

CHURCH NOW FLOURISHING

Gunnisonville Church Marks 100th Anniversary of Origin

Gunnisonville — The Gunnisonville Community church celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the first church service in Gunnisonville Sunday, July 8.

The scope was very impressive and beautiful as the congregation began to gather in the little brick church for the morning service, a good many of them wearing centennial dresses and others, the clothes of yesterday.

To the strains of the new organ the choir took their places in the choir loft and Rev. John Keith took his place in the pulpit, dressed in a frock coat and top hat, dating back well over one hundred years. The feeling of reverence was very authentic as the congregation of 115 bowed their heads to begin the praise and call to worship.

DR. HERBERT Hengst was master of ceremonies. He gave the pastoral prayer. Guests of honor, besides Dr. Hengst, a former pastor, were: Mrs. Ray Birdsell and Mrs. Faith Lawrason, Albion, wife and daughter of the late Rev. Ray Birdsell, a former pastor; Dr. Keith Avery, District Superintendent and Mrs. Avery, Grand Rapids. Mrs. Lawrason is associate editor of the *Michigan Chronicle*.



Pastor of Gunnisonville church, wearing the 105-year old suit and top hat belonging to the grandfather of Bill Crego of DeWitt.

church present was Mrs. Thelma Kraus Fisk, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Augusta Heidi, Melvin, Lansing, and Mrs. Zedie Angell. had attended the church for over 50 years. Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Rhynard, Bath, and all his family were present; Dale

Keith Avery. Candles were lighted by Karl Shirey and Johnny Hagy; ushers were Elmer Baldof, Bernard Harris, Karl Shirey and Johnny Hagy; greeters, Mrs. Loui Franz, Glen Baldof and Bernard Harris. Barbara Smith was in charge of the nursery. Christian Fellowship coffee hostess, Mrs. Beatrice Shirey.

AT 1 O'CLOCK about 85 old and new residents of Gunnisonville gathered at the church for the 31st annual Gunnisonville reunion. They enjoyed a potluck dinner followed by a short business meeting and program. New officers for the coming year, 1963, are: president, Dale Schmidman; vice president, Alva Hartman; secretary and treasurer, Mrs. Loui Franz.

The program was as follows: community singing, Ruth Peterson, pianist; duets by Florence Hartman and Gladys Baldof; history of Gunnisonville church, Margaret Stampfl; song by trio Mrs. Edna Gorton, Mrs. Adeline Martin and Mrs. Ruth Peterson; readings by W. E. Dobson and Gladys Baldof; music by Florence and Nancy Hartman; memorials read by Gladys Baldof, music and recitation, Florence Hartman and

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was Mrs. Cecil Rhynard, Sept. 26, 1930.

ABOUT 1919 the church began to go down. Elder Seipp could not seem to get a congregation together. He did everything he could to keep the church from closing its doors. He told the trustees to hold four meetings a year, a meeting of the Ladies Aid with a prayer would count as one, and keep the church off the delinquent tax roll and may be in time it would pick up.

Over the years the church had its ups and downs, but always a few faithful followers have never given up and have kept the church open, even when there were but three people and the minister in the congregation.

The Ladies Aid carried the church during its depressions, paid the light bill and kept up the insurance when there weren't any services. Rev. Seipp reopened the church again in 1930 or '37 and Harry Moon, DeWitt, was Sunday school superintendent. Rev. Seipp was an old man and soon Mr. Moon became a pastor and he took over the preaching duties. Rev. Seipp came back and preached his last sermon in Gunnisonville at the age of 83.

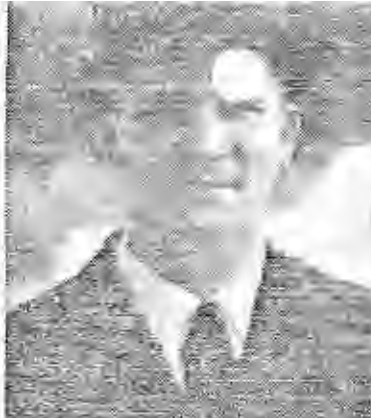
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The oldest member of the



Pastor of Gunnisonville church, wearing the 105-year old suit and top hat belonging to the grandfather of Bill Crego of DeWitt.

church present was Mrs Tillie Kraus Flisk, Washington, D. C. Mrs Augusta Heidt Melvin, Lansing, and Mrs Zedie Angell had attended the church for over 50 years. Mr and Mrs Cecil Ryhnard, Bath, and all his family were present. Dale and Le Roy and families, Denver, Colo.; Mrs Lila Kay Weinert and family, Jackson; Mrs Lois Baumer and family and Loyal (Mike) Ryhnard at home. They started attending Gunnisonville church 25 years ago. Attending from the longest distance were Mrs Mabel Heidt Huston, Calif., and Chris Hanson, Tucson, Ariz.

MRS MARGARET Stampfky read the history of the church. The cherub choir, directed by Mrs Faye Hagy, sang "He has the Whole World in His Hands." The Junior choir, directed by Mrs Florence Hartman, sang "When the Saints Come Marching In." The senior choir and them was "Climbing Jacob's Ladder" and "The Lord is my Shepherd" directed by Mrs Evelyn Case, organist Mrs Mary Harrison.

Rev John P. Keith's sermon was from the scripture of Moses leading the children of Israel. His text, "Journey On". The benediction was by Dr

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Next year Gunnisonville church will be 75 years old and we plan to celebrate a Diamond Jubilee and a re-dedication of the church. It will be the same day as the Gunnisonville reunion, the second Sunday in July, 1963.

IN THE EVENING, to make the day complete, we enjoyed an old fashioned ice cream social. Everything was five cents except of ice cream, piece of cake, cup of coffee and pink lemonade. About 65 enjoyed the social.

The "shutter bugs" also enjoyed a field day. Young and old snapped pictures, color slides and movies.

This correspondent, Loui Fritz, general chairman wants to thank everyone who helped plan, worked, attended or in any way participated in making our centennial Sunday a grand success.

THE FOLLOWING is the list of the church members

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Over the years the church had its ups and downs, but always a few faithful followers have never given up and have kept the church open, even when there were but three people and the minister in the congregation.

The Ladies Aid carried the church during its depressions, paid the light bill and kept up the insurance when there weren't any services. Rev Seipp reopened the church again in 1936 or 37 and Harry Moon, DeWitt, was Sunday school superintendent. Rev Seipp was an old man and soon Mr Moon became a pastor and he took over the preaching duties. Rev Seipp came back and preached his last sermon in Gunnisonville at the age of 83.

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THE LAST four years have seen a tremendous change in the church again. It is growing once more. The attendance is picking up. This year at Easter showed the biggest congregation ever known in the history of the church, about 170. There is a growing Sunday school and have just completed the fourth year of two weeks of jointly with Emanuel Methodist church. The average per day was 108, high 119, low 88. Four years ago the first VBS held one week averaged 17 per day.

There are now three choirs, senior, junior and cherub; a very active men's club, and for pleasure two soft ball teams the Young Adults and Little Leaguers, who play in the church leagues of the YMCA in Lansing. We have a wonderful working congregation. Our present pastor is Rev John P. Keith and our Sunday school superintendent is Mrs John Hagy.

THE OLD CHURCH is very badly in need of repair and we

DEPENDABLE
always
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MORE AND MORE FAMILIES ARE ENJOYING THE BACKYARD Cookout!



Today, in back yards all over the country, the outdoor food.

Electric fry pans and coffee makers are found on the patio almost as often as they are in the kitchen or dining room. Electric barbecue equipment is becoming standard for outdoor living.

Electrically gas anywhere, these days, and it's doing wonderful things for family living. Now, when it's time for the usual meals, there's no need to retreat indoors... modern barbecues "bring you the wind" with appreciated convenience outlets for living better than ever... outdoors!

history of the church as told by Mrs Stampfly:

January 19, 1862, a little group of people met in the schoolhouse at Gunnisonville, known then as Gunnison, to organize the first church. It was a Methodist Episcopal church. The first class dated January 19, 1862, (now owned by Margaret Stampfly) reads as follows: The Methodist Episcopal church class book for Gunnison class, DeWitt circuit, Lansing District, Michigan Conference, H. Hall, presiding Elder, A.L. Hoag, James Roberts, preacher, Thomas Robbins, leader. January 19, 1862. First roll call of members: T. Robbins, Elvira Robbins, Truman Heth, Cynthia Heth, Luther Southworth, Mrs Elderan, Elmira Henderson, David Turill, Hannah Morgan, M. A. Croy, Rachel Smith, Lida Lenderson, B. Conklin, M. J. Morgan, Nancy Wirtz, Thomas J. Croy, Elderan Henderson, John Conklin, Lavina Stampfly, Martha Morgan, Bishop Downer, Wilbur Bailey, Abbeil Hammond, Mary Gregory.

The class was revised on March 1, 1865, H. Hall still presiding Elder. In 1885 the Ladies Aid was organized. The minister, Rev McNutt, talked of a new church and although it looked like a big undertaking it was built in 1882.

The following was found in the St. Johns Republican, dated Oct. 18, 1886. "The new brick church at Gunnison's in DeWitt will be dedicated on November 4. Elder W. H. Thompson will preach the dedicatory sermon in the morning and services in German will be held in the afternoon. Services will follow each evening in the week. Rev. Duncan M. Ward will have charge of the pastorate."

The old class book was given revised in September, 1895. George S. Hicky, presiding el-

have done a lot. We have a new roof, new front doors, wall paneling in the vestibule, new birch railing in front of the choir and organ loft, a beautiful new organ, and downstairs an acoustical tile ceiling, aqua drapes to separate Sunday school classes, six new tables and about 45 chairs and many other things.

There is a lot of sentiment in this old church. When we put the new roof on we talked about repair on the steeple. Some want it left as it was built 74 years ago, and some are willing to have it torn down and rebuilt more modern. We haven't repaired it yet because of the cost.

This is a humble little church and as we celebrate this 100th anniversary today, our little church stands ready once more to serve the needs of her community.

THE FOLLOWING is the 1902 official church board of Gunnisonville Community church; Rev John P. Keith, Pastor, Mrs John Hagy, Sunday school superintendent; Mrs Janet Green, chairman of the board, 1902; Trustees — Gaylord Hill, Walter Placer, Lyman Case, Alva Hartman, Margaret Stampfly, Janet Green, Raymond Shirey.

Stewards — Jackie Andrews, Letha Hill, Communion; Glen Balduf, Building; Gladys Balduf, treasurer; Raymond Shirey, Ins Cook, Glenda Homer, secretary.

CHURCH school: Mrs Faye Hagy, superintendent, Mrs Lou Fritz, assistant superintendent; Hospital and Homes steward, Gladys Balduf, Florence Hartman; History and Records, Margaret Stampfly; Children's Division, Faye Hagy; Youth



Today, modern families use electrical equipment all over the house... and outdoors too!

Electric fry pans and coffee makers are found on the patio almost as often as they are in the kitchen or dining area. Electric barbecue equipment is becoming standard for outdoor living.

Electricity goes anywhere, these days, and it's doing wonderful things for family living. Now, when it's time for the usual week, there's no need to retreat indoors... modern homes are "Housepower or Wired" with waterproofed convenience outlets for using better electrically... outdoors!

Modern Living begins with "HOUSEPOWER WIRING"

Living modern means living the electric way... that's why "Housepower Wiring" is so important.

The term "Housepower Wiring" means... outlets right where you need them for easy use—outlets located at every room entrance and you can plug the light, your radio, your TV set, your... a 50-watt service—coming into your home and a main distribution point of at least 100 watts.

"Housepower Wiring" means enough electricity to power all the electric appliances you now have—and all you will want in the future.

**Ask your ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR
or CONSUMERS POWER COMPANY
for a Housepower Rating Today!**

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IN ITS EARLY years the church flourished and grew. It filled all the needs of the community. Ernest Stampfly, now 15 years old, said when he was four years old church services were held every other Sunday. The minister lived in DeWitt and preached at Gunnisonville at 11 a.m. and DeWitt in the afternoon, the next Sunday at Olive at 11 a.m. and DeWitt in the afternoon.

Miss Sarah Palmer and Adam Rupp were the first couple married in the new church. After the church service they walked up to the minister and asked him to marry them before the congregation was dismissed and he did.

The last funeral in the church

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THE FOLLOWING is the 1982 official church board of Gunnisonville Community church: Rev John P. Keith, Pastor; Mrs John Hagy, Sunday school superintendent; Mrs Janet Green, chairman of the board, 1982; Trustees — Gaylord Hill, Walter Placer, Lyman Case, Alva Hartman, Margaret Stampfly, Janet Green, Raymond Shirey.

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CHURCH school: Mrs Faye Hagy, superintendent, Mrs Loui Fritz, assistant superintendent; Hospital and Homes steward, Gladys Balduf, Florence Hartman; History and Records, Margaret Stampfly; Children's Division, Faye Hagy; Youth Division, Alva Hartman, Aidan Stampfly.

Music, Evelyn Gase; pianist, Susan Green; Elaine Cable, choir director; Lay leader Bruce Cook; Auditing, Dale Schmidman, John Beris.

South Greenbush

By Mrs Stanley Whitlock

Mr and Dale Crawford and Linda called on Mr and Mrs Stanley Whitlock Sunday evening.

The vote was 27 yes and 4 no to raise the millage for the Richmond School District.

Character is determined by the things a man can say no to.

MANY COME DRESSED IN OLD-TIME COSTUMES

Gunnisonville Community Methodist Church Celebrates 75th Anniversary

Gunnisonville—The diamond jubilee of Gunnisonville community Methodist church was celebrated Sunday, July 14.

As the congregation began gathering Sunday Morning, July 14, at the old red brick church at Gunnisonville corner, it looked a little like it must have looked 75 years ago when another congregation gathered to worship in a new red brick church for the first time in 1838 when the Gunnisonville Community Methodist church was built. The scene Sunday was reminiscent of the old days as a good many worshippers came wearing the old-fashioned clothes of yesteryears. Mrs. Gladys Balduf was dressed in her grandmother's dress and hat and Miss Loui Lea Fritz looked very much like a young school teacher in her great-grandmother McQuiston's best black skirt with the taffeta petticoat and a sailor hat. To be a little more up-to-date, the Fred Hornum family arrived in their 1923 Studebaker automobile and Dale Schaudtman brought his family to church in his 1930 Chevrolet touring car.

TO THE strains of the organ the choir took their places in the choir loft all dressed in the clothes in keeping with the day. During the worship service Rev. John P. Keith acknowledged the gift of a beautiful baptismal font to the church from Mrs. George Johnson in memory of her late husband; also the gift of the renovation of the church steeple by Chris Hansen and daughters as a memorial to their wife and mother, the late Clara Kraus Hansen. Both Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Hansen were present.

The history of the building of the church was read by lay leader Bernard Harris. The chorale choir, directed by Mrs. Faye Hagy, sang "Christ's Way, My Way." The junior choir, directed by Mrs. Florence Hartman, sang "Where He Leads I'll Follow", also the responses. A trio, Mrs. Florence Hartman, Mrs. Marion Trowbridge and Mrs. Gladys Balduf, sang "The Church of Long Ago." Organist and pianist was Mrs. Evelyn Case. Rev. John P. Keith's scripture and sermon text was from the 53rd chapter of the prophet Isaiah,



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At that meeting the minister, Rev. McNitt, talked of a new church at Gunnison (as it was known at that time) but the idea didn't materialize until the spring of 1832. The land on the corner of Wood and Clark Rds., where the church still stands, was donated by Philip Kraus and family for the new church site. The Ladies Aid, The Sons of Temperance and all the people of the community who could, gave money, and all the

shoveled all the gravel and Ephraim Henderson hauled it from the pit to the church site. Other men hauled stone, lumber and bricks, while others did carpenter work, painting, etc. Nearly everyone in the community had their share in building this church. The Ladies Aid furnished the meals for the men while they were working.

The original cost of the church was \$3,000 and it was owned jointly by the Methodist Episcopal church and The Sons of Temperance.

The church was completed and dedicated on November 4, 1838. The following was found in the St. Johns Republican dated October 18, 1838. "The new brick church at Gunnison's in DeWitt will be dedicated on November 4, 1838. Elder W. H. Thompson will preach the dedicatory sermon in the morning and services in German will be held in the afternoon. Services will follow each evening in the

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William Hornum Sr. told that a man named Andrew West, who lived where Helen Wins now lives near the church on Wood road, had trees in his woods, had lumber sawed and built church pews in his barn. When they were finished he loaded them into his wagon and hauled them down to the church. These are the same pews we are using today.

Ernie Stampfle tells of an incident: Most of the young people of the neighborhood belonged to The Sons of Temperance; the church wanted an organ, so they got together and went out to buy it. Clark Hornum put his foot and wanted some tobacco to go with it to stop the bleeding (it was an old remedy in those days) and out of about 17 young men there wasn't a one of tobacco in the whole group.

MRS. ZADIE Angell tells that 75 years later, they got the church roof re-shingled. Every man had to buy two bunches of shingles (cedar wood) and had to go up on the roof and put them on, or he had to have someone else to do it for him. Another time, lightning struck the church steeple and O. H. Kussman went up with just farm ladders and a swing anchored to the top and repaired it.

This old Gunnisonville church has seen good times and bad. For years a "faithful" have struggled to keep it open. About five years ago, under the pastorate of Dr. Bert Hengel and our present pastor, Dr. John P. Keith, the church has begun to show signs of "growing pains" again. A renovation began to take place, since one year something wonderful has happened to our church congregation.

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to be repeating itself. The complete renovation of the sanctuary with its colonial look and beautiful new stained glass windows, the newly renovated dining room and the 22 x 30 two-story addition that is being completed is once again being done by a community giving freely of their money, time and labor in Christian fellowship.

This new addition is the first ever built on Gunnisonville church. It will house a new kitchen, furnace room and two rest rooms on the ground floor, three Sunday school rooms, a nursery and a child's rest room on the second floor.

This humble little church has weathered one storm of 75 years and still stands on a firm foundation, and today as we celebrate this diamond jubilee, it still stands with open doors, ready to serve the needs of its fast growing community.

We humbly ask God's blessing and guidance on the building and carrying on the work of His Kingdom.

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CHRISTIAN fellowship coffee hostess was Mrs Margaret Stampfle dressed in an old-fashioned pink and white silk dress and a big picture hat. She served from a table centered with a big bouquet of garden flowers and pink candles. She was assisted by Mrs Lathia Hill.

At 1 o'clock about 115 old and new residents of Gunnisonville gathered at the church for the 32nd annual Gunnisonville reunion. A bountiful potluck dinner was enjoyed. Invocation by Cecil Rhynard. After a bit of reminiscing, baskets were packed away and a short business meeting, with Dale Schmidtman president, and program followed. Alva Hartman, program chairman, opened with some group singing, then introductions followed.

THE OLDEST person present was Mrs Bertha Henderson Cortright who was 88 years old. She came with her younger brother, Earl Henderson, who was 83. They attended Gunnisonville church as children. Others present, who also attended church in its early days, were Allen and Ernie Stampfle, Mrs Erna Johnson, Mrs Edith Gates, Mrs Zadie Angell and Mrs Bertha Zeeb and several others.

Memorials were read for Mrs.



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LAST JANUARY Mrs Zadie Angell and family gave an additional acre of land to the present church site. Looking back 75 years, history seems

Glenn Baddat and A. Hartman.

and labor to build the new church.

CLARK Livermore, now deceased, used to tell how he

have charge of the Pastorate.

THE CHURCH stands were built later, about 1903. The Ladies Aid furnished meals there

LAST JANUARY Mrs. Zadie Angell and family gave an additional acre of land to the present church site. Looking back 76 years, history seems

CHRISTIAN fellowship coffee hostess was Mrs. Margaret Stamply dressed in an old-fashioned pink and white silk dress and a big picture hat. She served from a table covered with a big bouquet of lily flowers and pink carnations. She was assisted by Mrs. Leatha Hill.

At 1 o'clock about 115 old and new residents of Gunnisonville gathered at the church for the 32nd annual Gunnisonville reunion. A beautiful potluck dinner was enjoyed. Invocation by Cecil Rhynard. After a bit of reminiscing, baskets were packed away and a short business meeting, with Dale Schmittman president, and program followed. Alva Hartman, program chairman, opened with some group singing, then introductions followed.

THE OLDEST person present was Mrs. Bertha Henderson Cortright who was 88 years old. She came with her younger brother, Earl Henderson, who was 83. They attended Gunnisonville church as children. Others present, who also attended church in its early days, were Allen and Ernie Stamply, Mrs. Erma Johnson, Mrs. Edith Gates, Mrs. Zadie Angell and Mrs. Bertha Zeeb and several others.

Memorials were read for Mrs. M. McGiveron, Mrs. Aggie Springsteen and Mrs. Fred Tucker, who have passed away this past year. History of the building of the church was written and read by Mrs. Lou Fritz. There was a duet, sung by Florence and Nancy Hartman, followed by a reading by Mrs. Lou Fritz and songs by Florence Hartman and the Hartman family. The program closed with the congregation singing "God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again" with Evelyn Case as organist.

AN ICE cream social followed the program in the church dining room. Ice cream, cake, coffee and cold drinks were served by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fritz and Mr. and Mrs. Dick Hamer, who were hosts.

Everyone seemed to enjoy browsing through the new addition and looking at the new color glass windows in the sanctuary and the many other things that have happened to the old church in the past year. They all seemed to agree the new was just about perfect.

His correspondent, Mrs. Lou Fritz, general chairman of the diamond jubilee, wishes to thank everyone who worked, helped plan, attended or in any way participated in making our



Help Yourself, Men, There's Lots More to Come

Part of the tradition of a work bee is a fried chicken and biscuit dinner at noon served by the womenfolk. Saturday's "dirt movin' bee" at the Gunnisonville Community Methodist Church was full of tradition. After the men washed the dirt and dust off with the garden hose and a couple of wash basins, they willingly reduced heaping platters of chicken and the trimmings to a respectable size.

Aug. 19 65



"Dirt Movin' Bee" Cleans up Gunnisonville Church Yard

If the 15 men who met Saturday morning at the Gunnisonville Community Methodist Church weren't sure what a "dirt movin' bee" was, they knew by 4:30 that afternoon. Using tractors, plows, bulldozer, scrapers, shovels and rakes, they plowed, graded and leveled the church yard in the same tradition of community fellowship that built the old church 77 years ago. Shown here riding their tractors on one sweep of the yard are Rev Bill Cessna, Bill Placer, Don Placer, David Gardner and Oliver Angell. Other men who worked included Lawrence Seeger, Walter Baumer, Merl Trowbridge, Marvin Rhynard, Ernie Fritz, Norman Smith, Allen Cable, Ray Shirey, Alden Stampfly and Alva Hartman.

LOCAL HISTORY
COLLECTION
BOX 11