

**Historial Sketch** *(from the Greene Street Methodist Episcopal Church 75th Anniversary 1837-1912 and 105th Anniversary of Piqua Methodism Souvenir Manual)*

On this, the first day of December 1912, we are celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the dedication of Greene Street Methodist Episcopal Church, and at the same time are celebrating the Centennial of Piqua Methodism, or more strictly speaking, the one-hundred - and - fifth year since Methodist was founded here.

The founder of Ohio Methodism was Francis McCormick. He crossed the Ohio River from Kentucky and came to a spot near Milford, Ohio and there organized the first Methodist class in Ohio in 1797. John Kobler joined him in 1798 and together they journeyed up the country, following the Miami and Mad River valleys. They formed the territory into what they called Miami Circuit, the first circuit formed in Ohio of which we have any knowledge. In 1805 this circuit was enlarged and called "Miami and Mad River Circuit" and in 1807 simply "Mad River Circuit." When Piqua Methodism was formed it was part of Mad River circuit.

Our local church was born on what is now North Broadway, east side, near the junction of River and Broadway, in 1807. Here lived Casper Hendershott. The records and history of the Hendershott family show that a Methodist class was organized and held its meetings in this home, beginning in the fall of 1807. The names of the members of that pioneer class are worth knowing and preserving. They are as follows: David Clarke, leader of the class; Mathias Scudder, Sarah Scudder, Casper Hendershott, Charity Hendershott, John Hendershott, James Scudder, Mary Scudder, Mrs. David Hendershott, Elizabeth Hendershott, Isaac Clarke, Lydia Clarke, Sarah Clarke, Susan Winans.

The next year this home became a preaching place for the pioneer itinerant preachers on the Mad River circuit. The places mentioned as the preaching places on that circuit in 1808, were Springfield, Sweet's, Cartmell's, Spain's Urbana, Reyold's, Coleman's, Lamb's, Cain's, Ross', Harner's, Reed's, Hendershott's, Smith's, Hamer's, Huron's, Lebanon, Curl's, Wido Smith's, Mt. Pleasant, Bonner's, Xenia, Cutler's Boggoss' and Adams'. The total quarterage of these twenty-five preaching places amounted to forty dollars. There was no church building in those days. There were no roads. Trees were blazed for guides to the traveler in the sparsely settled frontier. There were no bridges and swollen streams demanded of man and horse that they should swim. The preacher carried all his belongings in his saddle bags and there was nothing which the settler endured which was not shared by the itinerant.

The work tried their utmost nerve and piety. The church grew, but at what cost! In those days one-third of the preachers died before reaching thirty years of age and two-thirds died before they had preached twelve years. With their lives they paid for the founding of our church.

After eight years of meeting in the homes of members and chiefly at Hendershott's, a log church was put up at Upper Piqua where frequent services had been held and where two generous brethren donated two acres of ground for the church building. In 1815 this

house of worship was built and in 1818 it was succeeded by a brick structure on the same location. In 1816 Piqua was disconnected from the Mad River circuit and was made the head of the Piqua circuit. The circuit kept adding on appointments until, in 1820, it contained twenty-eight regular appointments, including Piqua, Troy, New Carlisle, Tremont, Addison, Brandt, St. Paris and Lockington, with a considerable portion of what is now the Central Ohio Conference thrown in. In 1822-1823 the members, in their quarterly conference, began to plan for a new church down in the village, where already preaching service had been held frequently in the old seminary on Main Street, an institution where many of the early residents received their education.

During the year, 1823, Geor. W. Maley came to the Piqua circuit. In his autobiography, published a few years ago, this paragraph is found, referring to his appointment: "My colleague was John A. Baughman, fresh from the tannery of Thos. Means, a young man of extraordinary gifts, grace and usefulness. Soon after the adjournment of conference, I received a letter from Col. Wm. McLean, of Piqua, who was a member of Congress, elected from the Dayton district. Here I transcribe an extract from this letter; 'The Trojans want you to settle with them, but they have no vacant house, neither can one be obtained in Piqua, but as I am going to Washington City this fall, I have concluded to let you occupy my law office on the lot where my family resides, without fee or reward. While we have a loaf, you shall have half. And now, George, I commend you to accept the above offer.'"

The first quarterly meeting held in Piqua, of which there is a record, occurred October 5, 1833, with Rev. Wm. H. Raper, presiding elder, and Rev. Azra Brown, preacher, in charge.

A mission has been maintained on Favorite Hill since that sub-division of the city has been opened up. James Howard, a local preacher, and an enthusiastic Englishman, first gathered the children in private homes for a Sunday School. When Flesh, Geyer and Davis donated a lot to Greene Street Church, the money was soon raised to put up a church building. Mr. Howard was the first superintendent of the Sunday school there and he has had many worthy successors.

The present parsonage was built in 1887 during the pastorate of Dr. A.B. Leonard. The manners and customs of the people of the pioneer days are of interest. The men sat on one side of the church and the women on the other. Husband and wife parted company on entering the door. "The early Methodists were easily known by their dress, especially the ministers. Some of them wore the long, flowing robe in the pulpit. But the drab, broad-brimmed hat, the single-breasted coat, of drab, with its straight-up collar, the short pants meeting the long stockings at the knee and buckled there with metal buckles, the leggings and saddle bags of the traveling preacher - all these were so much a part of the Methodist itinerant, and they were so venerated and held sacred by many people, that much opposition was provoked when the minister discarded them. The women, too, were plainly dressed and were warned against ribbons, artificial flowers, jewelry and other "worldly apparel."

"Class meetings were held every week and were under the supervision of an appointed leader. The leader questioned each member of his class as to his spiritual state, asking him "Do you pray in your family?" "Do you pray in secret?" "Have you the witness of the spirit?" "If not, are you striving for it?" Then prayer was made for the several needs of the members.

The Friday preceding each quarterly meeting was observed as a day of fasting and prayer and Saturday afternoon there was a service preparatory for the communion, the presiding elder usually preaching. Before every quarterly meeting it was the duty of the class leader to visit each member of his class, collect his quarterage, and give him a ticket to the Love Feast. For no one was admitted to the Love Feast then without a tickets and tickets could be obtained only from the class leader or pastor by those considered in good standing.

The people did not have many hymn books in those days so the preacher would line the hymn. Having announed "long meter," "common meter" or "short meter," as the case might be, he would either "raise the tune" himself or call on some brother to "set the tune." Then the minister would line it out, reading two lines at a time which were then sung; then two more lines and so on to the end.

Greene Street church has enjoyed many seasons of gracious revival and through its agency, many have been brought to Christ. One of these revivals was under the labors of Wm. Young, in 1841, and another in the winter of 1851-2 during the pastorate of Rev. Maxwell P. Gaddis, assisted by Rev. W. J. Thurber, when about 400 were added to the membership of the church and, as a result, Grace Church was organized. Still another revival, under Rev. Wm. I. Fee, was held when, among others, four young men were converted who became ministers of the gospel. They were Chauncey King, Frank Crozier, James Bitler and W. N. Brodbeck. The labors of many other faithful pastors might be mentioned, if space would permit. Mention, however, should be made of a recent great revival under the leadership of Wm. E. Bierderwolf, an evangelist. Almost all the churches of the city united in a movement for a great religious campaign in the spring of 1911. A great tabernacle was built by volunteer labor, with a capacity for 5,000 people. For six weeks, during April and May of the year stated, Mr. Bierderwolf, with his corps of assistants, and the co-operating pastors of the city and the Christian people generally, engaged int he greatest religious movement ever known to the city. Nearly 2,000 people were converted, many of whom were already members of the church. There were about 1,000 accessions to the churches. Greene Street Church had 135 accessions. While all of the results of the meeting have not been conserved, it produced a profound impression on the city, which has been abiding.

Methodist in Ohio had its beginning in 1797 when Francis McCormick crossed the Ohio river from Kentucky and organized a Methodist Class near Milford, Ohio. John Kobler joined him in 1798 and they journeyed north along the Miami river and Mad river valleys. This circuit was known as the Mad River Circuit, of which Piqua was a part.

The Methodist church in Piqua was born in the fall of 1807 on what is now Broadway, near the junction of River Street and Broadway. Here, in the home of Casper

Hendershott, thirteen devout pioneers met to organize the first Methodist class in Piqua.

After eight years of meeting in members' homes the group grew in numbers and strength, and began to search for a permanent church home. In 1815 they constructed, by subscriptions, a log structure on two acres of ground donated by John Johnston and Richard Winans. The first church was near what is now known as Johnston's Cemetery. Any denomination was permitted to use it for religious services and it was also used for school purposes.

In 1818 two years after Piqua was disconnected from the Mad River Circuit, the original log structure was replaced by a brick building on the same ground.

In 1823 the members, in their Quarterly Conference, began planning for a new church home. For \$30 they bought half of Lot No. 24 in the original plot of Piqua, which was on the west side of Spring Street between Ash & High Streets. Contractor and builder John B. Davis built the 36' by 40' structure at a cost of \$650. The date of completion was June 1, 1824.

The first Sunday School class in Piqua met in the Spring Street building in 1828 but was soon discontinued. A Methodist Sunday School began in 1832 with Henry Kitchen as the first superintendent. The outstanding feature of the Sunday School was its library. Since there was no town library at the time, many townspeople used the Sunday School library.

Notable changes in custom and discipline have taken place during the years of Methodist history in Piqua. In the pioneer days the men sat on one side of the church and the women on the other. Early Methodists were easily recognized by their dress, especially the ministers. The drab, broad-brimmed hat, coat with stand-up collar, knee pants, long stockings, knee buckles and saddle bags were so much a part of the Methodist itinerant preacher that there was much opposition to overcome before they were discarded by the ministers. The women, too, were plainly dressed and were warned against such worldly apparel as ribbons, artificial flowers and jewelry. Worldly amusements were strictly forbidden also.

At the weekly meetings members were questioned by appointed leaders as to the spiritual state of their lives. Prayers were then offered for the individual needs of members. Before every quarterly conference the class leader visited each member, collected his quarterage, and issued to members of good standing tickets which allowed them to partake of communion.

The name Greene Street originated in 1835 when the first steps were taken to erect a building at the corner of Greene and Wayne Streets. This church served the Methodists until the present structure was built in 1927. Lot No. 57 in the original plot of Piqua was purchased from General Young and on it John Keyt built a church for the sum of \$4,167. The dedication took place in October, 1837.

During the winter of 1852-1853, the Rev. M. P. Gaddis conducted a most fruitful revival, with about four hundred members being added. As a result, a mission, know as Wayne Street was established and it soon became a self-supporting congregation. Today it is Grace Methodist Church.

In 1857, when the Greene Street Methodist Church was 50 yeas old, the annual sessions of the Cincinnati Conference were held here from September 9 to 15, 1857. The presiding bishop was Thomas A. Morris. He preached Sunday morning at the church and ordained the deacons. At 3 p.m. at the church, Dr. Clark preached and the elders were ordained. The pulpits of the city that Sunday were occupied by the Methodist preachers. This included the Episcopal Church, and it was considered most unusual for a venerable churchman like the R Rev. Mr. Fitch to open his pulpit to those whom he esteemed dissenting brethren.

Brother Panabaker, a local preacher connected with the Wayne Street Church (now Grace) while feeding his horses Sabbath evening on September 13, which was during the Conference, received a kick in the stomach from one of them and died the next evening.

Contributions furnished the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church from within the bounds of the Cincinnati Conference for the year amounted to \$12,540.10. There were six districts in the Conference.

The host pastor was C. Brooks, who was transferred to the Minnesota Conference because of the state of his health. The Rev. Granville Moody was appointed to Green Street (the way it was spelled in the Conference minutes.)

The Greene Street report to the Conference included the following: Quarterage for pastor, @\$80; table and fuel expenses \$560, which was the largest in the Urbana District with Springfield included. Number of members, 288 (Wayne Street-175) value of church \$15,000; value of parsonage \$2000; contributions of missionary society - \$185; scholars in Sunday School -214 and officers an teachers -38.

During the pastorate of Dr. A.B. Leonard, 1886-1888, the parsonage at 423 N. Wayne Street was built. In 1893 large stained glass windows were put in the church and the pipe organ, which was later part of the echo organ in the current building, was installed.

Greene Street Church suffered no irreparable loss during the destructive flood of 1913 though about three feet of water covered the entire first floor. Extensive repairs were made, but the incident, together with the growth of the church, pointed out the need for a modern church with expanded facilities.

Believing that Methodists in Piqua would accomplish more efficient work by combining Greene Street and Grace churches into one united church, the official boards of the two churches attempted a merger in 1921. All members of both congregations over 16 years of age were eligible to vote, with a two-thirds majority required to make the merger effective. It was necessary to sell both existing buildings and establish a new church. Since no buyer was found for the seven-year old Grace church, the merger failed.

In 1923 the present site was purchased from A.C. Wilson and John Anderson and the church membership organized for the erecting of a new and modern temple of worship.

A building fund was raised and the following committees were appointed by the Official Board of the church: Building Committee - A.R. Pollock, chairman; Charles Proctor, secretary; John Luckey, William M. Boyer, C.T. Coon and Roscoe Babylon. Finance Committee - L.W. Pool, chairman; Sherman D. Syler, treasurer; Fred Blacke, secretary; and Henry Hoppy, Dr. S.C. Philbrook, C.E. Fristoe, Emmett Brush, W.E. Moore, J.H. Clark, John Zollinger, William N. Foster, Arthur S. Gray, R.M. Donovan, Arthur Redman, F.C. Fuller, George C. Dietrich, Dr. E.A. Yates, F. S. Moffett, Parker Leonard, Kenneth Winans, Elwood Henning, Robert Hegele, Harry Worthington, Charles Gram and Henry Hessler.

J. C. Fulton & Sons, church architects, designed the building and the contract for construction was awarded to A. M. Fry. Cornerstone-laying services were held Sunday, June 7, 1925. Contents of the cornerstone, prepared by C. L. Wood and George E. Lee, included church records, an American flag, coins in circulation at the time, a copy of the Western Christian Advocate, and a copy of the Piqua Daily Call containing the history of the church.

Reward for the faith, work and generosity of the congregation came with the week of dedication, June 19-26, 1927. It began at 9 a.m. when Phillip Gates and his band led members of the congregation in a procession from the old church to the new one. Bishop Theodore Henderson preached the sermon that morning and services all week were led by the pastor, Rev. J. Fletcher Lewis. Included in the celebration that week were evenings devoted to dedication of musical instruments, a family night potluck supper and youth night. The final day brought Bishop A.W. Leonard and Dr. E.C. Waring to Piqua to preach sermons.

Early in the morning of December 17, 1927, a disastrous fire broke out in the new church. The flames were quickly extinguished but there was extensive smoke damage of the entire building. It was necessary to refinish the interior and to replace much of the equipment. At this time the organ from the old church was torn down and made a part of the echo organ in the new edifice. A rededication took place on Sunday, April 29, 1928 with Dr. L. A. Murlin preaching the sermon.

As with all other phases of life in the 1930's, the "depression blues" had its effect on the church. In order to help finance the new building the church had borrowed \$60,000 from the Defiance Home Savings & Loan Association of Defiance, Ohio. With hard times prevailing in Piqua, members of the church were unable to give adequate financial support to continue liquidizing the debt. In the fall of 1936 the loan company was forced to file foreclosure proceedings. The delinquent interest was waived and the foreclosure was dismissed through the courts on an agreed settlement of \$35,000, the amount of principal still owed.

To raise the needed amount members of the congregation purchased non-interest bearing demand certificates to the amount of \$15,000. The remaining \$20,000 was

loaned the church by the Citizens National Bank and Trust Company in Piqua. Many people returned the bonds as gifts to the church. In 1943, when the debt was down to \$12,800 a debt retirement committee was formed. During the ensuing campaign 188 pledges, totaling nearly \$12,000 were paid in full by church families. With the additional of several hundred dollars from the general fund the Greene Street Church became debt-free in June, 1944.

Records of Board of Trustee meetings reveal that they began discussing the purchase of a new parsonage in 1943. After investigating various possibilities, the board voted to buy the former residence of Mrs. Lillian Retter, a long-time member of Greene Street Church. This was accomplished in March of 1946 and pastors who served the church occupied the nine-room brick home at 726 Caldwell Street.

Nearly one hundred years ago on the occasion of an anniversary program the Rev. Graville Moody address a Greene Street congregation with a concluding challenge: "Go forward! Go forward!" Those words were an inspiration to that 19th century congregation as they can be to the present members and friends of Greene Street celebrating 150 years of Methodism in Piqua. Many dedicated pastors, many devout persons, many worthwhile church groups have done their part to make the past history of Greene Street what it is. We of the present must do our best to uphold the worthy traditions of the past and to contribute what we can for the future of a church meant to serve God and mankind. We must "go forward."

### **Pastors Serving Greene Street Church**

1807	First Methodist Class organized with David Clarke, Leader
1808-1816	Church served by pastors of Mad River Circuit
1816-1817	David Sharp
1817-1818	Samuel Chenowith and P. Stevens
1818-1819	A.W. Elliott and Samuel Brocknier
1819-1820	John P. Taylor and Thomas Hitt
1820-1821	William Westlake, L. Swormstead and William Simmons
1821-1822	R. Dobbins and R.W. Finley
1822-1823	D.D. Davisson and R.W. Finley
1823-1824	George W. Maley and John Baughman
1824-1825	A.W. Elliot and richard Brandriff
1825-1826	George W. Maley and James Smith
1826-1827	John Sale and W. B. Christie
1827-1828	Augustus Eddy and John Wood
1828-1829	William H. Raper and Richard Brandriff
1830-1831	Joshua Boucher and Levi White
1831-1832	D.D. Dyche and D.D. Davisson
1833-1835	Arza Brown
1835-1836	M.D. Bassett
1836-1838	Ebenezer Chase and William Ellsworth
1838-1839	George W. Walker

1838-1841	Solomon Howard
1841-1842	William Young
1842-1843	A. Lowrey
1843-1845	Jacob G. Dimmitt
1845-1847	J. L. Grover
1847-1849	William H. Lauder
1849-1851	Michael Marley
1851-1853	M. P. Gaddis and W. J. Thurber
1853-1854	R. O. Spencer
1854-1855	Joseph Newton
1855-1857	Cyrus Brooks
1857-1859	Granville Moody
1859-1861	William Herr
1861-1863	A. Lowrey
1863-1866	Granville Moody
1866-1867	J. L. Grover
1867-1870	William H. Sutherland
1870-1873	William I. Fee
1873-1875	James Stevenson
1875-1878	J. L. Marlay
1878-1880	J. W. Cassatt
1880-1883	R. E. Smith
1883-1886	A. Bowers
1886-1888	A.B. Leonard
1888-1892	E. T. Wells
1892-1897	Frank G. Mitchell
1897-1901	H. D. Ketchum
1901-1906	R. J. Wyckoff
1906-1908	Sheridan W. Bell
1908-1910	William A. Deaton
1910-1915	Edgar H. Cherington
1915-1917	J. R. Colley
1917-1923	John S. Altman
1923-1927	J. Fletcher Lewis
1927-1928	William W. Motter
1928-1932	W. Carl Hickey
1932-1940	Vinton E. Busler
1940-1943	Ernest E. Fowler
1943-1952	Arthur K. Wilson
1952-1957	Austin R. Whitmore
1957-1960	Stanley H. McGilliard
1960-1967	Donald Mumma
1967-1967	Edward S. Wones
1968-1973	Warren Bright
1973-1977	Roland D. Fierce
1977-1981	Robert Sinks
1981-1982	Darrel Loar

1982-1986	Edward Peterson
1986-1993	John McRoberts
1993-2007	James R. Christy
2007-2012	Louisa Ellison
2012-	Kenneth A. Stewart

## Building Information

When members of Greene Street planned a new church in the 1920's, they selected a modern adaptation of English Gothic, as designed by J.C. Fulton and Sons, church architects, Uniontown, Pa. The buff-brick building with impressive stone-arched doorways combines beauty with utility in all parts of the church.

As one walks into the sanctuary the dominant feature is the Wood memorial window in the east end. It was designed and made by the J. C. Riordan Company, Cincinnati, Ohio. Given by W.W. Wood III in memory



of his parents and grandparents, the window is a mosaic, made up of 25,000 pieces of imported glass to depict in the various parts, small insignias, representing the Crucifixion. It belongs to the art of painting, to be viewed as an example of religious symbolism, employing line, symbol and especially color. (A detailed diagram and explanation of the window follow this article.) Along the sides of the sanctuary and in the foyer are windows which also were given as memorials

Another source of inspiration is the three-manual Moller organ, a gift of Mr. Harry Clark and his sisters in memory of their parents. In the tower are Deagan Tower chimes presented by Mr. and Mrs. William Boyer. Weighing a total of 10,000 pounds, they are electrically operated from the console of the organ, enabling their music to be incorporated into the service. Miss Myrtle Hester gave the church a Knabe grand piano which is now in the Wesleyan room.

Also included in the first-floor plan is the Sunday School assembly room above which one can see the reproduction of Leonard da Vinci's "The Last Supper" done by artist Robert Vittur. The ladies' parlor, church office, nursery facilities and minister's study are the other rooms on the first floor.

These are additional classrooms on the balcony and temporary ones in the basement. Fellowship hall is used for Scouting activities, family night programs, church and public dinners and youth activities. Completing the basement are the Wesleyan room, the kitchen and the furnace room.

The facilities of the 30-year old building which cost nearly two hundred, fifty thousand dollars, complete with furnishings, have been kept modern with the addition of new equipment and the periodic redecorations have kept the interior lovely.

When the Board of Trustees presented the plans of the new church, one of the reasons for the construction was stated as "Nothing speaks better for our city than good churches. No investment pays larger returns in happiness and character than those made in Christian Churches."

### **Old Greene St. M.E. Church, Landmark in City, Being Torn down by Workmen**

(Piqua Daily Call article-July 28, 1936)

To the observer, uninfluenced by surroundings or previous knowledge, and brought suddenly to view what is left of the old Greene Street church, now in process of wrecking on the corner of Greene and Wayne streets, the ruin suggests churches and cathedrals of the Old World, wrecked during the World War. One is vaguely surprised, upon peering through openings once holding stained glass windows, not to see a tall crucifix hanging to the crumbling walls.

The process of razing one of Piqua's landmarks goes on apace. Beginning at the east end, former Sunday Shool rooms, the work is progressing toward the front with the two unmatched towers as the last thing to go.

Passersbys pause to shiver at what looks like the perilous positions of wreckers on the old roof. "They're as safe as you are" the contractor assured on nervous feminine onlooker, continuing "besides which, it's cooler up there than down on the ground. You're wasting your sympathy."

For more than a century the old edifice has dominated the intersection of Greene and Wayne Streets. Thousands of devout men and women have worshiped within its walls. These same walls have been changed, remodeled, raised and added to during the 100 years since the congregation proudly established themselves in the edifice from a much less pretentious church building.

Conforming to the custom of the Methodist church, pastors have changed for the Greene Street congregation every two or four years. Such a transition has enabled many

ministers to shepherd the parish over such an extended period and numbers of splendid men have served their tenure of ministry here.

None have been more beloved than Dr. V.E. Busler, the present incumbent, whose broadminded Christianity has attracted friends and admirers all over the city. Asking him how he felt about the wrecking, going on next door to the parsonage, the minister said that it has not been nearly so uncomfortable thus far for his family, as he had expected.

But, he added, if he had realized how unsteady the walls had become, their condition revealed by the wrecking, he might have been somewhat uneasy for fear some day they might have collapsed without the aid of a technical engineer's supervision.

### **Church School**

Beginning in 1832 with 78 "scholars" and eleven teachers, Greene Street's Sunday School has, grown to an enrollment of 795 and a staff of 110 in five departments. During that long period of growth, changes in customs and in our community resources have greatly affected the purposes and procedures of the Church School.

Among the rules of that first Sunday School, as given in the original Minute and Organization Book are the following:

Rule #3 After the school is opened (with singing and prayer) the teachers will hear the children read or spell from 30-40 minutes. The scholars then spell off the book from five to ten minutes, after which the Scripture Lesson given the preceding Sabbath will be examined by asking questions from it, in order that the children may better understand and remember what they read. The Lesson for the next Sabbath will then be given out, the Library Books distributed and the School closed.

Rule #4 - No Doctrines shall be taught in the school but such as are common to all Christians...in order that all the children of our neighborhood may reap the advantages of this school."

When the first church on Greene Street was completed in 1837, the Sunday School was removed from the old church to the basement of the new one. But, says Mr. William Wood who was then superintendent, the basement "lacked light and I had it (the Sunday School) moved up to the gallery, which was a great improvement. School increased to 150.

About 1864 the library which was for long an outstanding feature of the Sunday School, began to receive much attention. A handsome library case was built at the cost of \$265.77 and new books were purchased. This excellent circulating library was part of an improved program which helped to build the attendance to an enrollment of 300, requiring a staff of 27 teachers.

Apparently this steady growth of the Church School continued until the 75th anniversary in 1907, when the enrollment is given as "nearing 900". It is worth noting

this report continues, that our adult Bible classes now have 40,50,60 and even 80 members.

At about the time the congregation moved into the new church, in the late 20's church school attendance began to decline, reaching its lowest ebb in the 30's.

In the 40's a gradual increase was again in evidence and during the last ten years, growth has been steady. The highest average attendance during this period was 250 in 1955-56.

In 1946 a need was felt for a young adult class in the Church School. Under the leadership of Mr. Robert Winter, superintendent, the Wesleyan Class was formed and a social group called the Supper Club which met once a month. This year-1957 - a social group called the "39ers" has been organized with Morrie Looney as president.

The first Vacation Bible School sponsored by the Church School in recent years was held in June 1948 under the direction of Mrs. Walter Hughes, Sr. with an enrollment of 78. Each year since, a successful Vacation School has been held and the enrollment has grown to 150. A need in our church and community was met by a Vacation Bible School Training Session sponsored by workers in our Church School and held in our church in 1951. Interdenominational in scope, it was reported by outsiders to be one of the best in this part of the state.

In 1948-49 a fine addition was made to our educational equipment by the gift of a movie projector by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Brelsford. The Church School set up a film fund to provide films or rental fees as needed. This has greatly encouraged the use of visual aids. For the first time also a Board of Education was set up in our church School. This is provided for in The Discipline of the church to oversee all educational work undertaken by the church. The first chairman was Elsworth Beach.

In 1952 it was decided that the Junior, Youth and Adult department should have separate assemblies instead of meeting together before going to classes. This greatly improved attendance of the Juniors and Youth proved that this step was a good one.

For many years people asked to teach have said, "We would like to, but we don't feel qualified." Under the direction of Rev. Austin Whitmore, a teacher training class was held in 1953, and in 1955-56 three such classes were held. Besides this, several of the staff attended workshops or training laboratories each year. In 1956-57 Mrs. Robert Fultz, a visiting director of Christian Education offered her time and directed on-the-job classes for teachers in the entire Children's Department.

This same year the church, for the first time, decided to employ a Director of Christian Education.

## **Our Music**

The records of our church contain very little regarding music, but we do know that it played only a small part in the services of those early years. Since there were not enough

hymnals for the congregation, the hymns were "lined" by the preacher. He, or someone in the congregation, would set the tune (usually with a tuning fork) and then two lines were read and sung at a time.

First mention of a choir was at the dedication of the former church in 1837, when it was called an "innovation." The choir was trained and led by a Mr. Dawin of Troy.

The records mention at the introduction of musical instruments in the church service cause no little concern, and that one pious sister of the early days would leave church and sit on the steps while singing was accompanied by a violin or bass viola which she termed "ungodly instruments." In 1861 the records tell of the use of a melodion, and in 1873 mention is made of a pipe organ which required a pumper to keep it going. It is not known who the early organists were. Beginning sometime in the 1890's Mr. Rey Wiley served for many years.

A few years before the congregation moved into the present church building, a chorus choir was organized under the direction of Mrs. James Brandon. Before this the choir had consisted only of a quartet. Several organists and directors served for short periods of time with the chorus choir. At the time of entering the present church in 1927, the choir was again only a quartet and Mr. Wiley the organist. However, the following October senior and junior choirs were organized with student directors from the Westminster Choir School in Dayton. In 1929 Mr. Philip Gates became the director.

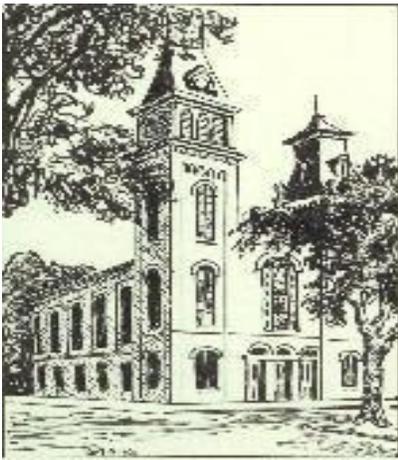
Among the many gifts to the new church were the Clark Memorial Organ, the Boyer Memorial Tower Chimes, the Hester Grand Piano. Later the amplifying system in the tower was given as a memorial to the late Mr. Raymond Mote. A few years ago Mr. and Mrs. John Leonard gave the Steinway grand piano which is used in the sanctuary.

Mrs. Raymond Mote became organist in 1933 and served as choir director and organist since 1949. Under her supervision the music program expanded and included six choirs.

## Greene Street UMC Facilities History



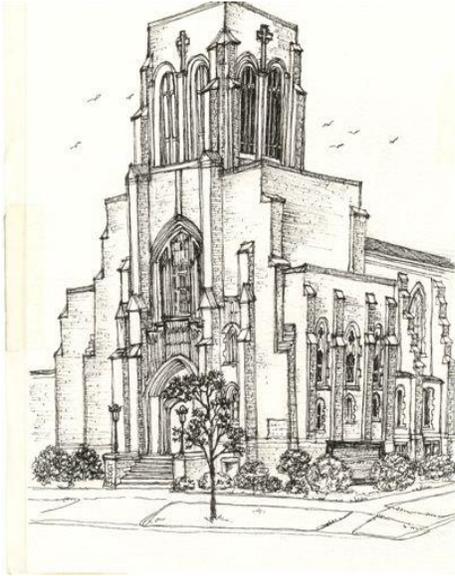
First church building -1815 (sketched by Marilyn Phillis)



First church building on Greene Street - 1837-1925 (sketched by Marilyn Phillis)



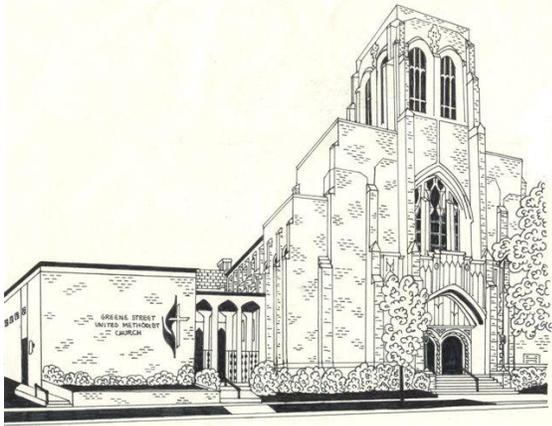
Historial Postcard -1927



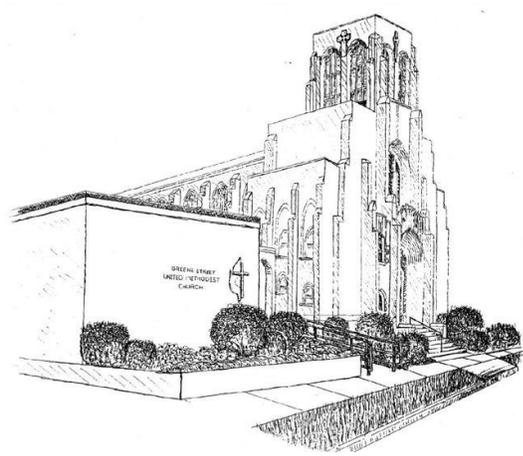
Sketch by Judy Fogt



Christmas sketch by Marilyn Phillis



Sketch by Rosy Albright



1995- Greene Street Church Building with Mildred Groves Educational Wing (sketched by Adam Heath)