

HISTORY OF THE BIG CREEK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1874 - 1974

Prepared for the 100th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, August 18, 1974

by Stanley P. Wiese, Minister

(This record is compiled from various sources, including material prepared by Mrs. Hazel Hutson, Mrs. Clarence Morgan and Mrs. Willard Heath on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary in 1949, from Conference Journals and Minutes of the West Wisconsin Conference, and from old church records as well as recollections of some of the members.)

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Over one hundred years ago, Methodists living in the Big Creek Valley were meeting in a school house to conduct a Sunday School for families of the area. According to early recollections, and a few scattered records, Mr. Lucien Davis was one of the chief promoters for this organization. For forty years, from 1861 to 1901 he served as the superintendent. The earliest written record still available is of 1892. At that time officers were: Superintendent, Lucien Davis; assistant superintendent, Lot Brooks; treasurer, Emma Harr; organist and secretary, Angie Fanning. Five classes were meeting, designated as Old Peoples' Class, E. B. Davis Class; M. L. Brooks Class; Mrs. J. Harr Class and Mary Humphrey Class. On Sunday, May 22, 1892 there were 37 persons present, with an offering of 34¢. On December 11 of the same year 9 persons attended and the offering was 6¢. On March 19, 1893 the record shows that 15 persons were in the session, and the offering was 15¢.

With the Sunday School as the beginning of regular meetings for the Methodists, by 1874 the decision was made to organize a congregation and to build a church. Among the founders were William Crouch, Solomon Hutson, Lucien Davis, P. H. Crane, Newcomb Gray, T. Burch, Robert Hutson, John Harr, Edwin Davis and John Hebron.

The land on which the church was built was conveyed to the trustees by James and Eliza Stewart "in trust for the Methodist Episcopal Church in Wisconsin." The first trustees were Lucien Davis, Solomon Hutson, Henry Crouch, Simon Burch, William Crouch, John Harr and Marshall Hart. One acre of land was transferred to the church for a consideration of \$24.00. In the deed, dated April 7, 1874, it was "further agreed that they will build and maintain a lawful fence on the west and south lines of said premises as long as they hold and possess the same".

Early records of the first congregation are not available. However, Robert Hutson, who was about 18 years old at the time, recalled that the lumber from which the church was built cost \$9.00 per thousand feet. It was hauled by volunteers from Lowries sawmill 12 miles north of Tomah. The work was done in winter, the men often starting from home at four o'clock in the morning, in weather at 30 degrees below zero. They drove through snow many feet deep, some of them taking loads of hay to sell or trade at the lumber camps. They would stay overnight and drive back the next day. The men who helped in this work were John Harr, James Stewart, William Crouch, P. H. Crane, John Hebron, Leonard Herbst, Solomon Hutson, Lucien Davis and Robert Hutson. Newcomb Gray and Samuel Folts were among those who helped in the construction.

The Journal of the West Wisconsin Conference of 1874 lists the Rev. Guilford D. Brown as minister of the Leon Charge, which included Big Creek as one of the churches. Mr. Brown was born in Ackworth, N. H. in 1829, and entered the ministry of the West Wisconsin Conference in 1868. There were 2 churches on this charge, with 4 church schools. The statistical table of the Journal indicates that \$2000 was spent for church building and improvement. It is reasonable to assume that this was the amount paid for building the Big Creek Church. The circuit also listed one parsonage with a valuation of \$600. The report for that year lists 109 full members in the two congregations, along with 15 probationers. There were 40 officers and teachers, and 180 scholars in the Church Schools. The claim for ministerial support was listed as \$600, but only \$500 of this was paid. Offerings for missions amounted to \$25.00.

The West Wisconsin Conference was organized with seven districts: Chippewa, Kilbourn City, La Crosse, Madison, Mineral Point, Prairie du Chien and St. Croix. Big Creek was in the La Crosse District, with the Rev. J. B. Richardson, Presiding Elder. His residence was given as Sechlerville, Jackson County.

It is not known when the name of the charge appointment was changed, but the Conference Journal of 1888 lists the Sparta Circuit on the LaCrosse District, with Harvey A. Rogers as pastor. There were now 3 churches and one parsonage. \$582. was paid for pastoral support.

In his report to the annual conference of 1888 the presiding elder of the LaCrosse District wrote: "The Sparta Circuit is one of those large, hard circuits. Rev. H. A. Rogers has been cultivating that field the last year. A goodly number of souls have been converted and added to the church. Big Creek, five miles from Sparta, has invited and will entertain the next District Association which meets Nov. 13-15. Conveyances will meet the brethren at Sparta. The church has been repaired for the occasion. A royal entertainment may be expected."

From the history of the Rockland United Methodist Church, prepared by Mrs. Garth Small on the occasion of their 75th anniversary in 1971, we learn that the appointment in 1895 which included Rockland was known as the Sparta Circuit. She reports, "Other small churches were Big Creek, Upper Big Creek, Leon, Farmers Valley, Cataract, Pleasant Valley and Portland". By 1896 the church had been making regular growth. In his report to the conference in that year, the Rev. Henry Goodsell, Presiding Elder, said that "sheds for teams have been built at Farmers Valley and Big Creek on the Sparta Circuit." In that year the Rev. Jesse D. Searles was appointed to serve the circuit, and his address was listed as Sparta. There were now 6 churches on the charge, with a total membership of 154. Six church schools, with an enrollment of 235, including 34 officers and teachers, provided training in Christian education. The pastor's salary for the year was \$625.00.

By the year 1899, Sparta Circuit had been reduced to 4 churches, with 6 Sunday Schools still meeting. The salary paid the previous year had been \$600. Leon was now listed as a separate appointment, and was no longer on the circuit with Big Creek. In 1908 the term District Superintendent had replaced the designation of Presiding Elder in the Conference records,

By the time of the annual conference in 1909 the charge arrangements had again been shifted. Sparta Circuit was "left to be supplied", which indicated a shortage of ministers available for assignment. It was in this year that the Rev. A. E. Frederick was appointed to Rockland, and evidently after the conference session he was also asked to serve as pastor for Big Creek,

The notation in the 1916 Journal is made that "Big Creek, on the Rockland Charge is making extensive repairs on the church." \$100 was listed as having been paid for building and improvements.

The United States entered World War I in 1917, and two of the former ministers of Big Creek answered the call to service. The report of 1918 listed "Brother Stone entered military service, and A. E. Frederick was in uniform". The Rev. Hiram J. Witherbee was assigned as pastor of the Rockland Charge at that annual conference, but in 1919 the appointment was "left to be supplied". The district superintendent A. V. Ingrham reported to the conference: "I have found it impossible to secure men for work at Valley Junction and the Sparta Circuit for lack of support, and the various appointments on those charges have been divided among the adjoining circuits." Rockland now was listed as the charge appointment which included Big Creek. Mr. Ingrham further reported: "I do not know where to class Brother H. J. Witherbee. He is recorded in the yearbook as retired. His hair is white, but he eats as heartily, sleeps as noisily, preaches as vigorously, as of yore. He has labored summer and winter on the Rockland charge, brought them "over the top", has had several accessions to the church, made possible an increase in salary for his successor, is loved by old and young alike." Mr. Witherbee did return to the Rockland charge to fill in for the first three months of that year, but "could not face the drives in winter", so was relieved, and "Brother Thomas Kell was secured for this point".

The longest period of pastoral service for this charge was provided by the Rev. Alexander E. Frederick. He was the minister here in 1909, and again in 1926 he was appointed to Big Creek and Rockland. In a note to Rockland at the time of their 75th anniversary, Dr. Frederick wrote: "On the Rockland Charge I succeeded one of our leading ministers, the Rev. Ernest E. Horth, a good sermonizer, a musician and a leader in song and musical numbers." Mr. Frederick maintained his residence in Sparta, and served these churches until his retirement in 1952. Records of the treasurer of the Ladies' Aid indicate that the women assisted in the financing of the church by helping to pay the house rent for the pastor. A personal note about his ministry was written by the district superintendent, W. W. Moore in his report to the conference in 1926: "Brother A. E. Frederick has been pastor at Camp Douglas and some little churches round about for 7 years. He has also been State Humane Officer, and this year commissioner of divorces in Monroe County, as well as a major in the army. He took on a union chapel and a Congregational church besides, and has been able by preaching 4 and 5 times each Sunday so to serve his field as to receive 15 people into the churches. He alone knows how he carries on this program of suicidal activities." In the same report Mr. Moore said, "A quartette of students assisted in a series of services on the Rockland charge which resulted in many additions and the opening of a new preaching point on Upper Big Creek".

Mrs. Clarence Morgan, Superintendent of the Sunday School in 1949 is the source of the following information: "Many of our former ministers lived in Rockland. They often walked from Rockland to Big Creek on Saturday afternoon and were guests in the various homes overnight. The story is told of how Rev. Mitchell walked from Rockland to the Den Morgan home on Saturday afternoon, then Sunday morning he would start out for the church on foot instead of waiting to ride with the family, so as to be there early. Promptness was one of his characteristics. When latecomers came straggling into Sunday School he usually chose the song, "Never Come Late to Sunday School". In 1949 there were 63 members on the "active" roll of the congregation, and 6 "inactive". The latter term was generally used for members who had moved away without transferring their membership.

The church building at Big Creek, located about six miles west of Sparta, is essentially the same as built in 1874, with the original pulpit, altar rail and pews still in service. The antique reed pump organ is used to accompany the singing of hymns. Mrs. Harry Brownell is organist, with Mrs. William Freeman as assistant. Reminiscent of the pioneer days are the sheds built in 1896 for sheltering horses while the owners were at worship. Before the furnace was installed in 1901, the building was heated by two stoves placed in the rear of the room. Kerosene lamps in brackets on the walls provided illumination. Later gas was used until electric wiring was installed and modern lights were hung from the ceiling.

In 1953 the church board decided to get a new furnace for the church. The Women's Society held a special meeting on October 19 to decide if the society should give the money they had saved for some special occasion. The minutes of their meeting record: "After discussion a motion was made to transfer the amount of \$279.27 to our church treasurer to be used for the furnace. Seven members were present, and several more sent their O. K.'s." This furnace was equipped with an air fan for more efficient distribution of heat. Wood continued to be used for fuel. The furnace was converted to oil in the fall of 1967 when a reconditioned oil burner was purchased from Reisinger Heating Company of Sparta for \$375.00. A special appeal to members of the church for money for this purpose resulted in gifts totaling \$443.00. With additional help from the Women's Society, the men installed insulation above the ceiling at a cost of \$200.50.

In the spring of 1940 Rev. Frederick informed the congregation that a church bell was available. Several men of the church went to Westby to learn more. Their report favored the purchase of the bell, so Howard Tripp and Floyd Huggett offered to bring it to Big Creek, for a fee of \$15.00, the price which had been asked for this service. They cut two long poles from the woods and made a rough ladder which was set on a four-wheel trailer to reach the eaves of the church. Then a regular ladder with boards laid over the rungs for a slide, was extended to the belfrey. The bell clapper was removed and the bell was skidded down these "tracks" to the trailer.

At Big Creek a "bee" was held to put the bell in place. Clayton Hutson furnished needed timbers to support the bell. These were cut and put in place in the belfrey by Floyd Huggett. A fence-puller was used to haul the bell up the ladder-skids, and it was installed for use. The Treasurer's records show that \$35.00 was paid for the bell, \$15.00 for the transportation, 45 feet of rope for 72¢, and 40 feet of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch rope for 70¢; bolts and welding were 50¢, a pulley was 25¢ and other bolts cost 15¢. The total paid for the bell and installation was \$65.00.

A note from the record of the church treasurer on September 22, 1940 reads: "No services - papering the church." An item of \$38.52 was listed as the cost of this project. The last major improvement made to the building was in 1972. Early that year the ceiling was lowered and acoustical tile panels were installed. The lights were lowered to improve illumination. Wall paneling was used to cover the walls, and the pews and wainscot were painted by Ernest Jensen. Several men of the church assisted the contractor in completing this project, and the result is an attractive sanctuary for worship. Cost of the remodeling was \$1,261 for materials and labor for the paneling used, and \$154 for painting. Again the women of the church provided needed financial assistance by paying for the paint used.

In the summer of 1972 Dan and Sue Olson volunteered part of their vacation to paint the exterior of the building, and were assisted by several of the church members. Cost of the paint, provided by the Women's Society of

carry through for an extended period, however. On November 28, 1920 there were only 21 persons present, with an offering of 76¢.

Beginning in September, for the year 1923-24, the following classes were meeting: Class in the Corner, with Mrs. William Hebron, teacher; the Glad Class, taught by Mrs. A. L. Harr; the Beginners Class led by Mina Herrman; the Good Will Class with Grace Harr, teacher; the Live Wires under the guidance of Nina Humphrey, and the Adult Class taught by the Rev. Howard White.

Beginning with the record of 1923, the designation became simply The Big Creek Sunday School. Officers for 1923 were President, Mrs. Parmenter, Vice-president, Lorene Hutson, Secretary, Carrie A. Harr; Treasurer, Helen L. Wells, Organist, Mrs. S. L. Harr. On September 23 the secretary recorded 19 present, with an offering of 66¢. This was "given for the Japanese that suffered in the earthquake". The treasurer always kept exact records to indicate the financial transactions. In 1934-35 the account lists: "Cost of writing check, .02; cost of stamp, .03. The total expense for that year was \$23.09 and the supplies were purchased from the David C. Cook Company.

Twenty five years ago when the church celebrated the 75th anniversary, Mrs. Clarence Morgan was superintendent, Mrs. Harry Brownell was assistant, Polly Huggett served as secretary, Niel Morgan kept the treasurer's account and Jo Ann Morgan was organist. Mrs. John Sanders was superintendent of the Nursery department. Other teachers were Mrs. Wayne Davis, Mrs. Harry Brownell, Jo Ann Morgan, and Mr. Harry Brownell. The enrollment was 31 pupils and 5 teachers. At the present time our superintendent is Mrs. Wayne Davis. Other teachers are Mrs. Calvin Morgan, Mrs. Floyd Huggett and Susan Christopherson.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Throughout the history of the church, the women have been active and have taken a major part in the total program of the church. According to a report prepared by Mrs. Willard Heath in 1949, the Rev. E. E. Horth organized the Big Creek Ladies' Aid Society on May 9, 1907. Mrs. Angela Barron was the first president. Older records have been found of a Ladies' Aid Society organized in 1892, which received the balance of \$9.10 from a previous treasury. It is assumed, therefore, that the group organized in 1907 was the third society of the church.

In 1907 there were 17 members in the Ladies' Aid. Mrs. M. J. Humphrey is the only member of that first group still a member of the church. The women have always been active in financing special projects of the church, as well as providing assistance for regular operating expenses. The Society purchased a communion set in 1908 for \$14.60. In the same year there is a note that \$14.00 was paid to Anna Hebron for furniture, and \$5.95 to Dodge and Davis for carpet for the church. During this early period the women bought the wood, paid for janitor service and insurance on the church, and made up the deficiency in the salary of the minister. The same pattern continues today. They also subscribed \$200 to help the S. P. I. Club in plans to build an annex room for the church to provide space for recreation. The Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual Club was a boy's club organized by Mr. Horth. It was very active at the time, but when their leader left Big Creek, the enthusiasm died and the annex was never built.

An indication of the general condition of the Ladies' Aid Society is contained in the following excerpt from the treasurer's report covering the period of May 5, 1910 - May 4, 1911:

Christian Service, was \$128.32. Dan had been the associate minister of the Sparta Area Ministries, and was at that time a student at Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, and Sue was a teacher in the Evanston school system.

The lovely picture of Salman's Head of Christ hanging in the chancel was purchased in March, 1945, and paid for by money in the Crouch Fund. In May of 1947 the present communion set was purchased from this same fund, which had been given by the children of William Crouch, one of the first trustees of Big Creek. They also placed a bronze plaque in the church in his memory.

In preparation for this anniversary celebration new American and Christian flags have been placed in the chancel by Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Morgan, in memory of her father, Richard Hebbe.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday Church School, organized about 13 years before the church was formally begun, has had a continuous history in training youth and adults in the Christian faith. One of the members recalls that one winter there was only one child attending, but at no time has the Sunday School been discontinued during its history of 113 years. Although never very large in membership, the school has been well organized. In 1892, the earliest record available, the following classes were meeting each week: No. 1, Old Peoples' Class; No. 2, E. B. Davis Class; No. 3, Mr. L. Brooks Class; No. 4, Mrs. J. Harr Class; No. 5, Mary Humphrey Class. On May 22 the secretary recorded a total attendance of 37 persons, with an offering of 34¢. On December 11 of that year 9 persons were present, with an offering of 6¢, and on March 19, 1893, 15 were counted and the offering was 15¢. One reference in the early records is a note that the Ladies' Aid Society helped to purchase lesson materials for the Sunday School.

During many of the early years the organization was known as The Prairie Sunday School of the Big Creek Methodist Episcopal Church. The secretary's report for each Sunday listed an account of the lesson studied for the day as well as a record of attendance and offering. On October 31, 1920 the minutes indicate that "a business meeting of the Sunday School was presided over by Mr. Kell before Sunday School. Officers were elected as follows: Superintendent, Mrs. M. J. Humphrey; Assistant, Mrs. Thomas Kell; Organist, Marjorie Hutson; Secretary Lorene Hutson; Treasurer, Addie Harr."

Occasionally a special effort was made to increase enrollment and attendance. One such attempt is recorded for Sunday, Oct. 31, 1920. "Title of the Lesson: 'Hew Down the Corrupt Tree'. Golden Text: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Leading Thought: The Life tells when the heart is true." The minutes further record: "From October 10 to Oct. 31 a contest was on between two sides of the Sunday School. Mr. Kell and Marjorie Hutson were the leaders and chose their members from the Sunday School. Fifty points were given to each member for being there, twenty-five points for being on time and twenty-five points for bringing some collection, and if they bring another new member they receive another one hundred points. The new member also receives his number of points. On November 5, Mr. Kell's side gave a party to the other side in the contest. The party was a Hallowe'en one and was held in the church. People were invited who were not members of the Sunday School, if they paid for their supper. Hallowe'en games were played and the usual Hallowe'en features were enjoyed by all. Attendance on Oct. 10 when the contest began, was 37, with an offering of \$1.33. On Oct. 17, 50 were present; on Oct. 24 the attendance reached 57 with an offering of \$2.04. The effectiveness of the contest did not seem to

Receipts		Expenditures	
Balance on Hand	\$59.04	Pastor's Salary	\$30.00
Dues and Donations	36.85	Church Insurance	20.00
Socials and Bazaars	62.03	Flowers for Mrs. Gray	
Post Card Sale	1.40	and Lottie Brooks	5.05
Total Received	<u>\$159.32</u>	Janitor Work	2.50
		Other Expense	<u>1.70</u>
		Total Expense	<u>\$59.25</u>
Balance on Hand \$100.07			

The report of 1911 included \$5.00 paid for the Presiding Elder's claim; \$3.00 for Janitor Work; \$60.00 paid on the Preacher's salary; to M. J. Humphrey for Lemon and Sugar \$2.75; to A. Hutson for Crackers and Peanuts \$2.15; Material for a Comfortable for Rev. Marshall \$2.16; Wood and sawing same for the church, \$7.50; 4 dozen forks and express on same \$9.14. Total expense for the year was \$94.50.

In 1912 the Ladies Aid purchased dishes and silverware to be used at church socials and paid \$25.00 toward roofing of the church sheds.

During World War I the Society contributed toward the support of a French orphan, and the record shows that on May 9, 1918, \$36.50 was paid to H. W. Barney for French Child. On the same date \$2.10 was paid for a Service Flag for the church. The women also sent barrels of fruit and dozens of eggs to the Wesleyan Hospital, and donations of eggs, fruit and vegetables were made to the Morrow Home.

With the union of three branches of Methodism in 1939, and the forming of the Methodist Church the name of the national women's organization was also changed. In October of 1940 the call went out to form a Women's Society of Christian Service (W. S. C. S.), a society whose purpose was "to unite all women of the Church in Christian living and service, and to help develop and support Christian work among women and children around the world." However, it was not until October of 1945 that the Ladies' Aid Society of the Big Creek Church was changed to the Women's Society of Christian Service, to conform to the national group. Again in 1968 the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church led to a change of name for the women's groups of the church. Now it is known as United Methodist Women, but the work remains the same. Regular meetings are held to conduct the business of the group, to give attention to the development of the spiritual life, and to study and support the needs of the church in countries around the world.

The organization today is led by Mrs. Calvin Morgan, president; Mrs. Llewellyn Hutson, vice-president; Mrs. Lorene Huggett, treasurer; and Mrs. Eunice Morgan, secretary.

THE EPWORTH LEAGUE

The youth organization of the church, known as The Epworth League, was an active group for part of our history. Records from 1930 list Helen Wells as president and Lyle Tripp as secretary. In 1931 Lyle Tripp became president, and Kathryn Humphrey served as secretary. The record of October 28, 1932 shows an attendance of 12 members and 13 visitors present for the meeting. The group held regular meetings for the purpose of study and the development of the spiritual life, and were also concerned about special projects for the church, as indicated in the report of the Ladies' Aid previously. On January 27, 1933 the program was a debate on "Resolved: That the World is Growing Worse. Ernie Birch and Marjorie Morgan were speakers for the affirmative, and the negative arguments were given by Mrs. Davis and Helen Wells." The decision

was rendered for the affirmative, though it does not indicate whether this came as the result of more skillful debate, or whether the members at that time were basically pessimistic about world conditions. The minutes further show that "after adjournment Rev. Frederick and some of the members and visitors continued the debate in open forum. Too bad that wasn't judged. Kathryn Humphrey, secretary." Occassionally meetings had to be cancelled as indicated under the date of March 31, 1933: "There was no meeting this month, due to the condition of the roads".

On September 29, 1933 Kathryn Humphrey was listed as president and Bernadine Anderson as secretary. There were 45 members on the roll. On July 27, 1934 the League met at Andersons. Twenty three members and twenty visitors were present. "The motion was made and carried that the League pay \$5 toward the church expenses. The motion was also made and carried that we elect new officers at the August meeting. Next in order was adjournment, after which an impromptu program was given. Rev. Frederick gave us a talk on Which is Greater, the Sins of Omiton or the Sins of Comition. (sic) The usual lunch was then served. Signed Secretary, Berdine Anderson."

The last entry in the minute book is for Aug. 31, 1934. "The report was made that the \$5 voted on at the previous meeting was used for mission work". It was also decided by the group that "any member failing to pay his dues or failing to attend the meetings for a year, his name will be withdrawn from the roll after being notified first." After re-electing the same officers for another year, the meeting was adjourned. The gavel passed to Nina Herrman. Other officers were Anabelle Haskins, Ruth Blinn, Helen Wells, Comodore Haskins, Kathryn Humphrey and Ruth Kronberg. Because of changing community conditions which resulted in many of the youth moving away, the organized group was finally disbanded. It is not known when this ocured.

A CLOSING OBSERVATION

There have been many persons of faith who have served Christ through the Big Creek Church during its century of ministry in this valley. For many who have moved away there are nostalgic memories of happy experiences through the fellowship and Christian faith which have been developed here. In faith we look back to remember our heritage in order that we might strengthen our commitment in this year of 1974 to the ideals which have been nourished here, and so that we might reach out to accept the unknown future in the awareness of God's presence in life, knowing that we have his aid and interest in everything.

The oldest member of the church now is Mrs. Nina Humphrey who observed her 96th birthday anniversary on June 23. She is a resident of Rolling Hills Nursing Home at Sparta, after having suffered a broken hip in a fall at her home. She became a member of Big Creek church in 1914 by letter of membership from the Bangor Presbyterian Church. Other long-time members of this congregation are Wayne Davis who joined in 1915; Mrs. Kathryn Brownell and Mrs. Lorene Huggett who both became members in 1919. Currently there are 64 members on the roll; Lay Leader is Llewellyn Hutson, who also serves as Chairperson of the Committe on Pastor-Parish Relations. Trustees are: Wayne Davis, Llewellyn Hutson, Donald Humphrey, Calvin Morgan, Harry Brownell, Mrs. Floyd Huggett.

The following poem was read by Mrs. Hazel Hutson as she gave the history of this church at the time of the 75th anniversary observance in 1949. It seems to fit our concept, and our feelings about Big Creek church in the valley.

COUNTRY CHURCHES

The little, unpretentious country church
 That stands beside a quiet, dusty road,
 Regardless of how far and wide I search
 Presents the most invitatory code.
 No architectural splendor graces it,
 No obvious kinship with cathedrals great.
 One simple room, with pews that are a bit
 Straight-backed and hard, but yet seem intimate.
 An altar painly hewn, its comeliness
 Adorned with flowers and word of His decree.
 There is an air of naive peacefulness,
 A lack of artificiality.
 I like quaint churches built on country sod
 Because they seem so very near to God.

--Maysie Tuley Klein

MINISTERS WHO HAVE SERVED HERE
 (The early list is not complete)

Guilford D. Brown	1874	Hiram J. Witherbee	1918-20
William W. Wheaten	1889	Thomas Kell	1920-22
H. A. Rogers	1887-88	Howard White	1922-25
G. A. Gorlin	1894	M. B. Ferguson	1925-26
J. H. Joslin	1895	Alexander E. Frederick	1926-52
Alfred Verran	1896	Clarence Wildes	1952-53
James Ford	1897	John Potter	1954-56
James T. Bryan	1899	Charles Shoults	1956
Samuel A. Hoffman	1901	Donald Riley	1957
E. E. Horth	1905-09	Robert L. Kinkade	1958-61
Alexander E. Frederick	1909	Virgil W. Nulton	1961-66
George Marshall	1910	Stanley P. Wiese	1966--
John Haw	1911	Associates:	
O. M. Mitchell	1913	R. Daniel Olson	1968-71
Thomas Grenfell	1915-16	Earl Adams	1971, part year
E. P. Stone	1916-17	Louis Stoker	1971--