

The first church in the West Medway parish was built in 1749 and dedicated on October 4, 1750. This sketch was drawn by W. M. Cabot for the 175th anniversary of its dedication.

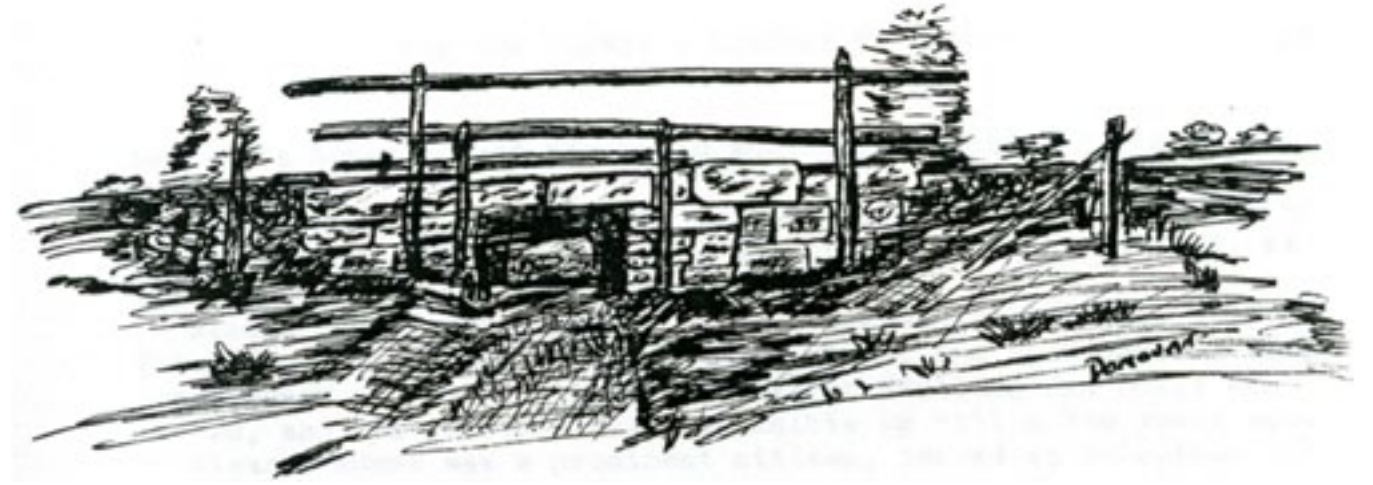


The original meeting house stood near the Southwest corner of Main and Evergreen Streets. The Medway Historical Society replaced the original wooden marker with this slate marker in 1929.



In 1759 a passage way for *cattle* was built under the road which is now Main Street, just west of the Charles River Bank. The underpass was known as “Drybridge,” and was demolished in 1842.

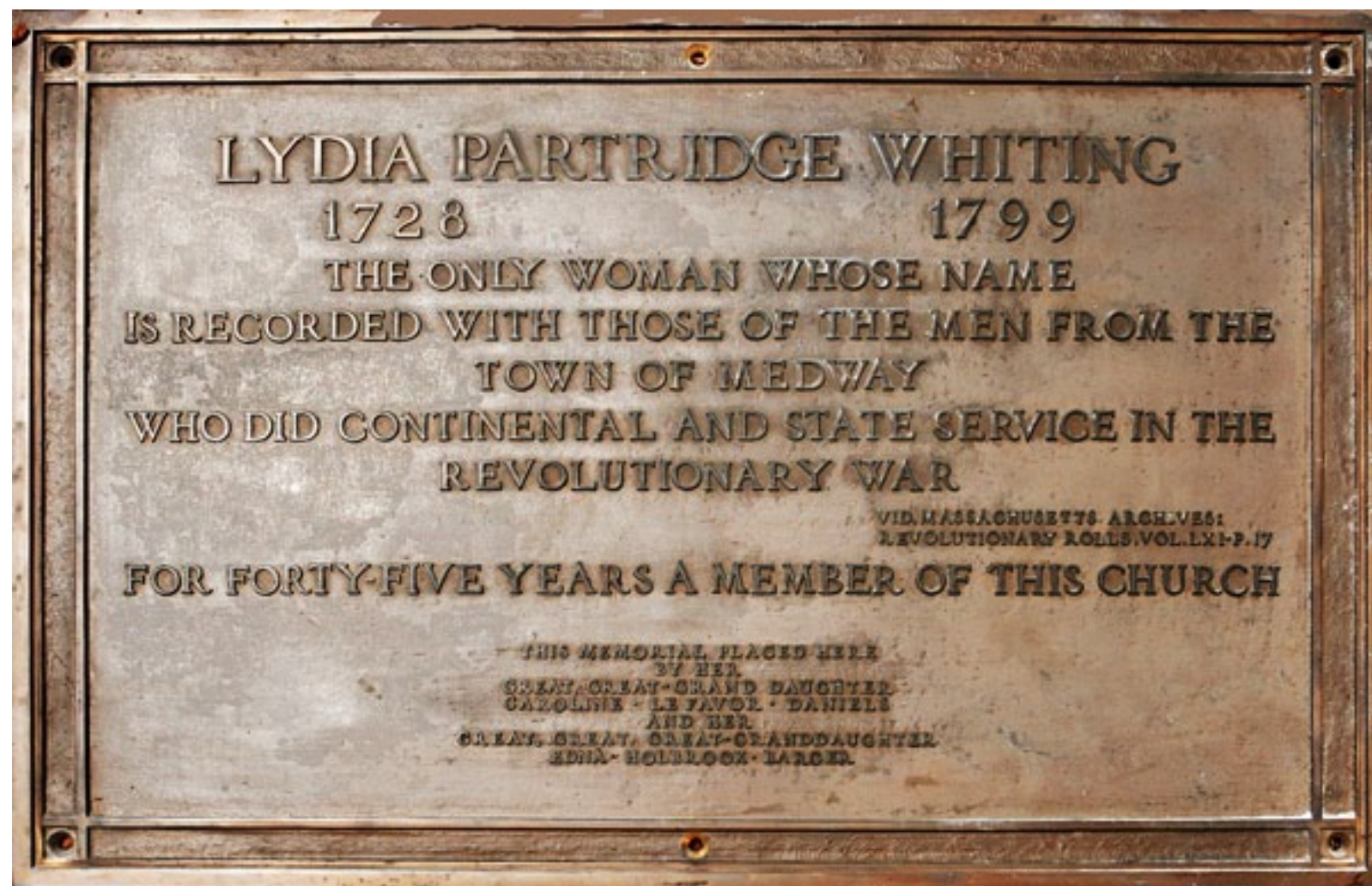
The lower picture was taken recently and shows a portion of what were probably some of the original stones used in the “Drybridge.”



This monument in Evergreen Cemetery marks the site where our second pastor, Rev. David Sanford is buried. He pastored Second Church from 1773 – 1810. His grandson David was the first pastor of the Village Church Congregational, and is also buried here.

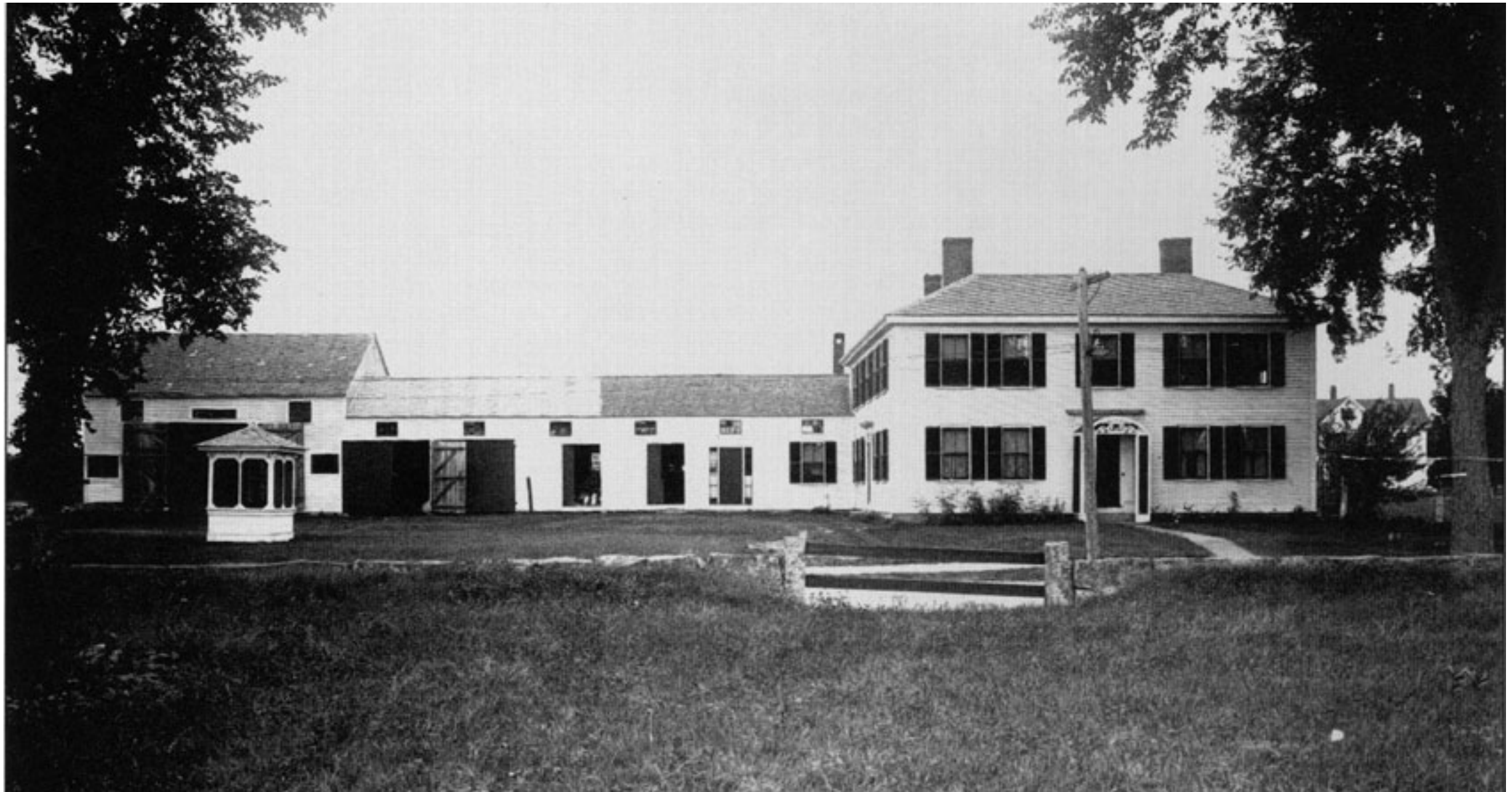


Plaque commemorating unique accomplishment of one of our early church members.



Rev. Jacob Ide, D.D. was our third pastor. He was the first pastor to serve in the Church on Rabbit Hill. His long service began in 1814 and continued to 1865. Rev. Ide was named Pastor Emeritus in 1865 and held that position until his death in 1880.

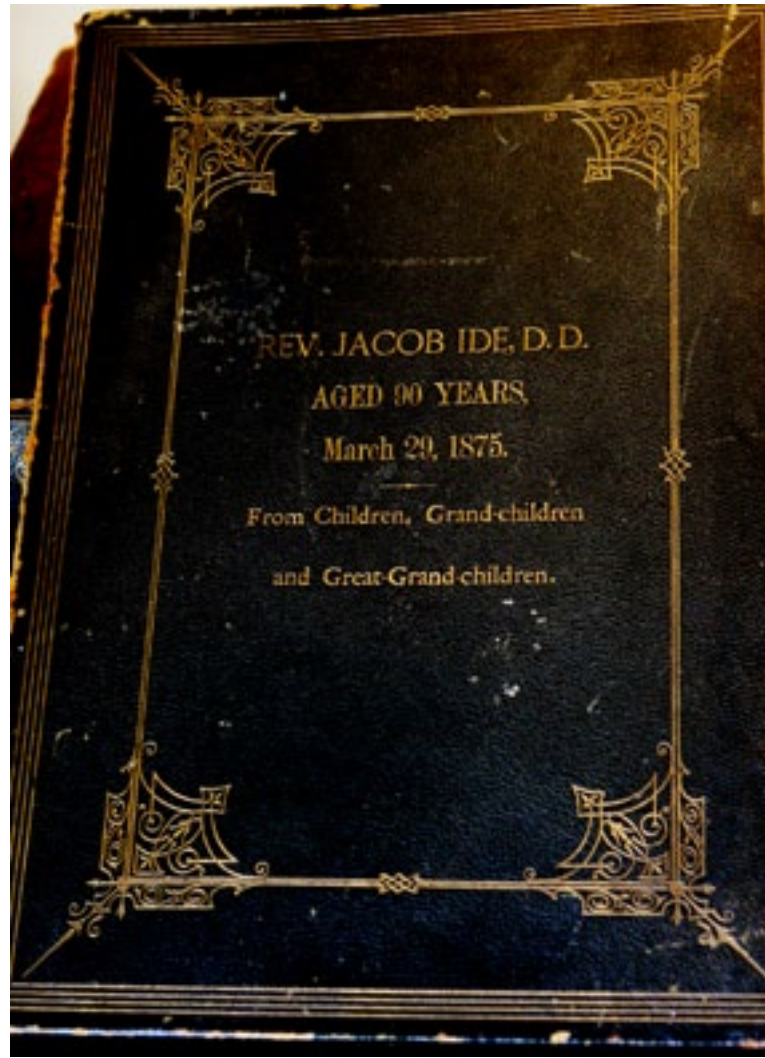




Rev. Ide's home, built around 1816, is located at 158 Main Street, near the intersection with Winthrop Street, and across the street from the 1749 Meeting House. While spacious, the Ides had eleven children. Rev. Ide's personal library was located here, which he used to instruct the 43 men whom he trained for the ministry.

... part of their religious worship. My business is with Balls as they are practiced, at the present day. The question, now to be determined, is, whether rational, and accountable beings, capable of the exalted pleasure of serving and enjoying God, destined to a future and an eternal existence, in which they are to receive according to the deeds done here in the body, have a right to spend their precious time, in dancing for mere amusement ; in circumstances too, where they are exposed to peculiar temptations ; where the mind is necessarily dissipated ; where health and property are often wantonly sacrificed ; where hours, consecrated by nature, to silence and repose, are devoted to hilarity and mirth ; and where by common consent, and the laws of fashion, serious reflection and fervent piety have no place.

(a)



(b)



(c)

(a) An excerpt from Jacob Ide's sermon on *Balls and Their Consequences* delivered in 1818.

(b) Cover of Rev. Ide's Presentation Bible, given in 1875.

(c) Rev. Ide's monument in Evergreen Cemetery, given by the Medway Historical Society in 1904.



The Parish House, built in 1817, used lumber from the 1749 meeting house. The building was used for both town and church meetings. Over the years it has housed stores, offices, the town lock up and various other businesses. In 1955 the building was gifted to the church and was then used for Sunday School rooms, church offices, youth groups, and many other activities. In 2013 the building was sold for conversion to a private residence.



The Manse was built on Main Street across from the church in 1849 by Christopher Slocumb on the foundation of an earlier home. It was purchased by the church in 1872 for use as a parsonage. It continued to be used for this purpose until 1995. Today it is used for church offices and the historical library.



Women's groups have played an important part in our church history, beginning with the Female Charitable Society in 1817. The group shown in this picture is the Phyllyne Club ("Fill-In"), which raised the money to build the side porch on the parsonage (shown behind them).

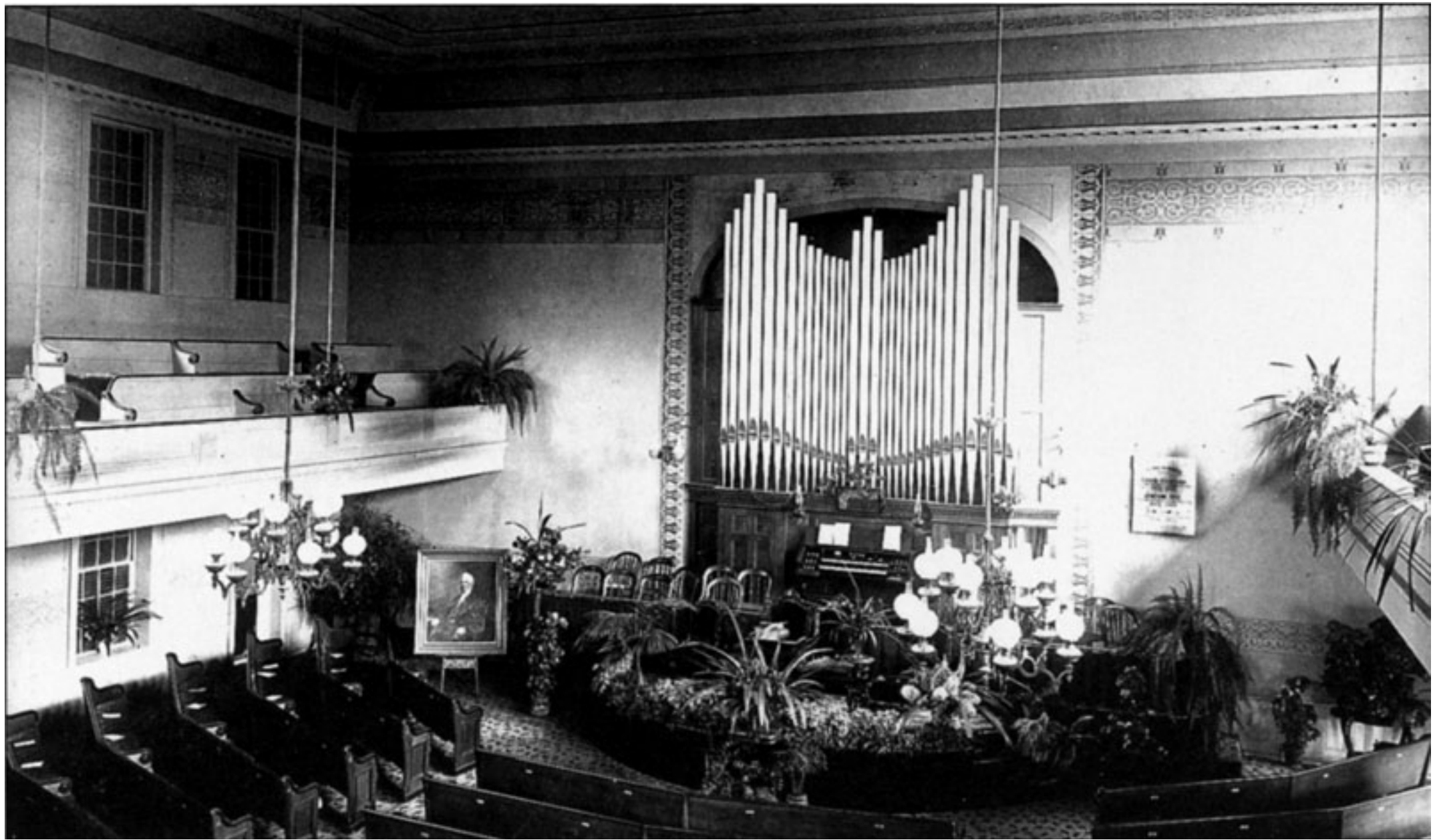


Rev. Seth W. Segur was a well-loved pastor who served from 1873 to 1875. During his brief ministry, the Chapel, now known as Fellowship Hall, was added to the church. During a visit to his former congregation in Tallmadge, OH for their semi-centennial, he became ill and died at the age of 43.



The Soldiers Monument in Evergreen Cemetery was erected in 1896 by the J.H. Sargent Post 130 GAR. It is the only statue in Medway.





This 1900 photograph shows the sanctuary decorated for the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Second Church of Christ in Medway. The Hall organ was a recent gift by the Leland family. Also visible is the painting of Dr. Ide and a plaque honoring Rev. Sanford, Dr. Ide, and Rev. Segur.

Picture of the church taken in 1900.
The old horse sheds can be seen behind
the church.



Interesting drawing from yesteryear, pulled from the church historical library.



This sign, located near the street in front of the church, commemorates William N. Hewitt, son of Rev. George R. Hewitt, pastor of the church from 1902 to 1914. William died in an airplane training accident in France in 1918. Prior to his death, he served as church organist, attended Harvard University, and composed a symphony which was widely acclaimed.



This boulder and plaque, located on the front lawn, commemorates the founders of the Church in the West Precinct (located on Evergreen Street). It was dedicated at the 175th anniversary celebration in 1925.



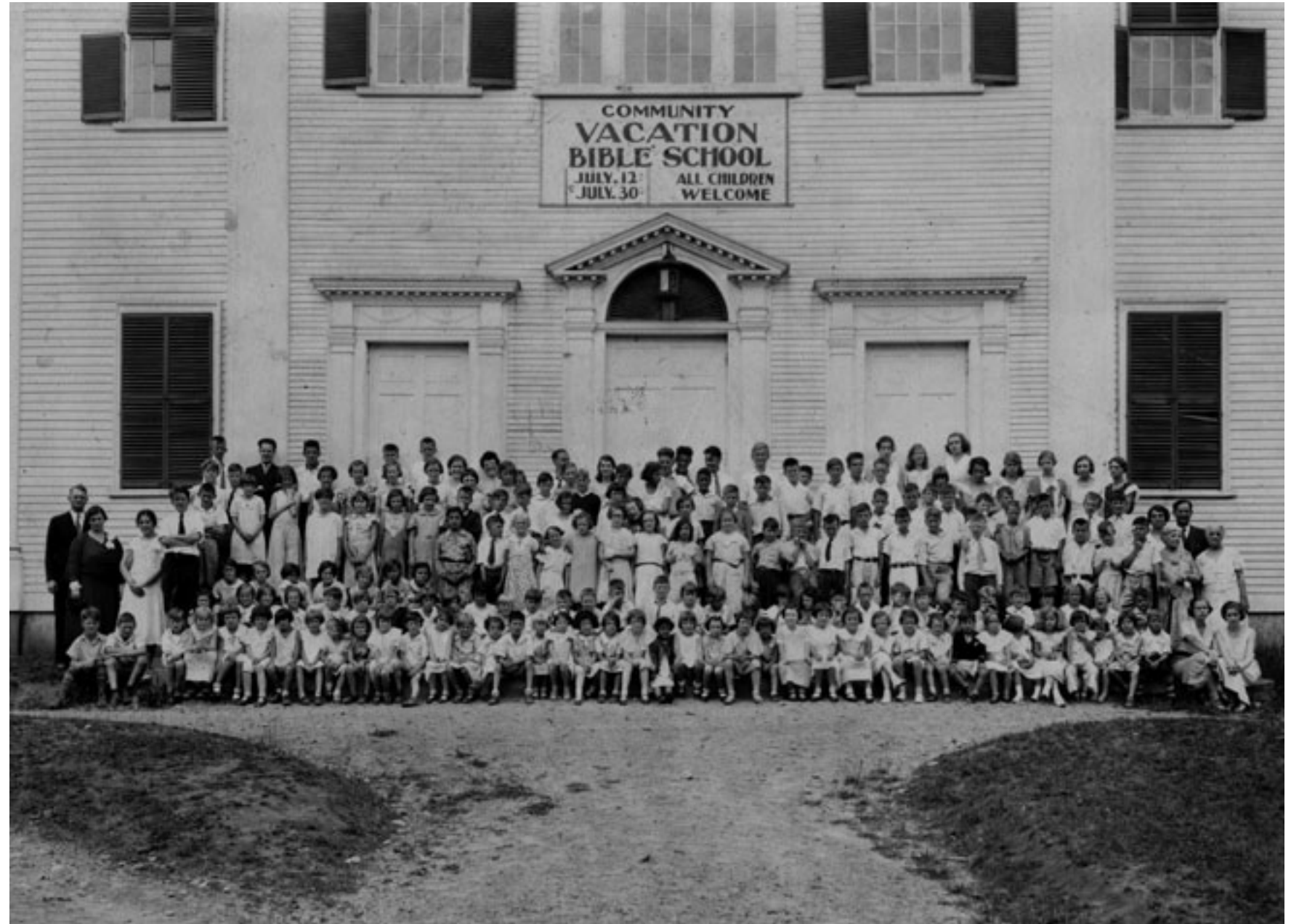
In 1930 a joint celebration of the Massachusetts Bay Colony Tercentenary and the 180th anniversary of the church was held. Several members of the church portrayed various characters from Medway's history.



Another tercentenary picture from 1930, showing our pastor, Rev. Howard, with the choir.



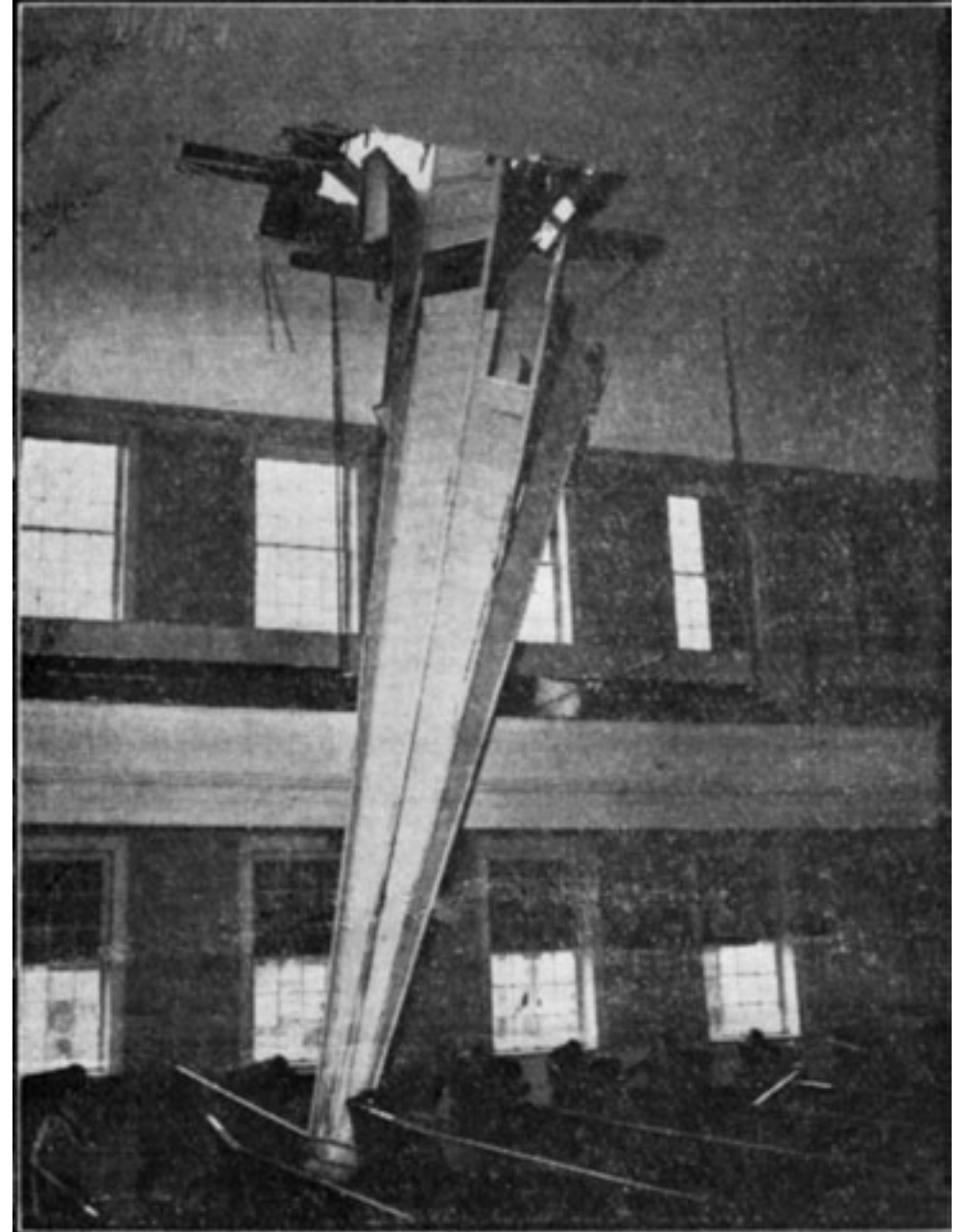
The Church on Rabbit Hill has long been a beacon to the surrounding community and has in the past, even as we now, desire to show God's love to all. Vacation Bible School was an important, annual event. This picture, taken in 1937, shows that many children, teachers and helpers were involved. Rev. Howard stands on the extreme left.



A unique 187th birthday celebration was held in 1937 with the goal of erasing the \$400 debt that the church incurred during the Great Depression. A campaign to sell candles costing one dollar each raised a total of more than \$1200. Requests for candles came from eleven states and three Canadian provinces. The additional funds were used for painting and much-needed repairs.



In 1938 a great hurricane swept through Medway causing extensive damage. The church steeple was detached and came crashing into the sanctuary, leaving a mark on the floor which is still visible today. The Baptist church at the corner of Main and Winthrop streets was completely destroyed. The Baptists accepted our invitation to worship with us, and united with us in 1940 to form a federated church, known as “The Community Church.”



The new steeple was dedicated in December 1939. The Lord provided the means through a fund, established by an anonymous donor to assist churches in the state who repaired or replaced their steeple before 1940. Church members also helped with the project through their generous gifts. A mortgage on the church was also needed to cover additional costly repairs.



Picture of the Cradle Roll Graduation taken in the 1950's. Kitty Elliott is the teacher. Austin McLaughlin, organist, and the Junior Choir are in shown in the background.



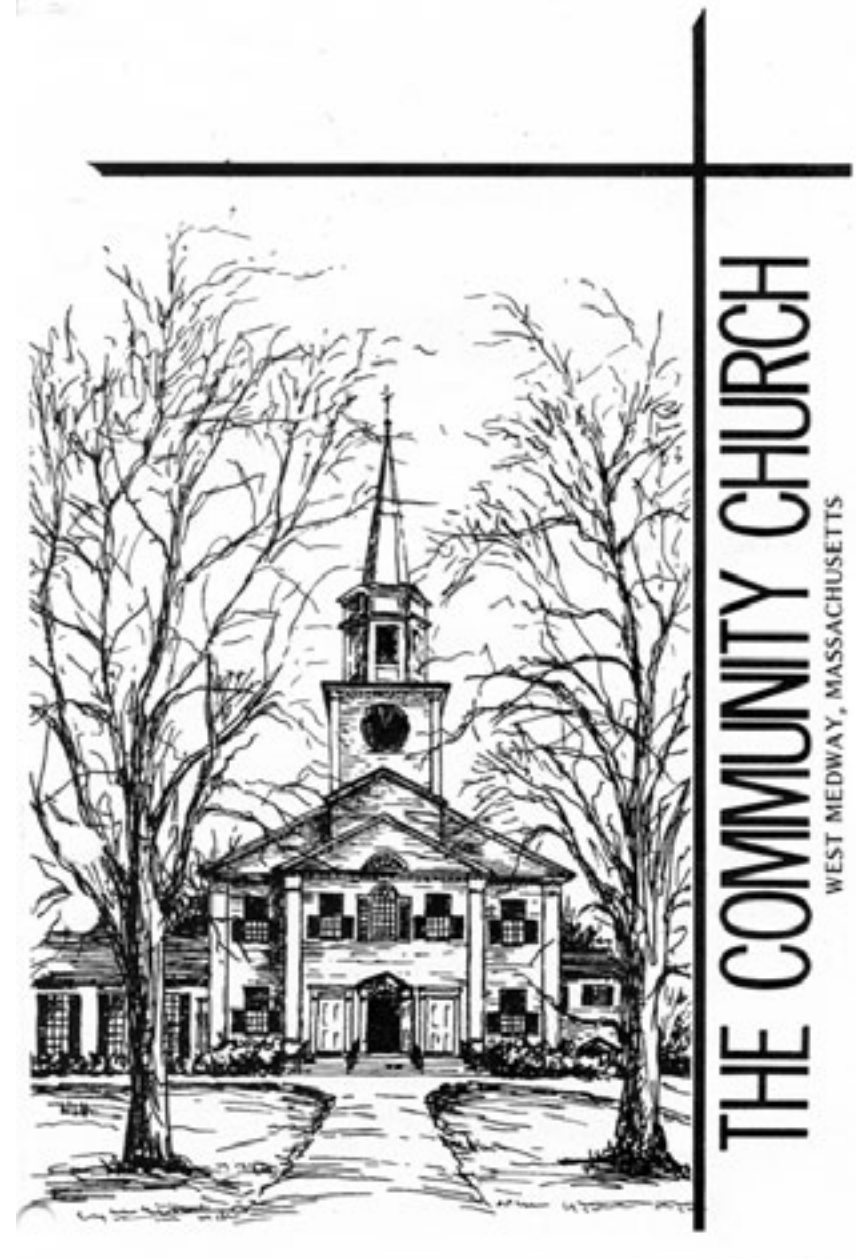
The pulpit shown on the right dates back to the 1800's and was first used by Rev. Jacob Ide. In 1953 it was restored and placed in service until it was retired (circa 1995).



Rev. Carl Schultz shown breaking ground for the new Christian Education wing in 1969. The wing was dedicated September 7, 1970.



This bulletin cover was first used at the Installation Service for Rev. Earle Spahr, who served from 1972 to 1975. The sketch of the church was made by Dr. Winfred Winget, interim pastor. The bulletin cover was used for many years.



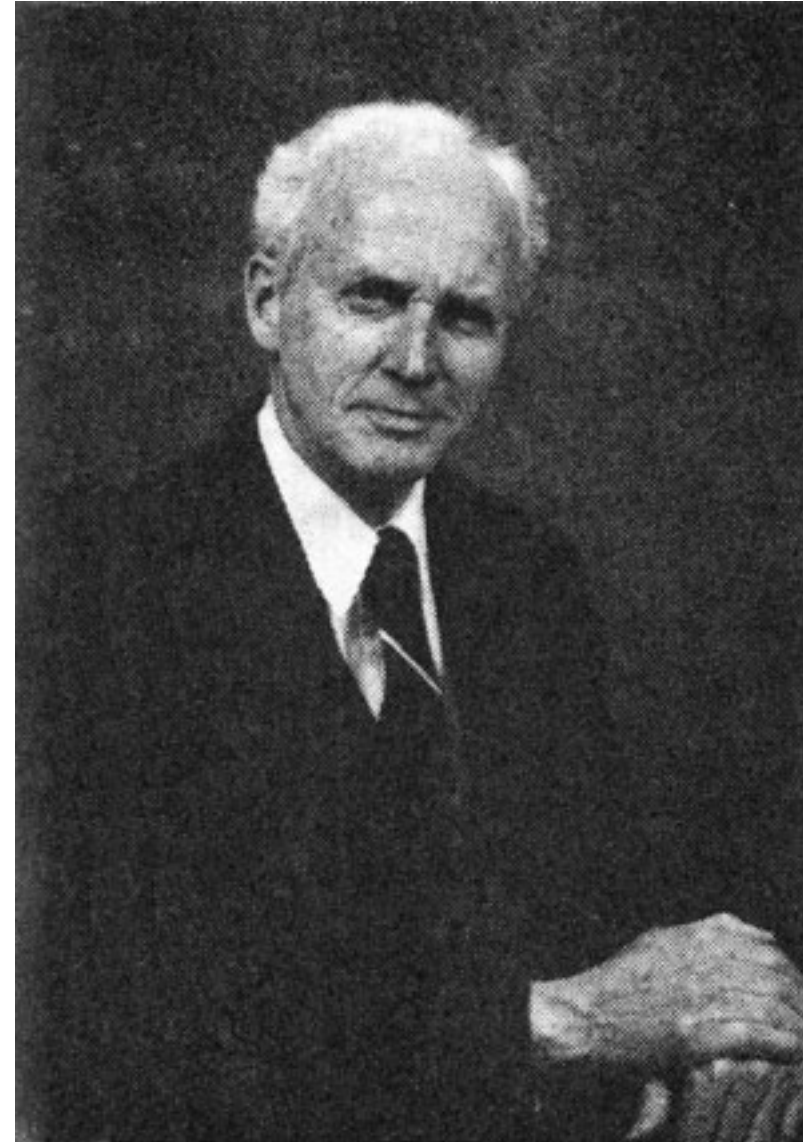


In 1973 at the age of 103 years, Josephine Daniels made a profession of faith and was baptized by Rev. Spahr. Also pictured are two deacons, Paul Russell and Raymond Wilber. On the right, Rev. Spahr is shown in 1974 with the first Boy Scouts in Medway to receive the God and Country Award.

In 1982, under Beryl Samia's tenure as church organist, the church bought its first set of hand bells. The 3½ octave set was used by the Dolce Ringers to provide special music monthly at church services, at nursing homes and annually at Faneuil Hall in Boston for the Christmas tree lighting celebration. Donna Henry is shown with Beryl and some of the new hand bells.

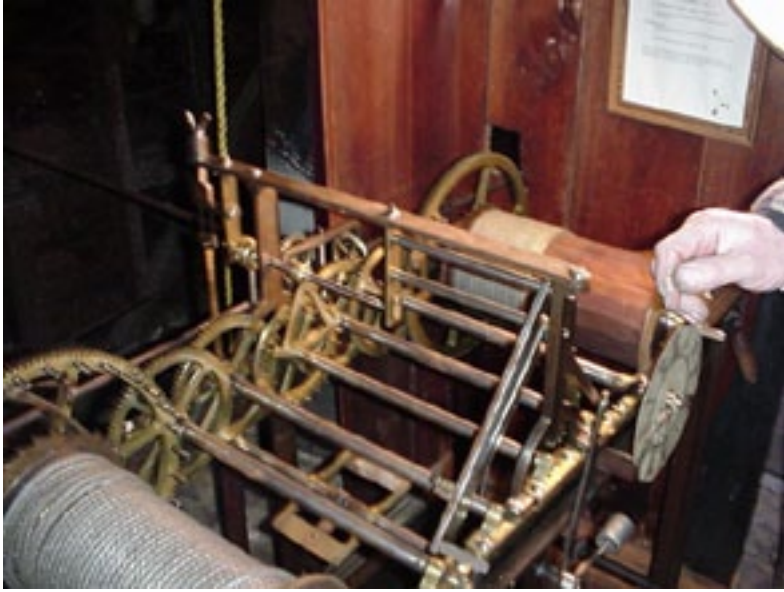


Rev. Marvin Derby was well-loved by the church and served faithfully as pastor from 1979 to 1988. He retired having served fifty years since his ordination, and was awarded Pastor Emeritus status. He and Rev. Ide are the only two pastors of the church to have been so honored.





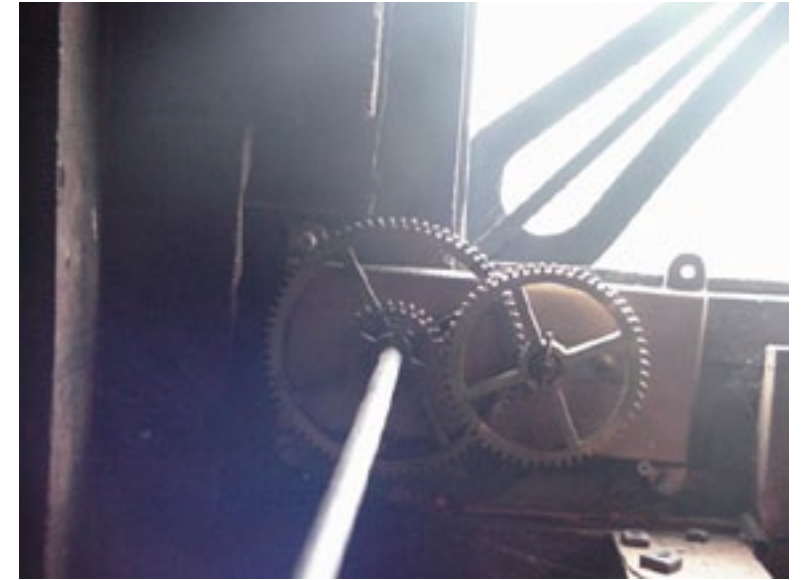
For many years the church held a Harvest Fair as an outreach event to the community toward the end of September. Pictured on the left are Neil Shorey and Jerry Hiatt at Neil's "Dish & Dat" table, and on the right are Dottie Derby, Carol Prescott, Barbara Clark and Jan Reynolds baking delicious apple pies from "scratch". The pictures were taken in the late 1970's and early 1980's.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Until the lightning strike and fire of 2009, the steeple clock's three faces were operated by a mechanical, pendulum-driven movement. Power to drive the clock was supplied by barrels filled with scrap iron attached to cables which may be seen at either end of the mechanism shown in (a). The right side of the drive train was used to drive the clock hands, and the left side was used to ring the bell. Time regulation was achieved by a pendulum. The motion of the gears in the right train was transferred to the clock hands as shown in (b). The bottom, horizontal gear attached to the vertical shaft was rotated by the vertical gear closest to the drive frame. The other three vertical gears were then turned synchronously to operate the clock hands. The other end of one of the three shafts is shown in (c). The clock dial, seen below the human hand in (a), was used to set the correct time.

On July 2nd, 2009 a bolt of lightning struck the steeple and started a fire. The steeple was destroyed and the inside of the church was heavily damaged by water. The congregation was displaced for about fifteen months as extensive repairs and renovations were made to meet the current building code. During the summer months the church met in a tent on the front lawn and during the winter worship services were held in the Medway High School auditorium. Throughout the process, God used the disruption to remind us that the church is a community of believers and not a building set upon a hill.





(a)



(b)



(c)

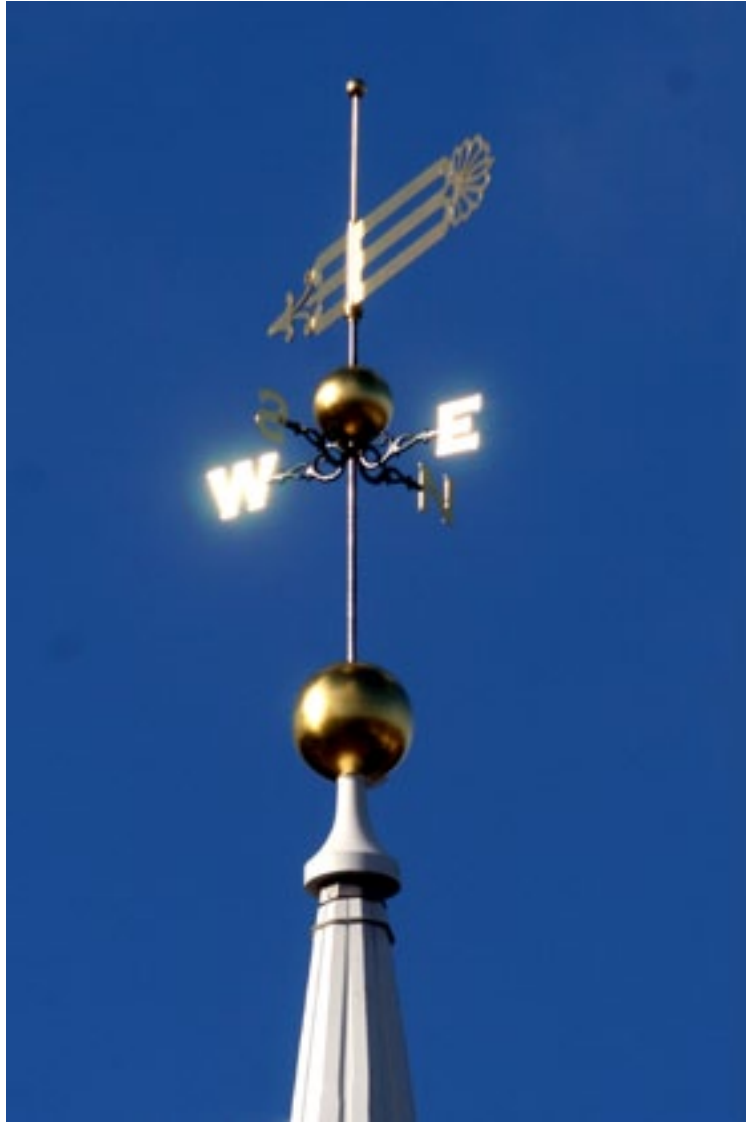
- (a) Exterior cleanup after the fire. The bell was removed and stored off-site until the new steeple was ready.
- (b) An army of (blue) blowers setup in the sanctuary circulating air to remove excess moisture.
- (c) Our church without a steeple and the tent on the front lawn used for Sunday worship.

On October 25th, 2010 the new steeple and a large crane arrived to lift the steeple into place. Art Paturzo and pastor Carl Schultz, standing at the base of the new steeple, are happy to see it arrive. The picture on the right was taken while the crane operator was checking things out.





First the bell, then the steeple, are raised and placed into position.



The weathervane was installed on December 6, 2010.



Picture of the Restored Church, sans clock, Spring 2011



In June 2011, almost two years after the fire, the mechanical tower clock was replaced by an electric one. In contrast to the old clock, the drive mechanism is contained on one printed circuit board, and the clock hands are advanced by powerful electric stepper motors. The hour hand is attached to the larger outer shaft on the motor, while the minute hand is attached to the smaller inner shaft. Adjustments for daylight savings time and power outages are done automatically.



Install the hour hands and minute hands on three clock faces, set the correct time, apply power and the job's done.