outside walls refinished and ceiling lowered. New roof was built on entryway. Folding dividers for Sunday School classes constructed in social room. Remodeling done by Sukoff and Pietenpol. Steel siding installed by Parent Roofing and Siding Company. $6,500 was borrowed to pay for remodeling.
Fall Sidewalk on south side of church constructed by Dave Pietenpol and volunteers.
November 14 The new roof was placed on the bell tower.

1973

The United Methodist Women put together a cookbook. All the women of the church were asked to contribute their favorite recipes. The book was printed and 2,000 copies were sold over a course of almost 10 years. A very successful project.
New hanging lights were placed in the sanctuary. A new sign was constructed at side of the church by the youth group.

1974

Screens were installed over the stained glass windows for protection.
New hot water heater was installed. Carpeted narthex and entry stairs.
November The improvements made in the last two years were dedicated.

1975

Rev. Agema retired and Rev. Jim Thunstrom came to serve our church.
New wiring was installed in basement by Rick Jones.

1976

An every-member visitation was conducted.
May 15 Rev. Jim Thunstrom married Sue Gardow

1977

An educational building fund was started. A committee was formed with Larry Sturz as chairman. They visited several area churches that had made recent additions.

1981

June Rev. Thunstrom left to serve the Elmwood Church.
July Remodeled kitchen at parsonage. A new stove, also a new vanity for the bathroom was installed.
August Rev. Mike Williams came to serve our church.

1982

A new roof was installed on the church. All the shingles were paid for by donations.

THE 1982 ANNUAL THRIFT SALE

1983

June Rev. Mike Williams left and Rev. Michael Gray-Ehnert came.
October A new Allen organ was purchased for $6,395 with trade of old organ.

1984

January An extensive remodeling project was undertaken. The entire back of the church was renovated, a choir loft was constructed and a church office adjoining the choir loft. Most work was done by church volunteers, with Dave Pietenpol coordinating the project. Cost was over $10,000.

April 8 Our church was represented with a banner at the District Bi-Centennial Celebration held at the Civic Center in Eau Claire.

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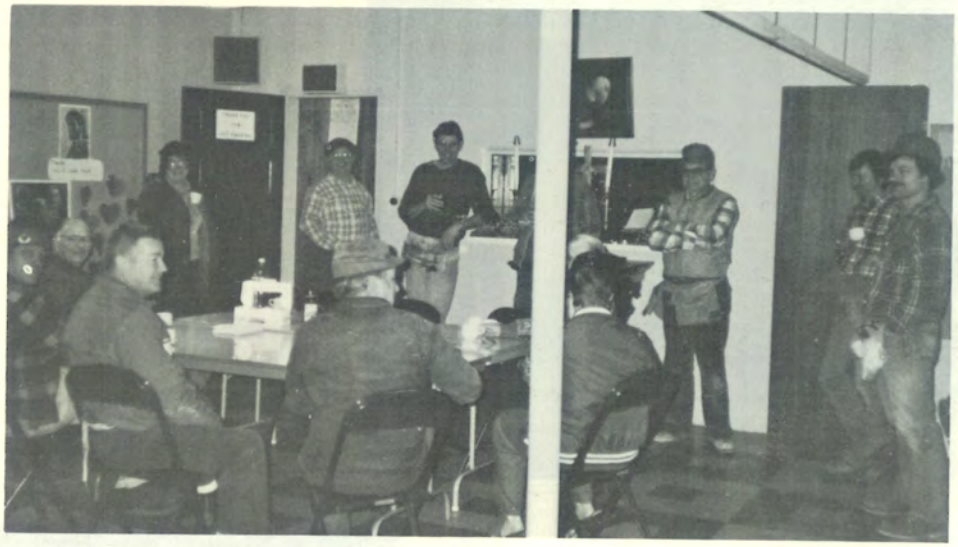
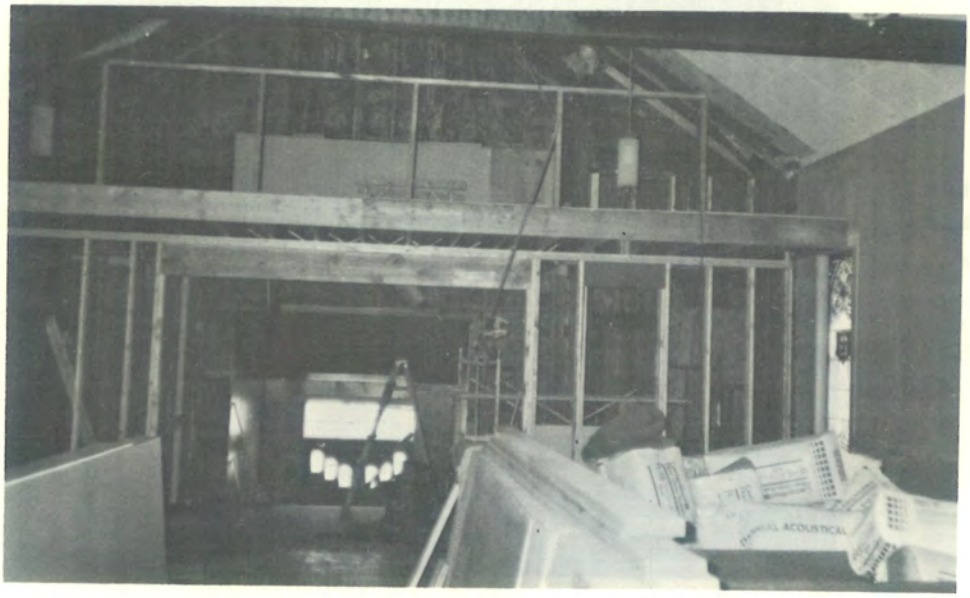
REMODELING

PROJECT

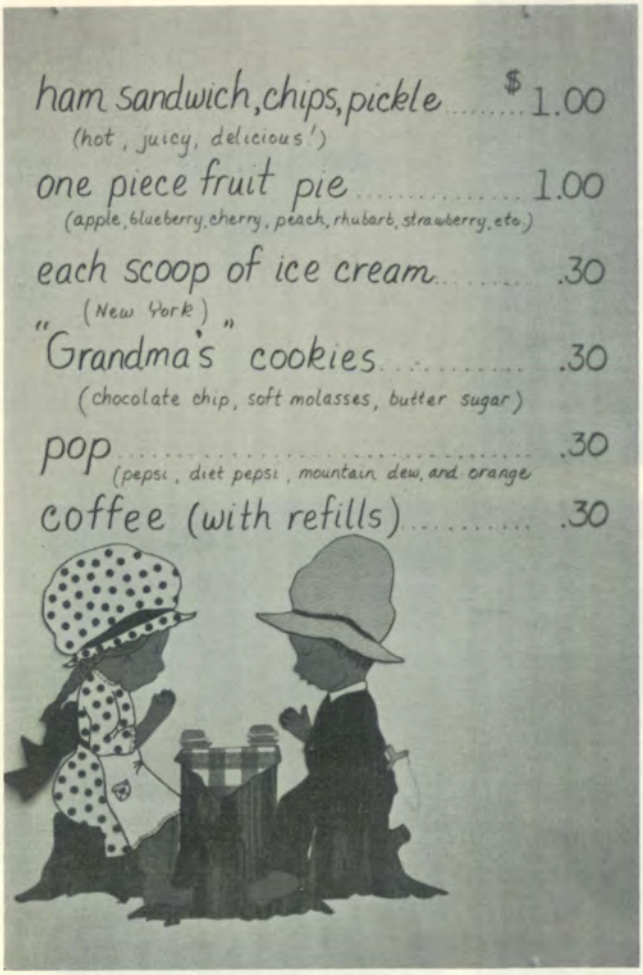
TIME OUT FOR

REFRESHMENTS





August The Annual Thrift Sale was the most successful ever with over $1,200 in profits made.



1985 THRIFT SALE

LUNCH MENU

MATE TAYLOR'S
95TH BIRTHDAY

Present in Photo:
June Tongen, Sesaly Overlien, Ruth Bredesen, Palma Petrick, Georgia King, Marie Brown, Roberta Harriman, Millie Burgmeier, Frieda Grilley, Marilyn Sullivan, Ann Myrick, Lois Neill, Mary Simonson and, seated - Mate Taylor

Following is a slightly condensed version of "A Story of the Altoona Church" as given by Mrs. Zelda Connell at the January 1955 meeting of the Women's Society of Christian Service.

When I first came to Altoona in 1892, I think the Baptists were holding meetings here. I think they had to work hard to keep up expenses. I know they gave suppers as after I had been here a couple of months, one of the neighbors came over to our house and told me that they were having a supper at the church that evening and that she and her husband were going. She said "You know, they serve very good suppers but they charge 25¢, so when Frank and I plan on going to one of their suppers, we only have soup for dinner so we can eat our money's worth."

The church was a Union Church until 1895 when the officers decided perhaps it would prosper better if it was run by one religious denomination. They couldn't give the property to any one of them without the consent of a certain percent of the donors and that was impossible to get as they could not get in touch with enough people to make the change, but they could sell the property. The Methodist Conference bought the property for one dollar. In order to make the transaction legal, the dollar had to change hands.

Our first pastor after the Methodists took over was R. H. Stokes. He was a young man at that time and he tried to make a success of the church. He called on every home - Protestant and Catholic alike - and invited them to attend services. Rev. Stokes was only here that one year. I don't know where he went from here but years later he came back to Eau Claire with his family and established the firm of Stokes and Son Undertaking Parlors. I think he must have found it more profitable financially to bury dead people than to preach to live ones.

When Rev. Monroe came as our pastor, money was raised to purchase and install a bell in the belfry. After that we went to church by the bell. First bell meant get ready for church; the second bell meant to be there if you didn't want to be late. We had several pastors who stayed only one year. Many were students getting their education in religion.

Then Rev. Bigger was sent here. He was an ordained minister and stayed two years. It was while he served here that the Railroad Company moved their shops to Elroy and we lost several families of church people. The men had to follow their jobs and the women followed their men. But the faithful workers that were left with the help of their friends, and friends of the church, kept up the good work. It was quite hard but God was with us and we kept on.

In the early days of the church, the Ladies Aid was a real aid. In fact, it was the whole working unit. If they had church officials at that time, and I suppose they did, they didn't function, so all business was done by the Ladies Aid, all money went through their treasury. We earned money several ways. We paid dues of 5¢ per week. We gave suppers, ice cream socials, coffees, bake sales, held bazaars and pieced quilts and tied them for sale, tied quilts for others and made an honest dollar at whatever we could.

One time we were given a dime talent and asked to invest it to bring in a dollar. One lady bought ten cents worth of popcorn, popped it and, when the passenger trains came through, she was at the depot selling popcorn to the passengers; then she reinvested until she had earned her dollar. Another lady reported that she knew she had worked harder for the dollar than any of the rest of us. She took her dime home and sold it to her husband for a dollar and she had a real hard time collecting that dollar.

We really worked under difficulties too. There was no basement under the church and it had to be used as a social room as well as a place of

worship. When we gave a supper, we had to shove the pews back against the wall to be used as seats for one side of the table; then the tables were put up. They were made of six inch boards spliced together and set up on saw horses. They were not very steady and one had to sit down and get up very carefully or someone would get a lap full of coffee. This happened several times. We had benches for the other side of the table as there were very few chairs in the church. We had to bring table linen, silverware and some dishes from home. Our kitchen was in a small room in the east end of the church. It was about as wide as our present entryway and about as long as half the width of the church. By the time we got a wood cook stove, an oil stove, two work tables and a dish cupboard in, there wasn't much room for workers but we all worked together and got along nicely. We had to carry water for drinking, making coffee, and for dishwater from the Sterus Green home just north of the church. We could not get heat enough from the wood stove to cook anything. In fact there wasn't room enough on it anyway, so we had to cook the food at home and bring it down to the church. We could keep the food warm on the stove and in the oven. The oil stove had only two burners - one was used for making coffee, the other for dishwater. At that time we served supper for 25¢ for adults and 15¢ for children under 12 years of age. If a family had three or four children and brought them all to the supper, we gave them a bargain - one could eat free. Whenever we were planning a supper, coffee, ice cream social or bake sale, as there were no telephones then, we had to walk from one end of town to the other to solicit. For one supper, a friend of mine and I were appointed to solicit. At one home we visited the lady said, "It seems to me that you folks are coming tolerable often for donations, ain't you?" But she donated anyway. We had very few refusals. It is really amusing to think back on some of the funny situations we came across.

Our chicken-pie suppers were our best drawing card but they meant work. Many times we had to buy live chickens, then find someone to kill them, then had to pluck and dress them and this was a job as any of the ladies can testify. In those days we didn't make the chicken pie as we do today. We cooked the chicken, made the gravy, then poured it into a pan, placed the biscuits on top, then it was put into the oven to bake. Perhaps some of you remember those old chicken pies. Some of the ladies made their pies like a berry pie, putting a whole crust over the chicken. This had to be cut like a pie to serve. I like the way we serve it now better as it's easier and not nearly as messy.

Our heating unit was a large wood burning stove shaped like the old round oak stoves. It was in the east end of the church on three legs. A large stone substituted for the fourth leg. The stove pipe ran the whole length of the church and was supported by wires fastened to the ceiling. How they ever got by with the insurance company with that kind of a setup, I don't know.

Our fuel house was a large, well ventilated building on the northwest corner of the lot. As there was only one entrance to the church, we had to go out the front way, go clear around the church to the fuel house for fuel, then back to the front entrance again. If it had snowed that day or the night before and no one had had time to shovel a path, the people had to wade through the snow then dig the fuel out from under the snow that had drifted in through the ventilating system. By the time they had enough fuel to last through services or a supper, they were rather damp and chilly around the edges.

After Rev. Bigger, we had several more pastors who only stayed one year until Conference sent us Rev. John Haw who stayed two years. He was an ordained minister and had the Augusta Church but he came up to Altoona to serve in our church. It was while he was here that the Ladies Aid put

on their first home talent play. It was the "Old Maids Club" and we had more fun practicing for that play than the audience did listening to it, and the candy we ate! It's no wonder some of us grew out of proportion. Mrs. Shute and I are the only ones left here that were in that play. There are two others, Mrs. Rahn in Black River Falls and Mrs. T. D. Palmer in St. Paul, that I know are still living. The two boys who were in the play - Lisle Shane and Leroy Palmer - would probably be grandfathers by now if they are still living.

After Rev. Haw we had another ordained minister, Rev. John Harris. At the time he was here, we had an elderly man who lived in Eau Claire as District Superintendents did, once a year to give us a service. One evening when he was here, he told me an amusing incident in Rev. Harris's life. He said that as a young man Rev. Harris had red hair and a red beard. That was before the safety razor was invented and barbers charged 10¢ for a shave. Not many of those young ministers had dimes to give to barbers so they grew beards. He said that when Rev. Harris was to be ordained, he the District Superintendent, had to fill out some kind of form telling his parents' names, where they lived and where he was born, his age, where he got his education, etc. When it came to color he wrote "white trimmed with red."

After Rev. Harris, we had several other pastors who served only one year. Part of the time we were served by the pastors of the First Methodist Church in Eau Claire. Finally, we got Rev. T. Harry Kelly. He was a young man from the Isle of Man. This was his first charge after coming to America. He was a very small man and we had to put a box back of the pulpit for him to stand on so that the congregation could see who was talking. T. Harry as we called him stayed here for two years. It was during this time that the Ladies Aid put on another home talent play, "Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party." In that play there was a boy supposed to be Aunt Dinah's son, who came rushing into the room where the ladies were quilting riding on a hobby horse. We couldn't get a boy to take this part and were about to give up the play entirely when T. Harry volunteered to take the part. It was really funny to see him prancing in on his hobby horse - which wasn't a hobby horse at all but one of the saw horses we used to put our tables on.

After Rev. Kelly, we had several others who stayed only one year, 'til Conference sent us Rev. Lehman in 1921. He served three years. It was during his pastorate that the church people decided to put a basement under the church. By this time, the church officials had got on the job. They borrowed $300.00 from Conference to be used to buy material and to pay for such work as couldn't be done by our local men. Rev. Lehman organized a men's club, recruited from all religious organizations and some who had no church affiliations. They all worked together and we soon had our basement. We now had a second entrance to our church. It was on the south side of the basement and the steps were covered by a trap door, similar to the ones farmers had to cover the outside entrance to their cellars. Now we had our kitchen in the basement. It was smaller than our present one as the door leading outside was in the dining room. We had a fuel room where our furnace room is now. The furnace was in the northwest corner of the dining room. There was a register in the floor that let the heat into the church proper. In cold weather the janitor had to build a fire early in order to get enough heat into the church so it was comfortable to sit during service. About this time, there was a theatre in the vicinity that was doing some repairing and redecorating and they let us have their old seats. We moved our pews and benches into the basement and put these seats into the church. Some of you probably remember those old theatre seats. There were four or five seats fastened to

one iron frame. The seats could be pulled up like the seats in the school house. They were not very substantial.

One Sunday a gentleman came in and sat down without testing the seat and he went clear down to the floor. He got up and walked out. When we started to sit down on one of these seats, we tested it first, then sat down very gingerly, holding our breath so as not to put our full weight on the seat at once. When we got up to sing, it was the same performance of holding our breath when we sat down again. We did not have this setup very long as in 1926 our church burned. The janitor came down one Sunday morning, built his fire then went to the post office for his mail. When he got back the church was in flames. I do not know whether they ever discovered how the fire got started or not but the church and contents was a total loss. Being a total loss, the insurance company paid the full amount of the policy - $3000.00. Guy Green was church Treasurer at that time so when he received the money , he paid the Conference the $300.00 we had borrowed and they appropriated the balance with the understanding that if we rebuilt inside of three years, we could have the $2700.00 back.

At this time Rev. Goodell was District Superintendent. He tried to persuade us to abandon the church entirely and our members and friends to attend the First Methodist Church in Eau Claire. As many of us didn't have any convenient means of transportation except our own two feet, we didn't feel like doing this. We were rather discouraged having our hard work go up in smoke. Some of our members and friends attended the Lutheran and Episcopal churches but when we rebuilt, they all came back. We were without a church for over two years. Finally we woke up to the fact that we must rebuild our church. A meeting was called of the members and friends of the church and men were appointed to go out and solicit funds for it. Mr. Carroll, Mr. Kersten, Mr. Connell, and Guy Green were some of those who did the soliciting. When they had enough donated and with the $2700.00 Conference gave back, they had enough to warrant the starting of the building. Oscar Nelson was given the contract to build.

As soon as the building was started we had a minister, a Rev. Sainty. We then had a minister but no church. We thought of having meetings in the homes but this didn't seem advisable as so many of the homes were not large enough; but the Lutherans were kind enough to let us use their church until such time as we had our basement under cover enough so we could hold meetings there. After the building was far enough along so we could use it, we had no seats. We were informed that there was a church near Elk Mound that had discontinued services and that we could have their chairs and pulpit if we could get them. Harry Miller took his dray and with the help of some others went and got them. The chairs were old and some of them needed repairs but they were seats. When the Sunday School had been reorganized, the Superintendent asked the pupils if those who could would buy one chair. Quite a few did and if you will turn one of these chairs over, you will probably find the name of the donor written on the bottom. Now we had a larger kitchen as the door to the outside was in the kitchen, but we still had our slide-down cellar door. We also had a furnace and fuel room where the old fuel room was. When the rooms were finished, it was dedicated. At the dedication service, enough money was pledged to buy several pews.

At the time of the dedication, the church wasn't paid for, as Mr. Carroll loaned us $1500.00 to finish paying the contractor. He took a mortgage on the church for this amount at 6 percent. There was no time limit as to when we had to have it paid. He told us to pay as we could; as this was during the Depression, the payments were small and sometimes far between, but at last we had it paid all except the interest. Mr. Carroll said he would throw off the interest as long as the church

remained a Methodist Church, but if it was ever sold to any other denomination we should pay him the $178.00 interest out of the proceeds of the sale. Up to date we haven't had to pay it. When the last payment was made, we had a banquet in honor of the Carrolls and at that time, the mortgage was burned. Mr. Connell had the honor of burning it.

After Mr. Sainty left, we had several other pastors for one year each. One year we had Rev. Colby from the Bethel Baptist church in Eau Claire. About 1936 Rev. Jordan was pastor of the Lake Street Methodist Church in Eau Claire and Howard Hovey, a young man from Mondovi, was appointed Assistant Pastor. He took over the Altoona Church while attending Teachers College. He, with his father and mother, moved to Altoona. Howard, with the help of Mrs. Wilcox, organized a young people's choir. He was so proud of this choir that he took them to Eau Claire and had them sing over the radio. He also organized a young people's club. This club did several things to earn money to help out with expenses. Some of these young people are still around here.

Leonard Haas who is now Dean in the State Teachers College was one of them. During this time Leonard preached several sermons in the absence of Mr. Hovey and we were sure proud of him. Another one was Ted Brown, our present church Treasurer, who is a faithful church worker. Howard coached a play "Showboat" that brought in quite a sum of money. This was repeated by request. While Howard served here we lost our slide down cellar door as his father built an entrance over the steps leading into the basement. He also made several small tables, some of which are still in use. Walter Whitman purchased the altar railing and Mr. Hovey installed it. He also did some repair work that needed to be done. Howard's mother, with the help of some members of the Ladies Aid, made robes and collars that the choir now use.

After Howard graduated and accepted a position in the Eau Claire schools, we were left without a pastor, but Vernon Ramberg, a teacher at Fall Creek or Augusta, came up each Sunday and gave us a sermon which we appreciated. Then came World War II and Uncle Sam took many of our young men into service and, but for the kindness of the laymen of the Lake Street Church, we would be again without a pastor. They served us for several months, and when we offered to pay them, they told us to apply that on our debt. We were glad to do this and we were certainly grateful to them for helping us out.

Rev. E. E. Clark was District Superintendent at this time and he finally secured the services of Mr. Norman Bailey, a teacher at the college in Eau Claire, to fill in this vacancy. Although Mr. Bailey wasn't an ordained minister, he had several churches in the east before coming to Eau Claire. While he was here we had our first Easter Sunrise Services. We also had our first lake-side church service. These were real open-air meetings as there was no club house at the lake at that time. On Sunday mornings there was usually a large crowd at the lake and altho' they did not join us, we could hear some of them joining in the singing. Mr. Bailey also organized a young people's club and choir. Mrs. Bailey was also a great help in the church as she was our musician and she also taught a class in the Sunday School. After Mr. Bailey left Eau Claire, we were several weeks without a pastor but we still continued services. Neil Woodington helped out in the pulpit and we had several song services.

Then Rev. Jordan, who had been promoted to District Superintendent, secured the services of Mr. Argetsinger, who was then serving the Colfax Church and he served us the balance of the year.

The next year, Conference sent us Rev. Finch who was appointed to serve the church in Chippewa Falls. As he had a large church there that demanded a great deal of this time and his health was poor at the time, he couldn't give us any time - only the hour for Sunday service but we

kept the church going. He served us several years then heaven smiled on us and sent us Rev. Jordan as pastor. Under his leadership the attendance and membership of the church has grown by leaps and bounds. He has organized a Men's Club that is now affiliated with the National Organization. He has a Couple's Club, a Bible Study Club. When he first came to us, we talked about the renovation of the church and thought we could do this with about $3000.00. After it was started, we found more and more had to be done until up to date the renovation and necessary equipment has cost over $13,000.00 This is all paid. There are several other things we are planning to do to improve the church property. This all has been accomplished under the able leadership of Rev. Jordan, and we should thank God every day for sending us such a wonderful leader.

The Ladies Aid (now the W.S.C.S.) also should come in for their share of praise for the wonderful work they are doing. They certainly have worked hard to accomplish what they have done. We have had some wonderful leaders in the W.S.C.S.. During the years the Ladies Aid put on several home talent plays that brought in quite a bit of money.

We must not forget our Sunday School. It was organized by the Union Church with Mrs. George Whitfield as Superintendent. When the Methodists took over, she stayed on as Superintendent until she moved away. Then Mrs. Wells, or Auntie Wells, as we called her, took over the Sunday School. When she left Altoona, her sister Mrs. Deiley took her place. We had many Sunday School Superintendents since 1886, some of them were Mrs. Harry Tinker, Mrs. Jim H. Johnson, Mrs. Harry Bonell, Mrs. A. L. Johnson, Mrs. Woodington and many others that I cannot remember. Except for the two years that we had no church, our Sunday School here has been in continuous operation. We now have a Superintendent, Mrs. Valska, who is doing a wonderful work with the Sunday School. I did not serve very much in the Sunday School, all told perhaps ten years, but I did my duty supplying pupils.

FRIEDA GRILLEY REMEMBERS...

Esther Circle had the United methodist Women's Christmas Old Fashioned school program on December 12, 1985 with pot luck and a program followed. Millie Burgmeier, Frieda Grilley, Ruth Bredeson, Marie Brown, Judy Williams and Roberta Harriman all had pieces to say and all sang Christmas songs and Marie Brown played the piano. We each had a letter of Christmas to recite and joining us were Mary Ann Giliberto, Palma Petrick and Cathy Case. Millie Burgmeier had closing recipes for Christmas. Closing prayer was offered by Rev. Mike Gray-Ehnert.

Tim Burgmeier played the part of Santa Claus and handed out bags of Christmas candies and nuts to all present.

On December 17, 1985, we took our program and cookies and gifts to Oakwood Villa Nursing Home. Those who helped us there were Shirley Grokowsky, Brenda Jones, Bobie Scholze, Palma Petrick, Geraldine Kolbrak, Mary Ann Giliberto, Millie Burgmeier, Frieda Grilley, and Tim Burgmeier. Marie Brown played the organ while we all sang Christmas Carols. The residents sang a merry Christmas carol to us to let us know how much they enjoyed our visit. Then we all enjoyed coffee and cookies and "Santa" Tim Burgmeier handed out bags of candy and nuts to the residents.

MADALON VALSKA HANSON SHARES SOME OF HER MEMORIES OF HER YEARS AS SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT...

I first came to Altoona in 1941. I wanted a home church and decided on the Methodist. Howard told me he had gone there when he was a little boy because he got to pull the rope and ring the bell for Sunday School. Rev. Finch from Chippewa was our minister and I remember many Sunday evenings when I attended there would only be about five or six of us. We would sit in one pew and Rev. Finch would come down and stand in the pew ahead and give an informal service. We had a hard time getting $10.00 together to pay him. Mr. William Connell was our janitor at that time.

I became Sunday School Superintendent and stayed for 18 years so saw many children grow up. At times we had around 100 children with no partitions in the basement for classes. We used the upstairs hall and sanctuary for many of the classes. We always had a surplus of money in the spring to buy bibles for perfect attendance, and each child received a little gift for having attended during the year. We gave these out at our annual picnic.

We also were able to send children to Chetek to camp and would help with the cost for those who needed it. I remember taking a bunch on the train to camp with Mrs. Signe Fuley Harmon to help chaperone. One of the reasons we accumulated money was that our supplies were purchased where we could make the most savings. I remember Dr. Jordan mentioning the source of supplies and wanting me to change as he said the paper was of better quality and the pictures were brighter. I only answered "Yes, but the children can make their kites and fly the papers outside just as well with the less expensive paper." He just chuckled and said, "I guess you are right."

At Christmas, I bought the candy and apples and made up all the boxes so that every child attending the program received a treat. I think I enjoyed the Christmas program as much as the parents and children. You never knew what would happen when the little ones got up in front.

As I am looking back, I think of all the joys and blessings I received from my personal contact. One incident stands out. A little girl came this one Sunday with a beautiful bouquet for me. I thanked her and later found she had stopped on her way and picked the flowers from a lady's front yard. I couldn't scold her the next Sunday as she had done it out of her love for me. I did explain to her it was wrong to take the flowers and I'm sure she has been forgiven long ago.

When I felt I couldn't be Superintendent-Secretary anymore, I put in my resignation - not once, but several times. My answer from Dr. Jordan when asked if he had received it was, "Yes, I received it but I filed it in the waste paper basket; you must stay as long as I come out and am your minister." Finally, I found a replacement in Mrs. Paul Edwards.

The last Sunday I gave out the Bibles,etc., I went back to sit down and Dr. Jordan called me up front. He presented me with a beautiful red leather Bible which is one of my cherished treasures. The inscription in Dr. Jordan's beautiful writing said:

"Presented by Altoona, Wisconsin Methodist Sunday School to Mrs. Madalon Valska whose loyal service and devotion are a blessing to all, and whose Christian influence will never be forgotten by the children who loved her and whom she loved.
May 1959, Fred J. Jordan, Pastor."

I broke down and cried and all the children wondered and asked, "Why does Mrs. Valska cry when she received her Bible?"

Just the past week while visiting with a girl at a local bank, she informed me that her husband would become an ordained minister this fall.

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He had been one of my Sunday School boys many years ago. May the church continue to grow. It will always be remembered by me as a very good part of my life.

DON BOARD REMEMBERS...

Almost everything is witnessed by someone - usually a child. Children get everywhere, especially where they have been forbidden to go. I was required to stay away from fires, so naturally, when the Methodist Church burned, I was there.

Altoona, at that time, was made up of two wards separated by Division Street. East was the first ward and West the second. The fire alarm was the round house whistle. One long blast followed by a long series of toots indicated first ward and two long ones, the second.

The fire station and city hall was a building (now gone) which lay two doors north of Huftel's 'Altoona Service Center'. The fire truck was a large hand operated and mobile hose cart. Our volunteer fire department would push this cart by hand and hind leg to the scene of the fire, hook up to our excellent water system, and really souse things down.

Our church burned on a Sunday morning and was almost completely gutted by the time our fire department arrived. I lived only half a block away as the crow flies from the site, so was an early arriver.

I stood across the intersection in a large group of 'too young to know betters' and watched it burn. I remember the conjecture about that heavy bell. Would the steeple tip and throw it toward us? Would it fall straight down? Would it melt? Would the heat destroy its temper so its resonance be gone?

Needless to say, timbers burned through and it fell straight down. It lay where it fell for some time; then one day it disappeared.

Being only nine years old, I didn't suspect it had been stolen. I would probably have explained its disappearance as an act of God.

MERT BOARD REMEMBERS...

When the water was first installed - there was just a pipe in the kitchen with a faucet on it, no sink.

Oscar Nelson built the new church and Botsford and Bonell did the wiring in the new basement.

Mert and Oscar Carol built tables and cupboards in church and also installed water works.

That the church bell was in the attic of the old church for several years before installed . It was bought for $65.00 or $75.00. It was very big and heavy and when the church burned, it fell and cracked.

He also remembers buying the old church furnace for $10.00. When it was being hauled home, it fell off the trailer and bent the pipe, so it couldn't be used.

When donations were asked to build the new church, several families gave $50.00 pledges.

BILL GROKOWSKY SHARES THE FOLLOWING MEMORIES

When we moved to Altoona in 1965, we were members of the Lake Street Methodist Church. I didn't go to church much, but Shirley went to the little church on Garfield Avenue a couple of times and met Reverend Agema.

I thought we joined the church shortly after we moved to Altoona, but after checking the records I found we didn't join the church until 1967.

It didn't take long to get involved. In what seemed to be a very short time, I was Chairman of the Administrative Board and Shirley was Financial Secretary.

One of the most memorable activities was the choir. This was where I met several of the 'Old Timers' that had been involved with the church for many years.

There was Laura Martin, the Choir Director. Her husband Major was the head usher until he was too ill to come to church. Louis Bonie sang in the choir then. Never a dull moment! Louis always kept everyone in a good mood. I don't think anyone could forget Louis if you had known him at all. One of Louie's favorite pastimes during choir was to keep some of the younger members laughing when they should be singing, particularly Randy Foss.

The Bonell's were there - Harry and Elna. Harry was a very good bass singer. I also remember Elsie Pettis always being there. Some of the newer members I remember are June Board, Don Board, Jr., Ann Sturz, Mary Foss, the Hays girls - Vickie and Illa.

Other things that happened in the last 20 years that stick in my mind are the work projects that I got involved in. It seemed like they all involved Dave Pietenpol, except the wiring of the basement, when I helped Rick Jones with that. The projects as I remember them were building cupboards in the basement in 1970, building room dividers for the basement in 1972, the sidewalk along the south side of the church in 1972, building new roof on front entry in 1972, re-shingle the roof in 1981, and building the choir loft and new narthex in 1983. There were many church members who worked on these projects and in no way could I begin to name them all. The most hair-raising project was the shingling of the roof. There were a few times I didn't care for that too much.

I remember helping George Wright cover the beams in the sanctuary with paneling. New hanging lights had been installed in the sanctuary and flourescent lights that had been fastened under the beams were removed. I was up on a stepladder doing some hammering when I missed the nail and hit my finger. Instead of responding with what would be one of the many verbal remarks you would expect in that situation, I sent a resounding "Aw, shucks" echoing through the far corners of the sanctuary. George tried not to laugh.

There was a project that never got done. Back in 1972, the roof on the bell tower was flat and was leaking. It was a continuing problem and as flat roofs are, could not be permanently fixed. Dave Pietenpol and I spent a lot of time talking about the way to fix it. Building a steeple seemed to be the answer to the problem. Dave wasn't sure just how to go about it as he had built just about everything but a steeple. We both thought it to be a great challenge.

As my work gets me around eight counties, I began taking pictures of every church steeple I could find. But as things don't always work out the way that we would like them to, the bell tower roof needed a permanent repair with the plan for a steeple still in Dave and my minds. So, in 1972 the roof was built on the bell tower that is there now. Maybe the opportunity to build a steeple will come at a later time. I still have those pictures stuck away somewhere!

We also had numerous projects at the parsonage. They always seem to

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take place between ministers. Probably trying to fix the place up to make a good impression. The maintenance of our building has always been a problem.

MARIE DUVAL, DAUGHTER OF ZELDA CONNELL SHARES SOME MEMORIES.

I remember Rev. Kelly coming to the house. I saw him coming down the street one day (I was about three and a half) and I said to my Mother, "Here comes Kelly with a Buckskin belly." Guess my Mother was really embarrassed. I must have heard some of the older kids saying it.

In the first church, they had a big stove in the back of the church. I think it was like a pot belly stove; anyway, it was big. When I came in I saw a boy laying on the floor. At that time, I didn't know what was wrong with him but someone was standing by him. He was having a seizure; it really scared me. I know I will never forget it - or the stove.

I really learned a lot from our Sunday School classes. We used to get little cards with stories on the back and a Bible verse on the front; also papers with stories in that we looked forward to reading. We never liked to miss Sunday School. If we attended every Sunday for the year, we earned a Bible. After that, we could earn a book. I earned several Bibles that I gave to my older sisters that were married. I also earned several other books. My niece from Baltimore sent me the Bible that I had earned in 1915 when I was eight years old and given to her mother, so it was precious to me and I was glad to get it. Her kids had used it in Sunday School too, so it was badly worn. Our Sunday School use to have a picnic every summer at Irvine Park. We really looked forward to it I tell you. We rode a street car up to the park which was really fun for us and believe you me we were always waiting to eat as we had lemonade, beans salad, sandwiches, cake and sometimes jello. We would spend the whole day there. It was fun.

On our birthdays, we would bring a penny for each year of age and we would have to walk up in front and someone would be standing there as we put our pennies in the basket as we counted them. Don't think I could carry enough pennies to do it now at my age.

One Easter Sunday, Leonard Haas was giving the sermon. He was such a good speaker. It seemed the way he told the story you could just see Christ carrying the cross. Every time I went to church at Easter, I could always see it all over again. I just never forgot it.

We used to have ice cream socials on our lawn. My Dad was always so proud of our yard. Every morning he was out digging dandelions. Never a weed in it; he was very fussy about it.

My oldest girl was in the Sacred Heart Hospital when she was six or seven. Neither of my girls had been baptized yet. I stayed right at the hospital with her. My Mother knew I wanted them baptized so she had Howard Hovey come to the hospital and do it. He was attending the college so between classes he came. He brought one of his friends who was a Lutheran for witness; so that was a rather different baptism: in a Catholic hospital, by a Methodist minister and a Lutheran witness - so he baptized both girls.

When I am asked to join another church, I always say, "I am a Methodist and once a Methodist always a Methodist. We do not have any in Adams so I do go to other churches when I can, but they are not my church in Altoona.

I miss my good Methodist church.

MARY ANN GILIBERTO SHARES MEMORIES OF SOME SPECIAL DAYS

What a wonderful way to celebrate Halloween! Our Sunday School students and teachers were all dressed up for our special parade. There were witches, pirates, ballerinas, ghosts and many other costumes. We all met at the church and the children were so excited that it was hard to wait until everyone had arrived before we we started parading. We had decided to go to Oakwood Villa Nursing Home and visit the patients so they could enjoy all the fun. We walked up and down all the halls and greeted all of the people. I don't know who enjoyed it most - the children, the teachers or the residents of the home. The interaction between young and old was a happy experience. Then we returned to church and played games and had refreshments.

The following week in Sunday School class, we talked about what fun it had been and how much the patients enjoyed our visit. We decided that making others happy was a good way to show Christian love. We all voted for doing something for the home again and thought Thanksgiving would be a good time to do it. For several weeks the Sunday School children made little nut cups which we filled with mints and sent to the nursing home. We wanted to have one for all of the residents which meant that we had to make 90 of them. I think the children would gladly have made twice that many. They really enjoyed the idea of helping brighten the lives of those less fortunate than the rest of us. Later, we received a nice "thank, you note' from the director of Oakwood Villa telling us how much all the patients enjoyed their little surprise.

These were just two outstanding events of 1984 in Sunday School.

LOIS GARDOW REMEMBERS 1940

During the early 1940's, the church didn't have a minister. Services were conducted by various lay speakers on Sunday evening. Attendance was very low. A small group of teenagers would scour the town for a piano player and then become the choir and often the whole congregation.

With the end of World War II, returning servicemen and their new families soon filled the church and Sunday School to overflowing.

TED BROWN REMEMBERS

A minister named Sammy Samuelson who had a car with a top that folded down. He would take the Sunday School class trout fishing on Otter Creek and for weiner roasts.

The choir was directed by Mrs. Wilcox and members included Ted Brown, George Wright and Art Ladler. They also put on "skits." Leonard Haas also attended Sunday School.

Another outstanding memory is of the huge church bell falling through the floor after the fire.

BERYL E. STEINBRING REMEMBERS

My service as organist for Altoona United Methodist Church dates back to 1972 - when after a few Sundays of substituting for the then organist, I took over and remained there through the term of Rev. George Agema and two years under Rev. Thunstrom. I was out five years, and again took over the position of organist in 1982 when the then current one wanted to be relieved. I held the post three years, leaving it as of March 1, 1985. Prior to the time I took over permanently in 1972, I played at funerals or occasional Sunday services when the regular organist found it necessary to be gone.

PEGGY ANDERSON REMEMBERS

Dr. Fred Jordan. One of my many memories of his is, after his health had forced him into a wheel chair, he made the comment in the pulpit:

"This is the first time in my life that I have ever been pushed around."

Shortly before Mrs. Jordan, Dr. Jordan's wife, passed away, our Sunday School teacher took us to the hospital to see her. She was happy to see us; however, she cried because she looked not at her best and wasn't able to be a hostess to her guests. Truly an unselfish person to the end.

Rev. Chris Everson. He had the most glorious of voices and could make any story come alive for the congregation. He worked with the youth of the church a great deal. At a particular program we did Jonah and the Whale. Rev. Everson provided the voice of God - I'm sure God was very pleased with his interpretation of God's voice. Rev. Everson loved to sing and his bass voice carried throughout the church. He certainly left quite an impression on all that he worked with.

Rev. James Witsaman. He enjoyed singing Christmas Carols and made a point of having the congregation start to sing them very early in the season and we all enjoyed it.

Rev. George T. Agema. He was a real joy for the congregation. I especially remember when we had trouble with the wiring at my mother's house. He found out and came down, repaired the wiring and refused any money for parts or labor. When our children were baptized and we gave him a 'thank you' card, he said, "If there is anything in there except a card, take it out, because not only is this my job, but it's also my pleasure."

Every year at Christmas, Rev. and Mrs. Agema always gave my mother a bag of potatoes - she really looked forward to this. Both very good Christians.

SOME MEMORIES OF ALTOONA U. M. CHURCH, RALPH ELY

1937 or 1938 - The M.Y.F. put on a play called "Daffy and Dilly." I only remember that the Davis girls - Dorothy, Jackie, and Helen -, Roger Knobel, Newell Pettis and I were in it. There were more, but I can't remember who they were.

1960-'61 - Rev. Chris Everson had an old Ford Model A car, and he took the youth group over to Lake Street Methodist Church in Eau Claire in it. The kids loved it, and they hung out of all the windows and waved at all the people in their yards as they passed.

When I taught Sunday School, I took over from George Wright. He had the toughest class in the school. I know, because my son Mark and his buddies were in it. No other teacher wanted to take this class, so I got stuck with it until they got out of high school.

I had a gimmick that never failed. Whenever they started to get out of hand, I'd start telling them a war story about my exploits in the Pacific fighting the "Sons of Nippon." They never did catch on that the moral of these stories always was the same as the current Sunday School lesson. Oh, well, it worked, and now they know the truth!

A MEMORABLE VISIT - ANN STURZ

1977 was a very special year for our church and for four families whose backgrounds were very different.

Through a program initiated to allow young Irish children a break from the constant tensions of the Protestant/Catholic conflict, the church provided the cost of transportation for two eleven-year-old children to visit the United States (and subsequently, Altoona). It was hoped that these

(Continued next page)

young people would see that Protestants and Catholics could live side-by-side and be friends; to give these youth something to strive for.

The Larry Sturz family and the John Kessler family were fortunate to have been able to host the six-week visit of these two Irish boys.

For the first week, it was apparent that the boys avoided going outside, let alone venture outside the yard. We eventually understood that it was not safe to venture very far from home in Ireland.

By the time the boys were ready to go home, they were quite footloose and fancy-free. I'm sure they dreamed of such freedom of movement in their homeland. Hopefully, their experiences in Altoona planted the seed and provided many of the necessary nutrients to encourage those young people to work toward that goal as adults.

It is impossible to assess which of the involved families benefitted the greatest. It was an experience no one will forget.

SPECIAL MEMORIES - SHIRLEY GROKOWSKY

We moved to Altoona in May of 1965 and became members of the Altoona Methodist Church in the fall of 1967. Rev. George Agema was our Pastor. We were eager and willing to again get involved in a small church like we frew up in. That we did, as in January my husband took over as Chairman of the official Board and I became Financial Secretary.

In 1975, Rev. Agema retired and Rev. James Thunstrom came to serve here. Rev. Jim was young, enthusiastic, and a bachelor! But the bachelor part didn't last long. He was married in 1976.

It seems like most of my memories are while Rev. Jim was here as our two children were growing up and we got involved through the kids' things. In fact, our daughter was in his first confirmation class here in Altoona. It was a beautiful service. My parents came from out of town and commented that it was the most meaningful one they had ever been to. Our son was confirmed a couple years later, and this time it was just as nice.

One thing I guess a few of us will always remember is that while Rev. Jim and Sue were on their honeymoom, somehow their bathroom got stuffed with crumpled newspaper!! I have heard that they had to paint, as the newsprint made the walls a little black! I'm sure by this time they were wondering what kind of a church they had gotten into.

The time the Sunday School kids put on the Spring Program, Sue and I cut wings out of cardboard and proceeded to paint them on my porch and kitchen floor. Being quite pregnant, I don't suppose this was too easy for Sue. The wings got painted and the kids were as cute as could be. I did. however, scrub paint for a long time!

My only canoe trip was with a church group when Thunstroms were here. We all camped over night and then took a trip down the Red Cedar. I must admit it was fun, even If I was scared to death.

I guess we feel a little closer to Rev. Jim as just before he was to leave Altoona to serve another church, we had a death in our family and without him, I don't know if we could have gotten through it.

Since then, we have had two pastors: Rev. Mike Williams, who was here only a short time, and the present pastor, Rev. Mike Gray-Ehnert. We are now helping the Gray-Ehnerts wait for the new little Gray-Ehnert who will be arriving in our neighborhood this summer. Congratulations, Reverends Mike and Jean!

THE CHURCH TODAY

O U R P A S T O R
Rev. Michael Gray-Ehnert
and his wife
Rev. Jean Gray-Ehnert

It is impossible to begin the section on the Church Today without commenting on the remodeling projects that have taken place in the last years. The new siding, the new roof, the creation of the balcony and the remodeling of the narthex and sanctuary, the painting and carpeting of the Fellowship Hall, and the addition of the parking space and the curb and gutter - and let's not forget the new organ! Many, many things are new; yet that newness is in touch with the past of our Church.

One of the crucial strengths of this congregation that is evident in the remodeling is the way in which this congregation can and does work together and strive to do what needs to be done. The United Methodist Women, the Helping Hands, the United Methodist Youth Fellowship and the rest of the congregation all work together for the common ministry. There are differences within the congregation, but these differences have proven themselves to be a source of strength rather than a dividing influence...different gifts but one spirit...that does indeed describe the Altoona United Methodist Church today! I am honored to be the Pastor during this important era of the church!

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The purpose of the U.M.W. is as follows:

"The organized unit of the United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ to develop a creative, supporting fellowship and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."

Over the years, this group of church women have also been known as the Ladies Aid, Women's Society of Christian Service (W.S.C.S.) and now United Methodist Women (U.M.W.)

At the present time, there are two circles. The Esther Circle meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. and the Rebecca Circle at 1:30 p.m. the same day. These two circles meet together the second Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. as the U.M.W. consisting of about 20 women.

A Fall Bazaar is held every year, which includes a craft table, bake sale, and noon meal, which has been very successful as a salad luncheon. Craft items that are left, along with additional baked items are taken to London Square Mall to the charity bazaar.

At Christmas an all-church potluck is organized by the women. This past year they put on a skit about "The Old Country School Christmas Program." It was also presented at Oakwood Villa Nursing Home.

Another annual event is the spring election supper. This is open to the public; various menus are served, all proving that the Methodist Ladies are good cooks!

Funeral lunches, wedding receptions, teas, etc. are organized by the U.M.W. They also remember persons who are ill with cards, flowers, and visits, which everyone appreciates.

Missions is a large part of this group. In the past, support had been given to the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, Odanah Indian Mission in northern Wisconsin and Wayfarers in Duluth, Minnesota. At the present time, a large donation is sent to the Northwest District each year.

The general budget of our local church also received financial support each year.

When the church needs a hand, the United Methodist Women are willing. Yes, the Ladies Aid, or W.S.C.S., or U.M.W., they have always been a large part of the foundation of the Methodist Church.

THE PARSONAGE

AT 1111 DANIELS AVENUE

SUNDAY SCHOOL 1986

Our Sunday School this year consists of five classes totaling 45 students. Bobbie Scholze leads the way as Superintendent with Jean York teaching Pre-school and kindergarten, Tauna Fritz and Lori Patrow have the first and second grades, Mary Ann Giliberto has third and fourth graders, Dale Patrow fifth and sixth and Kim Anderson grades seven and eight. Music this year is under the direction of Mary Pietenpol, with Cathy Case organist. Together they prepare songs to sing during the church service once every other month.

At Christmas, the children present us with a beautiful program which includes recitations, plays, music and "the Nativity". A Social time is held in the basement after the program with a visit from St. Nick passing out candy bags and talking to the little ones, and sometimes the older folks!!

In June, Bible School is held for one week for ages pre-school - 6th grade, with 7th and 8th graders assisting the teachers.

Some of the extra special things during the year was to make favors for our friends at Oakwood Villa Nursing Home like nutcups, napkin rings and, in February, Valentines. We also presented our Christmas program at the home last year. Part of our Halloween Party is to go to Oakwood Villa and parade around, showing off our costumes.

With God's blessings we will someday have the much needed educational wing with a growing church school to fill it!! These kids are our "Church of tomorrow"!

HELPING HANDS

Helping Hands was organized in the fall of 1982. Our first meeting had approximately 18 ladies in attendance. Today, we have about 10 active members.

Our activities include emergency quilts for disaster victims, making church banners for Easter and Christmas, and Spring Craft and Bake sales. The profits have been given to pay towards the new organ and for remodeling the church. A potluck supper and tree trim party is held to ready the church for Christmas and has been a great fellowship for all who attended.

This year, being the Centennial of our church, we made a Centennial Quilt, inviting anyone in the church to make a block of their choice representing our church history. We have a total of 30 blocks which tells a very interesting story. It will be displayed in the church for the remainder of this year and hopefully someplace in Altoona next year for the City's Centennial.

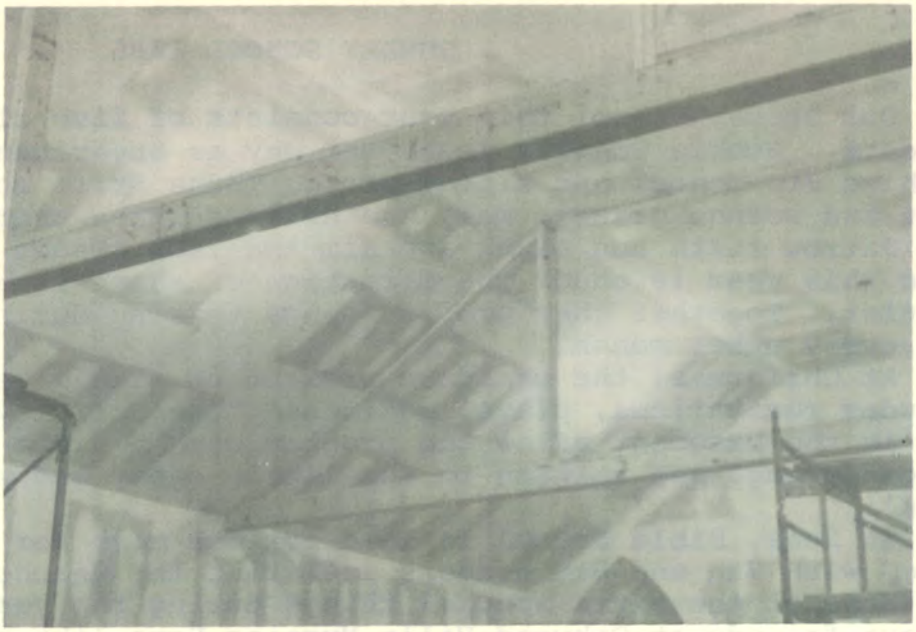
We are always willing to help in the church and hope to provide fund and fellowship while doing so.

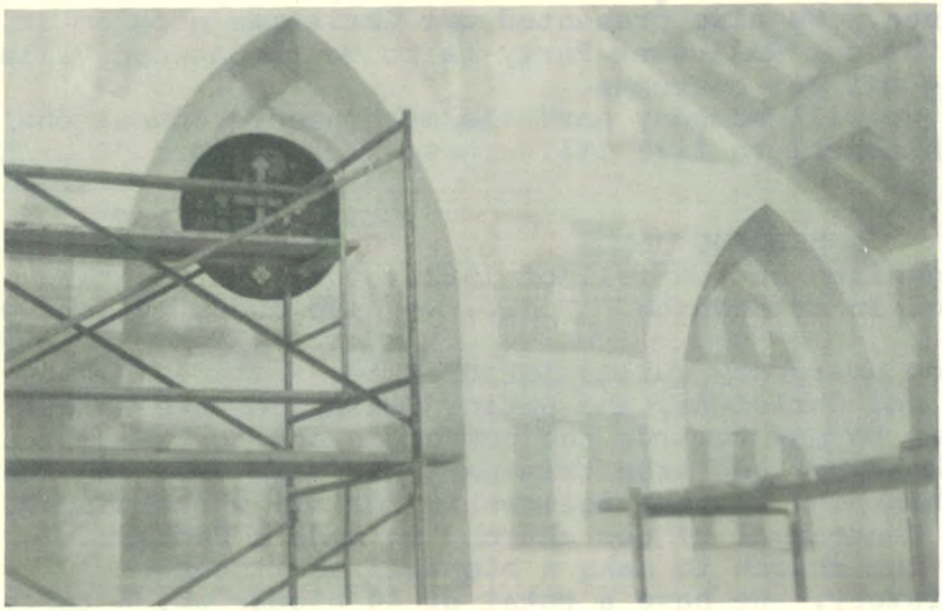
UNITED METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

The purpose of this group is to give the young adults, 9th grade through 12th grade, an opportunity to reach out to other youth of their own age from other churches. They can attend camping trips, weekend retreats, rallies and this year three of our youth went to New York City. The youth meet at least twice a month to share in fellowship. They plan and serve meals for the church such as pancake brunches, the Harvest Dinner and the Easter Sunrise breakfast. They also do the Easter Sunrise service. The money they raise goes into the building fund, youth scholarship fund and, of course, their own account to help pay for their own group activities.

1 9 8 6

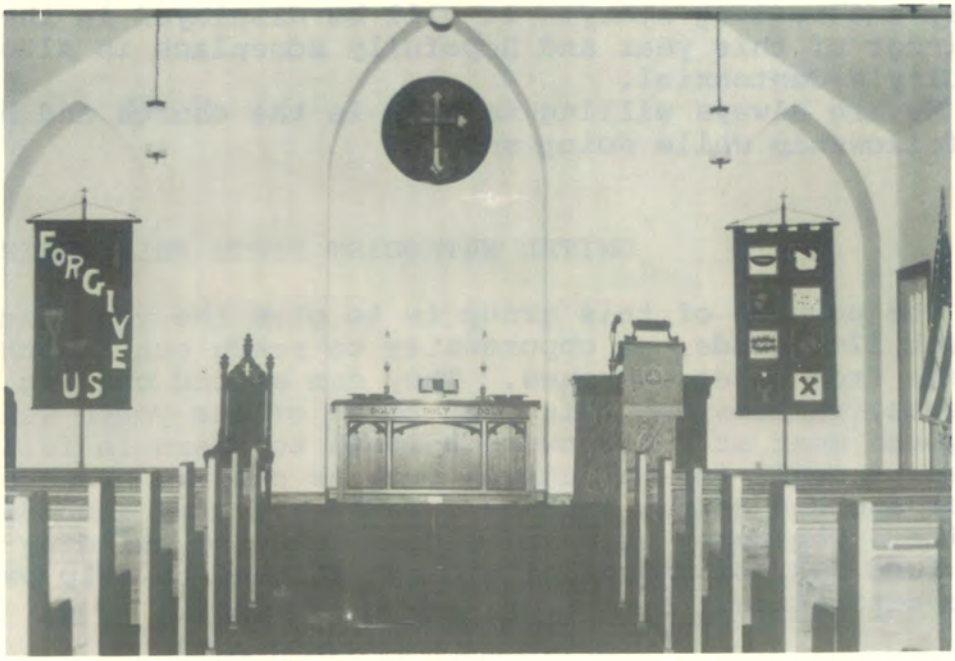
REMODELING
PROJECT





THE RESULTS OF OUR

LABORS!



One hundred years ago, most all of our church families' incomes came from the railroad. In the church today, the story is quite different. There are only three church members left working on the railroad. Pictured below are our church railroaders.

From left to right:
Top Row:
Keith Grilley, Conductor, 37 years of service, still working; Lawrence Kolbrak, Yard Master, retired in 1979 with 34 years of service; Lester Card, Welder, 33 years of service, still working; Maurice Nelson,Machinist, retired in 1970 with 48 years of service; Newell Pettis, Round House Foreman, retired 1982 with 41 years of service.

Bottom Row:
Fred Hudson, Engineer, retired 1963 with 54 years of service; Edward Bredesen, Engineer, retired in 1963 with 45 years of service; Harold Simonson, Engineer, retired in 1986 with 38 years of service; Herman Kersten, Eau Claire Yardmaster, retired 1978 with 47 years of service.

Not pictured: Owen Stewart, Engineer, retired in 1978 with 41 years of service; Lloyd Lenz, Engineer, retired in 1980 with 40 years of service; Charles Gumness, Engineer, 20 years of service, still working.

Reading from left to right:
Front Row: Gary Fritz, Tauna Fritz, Sharon Vollendorf, Gabriel Vance, Mark Vollendorf, Timothy and Shannon Burgmeier, Willard Burgmeier, Mildred Burgmeier, Ron Cater, Lavere Cater, Rev. Michael Gray/Ehnert, Georgia King, Mary Simonson, Harold Simonson, Ham Kersten, John Streif, Shawn Streif, Justin Streif, Jesse Regenauer, Ian McDonald, Ross McDonald, Diane Ho.
Row 2: Bill Grokowsky, Shirley Grokowsky, Deanna Shafer, Alan Anderson, Kim Anderson, Ruth Connell, Mary Ann Giliberto, Arnold Tongen, June Tongen, Delia Gehring, Fred Hudson, Marion Smith, Rawleigh Smith, Vincent Struck, Ruth Bredesen, Lois Neill, Harry Neill, Maurice Nelson, Florence Nelson, Ryan Scholze, Ray York, Marilyn Streif and Sonja Streif, Colin Streif, Mary Pietenpol, David Pietenpol.
Row 3: Ann Sturz, Vivian Hays, Marge Gilbert, Beula Erickson, Jennifer Jones, Rick Jones, Brenda Jones, Kyle Sturz, Sarah Sturz, Tom and Chalsea Lane, Jane and Erika Thorson, John and Leif Thorson, Vilma Struck, Palma Petrick, Louise Kopplin, Alex Kieth, Ann Myrick, Vincent Myrick, Pat Bartlett and Heather Kelly, Chad Bartlett, Wade Bartlett, Kevin Fritz, Cathy Case.
Row 4: Larry Sturz, Mike Hays, Milo Hays, Jeff Patrow, Betsy Patrow, Dale Patrow, Lori Patrow, John DeLaMater, Jody DeLaMater, Glenda DeLaMater, Kristi DeLaMater, Linda and Cory McCracken, Frieda Grilley, Geraldine Kolbrak, Lawrence Kolbrak, Lois Gardow, Ralph Ely, Helen Ely, Brenda Ely, Susan Ely, Tara Regis, Gary Bartlett, Callie Overlien, Ben Overlien, Joshua Overlien, Bob Bredesen.
Row 5: Harlan Medes, Myrland Hatleli, Yvonne Hatleli, Eugene Ehlinger, Darlene Ehlinger, Michelle Ehlinger, Donna Gutsch, Jerry Ehlinger, Pat Ehlinger, Jason Ehlinger, Nick Sullivan, Terry Sullivan, Marilyn Sullivan, Chris Sullivan, Jenny Scholze, Bobbie Scholze, Jeffrey Scholze, Jeanne York, Stacy York, Anita Regis, Sesaly and Zachary Overlien.
Members not present for photo: Gary Anderson, Peggy Anderson, William Anderson, Irene Anderson, Christine Anderson, Paul Anderson, Martin Bastress, Daryl Berg, Hazel Boland, Ed Bredesen, Barbara Bredesen, Thomas Bresina, Myrna Bresina, Forest Bresina, Jean Bresina, William Bresina, Kevin Brooks, Renee Bro-ks, Ted Brown, Marie Brown, Lester Card, Betty Card, Charles Card, Richard Carlson, Ute Carlson, Judy Cleveland, Charles Compton, Ethel Compton, William Connell, David Ely, Mark Ely, Josephine Erickson, Jane Fritz, Bruce Gardow, Lamoine Gardow, Forest Gilbert, Jane Gilbert Susan Grokowsky, Charles Gumness, Gordon Gutsch, Becky Gutsch, Brian Gutsch, Ramon Gutsch, Mary Gutsch, Scott Gutsch, Russell Hall, Frank Harriman, Roberta Harriman, Gary Hays, Terry Hays, Robert Hoth, Joan Hoth, Cora Hudson, Connie Johnson, Jerome Johnson, Dawn Johnson, JoAnn Johnson, Jason Johnson, Jeffrey Johnson, Willard Johnston, Marie Johnston, Tony Jones, Travis Jones, Dawn Knutson, Alisa Lane, Lloyd Lenz, Kathryn Lenz, Paul Lenz, Sherri Maki, Christopher Manor, Jacqueline Lindsey, Linda Martell, Lorraine Medes, Marie Medes, Max Meyers, Linda Meyers, Gary Neill, Brenda Neill, Brian Neill, Cinthia Neill, Roger Ness, Fern Ness, John Ness, Lewis Newman, Sherry Newman, Missy Newman, John Ohnstad, Dennis Overlien, Betty Passon, Michael Passon, Mark Peterson, Carla Peterson, Elsie Pettis, John Pietenpol, Marilyn Potter, James Potter, Teresa Raber, Robing Raferty, Randy Richter, Vickie Richter, Gayle Roosevelt, John Shelley, Beverly Shelley, Pamela Shelley, Susan Steen, Terry Steen, Tony Steen, Owen Stewart, Helen Stewart, Dennis Stewart, Barbara Stewart, Patricia Stewart, Mate Taylor, James VanderVoort, Sherry Vandervoort, Gertrude Walker Bruce Wingad, Liz Wingad, James Zempel, Kimberly Carlson.

1886
1988
THE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

FRONT ROW:
Zachary Overlien, Joshua Curry, Cory McCracken, Jessica Curry, Heather Seeley, Eric Seeley, B.J. Seeley, Dana Little, Ryan Setzer, Chad McCracken.

ROW 2:
Jean York, Justin Streif, Jesse Regenauer, Chad Little, Jody DeLaMater, Heather Peterson, Ross McDonald, Ian McDonald, Ben Overlien, Ray York, Ryan Scholze, Joshua Overlien.

ROW 3:
Dale Patrow, Mary Ann Giliberto, Kurt Carlson, Shawn Streif, Nick Sullivan, Traci Regis, Sarah Peterson, Jenny Scholze, Tauna Fritz, Bobbie Scholze.

ROW 4:
Kevin Ely, Eric Wick, Jason Ehlinger, Michael Medes, Jim Stewart, Stacy York, Callie Overlien, Jennifer Jones, Tara Regis, Kim Anderson.

NOT PRESENT FOR PICTURE:
Brenda Bresina, Tami Gutsch, Chad Gutsch, Jason Johnson, Scott Johnson, Shannon Johnson, Jason Nichols, Brenda Steen, Melissa Stewart, Angelia Sahm, Delina Sahm, Butch Sahm, Dwayne Sahm, Shane Sahm, Heather Kelly, Emily Borman.

CENTENNIAL QUILT

Description of blocks reading from left to right

TOP ROW

...My block commemorates the choir's contribution to the life of the church. Roberta Harriman

...Ministers serving our church from 1895 to 1926. Geraldine Kolbrak

...Original church burning on March 7, 1926. Mary Ann Giliberto

...Ministers serving from 1927 to 1986. Shirley Grokowsky

...A teaching certificate I found inspired me to have my block represent the many years of Bible School. Helen Ely

ROW 2

...This represents my many years as Communion Steward. Millie Burgmeier

...My square is in memory of my mother Clara Johnson, Grace Woodington, and Madalon Valska. The trolley car is what we used to ride to Lake Hallie and Irvine Park for our yearly Sunday School picnic. Lois Neill

...Symbol of Alpha and Omega. Rev. Michael Gray-Ehnert

...Altoona's first church had a lovely large bell. When 10 o'clock Sunday morning came, most every person in our town of 900 people paused to listen to the tolling, calling people to church. The fire that destroyed the church cracked the bell so it could no longer be used. Elsie Pettis

...Six generations of our family have belonged to the church. Ann Sturz

ROW 3

...Teaching little children in our church is very special to me, so that is why I chose this topic. Jean York

...Original church built in 1886. Bonnie Hatleli

...A copy of the Centennial sign made by Bill Grokowsky and hung above the front entrance of the church. Shirley Grokowsky

...Our church as it looks today in 1986. Mary Pietenpol

...Little girl representing the Sunday School singing. Brenda Jones

ROW 4

...Possibly one of the greatest treasures of a life is having friends to talk to, laugh with, and work with. I have found this treasure in Altoona United Methodist Church. Jane Fritz

...Crosses which are so beautiful to me. June Tongen

...Represents the Election Day Dinners put on by the U.M.W. Palma Petrick

...Helping Hands is an informal fellowship committed to furthering the goals of the United Methodist Church. Glenda DeLaMater

...Represents the U.M.W.'s contributions to Red Bird Mission. Ann Myrick

ROW 5

...Important events in our family's Christian life. Ann Sturz

...Sunday School teachers often suffer from the "Old Woman in the Shoe" syndrome - so many children we don't know what to do. Lois Gardow

...Our church as it looks in 1986. Frieda Grilley

...Annual Thrift Sales which we all enjoy participating in while earning money for our church. Catherine Case

...Gary and I were married in the Altoona United Methodist Church. As it was one of the most cherished times in our lives, I chose it for my square. Peggy Anderson

ROW 6

...Sketch of our parsonage purchased in 1959. Lois Gardow

...The treasure chest represents Jeff's contribution to the church as treasurer, and the school represents our family involvement in the Sunday School. Bobbie Scholze

...Sketch of the new front doors of the church. Georgia King

...Youth Group Christmas Party 1977. Rev. Jim Thunstrom and Dale Patrow attended as Santa and Caboose. Neither wore their glasses which proved to be very entertaining as they are both nearly blind without glasses.

(continued on next page)

Everywhere Santa went, Caboose followed, but he never knew Santa had stopped until he bumped into him. Betsy Patrow
...In spite of a serious injury, the 1985 United Methodist Youth Fellowship Ski Trip provided many great memories.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH