

# HISTORY

OF THE

## WEST HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH



*by Margaret Rowe Mastick*



## *The Church's One Foundation*

The Church's one Foundation  
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;  
She is His new creation,  
By water and the word;  
From heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy Bride;  
With His own blood He bought her,  
And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,  
Yet one o'er all the earth,  
Her charter of salvation,  
One Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy name she blesses,  
Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses  
With every grace endued.

'Mid toil and tribulation,  
And tumult of her war,  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace forevermore;  
Till with the vision glorious  
Her longing eyes are blest,  
And the great Church victorious  
Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union  
With God the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion  
With those whose rest is won;  
O happy ones and holy!  
Lord, give us grace that we,  
Like them, the meek and lowly,  
On high may dwell with thee.



## *History of the West Highland Baptist Church*

by Margaret Rowe Mastick

The history of the West Highland Baptist Church has its beginning in the very early days of Highland township with the church organization antedating the township by one year.

Only one or two families had arrived in 1832 previous to the coming in the spring of 1833 of Jessie Tenny, his wife Thankful Blackmer Tenny, their children, and John C. Morse, a young man who accompanied them on the journey from Monroe county, N.Y. to this new unsettled land which was to be their future home.

Rufus Tenny, a brother of Jessie, also arrived that same year with his wife, Eunice Mudge Tenny and family, as did Noah P. Morse, an elder brother of John, and wife Elizabeth Hyde Morse, with the latter's father Abner Hyde from Connecticut. Others closely identified with this group were Daniel and Harriet Sturtevant Dunham, and Eli and Mindwell Armstrong Lee who settled nearby. All of these families purchased their land in Highland township from the government with the exception of the last named couple whose uncleared lands were just across the border in Hartland township.

Mention should be made of the Mudge family, who came about 1837. The Rev. John Mudge was a retired minister and a Revolutionary war soldier having served in the Massachusetts militia under General Israel Putnam. He made his home here with his son Elisha Mudge. Eunice Mudge, the wife of Rufus Tenny was his daughter. Rev. John Mudge did not live long after coming here as he died in 1839 and is buried in the West Highland cemetery, his grave being appropriately marked by the Sons of the American Revolution.

The territory north of Milford was officially designated a township in 1835 and called Highland because of its elevation as it was believed to be the highest land in the then settled part of Michigan. The streams run both north and south within its boundaries, Pettibone Creek going south and a branch of the Buckhorn Creek going north.

The pioneer group of Tenny, Morse and allied families formed what was known as the Tenny settlement with the trail coming into it the Tenny road. The first school house was built of logs on Jessie Tenny's farm and designated as District No. 1. It was here that the first township meeting was held in 1835.

As more settlers arrived, a tavern, general store, blacksmith shop and dwellings constituted a village at the present intersection of M 59 and Hickory Ridge roads, and this was the original settlement called Highland until Spring Mills was platted ten years later under the name of Highland. The present town of Highland did not come into existence until the railroad was built in 1871, although the Highland cemetery established in 1849 and the Methodist church organized in 1866 were designated as belonging to Highland Centre to distinguish it from the settlements on each side of it.

The coming of the railroad stimulated the growth of the center village and it was then appropriately called Highland Station with the settlement to the east becoming Spring Mills and that to the west, Highland Corners. It was within my memory when these were changed to the now used names of Highland and West Highland, Spring Mills remaining the same.



Since living in this community, we have received mail originally addressed to us at Highland Corners by older relatives who remembered when there used to be a post office there, where the family received their mail. These letters were returned to the sender with the notation "no such place," and after two more tries the address was written, Highland Corners, 5 miles north of Milford, exasperation fairly dripping from each word. With this clue the letter arrived at Milford and was finally received by us.

Our pioneer families of 1833 first built temporary shelters to live in during the summer while some of the land was cleared and permanent log cabins erected, that of Jessie Tenny being located directly west of the stone barn on the Paul Charlick farm on Lone Tree road. These families brought their religion with them and no doubt family worship was carried on in their homes during this period when each household was striving to acquire the needed food and shelter for the coming winter.

It was felt that there were enough Baptist families among the settlers to form a church and on December 26, 1833, they gathered together in the log house of Jessie Tenny with that purpose in mind, drawing up the following covenant.

"We, the subscribed members of Baptist churches, considering the importance of maintaining the worship of God in this place, for our own benefit and that of our friends, and the community in which we dwell, do solemnly covenant and agree to unite in a conference for that object, with a view to unite in church capacity, whenever in our judgement and that of the ministers and messengers from neighboring churches, it shall be determined expedient. With that view we adopt the annexed articles of faith and covenant, and do solemnly pledge ourselves to one another, and to the great Head of the Church, to meet together on the Lord's Day, and at such other seasons as shall by us be thought proper, for the worship of God. And when not favored with the preached word, to improve the gifts with which God has endowed us, in reading the Scriptures, singing, prayer and exhortation, relying on the great Head of the Church to assist us in fulfilling these engagements."

To this covenant were attached the following names:

Daniel Dunham	Isaiah J. Hudson	Noah P. Morse
Harriet Dunham	Mary Hudson	Elizabeth W. Morse
Eli Lee	Jessie Tenny	John C. Morse
Mindwell Lee	Thankful Tenny	Harriet W. Morse

Of this group all were from this immediate vicinity with the possible exception of Isaiah and Mary Hudson. As there seems to be no persons by that name in the early history of Highland township, we believe he is the Isaiah J. Hudson who came to Milford township in 1832, settling on the Huron river about two and a half miles south of Milford, where he erected a saw mill. There was no Baptist church or any other church group in Milford until later so he and



his wife joined the Highland group organization, leaving it in 1838 to help establish the Baptist church in Milford, as their names appear in the list of organizing members there. It was quite a distance by the slow means of transportation from their home south of Milford to the place of worship in Highland and one can surmise this as the reason for the change.

We have endeavored to ascertain if there are any direct descendants in this vicinity of these original members whose names are on the covenant and to our knowledge find only Henry and Leo Dahn, who are great-grandchildren of Eli and Midwell Lee through their mother, Minnie Lee Dahn.

Harold and Garner Hudson who live on the Milford road south of Milford are descendants of Isaiah J. and Mary Hudson, whom we believe were the ones on the covenant, there being little likelihood that there were two persons in this section at that time with the same name and middle initial.

Other descendants, although not living here, are Dr. Farland Morse of Lansing and his sister, Mrs. Charles Berger of Jackson, who have always maintained an interest in this church and community. They are descended from three of the original members, being great-grandchildren of Jessie and Thankful Tenny and grandchildren of John C. Morse, who married Jessie and Thankful's daughter, Adeline Tenny.

Herbert Buell of Plainfield, Indiana, is the only descendant of Noah and Elizabeth Morse known to us. Daniel and Harriet Dunham with their son, Daniel, Jr., and his family moved from Highland to Kent county about 1858 which accounts for little being known about them, although we believe Dunham Lake is named for this pioneer family. Nothing is known of Harriet N. Smith. She could have been the wife of E.J. Smith, who came to this part of the country with Rufus Tenny and settled in Hartland township.

After forming the covenant at that first meeting in December of 1833, the group decided to send letters to the established churches of Pontiac, Farmington, Northville, Ann Arbor and Dexter, inviting them to send representatives to a meeting on January 16, 1834, at the home of Jessie Tenny, to advise and counsel them on the formation of a Baptist church.

It is recorded that on the day before the meeting it was necessary for Jesse Tenny, Noah Morse and Elijah Dunham to go to mill, the nearest one being at Dexter, thirty miles away, and in order to get back in time they traveled most of the night, reaching home at 3 a.m. Usually two days were allowed for the trip.

Representatives arrived from the churches of Dexter, Farmington and Northville by the same slow method of transit, oxcart, horseback or on foot, as there was no road to this vicinity as we now use the term, only trails through the woods, winding over the terrain where there were open spaces called "oak openings", where trees had been cut down. The conference was formally in session and recognition was given to the group as the Baptist church of Highland. The



articles of faith, previously prepared, were accepted, with one addition—"We believe that brother ought not to go to law with brother in ordinary cases." The Rev. Nehemiah Lamb gave the right hand of fellowship to the church.

This was the first church of any denomination to be organized in this section of the state antedating all the Milford and other Highland churches. Later, delegates were sent to assist in the organization of Baptist churches in Milford, Holly, Howell and Parshallville.

The first regular business meeting was held January 26, 1834, at which it was resolved that — "The Saturday previous to the second Sunday be a standing day for covenant meetings each month and that the Saturday previous to the first Sunday be a standing day for the business meeting of the church." Soon thereafter a resolution was passed stating that — "Any member who stays away from covenant meetings or the Lord's Supper twice shall be subject to a call from a committee."

The covenant meetings were a regular institution until a comparatively few years ago and one can see from the above that failure to attend made an offense, calling for a visitation from some of the brethren, and if not satisfactorily explained, the right hand of fellowship was withdrawn for neglect of covenant obligations. There were many exclusions in the early years for various reasons. Some of the members attended a 4th of July celebration at Ore Creek in Hartland township which was "conducted in an unchristian manner" and were dealt with by the church elders for this transgression.

The regular Sabbath Day services were held in the log house of Jessie Tenny for a few months of that first year with board seats used to accomodate the number attending. Services consisted of reading selected sermons by Noah P. Morse or some other brother, scripture reading, prayer, hymns, and at the appointed time the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Many more families came to this part of Highland township in the next year or two. A school house was erected in the spring of 1834 located one half-mile south of the present church building on the farm of Jessie Tenny. It was believed expedient to build a two room building with rooms being separated by a movable partition, one room being paid for by the district for a public school and the other by the church organization by voluntary subscriptions for the purpose of worship. Building in this manner, two rooms were available when two teachers could be secured and it was a convenience to the church for services when the partition was removed and the two rooms thrown into one. The voluntary subscriptions evidently were not sufficient and the part owned by the church was not completed until later. In 1838 it was decided that \$120.00 was needed to finish and that amount was raised by selling 60 shares at \$2.00 each.

By 1835 we note an increase in membership, there being the twelve original members, twelve more received by letter and



one by baptism, making the membership twenty-five. The first baptism was that of Fowler Hudson. The first person received by letter was Lavius Tenny on April 20, 1834, and the second was the writer's great-great-grandmother, Mary Crossman Rowe, on October 10, 1835, the Rowes having come from New York state in March of that year and built their log cabin homes on the shores of Rowe Lake.

The new church was received into the fellowship of the Michigan Baptist Association on September 20, 1835, when Daniel Dunham, Eli Lee, Noah Morse and Jesse Tenny were sent as delegates to present the application for membership in that body.

In November of 1835 a meeting was called for the purpose of hiring a minister and raising \$250.00 for the support of the Gospel. Arrangments were made with a Rev. S. Morrell, who lived in Walled Lake, to give one-half his time for six months, beginning January 1, 1836, on a salary of \$125.00. Rev. Morrell walked from Walled Lake, a distance of 14 miles, to keep his appointment here, but relinquished his post at the end of six months.

At the close of Brother Morrell's brief term, William Barrett of New York state was called, beginning his work about November 1, 1836, and continuing for four years. During his pastorate we note there were 102 received by baptism and 48 received by letter. These, plus the 25 members previously noted, made the membership 175, a high point for the first 100 years. One must remember that there were no other churches within a large radius and that many of these members in the following years were dismissed by letter to form other churches or unite with other denominations.

Among members of this period are many well known family names. We note that of Wm. Kinney, father of Claude L. Kinney, who having previously been baptised, joined here on March 11, 1837, and that Phildelia Phelps, great-grandmother of Roland Armstrong was received by letter July 8, 1837. Other familiar names are Sarah Andrus, William and Hannah Barrett, Thomas, Jersusha and Royal Baker, George Burns, Job and Mary Cranson, Daniel and Benjamin Castle, James Curdy, Albert Dart, George Hastings, James Lyon, John, Elisha and Chloe Mudge, Hannah Otis, Alvah Phillips, Frederick and Priscilla Prior, Henry Ross, Ansel, Alden and Betsey Sears, Willis Smith, Emeline and Henry Thompson, Daniel and Jerusha Trump.

Stories have come down to us that great-grandfather and great-grandmother Rowe were baptised in Dunham Lake in the winter time. A space large enough for the administration of this ordinance, a rectangular place 20 or 30 feet long and half as wide, was chopeed in the ice where the water was of suitable depth and steps were made for the convenience of getting in and out. So it was with compelling interest that a search of the records was made revealing that Squire and Dolly Castle Rowe were baptised February 13, 1837, in Dunham Lake with four other persons, two of them being Squire's sister, Mary Ann Rowe, and Jessie Tenny's



son, Edson Tenny. Three days previous to this on February 10, a group of twenty-four had been baptized, among them Henry Ross, Susan Kinney and Stephen Lockwood. One did not wait for warmer weather or put forth other trivial excuses, but was baptised immediately upon confession of faith, be it winter or summer.

Baptisms were held in Dunham Lake for many years, all the year around as father tells of a winter baptism as late as 1876, and adds that "he never heard of any ill effects from the experience, to either, candidate or preacher". The church had no baptistry until later, the supposition being that one was added when the church building was remodeled in 1880.

Returning to the eventful period in 1837, we find that a singing school was organized for the winter of 1837-38 for the enjoyment of those so inclined. Lyman Shattuck was appointed to teach. As this was in the records of the church, it was sponsored by it. Then, as now, most of the activities of the community were centered in the church. Father relates that "Singing schools were held during the winter evenings in the school house. Instruction was given in reading music and part singing. Rigid discipline was enforced during lessons, (We hope they had a bit of fun before and after instructions) and persons not serious in wanting to learn were not long in the class."

It is sad to note that in 1840 Pastor Barrett retired from the field in disgrace. History does not reveal his wrong doing, but states that the effects of his misdeeds almost wrecked the infant church. It was even talked about dissolving, but fortunately this did not take place. It was about this time in May 1840 that the Society came into being and for many years the organization was known as the Highland Baptist Church and Society, the Society consisting of people who were not baptised members of the church, some being members of other denominations in thier former homes, but who were interested in this church, attended and helped support it. The Church proper and the Society each elected separate officers and separate record books were kept until the reorganization in 1890, which did away with the Society.

The "Burying Ground" property was purchased in 1841 by the Church and Society from David Bangs, one acre of land for \$12.00. This has been added to from time to time, the present cemetery consisting of about four acres. A work bee was held to clear the land of trees and shrubs. It was surveyed and lots laid out with Rufus Tenny, grandfather of Mrs. Fred Beckwith, who was a trustee of the Society, being the salesman. Material for a fence was procured, the posts from "two miles beyond Fentonville", and 2,333 feet of pine boards were ordered "at 'the Flint' " and when ready, were drawn by team "from 'the Flint' ". This probably refers to a saw mill on the Flint river. Old family records also speak of going "up to the Flint" for lumber. The board fence was eventually replaced by a wire fence at the sides and back, and the ornamental iron one in front.



One notable pastor of this period was Rev. A.P. Howell, who served from May 1846 to September 1849. The church voted to hire Elder Howell for a salary of \$250.00 per year and furnish him with a house, garden spot and firewood.

Grandfather James D. Rowe writes in his "Memoirs" that "Rev. Howell was a college bred man. Father gave him all the firewood he desired to chop and delivered it to his door at Highland Corners. Rev. Howell was evidently not raised on a farm, for he made awkward work of chopping, causing Father to remark to us, the boys, 'You see what a college education does for a young man' ". The boys, James and Josiah, had hopes of attaining higher education than the district school of Highland afforded and were later enrolled in Kalamazoo college when the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 interrupted their school days and they enlisted, serving four years in that conflict.

Another incident related by Grandfather concerning Rev. Howell occurred during the Sunday service which was, in his youth, still being held in the double log school. James was only a boy at the time and says that while Rev. Howell was a good man, he was not a "spellbinder" as a preacher. Sabbath services were vastly different. Hymns were sung without the accompaniment of an organ, there were no ushers and no offering was taken. The entire time was taken up with the sermon, which was a long and serious affair with no stories or allusions which might produce a smile or an inward chuckle. While the sexton, with the long pole to tap the guilty one over the head for letting his attention stray or nodding off to sleep, had long since been abolished, still the congregation was not expected to be distracted in any way from the sermon.

On this particular Sunday the weather was warm and sultry so that doors and windows were open, when at an inopportune moment in the pastor's discourse, an uncanny, rickety lumber wagon came rumbling by with a noise and speed uncalled for, for such a time and place. Like puppets on a string manipulated by an unseen hand, every head turned and stared out the window and the embarrassed preacher was left without a hearing for the time being. The poor man managed to bring his audience back with the stern rebuke, "Can it be possible that Christian people are more anxious to hear the rumbling of a wagon than to listen to the preaching of the Gospel?"

Under the energetic leadership of Rev. Howell the Church and society voted in October 1846 to build a "House of Worship". Wood was favored over brick or stone for the construction. After much discussion, a more central location, the present site, was decided on, the land being given by John and Adeline Tenny Morse from their farm for this purpose. Whether to have a "gallery" was another much discussed point with the advocates winning and it was also stipulated that the front door be five feet wide.

The building was not completed during Rev. Howell's pastorate



but revival meetings, which were being held at the time were so widely attended that the double school house proved insufficient and a temporary floor was laid in the unfinished church and the meetings transferred there.

Another item of interest during his pastorate was the organization of the Female Benevolent Society, now known as the Ladies' Aid which has continued as such for 112 years. Money was earned by the busy fingers of its members by spinning wool into yarn and weaving cloth for garments in the early days, making quilts and tying comfortables, the latter art still in vogue. Other methods for replenishing the treasury were sewing for members or others who wished this service, making and selling of sunbonnets, bazaars, dinners or suppers and having an ice cream stand at the Highland and Hartland Farmer's Club picnic which was held every year, usually at Maxfield Lake. The Aid furnished supper for seventy-five men at the raising of Henry Marshall's barn for a fee of \$25.00 and later performed the same service at the barn raising on Mr. Latourette's farm.

One other notable event which was only discontinued about 1945 was the annual Thanksgiving dinner held at the church and put on by the Ladies' Aid. In the early days 15 cents for adults and 10 cents for children was the price of the bountiful meal and this continued until 1924 when we noted the price was 25 and 15 cents, raised to 50 and 25 cents in 1927 and about 1932 it was voted to take a plate collection instead of having a set fee per person. The dinner was for many years held at the noon hour. Towards the end of its existence it was held one week before Thanksgiving and a short program given in the afternoon.

Regular Aid meetings were held in the church parlors when these rooms were added to the building. A dinner was served before the meetings and this was continued until the time of the first World War in 1917 when scarcity of fuel made it imperative to hold meetings in the homes during the winter months. Fifteen cents was the fee for the dinners served before the meetings and it was at this time that it was decided to have smaller rations instead of raising the price for the same. It was suggested that each committee use its own good judgement in regard to "Hooverizing" and conserve as much as possible. It was also voted to send a barrell of canned fruit to Miss Alice Cimmer at Battle Creek to be given through the Baptist church there to the soldirs in camp.

Mention should be made of Mrs. Benjamin F. Davison, mother of Mrs. Clarence Armstrong, who although not a member of this church, was the president of the Ladies' aid for over forty-five years. In 1906 it was voted to have bookmarks of "eluminum", instead of celluloid as previously voted, with the picture of the church and that of Mrs. Davison thereon, these bookmarks to be sold for the benefit of the Aid. (We have one of these bookmarks which we inherited along with grandfather's Bible, and will have it on exhibit.)

Besides all the other activities, the ladies, then as now, met twice a year to clean up the church. When, in the course of time, the car-



pet had to be taken up and cleaned, the task was truly tremendous. Seats had to be removed and all tacks taken out which held the carpet in place, the carpet hauled outdoors where it was beaten and swept and finally relaid. When a new carpet was bought, 195 yards of it, the sewing together of the yard wide strips took many hours. The price of carpet in those days was about 45 cents a yard.

It is difficult to compress in a few short paragraphs the work that has been accomplished over this long period by the always loyal group of women. Many times they bought needed articles for the church and parsonage as well as assuming the entire cost of upkeep and repairs when it would not otherwise have been done. The December report for 1912 says, "The closing year finds us with our church repapered, cleaned, new carpet in place and a new metal roof on, all through the work of our Society, and all paid for except the roof."

Returning to the early days of the church it was voted in Feb. 1848 to allow Nelson Tenny \$5.00 credit on his "average" for sweeping the church and building fires. This aroused considerable protest as it was felt by many that service of this sort was a labor of love with its own reward.

It might be well right here to explain the "average". A committee from the church membership estimated the expenses for the coming year and arrived at an "average" for the head of each family from his assessed valuation on the tax roll with an allowance for persons indebted or those who were unable to pay. This method insured a good income which they felt was fair to all and was continued for many years.

In 1845 a Sabbath School was established which met only in the summer months with John C. Morse as superintendent. It was not until 1865 that it was carried on in the winter months with Nelson Tenny as the leader.

During the pastorate of Rev. Eben Carpenter in 1852, the interior of the church building was completed and the advisability of selling or renting pews was discussed, evidently without coming to a decision in the matter. These pews were of the early type with doors on the aisle. Pastor Carpenter preached the dedication sermon.

The next building project was that of erecting horse sheds at the rear of the church extending the full length of the property, with stalls 22 feet deep and 10 feet wide. Later more accommodations were needed and hitching posts were placed at a specified distance from the line fences along each side of the lot, said distance to be adequate to keep the horses from chewing on the fence and damaging it.

This is approximately the end of the first twenty-five years which takes us from the log cabin home of Jessie Tenny to the completion of a House of Worship, which is the auditorium of the present church building. Over this period of time there were 400 names registered in the record.

A parsonage was purchased in 1863 from B.F. Predmore for \$750 which is the present home of Mrs. Fred Beckwith and her sons. The Rev. A.M. Hunt became the pastor at this time and was the first



to occupy it. He, however, only stayed one year and was followed by Brother L.P. Day in 1864 who was furnished with the parsonage, paid \$400.00 salary and also received a donation.

These donations became a regular part of the salary for many years. They took the form of a social gathering once or twice a year when each family donated food from their own supplies. Canned fruit, jellies and jams, potatoes, squash, pumpkins and other garden crops, eggs, honey, meat from butchering, flour and many other edibles as well as wood for stoves, was presented to the minister.

The parsonage seemed inadequate and it was deemed necessary to build on "a room suitable for a stove and cook room" at the cost of \$25.00 and a new well was put down at the same time. Later, the parsonage fence needed rebuilding and repairing so it was decided that each family would furnish what material they could, some giving 4 to 6 posts while others supplied the boards for a total of 25 posts and 22 lengths of boards. Everyone lent a hand at the work and they soon had the fence in proper condition. We note that the fences around the cemetery and at the sides of the church lot were also of boards so evidently the wire fence had not yet come into use.

The salary paid the janitor had increased to \$30.00 a year for "attending to the House of Worship and the Burying Ground". Duties were to sweep out after meetings, build fires and clean, fill and trim the lamps, and we have been told "There were an awful lot of them". Burying Ground duties probably consisted of digging and filling graves, and perhaps cutting the grass with a scythe in summer when it became too long.

The contributions of this period remind us that the Civil War was in progress when money was given to the Freedmen's Bible Fund, the Michigan Branch of the American Freedmen and the Michigan Soldier's Home.

The Rev. Henry King, whose term of service began in 1866, had a longer pastorate of seven and a half years. The church enjoyed a period of prosperity during this time. His salary of \$500.00 was increased to \$700.00 plus the use of the parsonage and a donation.

The church was painted, papered, repaired and a new organ purchased. Repairs to the wooden shutters were spoken of, so originally the windows were equipped with these items. At one time there was a belfry housing a bell as shown in pictures of the church of that period, but the record does not state when this addition was erected. The whole thing proved to be too heavy and was removed thus giving the church a decidedly beheaded appearance.

A good description of the church of this period is given by the writer's father, Grant S. Rowe, in his 'Early Recollections'. Mr. Rowe attended this church all during his boyhood but adult years were spent in Milford where he was owner and editor of "The Milford Times" for forty years. He was also a faithful member of the Milford Baptist Church. He writes about the church as follows:



"The old church, before the interior was changed, forms a pleasing picture in my memory. The part back of the present large pillars was an entry or vestibule, with a gallery above. In the partition which separated the entry from the auditorium there was a wide opening at each side. There were two aisles with a double row of pews between them, and a single row next each wall. Two box stoves, long enough to burn four-foot wood, formed the heating plant. The smoke pipes from these extended to the other end of the church, where they went into a suspended drum. This arrangement formed a good creosote collector. The box-like pews had doors, after the fashion of the time.

The pulpit was placed next to the vestibule partition and hence was near the two stoves, the warmest part of the auditorium. Elder King, the first preacher I remember, was sometimes overcome by the heat and had to be carried out to the fresh air."

Mrs. Fred Beckwith adds a bit more about what she remembers of the church at this time. She tells, as do others, of the room built over the vestibule where the infant Sunday school class was held. She also says that she thinks the gallery refers to the raised part built along the entire west wall which would be at the back of the auditorium as it was then arranged. This raised part had a rather high railing and partition in front of it, separating it from the rest of the pews. The choir used the center of this raised section and the corner on the south was called the "bad boys corner". The young lads, if they could manage it, liked to sit here because, when seated, they were almost entirely hidden from the observing eyes of the minister and congregation, and therefore not noticed or reprimanded when their attention strayed to other matters. One can guess at the murmured conversations of yesterday's activities and the whispered plans for many mischievous adventures to come, all part of the small boy's world. The congregation was rather startled one Sunday to observe that two of the occupants of this secluded area emerged wearing a different pair of trousers than those in which they were attired when arriving for the morning services and one can surmise the chuckles and giggles that accompanied this switch of apparel.

In 1880, during the pastorate of Rev. C.D. Gregory, the church was remodeled into its present form, not including the wing at the south. The vestibule and rear room directly behind the auditorium were added. This added room was called the parlor and was also used for a dining room when occasion arose with a small kitchen located on the north end.

The vestibule had a door on each side as well as the one on the front and a cement platform was constructed on each side, made the correct height to facilitate getting in and out of the horse drawn carriages. One could step out of the carriages and enter the vestibule without going around to the front door.

A basement of sorts must have been excavated and built under the



new rooms at the rear as a furnace was purchased and installed. This remodeling called for a different arrangement of seating, placing the pulpit at the west end as it is now with the seats reversed accordingly. We believe the baptistry was installed at this time also. The remodeling and refurnishing cost \$2,300.00, putting the church considerably in debt. The re-dedication was held March 4, 1880.

A different system of raising money to carry on the work of the church was required and the plan since observed was adopted of taking a collection each Sunday morning before the sermon for general expenses, including the pastor's salary, Sunday school supplies and incidental expenses.

The Women's Foreign Mission Circle was organized in 1874 and the Women's Home Mission Circle in 1878. Later these two united into one circle, finally joining with the Ladies' Aid Society. Half the funds received, aside from membership fees, went for mission work.

The young people also had their missionary group when in 1884 the 10 to 15 year old girls organized under the name of the "Pearl Gatherers", their object being to raise money for the mission fields. The "Band of Helpers" was also organized by the young people in 1879 and they held social and business meetings every two weeks at the different homes, with an occasional concert or lecture held at the church. This provided much of the social life of the community and also helped to raise money to pay off the church debt. This group was merged with the Baptist Young Peoples' Union in 1895.

It seems to have been the custom about this time to press into service as janitor the older boys, and father served his term at this job. He had an unusual experience which he tells as follows:

"The lighting then was furnished by five chandeliers. The center one had six lamps, and four others near the four corners of the room held four lamps each. There were also two or three lamps for the choir, one in the entry, and a hanging lamp for the pulpit.

The janitor had the job of taking down these lamps, carrying them to the kitchen, filling, trimming, cleaning and replacing them, nearly every week. I know, for I was the "sexton" of the church for about two years. Strangely, I do not remember the salary, but it was not more than a dollar a week I had to carry the oil from the store at the "Corners" in a five gallon stone jug.

"An accident that happened during my term as janitor might have proved serious. One Sunday night I was putting out the lights in the center chandelier when the whole thing crashed to the floor, breaking every lamp. The oil on the carpet burst into flames. There were some cloth covers on the pulpit chairs. I grabbed the biggest cover and was fortunate enough to beat out the flames. The carpet showed an oil spot for some months."

Due to father's foresight in writing down these incidents, we



have a good description of some of the activities of the Sunday School, from which we quote as follows:

"I began Sunday School in the infant class which was held in the gallery over the vestibule in the old church. Mrs. John Wood was the first teacher I remember. When old enough to go down stairs, Mrs. Mary Predmore was our teacher. It was the custom in those days for each class above the infant class to select its own teacher. Every new year we boys would choose Mrs. Predmore, and she was our teacher as long as I went to Sunday School there. The fact that she was good looking had something to do with it, I imagine.

A Sunday School feature of my early recollection was the picnic. These were usually large affairs with several schools participating. It was not unusual for the schools to turn out in full force and drive eight to ten miles to attend one of these gatherings. There would be a mounted marshall for each school, and gaily decorated four-horse teams would draw wagons carrying those having no conveyance of their own. I remember that Uncle Judd was marshall on one occasion.

Arriving at the grounds, a parade would be formed. Each school would have a silken banner three or four feet square, carrying the name of the school. This was suspended on a standard and ribbon streamers were attached to the lower corners. Some popular young "blade" was chosen to carry the banner, while a young lady on either side kept it right face with the streamers. The big picnic custom seems to have died out during the eighties.

I think Father was the superintendent of the Highland Baptist Sunday school more years than any other man of his time. When he moved away, the school presented him with a Bible, which I now have."

We are now approaching the fifty year mark in the history of this church and in 1884 a committee consisting of Seymour Morse, John Morse, James D. Rowe, J.S. Bamber and Morgan Andrus was appointed to make arrangements for the celebration of the semi-centennial which was held in June. The Rev. W.L. Munger, who was the pastor at that time, prepared the church history. The membership was given as 138.

It was in October of that same year that one of the Pettit family, whose memory is cherished by many, the Rev. L.D. Pettit with his young bride, came to the pastorate and was ordained here December 23, 1884. His work, especially among the young people, was effective. At the end of three years he left for a larger field and was followed here by his father, the Rev. Harvey Pettit, who also served three years, coming from the Milford Baptist church.

We note the first mention of entertaining the Wayne Association when the Highland church was host to that group in 1889. Plans were probably very similar with those of today with the exception of providing feed for teams that would be stabled in the horse sheds during the day and arrangements for carriages to meet dele-



gates at the station and transport them to the church.

During the next pastorate, that of Rev. W.R. Waters in 1890, the organization of the Highland Baptist Church and Society came to an end as reorganization seemed indicated under new Michigan laws. The church was incorporated as the First Baptist Church of Highland.

Difficult times seemed to be approaching and there was an appreciable drop in contributions which made it hard to get satisfactory ministers. Most of those who did come stayed only one or two years.

Extensive repairs and improvements sponsored by the Ladies' Aid were made to the parsonage. One new item was noted, differing from the usual papering and painting, that the church purchased one share of stock in the Highland Telephone Association and installed a telephone in the parsonage. Highland had its own small telephone system and switchboard which always fascinated me. When visiting a school friend in Highland, we always accompanied her in the evening when she was on duty at the switchboard for a couple of hours.

One important change in the rules of the church was made in 1906 at the beginning of the pastorate of Rev. R.A. McConnell. It was voted that "in as much as we have many living among us, active Christians, who worship with us and contribute to the support of the church, but who are members of other denominations that we invite any and all Christians to partake of the Lord's Supper with us". This was one of the differences between the "hard shell" and the "free will" Baptist churches and placed this church among those of the latter distinction from then on. Previous to this the "closed communion" was partaken of by members of this church only.

In 1909 the Highland and Milford churches were both experiencing the hard times most rural churches felt for about 25 years, when the drift of population was away from the farms and small towns to the cities. The two churches mentioned decided to unite, hiring Rev. H.M. Lawson, who resided for the first part of his term of six years in the Baptist parsonage in Milford.

It was during these years that we became better acquainted with the Highland church although we had attended here from time to time as we had many relatives among its members.

The Rev. Lawson was a rather large muscular man and a great admirer of fast driving horses, keeping one that only he could manage and drive, to transport him back and forth from the parish in Highland. There were no facilities for keeping a horse connected with the parsonage in Milford, so he built a barn at the rear of the parsonage lot, tearing down the old horse sheds on the church property nearby in order to use the lumber.

Mrs. Lawson played the organ for services and also arranged the special programs held at Easter, Children's Day and Christmas, usually duplicating the programs in both churches. We re-



member one time when Mahlon Buell and I were brought to Highland on Saturday, the Lawsons were living in the Highland parsonage then, to participate in a Christmas program at the Highland church. We were transported at great speed over the frozen, snow covered roads in a sleigh or "cutter" with Mr. Lawson driving one of his fast horses, it requiring a good deal of strength with feet braced and taut reins, to keep it under control. Sometimes the order of visiting was reversed and we recall with pleasure the time the Lawsons brought Grace Miller, whose lovely voice enhanced the Highland choir, to sing for us at the morning service one beautiful Sunday in May.

In 1912 the Hickory Ridge church joined Highland in hiring Rev. Lawson. Services were held at the Ridge at 10 a.m. and at Highland at noon, the Sunday school classes being held before the 12 o'clock service here. Evening meetings were held on alternate Sundays.

The young people of the church promoted a new lighting system during the pastorate of Rev. C.L. Berry in 1915, realizing their project with the installation of an acetylene gas plant. Milford had long had electric lights but it was ten years more before the Detroit Edison company took over and electricity was extended into the country. The gas light system was better than oil lamps, when it worked, but rather unpredictable and giving most of the congregation, not used to such new fangled gadgets, many fidgety moments. Electricity was installed in 1927, the gift of one of the members for the auditorium and of the young people in the rooms at the rear.

The cemetery had gradually taken on the uncared for look usual to rural cemeteries of that period. It was still owned by the church organization and money from the sale of lots was the only source of income for its upkeep. The Ladies' Aid discussed the matter and interested lot owners in forming a Highland Cemetery Association in 1915, with \$2.00 per year dues. This, however, did not prove to produce enough money for the proper care. A new corporation was formed in 1927 under the title of the West Highland Cemetery Association and the church relinquished its ownership. Shares were sold at \$50.00 each creating a fund, the interest from which is used to keep it in excellent condition.

The church was much heartened when, in 1916, the beloved former pastor, Rev. L.D. Pettit came back after an absence of thirty-two years. He and his wife were a newly married couple at the time of his first term of service here and now returned as grandparents.

The old communion set of silver pitcher and matching goblet was replaced with the individual cups for science and medicine had awakened the public and the nation was becoming germ conscious.

The year of 1917 brings memories of World War I and the bitter cold of that winter when, because of the high price and scarcity of fuel, most of the services were held in the back room. Wood was often used for fuel and donations were several times received from different families. Offerings were taken for the destitute Belgians and for Y.M.C.A. work overseas. Churches were closed for several months due to the influenza epidemic.



Following the war came the "New World Movement" which was to cover a period of five years. The goal was high and was entered into with enthusiasm and courage but was not reached. This engendered a spiritual depression which culminated in a lack of finances and troublous times again cast a dark shadow over the church. The B.Y.P.U. ceased to function and the Woman's Mission Circle united with the Ladies' Aid.

At the conclusion of Rev. Pettit's second term of service, Rev. C.L. Berry returned for two years. In 1924 it was again thought advisable to join with the Hickory Ridge church, who had been having their own pastor for several years.

This period marks the lowest point in the history of the church, with the exception of the time in 1840 when pastor Barrett's behavior had divided the membership and there was talk of dissolving. Some of the more pessimistic in the later time of trial felt that it was impossible to try to go on and better to give up and attend other neighboring churches.

The state Baptist organization at this time formed a "larger parish plan" which they felt would help the small churches faced with the same problems. Howell, Milford, Highland and Hickory Ridge were to be grouped together with a pastor and an assistant to serve them. The plan did not meet with much favor in Highland and was voted down at first, then reconsidered and finally accepted, with doubts on the part of many.

Kensington was incorporated into this group for a short time only with the old church there being reopened and Sunday services held in the afternoon. Interest was not sufficient to continue with the work and it was once more closed and abandoned. It was torn down by the State when property in the entire area was bought and made into Kensington Park. One could not foresee it at the time, but we believe it should have been preserved intact, with its ornamental iron fence which surrounded it and the adjoining small cemetery, as a bit of the past which would have been interesting to hundreds of people. It could have been in charge of a custodian and open to the public in the summer months, as old churches in the East are or might have been used for chapel services on Sunday and for small weddings at other times.

The Rev. Ralph Karney and Miss Susie Olson were presented as candidates for this group parish plan and were given an unanimous call by all the churches involved. Mr. Karney resided in Howell and Miss Olson occupied the Highland parsonage for the three years of her work here.

This marked a period of rebuilding and growth, with the church taking on new life and vigor. Attendance and interest increased and in spite of the financial depression, which the whole country was experiencing, they managed to keep going with Rev. Karney being very patient and generous in matters of salary.

The B.Y.P.U. was soon reorganized and all work of the church resumed, results showing in the increased membership to over one hundred again. In 1930 the every member canvass and duplex envelope



system were adopted. A new hardwood floor was laid in the auditorium, the church painted and repaired and made ready to celebrate its centennial.

This one hundredth anniversary was fittingly observed on a beautiful Sunday, June 10, 1934. Morning services saw the church filled to capacity with a tent on the front lawn equipped with a loud speaker to accomodate the overflow. At noon the congregation partook of their basket lunches in the shady school yard to the north of the church. The old school building was still there at the time. Tables were set up and coffee served for the convenience of those eating lunch there.

The afternoon program in the church consisted of special music, the reading of the well prepared history by Mrs. Fred Beckwith (Mabel Tenny) and reminiscences by Seymour Morse, Sarah Nichols, Norman Davison, Herbert Bamber and Mary Bamber Buell. A light supper was served at the school grounds preceding the evening services which were in charge of Rev. Karney and took the form of an old fashioned meeting. The choir, dressed in old fashioned garments, gave several selections, with request songs given as solos, duets, and trios. Several numbers given by the quartette closed the services.

It was a wonderful day of greeting former members and neighbors and renewing old friendships, which did much to encourage and inspire the members of twenty-five years ago to go on in the work before them. The register contained the names of 427 persons and it was felt that there were fully 500 people in attendance as some neglected to signify their presence by registering.

About this time we note the change in name from the Baptist church of Highland to the West Highland Baptist Church.

The parsonage, which had been rented since the departure of Miss Olson was wired for electricity in 1936. The church decided to sell it in 1938 to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Beckwith.

A union with the Hickory Ridge church was consummated in 1940 for morning services here with the evening services being held at the Ridge. The purchase of a bus by the Hickory Ridge church for the accomodation of those needing transportation is noted for the first time. A need was felt for more Sunday school rooms and money from the sale of the parsonage was used to build on the addition to the south consisting of Sunday school rooms and kitchen. This, as well as the bus, was dedicated October 20, 1940 with appropriate services. A cooperative dinner for 250 people was held in connection with this event. The Hickory Ridge Church withdrew from its union service arrangement in 1942 and the West Highland Sunday School bought the bus from them.

The Ladies' Aid came to the rescue, as always, and earned money for the purchase of folding chairs and equipment for the Sunday School rooms, stove, linoleum and curtains for the new kitchen by serving the Milford High school Alumni Banquet. The venetian blinds were installed in 1943 and the printing of the church bulletins inaugurated in 1944. This was also the year that it was voted to take



an offering at the communion service for the relief of aged ministers and needy in our church and community.

The records of 1944 remind us that World War II was in progress as Christmas boxes were sent to the boys in the service. Ford Pettit Jr., on duty in the Marshall Islands requested a license to preach and administer the ordinances of the Church in his capacity as assistant Chaplain. His request was granted for the duration of the war.

Ladies' Aid activities include first mention of white cross quotas, sending of C.A.R.E. packages and sending of members to girl's camps and women's house parties.

In June of 1948, Rev. Ralph Karney tendered his resignation as he had been asked to accept an appointment by the Michigan Baptist Convention as Director of Rural Churches for Michigan, a post he still holds. This church relinquished him with much reluctance and sorrow. His pastorate was the longest in the entire history of the church and saw a tremendous growth from the low point of discouragement in 1930. His work among the young people was particularly outstanding. He and his family will always be remembered with deep affection.

Rev. Merle Meeden had the difficult task of following Rev. Karney as pastor here. His work was effective and as the membership grew, he guided and counseled this group, encouraging them to maintain a minister independently of the Howell church, with whom they had shared a pastor for twenty-four years. He remained until 1954, relinquishing his duties here to give his full time to the growing work in Howell.

The Men's Brotherhood was organized in 1949 and held monthly dinner meetings at the church. They established the working together of the Lord's Acres which brought them considerable income when crops were harvested, enabling them to complete needed improvements to the building. The auditorium was replastered and tinted, floors sanded and varnished and a new lighting system installed. Two new Sunday School rooms were made in the basement and a new well dug, with running water installed in the kitchen. Two lavatories were added on the north end of the large Sunday School room. An oil furnace was purchased for the new L addition, other means of heating by stoves having proved unsatisfactory. A member of the Walled Lake Church donated a bus to the Sunday School, the old one being past repair.

The three pocket envelope was put into use in 1950, the Girl's Guild organized and the first Vacation Bible School established. The first Harvest Festival was held in this year also, when the front of the auditorium was beautifully decorated with fruits, vegetables, grains, canned fruit, nuts, berries and fall flowers to make a wonderful display. The produce was later taken to the Baptist Children's Home in Detroit. This Festival as well as the Vacation Bible School have been yearly events since their inception. In connection with the Harvest Festival of 1957, thirty International students from Wayne University were entertained during the weekend in the homes of members and joined in the Sunday services. This church was chosen for this



project as a typical rural church to represent all rural churches in Michigan by the Christian Friendliness Department of the Detroit Association of American Baptist Churches.

In 1952, 1953 and 1954, George Bloyd, a student at the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago, came to assist Rev. Meeden during the summer, devoting half his time to helping in the Howell church and the remainder being spent in the work here. He helped with the Vacation Bible School and filled the pulpit while Mr. Meeden was on vacation. Mention should be made of the Baldwin electric organ that was purchased in 1953 which adds greatly to the musical part of the services.

At the resignation of Rev. Meeden in 1954, it was decided to have a full time minister serve this church and George Bloyd, who was still a student, was contracted to fill this position. He came week-ends from January 1, 1955 until he finished his education in June of that year when he established residence here in an apartment made available through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Roland Armstrong. The ordination service for pastor Bloyd was held here on December 4, 1955.

Meanwhile, a new parsonage was being erected on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Hewitt, located on M 59. Much of the work on the house was done by the men of the church with the women doing the interior decorating and painting and the young people putting in the landscaping.

Evening services were again held after an interval of ten years or more. The holding of an Easter Sunrise Service was initiated and Family Night suppers, held once each quarter, was another newly established custom. A new bus was purchased for the Sunday School.

We were sorry to lose Rev. Bloyd in 1957 at the outset of what seemed to be a very promising career in church service but were fortunate in securing in the same year, Rev. Gail G. Buckles, our present pastor. Under his guidance the work of all departments has continued to expand and function effectively.

Memorial gifts to the church in the past few years include a new communion table and service given by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Glendenning in memory of their son, Robert; a portable communion service, for use when prolonged illness prevents church attendance, given by the Armstrong family in memory of Mr. Clarence T. Armstrong, and a lighted outside bulletin board erected by the church from a fund presented by the Amora and Agota class in memory of Mrs. Perry Hewitt. Choir robes were purchased with funds given for that purpose by an anonymous donor.

The membership has increased until the need for more Sunday School rooms and other facilities is keenly felt. A building committee has been appointed and are working on the problem.

This brings us to our one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary which will be celebrated on June 21, 1959.

Time and space did not permit mentioning separately the work of each pastor who labored here but a list will accompany this history showing the term of service of each. We feel they all put forth their best efforts, some succeeding better than others, perhaps because of



the cooperation or lack of it they received from the church members.

Two ministers were ordained here, Rev. L.D. Pettit on December 23, 1884 and Rev. George Bloyd December 4, 1955.

The church can be proud of its record of the men and women who have gone out from it into special Christian service. We note that the Clark twins, Lewis and Willis, who were received for baptism here in 1870 later became Baptist ministers and prominent leaders in missionary work in the West.

Charles L. Maxfield was granted a license to preach by this church in 1894. He later studied for the ministry and served as a missionary for several years in the Philippines.

Rev. Robert Hewitt was received as a member of this church by baptism December 24, 1933 and given a license to preach in 1939. He attended the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and was ordained at the Riis Park Baptist Church in that city September 4, 1941. His present pastorate is with the Baptist Church in Mayville, Michigan, where he has been for the past nine years.

Rev. Richard Miller was baptised here May 15, 1949. He attended Eastern Normal College at Ypsilanti and the Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. Upon completion of his studies he was ordained in 1958 in the church he now serves at Morenci, Michigan.

James D. Rowe was also granted a license to preach by this church in 1887 and when need arose served this and neighboring churches as a supply pastor.

Bernice Ann Beckwith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clare Beckwith and descendant of the pioneers Rufus and Eunice Mudge Tenny, is devoting her life to missionary work. She grew up in this church and was received into membership here in 1941. After some schooling at Michigan State College she attended the Baptist Institute for Christian Workers in Philadelphia. At the conclusion of her courses there she came to the Michigan Baptist Convention for work among the young people as a Disciple Interene. She married in 1949, Rev. Russell Brown, a young man who was assistant pastor in the First Baptist Church of St. Paul, Minn. They offered themselves for missionary work and were accepted in 1949, going to Burma where they are the competent leaders in that mission station.

Outstanding members in the early days of this church include Jessie and Nelson Tenny, Noah and John G. Morse, Daniel and Elijah Dunham. A few years later comes Deacon James Miller who served in that capacity for many years as did his son, John Miller. James Rowe was another honored member, always active in the church work as Sunday School superintendent, teacher and church clerk for twenty-two years, a record surpassed only by Mrs. Fred Beckwith, who served in that capacity for twenty-seven years. John and Joseph Bamber, Thomas Harrison, Morgan and Henry Andrus, Harry Glendenning, C.L. Mills and Seymour Morse are also remembered in various offices of the church.

Contemporary sisters in church work were Mrs. Joseph Bamber, Mrs. Mary Predmore, Mrs. Spencer Lee, Mrs. James Rowe, Mrs. Emily Wood, Miss Mary Hewitt and Mrs. Eliza Tenny, all loyal



workers as Sunday School teachers and active in the missionary work and the Ladies' Aid. Of necessity many have been omitted who served faithfully and well, always doing their part in the various activities of the church.

Familiar family names of this period other than these are Armstrong, Barrett, Bird, Curdy, Cimmer, Davison, Gonne, Gaunt, Hyde, Hewitt, Lee, Nichols, Paro, Palmer, Predmore, Preston, St. John, Whitney, Wood and Waterbury. Later we note the names of Beckwith, Donaldson, Holdridge, Jones, Judson, Kinney, Leonard, Lemmon, Latourette, Shaw, Thompson Torpy, Treat and Taft.

Some future historian will record the names of the leaders and workers in the church today. We wish, however, to call attention to eight present members who have retained their membership here for fifty years or over.

Eldest of this group are Mrs. Fred Beckwith, whose years of continuous service number seventy-three and Mrs. Will Jones with a seventy-one year record. Both are daughters of early church members, their mothers being Mrs. Eliza Tenny and Mrs. Spencer Lee, previously mentioned. Mrs. Beckwith, the mother of five children all of whom have been members here, has always been active in the work and regular in attendance. In younger days she served as Sunday School teacher of children's classes, later being the leader of the adult class for many years. She filled the office of church clerk for a period of twenty-seven years and compiled the history for the centennial anniversary. Mrs. Jones served as organist and both ladies were active in the Ladies' Aid.

Those with a membership of sixty years are the next group found in the records. Mr. and Mrs. Foster Gaunt, Mrs. Frank McHugh and Mrs. Owen Nacker were baptised on December 31, 1899.

Mrs. William Judson and her sister, Miss Mary Charlick were received by letter from the Hickory Ridge church in 1909, giving them a membership here of fifty years.

Faithful attendance and loyal service has marked the records of all of these persons whom we especially honor at this anniversary for their long years of devotion to this church. The women in the above group served as choir members, Sunday School teachers and workers in the Ladies' Aid.

Foster Gaunt, who is now an honorary Deacon, has served this church in many and various ways in his long tenure of membership. He started in his youth as assistant janitor and as a member of the choir. He was a teacher in the Sunday School as well as superintendent, the church clerk, treasurer, trustee and deacon for many years. He was a member of the choir for over forty-five years. This is remarkable record of service, willingly and devotedly given and one this church is deeply grateful for.

Many changes have come into the church and community through this span of one hundred and twenty-five years. We have tried to record them as they occurred bringing you from the log cabin of Jessie Tenny, where the first services were held, to the substantial church of today, from the board seats, plank floors, candles and



fireplaces to the comfortable pews, electric lights and oil burning furnace.

Changes are seen in the mode of transportation, the automobile being the universal one of today as we haven't started going to church in airplanes or helicopters yet. That of earlier times was so well described in Mrs. Beckwith's centennial history that we will quote from it as follows:

"The writer's grandmother rode to church sitting on a chair placed on a stone-boat, drawn by oxen. Some walked many miles to church one that I heard of carrying his boots in his hand to save wear on those high-priced articles. Later came the lumber wagon and the spring wagon, and horses instead of oxen. Who, of the older ones, doesn't remember Uncle John Morse's big four seated spring wagon? With luxury of luxuries, an umbrella for every seat. And it was nearly always full, either with the family and guests, or some of the neighbors. Then the splendor of Joseph Bird's closed carriage and spanking team of blacks, and the nice horses and carriages of the young men of our younger days."

We see great changes in the form of Sabbath services from the over long austere sessions with no Sunday School or young people groups to the highly organized church of today with its efficient departments. The membership is now about two hundred and sixty while twenty-five years ago it was one hundred.

While we have noted all of these tangible changes, there has been no change in the intangibles, in the earnestness of purpose, the joy of service, the abiding hope and faith which has sustained this church down through the years and carried it past the heartaches, anxiety and discouragement of troublous times.

The West Highland Baptist Church has filled in abundance the wish of its founders, who felt it was important "to maintain the worship of God in this place, for our own benefit, and that of our friends and the community in which we dwell."



## *Pastors of the West Highland Baptist Church*

S. Morrell . . . . .	1836
Wm. Barrett . . . . .	1836-1840
J. Booth . . . . .	1841-1844
Wm. Grow . . . . .	1845
A.P. Howell . . . . .	1846-1849
Joseph Atwood . . . . .	1850
Eben Carpenter . . . . .	1851-1855
Joseph Atwood . . . . .	1855-1858
Martin Lamb . . . . .	1858-1859
V.. Church . . . . .	1860
Wm. Grow . . . . .	1861-1862
A.M. Hunt . . . . .	1863-1864
L.P. Day . . . . .	1864-1866
Henry King . . . . .	1866-1874
E. Wright . . . . .	1875-1879
C.D.. Gregory . . . . .	1879-1881
W.L. Munger . . . . .	1881-1884
L.D. Pettit . . . . .	1884-1887
Harvey Pettit . . . . .	1887-1890
W.W. Waters . . . . .	1890-1893
R.J. Lobb . . . . .	1893-1895
George Atchinson . . . . .	1895-1899
T.W. Gookin . . . . .	1899-1901
W.W. Beardsley . . . . .	1901-1902
T.D. Cross . . . . .	1902-1905
R.A. McConnell . . . . .	1906-1909
H.M. Lawson . . . . .	1909-1914
C.L. Berry . . . . .	1914-1915
L.D. Pettit . . . . .	1916-1920
C.L. Berry . . . . .	1920-1922
Roy Preston . . . . .	1922-1924
Frank Boleyn . . . . .	1924-1925
F.L. Prestidge . . . . .	1925-1926
F.I. Osborne . . . . .	1926-1930
Ralph J.. Karney . . . . .	1930-1948
Susie Olson, assistant . . . . .	1930-1933
Merle Meeden . . . . .	1948-1954
George Bloyd . . . . .	1955-1957
Gail Buckles . . . . .	1957