

January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1878, 21 members requested letters of dismissal for the purpose of organizing a church in the Bentley settlement. This request was granted.

Some trouble was experienced here with some of the members, who were opposed to the moving of the church, also with Elder Haycock and one of the deacons, on account of which he resigned, but all was peacefully settled by the advice of a council called for that purpose.

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1878, there were 168 names on the church roll.

During the summer of 1879 the church was supplied by Bro. George Chittenden, a student from Woodstock. In November, a call was extended to Rev. Chas. Harrington to take the pastorate of the church, in union with the Goshen and North Middleton, at a salary of \$350.00 with free parsonage. The call was accepted, and this pastorate continued until November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1881, which was fairly successful.

Bro. S. Cripps, a deacon and licentiate of Tillsonburg Baptist Church, took charge of the three churches, Eden, Goshen and Courtland in February, 1882. He was ordained at Courtland on January 17, 1883, and received \$200.00 per year from Eden. He served the field very successfully and satisfactorily until December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1888, nearly seven years.

Rev. E. D. Sherman began his pastorate on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1889, with a salary from the three churches of \$650.00, Eden contributing \$325.00. During this pastorate, which continued for four years, closing May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1893, the church building was raised up and put in its present shape, at a cost of \$4,000.00. Nine members were baptized during this pastorate.

At the close of Bro. Sherman's pastorate Mr. W. T. Bunt, a student of Woodstock, took charge of the services for the summer of 1893 with much satisfaction, resulting in seven conversions. Rev. J. B. Brown took the pastorate October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1893, at a salary of \$500.00 per year, which ended in August, 1896. Seventeen were baptized during this pastorate.

Rev. W. E. Mason settled with the church in October, 1896, after supplying the field for Bro. Brown during his absence in England, and remained one year. Three were baptized by Bro. Mason. On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1897, Deacon Wm. Stilwell passed on to be with his Master, after serving the church as deacon for 38 years, He was greatly beloved and deeply mourned.

Bro. Mason was succeeded by Rev. Cuthbert in October, 1897, who remained until October, 1900, three years, and was succeeded by Rev. R. Weaver for one year, when he resigned to accept a call to another field, closing his labours in November, 1901.

Rev. J. W. Silcox entered upon the pastorate in January, 1902, and continued his labours until October, 1911, resigning to accept a call in the Fullarton field. During this pastorate 58 were baptized, the salary was increased from \$500.00 to \$700.00. Home and Foreign missions advanced from \$8.00 each to \$65.00 each, and other denominational interests in like proportions. Bro. Silcox gave nearly 10 years of his best life to this.

The Rev. H. D. Moore entered upon his pastorate here in April, 1912, and served the church faithfully and successfully until May 1919, over seven years, at a salary of \$800.00 until the last year when it was advanced to \$1,000.00. During his pastorate 19 were added to the church by baptism and some much needed and valuable improvements were made to the church and property, among these the putting in of the baptistry. Bro. Moore was followed in June of 1919 by Rev. R. E. Jones at a salary of \$1,200.00, who closed his pastorate in May, 1922, to the sorrow and regret of a goodly number of warm and appreciative friends. Bro. Jones added five to the roll of baptism.

Rev. R. J. McLaren, assumed the pastoral care of the church in June, 1922, at a salary of \$1,200.00 per annum, and rendered efficient and acceptable service.

Rev. Mr. McLaren, having tendered his resignation in August to take effect at the end of October, brought to a close a three and a half year pastorate that had been fruitful in adding 14 new members to the church.

In 1926 S. France, McMaster student, was called to act as Student Pastor until the end of the school term, after which he became the regular pastor, whose salary was to be \$20.00 per week during the student pastoral term and \$1,200.00 per year thereafter. In June, delegates from the three churches agreed to the calling of a council to ordain him. The council met with the church at Eden, and Mr. France was accepted and ordained. After a little more than four and one-half years Mr. France received a call to the church at St. George, bringing to a close a very successful pastorate, during which 21 were added to the church.

Toward the close of Mr. France's pastorate the Courtland church withdrew from the Ontario and Quebec convention, and the working union with Eden and Goshen churches, a union which had existed from the organization of the Courtland church, and the Malahide church sought to take the place of the Courtland church.

Satisfactory arrangements having been agreed upon, Pastor H. D. Moore being pastor of the Malahide church, and having served nearly eight years with Eden and Goshen on a former

occasion, received a unanimous call to the three churches in the newly organized field at a salary of \$1,200.00 per year. Rev. H.D. Moore, continued as pastor of the three churches until his death on the 23rd of January, 1939, having given 42 years to the Baptist ministry, a total of nearly 16 years being given to the Eden field. During his pastorate at Eden a beautiful oak baptistry and hydro lighting were installed. He also gave to the church the Hymn Board, the reading desk for the basement and music cabinet for the choir music, also improvements in church and parsonage. The Sunday School record board, gift of Mr. Moore, had not been finished at the time of his death and was finished by Mr. Wilfred Nelson, Eden.

After funeral services, conducted by Rev. Albert Carr, Tillsonburg, assisted by Rev. S.D. France, Rev. W.E. Janes, New Sarum, Rev. C. Gosnell, St. Thomas, and Rev. G.S. Hammond of Straffordville, the remains of Rev. Moore were laid to rest in the family plot in the Aylmer cemetery.

In May, 1939, a call was extended to Horace West, a recent graduate of McMaster University, to become pastor and on November 23rd Mr. West was ordained in the Eden church. During this pastorate two weeks special services were held under the direction of the Association Moderator, Rev. G. Medley, conducted by Dr. Fromow, when 22 persons confessed conversion.

Improvements were made to the parsonage at this time, chief of which was the installation of a bathroom, financed by the Ladies' Aid with donations from Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Gray and Mr. and Mrs. Carmon Ball. Rev. West, having received a call to Beulah Baptist church, Winnipeg, he resigned, concluding a short but successful pastorate.

On April 1st, 1941, Mr. Frank Humphreys, of McMaster University, having a unanimous call from the three churches, Eden, Malahide and Goshen, began his pastorate and was ordained in the Goshen church November 27th, 1941. In September of this year the church decided to cover the parsonage with insul brick, which they did, the labour being done by Pastor Humphreys, Deacon Wilfred Nelson and Percy Summers. In 1943 the church building was painted, inside and out. N.H. Gray and Mrs. Gray presented the church with about an acre of land adjoining the church property and the cemetery, also during this year a communion table was presented to the church by N.H. Gray and Mrs. Gray and Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Ball. The basement of the church was remodelled.

( A splendid new heating system was installed in the church during the winter and spring of 1948. This is a blower type system which has already proven to be adequate and most satisfactory. Cupboards, with a sink and work-table, are being built in the church kitchen this year (1948). This convenience will be greatly appreciated by the ladies when they serve lunches and suppers in the church basement.)

During the winter of 1943-44 six members were removed by death as follows: Ira Stilwell, Fred Moody, Martin Kidd, Mrs. Celista Stilwell, Mrs. Will White and Mrs. Nathan Gray. In 1946 perpetual care of the cemetery was inaugurated.

Rev. Humphreys, having received a call to the Barrie Baptist Church, tendered his resignation on October 27th, completing five years and eight months successful pastorate. During his pastorate 23 were baptized and added to the church.

On April 16th, 1947, a call was extended to Mr. John Mildon, of McMaster University, by the three churches. Eden, Goshen and Malahide-Bayham, to become their pastor at a salary of \$1,800.00 per year, Eden, in addition to providing and caring for the parsonage accepting as their portion \$825.00. Mr. Mildon began his pastorate May 4th, 1947, Rev. Albert Carr supplying in the pulpit during the intervening months.

On November 8th, 1947, a letter was received from Mr. Mildon expressing regret that, owing to a condition of health, he was forced to resign. Seven had been added to the church by baptism during the few months of Mr. Mildon's ministry.

Again Mr. Carr came to the help of the three churches, preaching Sundays and presiding over their annual business meetings. Mr. Mildon was forced to spend several months in the hospital, but in the Spring of 1948, having heard of Mr. Mildon's improved condition of health, the Pulpit committee visited him, with the result that he resumed the pastorate of the three churches on March 4th, 1948.

On the 18th of May, 1948, an Ordination Council met at the Eden church and, after hearing Mr. Mildon's clear and concise statements of his "Conversion Call to the Ministry" and "Doctrinal Beliefs", it was unanimously decided to ordain him, this service taking place at eight o'clock that night.

Dr. Bristol, of McMaster University, preached the ordination sermon, taking as his text I Timothy 2:1. "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus." Rev. Waltho, of Waterford gave the "Charge to the Candidate" extending to him the hand of fellowship into the Christian ministry. Rev. Albert Carr, retired and much loved minister of Tillsonburg, gave the "Charge to the Church". The laying on of hands was observed with all ministers of the Ordination Council participating, as Rev. C.C. Anderson, pastor of

Langton Baptist Church, offered the ordination prayer. After words of exhortation and blessing from the Moderator of the Council, Rev. Gordon Crowfoot, pastor of First Baptist Church, Simcoe, the congregation rose and sang "The Church's One Foundation", after which Rev. Mildon pronounced the benediction.

And now for a brief summary, in which a few worthy names may be mentioned.

#### Among the Pastors

Rev. Simeon Rouse, who was the first settled pastor, was ordained on the field.

Rev. S. Baker and Rev. R.B. Smith gave the last years of their pastoral work and ripened experience to this field.

For length of service may be mentioned Rev. S. Cripps, six years; Rev. R.B. Smith, seven years; Rev. M.D. Moore, nearly 16 years, and Rev. J.W. Silcox, nearly 10 years.

#### Deacons

Abram Havans, who had been a deacon in the Goshen church, was the first deacon chosen, at the organization of the Eden church and continued as such until the time of his death. Bro. Wm. Stilwell became a deacon nine and one-half years after the church was organized and gave 38 years of unbroken service to the church, until the time of his death. Also Andrew Caswell, Edgar Wilson, Murray Travis, Archie Lamond, Niel Phelps, Wm. Rusling, John W. Alton and Abram N. Gray, all of whom have gone on to their reward after serving many years.

#### As Clerks

Elijah Phelps was the first clerk of the church and for length of service as clerks Bro. Wm. Stilwell, Isiah Dougherty, A.N. Gray, Ira Stilwell and the present incumbent, Bro. Lorne Alton.

Bro. Abram N. Gray was for a goodly number of years our faithful and efficient choir leader.

Beal's school-house was on the Ridge Road on property now owned by Claude Wilson and Son. On this church property there has never been a mortgage. Five churches have been set off from this church, two of which are still in existence, viz., Courtland and Goshen. Others were North and South Middleton and North Bayham.

This summary cannot be closed without mentioning the very valuable services from a financial standpoint, which have been rendered by the Ladies' Aid both in building operations and repairs as most, if not all the repairs and improvements, have been financed by this group, who have also contributed generously to missions and other denomination interests.

Permit me to mention a few names of those who have rendered valuable service in the Aid and have gone to be with their Lord: Mrs. John Weeks, Mrs. Archie Lamond, Mrs. Niel Phelps, Mrs. A.N. Gray, Mrs. Murray Travis, Mrs. James Leach, Mrs. D.D. Healey, Mrs. N.H. (Kitty) Gray. Still with us, who have given long and efficient service are Mrs. I. Stilwell and Mrs. J.W. Alton.

The Sunday School has also been blessed in having faithful and consecrated teachers among those who have given long years of service are Deacon Camby Travis, who has taught the Bible Class for over 30 years, also Mrs. Lorne Alton, who has been teacher of the Golden Circle Class since its organization in 1926.

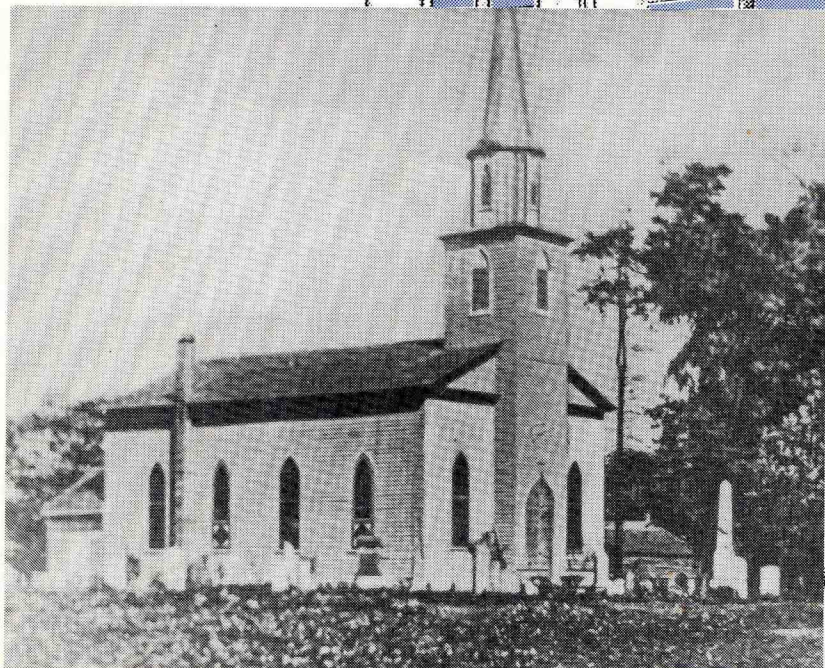
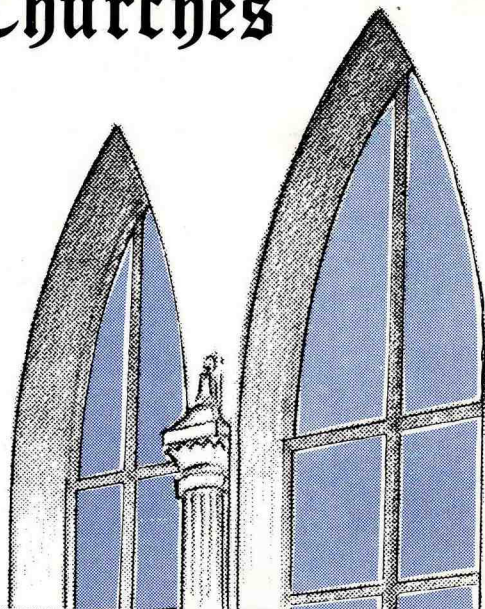
The Eden church has now given to this community one hundred years of unbroken gospel and Christian service, the results of which cannot be tabulated.

Officers of the Eden Baptist Church at the time of their one hundredth anniversary September 26, 1948 :

Pastor Rev. John Mildon, B.A., B.D.  
Clerk Mr. Lorne Alton  
Treasurer Mrs. Clarence Inman  
Deacons Mr. Cecil Ball, Mr. Frank Travis, Mr. C.C. Travis  
Mr. Wilfred Nelson, Mr. Max Alton, Mr. W.R. Stilwell  
Organist Mrs. E. McCurdy  
S.S. Superintendent Mr. Max Alton.

# Pioneer Churches

And A  
Brief History  
Of  
Bayham  
Township



PORT BURWELL ANGLICAN CHURCH

Written by  
Kirk Barons

