

Clinton County Historical Society Archives

Chronology Address Histories

ADDRESS: 305 Church Street

CITY: St. Johns

ZIP CODE: 48879

TOWNSHIP: Bingham

YEAR BUILT: 1872

PARCEL NUMBER: 300-000-020-007-01

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T7N R2W, CITY OF ST JOHNS, ORIGINAL PLAT, BLK 20, LOT 9

BUILDER/DESIGNER:

Pastors (by year):

1870	John Ellison	Rev.
1872	William R. Cusick	Rev.
1873	J. G. Witham	Rev.
1874	C. F. Irish	Rev.
1875	W. J. Johnston	Rev.
1876	C. D. Hoadley	Rev.
1877	Hiram Burse	Rev.
1878	A V Leonardson	Rev.
1879	C. H. Joslin	Rev.
1880	James Latham	Rev.
1881	Israel Mudge	Rev.
1882-1884	A C Marshall	Rev.
1885-1886	Myron DeVoist	Rev.
1887	Frederick S. Hulbert	Rev.
1888	G. W. Smith	Rev.
1888	W. H. Iles	Rev.
1889	Levy Witham	Rev.
1890	Hiram Voorhees	Rev.
1891-1892	A S. Andrews	Rev.
1893-1894	F. A. Perkins	Rev.

1895-1896	Elmer A. PUNCHES	Rev.
1897-1898	John D. Bennett	Rev.
1898-1899	J. A. Cooper	Rev.
1900-1902	Moses Cuthbert	Rev.
1903-1904	O. L. King	Rev.
1905-1906	P. S. Shoemaker	Rev.
1906-1907	C. E. Burt	Rev.
1907-1908	Marshall W. Hoyt	Rev.
1909-1911	Martha Cantley	Rev.
1911-1912	W. J. Hallead	Rev.
1913-1915	George A. Hosmer	Rev.
1915-1916	James Fuller	Rev.
1917-1918	Herbert Barnes	Rev.
1919-1920	J. J. Morrish	Rev.
1921-1922	M. M. Cooke, Rev.	(50 th Anniversary)
1923-1924	A A. York	Rev.
1924-1926	S. H. Porterfield	Rev.
1927-1928	W. J. Cross, Sr.	Rev.
1929-1931	M. P. Haller	Rev.
1932-1935	Nora Janes	Rev.
1936-1938	B. W. Case	Rev.
1939-1942	S. Mulholland	Rev.
1942-1943	V. R. Dunckel	Rev.
1944-1946	H. C. Artz	Rev.
1947-1950	J. W. Haywood	Rev.
1951-1957	Marjorie Hawkins, Rev.	(80 th Anniversary)
1957-1959	G. Robert Sawyer	Rev.
1959-1962	Richard L. Gongwer	Rev.
1962-1963	Robert J. Buethin	Rev.
1963-1965	Bruce Srigley	Rev.
1965-1970	Elmer E. Courser, Rev.	(100 th Anniversary)
1970-1975	Robert Bentley	Rev.
1975-1977	Rodney Dean	Rev.
1977-1980	Raymond Shaw	Rev.
1980-1985	George Hansen	Rev.
1985-1988	Paul Armstrong	Pastor
1988-1989	Joe Pendleton	Pastor
1989-1997	James Dennings	Pastor

1997-2010	Tom Wilson	Pastor
2002	Moved to new church 409 S US 27	
2011-2013	Brandon Hempel / James Benjamin	Pastors
2013	Scott Wheeler	Pastor
2014	CHURCH CLOSED	

STRUCTURAL CHANGES (by year):

1872	Church built	Cost: \$4,500.00
1888	Parsonage built	
1899-1900	Remodeling & substantial repairs	
1922	Church enlarged and remodeled	Covered in stucco
1923	New bell tower	Old one ripped off by a tornado
1947	New carpet	
1957	Church fuel oil furnaces installed	Replaced coal furnace
1957	New electric service in Church	
1957	New carpet in church	\$1,000.00
1972	Church re-roofed, ceiling dropped in sanctuary	
1974	Church light and windows	\$2,000.00
1977	Renovation of Church front	
1982	Greek Revival entryway	
1987	Sanctuary & small chapel painted	\$1,140.00 (Dave Gaffney)
1987	New gas furnace in Church	\$3,831.00
1989	Church Eaves replaced (ice storm)	\$150.00
1989	Storm/screen windows on Church	\$2,554.95
1990	White vinyl siding on Church, new back porch & door	\$16,575.00 (Fred Dowell Co.)
1994	Church basement remodel &	

	water proofed	
1998	Mint City sign put on front of Church	\$1,397.00
1999	Pews padded	\$2,617.06
2000	Furnace, hot water heater	\$3,234.99
2002, June 16	Last Service	Church sold to County (new church-409 S. Whittemore, SJ
2017, Jan 22	Torn down	

Newspaper articles:

--St. Johns News: 23 Jun 1898

--Clinton Republican: 9 Nov 1922

--Clinton County Republican: 17 Jan 1924, 24 Jan 1924

--Clinton County Republican News: 30 Nov 1950

--Republican News: 28 Jun 1956

--Clinton County News: 10 Sep 1975

--Clinton County News: 6 Sep 1978

Page 14B, Clinton County News, St. Johns, Michigan Sept. 6, 1978

Free Methodist here since 1872



elected superintendent over this section of Michigan and he settled in St. Johns hoping that soon he could build a society here.

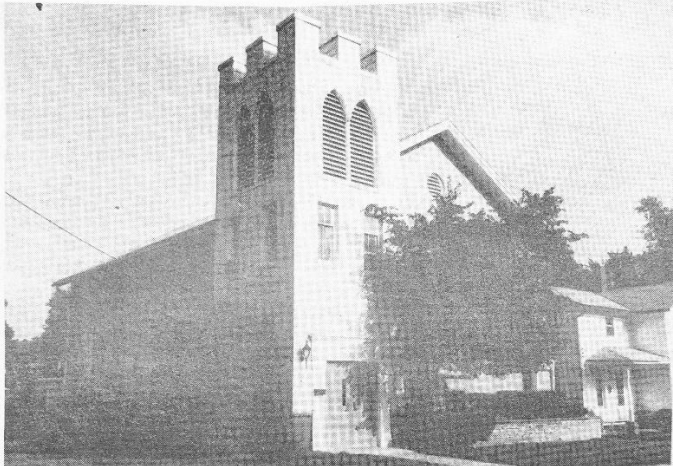
The church class of 1872 numbered 16 when the building was started. Soon it grew to 80. Today, membership remains at about 12 to 15 families. The Rev. Ray Shaw has served as pastor since August of 1977. He and his wife Regina, have two small daughters, Amy and Karen.

In the church history are several prominent figures. Cornelia Castle, who was on the roles of this local church for years, was a charter member of the first Free Methodist Society when it organized in New York. A famous son was Bishop Mark Ormston, son of Elizabeth and William S. Ormston. He was a Bishop for more than 40 years, serving as Bishop Emeritus from 1958 until his death in 1960.

FREE METHODIST CHURCH - Organized 1870 (1872)
305 Church St.

--St. Johns Reminder: 14 Sep 1982

ST. JOHNS REMINDER — TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1982 THE PAPER WITH THE WANT ADS



FREE METHODIST CHURCH

305 Church Street

The sole remaining church on Church Street in St. Johns is the 110-year-old Free Methodist Church. The original structure, built of soft red brick, was covered with stucco in the 1920's. In 1923 the enclosed tower was built after a tornado ripped off the belfrey.

The recent addition of a Greek Revival entranceway and other improvements has enhanced the appearance of the exterior. The church's interior features strong oak woodwork and doors, and the altar table and rails were hand built by a parishioner, Dr. Wesley Stephenson.

CONGRATULATIONS

— TO —

ST. JOHNS

— ON —

A Century of Progress



The Free Methodist Church

CENTENNIAL SUNDAY

HOMECOMING SERVICE — 11:00 A.M.

REV. VERDON DUNCKEL, FORMER PASTOR, PREACHING

SUNDAY SCHOOL — 10:00 A.M.

EVENING SERVICE — 7:30 P.M.

Republican News
28 Jun 1956 p 4

--Clinton County Historical Society Newsletter:

Clinton County Trails, March 2017, Volume 32 – Issue 1

And the Walls Came a Tumblin' Down: Joshua 5:1 – 6:27

By Julie (Staines) Courser Peters

Monday, January 22, 2017, was a sad day for St. Johns and for me. Behind the old Rodney B. Wilson High School was a church building that I'm sure a lot of people had never known was there even though it was erected 1872. Rev. T. S. LaDue was sent to Michigan by Rev. B. T. Roberts of New York when the Free Methodists broke away from the Methodist-Episcopal church in 1858.

Rev. LaDue spoke in private homes and other churches in the area that were willing to share their space until Rev. John Ellison arrived in 1870. He first preached "in his own hired house," a small frame building at the corner of McConnell and Lansing streets. At that time, the building was on the outskirts of the village.

In 1872, a small brick church was built at 305 Church St. at a cost of \$4,500 and dedicated late that year with Rev. Roberts present to preach the dedicatory sermon. Charter members were Caleb Ash, class leader, Hester Ash, Jeremiah and Janette Aiken, who came here from NY, Daniel D. and Henrietta Pattison, A.D. and Harriet Carrier, Horatio and Mrs. Parks, Walter and Mrs. Rall, Mary Robinson, Louise Letts, Thomas Placer and Eliza Placer. The parsonage, south of the church, was built in 1888.

1922 – 1923 brought a major restructuring to the building. Architect L. G. Morgan of Port Huron made the plans for the remodel. The entire foundation was rebuilt with a basement and an addition of a 4 foot sidewall. A 5 foot by 14 foot alcove was added to the east side where the pulpit stood and the cross hung. The most noticeable improvement to passersby was the new entrance and tower. Stucco was added to the outside. A classroom and balcony was added on the west side also. The interior was made beautiful with decorated walls and ceiling, etched windows, new floors, electric lights, and a restroom with toilets in the basement.

The first steeple had to be replaced in 1923 after it was damaged by a severe storm. The bell was installed in 1924. The bell has the inscription:

PRESENTED TO THE F.M. CHURCH JAN. 23, 1924
IN LOVING MEMORY OF
WIFE AND MOTHER – ELLA D. JOHNSON
BORN OCTOBER 29, 1861 DIED OCTOBER 2, 1922

C.M. JOHNSON
A.C. JOHNSON
L.A.W. JOHNSON

There have been many more changes over the years, with changing from coal to fuel oil to gas. Vinyl siding was added in 1990. Classrooms and a kitchen were added in the basement and the restrooms made a little prettier. The old basement walls were covered with tongue and groove pine boards. Carpeting was added in the sanctuary. There were many more necessary changes made and a few that were wanted more than needed... padded pews.

The attendees of the church worked hard together to keep the doors open. There were times when we struggled but knew that God still had a plan for us. There were 61 pastors over the years guiding us to the best of their ability. The first woman pastor was Rev. Martha Cantley. (1909-1911)

I started attending the church in 1967. The pastor's son was now in my class at school. I remember sitting in the unpadded pews one hot summer day and when I went to get up to sing, my dress stuck to the pew!! I, for one, was very glad to get the pews padded. I went from being a 16 year old kid attending church because of a boy to a somewhat smarter (I hope) adult that grew to want to know God personally. My heart was in that church and I was very sad to leave it for a different building in 2002.

I did marry the preacher's son and we had a son who was baptized in that church. I went through some rough times but made it through because of that church and the people in it. I am fortunate to have so many memories of that church and the imagination to feel what those before me felt just being in that building.

I had never seen the bell up close before and was anxious to be able to do that. The gentleman that was running the big jaws of equipment was so thoughtful of us few that were witnesses to this demolition that he "touched" the bell letting us hear that ring one more time. I still cry when I think of it. I gave him a hug when it was all over.

Our lives can turn on a dime and this was a reminder for me to be aware of that once again. I sent my son a picture of the demolition taking place. He sent me a text back saying that he had a lot of good memories of the church. I totally agreed with him and reminded him the he wouldn't exist without that church! *smile*
