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## CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alice Case Jensen, Chairman

Walt Lewis

Ellie Lewis

Angela Carlyle

Vivian Anderson

Chuck Dann

Evelyn Muzzall

Mary Jo McGuire

Caroline DeVries Williams

Juanita Van Dyke Anderson

Rev. David G. Lura, Ex officio

## SPECIAL CENTENNIAL EVENTS

Mar 25, 1990

Apr 21, 1990

Jul 4, 1990

Oct 28, 1990

Nov 18, 1990

Dec 1, 2, 1990

Dec 4, 1990

Jan 13, 1991

Feb 10, 1991

Mar 16, 1991

Mar 17, 1991

Francis Asbury Drama

Consecration of Centennial Hall

Float in Parade

Celebration Concert

Thanksgiving Dinner

Amahl and the Night Visitors

Bazaar

Arts & Crafts Festival

All Church Potluck

Catered Celebration Dinner

Celebration Sunday

## PREFACE

The heart and soul of any church family is the people. The story of the Christian Church on North Whidbey Island has its roots in the people called Methodist. Evelyn Muzzall has poured over pages of documents for months to bring us the Centennial Snippets and this publication. It is by no means able to cover every aspect and recall every name or event. For any omissions on behalf of Evelyn and the entire Centennial Committee, I apologize.

This whole year past we have been celebrating a variety of events with the intent of providing an opportunity for everyone to participate at one time or another. As 1991 passes we shall continue to give thanks to almighty God for the past opportunity for ministry and shall hope that we might remain faithful in the years ahead.



Pastor - March 1991

## METHODIST TIME-LINE

- 1738 On Wednesday, May 24, 1738, John Wesley wrote in his JOURNAL:  
"About a quarter before nine, while one was describing the change which God works in the heart, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation."
- 1784 At the Christmas Conference at Lovely Lane Chapel, in Baltimore, Maryland, "on motion of John Dickins, it was voted to form the Methodist Episcopal Church. The next day Francis Asbury was ordained a Deacon in the new church."
- 1787 The dynamic Rev. Richard Allen led Black Americans out of the church in Philadelphia because he felt they were not treated equally. They became the African Methodist Episcopal Church.  
Two other Black denominations:  
1. A.M.E. Zion Church  
2. Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- 1800 to 1815 Followers of Otterbein & Boehm form United Brethren in Christ
- 1816 Evangelical Association proclaimed
- 1830 The Methodist Protestant Church --This separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church was led by those who were determined that there must be more democracy in the government of the churches. When their demands were not accepted they withdrew in protest and formed their own church.
- 1844 Methodist Episcopal Church, South  
This break from the Methodist Episcopal Church was the result of the slavery issue
- 1853 Circuit Riders came to Whidbey Island
- 1861 The Salvation Army, led by William Booth, wanted the right to preach wherever, whenever, and to whomever he felt led. This was contrary to the strict order of the Methodist, who "wanted the machine to run smoothly." This splinter group not only survived, but thrived and spread.  
Other splinter groups that broke off from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but did not endure:  
1. Methodist New Connection  
2. Primitive Methodists  
3. Bible Christians
- 1891 Crescent Harbor Methodist Church Incorporated
- 1939 All Blacks in the Methodist Episcopal Church put together in a "separate but equal" governing structure.

- 1920 New church building built in Oak Harbor
- 1939 At Garden Street Church, Bellingham, Washington, June 14-18, the Annual Conference session merged the three Methodist bodies that were in the Puget Sound area. These bodies were (1) Methodist Protestant Church, (2) Methodist Episcopal Church, South (3) Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 1946 Evangelicals and United Brethren joined
- 1964 The "separate but equal" words were struck from the governing statement.
- 1965 New church building built in Oak Harbor
- 1968 The Evangelical United Brethren united with the Methodists to become the United Methodist Church.
- 1971 New church building built in Oak Harbor after an arson fire destroyed 5 year old church
- 1984 Bicentennial of denomination observed
- 1989 Major remodel and addition to Oak Harbor Church completed. Centennial Hall and church remodeling had been in the planning stages for many years and became a reality in 1989. Many, many people worked on this project through the years and appreciation and thanks go to all of them.
- The final Building Committee worked hard and long to bring this project to fulfillment and the entire church family says thanks to:
- Charles Renegar - chair  
 Douglas Wirth - vice-chair  
 Bob Wolfe - Capital Funds Drive chair  
 Ann Oldham - finance consultant  
 Delmon Anderson  
 Wilbur Gilbert  
 Ross Mordhorst  
 Bob Blackwood  
 Harris Eloff  
 Hubert Morgan  
 Pat Wolfe - UMW Representative  
 Pastor David Lura - Spiritual Advisor

## THOSE WHO LED US ON WHIDBEY ISLAND

- 1853 Rev. Benjamin Close, a circuit rider from Port Townsend held the first Methodist service in the Wallace home in Crescent Harbor. The minutes of the First Annual Conference held in Oregon City, Oregon, March 17, 1853, by Bishop E. R. Ames. Six ministers were present, of whom three, Rev. Benjamin Close, Rev. W. B. Morse, and Rev. J. S. Smith had preached on Whidbey Island. A pastor was sent to Whidbey Island every year thereafter. In 1888 E. J. Moore was sent and the name "Whidbey" was dropped and the name "Coupeville" was substituted.
- 1853 William B. Morse was assigned to Coupeville, but traveled to Crescent Harbor for services.
- 1856 James S. Smith--Coupeville - Crescent Harbor pastor. He was a tall, angular man, "who spoke with little eloquence, but with great force and some logic."
- 1857 W. J. Franklin
- 1858 H. C. Rhodes
- 1859 William D. Nichols
- 1860 A tract written by Rev. Royal, "The Story of Peace" stated that any sinner out of Hell could have peace at any moment if he would only believe." The first church building on the Island went up in 1860 at a cost of \$600, on a corner of Grove Terry's farm, the land donated by Mr. Terry.
- 1863 Christopher Alderson--"One worthy parson by the name of Alderson lived for a time in the 1860's in the log cabin on Dr. Kellog's place and rode on his calls a lively and spirited mare. Even though Alderson strapped one foreleg before mounting, the bucking and rearing this horse could do, the preacher meanwhile hanging on for dear life, was a frequently repeated source of amusement to the Doctor's children."
- 1865 S. H. Todd
- 1867 F. Elliott
- 1868 H. Patterson
- 1870 G. H. Greer--During the pastorate of Rev. Greer new roads had placed the old church out of the way of travel, so an effort was made to bring it to a better location. Moved part way, it was abandoned in John Crockett's field for several years.
- 1873 J. W. Kuykendall
- 1874 Martin Judy
- 1875 B. J. Sharp
- 1876 Thomas Magill--In early 1878 Rev. Thomas Magill was the preacher at a camp meeting among the Nooksack Indians in Whatcom County. A number of Indians were converted and many were baptized and united with the church. Many had multiple wives, but were anxious to change their ways and conform to Christians standards. On the appointed day Thomas Magill performed about 20 marriage ceremonies, using Chinook, an Indian jargon. He was paid \$7.00

- 1878 Wallace Hurlburt  
 1879 N. A. Star  
 1880 T. B. Goodpasture - A quote from Brother Mack, a circuit rider of Whidbey Island and other Puget Sound areas. "So the Presiding Elder sent them Rev. Goodpasture. He was a good preacher and his wife taught school while he travelled the circuit."  
 1882 G. A. Landen-- Excerpt from the report of D. G. Le Sourd, Presiding Elder at Puget Sound Annual Conference, 1884: "The parsonage has been furnished at a cost of \$135."  
 1884 W. H. Zellers - Report from the 1884 Puget Sound Annual Conference, the same year the Rev. William Zellers was assigned to Coupeville, and also preached at Crescent Harbor: "In early winter his youngest child died and the stricken wife and mother lay for weeks at the gate of death."  
 1885 W. B. McMillan - In A HISTORY OF WHIDBEY'S ISLAND by George Albert Kellogg, written as a Master's thesis in 1934, the author recalls that the Rev. McMillan was a frequent dinner guest in his family's home.  
 1888 E. J. Moore  
 1889 C. C. Culmer  
 1890 William H. Wilson - On May 12, 1892, marriage of Alfred Maylor, 28, Mary Hoffman, 20; he from Oak Harbor, she from Dugalla Bay; married by William H. Wilson. January 15, 1891, Fred and Nellie James, baptized in Crescent Harbor Church; sprinkled by Rev. W. H. Wilson, pastor.

From 1892 FULL TIME MINISTERS were assigned to  
 CRESCENT HARBOR CHURCH

- 1892 J. L. Parmeter - A parsonage built for him in August 1892.  
 1893 C. E. Cunningham - Arrived August 21, 1893  
 1894 R. M. Schoonmaker -- Arrived September 10, 1894. The parsonage was moved and placed in line with the church and an addition built on.  
 1895 W. S. Hanlein --to Crescent Harbor charge. In a letter dated Anacortes, Oct. 17, 1901, Rev. William S. Hanlein, departing pastor wrote: "Am stopping at the Hotel Thomas and hotel life is not at all congenial to me, to say nothing of the expense of \$6 per week. It is said that there are here from 1500 to 2000 people and so far as I can learn, there are only about 200 professing Christians."  
 1901 McClelland Reed --to Crescent Harbor charge, 39 members and 10 on probation

1902      H. W. Michener --arrived Sept. 1902; salary \$450; 43 members. The parsonage was again enlarged and a horse and buggy was furnished the pastor. Rev. Michener presented the church with pulpit chairs. In 1906 Rev. Michener received Jessle Watson into the Crescent Harbor Church. She worked untiringly for the Church until 1954 when she transferred to the Mt. Vernon Methodist Church after the death of her husband.



1906      E. B. Reese -- "Jan. 1907, pastor's salary has a \$31.99 deficit (salary \$600 per year). Pastor asked for suggestions from the Board of Stewards as to plans for getting rid of the deficit. No plan given except to urge all to do what they could for collection next Sunday."

From Mrs. Watson's summary: "This Charge has had a bad year. Sickness entered the parsonage and Brother Reese was laid aside. During this time the church carried along faithfully. Also Mary Byron Reese, the pastor's mother of national renown, passed to her Heavenly reward."



1909      J.M. Hixon --Sept. 13, 1909 he began preaching regularly in the town of Oak Harbor--upstairs in a store. During this time Brother and Sister Izett, pioneers of the Crescent Harbor Church, passed away. "Their high character have left their stamp upon the church and community." 33 members, salary \$700, rent \$50.





- 1910 C. H. Baldwin--To Crescent Harbor Charge; salary, \$900.  
 1911 H.P. Waldron- Ladies Aid Society of Oak Harbor built a hall at the cost of \$1000. The plan was to use it for all church services until a church can be built. Salary \$860, Rent \$100.  
 1913 B. Waddington - To Crescent Harbor Charge; Salary, \$900.  
 1916 B. N. Galbraith- To Crescent Harbor- Oak Harbor Charge

During his 19 year pastorate Rev. Galbraith (1916-1936) began the tradition of holding Easter Sunrise Services at the top of Goose Rock. After the Deception Pass Bridge was built in 1935 the services were held on Pass Island between the bridges.

Tragedy befell the Galbraith family during their pastorate in Oak Harbor, Willard "Buck", the senior high son, an experienced outdoorsman and climber, was lost in the area of Sauk River. The body was never found. Members of the church and townspeople spent a week in the region, hunting but with no success.

From PASTOR'S REPORT, Jan. 10, 1931: "In the early fall a new furnace was installed in the church and it greatly adds to the comfort of the worshippers. The furnace was purchased through Mr. E. E. Wade, our local dealer, who furnished to us the entire heating plant, fully equipped and installed at a little less than \$200. The Board tendered to Mr. Wade a vote of thanks.

It was during the pastorate of the Galbraiths the white frame Methodist church was built in Oak Harbor. It cost \$12,000 and was "modern in all respects." Deception Pass Bridge was opened, July 31, 1935.

It was during this time that the Crescent Harbor Church building was sold. The material was used to build farm buildings for a neighboring farmer.

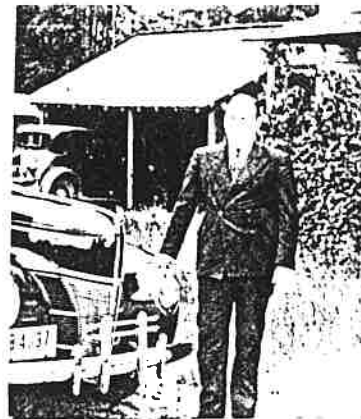


1936 W. C. R. Dann- In the August, 1904, copy of THE FORWARD a little monthly magazine printed in Hastings, England, was once edited by Will Dann, Chuck's father. It published news, letters, editorials, poems, short fiction, etc. In that issue are several references to the fact that young Will Dann had left England and had arrived in Winnipeg, Canada. The then editor wrote, "So let us thank God for Dann, and pray that His richest blessing shall rest upon him."

Rev. Dann died in 1966, having faithfully served the Methodist Church for 55 years, a gentle man who lived his religion every day of his life. Surely he lived the advice set forth in his short essay in THE FORWARD; "Look at your life today, and find out what it ought to be, and bring it up to the highest level. Remember we are to be copies of Christ, and people are reading us."



1938 Carroll H. Sprague-- "The change came in August when Carroll H. Sprague asked to be relieved to attend theological school."



1939 Philip H. Ashby--In 1939-40 a 20 year old student minister served our church. He was a cousin of Vera Larson of our congregation. Upon leaving Oak Harbor he graduated from UPS, received a Ph. D. from the University of Chicago, and then taught 28 years at Princeton University. In a letter to Vera he wrote, "If there were one year I could live over again there is no question that I would select the year in Oak Harbor." Phil's father was Dr. Paul Ashby, who was a Methodist minister in the Northwest for 55 years.

1940 C. E. Rayburn--"C. E. Rayburn, formerly a YMCA secretary at Wenatchee and Ellensburg, was secured to fill the vacancy" when Phillip Ashby left for further schooling.

1942 N. M. Jones

1944 Henry Attenborough (Thomas Roddy, a retired minister filled in during Rev. Attenborough's illness. Rev. Attenborough died in 1948 at Port Townsend.)

1947 Kenneth Countryman--Rev. Countryman's 1950 salary was paid semi-monthly at the rate of \$88 (\$2000 per year) He was paid 8 cents per mile for travel; in April, 1951 that amounted to \$34.20. In 1950 the Church was paid \$5 per use for the basement for such groups as 4H, Grange, Scouts, Garden Club, etc. A substitute minister was paid \$10 per service; the janitor, \$30 per month.

"Oak Harbor church with its added Navy Air Field has afforded the consecrated efforts of Rev. and Mrs. Countryman's rich field of service."



1952 Darrell Iwerks-- Salary \$2400, car expense, \$400. "Church facilities have been greatly enhanced by the wing added to the Oak Harbor church, where Rev. Iwerks has afforded splendid leadership."

Sept. 15, 1958 "Rev. Iwerks explained about UNICEF and suggested the possible use of this idea for Halloween. Frank Keck expressed it: "Do FOR PEOPLE INSTEAD OF TO PEOPLE."



1960



Calvin Moore-On May 23, 1962 Rev. Cal announced "the parsonage debt was paid and that a time should be set for the dedication of the parsonage and that perhaps Bishop Palmer might be available."

1966      Nolan J. McClurg--During Dr. McClurg's pastorate a new sanctuary was built on the foundation of the 1920 church. On February, 1967, the major construction of the organ began under the guidance of Vernon Greenstreet, installation by Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organ Co. It is hoped that "the pipes arrive from Holland by the time of the dedication of the church on May 28. Total cost of the organ--\$25,000.



1971      Edgar Starr--Rev. Starr shepherded the rebuilding to the church after the arson fire of 1970. In his words as the effort neared completion: "However, during the last few days of December (1972) a new and remarkable spirit seemed to emerge. It was apparent that we would be able to have our services in the new building for Christmas. The joy of the Christmas celebration was glorious. Some 397 people came together on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Christ. We are truly grateful for having the use of our new building and for the new spirit of joy and celebration which came with the completion of the structure. We also look forward with anticipation to the Consecration of the new building on January 16, when Bishop W. Maynard Sparks and our own Superintendent The Reverend Dan Taylor, will lead this worship."



1979

Ronald Northrup--A number of steps were taken during the pastorate of Rev. Northrup. In 1982 the first Church Directory was produced. New carpeting was laid in the Narthex, in the Sanctuary, and on the stairs. Child car-seat loaners were made available. A 9:30 a.m. worship was initiated in addition to the regular 11:00 a.m. service. This arrangement began in the summer and has continued to the present. Ceiling fans were installed. A church van was purchased in 1984. It, too remains a very valuable adjunct to many church activities. A salaried youth director position was also begun during this time.





1987      Richard Tuttle--Rev. Tuttle was an interim minister, serving from January 1, 1987 to June 30, 1987. In that short time he and his wife became dear friends, as well as trusted counselors to many in the congregation. After leaving Oak Harbor they returned to semi-retirement.

1987      David Lura-- Rev. Lura added a Saturday evening service, bringing to three the number of services for the worshipers. He oversaw the planning and building of the major remodeling of the lower level of the church and the addition of Centennial Hall and office space on the main floor. During Lent he introduced a weekly Soup Supper, followed by a devotional period. The church's Centennial became much more meaningful as a result of his suggestions and ideas. His duties as a Navy Reserve Chaplain have brought the church community and the Navy community much closer in spirit. Colleen Lura served two years as the staff youth director. Last, but certainly not least, Pastor David and Colleen gave us all a very special gift on Jan. 1, 1990. They named him Daniel James Lura.



## I. RECORD OF PASTORS.

NAMES	WHEN APPOINTED	WHEN REMOVED	REMARKS
W. H. Wilson	Aug 1890.	Aug. 1892.	To Biscaya, Wash.
J. L. Parmeter	" 1892.	Aug 21: 93	To West Tondah
A. E. Cunningham	Aug 21 - 94	Sept 10 - 1894	To Slammomomayen
R. M. Schumacher	Sept. 10 - 94	" 6 - 1897	by Bishop Joyce -
W. S. Hanlein	Oct. 1 - 1897	" 23 - 1901	To Eugene by
D. L. Matson	Jan 28 1902	Sept 25 1902	Bishop Foss
H. M. Michener	Sept 25 - 1902	Sept 24, 1906	To Anacortes by
E. B. Reese	Sept. 24, 1906	Sept 13 - 1909	Bishop Mallam
J. M. Hixson	Sept 13 1909	Sept 18 - 1910	and Curson of New Rind
C. W. Martin	Oct. 1910	Sept 18 - 1911	appointed by P. E.
H. P. Waldron	Sept. 18 - 1911	Sept 1913	appointed to Sedro-Woolley
B. Waddington	Sept 1913	Sept. 18, 1916.	" to Davenport.
B. N. Galbraith	Sept 18, 1916	June 21, 1936.	To Salem Ore. to school
W. G. W. Damm	June 21, 1936	June - 1938	To Oakville Wash
Carroll H. Sprague & Pa.	June 1938	Aug 1939	To Latsof
Philip V. Gshby	Aug. 1, 1939	July 15, 1940	To Shelton.
C. E. Rayburn	August 22, 1940	June 1942	To Burlington
N. M. Jones	June 1942.	June 1947	To Sequim
Henry Attenborough	June 1944	Aug 1951	To School - San Fran
Kenneth Countryman	June 1947	June 14 1960	Pac. Sch. Religion
D. L. H. works	Sept 1 1951	June 19, 1966	To School
Clivia W. Moore	June 10, 1960	June 1, 1971	Pac. Sch. Religion
Volney J. McClurg	June 26, 1966	July 1, 1979	Port Townsend
St. L. Hay	June 20, 1971	Dec. 31, 1986	Spokane Valley
Ronald R. Northrup	July 1, 1979	June 30 1987	Council
Drak Tuttle	Jan 1 1987	July 1, 1987	To SUMNER, WASH.
Daniel M. Lina	July 1, 1987		To Rindlin Scatth
			To Garden Street in Bellin
			To Wenatchee
			Retired



## MINISTERS' YEARLY BASE SALARIES

1898	\$ 350	
1902	450	
1906	600	
1909	700	
1911	860	
1913	900	
1916	925	
1918	1,100	
1919	1,100	
1926	1,400	
1929	1,439	
1932	966	(After Stock market crash)
1934	876	
1936	765	
1939	1,000	
1940	900	
1944	1,400	
1945	1,500	
1946	1,800	
1947	1,100	
1952	2,300	
1953	2,400	
1954	2,500	
1956	3,250	
1957	3,600	
1959	4,000	
1960	4,400	
1966	6,700	
1971	9,500	
1979	13,500	
1987	18,000	Base salary does not include travel, utilities, health insurance, continuing education, pension, or Social Security.

Conscient 2 (aylor W.

August 14 - 1906

Board of trustees met at the call of the Pastor H. W. Michener and held a short session over the phone.

F. R. Morgan being absent on a trip to the Atlantic Coast, his old son Rev Michener was acting Chairman

The following report was unanimously adopted

Value of Church \$1,500

" " Parsonage 700

Expenditure on Parsonage \$45

Debt on church property \$42.50

Insurance on Church \$1,000

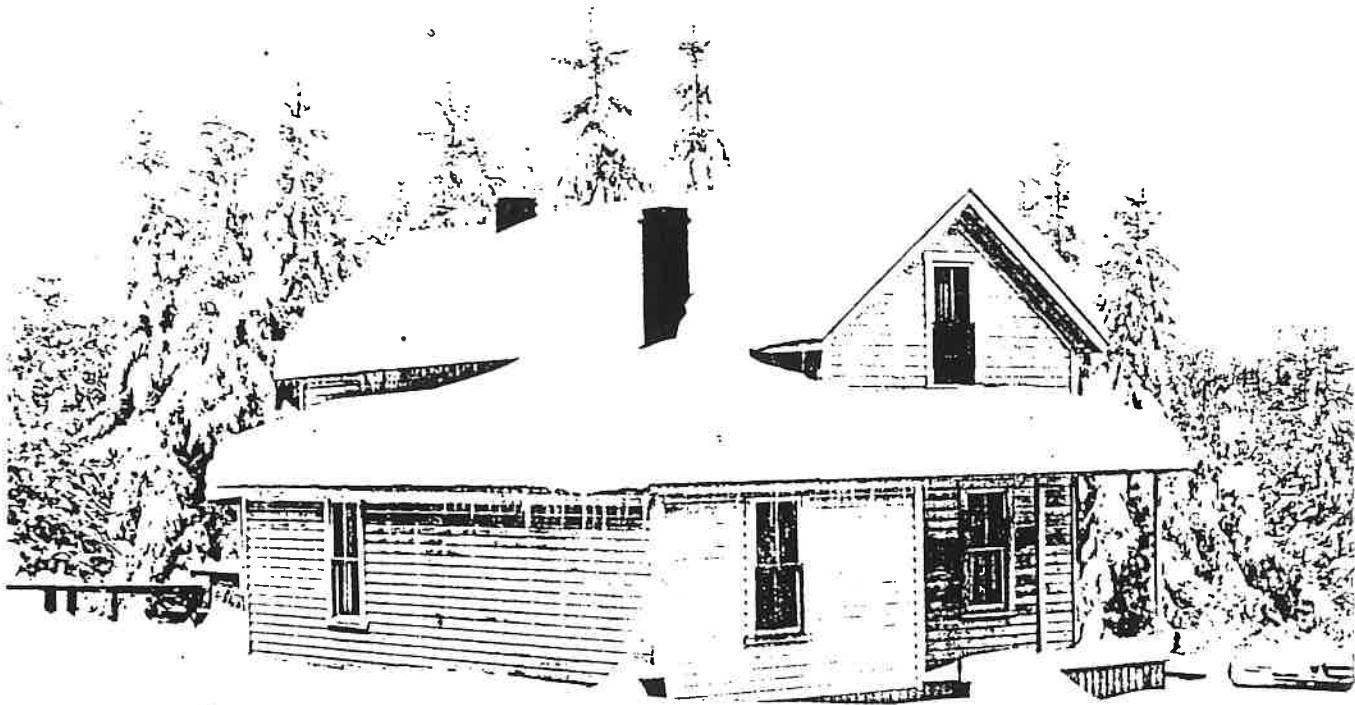
" " Parsonage 400

No other business the Board adjourned to meet at the Fourth Quarterly Conference to be held at the M. E. Church Aug. 20. - 1906.

A. P. Custer  
Sec.

## PARSONAGES

- 1892 Crescent Harbor Parsonage: In August, 1892, Rev. J. L. Parmeter was sent to Crescent Harbor Church and a parsonage was erected.
- 1894 Crescent Harbor Parsonage was moved and placed "In line with the church and an addition was built on.



- 1902 In September, 1902, the parsonage was again enlarged and a horse and buggy furnished to the pastor. The church was insured for \$1000, the parsonage for \$400. The premium was \$19, paid to the German American Insurance Co.
- 1942 Parsonage in Crescent Harbor sold  
House on 20th N. W. directly east, across the alley from the present church became Oak Harbor parsonage.
- 1959 Oak Harbor Parsonage-- to the present (built for \$18,000) Two city lots purchased on April 23, 1956 for \$2,950.

## TO BUILD A PARSONAGE

In 1953 the decision was made that our future Methodist families deserved a better parsonage than our church had been able to provide heretofore. In 1942 the old church at Crescent Harbor was sold to a nearby farmer, who used the lumber to provide necessary farm buildings. The parsonage still sits at its' original location on what is now Crescent Harbor road between Auvil and Torpedo roads. From that time on a house on 20th N. W., across the alley from the present church, was the parsonage , until the present parsonage was built.

Early the next year the Building Fund came into existence. It consisted of \$3224 in cash and pledges of \$7459. After considering whether to borrow the other \$8000 from the Board of Missions at 3% or to borrow it from the local bank at 5%, the decision was made to borrow locally. Heating, painting, and electrical equipment was not to be included in the contract.

The Official Board approached Mrs. Daisy Hill with the proposition to purchase her lot, 50' by 165', north of the church for a parsonage. Mrs.. Hill accepted the conditions of selling the lot for \$100 down, \$25 per month, with 5% interest. This was in 1955 when the decision was made to purchase this land for \$1500.

In 1958 Rev. Iwerks reported to the Official Board that the Trustees had selected Neil Koetje in charge of the Building Committee and Paul Cope in charge of the Finance Drive. A ceiling of \$18,000 to \$19,000 was set. At the end of that year Mr. Frank Keck reported for the Trustees that the parsonage should be a 2-story house with a part or full basement, 3 bedrooms, 2 and one half baths, reception room, picture windows, 2 fireplaces, and a garage.

The next year the old parsonage across the alley was sold for \$5000 with the privilege of using it and paying rent of \$70 per month until the new parsonage was completed. In the Spring of 1961 Rev. Cal Moore announced the parsonage debt was all paid and that a time should be set for the dedication, and that Bishop Palmer might be available.

From 1953--1961; from the idea to a completed and paid for parsonage!

## WHERE WE WORSHIPPED

1853 On April 25, 1853, Rev. Benjamin Close came over from Port Townsend in a rowboat to Ebey's Landing where he preached a sermon at the head of Penn's Cove, performed a marriage and held a Quarterly conference the following day. At this time Rev. Close baptized Mary West Wallace, the first child born on North Whidbey. A service was held in the Wallace home in Crescent Harbor.

1855 In 1855 William Wallace donated an acre of ground for a school house that was dedicated by Rev. Close.

1891 J. M. Izett sold an acre of land for \$100 to the Methodist Episcopal Church of Coupeville. A contract was entered into with LOVEJOY BROTHERS to build a church at Crescent Harbor at a total cost of \$1477.23. The building was completed and dedicated on June 7, 1891, by District Superintendent Rev. T. J. Massey. In the June 6, 1891 minutes, the cost of the church was broken down as follows:

Amount paid for material	\$820.57
Amount paid to carpenters	312.86
Amount paid for all other labor	314.80
Amount paid for freight bills	29.00

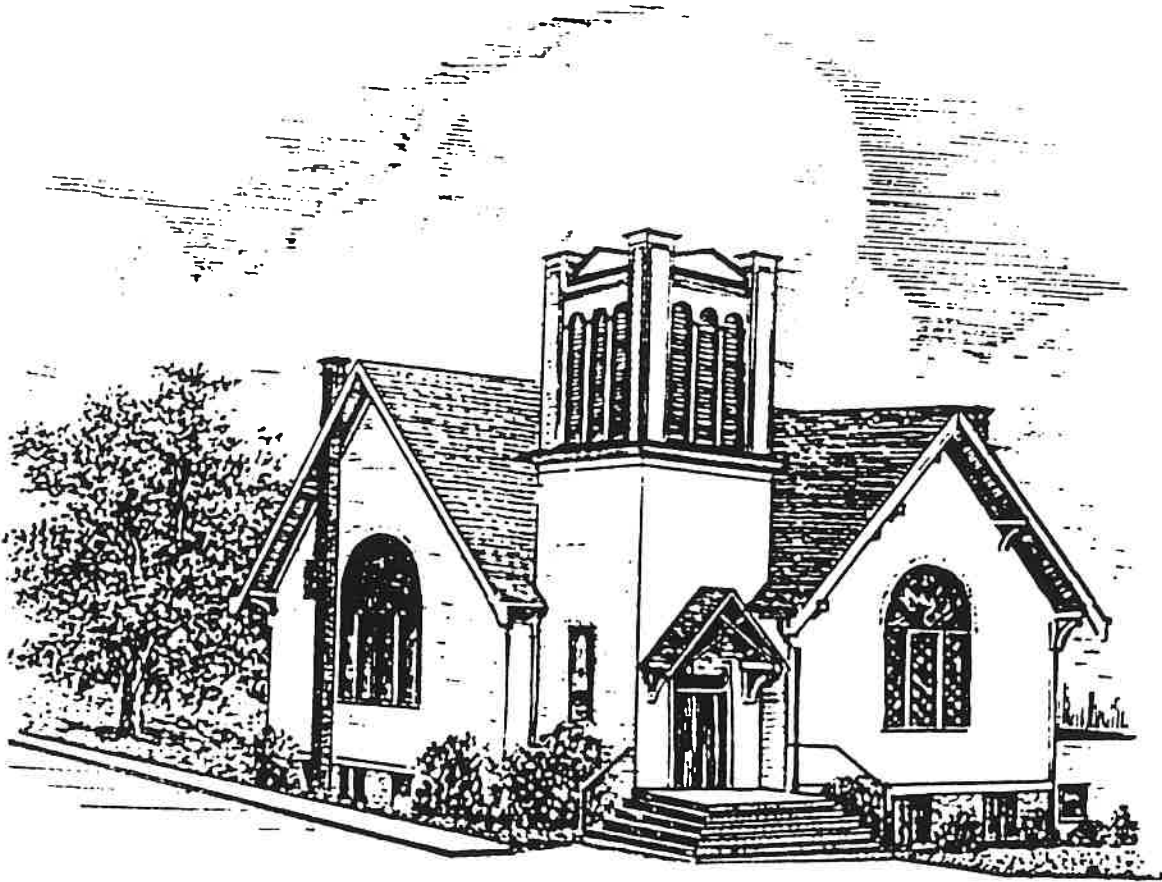
In the RECORD OF TRUSTEE MEETINGS, 1891:

"Within 90 days from date; we, the undersigned young people promise to pay to F. R. Morgan the sum set opposite our names. The same to be used in paying for a BELL for the Crescent Harbor M. E. Church."

Below this statement were listed 13 names, the young people pledging from \$2 to \$10 each, totalling \$64. (This is the same bell now ringing from our bell tower.)

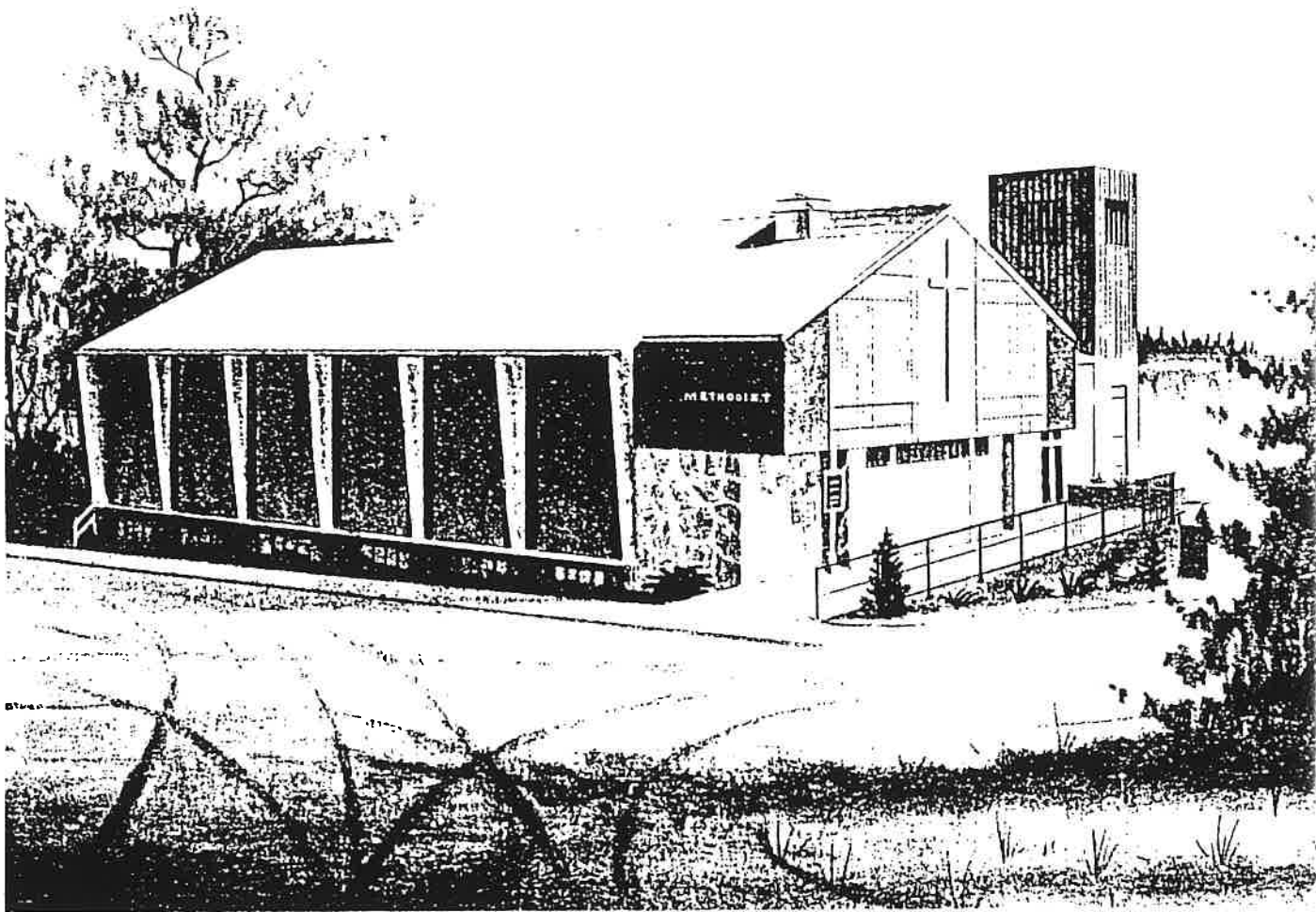


- 1909 Sept. 13, 1909, Rev. J. M. Hixon was sent to the Charge and began preaching regularly in the town of Oak Harbor, upstairs in L. P. Byrne's store.
- 1910 A second service was held each Sunday in the Crescent Harbor Church. LADIES AID HALL was built in Oak Harbor at a cost of \$1000.
- 1920 In September 1916, Rev. B. N. Galbraith was sent to Oak Harbor where a church was built. It was dedicated by Bishop William O. Sheppard on June 5, 1921. Cost: \$12,000

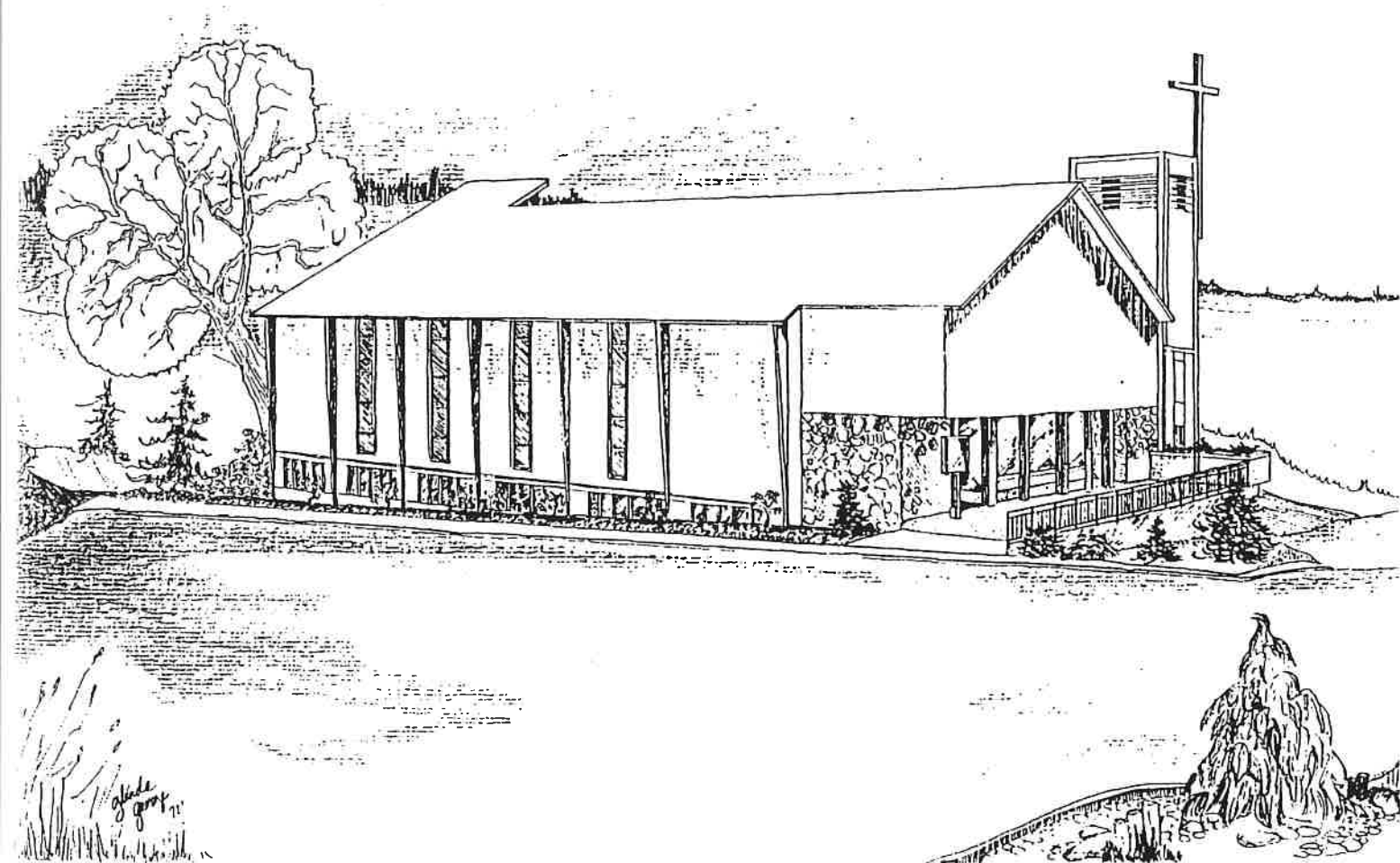


First Methodist Church ~ Oak Harbor, Washington

- 1966 Oak Harbor Junior High School -- during the building of a new church  
on the same site.
- 1967 New church complete on the foundation of the 1920 church, at a cost  
of \$153,000



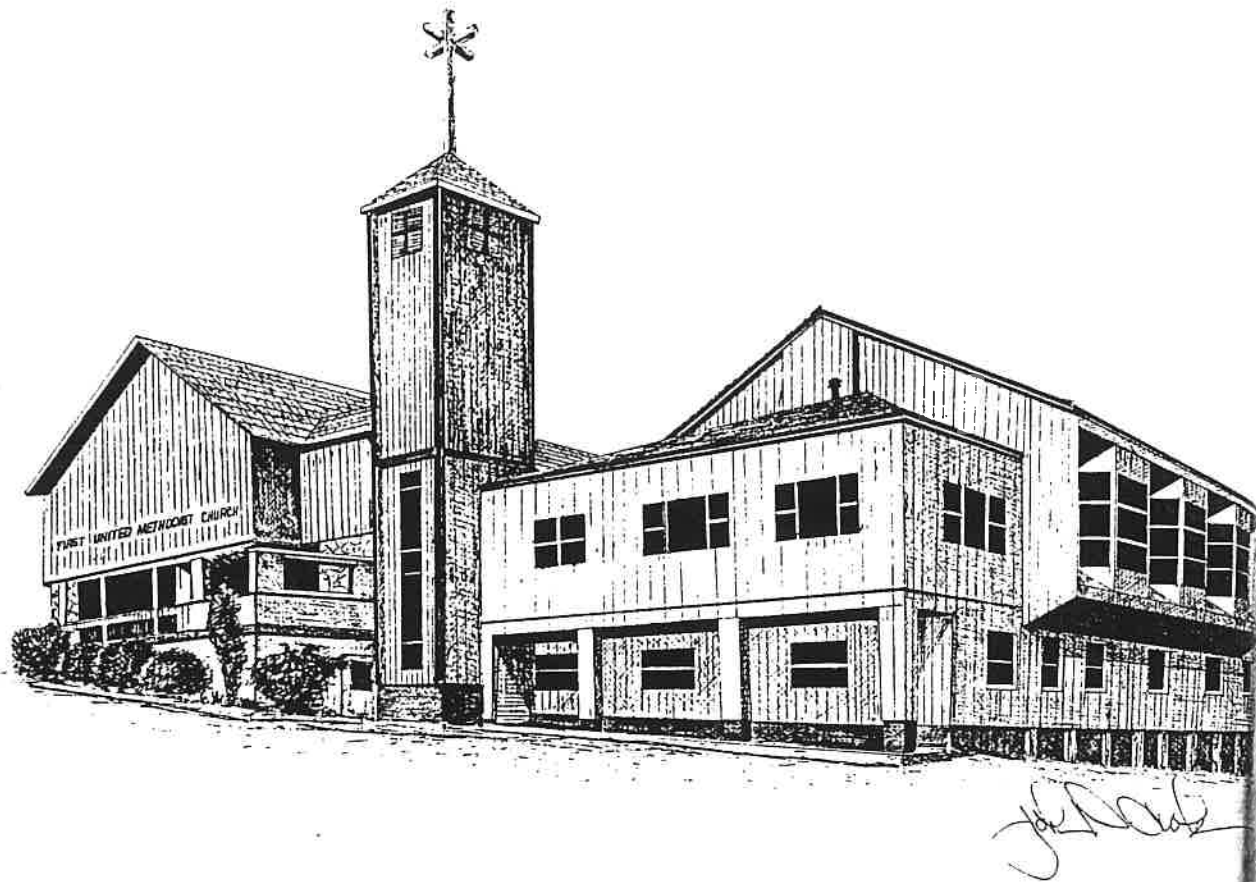
- 1971 Church destroyed by arson fire  
1971 Oak Harbor Junior High School (temporary, during rebuilding)  
1971 Oak Harbor Theater (temporary)  
1971 The rebuild First United Methodist Church --\$153,000 (Fully funded by insurance from fire)





1989

Major remodeling and additions \$437,400



## FIRST FAMILIES OF OAK HARBOR METHODISM

- BENNER, Hudson and Mina -- He worked on the construction of church and helped set the cornerstone, which is still in use.
- BORGMAN, Reint and Minnie (joined in 1927) -- He was a long time treasurer; daughter-in-law, Gudrun and her son, Donald, are members here.
- BOS, Nick and Grace
- BOWMER, Flora and Charles-- early owners and publishers of the local weekly, FARM BUREAU NEWS. Their son, Angus, established the famous Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, and devoted the rest of his life to it.
- BOYER, Myrtle and Jess (joined 1925) -- Their son, Don, is a member here; grand-daughters, Nikki, Karl, and Leslie are also members.
- BURRIER, Bertha -- With Bertha as chief organizer and head cook, the Methodist women cooked and served Rotary Club men for 15 years; mother of Dorothy Neil.
- CUSTER, Harrison (joined in 1919) -- He was the unofficial historian for the church. We owe him thanks for many facts, figures, dates, and incidents.
- CUSTER, Peter (P.P.) and Ada (joined in 1895)-- Peter was also a State legislator; Ada "died in the Lord" in 1904.
- DE VRIES, Menzo and Mabel
- ELY, JEROME-- Justice of the Peace in 1891
- FROSTAD, Henrietta and John Peter (joined in 1888) -- Untiring workers in the church. Mrs. Frostad was Secretary during the years 1905-1908 when the church was being organized along denominational lines.
- HILL, Daisy May and Harvey (joined 1930) --In September 1955, WSCS purchased from Mrs. Hill a 50' by 165' lot north of the church for a parsonage. It was purchased, \$1500, at \$100 down and \$25 permonth, at 5% interest.
- IZETT, William F. and Anna (joined 1888)
- IZETT, George --A trustee in 1903. He subscribed \$5 toward payment of the \$19 premium for insurance on Crescent Harbor church. Other trustees contributed and paid the premium in full.
- IZETT, John M. (joined in 1891) -- "Passed away 6 days after his wife; a pioneer and pillar in the church." His wife, Nancy (joined 1899) She "passed to her heavenly home", May 2, 1909. They gave an acre of land for the site of the Methodist Church in Crescent Harbor.
- JAMES, William and Florence Sweatman -- Very active over the 52 years of their marriage; Church trustee in 1902-1903.
- JUNGBLUTH, Verrelle (joined 1930)-- At 92 years of age she still attends regularly.
- LOVE, Jon and Mabel (joined 1927) -- Son visits this church on occasion
- MAYLOR, Alfred-- The trustees borrowed \$300, June 5, 1891, at 10% to retire a "church debt".

MAYLOR, Samuel -- In 1892 he presented the church with a silver Communion set at Christmas exercises.

MORGAN, F. R.

NESBIT, Thomas

OLDENBURG, Cressie and John (Joined 1920) -- Sons Al and Norm are members here.

POWERS, Grace and Edgar A. -- Their sons, Allan, Loren, and Stanley joined 1922. Parents moved to Port Townsend after the Navy took over the Clover Valley farm. Allan visits occasionally.

STREETER, Charlie and Mary (Joined in 1920) -- None of the family is left in the area.

STROOPS, Ann (Frostdad) and Henry C. (Joined in 1901) -- Parents of Hazel Koetje.

TESCH, Eric and Mildred -- Their son married the daughter of Norman and Jessie Watson.

VAN DYK, Dora and Albert -- Parents of Juanita Anderson.

VOGT, Elmer and Lucille

WADE, Earl and Hannah -- Children Pat Dann and Maxine Hansen are members here.

WALTER, Violet (Ernst) and Herman (Joined in 1920) -- Also Harry Walter and his sister, Hattie Walter Dyer. A nephew Ray Walter is a member of this church.

WATSON, Norman and Jessie (Joined in 1906) -- One son, Bernard, is a minister. Granddaughters Gail Jaeger and Shellah Case-Smith live in this area.

WEIDENBACH, Chris and Margreta (Joined 1923) -- Grandparents of member Juanita Anderson and Beverly Esterly Potter.

WEIDENBACH, Henry and Geneva (Joined 1923) -- Parents of the late Marge Davis.

WEIDENBACH, Ed and Eunice Boyer Weidenbach (Joined 1925, 1927) -- Parents of Beverly Esterly Potter.

WHEELER, Fred and Elvira -- Children Elizabeth Steinsiek and Robert are members of this church.

## REMEMBERING JESS AND MYRTLE

by  
Alice Case Jensen

The old timers in this church remember them well - Jess and Myrtle Boyer who served this church and community for many years.

Jess Boyer was born in Coupeville to devout Christian parents in 1894. He attended school there and worked on his parent's farm. He fought in World War I.

Myrtle Estergreen was born in Clear Brook, Washington in 1893, grew up in that area and upon graduation from high school enrolled in Bellingham Normal and became an elementary teacher. She had a job teaching at Friday Harbor and Jess Boyer's sister also taught there and one weekend Myrtle went to Coupeville to the Boyer home with Jess' sister. That was the beginning of their story of love. They were married in Myrtle's parent's home. They were denied a church wedding as the Estergreens were Lutherans and at that time a Lutheran could not get married in her church unless it was to another Lutheran.

Myrtle and Jess settled on a farm in Coupeville and attended the Coupeville Methodist Church. Two children, a boy and a girl, were born to them but both died. One at one month, the other at three months of age. The doctor advised them to have no more children. In 1922, Jess and Myrtle moved to Oak Harbor to a farm in Crescent Harbor where four healthy boys arrived to brighten their lives.

The 1929 depression took its toll on many farmers and a few years of hard times and struggles caused a foreclosure on the Boyer farm. They managed a house trade for the farm and Jess, Myrtle and sons moved to a home about 1/4 mile west of Oak Harbor, just off Highway 20 where Jess lived out his remaining years. He owned and managed a butcher shop in downtown Oak Harbor until poor health forced his retirement.

Jess Boyer was active in the community and was elected to the school board at a time when Methodists thought dancing was a sin. Due to his early training Jess agreed. Rev. Dann was appointed to the Oak Harbor Church and was modern, positive and broadminded in his approach and saw nothing wrong with dancing. So Jess and the church were in disagreement for several years. Myrtle and her sons continued to attend. He later joined them.

Jess was well known all over North Whidbey for the beautiful gladiolas that he grew as a hobby. He kept a lovely yard with many kinds and colors of lilacs. All his flowers were gladly shared with family and friends. He was also loyal and happy to work on the grounds of the church.

The four boys born to Jess and Myrtle were Jack, Larry (now deceased), Lane and Don. As the writer of this story looks back to her teenage years she has a fond memory of those four energetic little boys. Every school day and every Sunday the four children left home looking as though they had stepped out of the proverbial

band box. Each face was shiny clean, every hair was in place and all four were wearing a fresh, starched, ironed, white shirt. That meant that Myrtle washed and ironed 24 boys shirts a week plus six or more for her husband, Jess. I can still see their smiling faces as they attended church and Sunday School in the 1920's and '30's. Don recalls that his father saw to it that he, Don, and Lane sat next to him - one on each side. Jess kept an arm around each boy with his hand near an ear. Any misbehavior resulted in an "ear clip".

Jess and Myrtle Boyer were tireless, generous, and willing members of the early Oak Harbor Methodist Church. They always had time to help.

Myrtle taught Sunday School, was active in the women's groups, helped prepare the "Rotary Dinners" and rarely said no to any job she was asked to perform.

I am sure that I tried to pattern parts of my life after Myrtle's way of living. She was an inspiration to many. A fond memory is of her cinnamon rolls. She always wanted them to be special and would use extra sugar, butter and cinnamon to make them that way. If she were asked to take a potluck dish or bake for a bake sale, she would often take two items, rather than one.]

Myrtle went back to teaching after they lost their farm and the school district "bent the rules" so that she could continue to teach until age 70. Myrtle was an outstanding teacher - loved by her peers the students and the community.

Myrtle moved to an apartment in downtown Oak Harbor after her husband's death and that is where she lived out her remaining years. She and her little dog were a joy to the neighborhood.

When Myrtle's death was near she stayed in her apartment remaining alert and retaining her delightful sense of humor and still had a twinkle in her eye. Toward the end, either Don or Larry were with her 24 hours a day. Just before her death Noreen picked up Don to go home for a shower and Larry was with his mother. As Don left Myrtle said, "Don't be gone long, I might not be here when you get back!" The phone rang at Don's house 5 minutes later and Larry said, "Mom's gone." It was April 27, 1983.

Myrtle Estergreen Boyer loved her God, her family and her friends. She lived a strong faith and went by the golden rule. She believed in the two greatest commandments: "Have no other God before me" and "Love your neighbor as yourself."

## HARRISON MORTON CUSTER

March 3, 1889 - November 27, 1979

Harrison Morton Custer was a modern "patriarch" of the local Methodists. He was born March 3, 1889 on the Ebey Donation Claim west of Coupeville. He was the eldest son of P. P. and Ada Smith Custer.

After spending the first grade in the Coupeville school, he and his parents moved to a farm in Crescent Harbor, where he attended school through the 8th grade. In 1904 Harris enrolled for a 2 year term in Coupeville High School, then went with his father to Seattle, where he graduated from Broadway High School.

Harris' life with the Methodist Church began on Nov. 3, 1901, when he was received in the Crescent Harbor Methodist Church by Rev. M. C. Reed. He was transferred from "on probation", as was the custom of the time. In 1904 his mother, Ada, had "died in the Lord" as the records show. His father, Peter, and he transferred to Asbury Church in Seattle "by letter" on May 16, 1907.

Later, on October 26, 1919, he was received again into the Crescent Harbor Church by Rev. B. N. Galbraith. During World War I he was a private in the Army Engineers. After the war he farmed in Oregon for a number of years and returned to Oak Harbor in 1940, to live the rest of his life. He never married.

In Oak Harbor he was not only very active in his church but also was a member of the Odd Fellows, where he held all of the offices during his life. In addition he was a member of Rebekah Lodge, the Deer Lagoon Grange, the Democratic Party, and the American Legion. He served two terms as president of Maple Leaf Cemetery Association and was active in the organization for many more years. It was Harris who placed the flags on the graves of the veterans on Memorial Day.

His friends in the Rebekah Lodge gave him a memorable birthday party on his 90th! He spent the day enjoying his many friends and relatives.

The last few months of his 90 years were spent at Whidbey Manor Nursing Home, where he "died in the Lord," as he had lived. He became the unofficial historian after his return to Oak Harbor. Many of the facts, dates, names and figures that the church history has accumulated are because of Harris' attention to such details.

## WILL G. R. DANN

Pat and Chuck Dann of our congregation have 14 issues of a little 8 to 16 page monthly called THE FORWARD, printed in Hastings, England, S. E. London and selling for a few pence. Their earliest magazine is for May, 1903, when Chuck's father, Will, was an assistant editor. THE FORWARD published news, letters editorials, poems, short fiction pieces, announcements, and other things. All material was original and was contributed from the members of the Forward's Club, a Christian social club in Hastings. The Club contributed money to support a bed in a Mission Hospital, sponsored prayer meetings, and Bible classes, contributed to overseas missionaries, and helped and worked with the down-and-outs of London and southern England.

In the August, 1904, issue are several references to the fact that young Will Dann had left England and had arrived in Winnipeg, Canada. Among the later editions of THE FORWARD are several letters to the Club members describing the hard, cruel life in Manitoba where he settled. The editor wrote, 'So let us thank God for Dann, and pray that His richest blessing shall rest upon him.'

W. G. R. Dann attended college and seminary in Massachusetts, then moved West to become a member of the Pacific Northwest Conference in 1911. After serving several years in eastern Washington, Rev. Dann spent 1936-38 as the minister of our Methodist Church, where Pat and Chuck met. Additional years of pastorates in western Washington followed, Sequim being his last assignment.

During his years of retirement he served as a supply minister in many churches on the Olympic Peninsula. He died in 1966, having faithfully served the Methodist Church for 55 years, a gentle man who lived his religion every day of his life. Surely he lived the advice set forth in his short essay in THE FORWARD:

"Look at your life today find out what it ought to be, and bring it up to the highest level. Remember, we are to be copies of Christ, and people are reading us."

## HENRIETTA IZETT FROSTAD

by

Alice Case Jensen

All children called her "Aunt Hennie" and she is the one person in my early church life that I remember vividly. She was born in 1868 on a farm in Crescent Harbor, the child of Nancy and John Izett. Her church was her life. She married John Frostad when she was 30 years old. Her name often appears in early church record books. She was Sunday School superintendent and teacher, church organist (the pump kind), a church steward, Epworth League president, conference delegate, Ladies Aid officer and member. She was very active in the WCTU (Women's Christian Temperance Union) and I recall her forming the LTL (Loyal Temperance League) for children. We would meet at her home on Saturday afternoons for a temperance lesson and game playing in her spacious yard. We were taught to stomp on a cigarette butt and talk against alcohol. I religiously did both!

Mrs. Frostad was always stylishly dressed. She wore black taffeta dresses and big black hats with flowers on them. She had a pleasant expression and was almost always smiling. She baked cookies or made doughnuts every Saturday to hand out to all children the next day as they went home after Sunday School. She did this in both the Crescent Harbor Church and later in the 1920 white church in Oak Harbor. I don't recall when she quit doing this--probably when her health failed. She was in a wheelchair for several years and during this time she wrote a column for the Oak Harbor News called "The Wheel Chair Lady."

Aunt Hennie and husband, John, owned the most beautiful home in Crescent Harbor. How I loved to walk around it and see the luxurious furniture and walk on the colorful carpets, and go up the winding stairs to the second floor, where I could look out the windows at Crescent Harbor Bay and the farm land that surrounded it. When the Navy built the Seaplane Base, the land and buildings were taken over by the government. The home was made into apartments for officers and it was later moved and again remodeled. It still stands just east of Cemetery Road. It does not now resemble the mansion that I remember.

Henrietta Izett Frostad was a perfectionist in many ways. The Ladies Aid members would have a cleaning day every now and then. Mrs. Frostad would follow behind some of the ladies and re-do the work that they had just done. Aunt Hennie had no children of her own, but she and her husband adopted a little boy, Allen, whom she loved as her own. He died in his late teens; only her strong faith saw her through her grief.

Henrietta Izett Frostad died in 1953 at the age of 85. She is buried in a center lot of Maple Leaf Cemetery, a short distance from her birth place.



## THE PASSING OF WILLIAM AND FLORENCE JAMES

William James was an early member of the Crescent Harbor Methodist Church and a pioneer farmer on Whidbey Island, having come here in 1868 from England with the English Naval Service. He lived almost four score years, dying April 15, 1923. Services were held at the residence and conducted by Rev. B. N. Galbraith of the M. E. Church the deceased having been a member since 1898. In 1871 he "was married to Florence Sweatman and for 52 years they walked together in beautiful, devoted companionship." To them were born 13 children, ten still living at the time of his death.

"No man on North Whidbey was held in greater respect or more beloved for his consistent Christian character. His latchstring was always out to anyone who needed aid or sympathy; he was a loyal supporter of and believer in the Christian doctrine which he espoused. His good family is left with the memory of a noble character."

"In the case of Mr. James, words are inadequate to do justice to the splendid character, the uprightness, the kindness, the manly qualities and the desire to do good, which were possessed by our pioneer neighbor and friend, and this is the opinion of all with whom we have conversed on the subject."

An appropriate ending to the sermon was the poem:

"Servant of God, well done!  
Thy glorious warfare's past  
The battle's fought, the race is won,  
And thou art crowned at last"

"After five months of illness and suffering Mrs. William James was set free from further pain and distress last Sabbath morning. Tenderly cared for by loving children, she has been the recipient of all devotion that filial love could bestow upon her."

Florence Sweatman, like her husband, was born in England, the daughter of a pioneer Whidbey family until she married William James. "Mrs. James was a woman of fine Christian character. She was confirmed in the Church of England and had been connected with our local Methodist Church for 35 years. She was a true and loyal friend and a kind neighbor and she will be greatly missed in the walks of life by the many friends who loved and respected her."

Funeral services were observed in the local church on Tuesday afternoon, her pastor Rev. B. N. Galbraith conducting the service. After the last sad rites were held, her remains were laid at rest beside those of her beloved husband, who passed from earth six years before."

The preceding information was primarily drawn from the obituaries published in copies of ISLAND COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS.

## A TRIBUTE TO JESSIE GRACE WATSON

by

Alice Case Jensen

At the age of 95 Jessie Watson died. At the Mount Vernon Rest Home where she spent over a decade, the nurses lovingly referred to her as the "Little Bird" because in her bed lay a withered, broken body and mind. It almost seemed that one could pick her up and cradle her in one's hands. The final years she did not speak nor recognize her own children, but a spark of life remained until June 13, 1981, when her soul was released from the earthly remains in what her minister son referred to as a "day of ringing triumph for her."

But I want you to know the Jessie Watson that we old timers in Oak Harbor remember. She was the last born of thirteen children and when orphaned at an early age, a neighbor adopted her and her brother. She grew up in the Whatcom County area. She had a brilliant mind, was an excellent student, and graduated from Bellingham Normal when most women were not allowed a higher education. She married Norman Watson in 1906 in Lynden, Washington, and later moved to Oak Harbor, settling on a farm just east of the Blue Fox Theater. In the old days, the Watson Corner one room school stood just across the highway from their home. The house remains and is occupied. Jessie Watson was a strong leader and a devout old time Methodist who had the courage of her convictions. Black was black; white was white; and there was no gray, but she was loving and kind in all her dealings. I never heard her raise her voice in anger. She was an inspiration in our early day church and held every position at some time in her devoted service to the church. She was a lifetime member of the Official Board, served in every office of the Ladies Aid Society, and was a Sunday School teacher to both children and adults for over 40 years. She was the first Oak Harbor woman ever elected to the local school board and she was a dedicated member of the WCTU.

When Jessie Watson believed in a cause, she set a goal and worked untiringly to achieve that goal. I recall as a six-year old I walked to school in Oak Harbor because there were no school buses. In the early 1920's a bus system was started. The first ones were freight trucks used during the day to haul supplies, farm feed, produce, and cattle. Before time to pick up the students in the afternoon, benches were put into the truck; we would climb in and home we would go. Mrs. Watson thought we deserved something better and was instrumental in upgrading to a truck with a permanent homemade box on the back with nailed down benches along the sides.

When Verrelle Jungbluth, Myrtle Boyer, Lucille Vogt, Dora Van Dyk, and Ann Ducken were the young women of the church, Mrs. Watson guided the Ladies Aid Society, knowing which ones worked well together and where each one's talents were of most value. Hannah Wade, Minnie Borgman, Mary Case, Rena Case, Grace Bos, Elvira Wheeler, Mildred Tesch, Mabel Love, Anna Frostad, Belle Ducker, Cressie Oldenburg, Kate Vanderzicht, Anna Zett, Herietta Frostad, and Bertha Burrier were some of the workers in that long ago day.

Jessie Watson's life was truly one of complete service to others. Norman Watson died in his home in 1952 from cancer. Betty Freund was a young RN at that time and helped Jessie care for her husband in his final days. Betty has told me of the calmness, peace and assurance displayed by Mrs. Watson during this period of time. Betty learned an inspirational lesson through this experience that no college text book or hospital training course could teach her in learning to deal with death.

Mrs. Watson spent most of her time caring for the elderly, ill, and injured after her husband's death. I recall so vividly the terrible burns suffered by Edna Lang in the early 1950's which required months in the hospital. Shortly after the accident her husband, George, was killed on a hunting trip. Sandy and Sharon were seven and five years old at the time and Jessie Watson moved in the home and kept body and soul together for Edna and the girls.

Jessie's daughter Ena died a ravaging, lingering death from cancer also, and Jessie was there during all of those trying, hard last days of her oldest daughter's life. She gave care and love to Ena and stamina and courage to the family, especially to six year old Sheila.

Mrs. Watson was past eighty when she entered the rest home and was still alert and able to get about. She spent her days as an unpaid nurses aide - soothing, visiting, helping patients less fortunate. Her life was one of love and service to others - the list is endless.

This is the Jessie Watson that I remember. She was a grand lady, dedicated, calm, and strong, and sure that God was in his heaven and would give her strength for any task that was hers to do. She is part of our present church's heritage. Every church must have a beginning and a continuation. Because of lives like the one lived by Jessie Watson we have the church that we worship in today.

THE WEIDENBACH FAMILY  
by  
Juanita Van Dyk Anderson

Growing up Methodist in Oak Harbor, then Methodist Episcopal, now First United Methodist Church has been experienced by others. I would like to share it now with our newer church family.

My grandparents, Chris and Margreta Weidenbach, were members since the early 1920's and along with other good and faithful members gave interest-free loans to clear the church of building indebtedness. They and their sons, Ed and Henry, lived on their ranch at Weidenbach Beach, which is now under an Ault Field runway. Every Sunday the entire family would attend services. My family would attend and after church my grandparents ate Sunday dinner with us. How I enjoyed the walk from church to our home, through Smith Oak Tree Park--talking and listening to their feelings about "our" church and the sermons.

Uncle Ed sang in the church choir. His wife, Eunice Boyer Weidenbach, was active in Ladies Aid, later called WSCS, was the Sunday School Superintendent and was also a teacher. They were the parents of Beverly Esterly Potter. I can remember the events and social functions, as well as the polling place in the Ladies Aid Hall, which is still in use as housing across the street from the church. There were happy teas and dinners, song and hymn fests and skits and dramas.

I recall my Uncle Henry Weidenbach dressed as an opera diva, singing in a falsetto voice. My mother, Dora Van Dyk, baked pies and cookies, sewed for the Ladies Aid functions, and she was one of the faithful who cooked and served for the dinners the ladies prepared as money-raising projects. She taught a 3rd grade boy's Sunday School class. The sons of Grace and Nick Bos, Gordon and Glen; Charles Damon's boys, Joe and Jack, Al, George, and Fred Tesch, and Jack Hanby were some of the boys in her class.

Mr. and Mrs. Jake Nymeyer were Sunday School Superintendent and Kindergarten teachers, respectively. Mrs. Nymeyer was our teacher and she stressed missions, as they had daughters who served as missionaries. I remember being frightened--and grateful not to be Chinese--as she related to us the custom of destroying girl babies, for boys were preferred. She taught us a little song, "Jesus Bids Us Shine", and we had the privilege of holding a candle while singing the song!

Methodist babies were members of the Cradle Roll, administered by "Auntie" (Mrs. Fred) Wheeler. She always remembered our birthdays with cards, which I still treasure, along with my Cradle Roll Certificate. When she saw us, love pats and hugs were given generously. Her father, Grandpa Durward, is remembered for the peppermints from his pocket which he shared with us kids, lint and all.

Aunt Hennie (Henrietta Frostad), later known as the "Wheel Chair Lady" who she wrote a newsy column for the local paper, was one of our Sunday School teachers. She instructed us in Bible Study. For learning the Books of the Bible in order, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, as well as other chosen scriptures, we were rewarded with treasures from her home. My treasure was a lovely china plate. We looked forward to the Sunday School parties she gave us in her big, old home, giving us permission to explore its nooks and attics. Mrs. Cressie Oldenburg, mother of Al and Norm of our membership, was another of our Sunday School teachers remembered fondly for the summer picnics with her at Tesch's Beach (now Sunset Beach), where we played in the sand and tide pools.

Some of our classes were held behind green burlap-like curtains off the sanctuary. This meant the classes had to be orderly so as not to interfere with other classes. The scraping of chairs from the classes in the balcony above, and the tittering of captive scholars made teaching a class an ordeal at times, I'm sure.

I recall the Easter and Christmas programs when we spoke our "pieces". These were planned by the young adult women and directed by them. Maxine Wade, Alice Case, Harriett and Althea Van Dyk and others took the responsibility. I shall never forget the fright, trauma, and near nausea I experienced when my cousin Althea Van Dyk convinced me I could sing "Away In a Manger" all by myself for the Christmas program. I was about 8 or 9 years old. It must have been a horrible rendition, all breathless and "squeaky" strangely enough to the tune of "Flow Gently Sweet Afton". The only redeeming factor for me was the joy of wearing my new red Christmas sweater!

On our "Birthday Month Sunday" everyone, old and young, came to the front of the church. There we were presented with a miniature nosegay of flowers by P. P. Custer, who had grown the flowers in his garden. Then everyone sang "Blest Be the Tie That Binds". We had our moment of glory and returned to our seats. His son, Harris, perpetuated this pleasant custom.

The music of the church was lovely. The choir was seated in a choir section in the front, right corner of the church, facing the congregation, with the pump organ located immediately in front of the choir. Mrs. Packard, Mrs. Wheeler, Elizabeth Wheeler (Steinsiek) and Dell Wade Bryson were organists. Some of the choir members I recall were Charles Tesch, Helen Watson Tesch, Ed Weidenbach, George Hansen, Mildred Case Hall, Alice Case Jensen, Roy and Lorna Love, Harriett Van Dyk Oldenburg, Althea Van Dyk Galbraith, Les and Alan Galbraith, Irene DeVries Wanamaker, Ena Watson Case, Bernard Watson, and usually the minister's wife. A time or so a member would have to be aroused to sing their part. Early on,

Flo and Charles Bowmer sang duets with guitar accompaniment on special occasion. "Tone" Bos's solo of "The Holy City" impressed me. We enjoyed the lovely cello music of Mrs. Loys Watson when she and Loys came to visit his parents, Mr. and Mrs. N. E. Watson. Mrs Watson is remembered as the matriarch of the church and Ladies Aid and greatly respected and admired.

The financial report given by Reint Borgman was always accurate and accepted. I recall Mr. Will Izett, who would declare "Amen" if he agreed with the sermon. The ladies of the church canned and sewed for the Deaconess Children's Home in Everett and collected funds for the Jesse Lee Home for Boys in Alaska.

Growing up in the warm church family--too many names to mention all--and the feeling of belonging and being cared for has continued, going from the dear little church on the hill which my Uncle Otto Van Dyk contracted and built in 1920 to the beautiful modern facility we have now is an experience I would wish for everyone to have shared.

WITH LOVE FROM LITHUANIA

by

Caroline De Vries Williams

Mom (Mary De Vries) has told me many stories about the time in 1919 when she, a child of 12, came with her family to live on a farm near Oak Harbor. My grandparents, Alex and Annie Waitkus, both emigrated from Lithuania. Grandpa came to Springfield, Illinois in 1900 at the age of 20. Granny came a few years later. Here they married and lived in an ethnic community, still speaking their native tongue. Neither of them could read or write, but Grandpa proudly became an American citizen and took seriously the privilege of voting in the elections of this wonderful country he now called home. It always amazed me that, at the age of twenty, he could have said "good-bye" to his beloved mother and come to the new land, never to see her again.

Grandpa worked as a coal miner, a very hard job, so when the opportunity came to buy a farm Out West--sight unseen-- Grandpa and Granny gathered their three children and all their belongings and took the train to Seattle, moving to the small farm at the corner of Sleeper Road and Taylor Road here on Whidbey Island. How strange and different for those three kids--no streetcars, no corner grocery, and no movie theater now.

They had to walk over two miles to a country school where they were looked on with suspicion because they were new and they were Catholics. There was no Catholic Church in Oak Harbor in those days, so when Mom's Uncle Stanley became seriously ill and died, they had no support from their church family or relatives. But Mom always remembers the kindness of the Methodist pastor, Rev. Galbraith. He came to visit them and performed the burial service. Mom has always had a good feeling and affinity for the Methodist Church here. Even though she is still a Catholic, she comes with us often to Sunday morning worship. I have many more fine memories of the Methodist Church here from my childhood, but that is another story.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL REMINISCENCES

by  
Florence Powell

My husband, Cliff, and I first came to Oak Harbor in 1943. The next year our oldest child, Dale, was born; the following year Cliff joined the Navy. For about a year Dale and I went with Cliff where ever the Navy sent him, but in 1946 we returned to Oak Harbor to stay.

During the ensuing years Cliff and I had three more children, all of whom attended this church and Sunday School. Gary, our second son, graduated from the U of W and was attending the U of W Law School when he died of leukemia. Sally lives in Garfield, Washington, where she and her husband, Steve Bishop, are raising their three adopted sisters from Colombia, S. A. Sherry and her husband live in Puyallup, where Sherry is a Ceramic Engineer.

After returning to Oak Harbor my work in the Methodist Church began when I took Dale to Nursery Class. Soon Caroline Williams and I became their teachers. Our class met in a downstairs room where the kitchen and store room are now located.

When the first basement addition was in the planning stage, little cardboard churches were given to the Sunday School children. They were encouraged to put their pennies in the little churches as a contribution to the Building Fund. The men of the church remodeled the basement, the stairs, and several of the classrooms. We were so thankful for so much room!

At this time Alice Lang Jensen was Superintendent of the Primary Department. Each teacher had 10 or 15 children in her class, with up to 300 children coming to Sunday School. As the number of churches in Oak Harbor increased, quite naturally, a number of our Sunday School children left for the Sunday Schools in newly formed churches. A bit later, Helen Oldenburg and I taught the 3rd grade class, held in the new furnace room. Across the hall was the Nursery.

When Alice Jensen resigned I took over the job and held it for many years. During this time Evelyn Muzzall was the pianist for pre-class time assembly. From these years I still remember the little boys scrambling like monkeys up the posts that supported the roof.

Other memories: the time we met in the present Middle School while the new church was built; the new basement wing which again gave us lots of room for classrooms; the devastating feeling when the new church was burned. While the church was being rebuilt, we could still use the new Sunday School rooms, but our regular services were held in the local theater.

I next worked as Attendance Secretary for 6 years. Then, after 21 years of working in the Sunday School, I retired. The Women's Society has grown from an afternoon circle and an evening circle to an organization with seven such groups.

My memories are so many, I could never put them all down.



## THE GOOD TURN THAT FAILED

In February 1951 the local church was notified that the Displaced Person Family, which the Methodist congregation had volunteered to accept, would soon arrive. The church would provide them with whatever was necessary to help them become independent, contributing members of society. The Displaced Persons Family would consist of Mrs. Li, Chinese, and her daughter, Zoya, a Chinese-Russian girl, who would come from the Philippines via San Francisco.

In due time they arrived in Oak Harbor to begin a nearly two year period of Excedrin headaches for everyone who tried to help them. They complained about the apartment rented for them, so a small cabin was selected, but, then they decided to stay in the first one. They had great trouble working their stove, so Neil Koetje again and again showed them how to clean it, so it would work. Little success.

Zoya developed a bad skin eruption and was authorized to see a doctor. A collection was taken up to pay for her \$35 hospital bill. In the meantime, Mr. William Paul had taken care of the bill, so \$35 was on hand to use as needed. Other members donated firewood and other things they might use.

Rev. Iwerks volunteered to take an interpreter with him and try to show Zoya how to pick strawberries as she requested. With regularity they dreamed of returning to San Francisco, apparently believing that the church there would give them a rent free house and they would be provided with about any thing they might desire.

At the end of 1952 they went to Seattle, where Mrs. Li was working for Troy Laundry. It is the best guess that eventually they got back to San Francisco.

Thus came the end of an ignoble experiment, which proves that not everything works out for the best, regardless of good intentions.

## A CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

In the early 1930s the Oak Harbor Methodist Church's Program Committee decided that the big Christmas tree should be "old fashioned" with strings of cranberries and popcorn and twinkling REAL candles for lights. Christmas Eve finally arrived, accompanied by the herding and training of the children to enact the traditional Christmas story, the decoration of the church proper, and finally, the TREE! Popcorn, cranberries, old fashioned baubles, the star at the top! Then came the candles-- about two dozen. To be sure to guard against fire, 3 pails of water were in readiness, as well as a wet bundle of cloth on a long stick, that would reach the highest candle. It turned out to be an evening when most of the congregation sat on the edge of the pews with eyes glued to the tree rather than on the performers. The tree, the church, and the congregation all survived! Barely!

## REQUIEM FOR A LITTLE ORGAN

Some time in the long ago days of the Crescent Harbor Methodist Church there was a little pump organ that stood in the Sunday School room of the two room church. At this late time we know not from whom nor from where it came. Who built it? Was it purchased in Seattle and brought to Whidbey by boat? No one knows. It was used in the sanctuary until the church could afford a larger organ. In due time it was used in the Oak Harbor Sunday School.

As the years passed, time took its inevitable toll--scratches, checking of the varnish, scuffs, chipping, and a dulling of the once-bright finish. Dr. Bob Blackwood volunteered to refinish it; as it turned out, he refinished it not once, but twice. Using a new and presumably superior product, he completed the work, even to applying the last coat of varnish. Completely dissatisfied, he stripped off the finish again and redid it, using the "old stand-by" product and procedure that he had used so successfully many times before. The result this time was to his complete satisfaction.

In beauty and grace and dignity, the little organ rested in the Narthex of the 1966 church for several years, admired and loved by all who saw it. Then came the terrible arson fire of 1970. There in its allotted spot in the Narthex lay the little organ in a sea of ashes, its charred and mangled parts strewn on the black, soggy floor--its style and beauty destroyed. A piece of Centennial history, gone forever.

## QUILTS, QUILTS, QUILTS

For many years the Eleanor Warne Circle custom-quilted many "treasures" for the local owners of pieced quilts. From April 1973 to May 7, 1982 the ladies quilted 43 such "treasures". The charges varied from \$25 for tying a quilt to \$60 or \$75 for the usual quilting. One beautiful silk one was quilted for \$250. Over these years the ladies earned a total of over \$3000. Members of the Circle who did not quilt made the coffee, took part in the conversation, and provided moral support.

From year to year there was some change in those who did the work. Among the Circle members who quilted were Vera Larsen, Alice Bassett, Edith Cozine, Marian Duncan, Ethel Farnsworth, Dora Van Dyk, Loree Williams, Anna Ducken, Dicey Phillips, Anna Holm, Del Murhpy, and Thema Kellogg.

Some of the ladies whose creations were quilted are: Florence Powell, Betty Starr and her mother Carrie Holcomb, Edna Blackwood, Helen McNab, Connie Leonhardt, Marge Davis, Jean Northrup, and Dorothy Tennant. The proceeds from these ladies' work were generously presented to the Building Fund, which in 1989 enabled the church to complete the present beautiful structure.

## THE FIRST CHURCH ON WHIDBEY ISLAND

The first church building on Whidbey Island went up in 1860 at a cost of \$600, on the corner of Grove Terry's farm. The Rev. George Whitworth, later president of the State University, was the first pastor of this Presbyterian congregation. After Rev. Whitworth left at the end of the year, the building was used by the Methodists. It is told that a minister from Port Townsend, one Sunday, seeing Charles Terry in the back of the church whittling a stick as the preaching continued, amused the congregation by praying loudly for the "whittler that sits in the corner". Compared with those sermons given by the preachers of early New England these sermons were short, but there is no record of whittling under the eyes of the Puritan Divines.

## FIRST WHIDBEY PROTESTANT SERVICE

The first Protestant church services were held by the Rev. Benjamin Close (first circuit rider assigned to Port Townsend) and the Rev. William B. Morse (first minister assigned to Coupeville) at Isaac Ebey's home. It was a rainy Sunday, the 24th of April, 1853. Colonel and Mrs. Crockett, with all their boys, came over for morning services; then, in spite of the weather, all went to Coveland (at the head of Penn's Cove) for a service in the afternoon. The regular organization of the Methodist Church for Whidbey Island took place at the home of Dr. Lansdale in July, 1853. Dr. Lansdale is also given credit for naming Crescent Harbor. No building, however was put up until 1860. The first Sunday School was held at the home of Mrs. Thomas Coupe in 1854. Early church history is inexorably bound to our local geography: Ebey's Landing, Coupeville, Crockett Lake.

## A FINISHED QUOTATION

Edgar A. Power, a Trustee of the Oak Harbor Methodist Church, 1927-1928, was well-read and made a practice of memorizing selections of poetry and other writings that interested him. On one occasion, at a church youth meeting, members were asked to recite selections from their favorite authors. The pastor gave a quotation from Robert Ingersoll, the noted agnostic. In those days, Ingersoll was considered off-limits for a pastor. He apparently felt safe, however, as surely no one present would know the source of his quotation. As the pastor finished the partial quotation from Ingersoll, Edgar spoke up and completed it.

The pastor whirled around, looked shocked, and asked, "WHERE did you learn that?"

## A CERTAIN SUNDAY EVENING

Dar Smith (His father gave the little oak tree park to the town in 1910--official name, Smith Park) was the janitor of the Pool Hall, the Methodist Church, and the livery stable. One Sunday evening the Pool Hall was full of young unchurched males. Someone suggested that they all go out to Crescent Harbor to church services.

"Wonder what the preacher would think if we all walked in," one asked.

"He'd think the Pool Hall was closed," was the answer.

## HOSTESSES TO ROTARY

The waterfront restaurant was small; the membership of Rotary Club was increasing; and Bertha Burrier (Dorothy Neil's mother) had earned a reputation as a great cook. So, one day, the local banker, Chuck Rutherford, asked her whether the Methodist Ladies would prepare Friday noon meals for Rotary. They would. Mrs. Burrier was the chief organizer and head cook for 15 years--60c per meal. Some of the other ladies who helped were Cressie Oldenburg, Mrs. John Love, Jessie Watson, Rena Case, and Dora Van Dyk.

On a particular Friday Mrs. Burrier was ill, so she sent her daughter, Dorothy to substitute for her and prepare the noon meal for the Rotarians. About 10 a.m. when Dorothy got to the church--no one was there, no supplies, a cold wood stove no menu, no NOTHING! She tore down the hill to Boyer's Meat Market for quick and easy pork chops, shopped hastily for other necessities and rounded up helpers. Finally, the roaring old wood stove cooked the dinner for the 25 hungry Rotarians. Even Dorothy survived!

## TO THE CHURCH

One advantage of the "horse and buggy days" was that if the driver went to sleep, the horse could be depended on to turn out for passing vehicles, keep out of the ditch, avoid running into trees, and to continue on home.

On one occasion, John M. Power, Sr. fell asleep while returning from Oak Harbor to Crescent Harbor. When he awoke after a presumably satisfactory snooze, he found that the horse, instead of going home, had turned into the Methodist church yard and was busy making a meal of the church yard grass. His son claimed that the horse undoubtedly had religious leanings and was trying to indicate that this father should be in more regular attendance at church.

## ANTS, ANTS, ANTS

After long years of ants, ants, ants in the Crescent Harbor parsonage, Mrs. Galbraith, the Methodist minister's wife, could stand it no longer! Her complaints finally brought results, when people from the church rallied round to soak and strip layers and layers of old wallpaper from the walls. What did they find? According to Jessie Watson "buckets and buckets of ant eggs."

## WORLD WAR II USO

During World War II, when the first young men were stationed at NAS Whidbey, there was no USO in Oak Harbor. The Methodist Ladies, the USO official and the men of the church "created" a USO center in the basement of the 192 church. Furniture, supplies, food and hostesses were all part of the women's contribution toward providing Christian fellowship and "a home away from home" for NAS men and women. Many men and women from other denominations helped the Methodists in this endeavor.

## BROTHER MACK

BROTHER MACK, THE FRONTIER PREACHER is the autobiography/diary of Andrew Jackson McNemee, 1848-1936. He did not claim to be a great preacher. Rev. Harlan Jones says of him, "In some ways he was like Johnny Appleseed; instead of apple seeds for the hungry children along the trail he sowed hymn books, church steeples, sweet toned bells, halting sermons and temperance lecture." After his 33 years as a Methodist preacher and circuit-rider, primarily in western Washington and Oregon, he retired in 1912 to Langley, where he died in 1936. He is buried in Langley, Washington.

## REMEMBERING BROTHER MACK

Alice Hunziker Oldenburg of our congregation and her sister remember "Brother Mack" from their grade school days in Langley, Washington. He used to push a wheelbarrow full of apples by the school, where he would pass out the apples to the children. Then he would go on into town, buy his supplies and take them home in his wheelbarrow. She remembers him as a stooped little old man, head down, mumbling to himself, his hands clasped tightly behind him.

The children were a bit fearful of him although they knew he loved children. He encouraged the Sunday School children to memorize Bible verses and would give out prizes. Alice's little sister, a girl of about 10, received a book with hundreds of pages, tiny print, and no pictures. She would have dearly loved to have received the 25 cent prize, that he sometimes gave. Alice's grandfather, Ed Howard, helped "Brother Mack" build the Methodist Church in Langley. Fred Howard and Will Howard are also given thanks in his book for their part in the construction.

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    Facts, figures and other information preserved by Jessie Watson and Harris Custer  
    Minutes of Ladies' Aid Society (WSCS)  
    Bound volumes of early Membership and "Probationers", 1880s to 1940s  
Future Centennial Moments published in the Twin Flames have also been taken from the above mentioned references.

A special thanks to those who wrote their reminiscences of people or events relating to our church and consented to sign their by-lines. All other material was written, summarized, researched, photocopied or otherwise dug up by Evelyn Muzzall, Editor, if I am to have a title.



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## IN MEMORIAM

This publication is dedicated to all those who loved and served the Lord at the Churches called Methodist in and near the community of Oak Harbor for over 100 years. May they rest in peace.