

Antioch Christian Church

by
John F. Michael



(Photo by E.L. Grimes)
Four miles east of Sewal stands the Antioch Christian Church, active today. A live rural Church, after many years.

Antioch Christian Church, four miles east of Sewal and five miles south-west of Seymour, was organized about 1870. Services were held in a log school house two miles south of present location, where Sam Downing organized a few families to-gether as a worshipping church. In 1876 Elder H. Rice and Mr. Brown held a meeting at the Kerr schoolhouse with several additions to the church. Joseph N. Smith preached and then Elder Rice became the regular preacher. J.F. Estus preached for a while, when the schoolhouse was locked so no meetings could be held. This started a notion of a church building.

No preaching services were held for several years. In the fall of 1884, the church re-organized and Bro. J.H. Hickman said "Why not build a church". The people said "We can't."

On December 3, 1884 a committee was appointed to raise funds. Joseph Slavens donated \$100.00 and an acre of land in the N.W. corner of the N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 5-67-20, Monroe township, and the people contributed the balance necessary.

The church was erected in the summer of 1885 by Wm Montieth of Genoa and it was dedicated September 6, 1885. He constructed the church for \$150.00.

At one time 250 members were enrolled as church members. The Sunday School has been held regularly every Sunday since organization with the exception of

very few Sundays, on account of extremely bad weather. In 1935 there were fifty active members.

Pastors and Ministers who have served the church through the years are; B.S. Downing, Jasper Smith, Barker, Jones, Sumner, H. Rice, Brown, Russell F. Allen, John C. Core was called in 1931 as Pastor during the summer, and in the fall secured Rev. Pete Thomas to assist him. They held a three weeks meeting with twenty-four additions to the Church. E.J. McKinley, J.F. Estis, Al. Shepherd, John Rogers, A.B. Cornell, Andrew Coffey, Albert T. Pitts, L.D. Ammons, W.E. Jones, J. Newton Sours, C.C. Davis, George Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Wiseman, (black smiths), Frans Blanchard, Elder Hadricks, R.W. Lilley, Gill, Brumback, Green, Sam Carson, Ira Beck, J.H. Hickman, Joab Padget, James Altheid, Glidewell (blindman), F.A. Heilman, Roy Kinser, Chauncey Piety, Pierce, John F. Stubbs, Hayes McKinley, Mr. Newton, Dr. Nulund, G.W. Leonard and his sons, B.S. Denney, J.H. Painter, Win R. Matsler, G.A. Jeffries, Dan Hastings and Ramey. There may be others. L. Schaffer in 1959.

The church is still active and holds a homecoming day each year.

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The Bell from this Church was given to the Wayne County Historical Society in 1968.