

A Collection of History and Reminiscences to Highlight
the 1990-1992 Anniversary Celebrations

1822-Founding, Ebenezer	1891-Cornerstone
1840-Charter	1892-Chapel Dedication
1890-Groundbreaking, present location	1893-Completed building dedication

**Memorial Church of the Holy Cross
United Methodist**

The 170th Anniversary

1992

Holy Cross Anniversary Committee, 1989-1992

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The Anniversary Committee sincerely appreciates and thanks
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EBENEZER TO MEMORIAL: THE FIRST SEVENTY YEARS

By Claire Phillips

In 1822, James Monroe was President of the United States. Our young nation had won its independence from England only forty-one years earlier, and had recently concluded the Treaty of Ghent, which formally ended its second war with Great Britain, the War of 1812. Pennsylvania was a thriving state, Philadelphia was the most populous American city, and Reading was a flourishing town containing more than ten thousand inhabitants. In this year, two young men, Emmor Kimber and his cousin Samuel Pettit, Methodists from Lancaster and stone masons by trade, came to Reading where they found employment building locks on the Schuylkill Canal. They became Reading's first resident Methodists and they taught and conducted prayer services at every opportunity.

Reading was not an unchurched community. A Friends Meeting House, a one story log house, had been in use in Reading since 1766. The German Reformed had constructed a log house in 1753, the Lutherans had built a church in 1751, and a Catholic church had been erected in 1791.

In 1766, the first Methodist Society had been established in New York City by Irish immigrants under the leadership of Philip Embury. An organized body of Methodism was begun in Philadelphia in 1769 with the founding of Old Saint George's Church. The Reverend Joseph Pilmoor, a Methodist missionary sent to America by John Wesley, had preached in Reading in 1772. He left Philadelphia on Tuesday, May 26, 1772, and arrived in Reading the following day. He noted in his diary that "in the evening we had most of the genteel people in the town at the Court House, and God enabled me to preach the gospel, not in word only, but also in power ... and we were abundantly blessed while we concluded the day in praise and prayer."

By 1773, a Methodist congregation was meeting in a log cabin in Geigertown, southern Berks County, with congregational members posted as sentries during services to guard against Indian attacks.

Methodism was spreading westward as well as throughout the original states of America, but, somehow, a deep-rooted prejudice against the Methodists had grown in Reading during the late 1700s and continued for some years into the 1800s. In 1803, the Reverends Jacob Gruber and Henry Boehm were assigned to the Dauphin circuit. Mr. Boehm arranged to preach at the Court House in Reading, but the Commissioners refused to open the doors for the people who had assembled there. In 1808, Reverend Boehm again passed through Reading, this time with Bishop Asbury. "The boys laughed at us and said 'there go the Methodist preachers,'" Mr. Boehm noted. He explained that "they knew us by our garb and perhaps thought it no harm to ridicule us."

Mr. Kimber wrote of his arrival (with Mr. Pettit) in Reading in 1822:

"There was no Methodist society in Reading and the opposition against people of this religious faith was so strong that regularly ordained ministers of the church were not able to hold services.

"We, who adhered to Methodism, were called believers of false prophets, stobblers, and the like. But being just plain mechanics, they thought we could not make any headway, so we were not driven out, although we were subject to persecution.

"Our first meetings were in a log house of one room. Then we rented a schoolhouse which was seated (had benches) and in which we taught school in the winter."

That schoolhouse, at the rear of 38 South Fifth Street, was probably built by neighborhood families, who then hired a school master to teach their children. There were no public schools in those days. The schoolhouse was a three story brick building with one room on each floor. The first floor was the school room, and the second and third story rooms served as living quarters for the school teacher. A wood burning stove in the first floor room provided the only heat. The building stood on property now owned by the Eways family. It was recently torn down because of its deteriorated condition.

Kimber and Pettit next bought a brick house at 133 South Third Street, a house about thirty feet square. They tore out the indoor partitions and seated it. As Mr. Kimber noted, the two cousins "were bishop, presiding elder and preacher in charge - for a time."

They then invited preachers. Among these were Henry Boehm and Jacob Gruber, who were then on the Lancaster circuit, and the Reverend Boehm noted the following:

"I succeeded in planting Methodism in Reading and formed the first class there, when I had been shut out a score of years before."

The "class" or worshipping group Boehm wrote about was organized on September 24, 1822, at the meeting hall on the second floor of the old State House, situated on Fifth Street just north of Penn. (The State House was destroyed by fire in 1872.)

Years later, Reverend Boehm related the following incident:

"At Reading, there was a mechanics shop in the neighborhood of the schoolhouse where some men used to meet regularly, idly amusing themselves. (This was near Fifth and Cherry Streets.)

"One of that company, a rather young man, undertook to mimic the Methodists. He went on to show how they acted during their meetings. He shouted, clapped his hands, and then would show how they fell down. He then threw himself down on the floor and lay there as if asleep.

"His companions enjoyed the sport, but after he had lain there for some time, they wondered why he didn't get up. They shook him in order to awake him. when they saw he did not breathe, they turned pale and sent for a physician who examined the man and pronounced him dead.

"This awful event did two things for us. It stopped ridicule and persecution. Also it gave us favor in the sight of people. They believed that God was for us. Little do the present Methodists of Reading know of our early struggles and difficulties."

The cousins Kimber and Pettit remained in Reading for several years. Mr. Kimber was licensed to preach. When they left Reading they deeded the little house on Third Street, which cost about \$575, to the Methodist Church. It was called Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church, and it was the Reading Methodist's house of worship until 1839, when a "regular house of worship" was built at 39 South Fourth Street. (This would have been on the east side of South Fourth Street below Cherry Street, the present location of a city parking garage.) The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted a charter to Ebenezer Church in 1840. The church building was remodeled and enlarged in 1870 and again in 1884, when a large pipe organ was installed. There were 400 members of Ebenezer Church at that time.

Two additional Methodist churches had already developed from Ebenezer Church. In 1843, due to a lack of meeting space at Ebenezer, a Sunday School class began meeting in the Odd Fellows Hall (now the location of the Reading Public Library). That class founded the St. Peter's Methodist Episcopal Church in 1848. St. Peter's was in existence until 1972, and was located at South Fifth and Pine Streets. In 1868, a member of Ebenezer made "a covenant with the Lord to build a House of Worship", donated a lot he owned at Ninth and Elm Streets, and the following year the Covenant Memorial Methodist Church was dedicated.

Ebenezer Church continued to flourish. Before a prospective member could join the church, he became a probationer for a period of six months. Before he could become a probationer, he had to attend a Sunday School class for several sessions and be recommended by a class member. These and other requirements did not discourage new memberships.

Even after the extensive remodeling completed in 1884, the large numbers of members could not find adequate space in the Ebenezer building. By 1886, a group of members who called themselves the Missionary Sunday School began meeting in a building at Church and Oley Streets. There were ninety-one members in that class, and it was attracting families of other denominations and some with no church ties at all. The Missionary School wrote to the Quarterly Conference about the need for a permanent meeting place, and the matter was referred to Ebenezer Church for further action.

The idea of a new church edifice probably came from Aaron Wilhelm, a trustee, steward, and former Sunday School Superintendent at Ebenezer. Also advancing the idea of a new church edifice was Walter S. Davis, the brother-in-law of Aaron Wilhelm. Davis was also a trustee and Sunday School Superintendent. These two men along with the pastor, the Reverend Dr. William J. Stevenson, began meeting with a group of Ebenezer members to discuss the idea of building a new church.

Finally, at a congregational meeting on July 1, 1889, it was decided that the Trustees would be authorized to sell the Ebenezer Church building "with all appurtenances and appointments" for the sum not less than \$7500 to those

members of the church who desired to continue worshipping in that building. The proceeds from the sale were to be applied toward the erection of a new and more desirably located Church and Sunday School building.

Within one year, a North Fifth Street site was chosen for the new church, a Philadelphia architect, Thomas P. Lonsdale, was selected (from among forty bids submitted) to design the building, and a contract for construction was awarded to Josiah S. Koch.

Although the idea of a new church and much of the planning for its structure originated with Aaron Wilhelm, he did not live to see its construction. He died in May of 1889, the year before building was begun.

The new church would have a new name, although it was still legally the Ebenezer Church. A majority of the Trustees and the congregation were in favor of the new building project, so a new charter was not needed. A resolution was adopted naming the church "The Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church." The phrase, "Thy Memorial, O Lord" was included on the church front. (The present name, The Memorial Church of the Holy Cross, was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1901.)

On July 7, 1890, ground was broken and construction was underway. The cornerstone for the new building was laid on April 26, 1891 by the Reverend W. J. Stevenson, D.O., the Reverend Bishop C. D. Foss, D.O., LL.D., the Reverend J. Richards Boyle, D.O., and the Honorable R. E. Pattison, then Governor of Pennsylvania. Services were held at the site in the morning and at the Rajah Theatre in the evening.

There was a small group of Ebenezer members who wished to remain at the South Fourth Street location. The Reverend S. W. Thomas, the District Superintendent, arranged for the sale to him of the Fourth Street building "for the purpose of organizing a new Methodist Episcopal Church and congregation to worship therein." The people who remained there then incorporated into a separate body called Peoples' Church. That church remained until the 1930s when it merged with Grace Methodist Church and the Peoples' Church was closed.

While construction of the Memorial Church progressed, the old St. Matthew's Lutheran Church was rented for ten dollars a month (including light and heat) and was used to conduct worship services and hold Sunday School.

The Property Committee also leased the home of Walter S. Davis at 329 North Fifth Street to use as a parsonage. The Board of Trustees soon purchased the Davis property. Church member A. Harvey Tyson offered to remodel the parsonage for \$1000 to be applied to his next year's subscription. The basement was remodeled, the kitchen and dining room enlarged, a back porch added, bay windows put on the north side, the bathroom and entire second floor remodeled, all the new rooms papered, and the back of the building raised to the highest of the three stories.

The new church's architecture included a massive tower designed in a revolutionary style. It rested on four "legs", not on a solid base. During construction, in February 1892, the tower collapsed. At first, defective

stones were thought to be the cause of the fall of the tower. The possibility of faulty workmanship was considered. Whatever the reason, the tower's collapse caused much consternation as well as a delay in the construction schedule. Finally, in June, at the decision of the architect, the tower was taken down and rebuilding begun.

By the end of summer the chapel was almost completed. The present Sunday School auditorium was the chapel dedicated in 1892. The present Greer Memorial Chapel area was originally a ladies' parlor and a Sunday School room used as the Infants' Department.

The year 1892 was the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. The World's Columbian Exposition (the Chicago World's Fair of 1892) commemorated the progress of our nation in art, industry and agriculture. Memorial Church also held a "Columbian Festival" in the Entertainment Hall (church basement) on November 14 through November 19. A printed catalogue from that festival listed one hundred forty-four paintings and statuary on display. Visitors were requested "not to touch or handle the pictures, statuary, etc., and are cautioned against pointing with canes or umbrellas." A further program note announced that "the chapel in connection with the above (Memorial) edifice will be opened for service Sunday, November 20, 1892."

The chapel was dedicated by Dr. Stevenson on November 20th with little ceremony. There was still much to be done to prepare for the opening of the complete church building.

The appointment of a new pastor was a great concern. Dr. Stevenson had been at Ebenezer-Memorial for five years. Because the Methodist Church had a rule that ministers could not serve more than five years with one congregation, he would have to leave. "Dr. Stevie", as he was affectionately called, was loved and respected, and many people were upset at the thought of losing him. Finally, however, the Reverend I. M. Foster, D.D., was chosen as Dr. Stevenson's successor.

In February 1893, Walter Davis obtained a British organist, Dr. Stocks Hammond, a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, to serve as organist-director for the new church.

Other concerns had to be addressed as the church opening grew near. A mortgage of \$40,000 was arranged so the contractor could be paid, a committee was appointed to raise funds for the new music department, and a search for a house for the sexton was begun.

Sunday, October 1, 1893, was chosen as the date for the dedication of the completed building. As worshippers neared the church that Sunday, their attention was drawn by the sounds of music coming from above. Four trumpeters, playing from the church tower, heralded the dedication service to the congregation and the community.

The church was dedicated by the Reverend Bishop John P. Newman, assisted by Dr. Foster and Dr. Stevenson and three additional Reverend Doctors of the

Methodist Episcopal Church. Ebenezer, now Memorial Church, was seventy-one years old.

The new church was constructed of Michigan red stone and crystalline marble. Classified as Romanesque in design, it also incorporated Gothic and baroque features. Aaron Wilhelm and Dr. Stevenson had traveled to Europe sometime in the 1880s. When they returned to Reading, enthused by the beauty of the architecture they had seen in the churches, monasteries and other grand buildings of Europe, they persuaded the building committee to include some of those features in the design for the new edifice.

A lengthy front page article in the February 20, 1890 edition of the Reading Telegram (which can be read at the Berks County Historical Society) told of the proposed building, calling the new Methodist Episcopal Church "A Magnificent Structure Embodying the Latest Thought in Modern Architecture" and offering a detailed description of the building and materials to be used in the new edifice.

The "audience room" (sanctuary) was planned to seat eight hundred people and featured an octagon formed amphitheatre on a sloping disc floor. The lower ten feet of each wall was finished with mottled buff brick in lieu of wainscoting. In each angle of the octagon, exposed antique oak timber rafters were projected from a stone column. The joining of the rafters was made effective by the outstretched wings and heads of angels carved in relief. A central rotunda received the eight rafters at its base and formed an arcaded rim. Four wrought iron and silver electroliers were suspended from the rim for light distribution and a decorative effect. (There were also gas lights throughout the building. These were removed in 1927.) A large stained glass window was centered on each wall of the sanctuary.

Four pews spanned the area in front of the altar, making the center aisle a blind aisle. (This was changed in 1901, so that a way was opened directly to the altar.) There was a pulpit platform with a lectern on the right and a baptismal font on the left, with the choir loft above and to the rear of the altar. The organ, presented by the Wilhelm family, was built on either side of the north window. There was a raised dais from which solo and divisional choir work was rendered.

To the immediate right of the dais was a carved stone fireplace bearing the inscription, "While I was musing, the fire burned." Charles Wilhelm, Aaron Wilhelm's son, is said to have suggested the inscription, taken from Psalm 39:3.

The Sunday School area of the first floor included the chapel or main meeting area, the ladies' parlor, primary department, library with reading room, the Official Board room, radiating class rooms, and lavatories. The balcony floor contained additional classrooms and a large assembly room for the Young Peoples' Society. The Adult Sunday School could accommodate eight hundred people and the youth area was planned for three hundred-fifty.

The ground floor (basement) was the Entertainment Hall and contained the dining and kitchen area. The Entertainment Hall and dining room was planned

to hold one thousand people. (In 1901, the lower level of the basement was finished with hard wood and equipped with horizontal bars, a trapeze, rowing machines and showers. Basketball games were played there for many years.)

The church was entered from Fifth Street by walking through the open groined columns-supported tower and along the mosaic-paved arcaded cloister, one hundred feet in length, which opened into the auditorium (sanctuary) and Sunday School area. The church could also be entered through the octagonal vestibule on the northwest corner of the building. The vestibule had a stairway to the basement. Therefore, from this one entrance there was access to the closed arched colonnade along the front of the building, the sanctuary, the choir reception room and Entertainment Hall.

Outside, jutting from the vestibule walls, five sandstone faces appear. The corner or center face is mustached. Two woman-like faces are located on each side. No one knows the identities of the faces, but there is conjecture that the male face may have been a self-portrait of the artist who created the stonework figures. Other carved stone designs, including a gargoyle resembling a flying dragon, attract interest to the exterior walls.

The church roof was covered with a Spanish pattern unglazed red tile, sloping upward from each of the eight sides to the central rotunda. The rotunda covering and spouting was of cold-rolled copper.

One month after the new church was dedicated, the choir appeared at the worship service wearing choir robes and mortar board hats. This was the first vested choir in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Later, Memorial became one of the first, if not the first, American Methodist churches to have a gowned minister. When the Reverend Bishop Berry visited Memorial and saw the pastor in a robe he remarked, "This is the only church in Methodism where they dress their ministers up like a mother and call him Father."

In its lifetime of little more than three score years and ten since the cousins Kimber and Pettit first gathered with their small group of believers in a little log house, the people who became the Ebenezer Church had progressed to a one room schoolhouse, then to a larger "seated" house on South Third Street, eventually into a "proper" church building on South Fourth Street, and finally occupied and dedicated its beautiful new edifice on North Fifth Street. Now one hundred years older, our church still lives. It meets to learn and worship and serve, and it continues to be "Thy Memorial, O Lord."

CHURCH CHARTER
By James W. Stoudt

By Act. No. 146 of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on April 16, 1840, a Charter was granted to the Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church in the Borough of Reading. This was the original Charter for what is now the Memorial Church of the Holy Cross United Methodist.

The original name in the Charter was "Trustees of the Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal in the Borough of Reading, County of Berks and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

The officers under the Charter were to consist of a President and nine Trustees with a Secretary/Treasurer to be chosen from the nine Trustees. The officers and Trustees were to be chosen from the male members of the society. (This was before the emancipation of women.)

The original Trustees at the time of the grant of the Charter were Daniel Rhein, Christian Miller, Henry Goodhart, Jacob Gossler, Andrew S. Gossler, George Moore, and John Souders.

To be elected a Trustee, one had to have been a church member for at least eighteen months and be at least twenty-five years old. Only male members were permitted to vote. The preacher, having pastoral charge of the congregation from time to time, was by virtue of his office to be the presiding officer of and President of the Board of Trustees.

The assets of the Church were to be vested in the Trustees with the right on the part of the Trustees to dispose of any real estate with the approval of two-thirds of the male members qualified to vote and present at a meeting called by the President on Sunday morning after worship services. Sale or disposition of the building occupied for worship on South Fourth Street between Penn and Franklin Streets in Reading was prohibited by the Trustees. Nothing is said in the Charter as to how the sale of these premises was to be affected, but I presume it was by vote of the congregation.

The income from the real and personal property of the Church was to be applied to the maintenance and repair of Church properties as the Trustees thought proper and expedient.

The Charter also provided for the election of seven stewards who were to discharge the duties required of them by the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The original Charter was first amended on November 28, 1870. The Reverend Mr. L. A. Fernley was the pastor at the time. Under this amendment, the name was changed to "Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of Reading." Under this restated Charter, the assets of the corporation were not to exceed \$10,000 and voting membership was extended to all citizens of Pennsylvania

over twenty-one years, having been members for at least one year. The officers were to be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer elected from the nine Trustees who were to be elected by the male voters of the Church. No preacher was eligible to be a Trustee, nor was any member who had not been a member of the congregation for eighteen months and was not yet twenty-five years of age. The Trustees were given power to lease the pews for such rent and on such terms and conditions as they deemed proper. The amended Charter also provided that no action of the Trustees or congregation could prevent the minister or preachers appointed by the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States from officiating in the Church or using the Church building for religious purposes in conformity with the rules and regulations of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States.

The power to make by-laws was vested in the Trustees. This amended charter is recorded in the Recorder of Deeds Office of Berks County in charter Book Volume 2, Page 195.

On June 5, 1944, the Charter was again amended. This amendment constitutes a restatement of the Charter and changes the original Charter and first amended Charter in several respects. The name was changed at that time to "Memorial Church of the Holy Cross Methodist." The purpose was stated as "The support of the public worship of almighty God according to the doctrine, discipline, faith, laws, usage, and ministerial appointments of the Methodist Church as from time to time established, made, and declared by the lawful authority of the Methodist Church." An additional collateral purpose was the conducting of a public burial ground and cemetery. The amended charter provides that the Directors of the Corporation shall be a nine person Board of Trustees elected as prescribed in the Discipline of the Methodist Church with the Trustees having the power to make by-laws for the government of the corporation and rules and regulations for their own government. Under the new Charter there is no limitation on the amount of assets which the Church can own. This amendment is recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deed of Berks County in Charter Book Volume 13, Page 555.

The last amendment of the Charter was on April 23, 1969, at which time the name of the corporation was changed to "Memorial Church of the Holy Cross United Methodist." This was the sole purpose of the amendment and this amendment is recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Berks County in Charter Book Volume 22, Page 976.

THE FIRE

By Donald Ollendorf

Sunday, January 26, 1936, was a bitter cold morning. The sexton opened the church a little earlier than usual so he could stoke up the heating boiler to insure that the congregation had a comfortably warm building for Sunday school classes and the worship service.

At 2:45 that afternoon an unknown person called the fire department to say that the church was on fire. Eventually, twelve of the fourteen Reading fire companies were required to put out the stubborn fire at the rear (east side) of the building. One fireman, a George Long of the Hampden Fire Company, attacking the fire from inside the smoke filled building, died from asphyxiation.

The fire destroyed what was the chapel and today is the Sunday school auditorium. The remainder of the building suffered water and smoke damage. The present sanctuary (known then as the auditorium) had so much water that holes were chopped in the floor to allow the water to drain into the basement so the organ would not be damaged. Several churches offered their buildings to the congregation while repairs were underway. However, fast action by the Trustees had the sanctuary ready for use by the next Sunday. Fire damage costs were estimated at \$35,000 to \$50,000.

As part of the reconstruction, it was decided to have a separate chapel and Sunday school auditorium. The new chapel was located in the south portion of the Sunday school area. A generous donation by Elizabeth Greer Bausher was used to complete and furnish the interior of the chapel and resulted in the dedication of the chapel in January 1938 as the Greer Memorial Chapel.

Solon D. and J. Lee Bausher donated the chapel organ to the memory of Solon D. Bausher's first wife, Cora Elizabeth Bausher. The chapel as it exists today is unchanged from its original construction. The Sunday School auditorium, the parlor and small kitchen are also part of the reconstruction.

The actual cause of the fire was never determined. Fire officials surmised that beams close to the heating boiler chimney got hot enough to ignite.

A MUSICAL HERITAGE

By Dr. Francis H. Williamson

The importance of music in the life of our church is shown by several actions begun with the new church building. Dr. Stocks Hammond, a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, was brought over from England to be organist and choirmaster. Also, in 1893, when the choir was vested in gowns, the trustees thought that they were the first vested choir in Methodist history. At the same time, Mrs. Aaron Wilhelm gave the original organ to the congregation in memory of her husband. The family updated the instrument several times until the middle '20s.

Several years later, Hammond asked to be relieved of his duties. He later served First Methodist Church in Pottsville. Miss Evelyn Essick, a daughter of the congregation and sister of Joseph Essick, served as interim organist. Later, Miss Essick won a prestigious choral competition in Philadelphia with the choir of Second Reformed Church, Reading. For many years, she served as organist at Christ Episcopal Church in Reading. (Her most famous Boychoir graduate there was the tenor Paul Althouse of Metropolitan Opera fame.) In 1896, the church again arranged for the services of a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. Walter Heaton was an honors graduate of Victoria University. In 1922 he received a Bachelor and Doctor's degree in Music from Lincoln-Jefferson University. During his years of service, all the worship services of the congregation were printed. The anthem library shows that the choir music was selected according to the liturgical calendar. At communion services, full communion masses of Schubert and other composers were sometimes sung--Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. Many of Heaton's anthems were published, among them were settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis and other liturgical canticles. The playing of trumpets from the tower seems to have been done frequently in those days.

With the resignation of Walter Heaton in 1928, John Duddy became organist. Duddy served until 1933 when he left to continue his studies at Northwestern University. Later, Dr. Duddy was to become Director of Music at Albright College. Miss Marguerite A. Scheifele was the appointed organist-director, serving until the late 1960s. Many present church members have fond memories of the boychoir under her leadership. It is not always recognized that these organists served the community through their teaching, not just their Sunday playing. For example, Mildred Schnable, a pupil of Miss Scheifele, was a musical leader in the Reading area for many years, serving the St. James U.C.C. Church in West Reading. Robert Schultz IV, the bass in our quartet for many years, was also a member of the Scheifele boychoir. The recitals for Miss Scheifele's piano students were often held in the main Sunday School room.

Mrs. Dorothy Garlichs became organist/director after Miss Scheifele's retirement and stayed until her husband was transferred out-of-state, at which time Francis Williamson became organist (fall 1971). As professor of Music and Religion at Albright, Dr. Williamson continued the long tradition at Holy Cross, not only for fine music, but for music with theological and liturgical integrity. The choir also continued the tradition of outreach through music

through participation in the yearly Alumni Choir Weekend at Albright College. Through the assistance of the Holy Cross Choir, the college music program included performances of masterworks by Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Brahms, Faure and contemporary composers.

Clearly, the Memorial Church of the Holy Cross had recognized the importance of music as a part of its faith identity and calling throughout these 100 years. From its inception, authentic liturgy and the role of music in that service has been a part of our calling. Moreover, the church served the musical life of the Reading community through the work of its organist/directors and the quartet. This, too, was part of the church's mission; training and challenging young people to value the gift of music, especially in the life of faith. As the twentieth century comes to a close and the role of music in the community at large and within the church again faces change, it is imperative that we take seriously this heritage which is ours.

CHERUB CHOIR
HOLY CROSS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
By Elizabeth Rasbridge

During the early years of the Memorial Church of the Holy Cross, Methodist, there existed a notable Boychoir under the tutelage of Miss Marguerite Scheifele. About the year 1960, it was decided that a young choir should be formed to accommodate girls as well as boys. Consequently, the Cherub Choir of Holy Cross was formed and sponsored for the first year by the Young Adult Class.

Hrs. Marion Rodruan capably directed this group for several years and was eventually replaced by Mrs. Betty Rasbridge, who held the position for the next four years. She, in turn, was followed by Mrs. Dorothy Garlichs who served as Church Music Director upon the retirement of Miss Scheifele in the early 1970s. Also, Miss LuAnne Kerns and Mrs. Holly Parker served short terms as leaders who helped train and develop the Cherub Choir.

The children, whose numbers ranged between 20 and 25, were ages K through Grade 3. They wore white smocks accented by large maroon bows. Their gowns were fashioned and sewn by their mothers and the children truly looked cherubic in them. Practices were held in the upstairs Sunday School room on Thursday evenings, and the choir sang monthly on a Sunday morning during the worship service. On these occasions, they were accompanied by Miss Scheifele on the organ.

In more recent years, the Cherub Choir became the Children's Choir and was first directed by Dr. Francis Williamson and then by Mrs. Barbara Piscitello, and presently by Mrs. Joyce McNerny. Even though older children were included in this choir, its numbers have decreased due to the absence of eligible young people in the church. The garb was changed to light green choir robes with white stoles at the time the Chancel Choir adopted the same apparel.

Some of the children who sang in the original Cherub Choir are now the parents of the children who continue to bless the congregation with their inspirational music.

THE BOYCHOIR

By Henry Hershey

The Boychoir of Holy Cross had been in existence for several years when I joined in 1937. To the best of my memory and that of other fellow members, it appears the Boychoir tradition started in the early thirties, with Miss Scheifele as organist, and continued to 1952 when it became a Boys/Girls Choir.

The reputation of this choir was such that many families sent their sons to sing with this choir. Many young boys studied voice and piano in Miss Scheifele's home, and I'm sure were influenced to join the Holy Cross Boychoir. In my case, my mother and grandmother had moved their membership from Holy Cross to Windsor Street Church, as our home was only one block away; however, when I was seven years old, I was enrolled in the choir at Holy Cross and took voice and piano lessons as well.

I recall that Marguerite Scheifele would recruit every young boy in the church, and it was hard to find a Holy Cross family with a young son who did not sing in the choir. If she needed additional voices she would contact the Children's Home, and many years we would have three or four boys from the Home as part of our choir. The average size Boychoir over the early years was about twenty voices.

To many of us, Miss Scheifele was a very strong influence, not only in her music training but also in her character and moral demands. She was a no-nonsense religious woman. And while I attended as a choir member - without my family - she was both mother, grandmother and disciplinarian all in one. I would be remiss in not saying that she had her hands full with me. We were given 25 cents a month in a small envelope; however, during the month we were "docked" for any misbehavior or problems we caused. Most months my envelope was empty. In fact, I'm sure by the time my voice changed, in 1942, I probably owed Miss Scheifele for the amount of times she wanted to dock me and there was nothing left.

I gained many strong friendships over the years from the Boychoir, to name a few: Robert Mast, George Lindemuth, Franklin Hodgkins, Bud Seward, Harold Seward, Bob Shultz, the Ebling brothers, Al Stallone (from the Children's Home), Dana Gangewere, Kay Shober, etc. Many summers the boys would be guests of my family at Green Valley Country Club, so this experience was more than just singing in church.

Our Boychoir members were also given religious training by Miss Scheifele. Many times during our Friday night rehearsals, she would take time to teach us the meaning of the music we were using. I learned as much or more from her about our Christian beliefs as I did in Sunday School.

These choirs were very accomplished. We were well rehearsed and well trained. The choir dressed in crisp clean robes with hard starched collars.

There are many fond memories I have of the five years that I sang with this choir, but most exciting to me was to go through life never forgetting this experience. In 1951, I was baritone soloist at the Naval Academy and the other three soloists (quartet) came with me to Reading to sing at Holy Cross. I remember how proud I was, but the proudest person in church that day (next to my mother) was Miss Scheifele. She always remembered her boys and stayed in touch with many of them long after they left the Boychoir.

I have asked various former choir members to write a short note regarding their years in the Boychoir. They are as follows:

Robert Schultz, III, writes:

As I recall, I went to Holy Cross at about age 10 after leaving Christ Episcopal Church. I joined approximately fifteen other boys under the direction of Marguerite Scheifele and Hildred Schnable for rehearsals on Fridays in the large Sunday School room. During a break, we would disperse through out the church. To me, at that age, it seemed to be a lot of work that often ended in criticism about our singing. The boys always looked forward to the time we would receive three little brown envelopes with money, but to me the best gift was when we received the yearly membership to the Y.M.C.A.

On Sundays, we would don those black gowns with the white collars and go into the choir loft where, until you grew tall enough, you looked into the metal music rack or under it. All during the service, you were scrutinized and reminded to sit still.

I remained in the choir until about age 15 when my voice started to change. My voice teacher, Miriam Baker Hompie, said I should stop singing. This was the time I left the church. I returned as an adult in 1953, not as the soloist, but just as a member of the adult choir.

Franklin Hodgkins writes:

My association with the Boychoir began in 1937, when I knocked on Miss Marguerite Scheifele's Madison Avenue home selling 5 cents Liberty Magazines. It was one of the highlights of my life to date - the Boychoir led by Marguerite A. Scheifele, Mildred Schnable, Assistant, and Minnie Rowley, driver (of auto).

Rehearsals were held Friday night (before adult choir) and Saturday afternoons, weekly. Initially, I was paid 35 cents a month, which was increased to 50 cents when I became a soloist. But I seldom received more than a quarter - docked in 5 cents increments for missing practice, chewing gum, and restlessness in the choir loft during service. I paid 35 cents (my parents gave me the money) to have my Buster Brown collar cleaned at a Chinese laundry. Usually I wore it three or four times between starches. So my net loss cost me money. The best part of my pay was the free Y.M.C.A. Boy's Membership given to each choir boy, a gift of Solon Bausher. That cost him \$8.00 a year, and I was thrilled.

I remained an active member of Calvary Reformed UCC. From Sunday School, I would leave Calvary promptly at 10 a.m. to run down the hill for the processional at Holy Cross at 10:45 a.m. I also became crucifer at age twelve, a position I held for six years, even after my voice changed. I stayed in the choir loft (without voice) until I was drafted for the service in 1946.

Miss Scheifele wrote, to me every week when I left for West Point (four years) and each letter had inside a message from the Bible and one stick of gum. She said it was to make up for all that she had made me take out during my choir days. She also attended my graduation in 1951. I'm sure she had many "spoiled" sopranos, but I KNOW that I was her favorite, at least until Michael Flaherty came along (circa 1950's).

I always wrote back to Miss Scheifele using the initials SAM which are her initials backwards. Her middle name was Agnes. She is buried at Charles Evans Cemetery, squeezed in, almost lost. I visit her frequently, at least once a year. She died on St. Patrick's Day - ironic! I thought she was a saint - never while I was in the choir - but after I matured.

My growth through MAS via the Boychoir firmly established my Christian beliefs and religious roots for life. Thank you, Holy Cross, MAS, and the Boychoir gang (1937-1946).

Albert A. Stallone writes:

J. Lee Bausher, a trustee of this church as well as The Home for Friendless Children, now known as The Children's Home of Reading, made sure that any young boy at the "Home" between the ages of nine and twelve, who could still carry a tune and wear a two inch starched collar, sang in the Boychoir at Holy Cross Methodist Church. This choir was directed by Marguerite Scheifele ... one of the most loving women I had ever known up to the time I met my wife.

Fortunately, I met Mr. Bausher's criteria, because I certainly could use the thirty-five cents, and the "night out" once a week wasn't a bad idea either.

In Miss Scheifele's mind, I could do no wrong. Her only disappointment in me, perhaps, may have been in my failure to convince my oldest son to follow in my footsteps.

Each year since her death, I relive some of those fond memories by placing a lily in the Easter Garden of Lilies in front of our altar in honor of Miss Marguerite Scheifele. Then, looking to the last pew off of the center aisle, I give a wink to our soloist, Hank Hershey.

Eugene R. Curry, Jr. writes:

My recollection of being a member of the Boychoir goes back to sometime in 1947 when I was about 10 years of age and the choir director, Marguerite Scheifele, pounced upon both my mother and myself after Sunday School with an enthusiastic invitation to join the choir.

As I found it hard, even at that age, to say "no", I joined the choir and started the ritual of taking a bus every Friday evening from Glenside to the church for rehearsals. My least favorite memory of being a member of the choir was standing at the corner of 5th and Buttonwood after choir rehearsal during the winter months, waiting for the bus to go home. My most favorable memory was receiving my weekly pay envelope which contained 25 or 35 cents. I earned my first dollar singing in the Boychoir at a wedding, and yes, I still have it!

Miss Scheifele was a very dedicated worker, and I have very fond memories of her as well as of the friendships that were formed during those years with the other members of the Boychoir.

THE HOLY CROSS SUNDAY SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

By Roy Thomas

One of the aims of a Church Anniversary Celebration is to acquaint present church members with some of the achievements and practices in the earlier life of the Church.

At the request of the Anniversary Committee the writer will tell about the Holy Cross Sunday school orchestra as he remembers it.

In the late nineteen thirties the Ira Rider family came to Holy Cross. Mr. Rider, a General Insurance Agent, had been very active in Masonic musical activities in the Harrisburg area.

Soon after coming to Holy Cross, he recruited several players from the church and added a few semi- and professional musicians from the community. Eventually ten or twelve players were accompanying the singing and presenting an orchestral number on a weekly basis.

The orchestra personnel included students, teachers, insurance salesmen and a retired cellist from the Pittsburgh Symphony. We did not know until after the group had disbanded, just prior to the beginning of World War II, that Mr. Rider had personally compensated the outside professional musicians.

As the writer prepared this article he realized that he is the lone non-student survivor of the orchestra.

We have been able to follow the careers of some of the student musicians and are pleased to report that Dr. Morette Rider, violin, has recently retired as the Chairman of the Music Department at Oregon State University. Our trumpet player, Williard Musser, became a well known bandmaster, adjudicator and Clinician in New York State. Joe Boscov, violin and viola, founded and is the present owner of BerkTex, a local firm engaged in the manufacture of electronic and fiber-optic cables.

The writer has fond memories of playing the bass violin in the orchestra, which in its time contributed much to the musical heritage of the Church.

EDITORS NOTE: Roy Thomas became a teacher of music and served as professor of music at Kutztown State College (now Kutztown State University). He was Chairman of the Music Department at the time of his retirement.

THE CHAPEL CLASS
By Dr. Frederick Vastine

The name was not always the Chapel Class. It occurred during one of our monthly meetings, about 25 years ago more or less, that Jim Stoudt said to the class, "You know, even though we are known as the Young Married Couples Class, our status has changed. We are still married, but not so young. We are more portly, with gray, thinning hair. It is time we change our name. Since we meet weekly in the Chapel, why not call ourselves the Chapel Fellowship Class." So we became known as the Chapel Class.

The class had its inception at the time when Mrs. Helen Darrah (wife of Dr. Leon Darrah, head of the Department of Obstetrics at the Reading Hospital) was in charge of the primary department of the Sunday School. She saw these young parents bringing their children and thought what a wonderful opportunity to form another Sunday School class. She prevailed upon J. Lee Bausher to take the class and be its teacher.

The class grew in size under J. Lee's teaching, until we reached a peak of about 85 people. Mrs. Howard Hartzell became the first president in 1934. Herb Munshower had great fun leading the class in song. In later years, Bill Shillady became our secretary and kept us aware of the health of the members.

Early records bring back a feeling of nostalgia - memories of great times together - record attendance in J. Lee's Sunday morning class - wonderful banquets - picnics at the Copley's farm - great social times.

Also in those early records are names unfamiliar to the present generations - "those long dead and gone a while".

We held a banquet in Krause Hall at Albright College in 1954 in honor of J. Lee's teaching of his class at church for 20 years. The format of the program was copied from the television program "This Is Your Life". Lee was much pleased with the reference to a little red wagon which as a child he wanted so much. We gave him a little red wagon as a memento.

Our annual banquets were always well attended and we were entertained with many varied programs. "The Apostles", the Bellaires from Central Catholic High School, and "Chalk and Sound" were very impressive. A most outstanding program was Edward Hill presenting time lapse photography - a rapidly changing scene of nature and its growth, flowers and sky, winter and summer - beautiful and most spectacular.

The class functioned for over 40 years with J. Lee as its only teacher. Of course, when he went on his annual vacation in October with his wife, we had substitute teachers, but Lee was our teacher. He gave unselfishly of his time and talent to a class which meant a great deal to him, and we were the better for it.

A remnant of the class still holds forth in the Chapel with our minister, Arthur Rettew, teaching. Those who attend are inspired by his explanations of the scripture.

**HISTORY OF THE ADULT FELLOWSHIP CLASS
HOLY CROSS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

By Elizabeth Rasbridge

During the mid nineteen-fifties there arose a need for the formation of a group of young adults in the Sunday School of the Memorial Church of the Holy Cross. At the time, there were active classes called the Chapel Fellowship and the Philathea Class, among others, whose members were approaching middle-age.

Since many young couples with small children felt that they did not necessarily have the same common interests and did not fit in with these classes, the Young Adult Fellowship was organized and led by our pastor at the time, the Rev. Charles Yrigoyen, Sr.

The purpose of this organization was to promote and maintain Christian Fellowship among its members and to serve Holy Cross through projects and other services mutually agreed upon by the membership and the church. The group met each Sunday morning for Sunday School, often filling one of the alcoves in the auditorium, and also socially on the 4th Tuesday evening of each month, hosted in the home of one of the members. A cluster of approximately 25-30 men and women made up the original membership. Today, in 1991, those numbers remain relatively the same for the social meetings. However, the attendance is less during Sunday School.

Over the period of 25 plus years there came a time that, due to the aging of the membership, the Young Adult Fellowship adopted its present identity; namely, the Adult Fellowship Class. Under this name, as well as under the prior title, many singles and couples have come and gone with very few of the original group remaining today. While a few have chosen to leave because of personal reasons, the vast majority have left due to occupational moves to other cities and states. A number of these couples have retained close personal friendships and spiritual ties as attested by their attendance on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary Dinner held at the Sheraton and the more recent Church Anniversary celebrations held in the Fellowship Hall the past two years.

This organization has been led by a slate of officers elected by the group. For many years, the custom was to have two people (usually a husband and wife) serve as co-presidents for a year. Upon completion of their term, these couples were presented with a monogrammed Bible in appreciation of their services. Today, one person serves as president for a two year term and remuneration is in the form of a gift certificate given to an agency or charity of his or her choice. The spiritual leader continues to be the pastor.

The money-raising projects have been varied. For many years, the annual Christmas Poinsettia Sale (presently discontinued) served as our primary fundraiser. However, there were many other productive ideas that the Adult Fellowship used to raise funds for church projects. Among these were the

Green Hills Theater ticket sales during the days when that summer theater was a popular attraction. We shared also in the annual dinners served by the Women's Society. At the Christmas Turkey Dinner we sponsored a Santa Photo Booth and at the Easter Ham Dinner candy was sold. In more recent years, a spaghetti dinner was served by the group. Another important and very lucrative activity was the sponsorship of a clothing outlet which weekly sold new and used clothing to neighborhood residents at very reasonable prices.

All of the above functions made it possible for the class to sponsor many worthwhile endeavors for the benefit of Holy Cross. A number of these projects have been on-going. For instance, the membership, through its concentrated efforts, renovated and equipped the Infant Nursery, purchased altar covers for the Sanctuary, purchased a tea service for the Parlor, and organized and supported for a year the Cherub Choir. Robes for the latter were sewn by several dedicated members. In addition, as memorial gifts, a vestment cupboard and a beautiful nativity set were added to the church's prized possessions.

In conclusion, the history of this close-knit group, the Young Adult Fellowship Class, now the Adult Fellowship Class, has been both a blessing and a priceless heritage to the entire church membership. May God's hand continue to guide this group as it goes forward into the next 35 years!

THE BRINTONS -- OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY

By Reta Barto

The relationship of the Church of the Holy Cross and the Thomas and Anna Brinton family began in 1916 and spanned more than 50 years. At the time, Thomas Brinton was completing his theological studies at Garrett Biblical Institute (now Garrett Evangelical Seminary) in Evanston, IL, expecting to return to the Philadelphia Conference (Eastern Pa. Conference) as a pastor. He and his wife Anna were challenged to missionary service by a speech given to the student body at Garrett by Dr. John McKendrie Springer, a pioneer missionary to Central Africa.

In 1910, John and Helen Springer had made a trip into the southern part of the former Belgian Congo (Zaire) from Southern Rhodesia where they were missionaries. The purpose was to see whether the Methodist Episcopal Church North should begin missionary work among the peoples in the emerging towns and villages of this copper mining area. On that trip, the Springers met with the great African Chief Mwant Yav Muteba, who appealed for two missionary families, one a doctor, the other an educator-evangelist, to begin work in his kingdom.

Back in New York the Springers shared with the Board of Missions the chief's request. The Board's response was that it simply did not have the missionaries or funds to support them. However, if Dr. and Mrs. Springer found the missionaries and got churches in the United States to support them, the Board would back the Springers. He visited Garrett Seminary where he had once been a student and there delivered the speech that challenged the Brintons.

In previous contacts, a strong friendship had developed between the Jere Barr and Joseph Essick families and John and Helen Springer. Through this friendship the Springers had become acquainted with the Church of the Holy Cross and sensed the potential for strong missionary interest and support. As a result, just before Thomas and Anna Brinton and their six-month-old son, Howard, sailed for Africa in June of 1916, they began a close relationship with the members of Holy Cross Church which lasted over 25 years. Jere Barr and Joseph Essick and their families were always the main contact persons at Holy Cross.

As the Brintons sailed to Africa, their ship avoided German submarines by steaming south through the Caribbean and traveling without lights. They arrived weeks later at Capetown. After another two weeks and three train changes they reached Kambove, the end of the railroad line. Here they waited at a mission station for two months, until carriers sent by the Lunda king arrived to carry their belongings to their destination, Musumba, capital of the Lunda Kingdom of Katanga, Southern Belgian Congo (Zaire). These last 500 miles were traversed on foot, bicycle and hammock, along an old slave-raiding trail.

The next five years were spent putting the Lunda language into writing, developing the first schools, and organizing the early converts into worship-

ping congregations with a strong evangelistic emphasis. Thomas also spent much time translating the four Gospels, Acts and some of the Psalms into the Lunda language. In 1922, returning to the Belgian Congo after a year's furlough, they were assigned to establish a new mission center at Sandoa, 100 miles south of Musumba. For the family, which now included three small children, this meant living in a tent, then a grass house and finally an adobe brick house with a grass roof and a pounded dirt floor. The next few years saw the birth of two more sons and the death of their only daughter. She died at the age of seven after a two day illness with cerebral malaria.

The work at Sandoa and the many villages within a 50 to 80 mile radius grew to include an agricultural program, a Bible school for pastors, and many village schools and churches. Finally, in 1940, malaria, the scourge of the tropics, caused severe heart problems for Thomas Brinton, necessitating his retirement from the mission field. He and his family came back to Delaware where he served small churches in the Peninsula Conference until his death in 1957 at the age of 74.

In the meantime, Howard had completed his college education at Asbury College in Wilmore, Ky., and had gone back to Africa as secretary to John M. Springer, who was now Bishop of Methodism across Africa south of the Sahara Desert. When his father was forced to leave Africa, Howard was appointed by Bishop Springer to take his place until another missionary could be sent out. Upon his return to the States, Howard enrolled in Westminster Theological Seminary, now Wesley, and he and Elizabeth McAbee were married.

Their missionary service began in 1944, and included one term in the area where Howard had first gone with his parents in 1916. Howard's time was spent in evangelism and church development. Elizabeth supervised an orphanage, a girl's boarding school and the women's work, in addition to raising their two daughters and a son.

Their next three terms were spent in church extension and development in the rapidly expanding copper and cobalt mining cities of Likasi, Kolwezi and Lubumbashi, where people of many tribes had come to seek work.

In 1966, the Board of Global Ministries in New York asked Howard to join the staff there as Executive Secretary for the designated arm of missions support known as the Advance, outside the United States. He retired in 1980, after 14 years relating to the mission work of churches in 54 countries. He continues to interpret missions in district and local church events across the United States.

Fifty years after his parents were forced to leave the work at Sandoa because of ill health, Howard Brinton was invited by Bishop Katembo Kayinda to preach a series of sermons during the Southern Zaire Annual Conference. Meeting in the Thomas Brinton Memorial Church at Sandoa, 700 delegates heard the conference statistician report over 100,000 church members. For 1989-90 alone, in the 15 districts of the conference there were over 14,000 new converts to the Christian faith. Children and grandchildren of the first generation Christians whom Thomas and Anna Brinton helped to train were now leaders of the United Methodist Church in Southern Zaire.

As Howard Brinton recalls his life, first as a child of missionaries and later as a missionary in his own right, he remembers that during each furlough he and his family would come to Holy Cross Church for a memorable weekend of warm welcome and expressions of friendship and support.

UNITED METHODIST MEN
1954 to 1957 and 1986 to Present
By Hank Hershey

The first charter of Methodist Men was requested at a meeting on October 12, 1954. In attendance were J. Lee Bausher, Jeff Ballow, Nicholas Koste, Roy Thomas, Henry Poe, Howard Hendricks, George Swartzwelder, William Shillady, Fred Meinhart, Fred Vastine and Pastor Yrigoyen.

On February 5, 1955, Fred Vastine, who was the first president of Holy Cross Methodist Men, conducted the Charter and Ladies Night program. James Stoudt followed Fred Vastine as the second president. Although this group had a fair start, the organization died from lack of interest in 1957.

In June 1986, the second charter of United Methodist Men was initiated. Henry "Hank" Hershey was elected president of the Holy Cross group. In 1992, approximately 50 men continue to participate in various United Methodist Men activities. Meetings are held every other month with other Reading United Methodist churches. Holy Cross men are now in their fifth year of monthly furniture pick ups for "SHARE". Our men work with inner city projects as well as inner city youth. The United Methodist Men's group remains a viable and very important activity at Holy Cross.

"IN THE MIDDLE OF TOMORROW"

(The title of a book by Barbara Campbell in which she traces the women's movement of our predecessor churches and our present United Methodist Church.)

By Reta Barto

Each generation of women moves according to the needs of the times and to plan for the future.

The Annesley Guild of Holy Cross was organized October 19, 1908. Its purpose was: 1. To broaden the sphere and extend the influence of Holy Cross throughout the community; 2. To promote good fellowship among the families within the church and congregation; 3. To contribute funds towards the maintenance and improvement of the property and equipment of the parsonage, the sexton's house and the church.

The usual complement of officers was elected with Mrs. Walter Davis as president. By-laws included "membership shall include every woman in the church, and dues shall be not less than \$1.00 per year payable in January." The executive committee met monthly. Their minutes recorded amounts collected from their assigned members. The amounts were from \$1.20 to \$5.00; most of this was pennies from the members' pence boxes.

Quarterly meetings featured musicians, high school band, travelogues and Bible study. Entertainers were given 50 cents.

In reality they functioned as a Ladies Aid. Minutes detailed the needs of the houses and the church and how much was spent on each item. Money was raised by oyster and ham suppers (at 25 cents per person), teas, bazaars and rummage sales on Bingaman Street. (The sales continued there until the mid fifties. At the last one, Adele Dunn placed her new hat on a top shelf for safekeeping - Mrs. Lipka sold it for 50 cents.)

The minutes referred to payment on loans in time for a discount, but never were the loan amounts recorded. Once their bank balance was \$4.35. What did they buy? Pay for? County and city taxes, water bills, furniture and equipment for the houses and church. In November 1908 the Board of Trustees voted to introduce the use of individual communion cups and asked the women to buy them at \$41.85.

Those were amazing women of indomitable spirit and faithful to their impossible task.

1940-1992

The Methodist Episcopal Churches North and South and the Methodist Protestant Church merged in 1939. That conference decreed that each church shall have a Woman's Society of Christian Service by merging the Woman's Foreign and Home Societies and the Ladies Aid, but the women of Holy Cross didn't know they no longer were responsible for previous property and equipment costs. Two officers learned about it at the School of Missions in the mid fifties. The local society had borrowed \$6,000 to buy appliances for the parsonage and the church kitchens as well as the parlor. The same kinds of money-making ideas were used, only suppers were now \$3.75. The best idea was selling Christmas cards to business and industries - 60% profit.

All this is incidental. Our name has changed twice before we became United Methodist Women in 1972. Our concerns are still focused on women and children as we try to implement the Purpose:

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

All kinds of training, spiritual growth and educational opportunities are offered through local studies, district and conference events such as retreats, meetings and Schools of Christian Mission. The president and others attend them. Our president is sent to the Quadrennial Assembly attended by 25,000 women. Future concerns for local study are presented there. Recent emphases have been on the environment, health and wholeness with education about the AIDS crisis, Human Values in a Changing World, Japan and the Gospel of John.

Increased knowledge has stirred our hearts, too. Our missions pledge has grown to \$2,200, plus special gifts and Thank Offering Boxes. Pledges are received and added to those funds from the fellowship meals we serve - mostly conference committees. Last year we dispensed funds to conference retirement homes, the Methodist Hospital, Church Children's Homes of Philadelphia and Reading, to many other groups, and to mail medical supplies to Zaire.

Our women are found in many local volunteer situations and in district conference and jurisdictional positions. Pat Rettew is presently a visitor to a woman in Berks Prison as a result of the program at our Annual Conference Meeting in June.

Yes, we live today, we learn, pray and try to make Tomorrow a better day.

JERE HESS BARR 1876-1955

By Elizabeth Barr (Speicher) Moyer

Jere Hess Barr was born in 1876 in Columbia, PA. When he was a young man, he moved to Lebanon, PA where he worked for the YMCA. He met his wife, Mabel Light, and they later moved to Reading.

Jere H. Barr and Joseph W. Essick, brothers-in-law, started Essick and Barr Insurance Co. It still carries their names today.

Jere and Mabel moved to West Lawn where they lived with their two children, David and Betty (Speicher) Moyer.

He was a devoted member of Holy Cross Church where he worked and served as Communion Steward and as Superintendent of the Sunday School (1916-26), but he is best remembered for his "Three Minute Talks" in the Adult Sunday Schools from 1934-1941.

Jere Barr and Joseph Essick were financially instrumental themselves and then inspired Holy Cross sponsorship of the Thomas Brintons, missionaries in the Belgian Congo, Africa, starting in 1917 and continuing for many years.

Jere Barr was very active in the community but was always the first to open the doors of the church every Sunday.

Following are two examples of Jere's famous "Three Minute Talks":

Sunday morning, S. S. Nov. 11, 1934

True happiness does not usually come with what we commonly call "surplus".

As a boy I was very fond of hominy; I could never get enough, until one day I was allowed to eat hominy until I literally could not absorb another mouthful. From that day to this I have never liked hominy.

In a certain candy shop, the clerks were allowed to eat all the candy they wanted without restrictions. Most of them soon lost all desire for candy.

A doctor's son collected cigar wrappers a few years ago. One day the father presented his son with a large bag full of wrappers. From that minute, the enormous quantity of cigar wrappers took away all his desire to collect them any more.

We soon tire of the things we can get without effort. Those who have "vacations" ALL the time cannot enjoy them. They do not know the thrill of anticipation or the joy of realization.

The child who receives fifty Christmas presents cannot by any stretch of the imagination enjoy her fifty presents as much as the child who receives two or three.

At Marshall Field & Co. in Chicago last year, I saw Easter eggs presented to the children of the Russian Tsar, beautiful works of art with priceless gems and marvelous enamel. I can't believe that they enjoyed the \$5,000 eggs half as much as I enjoyed the nests which my mother put out in the yard with a few colored hardboiled eggs and some chocolate drops.

I read of the experience of a piano manufacturer who has found life in a small country town where he has been forced by circumstances to live after he lost all his money. He and his family have found the happiness in scarcity which they never found in abundance.

I believe that I was happier having to start married life with simple things and to work for better and better rugs and furniture.

Happiness is NOT a gift to be handed you in abundance. Happiness is found in securing these gifts for yourself. For a man's life consisteth NOT in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Sunday morning, January 29, 1939

I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise. (Romans 1:14.) I am not going to amplify Paul's comment on his debts.

I want to speak on our present day debts and of how little we think of what WE OWE to others. Perhaps it may suggest to you how we depend upon others and the importance of World Brotherhoods.

I made a round-trip to New York last week. I drove a motor car forty miles to Allentown on tires the rubber of which came from the sweat of black men in Brazil. It was put together in Detroit by a thousand different men working on a long line of machines.

I got in a railroad train of ten cars drawn by a Pacific type locomotive representing an investment of a million dollars contributed by thousands of investors. My safety was watched over by hundreds of enginemen, conductors, trainmen, trackmen, signalmen and officials. I sped along at seventy miles an hour over rails rolled in a giant mill, where men sweated and toiled that I might ride in comfort. I sat down to a meal - shad from South Carolina; grapefruit from California; coffee from South America.

As I approached my destination in the heart of New York, we descended into a giant tube burrowed under the mighty Hudson River, driven through rock at the cost of dozens of lives and the efforts of men working in compressed air under hazardous conditions.

When I alighted from the train I got on an escalator which had been built in a great factory and was constantly being inspected by trained men so that it would work continuously. When I returned, I even rode down on a similar one working the other way.

As I went from the main station into the waiting room, I passed a spot-light. The door ahead of me opened automatically and beckoned me to go through without thought or effort. Again men had conceived and brought to perfection things for my comfort and convenience.

When I got to my destination I pushed a button, a door swung to one side; I entered an automatic elevator and went to the right floor. The door again opened and left me off at the landing. Another group of men had preceded me with ideas for my convenience.

From the time I left Springmont in early morning until I returned late that night, men and women had toiled ceaselessly for ME. Highways were built, cleared of snow, signals erected, cars heated, meals cooked, my comfort was considered every where I went, and including my fare I had spent less than ten dollars for the business and enjoyment of the day.

Each one everywhere in the world - white, yellow, black, of every race, creed and standard of living - ministers in some way to the comfort of some other person or persons.

When Paul said 2,000 years ago that we owe a debt to both the Greeks and the Barbarians he was right. When we send men and women to the far corners of the earth and pay for their support, maybe we are helping a little to pay what we owe.

USHERS

By George Lindemuth

I was transferred to Holy Cross U.M. Church in 1920. At that time, there were about ten to fifteen men who did the ushering, compared to 45 men now (1992). In 1920, James Coleman was the head usher. He was a tailor and made eight frock coats to fit the regular ushers. These coats were used every Sunday for many years. I think we stopped using them in the 1950s. Now we use them for special occasions.

Instead of using a few men as they did in the 1920s, I schedule the 45 men to serve as ushers for at least two months in the year. They are a dedicated group.

After Mr. Coleman retired, Charles Speth was named as head usher and served faithfully for many years.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Lindemuth was honored for his 50 years of dedicated service to the Holy Cross congregation as an usher and head usher in 1989. He continues to serve as head usher at the time of this writing (1992).

HOLY CROSS BASKETBALL

(1946 TO 1950)

By Hank Hershey

Nicholas Koste, a member of Holy Cross and Athletic Director of the Y.M.C.A., organized a Church Basketball League for young men under 18 years of age. Ten different churches launched this League in 1946. In addition to Holy Cross, strong teams were entered from Alsace Lutheran, St. Matthew's E.U.B., St. Mark's Lutheran and a team from the Jewish Community Center. The remaining teams were not contenders in the first few years.

The Holy Cross team won the League championship in 1946, '47 and '48. Bill Housum coached the team. Members were Bill Dengler, Bill Ebert, Henry Hershey, Phil Hafer, George Guenther, Rod Eaken, Bill Eaken, Bill Whitman and the Schappel twins.

This basketball activity continued until the late '50's, when the Y.M.C.A. was forced to discontinue the League because of lack of participation from other churches. This basketball participation by Holy Cross boys was another example of youth activities encouraged by Holy Cross members.

MUSINGS

By Reta Barto

It was a bitterly cold winter Sunday morning in 1950 when Ken and I first entered the Sanctuary of Holy Cross Church. We were early and thought we were the first there until we saw a very tall man on the other side of the sanctuary. His long legs seemed to propel him in leaps as he came to greet us. That man was George Lindemuth. Soon after, a quiet small lady came in from the narthex to extend her welcome. She was Charity Gorrell, who lived in the 400 Block of North Fifth Street, and she was the official greeter for many years.

The next week we went to Sunday School. Mary and Fred Vastine took us under their wing and introduced us to Lee Bausher, who was the Lay Leader and acquainted with all the families in the church. Lee Bausher was also the teacher of the Chapel Class and we were introduced to the members. Here were couples of various ages in a fellowship which met monthly to celebrate every conceivable occasion. One of our earliest memories was a dinner at Albright College to celebrate Lee's 25th anniversary as organizer and teacher of the class. (He organized the class because Mrs. Darrah didn't want the parents to remain in the kindergarten while she was teaching their children.) At one time, Lee had mentioned to the class that as a child he always wanted a little red wagon and never got it. That night he received his little red wagon.

I recall seeing Jim Stoudt teaching a class of boys in the left alcove of the auditorium and Miss Celia Weightman teaching the Philathea Class (elderly women) in the center alcove. The Men's Bible Class met in the parlor. Two of these men had interesting habits. One would always go first into the Sanctuary and turn down the thermostat on the east wall. About ten minutes later, the other would enter and turn it up high. (He sat behind the first one.) The result was a clanging and banging of pipes throughout the service. Solomon-like wisdom solved the problem. That thermostat was disconnected and a new one was installed back by the ushers' room.

Ken and I joined the choir when Miss Scheifele was the director. We enjoyed both the choir work and the fellowship. Unfortunately, in a couple of years, Ken's work and my involvements precluded rehearsal attendance.

During Dr. Wall's last few months as pastor he mentioned the need for a youth leader. Ken volunteered me. That was the finest group of young people I've ever known. We did it all - Bible study, worship, hay rides, and even had a three-part chorus. Each year we produced either a full length comedy or a religious play. Once they planned a worship service which was shared in an Adamstown church. As promised, we stopped on the way home at Pensupreme on Lancaster Avenue. We and the Walker Copleys had to empty our pockets to pay for 23 banana splits. The secret of the youths' participation was both their own enthusiasm and their parents' cooperation. Family names still on our membership list are Burkey, Crow, Curry, Eaken, Howard, Koste, Lindemuth, McQuiston, Vastine and Yrigoyen.

Soon after Dr. Yrigoyen came, he asked Ken to recruit men and money to paint the upstairs classrooms. The story goes that Ernie Barth and Lee Bausher showed up in brand new overalls. Another story was Doc German's encounter with a Sunday School teacher on a very hot August Saturday. He had stripped down to his shorts and was painting the ceiling of a room. Heels clattered on the steps, she entered the door, saw him and stammered "I came for my books to study for September." He replied, "You go right ahead, and I'll finish my painting before September." Roy Thomas and Fred Vastine also participated in the fun of this painting project.

Every church has many saints in it. Rachel Morris was in her late seventies when we first knew her. Each Sunday she would check the regular attendees at worship and the absentees were noted. That afternoon she sent them a note and an order of worship. Another was Mrs. Lipka, who learned of my deficiency in pie baking and often brought Ken an apple pie on Sundays.

We needed a new sexton when Mr. Hewitt retired after twenty-seven years of service. One day, a miner from Schuylkill County rang the parsonage doorbell. He asked if Dr. Yrigoyen knew of any jobs available. Tom Yiengst was hired on the spot. He and Helen moved into the small house on Church Street just behind the parsonage. He loved the church and his work proved that love. One summer evening, I went early to a meeting. Tom was in the sanctuary and heard the narthex door close, so he came to see who had entered. He asked me to come into the sanctuary. I followed and sat down in the pew beside him. He pointed to the west window all aglow from the red sunset, and said quietly "It looks like Jesus is reaching out to me." Sometime later Tom had surgery for a brain tumor. No one told him he could not recover. His salary was continued while Helen and a nephew did the cleaning and Ken kept the stoker filled with coal. Each Sunday Ken would check at 2 a.m. and 5 a.m. and again at 8 o'clock to assure himself that the balky furnace was working. Several months later and a short time before he died, the Yiengsts moved back to Delano.

What a joy it was to discover our missions history beginning with our support of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Brinton in Africa. Upon their retirement, their son and wife continued the work. Howard is married to a friend of mine, Elizabeth McAbee, from Williamsport. Their support was continued by placing an Advance Special in the budget. After they returned to the States, Howard suggested we "build" churches with that fund. He did so in Korea, Brazil and Zimbabwe. I visited the Zimbabwe church, a small frame building in the countryside. We have since expanded our interests to include literacy, a male nurse in Angola, pastoral support in Latin America, and medical missionaries in Africa. Add to that the usual requests such as our excellent reply to the Food Lift for Russia.

Our pastors and laity were in the forefront of establishing Northwest Neighborhood Ministries and continue involvement in many kinds of community ministries. In the late fifties one pastor aided in developing the local Human Relations Council and worked with it to improve job opportunities.

The late Mildred Jordan Bausher was dismayed by the living conditions of some of the families in housing surrounding the church and on Buttonwood Street near the church. The screams of children and of frustrated mothers

trying to control them pierced the air in hot weather. She did something about it by speaking with them. Then she developed a summer camp for the mothers at Blue Mountain and also provided child care. She recruited friends to share special homemaking skills while the mothers enjoyed rest and play and learned new skills. Some of the women even held food sales to provide scholarships for other women.

As usual, some incidents are on the light side of life. Lillian Poe chaired the parsonage committee when the new one was bought. She went up early on the day of Open House to help, if necessary. Harold (Pastor Flood) had hung his tools on the wall peg board in the utility room. She turned each one in the opposite direction. She forgot he is left-handed.

We bought grape juice by the case. Ken asked the warehouse men to put a case in the trunk while he paid for it, then took the case to the church. Saturday morning an alarmed sexton called. The case contained prune juice. The problem was rectified.

Yes, we came seeking good preaching and good music. All that and much more is found at Holy Cross - a loving fellowship for each other and for those of the community. Pastors and laity are in ministry in the church in district conference, general church organizations, and in ecumenical situations. Hundreds of hours are spent in community service through church, civic and professional agencies. I thank God that Holy Cross took us in and that the members continue their love for each other.

MINISTERS OF HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Date of Appointment

1822	Henry Boehm, Organizer of the Church	1905	John H. Hackenberg (6 mos. Interim)
1823	Henry Boehm; Wesley M. Wallace	1906	J. Richards Boyle
1824	Jacob Gruber, Thomas Miller; James Moore	1910	John H. Hackenberg
1825	William Hunter	1920	William H. Lindemuth
1826	Thomas Neal; Pharaoh A. Ogden	1928	Edward J. Bond
1827	Samuel Gracey; George C. Cookman	1932	Albert E. Piper
1828	David Best; John Lednum	1936	Luther H. Ketels
1829	David Best; Manlove Hazel	1945	Arthur S. Walls
1830	Thomas Sovereign	1952	Charles Yrigoyen, Sr.
1832	Joseph Ashbrook	1957	Harold D. Flood
1834	Thomas Millard	1968	Benjamin Gould
1835	William Torbert; Allen John	1973	F. Lewis Walley
1837	Allen John	1977	Robert C. Pike
1838	John A. Roche; M. D. Kurtz	1987	Arthur L. Rettew
1839	John A. Roche; Joseph Mann		
1840	Samuel H. Higgins		<u>Associate Pastors</u>
1841	Joseph Mason	1977	James Brown
1843	Pennel Coombe	1978	Susan Withrow
1845	Elijah Miller	1980	Robert Wilt
1847	William H. Wiggins		
1848	Gassaway Gram		
1850	John C. Thomas		
1851	William H. Elliot		
1853	John Ruth		
1855	John B. McCullough		
1857	John W. McCaskey		
1859	James R. Anderson; Silas B. Best		
1861	William L. Gray		
1863	Jerome Lindemuth		
1865	George W. MacLaughlin		
1868	Thomas A. Fernley		
1870	John F. Meredith		
1871	Sylvester N. Chew		
1874	J. Richards Boyle		
1877	Wesley C. Best		
1880	Richard W. Humphries		
1882	Thomas B. Neely (Bishop)		
1885	Charles W. Bickley		
1887	Levi B. Hoffman		
1888	William J. Stevenson (Rev. Young/ short Interim before Foster)		
1893	Isaac M. Foster		
1895	George Gaul		
1900	Richard Harcourt (Interim Pastor) (Later became Pastor of People's Methodist Church)		
1900	William Arnold Shanklin (Leonard Swisher, Associate)		