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# **Plainview United Methodist Church**

1866 - 1999



## **Minutes from the Past:**

*November 5, 1896, Trustees of Plainview M. E. Church*

...Motion carried that we build an addition to the buggy shed on Parsonage Barn, not to exceed \$15 in cost...

*October 22, 1901, Official Board of M.E....*motion carried that the Pastor's salary for the year be fixed at \$700 and the parsonage from Plainview.

*October 11, 1938, Sunday School Board:...*Reverend Ludden ... told of the (board meeting) program followed in Elgin and urged a definite program be followed here...the following program was accepted. One teacher present some material at each meeting, then a chapter or portion of a study book called "New Trails in Religious Teaching," by Rev. Ludden, to be followed by the business meeting....Mrs. Mundt asked what to do about continued absentees. She had done all she knew to get them back all to no avail.

*September 6, 1939, Ladies Aid....*The president announced the furnace at the parsonage had been torn down and was beyond repair. It was decided for the aid to pay what they could best afford toward a new furnace....A Motion was made and seconded and carried to charge 40 cents a plate for the chicken pie supper.

*July 21, 1957, Board of Trustees...*The entire board inspected the Siebenaler house with a view of purchasing it as a parsonage.

*February 21, 1963, Father & Son Banquet...*Menu: Ham loaf, Mashed potatoes and gravy, Baked beans, Carrot sticks, Celery, Rolls, Pickles, Jelly, Coffee, Milk, Cherry pie.

*April 23, 1964, Board of Trustees...*It was moved by K. Briggs and seconded by Lloyd Bentley to sell the old parsonage by the church and use the money to repair the other parsonage...passed

*October 6, 1977, United Methodist Women...*new business is the Bazaar...The Bazaar will start at 9:00 a.m. until approximately 2:30 p.m.. On-the-spot doughnuts will be fried....There will be fancy work, candy and garden products...Soup, Bar-b-ques and pie will be served for \$1.75.



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: *Excerpts from a church history prepared and presented by:*  
: *Mrs. Lloyd Melendy to the Old Settlers, February 1971.*  
: .....



# PLAINVIEW METHODIST HISTORY



Plainview Village, first called "Centerville" was platted in the summer of 1857, and that August, the first religious organization of any kind was formed in Plainview.

Oliver Perry Crawford, a preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, came from Indiana and settled at Forest Mound, west of Plainview in Elgin township. He held services in homes, and in August of 1857 organized a class of eight at Centerville. They were: J.Y. Blackwell, Guerdon Town, Sophronia Town, Sam Lattie, Mrs. Lattie, Mathilda Todd, Mrs. Thompson, and Edwin L. Ball.

This class of eight was included in the St. Charles circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Quarterly Conference held in St. Charles September 19, 1857. The first minister was Dwight Kidder, from 1857-1858.

The Plainview society continued as a part of the St. Charles circuit until the fourth quarterly conference in March, 1859, when it was requested the circuit be divided into the St. Charles and Greenwood Prairie circuits.

The first quarterly conference of the Greenwood Circuit was held at Plainview in July, 1859. This circuit was composed of six preaching places: Forest Mound, Murphys, Plainview, Farmington, Fitch's and Morrows.

In September 1860, the Greenwood Circuit grew to eight preaching places. And one year later there were 103 full members recorded in the circuit.

The names of those who were first baptized and recorded were Jeshua Davies and John B. Davies, baptized October 21, 1860. The first names to appear on the record as members are



Hiram and Phobe Allen, the former and local Deacon and Chuancy and Eliza Cornwell, Mrs. Jane Rock, oldest member of the church for over 50 years, died May 12 1920 at the age of 93. In the record of marriages the names of Andrew G. Crawford and Maria A. Baston appear, the parties being united by Ezra Trecker, November 14, 1860. The record also showed that many of the weddings in those days were held either at the home of the bride or groom.

In this early day, four Quarterly Conferences were held each year, rotating among the different points of the circuit. At the fourth quarterly Conference of the Greenwood Circuit, held in June, 1863, the Presiding Elder was requested to secure change of name of the circuit from Greenwood to Plainview; and the first Quarterly Conference of the Plainview Circuit was held at Plainview in October, 1863.

The average pastorate during those early days was two years. In later years, it averaged four years or more.

By 1870 the 8 preaching places had been reduced to 3 or 4. In 1919 Plainview was a single appointment, but this lasted only a few years. Plainview then shared a pastor with Beaver for a number of years.

From 1927 until 1936 the Plainview Methodist Episcopal and the Congregational Churches were federated and known as the Community Church, with a Methodist Pastor in charge. During this time the pews from the Methodist church were removed to the Congregational building, which was used for worship services and Senior Sunday School. The Methodist building was used for Jr. Sunday School and educational and group work, as well as a dining hall (for chicken suppers and Mother and Daughter Banquets). The ministers that served during this period were Reverends G.E. Martin, C.W. Gilman, C.E. Sauter, and F. Greene.



When this federation was dissolved in 1936 the Methodists again became known as the Plainview Methodist Episcopal Church, sharing a pastor for a number of years with Elgin.

In 1939 three branches of Methodism, the Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Episcopal Church South, and The Methodist Protestant Church, united under the name "The Methodist Church." Formerly known as The Methodist Episcopal church of Plainview, our church then incorporated under the new name, becoming known as "The First Methodist Church."

Rev. C.F.H. Guse, a retired missionary from India, was appointed pastor to this charge by the Minnesota Conference in 1934. A Pound Party was held for Rev. and Mrs. Guse, where everyone was to bring a pound of something to help them get started housekeeping after the return from missionary work in India. Tragedy struck in June, 1937, when Rev. Guse was killed while on a fishing trip.

Other ministers that were assigned to Plainview and Elgin charge were: Revs. C.P. Baenziger, George Chant, and Charles Sheffield. In 1959 the union with Elgin ended. We were then assigned to share with Millville the following ministers: Revs. Walter Crabtree, Richard Horton and Rev A.E. Dripps. When the Millville Church was discontinued Weaver and Kellogg joined with Plainview and formed what is called the Hiawatha Valley United Methodist Parish. Richard Horton became pastor, followed by Luther Pennington.

Plainview remained in the Hiawatha Valley United Methodist Parish until it merged with the Elgin Church in June 1998. The merged congregations chose to be known as Peace United Methodist Church. Reverend Lavern Johnson was appointed to serve this new charge.



## Parsonage

In April, 1861, the Quarterly Conference approved the purchase of lots for a parsonage and appointed a committee composed of "Light" (Preacher in Charge), Soule, (Assistant Preacher) and Yale to circulate subscriptions. In October 1862, there was a motion that "we build a parsonage at the Plainview forthwith." The cost of this first parsonage was \$701.40. It was located on the property east of the present creamery.

Approximately 5 years later this parsonage was offered for sale for not less than \$700, the proceeds to be applied to building a new parsonage on the present parsonage lot. This parsonage was erected in 1890 and served its purpose well for a period of 76 years, when a new parsonage was constructed on the same spot in 1966.

Prior to that time, in August of 1957, a parsonage had been purchased in the residential area to house the minister and his family, who for the past 10 or 12 years had resided in Elgin, while we shared a minister with them. But after about 6 or 8 years this parsonage was offered for sale along with the first one of 1890. In December of 1964 the Trustees recommended that a new parsonage be built on the grounds south of the church. Bids were received and Mr. Arnoldy hired as contractor. The new parsonage was built and dedicated on October 9, 1966. Rev. Richard Horton, pastor, and Dr. Edward Foote, Rochester, District Superintendent, were present for the dedication.



## Church Building

It was not until 1866 that the first church building was erected. Prior to this time church services were held in the homes or the country schools.

The lot for the church was purchased from Jesse Landon for \$200.00 and the warranty deed is dated May 15, 1866. The trustees that signed the deed were: John Yale, G.A. Frizzell, C.C. Cornwell, and E.C. White. This building was a simple rectangle 33 by 60 feet and the total cost of construction was \$4,000. The mortgage carried 12 per cent interest. In April, 1877, 11 years later, it is happily reported "Paid \$200, the balance of the church debt."

In 1894 the church was remodeled. A large vestry of two stories extended to the street was added to the front of the church, making needed Sunday School rooms and also a kitchen and dining room upstairs, where many chicken suppers were served to help defray expenses of the time.

In the summer of 1941 some of the members of the congregation and our pastor, Rev. Baenziger, investigated the cost of a furnace and basement, which revealed the impracticality of proceeding with the building project due to war conditions. So the old furnace was patched up and the money invested in War Bonds. In the spring of 1948, Louis Boehlke was employed as contractor and the work begun on the second major remodeling of the church. The church was raised, moved back from the



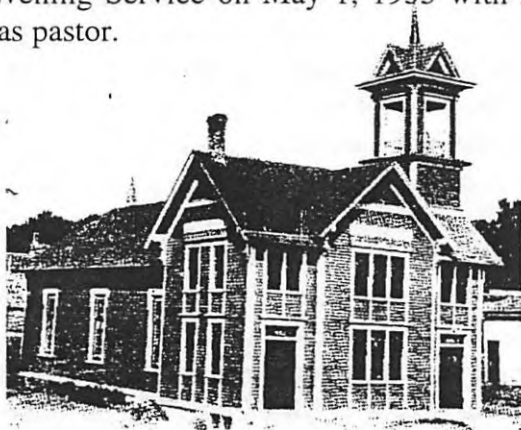


street onto a full basement foundation, remodeled, redecorated inside and out, reroofed and a new heating system installed. The front double entrance was changed to a single entrance in the remodeling process. This necessitated the borrowing of \$7,000 from the First National Bank. This was done and a mortgage placed upon the church property December 1, 1948.

Trustees signing this deed were: C.W. Herman, Louis Mundt, Kenneth Briggs, Ralph Edwards. The entire cost of the project was about \$21,000, including about \$1,500 worth of donated labor by the men and women of the church.

These improvements were completed and the first services were held in the newly remodeled and redecorated church on Palm Sunday, April 10, 1949 when Rev. George Chant was pastor. Since the completion of the work, the WSCS took it upon themselves to pay off the mortgage and with some help of individual gifts made the final payment in December, 1954, just 6 years after assuming the debt.

The \$7,000 mortgage was paid up and burned at a special Sunday Evening Service on May 1, 1955 with Rev. Charles Sheffield as pastor.



Methodist Episcopal Church 1894



## Organizations

The exact date of the organization of the Ladies' Aid is not known, but it is believed to have been in the early 1880's, for we find in the Quarterly Conference records of January, 1882, the first mention of the "Young Ladies Aid Society." This group was composed of the older women of the church. The younger women, feeling the need of an organization of their own, organized the "Priscilla" society in the late 1890's. These groups functioned separately for a number of years. About 1916 the Ladies Aid dissolved and the Priscillas took their place. Later, however, they again became the Ladies Aid.

The Women's Foreign Missionary Society was organized on November 2, 1906, with 14 members. A Women's Home Missionary Society was also organized, but since it was mostly the same ladies in both groups, they joined forces in later years and were known as "The Missionary Society," with interest in and supporting the work of both foreign and home missions.

There was also in the women's work a society of unmarried young ladies of the church, under the leadership of Miss Mary Bolton, called the "Queen Esther Society," which was organized about 1913 or 1914.

The union of the three branches of Methodism in 1939 necessitated some changes in the organizational procedure. In 1940 all women's work was combined into the Women's Society of Christian Service, with Mrs. Louis Mundt as the first President. The members of the Women's Society of Christian



Service also formed three circles, two meeting in the afternoon and one meeting in the evening.

On September 2, 1965, The W.S.C.S. observed their Silver anniversary and gave special recognition to the charter members: Mmes. D.G. Mahle, C.W. Herman, Earl Lehnertz, Alvin Rottke, Harold Schwanbeck, Fay Wood, Louis Mundt, Lloyd Melendy, Kenneth Briggs, Ed Apple, Elmer Ableitner, Walter Briese, Selma Austin, Clarence Kruger, James Montgomery, William Rosenberg, Floyd Bennett, Ralph Edwards, Glenn Brooks, Helma Colby, W.E. Mahle, Norman McFarlin, John Turner and Misses Nellie LaRocque, and Netta Gorrell.

The first Sunday School in the village of Plainview was organized in 1861 with Franklin Sylvester as superintendent. This school evidently grew rapidly and in July 1867 Plainview reported 108 Sunday School scholars. The Sunday School has carried on through the years. In 1954 Mrs. D.G. Mahle prepared a color film strip illustrating what can be done in the Sunday School kindergarten using the local kindergarten children and our church. She showed how to help advance the work with pre-school children.

The young people's work was first started about 1885 with the organization of a Junior League by Mrs. Raveill, the minister's wife. The older young people of the church were organized into an Epworth League by Professor VanDyke in 1891, with 14 members. This chapter of the Epworth League was known as the VanDyke Chapter. The group grew rapidly, and in five years the membership was reported as 42, though "Young People" was very elastic and reached up into the mid-thirties at least. Through the years these organizations have had their ups and downs with membership fluctuating considerably.

The Epworth League and the Standard Bearers changed to the Methodist Youth Fellowship, for all young people from



ages 12 to 23, after the organizational changes in 1939 which merged the three branches of Methodism.

In 1951 a Methodist Men's group was organized with Dr. D.G. Mahle as the first president. The Plainview chapter of Methodist Men received their national charter as an official Methodist Men's Group in 1954. Pancake suppers were their main money-raising events for church work projects.

Other money-raising events have been the Mother and Daughter Banquet, started by the Ladies Aid and still carried on by the Women's Society of Christian Service today as the Mother/Daughter/Friend Spring Salad Supper. One event of interest was when Mrs Lucia Nunamaker, who lived on the Will Hassig farm in the 1800's, received a quantity of maple sugar from a relative in the East. She and the church ladies made it into syrup and they served hot biscuits and maple syrup (all you could eat) as a means of raising money for the church.



*Mother - Daughter Banquet  
Plainview Methodist Church  
May 6, 1954*

by Roxanne Mahle



## People in Ministry

From its beginning under a local preacher, P. O. Crawford, whose granddaughter, Mrs. Edgar Putnam, resided in Elgin, the Plainview Church has been giving of its members into full or part-time Christian Service. Edwin V. Squires was given a Local Preacher's license. This was in 1880 for one year. Then in 1904 we find him again listed as a local preacher. Fred Nelson was granted a Local Preacher's license. Reverend Ralph Carleton was another church member to go into the full-time ministry. Miss Mary Bolton, active church member and a one-time class leader, served as superintendent of Grenoble Orphanage in France in 1919 and 1920.

In the "Beaver Story" book in the activities section, by Alice Card Hancock, Reverend Carleton was the speaker at their Harvest Festival held at the Town Hall. "He was earnest, dynamic and liked by everyone, and his name on the advertisement brought a crowd."

The Missionary speakers we have had at our church and whom we have helped support their are: Reverend Wallace Hanks from the Congo, Reverend Julian Nave from India, Charles Mosebrook, from the Philippines and Ivan Northdorft from Bolivia and Peru, South America. These events usually started with a family potluck dinner on a Sunday.

The first organ of record was purchased in 1882 for \$150 and a bell for \$200 was reported in July, 1888. Another organ





was purchased in 1891 at a cost of \$75. In 1903 an organ was given to the church in memory of Electa Sylvester, organist for many years, who lost her life in the Iroquois Theatre fire in Chicago. In 1962 an electric organ and chimes were gifts to the church from Lewis Dickerman in memory of his wife, Adah. In 1970 a piano was a gift to the church in memory of Mrs. W.E. Mahle.

The six beautiful stained glass windows in the church were installed in 1894 as memorials to T.G. Bolton, Arthur J. Carroll, James Lynch, Samuel McLaughlin, Reverend W.M Gillis and the VanDyke Chapter of the Epworth League.

## Plainview Methodist Church

1857 -1957

First Methodist Organization in Plainview	August, 1857
First Quarterly Conference	January 2-3, 1858
First Minister	Dwight Kidder
First Sunday School	April, 1861
First Church Erected	1866
First Women's Foreign Missionary Society	November, 1906

About 1860 the Greenwood circuit had a Preacher in Charge, and also an Assistant Preacher. The claims for that year show:

Presiding Elder:	\$ 32.00
Preacher in Charge:	\$400.00
Assistant Preacher:	\$200.00

Memorial Service, June 30, 1957

Golden Years Banquet, September 12, 1957

Centennial Service, October 27, 1957 with Bishop Coors

Reverend Charles Sheffield, Pastor

Dr. D.G. Mahle, Choir Director

Miss Florence Posz, Organist

"Let gratitude for the past inspire us with trust for the future. In Chapel or Cathedral, in simple meeting house or rural church, God can be found of men; and men's needs can be met by Him. Our Church is rich with the fellowship of Christians, sweet with the fragrance of many communions, beautiful with the freshness of God's cleansing power. God bless the Church—Our Church!"



## Pastors

Dwight Kidder, 1857-1858;  
Benjamin Crist, 1858-1859;  
S. M. Phelps, 1859-1860;  
Oliver P. Light, 1860-1861;  
John Quigley, 1861-1862;  
Noah Lathrop, 1862-1863;  
Bartley Blain, 1863-1865;  
A. Wliford, 1865-1866;  
W. C. Rice, 1866-1869;  
M.D. Terwilliger, 1869-1870;  
Wm. M. Bowdish, 1871-1873;  
Henry G. Bilbie, 1873-1875;  
W. W. Rork, 1875-1876;  
Peter Clare, 1876-1878;  
J.J. Crist, 1878-1879;  
Lynd Wright, 1879-1880;  
Frank B. Cowgill, 1880-1882;  
Alfred Cressey, 1882-1884;  
John W. Raveill, 1884-1886;  
T.B. Killiam, 1886-1887;  
W.L. Langrell, 1887-1891;  
W.M. Gillis, 1891-1896;  
W.E. King, 1896-1902;  
D.M. Johnston, 1902-1904;  
H.F. Ackerman, 1904-1907;  
Lincoln Hughes, 1907-1908;  
E.A. Palmer, 1908-1910;  
Oscar Smith, 1910;  
Joseph R. Jeffrey, 1910-1913;  
J.R. Hitchcock, 1913-1916;  
Jesse Kenderdins, 1916-1919;  
James E. Rains, 1919-1920;  
R. Prescott, 1920-1921;  
Wm. Wooley, 1921-1923;  
H.D. Bossuet, 1923-1925;  
I.N. Goodell, 1925-1927;  
G. E. Martin, 1927-1930;  
C.W. Gilman, 1930-1934;  
C.E. Sauter, 1934-1935;  
F. Green, 1935-1936;  
C.H.F. Gusé, 1936-1937;  
Paul Ludden, 1937-1941;  
C.P. Baenziger, 1941-1946;  
George Chant, 1947-1951;  
Charles Sheffield, 1951-1959;  
Walter Crabtree, 1959-1962;  
Allen Dripps, 1962-1964;  
Richard Horton, 1964-1969;  
Luther Pennington, 1969-1975;  
Warren White, 1975-1979;  
Ramon Olson, 1979-1986;  
Gary Bruening, 1986;  
Harold Kraft, 1987;  
Dennis Cox-Townsend, 1987-1996;  
Lyle Krumrie, 1996-1998;