

# Humeston Methodist Church

by  
Mrs. Fred (Grace) Gunzenhauser



Humeston Methodist, built 1874 (Photo by Blackman of Humeston)

Mr. Williams, a Methodist missionary at Chariton, Ia., was the first man to preach in Richman township. He had ten appointments and received a yearly salary of \$250. He preached at the old Brown school house located at the Green Bay Cemetery. He was followed by Bracewell of Corydon who preached at the same place.

In 1868, a number of Methodists living in the area north of Humeston decided to build a church at the Humeston Cemetery location. Five or six men went to the timber a few miles northwest, cut trees, hauled the logs to the sawmill, got the frame lumber sawed and hauled it to the chosen place. Sid. Fellers was the carpenter. One evening when he and his helpers had

the framework up and ready to leave for home, the wind was blowing so hard from the south that as a precaution, they set some timbers on the north of the framework to brace it. But next morning the whole framework was flat on the ground. One of the brethren said that if the Lord blew His own house down, it could just stay down. Another said, "no, it was our own stupidity that did it; if we had set braces on the south side, too, it would have been all right." This church was dedicated on June 21, 1886. Rev. Todd was the pastor and the Rev. Brazee of Chariton preached the dedication sermon. The trustees were; Honnold, Casteel, Ault, Grimm, Daily and Rorick.

After the town of Humeston started in 1872, this

church was torn down and rebuilt in 1874 just east of Jamison's Blacksmith Shop. This was the lot where the town water tower now stands. It was dedicated when Rev. Volmer was pastor; he later became pastor at Corydon. Bishop Andrews preached the dedicatory sermon.

The Trustees were; W.J. Wood, R.R. Richard, J. Casteel, J. Ault, J.W. Daily, Mr. Kiger, Mr. Rouck and W.H. Helt. It was afterwards moved to the location of our present church, on skids; they got it within three feet of its foundation when a big August storm moved it too far, a tree stopping it. Mr. Matheny, who lived in a near by house, looked out at the storm and started to run as he shouted to his wife, "The church is coming." Rev. Evans preached the dedication sermon at this new location. The trustees were the same except that Smith took Helt's place and J.T. Riddle took Kiger's place.

Early in 1920 it was decided by a committee that it would be more practical to build a new church than to make the extensive repairs required by the old one. The old church was razed and construction of the present church made on its location. Services were held in the High School assembly room during that summer and in the Princess Theater in the winter. J.S. Young was pastor and the building committee was E.S. Williams, W.F. Leech, George Roller, C.L. Hart, Clyde Hutchinson, R.C. Hutchinson, Henry Birlingmair, and W.R.

Richard. It was dedicated on April 19, 1921 with Bishop Stunts preaching the dedicatory sermon. That was a beautiful day and services were attended by a capacity crowd of 600 or so, but a week later, April 16, occurred the record breaking snow storm which resulted in big drifts of four and five foot depth, with stalled trains and all traffic at a standstill.

The Humeston New Era described the new church this way; "It is of rug faced brick with appropriate white stone trim. It is sixty feet square with an exceptionally well lighted, commodious basement for Sunday School and kitchen use. The auditorium finished in oak is well lighted with windows of art glass bearing the names of donors or of those for whom they are memorials."

These are the names of former pastors of our church, but not in the order in which they served; Todd, P.J. Volmer, Maybee, W.R. Horswell, J.H. Miller, Matheny, H. Langley, Coshier, Bott, V.B. Thompson, (1884), Hard, Riladeffr, Evans, Bradford, Edwards, Griffith, Ross, Wilson, Roberts, Shipman, Shepard, Heaton, Carder, McEldowney, J.S. Young, George, Hower, Rowe, Barnstable, McDougal, Hughes, Shupe, Boos, Barker, and McClellan.

Rev. R.G. Walker, the present minister has served our church since 1957,58,59,60,61,62. Rev. B. Gordon Packard 1963.

The church is located at the corner of Broad and 3rd streets, on lots 10-11-12, original plat. Cost \$30.00

The church was incorporated under the name of Protestant Methodist, on June 21, 1943. The incorporators as trustees were; W.C. Morford, J.H. Joy, W.R. Evans, W.R. Richard, J.W. Sanderson, H. Burlingmiar, E.B. McConnell, and Clyde Hutchinson.  
Helen Richard,  
Notary.

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David F. Barker, 1952, Sydney Sterret, 1968, N.V. Wilson, 1915, Sydney Sterret, 1968 died during pastorate and Thomas E. Lentz was appointed 1969-70. Rev. Albert E. George - 1922, C.H. Boos, Louis Bradford, 1905. David MacDougal, 1933.

Rev. Tanaka (minister from Japan) took charge Sept. 1, 1970. They became United Methodists 1969. Observed Centennial, 1960.



Humeston Methodist, built 1920 (Photo by Blackman of Humeston)