

New York Christian Church

by
Mrs. Roy Patterson



On the front page of the Church Book is the following. "A record of the Christian church of Bethlehem and New York, Wayne county, Iowa. It was organized in the year of our Lord, in June 1853, by elder Morgan Parr.", who was ordained in 1852. They held services in the Parr home for several years.

The first elders recorded were; T.W. Sutton, ordained in 1854, Leander Norton and Wm. Tearry, -deacons were; D.M. Clark, ordained in 1852 and Wm Pray and Amos Oldfield.

The first deaconess' were appointed in 1871, being; Sister Mary Clark, sister Nellie Harr, and sister Sarah Brown.

Some of the earliest members were; D.M. Clark and wife Mary, Harriet (Mrs. G.J. Laing), Oldfield, Hatten, Sutton, Sharrod, Putmen, King, Dyer, Parr, Pray, Ruff, Morris, Tearry, Smith, Allman and the Langfords.

Some of the earliest ministers were; Rev. Morgan Parr, 1853, Rev. A.J. Coffman, 1871, Rev. Garrison, Rev. Norton, Rev. Hoover, Rev. Seevies, Rev. Morris, Rev. Painter, Rev. Hendrix, and Rev. Gance, who was head of the college at Humeston. The story is told of him taking thirty bushels of turnips for tuition of those attending college from New York. The students complained they had only turnip soup to eat.

The Christian Sunday School started at New York prior to the year of 1869, which was held in the old school house. For this authority, I am going back to a talk given by the late G.J. Laing, at the New York Sunday School. He said that he was secretary of Bethlehem Sunday School and Harriett Clark was secretary at New York. First he visited New York then Miss Clark visited Bethlehem. They finally decided the secretaries should get together, and they married in 1869. There was no question in those days of not going to Sunday School. It made no difference whether in wagons, spr-

ing wagons, on foot or on horseback, they went to Sunday school.

No positive date could be found when the New York church was built, but we know it was before 1871. From the date of the only wedding held there. This romance seemed to have blossomed in Sunday school. Elias Scales had asked Mary Clark to be "his." She said she wanted time to think it over, but if her answer was yes, she would smile at him the next Sunday at Sunday school. She evidently smiled for they were married in the church July 16, 1871.

To show how they looked after the members in the earlier days, I am giving a record of one of the church meetings. New York, Ia., Feb. 7, 1876; The congregation of the Church of Christ worshipping at this place, met in a business meeting. It was moved by D.M. Clark, that the deacons report to the elders, the names of those who were not walking orderly.

The church was built on land donated by D.M. Clark for church purposes, and reverted back to the heirs whenever it ceased to be used for such.

The original church building burned in 1886. This was later replaced in 1887 by the main part of the building now here. Mr. Rudd of Corydon was the carpenter. In 1927 the church was struck by lightning. By some act of providence, the men were able to extinguish the fire, although it did quite a little damage. The building was immediately repaired.

By 1886, the services of the women were enlisted. Rev. Garrison was minister and appointed three women to circulate a subscription paper to raise money for preaching.

The Ladies Aid society was organized August 8, 1893. Rev. P.H. Green was minister at this time. They have served lunch at sales, served dinners at the county Fairs, held strawberry suppers, dinners, God portion sales and bazaars and helped in many other ways.

Many loyal families helped. Some of which are; Cutler, Brewer, Barnes, Stark, Blakey, Scales, Stech.

Hallie and Susie Laing were both organists, also Ida Chamberlain.

Some other ministers who served the church are; O.L. Adams, Win, Matsler, Grover Schurman, J. Newton Sours, Will A. Sessions, John McCurdy, C.V. Pence, Loren Lair, Don Eagle, Kenneth Hayden and Clyde Leeds. This list brought up to date.

We might say that New York has been Father to several other organizations. In 1894 Martin T. Brewer went as a medical missionary to Old Mexico. Leander Norton moved to Broken Bow, Nebr., and started a Christian Church. Amos and Dave Oldfield moved to Canton, Kansas where they established a church.

Many left to help establish Christian churches in Confidence, Bethlehem and Corydon.

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The New York Church is located in the N.W. corner of E. ½, S.E.N.E. Sec. 22-70-21 in Union township.

The church stands at the north end of Washington Street, on land once deeded to the United Brethern Church by Wm. H. Evans and Nancy A. Evans his wife of Warren county, Iowa. The purchase price being \$325.00. But as before stated D.M. Clark donated this tract to the New York Christian Church. He had previously bought the land.

Pastors: Kenneth E. Hayden, 1952-3, Morris L. Bailey, 1950. Clyde C. Leeds, 1958-9-60-1-2-. J. William Gardner, 1966. James E. Larson, 1970-1.

Memorial Gifts 1967

Oak Communion Table, by Marilyn McMurry in memory of Kay. Communion Service, by Mr. and Mrs. Ernie McMurry in memory of their sons Ronnie and Kay. Hymnals, by Burton Family in memory of Frank and Belle Burton. Hat and Coat Racks, by Patterson girls in memory of Roy and Elsie Patterson. Clock, by Louie and Marvin Stark in memory of Jim Stark. Cash, by the Carlson Family in memory of Bernice Stark. Carlson and Jackson family in memory of Ernie Jackson.