

The United Methodist Church  
Wisconsin Annual Conference  
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## FLASHBACKS

*Revealing glimpses of our  
creative past*

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## FLASHBACKS



Official newsletter of the United Methodist  
Historical Society of Wisconsin

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Material of historical interest, church  
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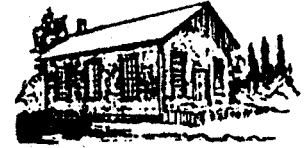
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"WE are the end-product of our history"

# FLASHBACKS

Revealing glimpses of our creative past



*Official newsletter of the*

**UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN**

Vol. 33 No.3

September 2008

## FALL PILGRIMAGE

On Saturday, October 4, the Fall Pilgrimage of 2008 will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first Wisconsin Conference of the United Brethren in Christ.

The Pilgrimage will meet at the People's United Methodist Church, 103 N. Alpine Parkway, Oregon, Wisconsin. At 11:00 am, there will be a presentation by Steve Polster on the origins of the Circuit System in the Wisconsin Conference. Lunch will be served at noon.

At 1:00 p.m., there will be a visit to the Rutland Church and Cemetery. This is the site of the first Conference of the UBC in 1858. The tour will be presented by the Friends of Rutland Church who are in the process of restoring the building.

For more information, please contact the Archives at [archives@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:archives@wisconsinumc.org) or call 608-837-7328.

## WE ARE

## BRETHREN!

The organizing conference in Wisconsin of the United Brethren in Christ (UBC) took place on September 16-20, 1858 in the Rutland Church in Dane County. Bishop Lewis Davis was the Chairman of the Conference.

This event had been preceded by the organization of a number of classes and congregations of the United Brethren members in Wisconsin.

The earliest event also began in Rutland. In 1836, several families from Vermont and Pennsylvania settled in Rutland. They first met for Sunday service and weekly prayer meetings in the Father Johnson home. In 1840, they met in the home of D. E. De Jean and organized a class. Mr. De Jean was chosen as the first class leader.

On 1842, the Rev. James Davis came from the Wabash Conference of Indiana, to Monroe, Wisconsin. In the fall of that year, he organized the first United Brethren in Christ congregation. This was in the Isaac Chamnes home, a log cabin. This was three miles west of Monroe in Smook Valley. There were seven charter members.

Herman Block says "The Wabash conference was characterized by its missionary zeal. Thus, when an appeal was made for someone to go into the Wisconsin territory, ready response was forthcoming. The Rev. James Davis, then a young man, 30 years of age, in the Wabash Conference, asked for appointment to this opening area. In 1842, he packed a Bible, an English dictionary and a German language dictionary, in his saddle bag and rode horseback 500 miles northwestward. In a short time, he could preach in either language as the occasion required. He held his first service in the Isaac Chamnes home."

In 1844, the Wabash Conference elected James Davis to be the presiding elder over the two Wisconsin Circuits: Monroe and Rock River.

In 1852, a church building was erected in Rutland. By 1853, there were two circuits: Monroe and Union, and five missions: Sugar River, Richland, Coon Creek, Sauk Prairie and Jamestown.

### ORIGINS OF THE DENOMINATION

The origins of the UBC can be traced back to the early work in Pennsylvania among the German speaking people. William Otterbein, received his theological training in the German Reformed Church. In 1752, he came to Pennsylvania where he accepted a call from a congregation in Lancaster. In 1767, he attended a "Great Meeting" where he heard Martin Boehm preach. At the end of that sermon Otterbein proclaimed in German "We are Brothers." In 1800, the first annual conference of the United Brethren in Christ was held in the Frederick Kemp home,

Frederick County, Maryland. Otterbein and Boehm were elected the first bishops.

Membership in the churches grew quickly, and there was a rapid spread of congregations to the south and west. By 1841, there were nine annual conferences, reaching as far west as Indiana and Illinois. The Wabash conference included congregations in western Indiana and eastern Illinois. Although German had originally been the language of choice, by 1837, the English language had become predominant. The work in Wisconsin was initiated by the Wabash Conference for three years, then for eight years by the Illinois conference and five years by the Rock River Conference.

At the organization of the Wisconsin Conference in 1858, the conference consisted of one station (Rutland), three circuits: Sheboygan, Union and Monroe, and nine missions with 131 preaching places. There were fifteen ministers who were charter members. The first conference licensed six young preachers and received four others by transfer, making a total of 25 ministers in the conference. This meant there were twenty charges to which pastors could be appointed, an average of six appointments per preacher.

At the fourth session of the Wisconsin Conference held on October 3, 1861 the organization was divided into two conferences: The Wisconsin and the Fox River. The latter included land from Sheboygan to the Mississippi. There were 1752 members in the conference. The ministers were instructed to preach a missionary sermon and one temperance sermon

at each preaching place once a year. These two conferences united in 1885.

The United Brethren were concentrated in the southwest corner of the state and were essentially a rural church. By 1880, there were 1815 members in 67 meetings (25 in churches) served by 37 local and itinerant ministers. By 1887, there were 2477 people in 77 meetings (43 in church buildings) served by 37 ministers.

The lack of church buildings was a constant problem and was addressed repeatedly at annual conference. Presiding elders were burdened with the task of raising funds for new construction.

### THE SEMINARY

The UBC came into Juneau County about 1858. At different times there were eighteen small congregations or preaching places in the county. A congregation was established in Elroy in 1873. Services were held in the ELroy Hall on the second and fourth Sabbaths at 3:00. There were ten charter members.

South of Elroy there was a circuit at Millards Prairie. In 1861, this became a mission. It was at this church where the seminary was first organized in 1872 at a quarterly conference held in the church.

On January 9, 1874, an Academy was opened. A building at the cost of \$3,000 was opened at the top of the hill on the west side of the village. Teachers were the Rev. and Mrs. Washburn, John Allison and Mrs. George Hooper. The school was called the Academy and Academy street got its name from the school. The Academy was housed in an unpretentious two-story square building having a square

bell tower. From an advertisement appearing in the Elroy Headlight, Elroy Seminary was "A Christian Institution of learning for the education of both sexes, having the same course of study, classical and scientific for ladies and gentlemen" and "Thoroughly organized commercial department" was also connected with the school. What the institution was trying to do and in some measure did accomplished, is indicated in the published list of faculty members and subjects taught.

*Heading the Seminary as principal was Rev. F. M. Washburn, M.A., with Martha A. Washburn as "Lady Principal". C.E. Booth, M.D. was professor of Anatomy and Physiology. Anna M. Hopper was teacher of German and Mathematics, Eva Brown was principal of the Primary Department, Victoria P. Bovee was principal of the Commercial Department, and Genie McClure was teacher of Music. In 1877, from 40 to 86 students attended the Academy.*

A Seminary board of trustees was elected in 1874, which included G. G. Nickey, the district superintendent of the conference. The first principal served for six years and was succeeded by F. Pease. The seminary struggled under a burdening debt from which it could not recover. In 1882, it closed and the property was taken over by mortgages. In 1883, the seminary building was purchased for \$868 by the school District. The First School building was moved to the seminary grounds.

Finally a fire occurred in the main building. The fire department was hampered by low water pressure. Word was

sent to the pumping station to increase the pressure. As a result, the water main burst because of the added pressure. There was no water to fight the fire and the building burned down.

One of the graduates of the Academy has a special place in UBC history, Mary Mutch Cain. She was born in Hillsboro in 1869. As a Youth, she attended the Millards Prairie UBC. Mary Mutch made a public profession of her faith in 1874, united with the church and was baptized by immersion. She received academic instruction at the Elroy Academy and at the age of eighteen years, she taught school. In 1888, she attended Western College in Iowa and graduated in 1892. Here she met Isaac Cain, also a student at the college. They were married shortly after graduation and sailed to Sierra Leone as UBC missionaries on October 1, 1892.

The Cains were stationed at Rotifunk under the support of the Women's Missionary Association. During the next three and half years the Cains participated in the work in Rotifunk. They both taught school and supervised the boys' home.

They returned to the United States in 1896 and then returned to Rotifunk in 1897. In 1898, there was a local uprising in Sierra Leone, called the Hut Tax War. Both British and Americans, as well as about 1000 Africans were killed in the uprising. This included Mary and Isaac Cain., The graves at Rotifunk are marked in remembrance of their sacrifice.

In the United States, the Bloomer Church is named the Mary Much Cain Memorial Church.

### PLEASANT RIDGE

One of the congregations in Grant county was Pleasant Ridge, one of the few integrated congregations both in the denomination and in the state of Wisconsin.

There were several groups of African Americans who settled in small towns in the state. These include Fox Lake, Cheyenne Valley and Chilton as well as larger communities such as Milwaukee, Racine, Fond du lac and Janesville.

The earliest African Americans to settle in Pleasant Ridge were the Shepherds, former slaves who had traveled with their former owners, the William Horner family. They arrived in 1848. They were joined by a number of other African Americans, who some, like the Green Family, escaped from slavery.

By 1858, the United Brethren had started work in Grant County. A school building was erected in 1870 at Pleasant Ridge. It was also used for worship services. The church building at Pleasant Ridge began about 1880. The log building was finished about 1883. The name of the church was the Flora Fountain United Brethren in Christ Church. The congregation was integrated and was served by both Caucasian and African American pastors: Romulus Richmond and his sister-in-law Minnie Richmond.

## ORDINATION OF WOMEN

In 1851 in Illinois, Lydia Sexton was given a license to preach by her local class meeting. They presented their decision to the quarterly meeting of the UBC Illinois conference and she was licensed to preach.

On September 11, 1889, The UBC ordained their first woman minister: Ella Niswonger, who became a member of the Central Illinois Conference. She had been the first female graduate of the regular theological course at Bonebrake (later United) Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. By 1901, ninety-seven women were listed in the UBC ministerial directory.

In Wisconsin, in 1883 the first woman licensed to preach was Jennie Harness, who later became the wife of J. C. Hatch. She served as an evangelist until she was properly licensed in 1895. In 1894, Ida Richards was licensed and in 1896, was the first woman to be ordained in Wisconsin. She later married Henry C. Marquardt. She was first assigned to the Turtle Lake Circuit.

Eventually, there were nineteen women who were licensed to preach. This did not include Minnie Richmond, who was ordained in the UBC but after the denominational split in 1889.

## CAMP MEETINGS

In 1884, the UBC Wisconsin Conference and the Rock River Conference purchased ten acres in Clarno Township, three miles southwest of Monroe and ten miles south of rural Bethel church. Camp meetings were held there until 1901. The UBC also rented the Witwen Camp

Grounds near Blackhawk from the Evangelical Church. Beginning in the early 1930s, the camp was used for family camps, the Ladies Missionary Society, the Brotherhood and the Youth Fellowship.

## MISSIONS

Both home and foreign missions were a strong element of the UBC. The first foreign mission was to Sierra Leone, West Africa in 1855. Work was begun in Germany in 1869 and in China in 1899, Other sites included Japan, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. In the United States, work was established in New Mexico. A number of individuals from Wisconsin served in the mission fields.

## DIVISION

In 1889, the parent denomination suffered division. This, after a long period of dissension. In 1841, the General Conference attempted to revise the constitution. There were three points of contention:

- 1) lay members of the general conference
- 2) Confession of faith
- 3) Membership in Secret Societies.

Of the three, the last one was the most contentious. It particularly dealt with the Free Masons.

The matters were discussed at each General Conference. In 1885, a commission was named to rewrite the constitution. They suggested that lay members could participate in General Conference. Membership in secret

societies would be allowed for those members who were a part of the church.

Two men who were opposed to the changes were Bishop Milton Wright and Bishop John Dickson. (Bishop Wright was the father of the Wright brothers.) The matter was presented for a vote to the entire church. The changes were accepted. At the General Conference of May 1889, it was voted to accept the new constitution. Bishop Wright and fifteen delegates withdrew. They reconvened the General Conference under the constitution of 1841. The new denomination was titled United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution.) Sometimes the title Radical was applied. About ten percent of churches nationwide moved to the new denomination. In Wisconsin, seven churches withdrew to join the new group. One of these was the Pleasant Ridge Church.

### LATER HISTORY

Trying to follow the history of the denomination can be frustrating. There was the establishment of small churches, preaching places, large churches, and of course, the merger of many of these congregations. In the history of ninety years of existence, there were 335 congregations. The UBC continued to be concentrated in the southwest corner of Wisconsin. One of the largest congregation was in Richland Center. At the time of the merger with the Evangelical Church in 1946, there were 37 congregation still in existence, four of which were part of the UBC (Old Constitution) Iowa Conference.

Union with the Evangelical Association had been discussed as early as 1813. A

major point of disagreement was the rating of minister within the church. In 1809, there was talk of union with the Methodists. Further union with the Evangelicals was considered a number of times, starting in the 1920s. Finally on November 16, 1946, the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelicals met in Johnstown Pennsylvania, and the church union was accomplished.

In Wisconsin, the union was achieved in 1951. Both conferences met in Monroe and agreed on items of union. On May 17, 1951, the Uniting Conference under the presidency of Bishop Praetorius, the Declaration of Union was agreed.

## NORTH CENTRAL

### JURISDICTION

In a combined meeting, the North Central Jurisdiction of Archives and History and the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church met on July 7-19 at Mitchell, South Dakota. The meeting was held on the campus of Dakota Wesleyan University.

During the opening worship service two inspirational addresses were made. Senator George McGovern talked about his youth and education. The Senator's father was a Wesleyan Methodist pastor. The Senator is a graduate of Dakota Wesleyan as well as having earned an M.A. and Ph.D. degree in American history at Northwestern University. Senator McGovern was the 1972 Democratic presidential

candidate and has served as the United States delegate to the United Nations.

Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesay, bishop of the Dakota Conferences led us in a presentation of one of John Wesley's sermons. The opening worship included The Lord's supper, the service based on the 1888 Discipline.

Among topics presented at the conference were a discussion of Calamity Jane and the Methodists, a history of Christmas traditions (non-Biblical) and the life of a pioneer preacher.

Two awards were given: The Ministry of Memory Award was given to Richard Sieber. He served as a military chaplain for twenty years. He has served on state, jurisdictional and national historic societies.

The Saddlebag Selection was awarded to Dr. Rex Matthews, a member of the faculty of Emery University. His publication is Time Table of History for Students of Methodism.

Both the North Central Jurisdiction and the United Methodist Historical Society conducted business meetings. Dates for future meetings are as follows:

UM Historical Society:

2009 Lake Junalaska: Southeast Jurisdiction June 29- July 2

2010 Seattle, Western Jurisdiction

2011 Oklahoma City

World Methodist Historical Society Durban, South Africa

North Central Jurisdiction

2009 Great Rivers, Illinois at McMurray College, July 6-8

2011 Minnesota

2012 Indianapolis

At the NCJ, Jim Morris of the Iowa Conference was elected chairperson. Judy Vasby of the Wisconsin Conference was elected as member at large.

### DAKOTA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

The university was founded in 1883 by a group of Methodist settlers. Their motto was "Build a college of stone while living in houses of sod."

The current enrollment is about 700. Outstanding features of the university is the McGovern Center for Leadership and Public Service and the McGovern Center of Museum and Library. The University is related to the Dakotas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The Dakotas Conference was created in June 1994 with the merger of the North Dakota and South Dakota con-



ferences. The meeting as held in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

The Conference was the merging of several preceding conferences. The North Dakota Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had its beginnings as a mission conference organized in October 1884 at Fargo. The South Dakota Methodist conference had two fronts: The Black Hills Mission at Deadwood and the Dakota Mission Conference at Yankton. These three merged in 1939.

The Evangelical Association was organized as the Dakota Conference in 1884. It was divided into two conferences in 1920. In 1951, both conferences united with the United Brethren. The United Brethren in Christ work in the Dakotas was carried on by conferences headquartered in Iowa and Nebraska.

P.S. We did go past the Corn Palace in Mitchell but we didn't go in to visit.  
ED.

## STEVENS POINT

In 1836, Congress organized the Wisconsin Territory, and the territorial legislature created Portage County around the seat of government in Portage City. In 1844, in a referendum vote decided with the help of rivermen in town for the spring drive, the village of Plover defeated Portage City as the

site of the Portage County Seat. In 1847, a circuit rider conducted the first recorded Christian religious service in the new county courthouse in Plover. Shortly after Wisconsin became a state in 1848, there were enough Methodists in Stevens Point for it to become a mission church served by the appointed Plover pastor, a Reverend Hurlburt.

By 1857, the congregation in Stevens Point was large enough for the bishop to appoint a pastor, William Spell, who served for one year. The congregation met in the White Schoolhouse but soon bought or were given land on the northwest corner of Strongs Avenue and erected a building. According to the Wisconsin Pinery of that time, "our Methodist brethren are erecting a beautiful church on the northwest corner of Brawley Street and Strong Avenue. It will be a credit to the town. There is an opportunity for the correctly disposed of all classes to contribute towards the purchase of a good sized bell for the church."

In 1866, the congregation began to meet at 450 Clark Street, more convenient to the town center. The congregation was famous for its "All you can eat" fund raiser suppers, which had to be turned into ticketed affairs as the ever-present loggers could eat much more than was expected!

By the 1870s, the congregation had outgrown the Clark Street facilities and

moved the original church building across the street and continued to worship there.

In 1889, the Rev. E. McChesney decided that a new more substantial building was needed. In a few short week he had acquired over \$4,000 in subscriptions toward the new building. The Romanesque brick church with brownstone trim was dedicated on December 7, 1890. The name was changed to Saint Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church. The sixty-member congregation had constructed an auditorium to seat 250 worshippers, an indication of their confidence in the future of their congregation. The building cost a total of \$12,000 and was debt free at its dedication. It had many stained glass windows, one of which was given by many railroad engineers who were members. It depicted the steam engine that was driven by one of the engineers.

The Victorian style parsonage was erected on the site of the original church building.

In 1924, there was extensive remodeling of the building including a new roof, renovation of the sanctuary and a new organ. The renovation cost \$6,358.96 and the organ cost \$3,9656. The congregation raised \$8,000 and the Board of Church Extension granted \$1,000.

More remodeling was done in 1956 but the congregation had outgrown the building. Parking space insufficient. Tentative plans were made to build at a new location.

Easter Sunday night, March 29, 1959, shortly after 9 PM, a small blaze probably caused by faulty wiring, was discovered

in the basement. By midnight, when the flames tore throughout the roof, the building had been destroyed. After two meetings held in Central State College Auditorium, the congregation began meeting in the Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Sunday morning, July 12, 1960, the congregation overwhelmingly authorized the board of trustees to approve letting a contract for the new building. The ground breaking ceremony was held that morning.

The first service in the present building was held New Year's Day, January 1, 1961. The service was held in the Fletcher Memorial Hall. Two weeks later, the educational wing was used by the Sunday School. The first services in the sanctuary were held on Sunday, April 16, 1961.

A major contrast between the older buildings and the present church building is that it doesn't have any steps, either into or within the building, so that it became the first large church in the community to provide easy access to handicapped groups.

Another interesting historical note: The Stevens Point School System used six rooms while Washington School was being built, The church is still used almost daily by small community groups who need a meeting place and by large groups like the Blood Mobile.

In 1993, the building was no longer large enough for the 700-plus members. A fourth connected building was erected. The old sanctuary was turned into at new kitchen. The Fellowship Hall was rented

to Community Industries. The new sanctuary was used for worship on Easter Sunday, 1995.

The congregation celebrated its 150th anniversary during the entire year of 2007. There were seven signature events which highlighted missions, music, camping, children and youth and a home coming celebration for past church and choir members. On March 11, Bishop Linda Lee led the service of Celebration and Renewal.

Former pastors led several worship services. The theme of the celebrations was *Remembering, Rejoicing, Rededicating*.

Material compiled by Loras Smithback and Ruth Stevens.

## **PRAIRIE FARM**

It is good when brothers unite in harmony. This can be said of the United Methodist Church in Prairie Farm which dates its history back to three congregations.

### **EVANGELICAL**

The Evangelical Association held its first services in a school building, east of the village. The first quarterly conference was held in this school on July 20, 1878. In 1894, the congregation was incorporated as the Zion congregation. In 1895, the first building was erected. This was part of the Barron County Mission of the Portage District. In 1961, Zion put an addition to the east part of the building which would now have a furnace room with an oil burning furnace. A new kitchen was also added.

The denomination also started work in Sheridan, Dunn County. The first services were held in Big Beaver and Little Beaver. This became the Vanceburg Church which laid its cornerstone in 1908. The building was dedicated in 1909. Bishop T. Bowman officiated at the dedication. This congregation with the Zion congregation comprised the Prairie Farm Mission. Later the Vanceburg congregation became a congregation of its own under the name of Emmanuel Evangelical Church.

On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1950, Emmanuel Church was damaged when lightning struck the building. The Methodist Church (See below) in Prairie Farm had closed and had been vacant. They offered to sell their vacant building the congregation, but the offer was refused. Instead, Emmanuel chose to re-decorate their building.

On November 3, 1951, there was extensive damage to the building and furnishing caused by an overheated oil burner. Under the advice of a building committee, it agreed to purchase the Methodist Building. This was renovated and re-decorated. The first worship service was held on January 13, 1952. Again in 1953, there were extensive renovations including connecting the water supply line to the parsonage.

The two Evangelical United Brethren churches, Zion and Emmanuel, merged in March of 1968. The Zion church building was to be the new place of worship. The parsonage, which was built in 1894, adjacent to the church, became the home of the pastor.

In early 1970, a church office, Sunday School room and an outside entryway were added. In the late 1990, the improvements included a handicap=accessible ramp. In 2006, the 1918 stained glass windows were rereaded.

### METHODIST EPISCOPAL

The Minnesota Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in 1856. In 1859, John Dyre of the Minnesota Conference was appointed to the circuit then known as Dunnville and Menomonie. In the summer of 1869, Dyre reached the outlet of Rice Lake. Native Americans told him of a white settlement to the southwest along the Hay River. He set out and two days later reached what is now Prairie Farm. Here he gathered approximately thirty-five "all attention" settlers and lumber men and preached his first sermon in Barron County.

In 1871, Rev. Bowen was sent to Prairie Farm as a missionary pastor. His territory included all of Barron County and part of St. Croix and Polk Counties. He preached his first sermon in the dining room of the Knapp-Stout and Co's boarding house early in the fall. Mr William Wilson, Captain of the firm was present. Rev. Bower remained for two years, establishing preaching places at different points in this large field.

The Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1876. Sunday School was started in 1883. The Rev. Paul Hull became the pastor. Soon after he began special services with a number of new conversions. He was instrumental in the organization and construction of a building in 1892. This was the first Methodist Church in Barron County.

In October 1886, the Ladies Aid Society was organized. A parsonage was built in the early 1900s.

After dwindling attendance, the building was sold on March 14, 1951. After the fire damaged the Vanceburg EUB church the Methodist building was sold to the EUB Church. The new congregation is called Faith United Methodist Church.

Material supplied by Barb Bender.

### NEW CENTERVILLE

The early work of the Methodist Episcopal Church goes back to when the Norwegian Methodists began work in the community. Nils Christophersen and his wife, Anna Dorthea (Jahr) lived near Martell in approximately 1854-1856. He was converted to the Methodist faith and in 1857, was authorized to hold Christian meetings in his home. The Lord was with him and the result was the establishment of the Norwegian-Danish Conference. After a strenuous period of working and gaining membership for the church, he and his wife traveled to Norway in 1863 and evangelized there.

We believe that our church society was closely connected with a strong church in Pleasant Valley. The work went on for many year in the homes, in the school-house at Pleasant Valley and in homes in Gilman. Nils Christophersen returned from Norway and it was during his second pastorate (1871-1873), that house of worship was built in New Centerville. Brothers Christophersen, Olsen and Martinius Olsen built the building. Before 1874, a house was bought and used as parsonage. This was sold in 1879 and a new one built at the cost of \$700. The

church budget at that time was about \$1300.

The New Centerville Church during all this time was connected with one or another nearby church, either Hartland and Diamond Bluff or Deer Park. In Arne Johnson's time, the church was connected to the Norwegian-Danish church in St. Paul, Minnesota and a pastor came out once a month.

Between 1859 and 1900, eighteen pastors served the church. Most of the years of service were one or two.

After his work in the New Centerville area, Nils Chrisophersen became the presiding elder of the Minnesota Norwegian District. He continued to take an active part in the affairs of the New Centerville Church, helping when possible.

A Ministerial Log was written in Norwegian by Pastor H. P. Bergh. This was completed in 1897 and contains records of the first 38 years of the congregation. This has recently been translated into English.

The Rev. Paul Seim was the pastor from 1885 to 1888. He was the first Pastor to speak English during the services, with the result that many English speaking people in and about the village were converted and joined the church.

When Pastor Seim was appointed elsewhere, the Hammond pastor came and arranged to hold meetings in the afternoon. This Norwegian church building was later moved and is the present United Methodist Church near Martell. Rent was paid to the Norwegian people for the use of their building.

Now there is an excerpt from the Hammond Church history. It tells that the Rev. George Smith began his pastorate in 1887 continuing until 1890. He preached in Roberts and New Centerville. The officials in Roberts took offense at a prohibition sermon and requested him not to preach there again.

In the years since then the congregation has had the same pastors as Hammond, with the exception of the 1921-22 pastorates. These were provided by the Ellsworth charge.

The Rev. Lyman McKibben served from 1890-93. He was a carpenter and was sent wherever a new church was needed. He worked along with the other men in doing the actual labor. From one who worked in the McKibben home as a hired girl, the word has been remembered - the McKibbens did not tithe their salary they put half of their meager salary into the sugar bowl for the Lord's work.

In 1892, the congregation decided to build a new church in New Centerville. On May 5, the trustees met and staked out the ground for the new building and made some changes in the specifications.

The construction cost of the building was \$1800. The church was dedicated on July 9, 1893. From a news item of April 2, 1896, "Bell for the M. E. Church has come and will be hung the middle of next week."

Ground was broken for the building of the social room addition on October 4, 1953. This was dedicated on December 6, 1953. It contained a dining hall and

Sunday School area. Further improvement was made in 1967. when there was addition to the social hall, At this time, a well was dug and water piped into the building. A new parsonage was built in Hammond in 1971-73.

Among the pastors who served was the Rev. Ralph Prescott who was appointed in the fall of 1910 and served until the summer of 1912, when he was granted a vacation and he and his family returned to England. The Rev. E.R. Kildow was appointed in the fall of 1912. He resigned in December as the ride to New Center-ville was too hard for him.

Mrs. C. Paul Nulton came in 1951. She had preached before, but had never had a pastorate, and the church had never had a woman pastor. She was a hard worker and accomplished much. She accepted the appointment elsewhere in 1955.

Material taken from the history of the church.

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I would appreciate articles of interest to be included in Flashbacks. This includes church history, stories of men and women in the church and other items related to Wisconsin history. My address is on the back of the flyer. My e-mail address is [lcolsen@execpc.com](mailto:lcolsen@execpc.com) Lois Olsen, editor