

Clio Methodist Church

by

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METHODIST CHURCH - CLIO, IA. (Taken 1908 by Fred Lane.)



Methodist Church in 1908. It has been remodeled and changed.

The information for this church was taken from an article written by one of the early and devout members of the church and is presented in memory of the writer of the original story, Mrs. Frances (Paddock) Cravens.

The Clio Methodist Church was organized in the home of John W. Tabler who had come to Wayne county from Illinois in 1885 and built a log cabin on land he acquired in the northeast corner of Grand River township. This house, the first building in Clio, was located just north of where the Clio depot was built with the coming of the railroad years later.

The Church, like the town and the Post Office, had its beginning in this log cabin of Mr. and Mrs. Tabler who opened their home to the people of the town and surrounding community for public worship. As time went and their numbers increased to such an extent that more room was needed for their services, it was then decided that those living in Clio should continue their attendance at the Tabler home, while those living north and east of town should hold their services at the Greenridge Schoolhouse some three miles to the northeast, while those who lived south and west of town chose the Barker Schoolhouse about two miles to the southwest for their meeting place. As all travel in those days was on foot or by "horse-and-wagon", this plan proved more convenient for all.

To mention a few of the Charter members of these three groups; - the first, who met in the Tabler home included Mr. and Mrs. Tabler, Mr. and Mrs. George

Wright, (grand-parents of G.A. Wright of Clio), Mr. John Souder and family and Mr. and Mrs. Renshaw (parents of Mrs. Anna Souder of Clio).

Those living northeast of Clio were led by Rev. Hartley Bracewell, who was the first circuit-rider in this locality, also his wife Margaret, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Lawson, Mr. and Mrs. David Williamson, John and Henry Bracewell families who with others made up the group at Greenridge schoolhouse.

Those living southwest of Clio, we find the names of, Mr. Starkey Bracewell and family, Rev. Thadden and family, Rev. R. Shipley and family, Mr. and Mrs. D.H. Comstock, Mr. and Mrs. Perry Tullis, Mr. and Mrs. Dias Neil, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton and Angeline Garton, Mr. and Mrs. Callens and daughter Agnes, Mr. and Mrs. George Barker, Mr. and Mrs. D.A.Y. Sargent their son-in-law and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Tabler, who bought the Family Bible in Allerton, Ia. in 1877 which later was presented to the Methodist Church by Perry L. Sargent and Mrs. Fannie Harper grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Tabler, and which was used in the pulpit of this church for many years thereafter.

With the coming of the railroad about 1871 the need of a central church was met and the present Methodist Church was built in 1877 in the south part of Clio upon land owned by John W. Tabler at that time. Since both Mr. and Mrs. Tabler were devout members of the Methodist church it is assumed that the land

upon which the church was built was donated to the Clio Methodist Church by them at that time. Since no title nor deeds concerning the transaction are available this conclusion is obvious.

The church building was built under the leadership of the Rev. John Wesley Todd, Presiding Elder and the Rev. G.W. Patterson, pastor. In this the Clio and Barker groups united and the above names mentioned, with others of the Greenridge group coming to the Clio church while those living nearer Allerton united with the church there.

From this time on the Clio Church was almost continuously a part of the Lineville charge with the exception of a few years in the Allerton charge. Mr. Starkey Bracewell was elected class-leader, a position he held for years. About this time Miss Lillian Langle, with her parents, moved into this community and, since she was a musician, a second-hand organ was purchased for the church and she was appointed organist.

Church services were held every two weeks and Sunday School every Sunday from April 1st. to Oct. 1st, until about 1885 when they were able to hold the services every Sunday. When the Sunday School was started there were 37 names on the roll call. The church choir was organized under the leadership of Rev. Waddell who, with Reverends Volmer, Opie and Smith seem to be the best remembered of the early pastors serving this church.

Epworth League was organized about 1896 with Rev. Joseph Hosier, the pastor. Among the charter members of the league were Hartley and Cora Bracewell, Lillian Souder, Birdie Dobbins, Mrs. Charles Lathrop and many others. It seemed to fill a very important place in the social and religious life of the church.

The Ladies Aid was organized a few years later at the home of Mrs. Anna Souder. Mrs. Anice Wright was elected president, Mrs. Fannie Wright, treasurer and

Mrs. Anna Souder, secretary. One of the "By-laws" of the society was that "there should be *absolutely no gossip.*"

In 1911 the church was remodeled as it stands today. Through the untiring efforts of Comrades Wm. Scott and Henry Paddock the money was raised for the beautiful window of the G.A.R. in the west wall. Both these old comrades have gone to their reward, but the window still stands a "Silent Tribute" to our "Heroic Dead."

"This record would be incomplete without a word of respect and deep appreciation to the band of God-fearing and soul-loving men and women who came, telling of the love and forgiveness of a living Savior, bearing the burdens of the Church, bringing a personal message of cheer to those in sorrow, sacrificing the permanency of home and friends that they might be of greater service to mankind. May the richest blessing of our loving Father rest upon the pastors of these Methodist churches which they so ably served. May this Church stand a moral and religious headlight in this community, its doors open alike to saint and sinner, its altars a meeting place for God and man, its only aim and desire, salvation to immortal souls and service to mankind."

A few of the Pastors who have served the Clio Methodist Church.

Rev. Tom Moore King, 1946 Hugh Barrett, 1952-3

James Benson and Earl Streyffeler, 1958-9

Howard F. Ball,

Dean Ridenour, 1965

1960-1-2-3-4

Ron Wilkie, 1966

Russell Vanderhoff, 1967-8

Barry Ballard, 1969-70

John Braden, 1971-2

In 1969 the Clio Methodist Church united with the other churches in the county, and thus became known as United Methodists.