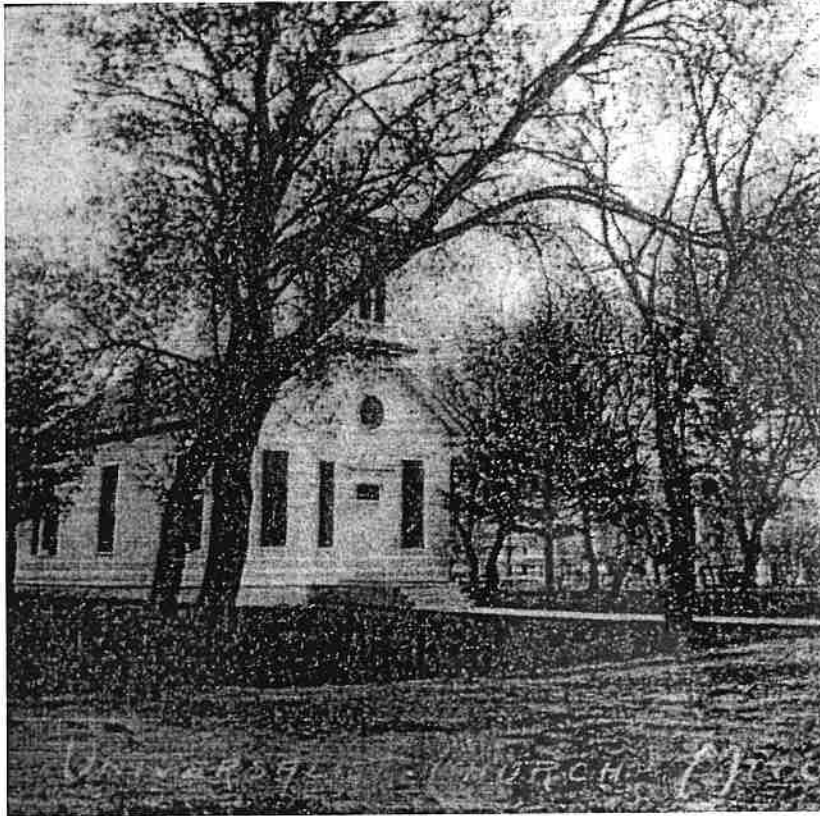


History of Mitchellville United Methodist Church



Compiled by Karen Spitler, July 2017



1868 – The first church in Mitchellville, Iowa was the Universalist Church was built on land donated by Thomas Mitchell.

1870 – Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. The congregation held their meetings at the Universalist Church two Sunday evenings each month. The minister, Rev. J.M. Holmes had three churches, Altoona, Mitchellville, and Rising Sun.

1870 – Christian Church was organized and also met at the Universalist Church

1874 – Christian Church built their first meeting house.

1878 – Congregation Church organized.

1882 – Congregation Church built their first meeting house.



July 1889 – the Methodists bought two lots from Lydia and Horce Brown and ground was broken for the new church and parsonage.

Sunday, December 29, 1889 – the Methodist Congregation formally took possession of the church. It was reported the weather was extremely bad, but the church was packed to its fullest capacity. The sermon included a plea to raise \$440 to remove the debt. The dedication ceremony was held that evening, Elder Rees sermon was said to be “one of the most powerful ever heard here.”

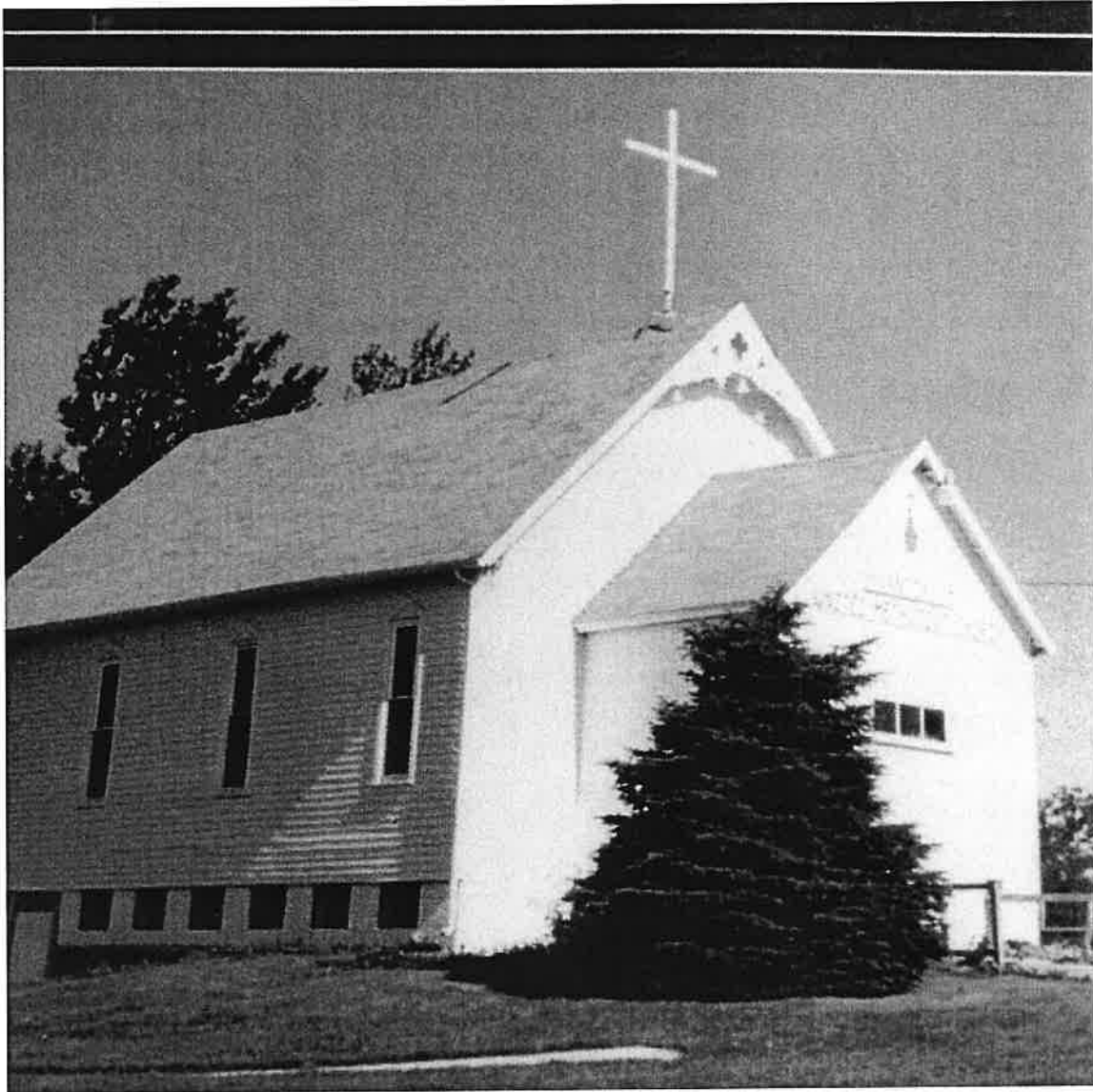


1888 – Rev. William Todd assigned to Mitchellville and Altoona Methodist Churches. He is given the credit for getting the church built. “He it was who took the initiative step and in the face of discouragements that would have appalled a less earnest and enthusiastic minister urged his little band of Methodists to exert themselves in the good work. He never for a moment wavered or doubted the possibility of building a church here.”

The pulpit was on the south side. Hitching racks for the horses were outside on the south and east walls. The bell loft was there along with the door on the north side.



1891 – a bell was presented to the church. It became a custom that when there was a funeral, the janitor would toll the bell once for every year of age of the deceased.



1892 -Santiago, area originally known as Trullinger's Grove, organized a Methodist Church. They originally met in the school in Barrett. Land for the church was donated by George Goddard.

The meetings of the M. E. Ladies' Mite Society at the residence of Mrs. A. G. Nye last Friday night was a great success both socially and financially—there being 70 persons present, and the mite collected amounting to \$6.00. The exercises of the evening consisted of

Song—"Oh Hail us Ye Free".....Glee Club
 Reading—"An Order for a Picture"....Mrs. Kibby
 Instrumental musicMiss Lena Meanes
 Declamation.....Master Earl Kibby
 "Gallilee"—Ladies Quartette.....
 Mrs. Dutton, Mrs. Tower, Mrs. Jones, Miss Hatcher.
 Reading—"Nauhaught the Indian Deacon".....
Miss Gertie Flower
 Instrumental music.....Miss Cora Nye
 Duette—"Beautiful Moonlight"
 Mrs. Tower and Mrs. Dutton
 Declamation.....Miss Carrie Commons
 Song—"Come Rise With the Lark".....Glee Club

Mitchellville Index
 1885

The Methodist Episcopal Ladies Mite Society met every two weeks for programs that included music, selected reading, declamation, and charades. All ages were encouraged to come. These social gatherings were considered to be excellent places for young people to meet to learn from taking part in Literary exercises and “to develop social qualities which are indispensable to one who mingles in society.”

1893

Christmas Hoops

And
FIREPLAGE,
IN THE
M. E. CHURCH,
Mitchellville, Iowa, Dec.
23, 1893.

Program

PART I.

Hail the Day Quartett
 Prayer Rev. R. E. Shaw
 Scripture reading Superintendent
 Song—The Christmas Story School
 Rec—The Ringing Bells Floyd Qualintance
 Rec—That Holy Night Garfield Lee
 Rec—Dear are the Bells Asa Marmon
 Song—The Angels' Song Maud Wolf and Maud Oldfield
 Rec—The Angels' Song Nellie Donnelly
 Rec—The King Coming Ethna Pearson
 Rec—Christmas Bells Maud Oldfield
 Rec—Oh Happy Bells Emeline Starks
 Song—Ring Out Ye Bells Quartett

PART II—SANTA CLAUS.

1 Eddie Corbin
 2 Edna Daniels
 3 Maud Wolf
 4 Garfield Qualintance
 5 Clarence Pearson
 6 Charley Marmon
 7—Song—The Angel Chotr School
 8 Asa Lee
 9 Earl Corbin
 10 Jimmy Donnelly
 11 Charley Walz
 12 Orrel Scott
 13 Earl Martin
 14 Grace Corbin
 Song—Santa Claus is Coming Little Folks
 Distribution of Presents
 Collection
 Song—Beautiful Star School
 Benediction Rev. R. E. Shaw

INDEX PRINT.

*Easter * Concert.*

BY UNION S. S. MITCHELLVILLE,
IOWA, APRIL 1, 1888.

PROGRAM:

Song
 Prayer
 Introductory remarks, Superintendent
 Easter Edith Wilson
 Easter Lilies Katie Jones
 The Resurrection Mable Ellis
 Declamation Edson Gadd
 Song
 Jesus Loves Me Class Exercise
 God's Love and Care Alice Russell
 Declamation Harry Gadd
 Anthem
 The Open Gates Class Exercise
 The Christian Graces
 Easter Lady Martin
 Song A Child's Prayer
 The Changed Cross Ollie Simpson
 Whispers of Love Rena Goddard
 Recitation Ella-Joe Rodgers
 Anthem
 Benediction

1888

EASTER PROGRAM.

M. E. Sunday School.

Mitchellville, Iowa, April 7, 1901.

Song—Christ is Risen by the School
 Invocation Rev. A. R. Miller
 Song—Easter Tide School
 Recitation Asa Lee
 Class Exercise Mrs. Pearson's Class
 Rec Ethel Hume
 Rec Cora Lacey
 Class Song Mrs. Bechtell's Class
 Rec Earl Baird
 Rec Gladys Coulter
 Song—The Glad News School
 Class Exercise Minnie Allen's Class
 Rec Anna Crismer
 Anthem Choir
 Rec Ruth McDonald
 Rec Susie Mann, Emeline Starks
 Song Lois Hume
 Rec Gerlie P. ck
 Duet Beulah Cook, Mary Starks
 Rec Myrtle Robinson
 Class Exercise Mrs. Walter's Class
 Duet Eva Pearson, Ella Allen
 Address The Pastor
 Missionary Collection Classes and Audience
 Song—The Call to Duty School
 Benediction

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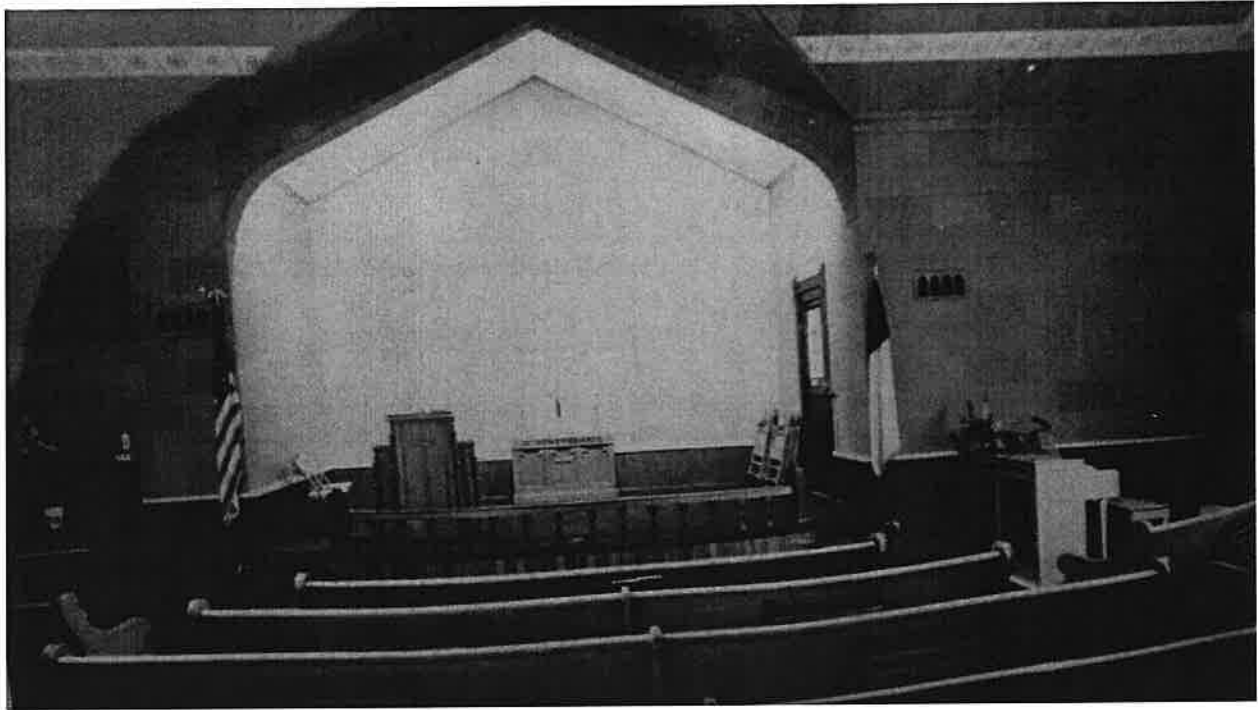
There were also Prayer meetings every Wednesday night and Epworth League for Young People on Sunday evenings before services.

“There has always been a good relationship of the churches in Mitchellville, but one time you might have questioned it. It was summer and windows were open. The Methodists were singing “Will there be any Stars in My Crown?”, while the congregation at the Christian Church were singing “There’s not a Friend like the lowly Jesus, No not one”. The neighborhood between the churches heard

Methodists – “Will there be any Stars in my Crown?” followed by the words from the Christian Church “No, not one, no, not one”.



The picture and newspaper article that were in the hallway are of Rev. B.A Fassett. He was born 1852 in New York and moved to Iowa as a minister in 1883. In 1892, he was assigned to Mitchellville Episcopal Church and died May 9, 1893 of diphtheria.



1906 – the Methodist began to raise funds for remodeling and rebuilding the Church, they raised \$2,000.

1907 – the excavation began on a basement underneath the sanctuary. During the remodeling process, Services and Sunday School were held in the north store room of the Odd Fellows Building. In the Summer they met in the park with no evening services.

The Pulpit and Choir loft were moved to the west side of the room and the floor was sloped down from east to west. A new east wing addition was added, along with a rolling partition so the area could also be used as a class room.

August 1908 – the newly remodeled building was dedicated.



1903 – Congregational Church built their first Church building.

1910 – New Congregational Church built, the one that is still in use today.

1919 – Santiago Church started their annual tradition of Harvest Home Festival Dinner and Auction.

1928 – 1936 – the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Congregational Church held Union services. Rotated where services were held, for six months the services were held at the Methodist Church and the next six months they were at the Congregational Church. The Sunday Schools were also combined to be a Union Sunday School.

1939 – Methodist Episcopal Church became the Methodist Church.

By then there were two Women's groups. The Women's Home Missionary Society, and The Ladies Mite Society that had become the Ladies Social Union. They had a very active year in 1939. They purchased a heater for the parlor for \$60.00, after this was paid for they raised \$83 for a kitchen stove. They raised money through monthly dues, penny suppers, and once even cleaned the parsonage for \$20.

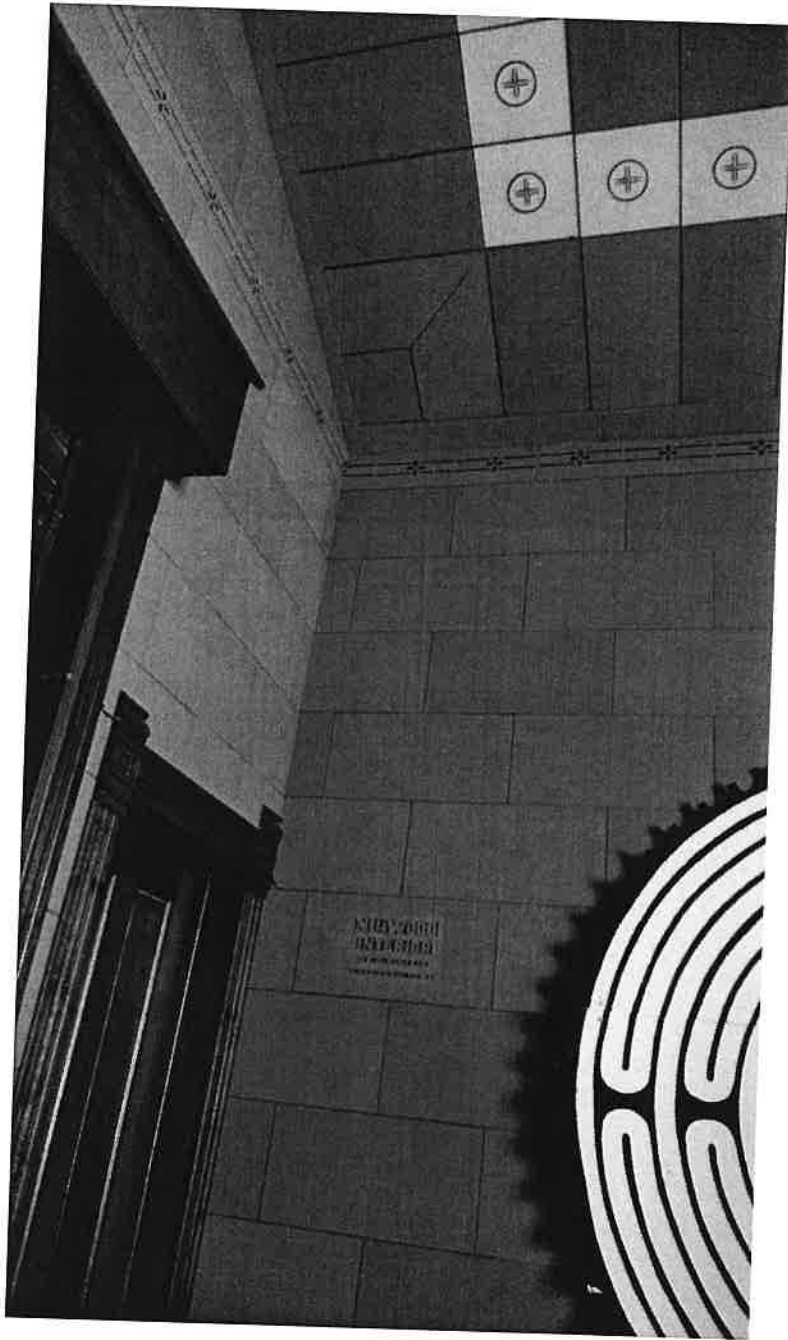
In September of that same year at one of their meetings they had a demonstration by the telephone company on the use of the new dial phones. At the end of the year the Ladies helped plan the church's 50th Anniversary Service that combined with the New Year's Eve Watch Night Service.

1940 – The Ladies Social Union and the Women's Home Missionary Society united to form the Women's Society of Christian Service.

1949 – repairs were needed. The Church rented 15 acres from N.M. Criswell, the men of the church plowed, planted, cultivated, and harvested corn. Called the "God's Acre Project", the money raised from the sale of the corn paid for the repairs. The wooden floor in the basement was replaced with cement, and the wall enclosing the kitchen was changed to make it easier to serve church dinners. In the dining room the wooden supports were replaced with smaller iron supports to give more room.



Summer of **1950** – the three windows in the east wall of the sanctuary were changed to one larger window. The outside was painted and the back steps leading to basement (where chair lift is now), was enclosed with a roof and wall. Outside double doors were added, the one we now use as the main entrance.

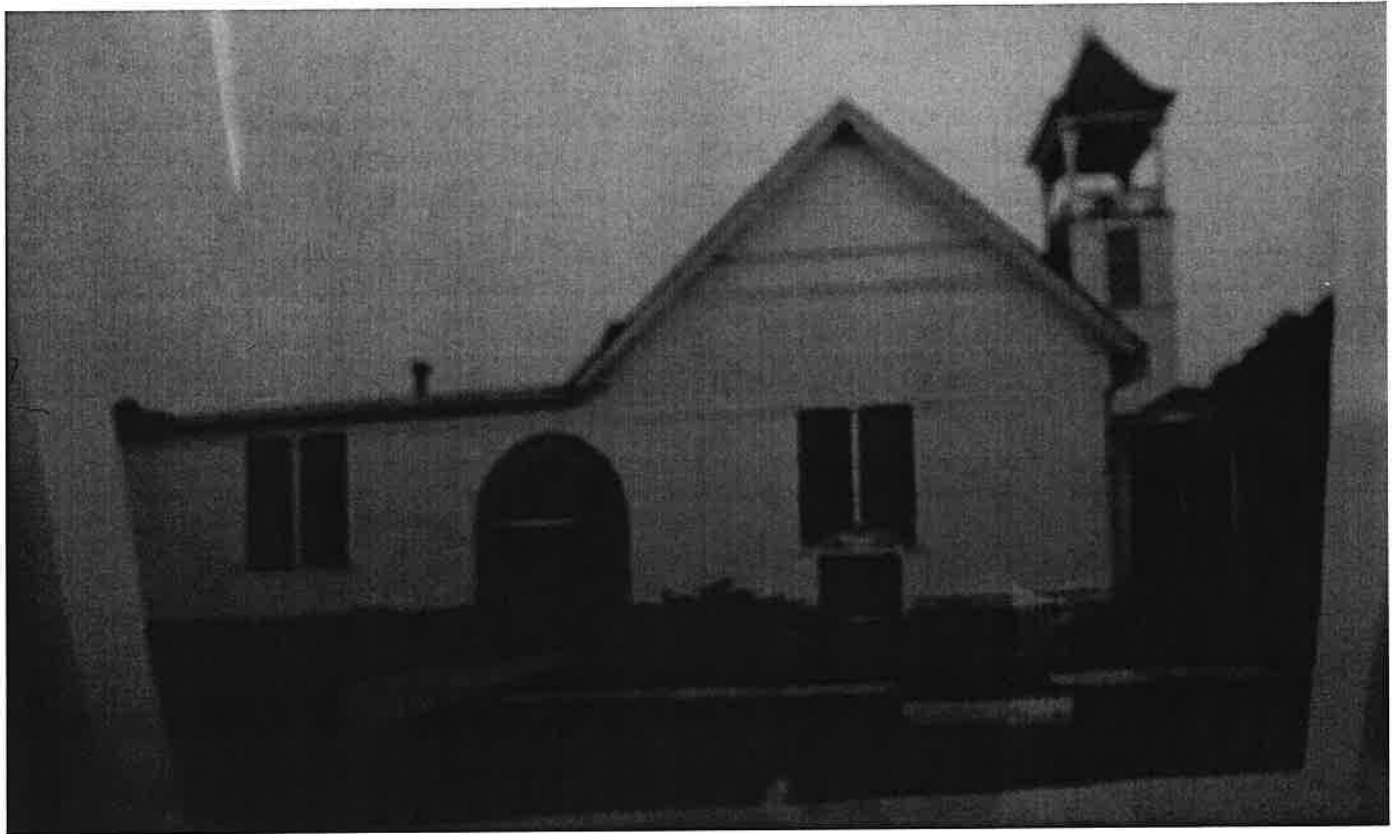


The interior of the sanctuary was finished with Nu-Wood. The Women's Society of Christian Service took on the task of redecorating the church.

1954 – campaign for a new Sunday School unit to be built. To raise money, Church members had a variety of fund raisers. “Tree of Lights” – bulbs of different colors were purchased for set amounts and used on the Christmas Tree. Corn pick up days involved the young and old alike, they went together to fields of corn with tractors and wagons to glean after the mechanical pickers, and the corn was sold. There were also Ice Cream Socials, Ham suppers, roller skating parties, and hot lunches taken once a month to the school children and the public.



One member stood out in her efforts to raise funds. Nina Weston lived on a farm outside town, she decided to use her cracked eggs to make glazed doughnuts and sold a total of 1,121 dozen with all receipts going to the church. She kept making doughnuts and gave a tithe of the receipts. By the time she stopped, she had made over 60,000 doughnuts. In a newspaper article about the endeavor, she said the hardest part was the doughnuts needed 90 degree heat to raise properly and on “some of those 10 below zero days was a trick. Harold (her husband), piled the fuel into the stoker, but we had to cut off the heat supply to all rooms except the kitchen to get it warm enough.”



August 1955 – the basement for the new addition was dug.

September 1958 – the new space was finished and created 3 Sunday School rooms on first floor and room for 4 more classes in the basement. Stained glass windows installed???



1960 – the Universalist Church was down to 10 families and soon stopped having regular services.

1968 – the Methodist denomination united with the Evangelical United Brethren to become the United Methodist Church. A side note, here in Mitchellville, Ellen Beukema was the President of the Women's Society. At this same time, due to a shortage of ministers in Mitchellville, the Congregational, Christian, and Methodist Churches went together to form a Community Parish. Two ministers served the 3 Mitchellville churches and the Santiago church. Sunday School was held at the individual churches, but Worship Services alternated between the three Mitchellville Churches. After two years, the Christian Church voted to return to being separate. The Methodist and Congregational churches separated in 1974.

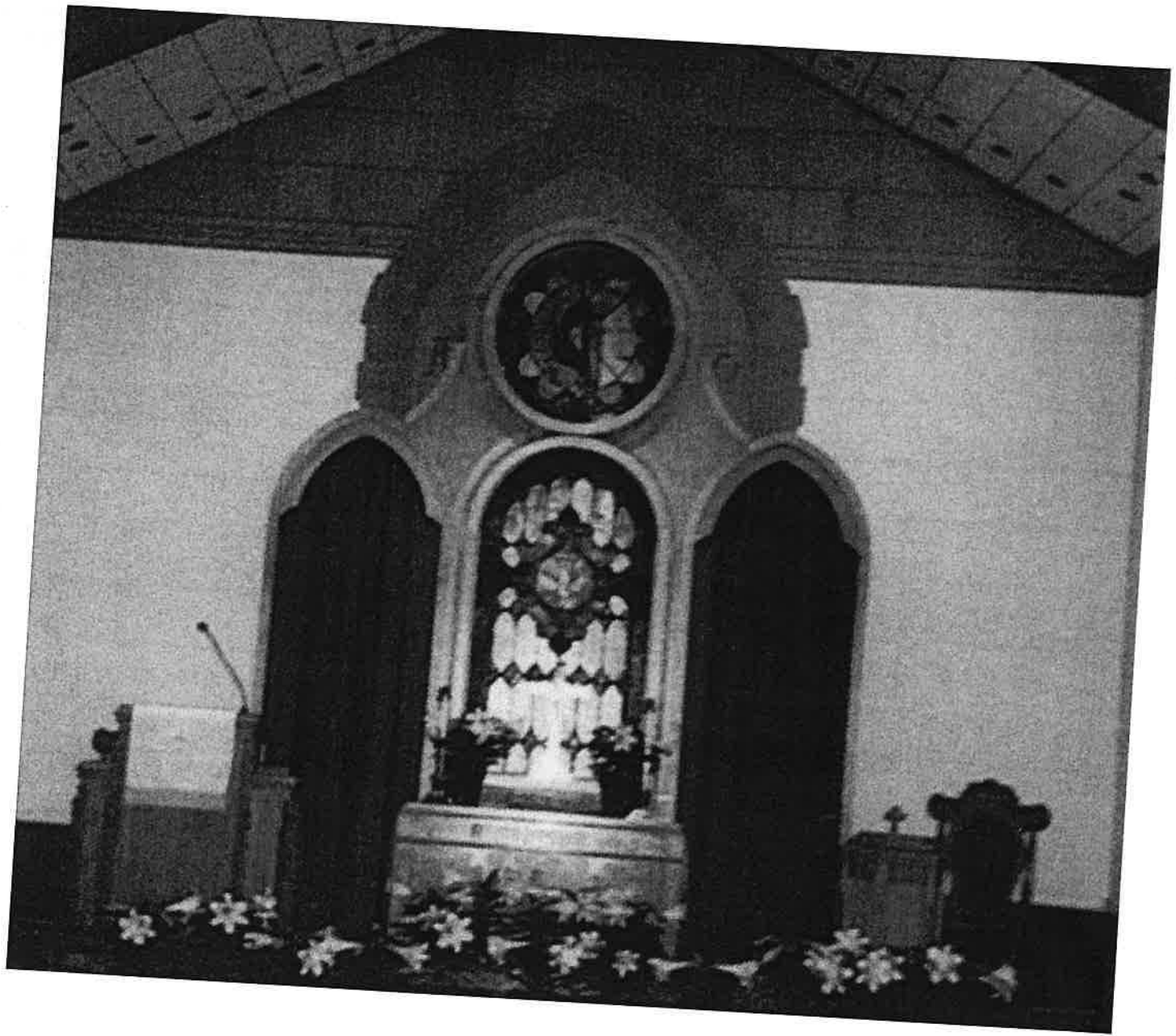


1970 – Centennial Celebration. In 1970 Rev. Carroll Brown wrote a short letter for the Centennial Church Directory. Here is part of his words:

“ We look back with real joy and gratitude upon all those whose lives have been a part of our rich heritage in this community. In the midst of a day when life seems full of uncertainties and tensions, it is good to know that the church has stood in this community these many years as a symbol of God’s love and care for His people.”

“This leads us to the realization that we have our existence, and continued survival through the grace of God. As we discover what God can do for us, and give ourselves in service for Him, we realize the real meaning of the Church, as a community of committed persons serving God as He shows us the way.”

“We can give thanks to those who had vision to begin the church in this community, and the foresight to plan ahead for the future. We can rejoice in their lives which have become a part of the church in our midst. We can have pride in the missionary concern and the outreach efforts of the past years. But most of all, our gratitude should be to a God who gives us new birth through His son Jesus Christ, and who leads us to witness for Him wherever we are.”



Mid 1980's – Bobbi Cochran sons salvaged the large center Altar piece from a church in Knoxville, Iowa and installed it in her honor.



Rev. Ted Hatten served at the church from 1990-1999. He made the wall hanging for the Iowa Annual Methodist Conference about **1992**. One person's memory is that the wall hanging represented the path we walk to find God.



2003 – Jean McManus presented a program to the United Methodist Women about the Peace Pole Project. The UMW was interested and voted to purchase one for our church with Memorial Funds in memory of Twila Kinkennon. Wally Craig planted the Peace Pole and Steve Von Stein installed a spot light for it. Debbie Craig (Scholz) and several others re-landscaped the church yard. The Peace Pole says “Let Peace Prevail on Earth” in English, Hebrew, Dutch, and Spanish.



During the last 20 years the UMW has a bake sale every month at the Legion Pancake Breakfast to raise funds and their “Soul Food Café” and delicious pies are always a popular stopping place during Thomas Mitchell Days. Our own Debbie Cooper is an active part of a local Clown ministry outreach, providing smiles and laughs at a variety of places.





2015 – outside ramp to the basement built.

2017 – roof and sides are added to the outside ramp.