

It was in 1898 that Mrs. Martha Faulds attended a W.M.S. meeting at Gladstone and was so interested that she called a number of ladies together and in February the Women's Missionary Society of the Belmont Methodist Church was organized with Mrs. Faulds as President. (44 years later on her 90th birthday, September 17, 1942 she entertained the W.M.S.) The pioneer set the pattern. They bravely did the things that had never been done before, by means that had never been tried and they did not fail and the work grew. For 61 years the W.M.S. has labored earnestly for the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad. There have been 19 Presidents with Mrs. F.C. Moore presently serving. Silver and Golden Anniversaries were marked in 1923 and 1948 and on April 17, 1958, the W.M.S. of the Belmont United Church observed its Diamond Jubilee - all with celebrations befitting these historic occasions.

The W.M.S. family includes:

(1) C.G.I.T. A strong C.G.I.T. group was organized by Mrs. Page in 1924 but eventually disbanded. Since 1943 when re-organized by Mrs. Brock Harkness, it has been a continuing effort, under her leadership until 1955, succeeded by Mrs. John Taylor and presently led by Mrs. Sam Richardson and Mrs. Ivan Wright. This zealous missionary minded group of girls are from Nilestown and the Village churches. Highlight of the C.G.I.T. year is the annual Mother and Daughter Banquet climaxed by the Affiliation Service with the W.M.S.

(2) The Mission Band may be the successor to a Children's missionary group sponsored by the W.M.S. Auxiliary at least as early as 1910 known as "The Cradle Roll". The aim of the Mission Band active here for many years is to nourish the missionary spirit in young hearts. This group meets monthly, on Sunday morning with Mrs. R. Layfield and Mrs. Harley as leaders.

The Baby Band under the guidance of Mrs. F. R. Taylor since 1950 has an enrolment of 112. Visitation to each new baby and family, gift literature to mothers and a link between home and church concerning Baptism, and the presentation of Baptismal Certificates at the service are among the important functions of this department. It also sponsors a Nursery for children up to four years during Sunday Church service.

Many memorials and gifts have been received. Salem congregation presented three stained glass Memorial Pictures (formerly windows in their church), one in memory of John and Henrietta Dibb and two in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Thompson. Gifts from Salem also are the Pulpit, Chairs and Communion Table. The Pulpit Bible was presented by the Ladies Aid, Christmas 1924 and the Pulpit Light by Miss Mildred Barons in memory of her father. The Baptismal Font is "In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Venning, for 50 years members of the Church 1873-1923", presented by their daughter Stella B. Venning. (Mr. Venning was Recording Steward (1878-1907)). Hymn Books were given by Mr. and Mrs. Alex Robbins and Offering Plates by G. L. Smith and Family in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Barons. The Communion Set is in memory of Mrs. Martha Faulds - by her sons George, Lorne and William, and the Linens are the gift of Miss Marie Faulds (1947). A Chalice, Communion Tray and Bread Plate from the Monck Family commemorates their Mother, Mrs. Alex Monck, Communion Cup Holders (1953) in memory of Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Taylor were planned by their daughter Mary. The Cross was made and given by Gordon A. McIntyre and the ferneries were a memoriam of Miss Minnie Legg. In the "Memorial Corner" the illuminated Honour Roll, made and given by Mr. McIntyre records the names of those who served in the Second World War 1939-45. In front, the Memorial Vase, to the memory of Harry Wintermute, (the gift of the W.A.) rests on the Memorial Table (Miss Legg) on the Linen Centre (made and given by Mrs. C. Ferris). Flanking all are the Flags presented by the Woman's Association.

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We pause in Retrospect. For 106 years this Church has been a blessing in this neighborhood and also in far places, through those who have gone from it, carrying their Christian ideals with them.

While many names are mentioned here, the names of many more good men and women do not appear, but the God whom they served is not unmindful of the labor and love which they rendered Him. They walked these ways and made them better for the walking, - each serving his generation faithfully and well. For those pioneers and those of our own time whose faith and example have led us where we are to-day and from whose hands we have received the reins of responsibility, we offer thanks. They labored mightily and we have entered into their labors.

Today we stand in the Present between the Past and the Future. We cannot go back. We must go forward with the God of all the years.

For centuries the Church and the Bible have been strengthening influences in our national life and it behooves us in these momentous days to turn with renewed faith to this Divine source of comfort and inspiration.

"The grass withereth,
The flower fadeth,
But the Word of our God
Shall stand forever."

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By: Evelyn L. Moore

On January 10, 1960, the newly remodelled Christian Education Centre (Church Basement) was dedicated in special services conducted by Rev. A. L. Harley and Rev. B. L. Oaten of Five Oaks, Paris. During the preceding Church Service, ten years of faithful Sunday School attendance brought its reward for fifteen members of the Belmont Sunday School when they were presented with Bibles by F. J. Yorke and Mrs. McMurray.

Also dedicated by Rev. A. L. Harley was a new Memorial Section to the organ. It was given by Mrs. Inez Smith, Terry and Barry in memory of Gordon L. Smith, who had given outstanding leadership in the life of the Church and was choir soloist.

DEDICATION OF THE PARSONAGE - 1960

It is no small matter to please two people - as many husbands and wives will find as they do their Christmas shopping. It is next to impossible to please everyone of 235 members of a Church, to say nothing of their families and relatives, a number of adherents and the rest of the Community. When you add to them present and future ministers and their families you have a hopeless task. That is why everybody trembles at the thought of forming part of a building committee. Under the able chairmanship of Robinson Thompson; Mrs. Norman Taylor, Mrs. Huron Wintermute and Mr. Sam Richardson, this committee has succeeded as well as any could hope to do. They have had many difficult decisions to make even when the plans had been chosen. Numerous details have cropped up at each stage of construction and under the capable direction of the Roberts Brothers there were almost no delays once construction began. It called for quick thinking to keep ahead of the workmen and out of their way at the same time. In spite of their speed no details of good craftsmanship were left out.

Before construction could begin, the Official Board had almost given up hope of acquiring the property which almost all of them preferred, where the parsonage is now located. One member of our Committee of Stewards, Mr. Huron Wintermute, was not easily discouraged. Through his persistence and determination the lot and the old house that it contained were purchased and special donations secured to pay the difference in cost, between it and the one we already held.

• MAY • 61



United Church Parsonage

Volunteers with strong backs and strong minds cleared the furniture out of all three floors of the old parsonage, giving their time and efforts at a busy time of the year. Mrs. Melvin Chivers, kindly made the former bake shop property available as storage space for the furniture. Other friends found space for winter clothing, a piano, pictures and mirrors.

The minister and his family were moved to what our Anniversary speaker rightly called "a little dream house up the highway", the home of Mrs. Eva McLellan who generously moved out at much inconvenience to herself.

The wrecking crew, again some energetic volunteers moved in to demolish the old house on the lot north of the church. They found a good quantity of sound lumber could be saved.... more than enough to build a parsonage garage next spring.

Looking to the day of completion all of the ladies of the congregation here and in Nilestown rallied under the leaders of the W.A. to feed some thousands of people at the Ploughing Match to raise money. Within the W.A. groups many activities on a smaller scale were carried out.

After the construction was nearly finished the decorating skill of Mrs. Jack Smith and Mrs. Fred Taylor was combined with their eye for a bargain to buy draperies and a number of pieces of new furniture. They met with the encouragement of Mrs. Brush and Mrs. Piggott from Nilestown, and we know that you will approve of their good taste as you visit the parsonage later this evening.

Mr. Sam Richardson, chairman of our trustees, was not only in the vanguard of those with ideas, but also arranged our property transfers. A number of friends spent weary hours cleaning and preparing the parsonage for occupation.

We could scarcely have begun without the assurance of our senior member, Mr. Fred J. Yorke, 93 years of age that he would loan us the required finances at a low rate of interest. Mr. Yorke was for many years treasurer of the church and has entrusted his money to our Committee of Stewards in confidence that the congregation has both the desire and the ability to meet its obligations both at home and in the wider outreach of the church.

Our floral decorations in the church and in the parsonage this evening have been placed in memory of Mrs. Milton Hambly and Dr. George Thompson, and through the courtesy of the Woman's Association.

To these and to the entire congregation, we wish to express our thanks. You have co-operated wonderfully that this house might be built in harmony and designated as the home of many ministers and their families.....its study a place where those in difficulty may come for help; where those with joyful plans may share them; and an incubator for sermon ideas. May all of you know the depth of our gratitude.