

*The Planning Committee extends grateful appreciation to all who helped in any way to make this day memorable in the life of the Church. **Acknowledgments:** Those interviewed who provided helpful historical accounts (Peggy Leimeister, Jerry Beck, Barb Kramer, John Liles, Virginia Harper). Thanks also to Donna Harper (church secretary), Kathy Corbin (custodian), Pat Vogt (meal coordinator), Hospitality Committee, Jim Barron--Music, Gary Sams & Zach Crane, and young people. Additional thanks to Carol Holiger, Archivist, Archives of Ohio United Methodism (Ohio Wesleyan University) for materials on the Collins Church sent from the Archives Center, article by Pastor George A. Weber from History of Huron and Erie Counties, Ohio compiled by W. W. Williams, 1879, *Dedicatory Program of the The Townsend Methodist Episcopal Church (Collins, Ohio) March 12, 1933, The Collins United Methodist Church Home Coming Program and Historical Summary, September 14, 1975* by Richard Harper, Pastor, as well as those who contributed articles and clippings from newspapers.*

A SYNOPSIS OF CHURCH HISTORY: 1839 - 2014

The history of the Collins United Methodist Church goes back 175 years to 1839 which was much different than today. Many of the early inhabitants came from Connecticut settling in the area of the Western Reserve and its western most part known as the Firelands. They had a strong Yankee spirit of hard work and rugged individualism.

While the earliest origins of our Church is somewhat indefinite, according to one of the pastors, the Reverend Mr. George A. Webber, "The church was in existence at Townsend Center in the spring of 1839; how long before that, or by whom organized cannot be ascertained. The first meetings were held in an old red school house a short distance southeast of the center." In 1851 the members decided to build a Church at Townsend Center. This was accomplished in 1852 at a cost of \$1,400. At the dedication of the Church the sermon was brought by Edward Thompson, who later became a bishop. The first Sabbath School was formed in 1853.

In the Spring of 1897 the second building was started; the new structure was dedicated by Bishop David Hastings Moore on December 4 1898. This building was the dream of the Women of "The Ladies Aid Society." At the time of its dedication there were 130 members. It is interesting to note that the total cost in labor and construction was \$4,000.

For the next 34 years that building served the congregation, but in time additions and upkeep necessitated costly repairs in 1931 and 1932. Then the unexpected happened. On March 29, 1932, the building was destroyed by fire. While the cause has never been determined there has been speculation that it may have had something to do with the remodeling project itself. The congregation was stunned by the loss. This was during the Great Depression; money and jobs were scarce. But the site was cleared and a cornerstone was laid for a new building on October 16, 1932. This commitment was a genuine act of faith. There was much enthusiasm surrounding the dedication of the new building on Sunday, March 12, 1933 a month before Easter (April 16th). The Church, the body of Christ, had truly experienced a kind of resurrection as a result of their faith. At the Dedication Service at 10:30A.M., Resident Bishop H.Lester Smith, delivered the sermon. That evening at The Formal Dedication of the Rose Rudin Roosa Memorial Organ a member of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music played this fine instrument. The cost of the building was \$15,850.

Through the years additional improvements and upkeep of the physical plant had taken place. The volunteer core of the church has been strong with members and constituents rallying to meet the needs, whatever they were.

God has blessed the Church in many ways even as it has been a blessing to others. One such illustration was the unexpected joy on Saturday, October 19, 1968. Mrs. Harold Earnest, custodian, went to the building that morning to do her duties and experienced the surprise of her life. She discovered a baby wrapped in a white sheet on the steps of the church. After going to her daughter's home to share with her the find, she called the sheriff who met them at the hospital. No one ever came forward to

claim the treasure. Baby "Joy" was adopted and her needs were met. Thirty years later when Joy Lynch learned of her abandonment on the steps of the Church, in order to make contact with her past she returned to this Church where she was found. A national TV show covered the story so Joy held out hope that someone might see it and help to answer questions about her parents and her birth. The real miracle was that Beulah Earnest was at the right place to make the great discovery which was for baby "Joy" a real life-saver!

This Church has been very mission-minded, engaging in numerous fundraisers to support projects all over the world. One such project was the making of colorful chocolate covered and decorated Easter eggs.

With a growing congregation there was a need to have a larger facility. So in April of 1992 ground was broken for a new addition comprised of office space, rooms for Sunday School, a kitchen, and areas for youth activities. The cost would be considerable. Just at the right time a \$100,000 gift from Helen (Bilton) Langer Painton, who had been baptized at the Church as a child, helped to get the project underway. But the congregation took on a \$100,000 debt. Just as miraculous as the bequest given to the church, the debt incurred was paid off in only three years. On Easter Sunday 1995, the mortgage was burnt before the tear-filled eyes of those present, in gratitude to God for the generosity shown by those who had given sacrificially.

The Collins United Methodist Church is by no means ingrown or detached, for its ministry and mission is to a world that needs to know about the love of God through devotion and service to Jesus Christ. There is a ministry directed toward everyone in the Church: Sunday School classes, small groups, youth programs such as AWANA, MAD HOUSE and Hang Out, 4 C's Pre-School, Respite Ministry, Soccer Camps, Vacation Bible School, and Cantatas. These are some of the ways the Church seeks to meet the needs of members and constituents, the community and surrounding area, the Western Reserve School District, and the ripple effect of an ever-widening influence in the District, the Conference, the Nation, and the World. As John Wesley said, "The World is my parish." That could be easily said of our response to Jesus to "Go

into all the world and make disciples.” We are indeed reminded that “The church is not the building...the church is the people.” This is learned not only in the Church’s tragedy but in its relocation.

Over the course of its 175 years a rich legacy has been passed down generation to generation by the “saints”-- lay and clergy-- the mention of whose names evokes much gratitude.

PASTORAL APPOINTMENTS FOR WEST HARTLAND AND COLLINS

Pastors who served the Collins Church and its antecedents-- from 1838 to 1841 ministers from the Clarksfield Circuit served by extension our predecessor church during that period: J. L. Ferris, William Diabro, Thomas Barkdull, W. J. Wells, John H. Curtiss, James Brewster and John O. Conoway, L. B. Gurley presiding elder. (*Appointments from its founding until 1852 are uncertain.*) (Reference Archives of Ohio Methodism. Ohio Wesleyan University

1850-51 – Hiram Humphery
 1851-52 – L.S. Johnson
 1852-54 – John R. Jewett
 (1852 Townsend Center Methodist Church built)
 1854-56 – E. H. Bush
 1856-58 – J.A. Brown & Hiram Humphrey
 (Parsonage built)
 1858-59 – Hiram Humphrey & R. Wilcox
 1859-60 – R. Wilcox & John McKean
 1860-61 – H. Safford & J.W. Buxton
 1861-62 – J.W. Buxton
 1862-63 – J. Williams
 1863-64 – J.S. Halderman
 1864-65 – C.L. Foot
 1865-67 – P.B. Stroup
 1867-69 – Orlando Pearce
 1869-70 – A.P. Jones
 1870-72 – G.L. Hanawalt (no longer on a circuit)
 (1873 West Hartland Church built)
 1872-75 – D.R. Moore
 1875-78 – Hiram Royce
 1878-80 – G.A. Webber & Mrs.M.E. Lowrey (6mos)
 1880-81 – Oman Lawrence (3/4 yr.)
 1881-82 – E.J.V. Booth (1 ¼ yr.)
 1882-85 – H.S. Place
 1885-86 – F.A. Owen (7mos.)

1885-86 – Collinsee & Reeder (5mos.)
 1886-88 – C.F. Johnson
 1888-90 – F.S. Wolfe
 1890-92 – J.T.N. Braithwaite
 1892-97 – Oliver J. Coby
 (1897-1898 Townsend M. E. Church built)
 1897-98 – C.D. Patterson
 1898-1901 – B.F. Rhoads
 (Dec.4, 1898 Church Dedicated)
 1901-03 – W.H. Eglin
 1903-06 – D.L. Edwards
 (E. Townsend & West Hartland become a two-point charge)
 1906-08 – W.H. Oswalt (now called Collins)
 1908-11 – L.A. Ensley (Bishop Ensley’s Father)
 1911-17 – F.A.S. Hinman
 1917-19 – T.H.D. Harrold
 1919-20 – G.H. Crafts
 1920-22 – J.R. Babcock
 1922-24 – James Eastwood
 1924-25 – O.B. McLaughlin
 1925-28 – John Thompson
 1928-29 – A. E. Harrison
 1929-33 – O.E. Hanawalt
 (1932 New Townsend Methodist Episcopal Church rebuilt)
 1933-35 – O.L. Ashburn
 1935-38 – F.M. Dickey
 1938-41 – Hallis C. Green
 1941-43 – Frank B. Chapman
 1943-45 – Andrew C. Johnson
 1945-46 – Theodore Rodd & C.J. Messenger
 1946-48 – E.L. Thompson
 1948-52 – Einar Bohne-Echolt
 1952-56 – Marie Tschappat
 1956-58 – William E. Gilmer
 1958-60 – William C. Burgess
 1960-62 – Thomas M Scheesley
 1962-66 – Robert L. Smith
 1966-67 – Norman Everard
 1967-68 – George Parsons, Sr.
 1968-72 – Homer Moore
 (1971 Cooperative Parish- Norwalk First, Collins, West Hartland, Homer Moore, Assoc. 1971-72)
 1972-82 – Richard G. Harper
 (1972 -73 Richard Harper Assoc., Cooperative Parish)
 1982-Nov. 84 – Mitchell J. Ladich
 Feb. 1985- Jan. 86 – Thomas Schluter
 April 1986-2012 – Carl H. Fannin
 1999-2003 – Greg Rowan, Assoc.
 (2000-2003 three point charge with Clarksfield UMC)
 2012- present – Everett A. Stoddard

COLLINS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1839 -- 175th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION -- 2014 Sunday, October 26, 2014

Potluck In Fellowship Hall 12:15 P.M.
 Welcome Gordon Hahn
 Introduction Gordon Hahn
 Prayer Pastor Everett Stoddard
 Meal
 Skit “Who’s on First?” Gary Sams & Zach Crane
 (Adjournment to Sanctuary)
Sanctuary 1:00 P.M.
 Welcome Gordon Hahn
 Introduction Gordon Hahn
 Historical Sharing Clarke Hogue
Presentation of certificates to the Collins United Methodist
 Church from the *Firelands District* and the *United Methodist Historical Society of Ohio* Recognizing
 175 years of Christian Ministry
 Clarke Hogue, UMHSO President Emeritus
 Duet “Right Here Where We Stand” Clarke & Pat Hogue
 words by Jean Ziegler and Deb Searles
 Musical Selections led by Jim Barron
 “Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God Almighty” (HFG) #323
 “And Can It Be That I Should Gain?” (HFG) #260
 “What A Mighty God We Serve” (See insert)
 Theme: “Not Finished But Begun” Pastor Everett Stoddard
 Present & Future Hope by young people
 Special Reading “A Perfect Church” Gordon Hahn
 Closing Prayer Pastor Everett Stoddard
Planning Committee:
 Everett Stoddard, *Pastor*
 Gordon Hahn, *Chp. 175th Anniversary Committee & SPRC*
 Joe Kovach, *Chairperson of the Church Council*
 Dale Hopkins, *Intentional Faith Development Team Leader*
 Clarke A. Hogue, III, *Archives & History Consultant*