

100th Anniversary

1889 - 1989



Wausaukee Presbyterian Church

Wausaukee, Wisconsin

The History Of The First Presbyterian Church

OF WAUSAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The First Presbyterian Church of Wausauke had its beginning with the local lumbering industry. With the coming of the Beech and Bishop Sawmill came people to work in it. As would be expected, they had need of various establishments, among them a church.

The glimmer became a gleam when a special meeting of Lake Superior Presbytery was called at Wausauke, Wisconsin, to consider a request from 39 people for the organization of a Presbyterian Church.

Reverend A.W. Bill, Menominee, Michigan, preached a sermon and was elected clerk pro tem. In his meticulously recorded minutes it appears that he also acted as moderator.

Some candidates for membership presented letters of dismissal and recommendation from other churches. Others presented themselves with a "view to union with the church upon profession of their faith."

Organization proceedings followed with the Presbytery reading the articles of faith and a covenant for those who wished to become members.

Lorenzo P. Grant was suggested to become an elder, but he had never been baptized. So Reverend Bill Baptized him; and he and David Edgerly were unanimously elected, ordained, then installed as the churches first ruling elders.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was next administered. Organization was now complete and Reverend Bill pronounced the First Presbyterian Church of Wausauke, Wisconsin, be duly constituted; and that it be entered upon the roll of churches in Lake Superior Presbytery.

Only two other session meetings are recorded for that first year -- one June 23, the other November 9, 1889. More people were taken into membership at each meeting.



Articles of incorporation dated November 11, 1889, signed by D.M. Noland, H.P. Bird, H.L. Bergstrom, H.D. Somerville and L.P. Grant were recorded in Marinette County Courthouse on November 20, 1889.

It seems that worship services were first held in the school house but construction of the "old" church must have begun immediately as session minutes for February 23, 1890, state the meeting was held in the church. No mention is made, however, of the actual building of the church.

No permanent pastor was installed until January 1900 when Reverend W.J. Lewis was elected to serve both Wausauke and Amberg in a "Yoked-field" capacity. Following were a Reverend Thompson and a Reverend Sherwin. All three served only briefly. But April 17, 1902, Reverend Charles P. Andrews was hired (at a salary of \$70.00 per month).

Amberg supplied \$20.00 of the \$70.00 paid Reverend Andrews for two services held the last Sunday of each month -- morning and evening. The minister agreed to pay \$5.00 per month rent for the manse and to hold services in Wausauke each Sunday morning and evening when not in Amberg.



Session minutes of January 16, 1895 report the purchase of a house and lot, "conveniently located" to be used as a parsonage. A membership of 29 with an absent list of 6 was shown at that time.

Early years session minutes are largely taken up with the screening of applicants for membership and a listing of those rightfully entitled to full communion.

RAPID GROWTH

The growth of the early church was rapid, with members being accepted nearly every Sunday. In 1904, 91 were entitled to full communion with a "Sabbath School" membership of 127. (Must have been lots of young folks in town).

In 1905 a member was called to answer certain reports circulating against her because of entanglement in some lawsuits. No guilt could be proved, the session urged her to be more careful in the future!

Reverend West had been well liked and was missed by the congregation. Guest ministers filled the pulpit until Reverend H. Lothian came to serve the church, March 30, 1914. He remained in Wausaukee until June, 1918.

Building a new church had been under discussion for quite a while. During Reverend Lothian's stay, a parcel of land on which to build a new church was donated by W.E. Hallenbeck, an elder of the church. At about the same time the Hallenbeck tract was accepted, a parcel of land was donated by the Monroe estate and accepted. This piece of land adjoined the church land on the north.

Plans for the new church began to get underway at this time.

In September 1918, the congregation voted to call Reverend Benjamin Freye to be installed as the next pastor of the church. He stayed as pastor until December 15, 1919. He resigned to accept a call from upper Michigan. This again left the church without a minister.

Few records were kept from 1919 to 1922, so little is known.

During January 1924, more land was

given to the church by the Monroe girls. Solicitations for cash donations for the building of the new church began. A committee was appointed to get estimates and plans for the new building.

In January, 1925, Reverend H.G. Vorshein was called to be pastor. He remained only until April, 1925. The present church building was dedicated September 20, 1925.

In December 1926, Reverend R.O. Moon was accepted as pastor. He was also pastor at Athelstane. He served the two churches until sometime in 1929.

Reverend H.C. Ramsey was pastor in 1928, but in April, 1930 he resigned because of ill health.

In April, 1930, a joint meeting was held with the church sessions from Amberg, Wausaukee, Athelstane and Pembine to consider the possibility of working together under the leadership of Reverend Earnest Trembley assisted by Miss M. Cool. The church sessions approved the action and Reverend Trembley was elected as pastor.

Even though it was Depression times, under the guidance of Reverend Trembley and Miss Cool the larger church parish grew.

Christian Endeavor, a young peoples' group was very active.

"GO TO CHURCH" CAMPAIGN

Easter service in April of 1935 was a great blessing to the community, as it was a culmination of a 13 week "Go to Church" campaign promoted by Pastor Trembley with the use of the press, being the **Independent**, and his forceful sermons, special music, and appropriate object lessons every Sunday.

Reverend Trembley also preached at the prison camp in Amberg.

In 1938 Reverend Trembley resigned and preached his farewell address from Acts 20:32.

The church remained without a pastor for several years. In 1939 Ralph Finn, a student pastor, filled the pulpit. During this time Dr. E. Bradfield was acting moderator from Presbytery.

In 1942 Reverend H.E. Turley became resident pastor.

In 1943 Reverend C.H. Haskins became pastor and served the parish well until 1947.

Necessary improvements were made on the manse for its new occupants. The Reverend R.E. Donaldson became pastor in September of 1947. Painting of the manse was done the following year, October 1948.

The "Young Peoples Society" was very active at this time as they had many activities they participated in, and had rallies once a month. This kept the young people very interested.

In the early 1950's attendance at the Wausaukee Presbyterian Church was about 45 per Sunday. At that time seven churches -- Crivitz, Loomis, Amberg, Middle Inlet, Wausaukee, Athelstane and Pembine -- worked as one with a total membership of about 328.

An old home a few blocks from the church served as the manse and it was in much need of repairs to the windows, doors, plumbing, wiring, and the outside paint was fast fading away. The church basement was also in poor condition. The furnace balked in cold weather, the plumbing leaked, the walls needed painting and the whole building required rewiring.

Funds were also needed to help send the young boys and girls of the parish to Bible Camps.

FUND RAISING

One means of raising this much-needed money was by various social sales the parish held each year, such as Irish Stews, bake sales, candy sales, Valentines Day suppers, broom sales, shampoo sales, card sales, the very popular Summer Ice Cream Social, White Elephant sales, and the once-a-year superb church supper and fall bazaar. This was the peak-of-the-year, money-raising event. It was also a great social bonanza, as people from all over the county and of all church denominations came to visit and enjoy the culinary arts of our church women.

The story is still told of one small event. It

seems that one of the church member's husband always came to the kitchen and asked the ladies to "be sure and save me a piece of (name withheld) Mrs. X's pie. Her pumpkin is out of this world, so sweet and creamy. I wish my wife could bake like that." Year after year this same event was repeated. Unknown to him, several years ago his wife had acquired the recipe from Mrs. X and baked pies exactly like hers but the husband would never acknowledge this. So one year the two ladies set up a conspiracy. When the husband came to the kitchen asking for his special piece of Mrs. X's pie he was told they had saved a whole pie for him. After eating it, the gentleman spent several minutes extolling the excellence of the pie to Mrs. X. The women listened quietly with little smiles of patience on their faces. When he finished, the remainder of the pie was handed to him to examine and find his wife's name taped to the bottom. About that time he recognized the tin, having only brought it in a few hours ago. He was informed, amid much laughter, he had just had a piece of his wife's pie. This was all taken good naturedly and the women of the church never had to save him a special piece of pie again.

That winter Reverend Ralph E. Donaldson passed away and Mrs. Donaldson offered the church her services to fill the pulpit for half of the pastor's salary until a new minister could be found. She would work with the two churches, and Reverend Bradfield, guest minister in residence, could serve the other churches. This offer was accepted.

GUEST MINISTERS

Before a new minister was found the church enjoyed the following guest ministers: Reverend Robert O'Neill, William O'Neill, George Griffith, Garth Gee, Howard Herman, O.L. Harley, John Kess, John Berg, Charles Berg, A.B. Pearson and Seminary students. They were all paid \$10.00 per Sunday.

In the course of time the old church organ, not always reliable, finally gave up. It was replaced with a new piano, donated by Mrs. Alma McNeeley. The new piano created a small stir in the congregation as members were accustomed to organ music all these years, but Mrs. McNeeley's clever fingers created such beautiful melodies she soon had the congregation singing in full voice.

Meanwhile, downstairs Shirley Wolfe was pianist for Sunday School and the two pianos often competed with each other, but the youthful voices of 40 to 60 enthusiastic singers was a delightful experience.

In September of 1950 the 25th Anniversary of the church building was celebrated, with Reverend Garth Gee overseeing the ceremonies. At this time the new Carillion Bells and records were purchased and installed. The afternoon of the dedication Vivian Finn and Mrs. Donaldson demonstrated the use of the bells and the town was filled with the mellow musical chime-songs.

REV. RUBESH WAS VERY ACTIVE

After almost two years without a minister, Reverend Leland Rubesh was called to serve Wausaukee, Amberg, Pembine and the Athelstane churches. Reverend Rubesh was young, active and a very involved minister -- a total extrovert.

He organized an Every-Member Canvas with the result that on one Sunday 35 new members were accepted and 23 were baptized. A Young Adults group was formed as well as a Westminster Fellowship group. His zeal encouraged many of the young people of the parish to attend Bible Camps such as Onaway, Galelee, and Lake Lundgren, where he also volunteered to be a counselor.

At this time also the young people of the parish would set up a huge, green, fresh Christmas Tree in the vestibule. Decorated and sparkling with hundreds of lights, it was a beautiful sight that was anticipated each Christmas season.

For many years, weather permitting, an Easter Sunrise service was held at 6:30 a.m. on the hill above the church. The hardy ladies of the church rose before the crack of dawn to prepare the coffee, set up the tables, organize the meal, and then rush up to the hill to join the other early worshippers in the fresh dawn air and sing "Hosanna to the Highest". Our voices were truly raised in joy and glory but our cold fingers and toes did not always agree.

As time passed and more money was saved, the church was given a face-lift. A new

well was installed, new plumbing, new lights donated and installed by Vern Carter, walls repainted, windows repaired and new hymn books added. New choir robes were donated by the First Presbyterian Church of Menominee.

Outdoors the retaining wall was redesigned, the lawn reshaped and the steps and railing repaired.

When this was all accomplished, thoughts returned to the old manse which was still in need of much repair. After lengthy discussion it was decided to construct a new manse or purchase an established home close to the church. So again church members rolled up their sleeves and went out to beg, borrow and earn money for the appropriated building. For three years they worked, with all monies channeled to the building fund.

NEW MANSE

In the spring of 1957 the church members felt they had enough equity earned to begin on the new manse. Soon the land adjacent to the church was astir with heavy bulldozers rolling back the sod and digging the basement, with eager workers pouring cement and pounding rafters, while the ever faithful ladies of the church appeased their hearty appetites with nourishing meals.

By fall the manse was completed and dedication ceremonies were held with all of the branch churches participating. What a proud and happy day that was. The first session meeting was held at the new manse in November, 1957.

A year later Reverend Rubesh announced his intent to leave the parish and transfer to a church in DePere. The congregation received this news with much regret.

Reverend David Rockerfeller replaced Reverend Rubesh in the pulpit but served only a few short years. When he left, no immediate replacement could be found so Reverend I.E. Bradfield conducted the church services with Reverend Pearson moderating the session meetings.

A few years later Reverend Wallace

Smith became the new minister and the church settled down to a slow smooth growth. In time Reverend Smith was replaced by Reverend Christian Land.

REV. LAND

Reverend Land's paramount thoughts were of the church and community. He never failed to visit the sick and elderly, at home or in the hospital. He could often be seen carrying large boxes of food to the needy and sometimes the not-so needy. His visits always included a box of goodies, which were most enjoyable. He was a sincere, dedicated man who worked with and was a vital part of many public committees.

The church progressed. Another piano was donated by Alva McNeely to compliment the organ music. The Norman Smith family carpeted the aisle and hallways of the church in memory of Norm's mother, Anna Smith. However, repairs to the church are never-ending, as one Sunday Mrs. Earl Cummings tore her dress on one of the splintered church pews. Nevertheless, much was accomplished, with the church an integral center of the community.

The year 1969 began on a positive note when Reverend Land, announced to the January congregational meeting that the mortgage had been paid. At the same time, Elva (Mrs. George) McNeely revealed a bequest she had made in her will of 250 shares of bank stock to be transferred to the church upon her death.

John Boshan erected the glass doors in back of the sanctuary to create a "Baby Room" in 1969. On July 5, 1970 the communion table was presented to us by Edna Wheelock, dedicated to the memory of her late husband Emory. In June 1971 the snowy-white cloth for the table was given to us by Mr. and Mrs. William Braker.

Robert Bastian was pressed into service in June, 1971, to supervise and build a new walk, steps and hand railings for the front of the church. The same year he was authorized to build the canopy over the front steps. In 1972 the outside bulletin board was presented to us by Ms. Charlotte Wheelock and Mr. Leroy Gilbertson in memory of the late Alice Wheelock.

In 1971 Vivian Wolfe first offered the gift of a large cross to be erected on the north wall of the sanctuary in memory of her late husband Alfred. In 1985 when renovation of the sanctuary was done the cross became a reality.

In 1974 the two beautiful religious pictures now gracing our sanctuary were presented to us by Theodore Haines in memory of his wife Hattie.

The exterior of the church was painted in 1975 and again in 1987 at the time of the Wausaukee Centennial. In 1978 Reverend Christian Land died after a lengthy illness. Reverend Land was instrumental in promoting mutual respect and understanding among different church factions during his some 11 years of service.

REV. O'NEILL AND REV. ERICKSON

From that time on Dr. William R. O'Neill, retired minister from Pembine, and Reverend Everett Erickson, retired minister from Menominee, Michigan, served our pulpit, preaching on alternate Sundays.

Reverend Peter F. Markey was called as pastor in 1981.

In 1984 the Ladies Auxiliary volunteered to pay for the renovation, repair and renewal of all the stained glass windows in the church. That included putting on storm windows and screening those not already screened. The work was handsomely accomplished.

Reverend Markey's pastorship ended June 26, 1984. From then until 1985 the pulpit was supplied by Northeastern Wisconsin ministers from the Winnebago Presbytery.

The manse needed substantial repairs. Professional help was called to paint, sand, stain and carpet. The remodeling was finished just in time to receive Reverend James Thomson, who we called as an interim pastor while a search committee undertook the task of finding a minister. Reverend Thomson's interimship extended from February 1985 through July, 1986.

While the committee read dossiers, we relied on Dr. O'Neill, other area ministers and lay people. Reverend Erickson's health had deteriorated so that he could no longer assist.

By this time our Memorial Fund accounts had accrued so that we could start renovation projects on the upstairs of the church. We trustfully put ourselves into a contractor's hands only to discover too late that this firm was not entirely reliable.

Norman Smith generously gave us a check for new lighting fixtures.

As we got further into 1985 we became aware of the need for a new roof for the manse. Paul Schroeder organized a huge roof-building by members and friends of the church. This was accomplished on a sunny, September Saturday when approximately 20 young men, including some of their teen-age sons, installed the new roof, complete with improved insulation. This fine ecumenical group was served a hearty noon luncheon in Fellowship Hall by the Ladies Auxiliary.

Eventually relations with the church renovation contractor broke off completely and the men of the congregation completed renovating the sanctuary. Many hours were spent by many people, but when finally finished the sanctuary was beautiful. Restful wall hangings, new mauve carpeting, all pews

repaired, refinished and polished make the sanctuary a delightful haven of peace and rest. It is a pleasureable place to worship.

Dr. Reagan P. Gibbs was called as pastor in May 1987 and left in 1989.

A new furnace was purchased in 1986. Early in 1987 the kitchen was remodeled and an additional sink with garbage disposal unit installed.

In 1989 the basement Sunday School room was repaired and renovated. New ceiling lights were installed.

It seems only fitting that all this hard work by the many dedicated friends and members of the church have us in "Tip-Top" shape for our centennial celebration. We pray that the next 100 years will be as successful as the first 100 years.

HISTORIANS
 Pauline Boshan
 Helen Rollo
 Amelia Schroeder
 Lola Thompson
 Betty Wetzel



PRESENT CHURCH OFFICERS

Session:

Eleanor Schleuter — Clerk
 Dean Bork
 Linda Hogan
 Helene Mabry
 Norman Smith
 Alfred Thiel

Treasurer:

Betty Wetzel

Presbyterian Women:

Helene Mabry — President
 Martha Schroeder — Vice President
 Eleanor Schleuter — Secretary
 Goldie Walton — Treasurer

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Martha Schroeder, Chairman
 Paul Schroeder, Vice Chairman
 Caryl Schmitz, Secretary
 Pauline Boshan
 Lola Thompson
 Betty Wetzel
 Dean Bork
 Rev. Reagan Gibbs

EARLY MODERATORS

Rev. A. W. Bill	1889	Rev. W. J. Lewis	1900
Rev. Reuben Smith	1890	Rev. Thompson	1901
Rev. Hartwell	1893	Rev. L. C. Smith	1901
Rev. T. S. Anderson	1898	Rev. Sherwin	1902

PASTORS

Rev. Charles P. Andrews	1902 - 1905
Rev. J. S. McGreaham	1905 - 1909
Rev. Donald S. West	1909 - 1913
Rev. H. Lothian	1914 - 1918
Rev. Benjamin Freye	1918 - 1919
Rev. E. E. Andrus	1920 - 1921
Rev. A. E. Roberts	1921 - 1921
Rev. B. C. Stuart	1922 - 1924
Rev. H. George Vorsheim	1925 - 1926
Rev. R. O. Moon	1926 - 1928
Rev. C. Ramsay	1929 - 1930
Rev. Ernest Tremblay	1930 - 1938
Rev. Ralph Finn	1939 - 1941
Rev. H. E. Turley	1941 - 1943
Rev. C. E. Haskins	1943 - 1946
Rev. R. E. Donaldson	1947 - 1950
Rev. Leland G. Rubesh	1952 - 1958
Rev. David Rockefeller	1958 - 1960
Rev. Wallace L. Smith	1961 -
Rev. Christian Land	1965 - 1978
Rev. Peter Markey	1981 - 1984
Rev. James Thomson	1985 - 1986
Rev. Reagan Gibbs	1987 - 1989

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1989

Wausauke, Wisconsin

Our Church Family: Members and Friends

Anderson, Carl
Anderson, Virginia
Anderson, Jon
Anderson, Lori
Arndt, Melody
Arndt, Richard
Arndt, Dustin
Arndt, Matthew

Bastian, Robert
Bastian, Pat
Birr, Earl
Birr, Geraldine
Birr, Leonard
Bomback, Irene
Bork, Dean
Bork, Susan
Bork, Jill
Bork, Ann
Boshan, John
Boshan, Pauline
Boshan, Louis
Blum, Kerrie
Blum, John

Camlek, Linda
Carpenter, Jill
Carpenter, Colin
Carpenter, Brad
Carpenter, Cory
Cherry, William
Cherry, Rita
Cherry, Roberta
Christ, Diane
Christ, John
Christ, Michelle
Christ, Chad
Collier, David
Collier, Joyce

Collier, Evelyn
Collier, David, Jr.
Collier, D. Scott

Ecklund, Esther
Eichinger, Robert
Eichinger, Jeanne
Elias, Kyla
Elias, Paul
Ethington, Max

Feller, Ora
Feller, Freida
Fessler, Wayne
Fessler, Georgia
Fessler, Eric
Fugate, Paulette
Fugate, Gordon
Fugate, Michelle

Gayette, Merri
Gayette, Misty

Haines, Theodore J.
Hogan, Linda
Hogan, Martin
Hogan, Adam
Hummel, Patricia
Hussong, Audrey

Johanning, Conrad
Johanning, Kathy
Johanning, Kristine
Johnson, Lorene

Kaiko, Peter
Kaiko, Nancy
Kaiko, Vicki
Kaiko, Nancy Ann
Kaiko, Debra
Kaiko, P. Michael

Kempinski, George
Kempinski, Sandra
Kempinski, Julie
Kempinski, George, Jr.
Kempinski, Kathleen
Knox, Jacqualine
Knox, Heidi

Lund, Peter
Lux, Stacy
Lux, John
Lux, William

Mabry, Helene
Manowski, Tammy
Maye, Albert
Maye, Marie
Maye, Tyann
McCormick, Vivian
McNabow, Heather
Mielke, Alice

Naud, Frederick
Naud, Ferlin
Naud, Lila
Nelezen, Roxanne
Nelezen, Cory
Ninnemann, Sharon
Ninnemann, Peter
Ninnemann, Janel
Ninnemann, Michael
Ninnemann, Kari
Nutt, Diane
Nutt, Dale, Sr.
Nutt, Dale, Jr.
Nutt, Angela

O'Brien, Suzen

Penry, Elinore
Phillips, Barbara

Phillips, Alexander
Pociask, Alex
Pociask, Viola
Proctor, Verna
Proctor, Sam
Proctor, Devon
Provost, Gladys

Radtke, Hilbert
Radtke, Lyla
Radtke, Hilbert III
Radtke, Jeffery
Rathberger, Evelyn
Rollo, Edward
Rollo, Catherine
Rollo, Cory
Rollo, Matthew
Rollo, Helen
Rugg, Barbara
Rugg, Jesse
Rugg, Jeremiak
Russ, Barbara
Russ, Michael
Russ, Grant
Russ, Stuart

Schlies, JoAnn
Schlies, David
Schlies, DeAnna
Schlies, James
Schlies, Suzan
Schlies, William
Schlies, Jennifer
Schlies, William, Jr.
Schleuter, Othilia
Schleuter, Eleanor
Schmidt, Fay
Schmitz, Caryl
Schmitz, Robert
Schroeder, Carl Jr.

Schroeder, Amelia
Schroeder, Carl III
Schroeder, Judy
Schroeder, Laura
Schroeder, Greg
Schroeder, Orville
Schroeder, Paul
Schroeder, Ruth
Schroeder, Sarah
Schroeder, David T.
Schroeder, Jonathan
Schroeder, Vernon
Schroeder, Martha
Schroeder, Vernon, Jr.
Schroeder, Michael
Schroeder, David J.
Schroeder, Jill
Schroeder, Kristy
Schroeder, Mindy
Schwartz, Annette
Schwartz, Jon
Simpson, Kenneth
Simpson, Joellen
Slattery, Gerald
Slattery, Nancy
Slattery, Matthew
Slattery, Lindy
Smith, Norman
Smith, Mildred
Smith, Gary
Smith, Richard
Smith, Rhonda
Smith, Resziray

Ten Bruin, Arlene
Thiel, Alfred
Thiel, Ruth
Thompson, Viola
Tice, Anna

Tracy, LaVon
Tracy, John

VanCaster, Sandra
Vertz, Margaret
Vertz, George
Vertz, Sherry
Vertz, Timothy
Vertz, Amanda
Vertz, David
Vertz, Mary
Vertz, Kerry
Vertz, Tina
Vertz, D. Joseph
Vertz, Stanley
Vertz, Vernon
Vertz, Julie

Walton, Goldie
Walton, James
Walton, Douglas
Walton, Patricia
Walton, Penny
Walton, Debbie
Walton, Rodney
Wentzel, Harold
Wentzel, Carol
Wentzel, Jennifer
Wentzel, Andrew
Wentzel, Johanna
Westcott, Debbie
Westcott, Russell
Westcott, Danielle
Wetzel, Elizabeth
Whitton, Cheryl
Whitton, Dennis
Wolfe, Iva

Zak, Marian