

# Methodist Church Of Corydon

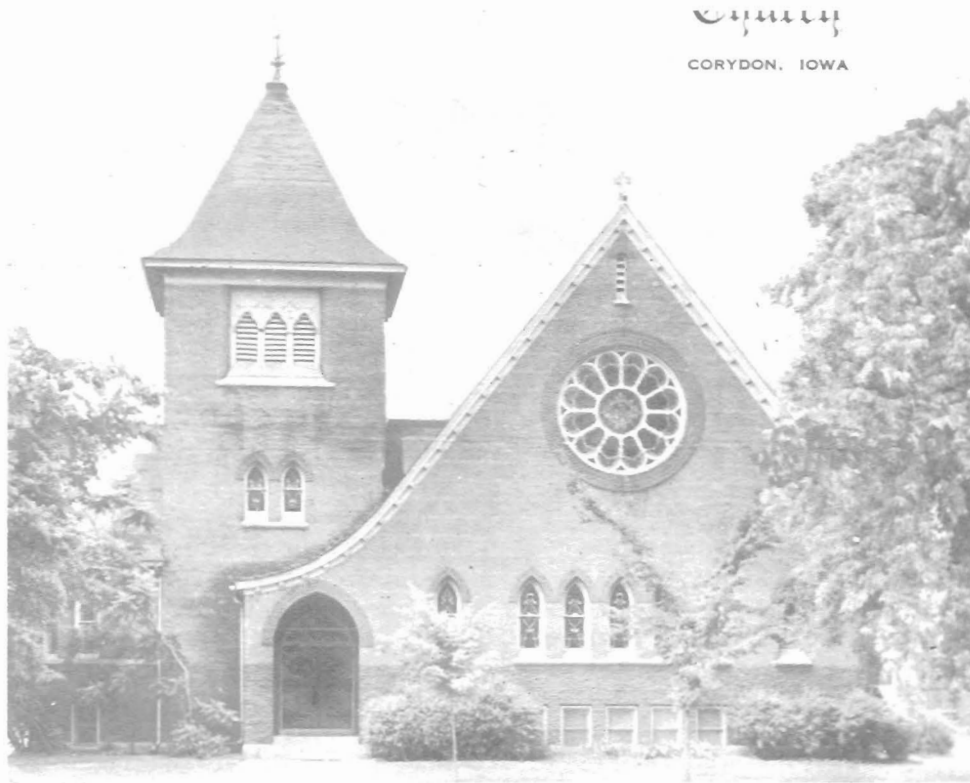
by

Mrs. Eva (Tedford) Miles  
for the Centennial in 1955

This well known hymn typifies the Belief and  
Faith of our forefathers who made this church possible.

I love thy church O God,  
The house of thine abode,  
The Church our blest Redeemer saved  
By His own precious blood.

For her my tears shall fall,  
For her my prayers ascend,  
To her my cares and toils be given  
Till toils and cares shall end.



The Corydon Methodist Church was organized in 1855, and these were Charter members, Mrs. Hetty Booth, Mrs. Margaret Sollenbarger, John R. Allen, Mrs. James Garratt and Wm. Foster, beside others.

There were quite a few Methodist families in Wayne County and they felt the need of their own church. In 1859 the group purchased for \$511.00 a partially built frame building from the United Brethren. It stood on the present lot, (Lot 5-6 original town at the corner of Jackson and DeKalb Sts.) which had been given for church purposes by William Miles, a public-spirited Freewill Baptist. The trustees were; Joseph James, Wm. Boyle, John Boswell, David Kinsey, Daniel Hill and A.T. Frazier. By 1860 the church was ready for use. Two front doors, one for the men and one for the women, were in place. The seats were of rough boards with no backs. Candles were used for light, and a wood burning stove for heating.

Six years later an 8 ft. vestibule with belfrey and bell were added with more comfortable seats, coal-oil and coal stoves for heating.

This frame building served the community for twenty-three years when it was pulled back and a beautiful new brick church, costing \$7000. took its place. The first service was held here in June 1883, with formal dedication in July 1883 with Bishop Hurst presiding. In 1884 the tall spire was removed, and an addition built on the west. This church served the people for sixteen years.

On January 27, 1899 this church burned. The walnut pulpit set, all of the pews, and stained glass windows, along with the Vocalion purchased in 1890 were saved. The bell was unfit for use. A new bell donated by Judge H.K. Evans in 1899 (the one now in use) and at his request the gift was kept secret for 42 years until July 9, 1941 when it tolled the death of the Judge.

The next year after the fire, the board voted to rebuild at a cost of around \$13000.00 E.A. Rea procured the material. Brick work contracted to Senator Alex Mardis, the carpenters were Rudd and Chase. During the time of construction the congregation worshipped

in the Court House. On Dec. 31, 1891 the church was dedicated by Dr. J.F. Berry of Chicago, Ill.

The early preachers were the Circuit Riders. They traveled all over the county each with all of his belongings and his Bible and sermons in his saddle bags. One of the best known and most loved Circuit Riders was Hartley Bracewell, who came here from England in 1854 and settled in Wayne county, and was a tower of strength, both in the church and the community for fifty years and made his home in Corydon, Elias Parks, 1851, John Parker, 1852, John Danah, 1853, D.T. Swen, 1854. In 1855 the Mission Circuit with Corydon as the center was established and B.F. Williams was its first minister, followed by C.F. Spooner, 1856, D.T. Sween, 1857, W.C. Williams 1858, Benjamin Shinn 1859-60, J.M. Daily 1861, J.M. Baker 1862-63 and S. Farlow 1864, Rev. G.P. Bennett 1865-67, Rev. W.F. Hestwood, 1868-69, Rev. E.H. King 1869-72 who was an Adjutant in the Civil War. Rev. Bartholomew 1874-76, Rev. Fred Harris 1877, C.C. Mabee 1878, Rev. Dinsmore Austin 1879-80, Rev. J.D. Moore 1882-83, Rev. Bartholomew 1883-86, Rev. Joseph S. Wright 1886-88, Rev. J.L. Johnson 1889, Rev. Myron C. Waddell 1890-94, Rev. W.O. Allen 1894, Rev. Wellbourne 1895-98, Rev. G.M. Hughes 1898-99, Rev. A.M. Shea 1899, 1903, Rev. H.P. Dudley 1904-1908, Rev. Anthony E. Slothower 1908-1912, Rev. Edward Pruitt 1913, Rev. Edmund M. Holmes 1914-1916, Rev. Walter A. Morgan 1916-21, Elias P. Handy 1922, Rev. Arthur P. Keast 1923-27, Rev. Howard P. Young 1927-29, Rev. James F. Findly 1929-31, Rev. J.B. Johneton 1931-35, Rev. Preston M. Conant 1935, Rev. Lawrence H. Athey 1939-1942, Dr. F.C. Edwards 1942-48, Rev. M.D. Wyatt 1948-50, Rev. R.T. White 1950-56, Rev. Mark Weston 1956-62-63, Paul D. Williamson, 1964.

The earliest music was "Psalm singing". Someone "lined" or read a line, then it was chanted. J.S. Whitaker came here in 1858. He and his wife loved music and had a school where they taught how to sing "by note". He formed the first choir in Wayne county and was its leader for twenty years. Most of the older church members were horrified by choir singing and later when the choir wanted a Melodian and offered to pay for it by ice cream festivals, etc, that too was frowned upon, but two of the trustees W.W. Thomas and James Garrett each gave \$5.00 (a large gift for that time) and the Melodian was purchased in 1861. Then when it was out of style, they bought a cabinet organ which was used until 1890, at which time we bought a Vocalion second hand from Shenandoah. It was pumped by hand and many different boys, who are now prominent business men supplied the "power". Later the organ was electrified and in use until 1940 when the Hammond Electric Organ was installed. The church has four pianos. They have had good orchestras, choirs and vocalists.

Musicians who played the Melodian were Maggie

Boyle, Mrs. Joshua Prugh and Florence Grebill, the cabinet Organ, Belle Whitaker, Mattie Rea, Anna Thomas and Mrs. W.S. Richard. The hand pumped Vocalion was played by Mattie Rea (Dent), Kittie Law (Burson) and Maude Burton (Hart). Belle Whitaker also played this organ and her father supplied the hand power. Stella Mardis Green was a faithful standby for thirty years.

Faithful choir leaders were; Mr. Whitaker for twenty years, Rev. Hartley Bracewell twenty years, John Garrett thirty years, Mrs. Harry D. Kies, Ruth Hayes, Dr. McFait, F.B. Fry, Allan Minger, Bernice Allred, and James Hart. Junior choir leaders have been Mrs. Athey, Marjean Poston, Mrs. Brewer, Mrs. Hart and Mary Jo O'Dell.

The Epworth League and Womens societies have grown steadily and are still being maintained.

These members have attended General Conference as lay delegates; E.A. Rea at Chicago, Mrs. Elizabeth Martin at Los Angeles in 1904, Mrs. Alice Burton at Springfield Mass., in 1924 and W.G. Clark at Baltimore.

Miss Julia Ulrich, Mrs. Hattie Draper, Mrs. Lillian Perkins and Mae Miller King have left bequests which have been much appreciated.

"I love thy church, O God  
Her walls before Thee stand  
Dear as the apple of thine eye  
And graven on they hand.

Beyond my highest joys  
I prize Her heavenly ways  
Her sweet communion, solemn vow,  
Her hymns of Love and Praise.

Corydon Methodist  
by Ortha Green

Bishop Thomas (a colored man) negro spoke at the church here on Nov. 21, 1965. (first time in the towns history).

The beautiful brick church was willfully torn down in 1968 and destroyed to make room for a new church building. This brick church had been a land mark for almost 70 yrs.

In 1964 under the pastorate of Paul D. Williamson the new church idea began. The Methodist Episcopal Churches in the state went together and named themselves United Methodists.

The new church was built and the first services were held July 27, 1969. The church was dedicated Nov. 23, 1969.

Paul D. Williamson was pastor 1956 to 1970. Then the Rev. Lawrence Jones, 1970-1-2.