

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

History of Bedford United Methodist Church

by
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HISTORY OF THE BEDFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

John Wesley of England was the "father of Methodism." His doctrine of "Christian Perfection" was solid rock, firm enough to hold all the building material of our faith. In 1771 he sent Francis Asbury to our shores. He was destined to become the "Father of Methodism in America." He landed in Philadelphia in 1771 and, in 1774, the Methodist Church was organized. By 1816 there were 100 preachers and a membership of 200,000. His was a traveling ministry on horse back, and those preachers were called Circuit Riders.

In his time, he traveled 265,000 miles and preached 16,000 times. He arrived in Lexington, Kentucky, on May 12, 1790, and held the first Methodist Conference in Kentucky. He was made a Superintendent--the same as Bishop today--and rode horseback almost more than any other man known.

The Circuit Riders had a hard life, maybe riding fifty or sixty miles to preach three times a day. He was away from home sometimes for weeks, and if he did not have any place to stay, he would sleep in a barn, a shed, a corn field, or under a tree. Their lives were so strenuous, the average life of a Circuit Rider was seven years. We owe so much for our heritage.

History of Methodism 1783-1985:

- 1783 First Society of Methodism organized
- 1784 Christmas Conference, Baltimore, Maryland, Methodists organized as church
- 1786 Two Missionaries sent to Kentucky by Bishop Francis Asbury
- 1790 First Annual Conference held at Masterson's Station, out of Lexington
- 1819 The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was organized

- 1820 Kentucky Conference organized
- 1831 First Missionary group organized in the Kentucky Conference
- 1845 Kentucky Conference membership 52,064
- 1871 Methodist Home Chartered
- 1878 Woman's Foreign Missionary organized at Shelbyville, the first in the Conference
- 1924 Good Samaritan Hospital acquired
- 1939 Unification of three branches of Methodism, Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Church, and Methodist Protestant
- 1943 Kentucky Mountain Missions started at Jackson, Kentucky, Rev. John Lewis, Superintendent
- 1968 Uniting Conference, bringing together the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, thus forming the United Methodist Church
- 1984 Bi-Centennial Annual Conference, Richmond, Kentucky, marking 200th year of Methodism
- 1985 Methodists starting on their third century

Ministers that served Bethel and Bedford Churches from 1872 to 1987:

B. F. Sedwick. . . . .	.1872-1874	J. E. Roberts, . . . . .	.1925-1928
J. H. Young. . . . .	.1874-1875	J. B. Hahn . . . . .	.1928-1931
J. E. Minor. . . . .	.1875-1879	C. E. Dearing. . . . .	.1931-1935
W. N. Quisenbury . . . . .	.1879-1881	C. P. Pilow. . . . .	.1935-1940
S. S. Lee. . . . .	.1881-1882	W. W. Williams . . . . .	.1940-1945
D. E. Marrison . . . . .	.1882-1884	A. K. Farmer . . . . .	.1945-1948
E. B. Head . . . . .	.1884-1886	O. S. Gardner. . . . .	.1948-1951
Wm. Shoemith. . . . .	.1886-1888	L. A. Garriott . . . . .	.1951-1955
W. H. Winter . . . . .	.1888-1890	C. C. Newsome. . . . .	.1955-1958
W. H. Ditzler. . . . .	.1890-1893	George Miller. . . . .	.1958-1960
G. W. Crutchfield. . . . .	.1893-1897	J. W. Parish . . . . .	.1960-1961
C. J. Nugent . . . . .	.1897-1899	H. R. Jones. . . . .	.1961-1966
W. F. Wyatt. . . . .	.1899-1904	R. W. McCloud. . . . .	.1966-1967
R. R. Baird. . . . .	.1904-1906	O. S. Gardner. . . . .	.1967-1970
S. H. Pollitt. . . . .	.1906-1909	C. E. Barnes . . . . .	.1970-1971
G. W. Boswell. . . . .	.1909-1911	D. L. Alther . . . . .	.1971-1974
J. E. Wright . . . . .	.1911-1915	R. H. Finch. . . . .	.1974-1978
Edward Allen . . . . .	.1915-1918	Kent Sullivan. . . . .	.1978-1981
R. M. Lee. . . . .	.1918-1919	David Paul . . . . .	.1981-1983
J. S. Ragan. . . . .	.1919-1920	William Pearson. . . . .	.1983-1986
E. W. Ishmael. . . . .	.1920-1925	Robert C. Royal. . . . .	.1986-Present

The United Methodist Church was erected in 1888 and held many wonderful services and revivals and enough preaching to save the whole country, but there is still a large field in our care. The Church building located at the end of Church Street was sold to the Church of God in 1985. The building held many memories, joyful and sad. It was a beautiful church with memorial windows. It was the site of many weddings, wedding anniversaries, funerals, etc. The Methodist Church built a lovely church on Fairview Lane.

In 1838, just two years after Trimble County was established from parts of Henry, Oldham, and Gallatin Counties, and Bedford was made the county seat, the people called Methodists wanted a church for their children and themselves in the new county seat. Dr. Wesley J. Wright, the town's only physician, presented the trustees, namely: Jack Ryan, George Wright, Robert McIntosh, Archibald Bain and Coleman Perkinson, with a tract of land on the northwest corner of a five-acre lot he had purchased in Bedford, to erect a "meeting house," as it was then called.

This was more than 142 years ago and Bedford consisted of a courthouse, a tan-yard, a flour mill, a shoe-maker's shop, one or two general stores, and a few dwellings. It is said that in those days there were no front porches as there are today, the people being too modest to sit out. Instead, most of the dwellings had walled gardens in back where they relaxed outdoors and enjoyed gardening. In due time, the brick building was erected on the lot where Mrs. Louise Melvin's home now stands.

In 1884 while Rev. E. B. Head was pastor of the Bedford Circuit, Bedford, Hickory Grove, and Union Grove were together and shared the same minister, he serving all four churches. If a member of the church missed a time or two, the leaders of the church would visit them to learn the trouble, watching over the flock.

The early Methodist Camp Meeting movement of the 1800s made a tremendous impact on America. In 1888, the Conference sent Rev. W. H. Winter with a vision of a new church. John W. Lee, who was afterward County Judge and Superintendent of the Methodist Sunday School for 35 years, and his wife, Sally Lee, offered a tract of land adjoining the church lot on the south, 107 feet long and 64 feet wide, for the church. This offer was accepted by the trustees. The present building was erected by Van R. Mullikin for the consideration of \$1,300. Mr. L. G. Peak, Mr. John Gatewood and Dr. W. P. Bell, then quite a young man, furnished part of the labor.

The picture of the Methodist Church parsonage (on the following page) was taken in 1909 and is treasured by many of us who lived there. It holds many memories; many changes were made later.

For many years, we have had a good Missionary Society, studying the needs at home and around the world, helping many mission fields, schools, children's homes. This society has been a strong arm of the church. Every member has been made a "life member." The Kentucky Conference supports mission fields and missionaries all over the world.

In earlier history, written by Mrs. W. D. Pierce, she wrote that in 1951 Rev. L. A. Garriott organized the Methodist Youth Fellowship, made up of Seniors and Intermediates. There were 48 enrolled, and he and Mrs. Garriott worked with them every Sunday evening before Worship Service. Three were called to full-time Christian Service from this group: Bobby Jackson, who became a minister in the Indiana Conference and at one time was District Superintendent; Graham Abbott entered the ministry, at this time, he is District Superintendent of the Danville District; and Susan Cutshaw went as full-time Christian Education and Church Activities Leader, now in the Virginia Conference. "It pays to work with youth."

When the Trimble County Court House burned on March 5, 1952, the Methodist Church let them have their meetings in the church. Some years before, when we were remodeling our church, they let us use the court house for Sunday School. We appreciated and they appreciated. "That's being good neighbors." Rev. L. A. Garriott was pastor of the church then.

In 1984 Methodism celebrated its "Bi-Centennial," 200th year of Methodism, with programs and pageantry over the nation and around the world, trying to show our love and appreciation to those who have blazed the trail and for our heritage.

In 1985 the Bedford United Methodist Church was sold to the Church of God as we were building a new Methodist Church on the lots purchased earlier, on Fairview Lane, next to the parsonage that was built in 1961. The first service held in the new church was October 27, 1985, with Rev. William Pearson as our minister. Open House was held November 24, 1985. Then Consecration Service was held January 19, 1986, with Bishop Paul Duffey and wife, Louisville, and

The picture which is supposed to have been here
was not present on the Kentucky Historical
Society's copy (my source) of this document.

Bedford Methodist Parsonage - nearly 100 years ago, located on the corner across from the Bedford Post Office. Rev. G. W. Boswell and family are pictured. He served the Methodist Church 1909-1911. The lot for the parsonage was given by Jack Strother's grandfather, a relative of Mrs. Helen S. Morgan, Carrollton. In 1961 a new Methodist parsonage was built on Highway 421 across from the Cooper Clinic. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Haney bought the old parsonage and are remodeling and making a beautiful home to enjoy before long. This picture taken in 1909 was furnished by Mrs. Vera Garriott and found in her mother's collection and will be appreciated by many far and near.

Rev. Walter Arnold and wife, District Superintendent, Frankfort, with Rev. William Pearson, Pastor. Rev. Graham Abbott, Danville, was also with us for this special occasion, as he was a home boy coming back home.

Dedication Service will be a little later, as we have to be free of debt, and we're coming along well, but little more to go. We hope to clear the debt completely soon and go forth, working full force to win souls, as that is our mission.

The 1986 Annual Conference was held in June at Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky. Rev. William Pearson, who had been pastor of the Bedford Church for three years and had done a good work, was moved to Ferguson, Kentucky,