

KK's Kin Chronicles

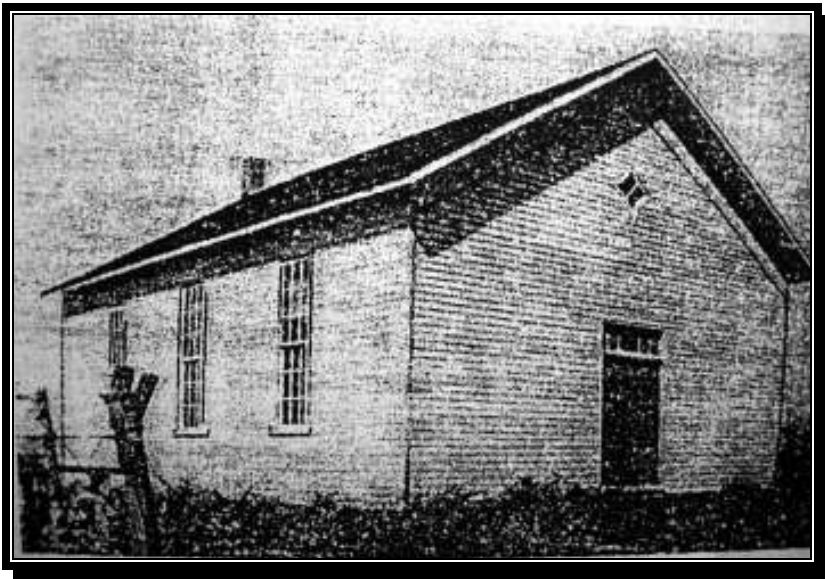


By Kathy Kult

Embury United Methodist Church Van Buren Township, Lee County, Iowa

■ Embury Church History

This little church of 125 years duration stands for something special for many folks. It may be where they attended Sunday School or church where they were baptized and taken into the church or where they were married.



*Embury Methodist Church
1869*

A group of Methodists held their first meeting in the Columbia school house in Van Buren township, Lee County, Iowa. They decided to build a church one mile south across from the cemetery already there. The land was deeded to the Methodist Church by Joseph and Mary Clark for the consideration of \$1 on June 18, 1869.

The first trustees were John McKaig, Henry Wahn, James H. Gay, Joseph Clark and William Kingkaid. Others in the first group were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Richey, Mr. and Mrs. H.A. McKaig, Mrs. Clark, Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Gay, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wahn, Mr. and Mrs. John McVay and family, Mrs. John Herron, Mr. and Mrs. George Martin and family, the Withrow family and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dresser.

Others joining later were: Mr. and Mrs. Tom Dresser, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Dresser, Mrs. Albert Henkle, Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Rube, Mr. and Mrs. George Lauterbach, Mrs. David Herron, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Schoene, Mr. and Mrs. George Meinhardt, Mr. and Mrs. John Kelsey and the Haynes family.

The article in the Daily Gate City of Keokuk on Friday, Nov. 26, 1869, telling of the dedication of the church was found and sent to the historian in April, 1969, by the late R.J. Bickel of Keokuk.

In the beginning Embury, Charleston and Farmington were together. When the Donnellson Methodist Church was built, the circuit was changed leaving Farmington out and putting Donnellson in its place in the circuit. In 1917, Clay Grove replaces Charleston, and in 1969 New Boston replaced Clay Grove. The New Boston Church closed in early 1970's. Montrose joined Embury and Donnellson in a three-point charge from 1979 to 1989. Donnellson and Embury have been in a two-point charge since then.

This little church has seen some hard times when but a few attended and it was a struggle to keep it going; and it has seen some good times with large attendance.

In the first one hundred years, it prospered enough to add to the outside, to have a nice full basement with modern facilities and a very comfortable inside with new seats, organ and altar. Many contributions came from members and good friends who made it possible for these comforts.

Many young student ministers have started their ministry in our church and have gone on to more responsible positions after leaving here.

The church helped to send one minister, Rev. E.K. Burham, to Japan for three months as a missionary in 1955.

The church, W.S.C.S., and the MYF supported a foster child from Hong Kong between 1962 and 1968 and a child from Viet Nam for a number of years beginning in 1969. The Sunday School and United Methodist Women still support foster children. Our last two have been Indian youths.

The Ladies Aid Society was organized in 1906. They were very instrumental in providing funds to help pay the minister's salary. In 1940 they reorganized and named the society the Women's Society of Christian Service.

In 1968 they reorganized again, becoming the Women's Society of Christian Service of the United Methodist Church. In 1973 the name was changed again, this time to United Methodist Women. The United Methodist Women, with a current membership of 24, remains an active and vital part of our church whose main purpose is missions.

We have had young people in the Epworth League. Later it was called the Methodist Youth Fellowship and in more recent years it has been called the United Methodist Youth Fellowship. At the present time we do not have an active youth group.

Now our church is 125 years old and these are our blessings and accomplishments since 1969. The following new furnishings have been added: an organ, piano, memorial and guest books and stands, a handcrafted sanctuary clock, new hymnals, a furnace, ceiling fans, floor tile and carpeting, three utility cupboards, an electronic keyboard, folding chairs and window shades in the sanctuary. Improvements to the building and



*Embury United Methodist Church
(photo taken by Kathy Kult on March 15, 2007)*

grounds have been new storm windows, roof, furnace enclosure, new basement walls and lights, new doors, a utility shed, a dusk-to-dawn light and several new trees planted in the yard.

This church has had Vacation Bible School each summer since 1948.

We have a Memorial Scholarship Fund for any church member who chooses to pursue a degree at tan accredited school.

Some of our special annual events include a soup supper, an Easter sunrise service and breakfast, pasta supper, and a midnight Christmas Eve service.

Our membership has been close to 100 for the past few years.

We have seven members now whose great-grandparents were among the first members of the newly formed Embury Church.

Embury is a member of the Mid-Lee County Council of Churches.

We hope this church can stand for many more years and always have a welcome for all people.

Ministers Who Have Served During the 125 Years

Rev. Jessie Craig	Rev. R.C. Murdock
Rev. R.A. Wright	Rev. Treverton Warren
Rev. A. Robinson	Rev. Paul Apfel
Rev. J.C. Thorn	Rev. A.B. Adams
Rev. Wm. S. Hast	Rev. C.E. Coggeshall
Rev. Jessie Craig	Rev. G.E. Meier
Rev. John Freeland	Rev. Robert Pinnell
Rev. James Hunter	Rev. Roy Sturgell
Rev. Samuel Vinai	Rev. J.S. Pennepacker
Rev. C.S. Tennant	Rev. Alton H. Zischke
Rev. J.F. Barnett	Rev. Charles Gross
Rev. A.M. Boydson	Rev. Everett Burham
Rev. J.W. Frakes	Rev. James King
Rev. G.W. Pool	Rev. Frank Matthews Jr.
Rev. J.E. Wilkens	Rev. Douglas Reed
Rev. G.W. Barber	Rev. Everett Miller
Rev. J.W. Dimmitt	Rev. Perry Gaalaas
Rev. Willard De Yoe	Rev. J.E. McClellan
Rev. Aaron James	Rev. Carles [sic] McNeeley
Rev. W.S. Moore	Rev. Kraus
Rev. Harvey Butler	Rev. Clarence Lautt
Rev. Harry Burns	Rev. Jim Eads
Rev. L.C. Garner	Rev. Larry C. Robertson
Rev. N.E. Morris	Rev. John Yarosevich
Rev. W.B. Ireland	Rev. Don Strickler
Rev. F.P. Frye	Rev. Don Hensen
Rev. Waldo Buell	Rev. Jim Turner
Rev. O.B. Rogers	Rev. John D. Cornish

*Pastor Julie McCullough
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Source: Church Bulletin, Embury United Methodist Church 125th Anniversary, Sunday September 25, 1994.

