

United Methodist Church  
Sussex, N. J.  
1858-1983



OUR MEMBERS OF SUSSEX UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

OF 50 YEARS AND MORE

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MISS MAY EWALD	1897
MRS. INA KIMBLE	1914
MRS. LILLIAN COSH	1916
MR. GEORGE LAYTON	1916
MR. WILLIAM LITTLE	1916
MRS. EDNA SCHICK	1916
MRS. HAZEL SWARTS	1917
MRS. ETHEL CONSTABLE	1922
MRS. HELEN CONSTABLE	1922
MRS. BLANCHE PELLOW	1923
MRS. BEATRICE RUDE	1925
MRS. RUTH WRITER	1926
MRS. FRANCES LITTLE	1927
MRS. ELOISE PECKHAM	1927
MR. WILLARD TURNER	1927
MRS. FANNIE SIMPSON	1927
MRS. RUTH ACKERSON	1928
MRS. MILDRED SWARTS	1928
MRS. FRANCES HULBERT	1929
MRS. DOROTHY HEY	1930
MRS. ELEANOR DAWSON	1930
MRS. MILDRED HOUGH	1931
MR. RICHARD VAN GELDER	1931
MRS. DORIS STANTON	1932
MRS. ALICE WHITMORE	1932

HONORED GUESTS

GUEST PREACHER : REV. E.T. HOLLAND  
SUPERINTENDENT - WESTERN DISTRICT

FORMER PASTORS :

Rev. & Mrs. James K. Price  
Rev. & Mrs. W. Sanford Ostman  
Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Malcolm McVeigh

CLERGY :

Father Brendan Madden	St. Monica's Roman Catholic
Pastor Richard Hughen	First Baptist
Rev. Richard Turner	First Presbyterian
Rev. Ray Friendley	First Baptist (Retired)
Rev. Gary Culp	Colesville United Methodist
Rev. George Poffenbager	Church of the Good Shepherd
Rev. Sharon Ladd	Libertyville United Methodist
Rev. Stephen Nash	Weslyan Methodist

SUSSEX/WANTAGE GUESTS

Mr. Alonzo Little	Mayor, Sussex Boro
Mr. Harold Rome	Mayor, Wantage Township
Mr. John Farley	Administrator, Walkill Valley Hosp.
Mr. Bruce Kolloff	Exalted Ruler, Sussex Elks Lodge
Mr. Gerry Wootman	President, Kiwanis Club
Mr. Nelson Struck	President, Rotary Club
Mr. George Clark	Fire Chief
Mr. Minard Houghtaling	Post Commander, American Legion
Mr. Robert Clark	Superintendent of Schools

OUR 50 YEARS AND MORE MEMBERS



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SUSSEX

125th ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

FEBRUARY 6th, 1983

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

ORGAN PRELUDE

QUIET MOMENTS    Whosoever thou art who enterest this church,  
Remember that it is a house for God.  
Be reverent; Be silent; Be still.  
And leave it not without a prayer for thyself,  
For thy neighbor, and for all the people  
Of this troubled world.

ACOLYTE

CHOIR            The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

HYMN 536        For All the Saints

THE REMEMBERANCE

LITANY OF THANKS

Pastor : For Abraham who lived by faith, and Moses who  
          established the law;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For prophets who listened for your word, and called  
          the people away from the worship of man-made gods;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For those who foretold the coming of the Christ, and  
          prepared the way for His birth;

People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For the Lord Jesus who loved us and gave himself  
          for us;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For apostles and martyrs who dedicated their lives  
          to proclaiming the Gospel and who have faithfully  
          passed the faith on even to us;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For those who have labored for this Church in Sussex,  
          for pastors and people who served with love;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For all who have heard Thy Word and have been moved  
          by thy Spirit, who have known their sins forgiven,  
          and have reconciled to God and man in this sanctuary;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For those who today serve with gladness and witness  
          through worship, fellowship, service and proclamation  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God.*  
Pastor : For those of tomorrow who will bear the faith to this  
          community;  
People : *We give praise and thanks, O God*

*For all Thy Church,  
We give thee thanks,  
Holy, Gracious, Infinite God,  
Lord of all history;  
All the creation is full of Thy glory!  
Glory and adoration we give to Thee  
O Lord most high. Amen.*

ASBURY CHOIR        Renew Thy Church

WELCOME

RECOGNITION OF OUR 50 YEARS AND MORE MEMBERS  
(Presentation of the carnations by Bettilou Holland)



DUET                    HOW GREAT THOU ART

THE SCRIPTURE        Psalms : Psalm 122  
                          Epistle : 1 Peter 2 vs 1-9  
                          Gospel : Luke 4 vs 16-21

GLORIA PATRI

HYMN 49                Now Thank We All Our God

SERMON                OUR HERITAGE AND OUR HOPE

RESPONSE             *We believe in God,  
Source of Life, and Light, and Love;  
Who creates and sustains,  
By His power and His love.  
We confess Jesus to be the Christ,  
Fully Divine and fully human;  
We believe his words to be the Truth,  
Trusting what he revealed about God,  
And that his life, suffering, death and  
Resurrection were for our sakes.  
We affirm the Spirit of God,  
A fire within our hearts,  
Who through Word and Sacrament,  
Calls us into being as the Church;  
And who by repentance, forgiveness and  
Reconciliation leads us toward  
The life of perfect love.  
Amen.*

THE OFFERING

WESLEY CHOIR        The Church's One Foundation

DOXOLOGY

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN 479             Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service

BLESSING

ACOLYTE

CHORAL AMEN

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Thank you for sharing this celebration service with us this afternoon. Please enjoy a few refreshments in the Fellowship Hall before you leave.

Our special thanks to -

Rev. E.T. Holland for agreeing to preach.  
Bettilou Holland for presenting the carnations.  
Michael Yankko, Lay Leader, for the Welcome.  
Marilyn Davis, Lay Leader, for the Remembrance.  
J.B. and Barbara Davis for the Duet.  
Elwood "Woodie" Bond for the Cover Drawings.  
Mary Rome and Howard Case for the History and the loan of the line drawing of Deckertown.  
Anniversary Committee for many, many things.  
Guest Clergy and Officials for Greetings.



SOME EXCERPTS FROM  
THE RECORDS OF  
THE 19th CENTURY.

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APRIL 1863 : Book purchased by Reuben van Syckle for the  
Wantage and Colesville Circuit -

"The old record being very imperfect, bearing but few dates or particulars, and being a book unsuitable for the purpose, I deemed it necessary to procure this new and magnificent record - and now I charge every preacher to keep this record perfect - put down every date of death as well as of removal and reception of members. And I forbid any careless work or any pencil marking in the record and, Brother, if you can't write well yourself, get a good pensman to do your writing so it shall be neatly and beautifully and perfectly executed."

1870 : "J S withdrew to avoid charges - Is commonly vulgar and profane - have borne with him and warned him a year."

MARCH 1876 : Directive to "raise the roof of the M.E. Parsonage 4½ feet" (corner of Main and Harrison) "with an additional bent of 14 feet and so arrange the inside as they upon consultation with the carpenter think best with the understanding they all shall be done at as little expense as possible and do a good ordinary job."

1880 : "Pastor Rev. E. V. King was contractor for repairs to parsonage, the bill for which was \$190.43. This bill combined with a note totalled \$393.23. Mr. King was given vacation of 5 weeks and was not required to furnish a substitute."

AUGUST 1883 : "Insurance on Church for 3 years, paid \$30."

MARCH 1882 : Money had been collected in a jug and at a certain time the jug had been broken. "Proceeds of the jug breaking were found to be \$502.26, less expenses of \$23.82, leaving a balance of \$478.44. Amount due on the mortgage held by C.A. Wilson \$474.09. The proceeds were used to cancel the mortgage."

1891 : Paid \$17 for temporary Parsonage for 17 weeks. New Parsonage finished 1891.

1892 : Parsonage barn erected. (Note: during 1977 renovation of Church kitchen, on removing the back wall, the original concrete wall with horseshoes cemented in at intervals so horses could be tied up while parishioners worshipped) "Parsonage barn built with subscriptions in hand to pay for it."

FEBRUARY 1893 : From the Pastoral Report - "The heavy snowfalls blocking the roads have seriously interfered with our revival work and personal visitation. My wife and I rode to meet engagements from 6 - 14 miles during the day when it showed 24 below zero."

1893 : "In the Spring of 1893 Rev. Timbrell had the grippe."

1893 : 3rd Qtly. Conf. Pastor's Report - "I have kept the parsonage debt before the people and labored with our friends in its interest. The amount needed is \$1200. I have secured on subscription \$665. The financial condition of the country may account for our failure to have the full amount in hand."

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF  
THE METHODIST CHURCH  
IN SUSSEX, NEW JERSEY, 1858-1983.

BEFORE 1858 : The Methodist churches of Sussex County grew from visits by early circuit riders. Bishop Francis Asbury visited our county seven times between 1784-1811, preaching in Vernon, Papakating, and Newton. Twenty Methodist churches were organized in Sussex County between 1787-1858.

The date and place of the first Methodist meeting in the Sussex/Wantage area is unknown, probably in the Colesville/Libertyville area. The diary of Rev. Ezekiel Coper records a class at "Esquire Wilson's, Andrew Wilson of Wantage, Sussex County" in June 1786. The early records of the Rome circuit do not give place names. (The "Old Rome Church" was erected in 1835 and was located in the town of Minisink, Orange Co., N.Y. The Church was sold in 1874.) It would appear as if there was a Methodist "class" here in Sussex in 1845 and perhaps as early as 1839.

The oldest Methodist church in this area was the Wantage Methodist Episcopal Church, incorporated Dec. 31st, 1825 at the Union School House, "the usual place of meeting." The Church was built in 1831. It stood on Rt. 282 just north of Simmons Lake and remained active for nearly a century. The building was torn down in the 1950's.

The second local Methodist church was the North Wantage Methodist Episcopal Church, also known as, "The Red Church", which was built in 1837. The church stood on the south side of the Greenville Road (Rt. 519) about .8 miles from Rt. 23. This congregation was later absorbed by the Colesville Methodist Church (1887) and the old building torn down about 1899. The Libertyville Methodist Church organized in 1860.

The Methodist Episcopal Church at Deckertown was organized in 1858. Deckertown, settled in the 1730's, was part of Wantage Township until 1891, the name was changed to Sussex in 1902.

The Deckertown Turnpike (Hamburg, N.J. to Milford, Pa) was chartered in 1808 and the Deckertown-Newton Turnpike was chartered in 1813. Sussex, at the intersection of two turnpikes and having

power from the Clove River, began to grow. The 1860 federal census for Wantage Township (incl. Sussex) gives a population figure of 3682. There were then nine churches in Wantage.

Sussex, in 1860, had two churches, two hotels, a school and an academy, bank, post office, foundry, several mills, stores, mechanic shops and about 40 houses. Thrice weekly stagecoach service between Paterson and Sussex began May 1, 1857 (the trip took about 9 hours.)

1857-1858 - Rev. Isaac Cross : In 1857, Rev. Isaac Cross was appointed to the Wantage Church, then in the Newton District. The Methodist Episcopal Church in Sussex was organized in 1858 under his energetic labors. It might be said that the Wantage Methodist Church sponsored the Sussex Church. For many years this was known as the Wantage Circuit.

The church building was built in 1857 and dedicated Feb. 3rd, 1858. We are still using that building today! The Methodist Church was the second church built in Sussex. (The Presbyterian Church was erected in 1839.) Mr. Increase Stoddard of Wantage donated the ground on which it stands and also subscribed \$500 towards the building. He died April 28th, 1858 and is buried in the Wantage Methodist Cemetery. His funeral sermon was the first delivered in the new building. The congregation probably observed the custom of that time of men and women sitting on opposite sides of the church.

Snell's 1881 Sussex County history speaks of the Wantage M.E. Church, "The pastors who are located in Deckertown also minister to this congregation." The parsonage was located on the corner of Main and Harrison Sts., now owned by MR. & Mrs. George Davenport.

It is interesting to note that the Newark Conference of the Methodist Church was organized from the N.J. Conference in 1857. The first session was held in 1858 at Morristown. We are therefore the same age as our conference.

1859 - Rev. John Seran

1860 - 61 - Rev. Jacob Fort: The earliest membership list for this congregation is dated March 1860 as follows: Mordecai Wilson (leader) William Allen, Nancy Alward, Stephen T. Alward, H. Bross, Peter Bross John Z. Buchanan, Amanda Cassady, Nathan A. Cole, Amanda Croel, Matilda Drake, Jonathan Hutchenson, William Hutchenson, Bethia Kilpatrick, Hannah Lowery, Sanford S. Lowery, Benjamin Mann (colored), Mary E. Marshall, Mary E. Martin, Anna Overton, Gabriel Overton,



Phebe Overton, Sarah E. Overton, Charlotte Quick, George W. Quick, John Quick, Mary Ann Quick, Jacob D. Roe, Sarah A. Roe, James H. Runyan, Nancy R.B. Runyan, Eliza Shorter, Margaret J. Shorter, William J. Shorter, George B. Skinner, Catherine Spear, Eliza Jane Swarts, Sarah Jane Swarts, Mary VanRiper, Thomas VanRiper, Abraham Wright, Jonathan Wright, Lucy Wright and Martha Jane Wright-49 names  
1862 - Rev. John Faull: Civil War Chaplain

1863-64 - Rev. Isaac N. VanSant

1865-66 - Rev. Benjamin Palmer: About 1866 the Ladies Aid Society formed, this became the Women's Society of Christian Service in 1951.

1867-69 - Rev. James N. Keys

1870-72 - Rev. George W. Horton: Civil War Chaplain - Two very important events in the history of Sussex occurred during the Rev. Horton's pastorate. On May 4, 1870, the "Sussex Independent" began publication. In the Spring of 1872 the Midland Railroad began its operation, and with the railroad came the telegraph. Life in old Sussex would never be the same again!

1873-74 - Rev. William Chamberlain: On April 28, 1873 the "Trustees of the M.E. Church of Deckertown" were formally incorporated. The trustees were: Abram J. Drake, John V. Odell, Jacob Wilson, Jonathan Wright, George M. Coe, Charles A. Wilson and Theodore Fowler. Their first meeting was held Oct. 17, 1874 at the home of James Buchanan.

1875-77 - Rev. Enoch V. King: In May 1875 it was moved to sell the old parsonage for \$2000; this was not done, the parsonage was remodeled in March 1876.

1878-79 - Rev. James N. Keys: In August 1878 Kilpatrick's "Sham Battle" brought 40,000 people to Sussex.

1880-83 - Rev. William R. Kiefer: Civil War Drummer Boy - In 1880 St. Monica's R.C. Church was built and in 1883 the Baptist Church moved to Sussex from Wantage. In 1883 an agreement was drawn up between the building committee of the church and Joseph W. Elston, "that the said Elston will within the space of two months and a half from this date build in good and workmanlike manner a new addition in front of the present building, extended out ten feet." The bell tower "was built by Mrs. Clarissa Wilson."

1884-86 - Rev. Edwin N. Crasto

1887-89 - Rev. Elkana H. Conklin: The Epworth League was formed in 1889 in Cleveland, Ohio, and a chapter opened here shortly after.

This group became the M.V.F.

1889-91 - Rev. William M. Johnston: The town's second railroad, the Pennsylvania, Poughkeepsie and Boston (later Lehigh & New England) Railroad began operation in 1890. The present parsonage was completed in 1891.

1892-94 - Rev. John H. Timbrell: In 1892 the parsonage barn was built. During renovation work in 1977 it was discovered that horse-shoes had been embedded in the cement so that parishoners would have a place to tie their horses. On Jan. 1, 1894 the "Wantage Recorder" began publication. The publisher, Mr. Charles E. Stickney was a faithful member of this church until his death in 1930.

1895-98 - Rev. Sylvanus D. Decker

1898-1900 - Rev. Louis F. Bowman: Slopping church floor installed in 1900.

1900-02 - Rev. William A. Knox

1903-05 - Rev. Charles Scudder: The Sussex and Wantage Methodist Churches worked together for many years. One pastor served two churches. In 1904 the pastor preached at Sussex in the morning and at Wantage in the afternoon until winter when the Wantage Service was held every Monday night and one at Quarryville the next Monday night. The salary of the pastor was \$1000 a year, Sussex pledged \$750 and Wantage \$250.

1906-08 - Rev. George Angleman

1909-11 - Rev. Stephen Jones

1911-13 - Rev. Morris T. Gibbs

1913-16 - Rev. James K. Easley: On Feb. 2, 1915, Owen J. Little's foundry burned. Rev. Easley discovered the fire about 1:30a.m. and sounded the alarm by ringing the church bell. In 1916 the eight memorial windows were installed, the rose window probably dates from the 1883 renovation. Also in 1916, the social room downstairs was converted for Sunday School use.

1917-21 - Rev. Audley J. Bliss

1921-23 - Rev. Harold Herbert

1923-26 - Rev. Nevi Cutlip

1927-30 - Rev. Paul R. Schriver: The fellowship hall was added to the rear of the church and in 1928 the pipe organ installed. Miss Leona Kimble was the organist until her death in 1963.

1931-36 - Rev. E. Glenn VanTilberg

1937 - Rev. Ralph G. Saxe: Army Chaplain 1943-46



1938-41 - Rev. Arthur DeWire: In 1939 the Methodist Episcopal Church became the Methodist Church. Dec. 31, 1941 the Methodist Youth Fellowship was organized, now the United Methodist Youth Fellowship.

1942-46 - Rev. Lewis A. Benjamin: During the years 1944-48 the church interior was remodeled. In 1945 the electric memorial cross was donated. The Sussex Wesleyan Church organized in 1946.

1947-57 - Rev. Herbert Rhinesmith: In March 1949 the Married Couples Club was organized, in 1951 the Women's Society for Christian Service organized, and the Wesleyan Service Guild began in 1954.

1957-58 - Rev. Ernest Walton: Australian Navy Chaplain - our 100th Anniversary Service was held on Nov. 24, 1957. Our first commemorative plate was issued at about the same time.

1958-65 - Rev. Daren Miller: The Methodist Men organized in 1961. In 1962 the Parish House property was purchased. The sanctuary was renovated including suspended ceiling, wall paneling, lighting and removal of artificial organ pipes. A church newsletter, "The Methodist Messenger" was started.

1966-67 Rev. Nelson Smith

1967-69 - Rev. G. Thomas Skyler: The Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren Churches united to form the United Methodist Church. Our first pictorial directory appeared in 1967.

1969-74 Rev. James Price: In 1973 the Couples Fellowship was organized, becoming the Adult Fellowship Group in 1974.

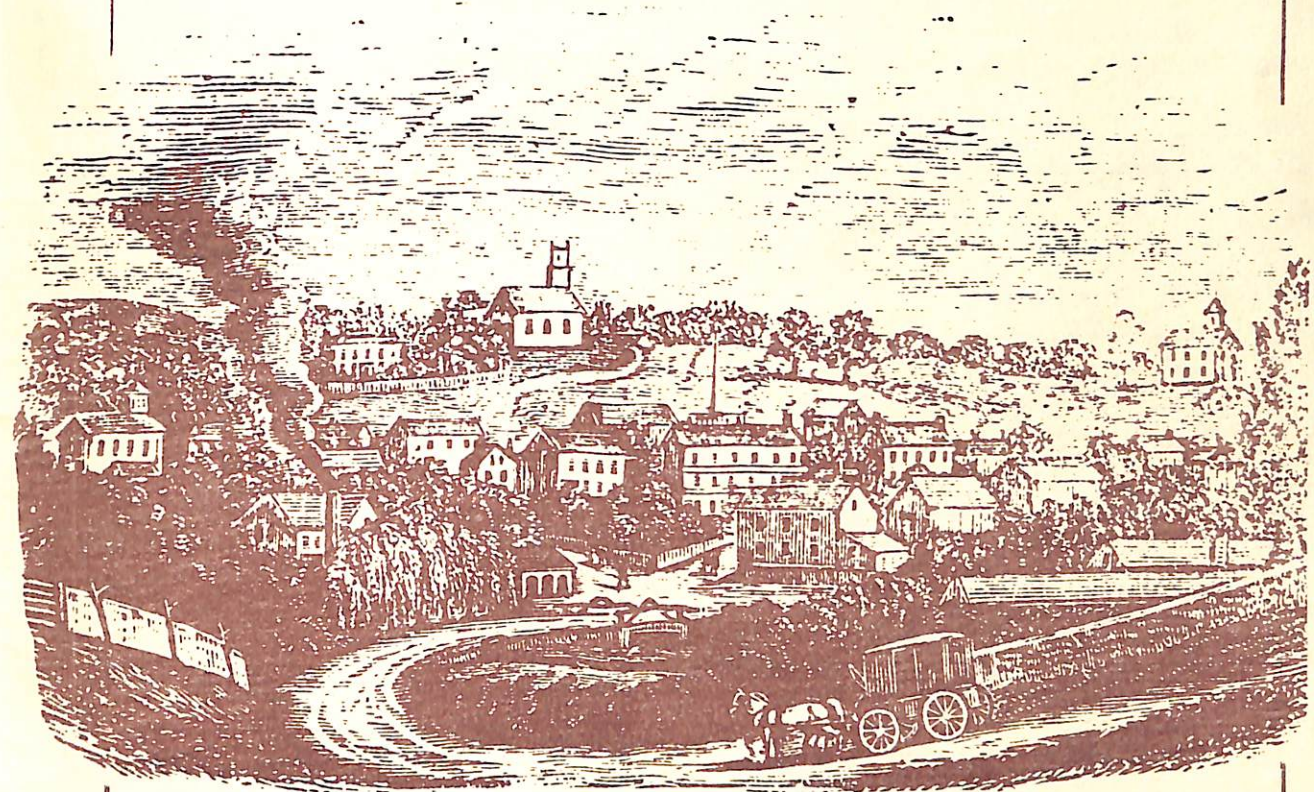
1974-78 - Rev. W. Sanford Ostman: In 1974 the U.M.W. published a cookbook. Extensive renovation was done on the Parish House including installing a fire escape. Sussex-Wantage Lay Ecumenical Council was formed in 1976. Fellowship Hall and the kitchen were renovated and the store room and rest rooms were added in 1977.

1978-81 - Rev. Malcolm McVeigh: In July 1979, the steeple cross, donated by Mr. & Mrs. Richard Textor, was erected using memorial funds given in memory of Dr. Charles McVeigh. The Holbart property, including the barn, was purchased and dedicated in 1980.

1981- Rev. Lee van Rensburg: Our second pictorial directory was issued in 1982. In Dec. 1982 the organ pipes were reinstalled. We celebrate our 125th Anniversary with a special service on Feb. 3rd 1983, and the issuing of our second commemorative plate. The following non-church related groups use our facilities: Al/Anon Alcoholic Anonymous, Aerobics, Over 50 Club, Appetite Control.

In the 100th Anniversary booklet, Rev. Walton stated, "We have a great future before us, many opportunities of doing good."

This is just as true today as it was in 1957.



Southwest view of Deckertown, N. J.

In the reproduction above the Methodist Church appears on the extreme left; the Presbyterian Church is just left of middle on the hill and the Academy may be seen on the extreme right. The horsedrawn carriage is travelling down Newton Avenue.



