

History of the
Penfield Baptist Church
1804 to 1904





EXTERIOR OF THE PENFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH, 1904.



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PENFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH.

The Centennial Anniversary of the Penfield Baptist Church was observed in the afternoon and evening of Dec. 30, 1904, with the following program:—

AFTERNOON.

Devotional Service.—

Reading of Church History, - Mrs. L. F. Worden.

Music.—

Roll Call.—

Addresses by visiting brethren,—

Rev. E. E. Knapp, Fairport, N. Y.

Rev. G. A. Beers, Webster, N. Y.

Rev. F. J. Palmer, Pittsford, N. Y.

Remarks, - Rev. W. H. Barker, Pastor of the Church.

Music.—

Benediction.—

5.30 o'clock,—Social Hour and Supper.

EVENING.

7.30 o'clock,—Prayer and Praise Service.

Scripture Reading and Prayer.—

Anthem.—

Address,—“Whatsoever He saith unto you do it.”

Rev. D. D. MacLauren, Rochester, N. Y.

Hymn by Congregation.—

Benediction.—

The natural disposition to refer the source of any historical sequence to the earliest possible data, leads us back to the formation of the County of Ontario in 1789, when it extended from the Pennsylvania State line northward to Lake Ontario, and east and west far enough to include within its boundaries several of the present counties of Western New York.

The present towns east of the Genesee River and north of Rush and Mendon were organized into a township in 1794 and named Northfield. Later, in 1806, the name of the township was changed to Boyle, and at a subsequent date the territory of Boyle was divided into the several towns now forming the north-eastern part of the County of Monroe. Boyle was divided and Penfield created and named March 30, 1810, in honor of a pioneer settler, Daniel Penfield (A postoffice was established here about this time.)

The first religious services held within the bounds of Monroe County, of which we have any account, were connected with the French Missions in the 17th century. This section remained in the peaceable possession of the Indians until after the Revolutionary war, when immigration began to set in towards Western New York. The first permanent settlements were made in 1789 in Wheatland and near the head of Irondequoit Bay. During the next five years settlements sprang up in various parts of the county, although growth was greatly retarded by the difficulties of access, the dense forests, and the unhealthiness of the climate when the lands were first cleared; the unsettled condition of Indian affairs also had the effect to retard immigration.

Antedating the organization of all the Baptist churches in the county, and with one exception a church of any denomination, and the formation of this present town or county, the Baptist church of Palmyra, (which was but three years older,) granted letters in August, 1803, to Joseph Case, a licentiate, and other brethren to form a church. Early in 1804 these and others with Brother Case, who was soon ordained as their pastor, formed themselves into the Baptist church of Northfield.

This church numbering twenty-two members, the germ of the present Penfield church, united with the Cayuga Association in September, 1804. Elder Case largely bestowed his labors on adjoining towns. During his pastorate and even longer, the infant church enjoyed also, the useful labors of Elijah Case, a licentiate, "whose sepulcher is with us to this day." Elder Case closed his nine years' pastorate in 1812 and soon after went to his reward. It is not known that he received any pecuniary aid.

In the year 1809, this church sent pastor and delegates to a council called to organize a church in the south-west part of the town, which was united with the Cayuga Baptist Association in 1810 and was known as the Second Church of Boyle, now the Pittsford church.

In 1813, the church now numbering 75, called Bartlett Dake, a licentiate, who was soon after ordained. His ministry of four years was attended with some increase, but on account of alleged immoralities he was silenced in 1816. His adherents withdrew and formed a second church which maintained a separate existence for nearly seven years.

In September, 1814, Penfield with twenty-two other churches met in Bristol and formed the Ontario Association.

In 1816, the church called Elder Benjamin Caulkins, who served two years. There was a revival of religion in 1817 in which 57 were baptized.

During 1819 Elder Nehemiah Lamb served the church very acceptably, one half of the time. Elder Lamb died in Michigan, May 10, 1850, aged 73 years.

For one year, from January 1, 1820, Elder Thomas Tuttle divided his labors between the two churches, for which the church voted him "\$40 in grain—wheat at 4 shillings, corn at 2 shillings." Elder Tuttle continued to supply the second church until its union with the first in 1822. He died in Michigan in 1834.

From August 4, 1821, Elder Joseph Monroe was pastor six months; salary \$50 and his board.

In January, 1822, Elder Joseph Maltby commenced his successful pastorate of three years, on a salary of \$125, "to be paid in house rent, pasturing and produce". This same year the canal was opened between Albany and Rochester, giving new impetus to settlement and the development of surrounding towns. Increased wealth began to manifest itself also. Two prosperous events attended Elder Maltby's labors; the reunion of the two churches alluded to, and the building of a house of worship. This house, a wood structure, was erected about one half a mile east of its present location, 40 by 50 feet in size, with a gallery on three sides. It was completed in the fall of 1823 at a cost of \$3,496.05. Elder Maltby died in Copenhagen, N. Y., July 11, 1845, aged 77 years.

In June, 1825, Elder Jason Corwin, a member of the first class graduating from Hamilton College, was called as pastor and served three years and ten months; salary \$175 to \$200. Under his able ministry, after a season of prosperity and increase, the church shared with many others in the great Anti-Masonic struggle. The contest went on, aggravated by political combinations; two parties were formed, manifesting much rashness and unchristian spirit on both sides. After much wrangling, the "Whitesboro Resolutions" framed by a large convention of Baptists, strongly Anti-Masonic, yet conciliatory, were adopted by the church with admissions "that sufficient gentleness had not always been manifested towards the Masonic brethren." Elder Corwin was obliged to leave the pastorate of the church, November, 1828, and harmony was at length restored. It is just to say that Elder Corwin, though moderately Masonic, carried himself through this time of trial in a manner that met the approval of his ministering brethren of both parties. On invitation of a few Baptists in North Penfield, (now Webster,) he commenced preaching there on the Ridge; a church was organized and later recognized as a regular Baptist church by a

council called November 10, 1830. It was named the North Penfield church. Elder Corwin was pastor there for about three years. Of those uniting with that body, a large number were from the mother church. Elder Corwin closed the labors of a long and successful ministry in 1860.

Contemporary History.

In 1825 the First Presbyterian Church of Penfield, built its church edifice on a lot donated by Daniel Penfield. "It is a **fine** brick structure having a capacity for seating four hundred persons; it is located on an old burying ground covering about sixty graves." This body was organized in 1804 as a Congregational church and continued its existence until February 7, 1806, when the members resolved themselves into the First Presbyterian Church of Penfield.

The Monroe Baptist Association was organized October 18, 1827, "John Quincy Adams being President of the United States, and Dewitt Clinton, Governor of the State of New York, and Mr. Brown, Jr., President of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rochester." Delegates from six churches of the Genesee and three from the Ontario Association, of which Penfield was one, met in the Court House in Rochester and perfected an organization that now numbers 34 churches.

In April, 1829, Elder Norman Bently was called to the church on a salary of \$150, and served sixteen months. As the fruit of his earnest labors 34 were baptized; one baptismal season was fraught with more than common interest. Among twelve baptized March 7, 1830, are the names of some well known in the denomination; viz: Rev. Timothy Fuller, the Rev. Dr. Mason of Chelsea, Mass., and Jane Mason, his sister, who after becoming the wife of Rev. J. M. Haswell, was with him twenty-six years a missionary in Maulmain, Burmah. Elder Bently died in Rome, N. Y., in 1846.

Contemporary History of 1829.

In the eastern part of the town we find from a little band of five who years before had organized under the sentiments declared by the Free Will Baptists, an organization of forty members, established as a separate church. Their services were held in school houses and barns, until they built and completed a church edifice of brick in 1830, on the old stage road. In the same year the Methodist Episcopal Church of Penfield was organized. They held meetings in private houses and rented rooms until the completion of a church building in 1843. These separate organizations seemed in no way to interfere with the prosperity of the church, but manifested more fully Christ's power to draw men unto Himself and extend His kingdom in the earth.

Elder Israel Robords was called in November, 1830, and served the church three years and seven months, on a salary of \$250 to \$450. Under his ministry was enjoyed an almost constant revival, in connection with protracted meetings which had their origin about this time. The earnest manner of Elder Robords, and his unwearied activity, peculiarly fitted him for the revival efforts of that day. He baptized 207 in Penfield.

November, 1834, Elder L. J. Reynolds was called and served six months. This good man died in Port Byron in 1838.

In July, 1835, Elder Simon G. Miner assumed the pastoral care of the church and remained twenty-six months. His faithful labors resulted in adding 70 to the church by baptism. After leaving Penfield he labored with great success in Illinois.

December, 1837, Brother Alfred H. Burlingame was called and ordained pastor February 15, 1838; salary \$400. In the year 1839 the church removed its house of worship to its present location in the Village of Penfield and rebuilt it; enlarging and improving it at a cost of \$4,004.29. In 1840, the church enjoyed one of its most precious revivals; 80 were baptized into his membership. After a successful pastorate of three years and three months Brother Burlingame was dismissed March 20,

1841. As a pastor he was watchful and sympathetic; and as a preacher lucid and convincing. He died in Pittsford, February 11, 1845, aged 34 years.

Next, Elder B. N. Leach served the church eight and one half months from May 16, 1841; salary \$500.

Brother Harvey Munger, "well reported of", had care over the church nine and two-thirds months, from February 12, 1842; salary \$400. In January, 1842, the Baptist brethren and sisters of Perinton resolved to organize as a church body; (a church existed there "previous to 1820, with Elder Spencer as pastor, and had joined the Monroe Association in 1834, but was dissolved in 1838.") a council was called in February and the organization perfected and recognized as the "First Baptist Church of Perinton." Elder Munger acted as a supply to that church until they called a pastor in May. A goodly number were given letters from the Penfield church to unite with the church in Perinton, now the Fairport church.

Elder David Bernard was next called December 31, 1842, and remained with the church two years and eight months. The year 1843 was remarkable as a time of great religious revival and Elder Bernard, ever active and zealous for souls, held several protracted meetings, resulting in the addition of 60 by baptism. In December of 1843, William Miller, the father of Adventism, gave a course of lectures in Penfield; although he advocated no views whose peaceful adoption need create any difficulty, yet here as elsewhere, his lecturing and his books gave rise to dissension and trouble and resulted in several exclusions.

On the 16th of November, 1845, Elder Jonas Woodard accepted the pastoral care of the church at a salary of \$400. Several revival efforts during his faithful ministry resulted in 107 baptisms. One revival of special mention began in meetings held at Lovett's Corners, (now East Penfield) in "Uncle Josey Fuller's kitchen." The meetings continued until the room could no longer accommodate the number attending, when the "landlord of the tavern opened the ballroom" and meetings

were held there for a number of weeks resulting in a large number of conversions; the greater part joining the Baptist church. Then followed the building of the little chapel known as "The Bethel" in 1847, at a cost of \$250, to be used for out-station services; on land leased of Joseph Fuller so "long as the building should be used for religious purposes." During the ministry of Brother Woodard, more was done than ever before to bring the church into sympathy with the benevolent objects of the denomination. He was dismissed November 16, 1850, after a pastorate of five years.

The following December, 1850, the church called Elder Spencer S. Ainsworth, who served four years on a salary of \$450 to \$500. Thirty-two were baptized during his pastorate and the church largely increased its benevolent contributions. The fiftieth anniversary of the church was celebrated near the close of Brother Ainsworth's pastorate. The record says "December 27, 1854; The Semi-centennial Celebration was held agreeable to appointment. Rev. Jonas Woodard preached at 1 o'clock p. m.; Rev. Timothy Fuller in the evening. December 28: Rev. S. S. Ainsworth preached at 10 o'clock a. m.; at 1 o'clock in the afternoon a history of the church was read followed by a season of conference in which the pioneers of the church and community participated." Elder Ainsworth left in 1854 under circumstances painful to the church and disgraceful to himself.

After a sorrowful destitution of five months the church called Elder J. A. Bullard in May, 1855, who served sixteen months under circumstances of peculiar trial. Salary \$600.

January 1, 1857, Elder Almon Virgil, by invitation commenced a protracted meeting which lasted several weeks and resulted in a large number of conversions. On February 22 he was called to the pastoral care of the church and remained fifteen months. Eighty-three were added to the church by baptism.

On the 18th of Aug., 1858, Brother J. J. Keyes was called and had care of the church until ordained pastor January 27, 1859.

At this time the custom of holding a preaching service in the forenoon, an intermission at noon and Sunday School, followed with another sermon, was changed by vote, to "dispense with the afternoon service, and in place thereof have preaching in the evening at the church." After serving the church eighteen months Brother Keyes was dismissed February 10, 1860. Salary \$500.

A call was next extended to Rev. Abel Haskell and he entered upon his services as pastor of the church August 15, 1860. In 1861 the church was entirely remodeled; the gallery was removed, the big white pulpit removed giving place for the choir in an alcove between the two vestibules; a speaker's platform with desk, placed at the north end of the audience room and facing the entrance, and new seats; the session room was built, a furnace installed, and new carpets for the main room and vestibules; a strip of land purchased on the north end of the lot and the sheds moved back, all at a total cost of \$2,500. The church was re-dedicated February 6, 1862. In 1863 a series of meetings were held, the church greatly revived and 30 added by baptism. At this time the salary was raised to \$700. In the private records of Brother Haskell we find under date of November 4th, 1865, "Covenant meeting; large attendance and good meeting. Dismissed Sister ——— by letter; received on relating their Christian experience, as candidates for baptism ———" two young sisters. On the following Sabbath, after preaching, he had given his last public service to the church. Sickness followed and his death occurred December 21, 1865, in the vigor of middle life and in the triumphs of faith. The church was greatly afflicted and the following resolutions were entered upon its records:

Resolved, That in the death of our brother, we as a church and society, have lost a kind and tender pastor, a faithful and earnest preacher, and a constant and consistent Christian; one always true to his Maker, true to the church, true to his country, and a true friend to humanity.

Resolved, That as a church we deeply mourn our loss, but we bow in submission to the Divine will and devoutly pray that

his mantle may fall on us, and that the Christian virtues so prominent in his life may ever be remembered and practiced by us.

Rev. E. J. Foote entered upon his labors, as pastor of the church the first Sabbath in May, 1866. The following year a most precious revival was enjoyed; the whole community was awakened, the church was thoroughly engaged and a large number added. A baptistry was built and in November (1867) a steam heating plant was installed, walls decorated and wood-work refinished at a cost of very near \$1,000. In the fall of 1870 a new pipe organ was purchased and placed in the church at a cost of \$1,100. During Brother Foote's ministry the salary was raised to \$1,000. After a most blessed and successful pastorate of five years in which he baptized 77, Brother Foote resigned his charge of the church April 1, 1871, to the regret and sorrow of the whole community. The fruit of his revivals remain to this day; many having become standard bearers in this and other churches.

September 10, 1871, Brother Forest A. Marsh was unanimously called to the work of the church, and began his labors on a salary of \$1,000. He was ordained October 26, and served the church very acceptably eight months, until the failing health of his wife compelled him to resign his charge and seek a more healthful climate.

Rev. A. L. Freeman accepted a call and began his ministry to the church in September, 1873. In December the spacious and comfortable parsonage was purchased for \$1,610. In the fall of 1875 the pastor aided by Rev. C. M. Palmer commenced a series of evangelistic meetings which resulted in the reviving and quickening of the church and 30 additions to its membership. The labors of Pastor Freeman and his very helpful family were greatly blessed to the building up of the church and the good of the community. He served the church six years, baptizing 53. He was honored in receiving the largest salary, \$1,200—given to any pastor in the history of the church. Brother Freeman died very suddenly September 29, 1902.

August 15, 1880, a unanimous call was extended to Brother Joseph R. Henderson to become pastor of the church at a salary of \$800 and parsonage. Brother Henderson was ordained September 23, to the work of the gospel ministry, by a council composed of delegates from each church in the Monroe Association. He served the church efficiently and faithfully for three years, baptizing 20 converts.

Next, Rev. O. C. Kirkham accepted a call to the pastorate and commenced his labor April 1, 1884. Salary \$800. He remained with the church nineteen months, baptizing 3.

Beginning in January, 1886, and laboring for several weeks in a gracious revival, Rev. Mortimer V. Willson accepted a call of the church and assumed pastoral relations April 1st. 39 were very soon added by baptism. Associated with Rev. T. F. Parker, the pastor of the M. E. church, in preaching at out-stations, began an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit in meetings held in the school house of the "Brewer district", in January, 1887. Members of the village churches and christians of the neighborhood came in to the work and a large revival resulted. About 20 were received into the church, while a large number united with the churches of Brighton, East and West Webster, and the M. E. church of the village. In 1889 the church building was thoroughly repaired, the organ was moved to its present position near the platform, memorial windows replaced the old ones, a vestibule was added, thereby enlarging the auditorium, the walls were beautifully decorated, woodwork stained, exterior painted, and minor improvements with furnishings at a cost of \$2,000. The 90th anniversary of the church was celebrated in the fall of 1894. Several revivals resulted in additions to the church; Brother Willson baptizing nearly 100 in his long pastorate. His term of pastoral care over the church was without parallel in its history: a shepherd and a watchman for seventeen years: ceasing from labor on account of failing health and in a few short months called to lay down the weapons of his warfare to receive his crown of rejoicing. Beginning his ministry in 1860, he served but five churches and was never

without a pastorate until the last two or three months of his life. Sympathetic and charitable, and a heart overflowing with love, he ever shared the cares and burdens, the joys and sorrows of the church and the individual. During his pastorate the church suffered many and serious losses. The pastor was bereft of a faithful, loving helpmeet in the death of his wife May 1, 1893, and the church missed her help and sweet counsel while deeply mourning their loss. In the death of three deacons, and many of the strongest supporters of the church together with very many changes that came by removals, or change of residence, but a small number remain of those with whom Brother Willson commenced his work in Penfield. He died in Sodus, May 20, 1893, aged 71 years.

Rev. H. Clay Poland entered upon his labor April 5, 1903, as the twenty-ninth pastor. 20 were baptized during his ministry. He remained with the church eighteen months, closing his labors October 2, 1904.

During the period of 100 years there is a total of 8 years that the church was without a pastor. The average length of pastorate was about 3 years and 2 months, the shortest period recorded 6 months, the longest 17 years. In the intervals between the dismissal of one shepherd and the call of another the services have been continued, pulpit supplies obtained, usually from the Rochester Theological Seminary.

As the century closes but five are living—Reverends J. J. Keyes, E. J. Foote, J. R. Henderson, O. C. Kirkham and H. C. Poland, who have gone in and out before the people administering the Word, sharing the responsibilities and trials, and entering into the joys and sorrows as ministers of the Gospel having charge of the church.

Deacons.

Having chronicled the shepherds of the flock, who have come in and gone out in the years of the church's existence, and some of the ingatherings while under their care and leadership, it is of equal interest to note the officers and undershep-

herds who maintained the rank and file, and bore the burden and heat of the day in times of trials and testing, and yet rejoicing in service, were steadfast and faithful to every interest and work of the church.

Of the first deacons, the names Abijah Barber and Peter Marlett are found, but no record of date of appointment or time in office.

Next, in 1820, Forbes Southworth and David Monroe were chosen.

In September, 1831, the above were superseded by John Fuller and Solomon Case; the former served faithfully until his death, October, 17, 1848, and the latter until his removal in 1836

In April, 1836, Nelson Fullman was chosen and served 10 years, until dismissed by letter in 1846.

The same year, 1836, Harvey Fuller, a brother of Rev. Timothy Fuller, was chosen to fill the office, and ordained October 26, 1836. With him Christ and the church were first of all things; always a ready witness for his Master in word and deed, he faithfully sustained the office of deacon for 43 years, until called from labor to reward, November 7, 1879.

In 1843 Sylvester S. Millard and Arunah Mosely were chosen; the former January 3rd and the latter in June. Deacon Millard maintained a vigorous watch care of all the interests of the church, and faithfully discharged the duties of his office for 33 years, departing this life June 27, 1876, aged 78 years. Deacon Mosely served 7 years, until his removal and dismissal by letter to unite with the Fairport church; after a few years, on moving to Rochester he united with the Second church and was chosen one of its deacons. It is recorded that he represented his church in the Monroe Baptist Association 49 years in succession.

Deacon Burr Northrop was admitted by letter from the Webster church, February 3, 1844, and it was "voted that Brother Northrop be received also in his official capacity as deacon," February 4, 1844, and he served faithfully for 25 years. With the help of his good wife he had care of the communion

set and attended to the furnishings for the Lord's Supper as it was observed monthly. After the death of his wife he lived mostly with a daughter in Rochester, but continued his connection with his home church. His death occurred May 4, 1877.

October 6, 1854, George W. Tower was chosen and consistently honored his call until his removal and dismissal by letter March 2, 1867. His death occurred in Wallington, Vt., January 10, 1894. Burial in Oakwood cemetery.

Isaac Bronson and Alanson Higbie were chosen in 1872. Deacon Higbie filling the office most acceptably until his removal to Fairport in 1878, where he was called from the church militant to the church triumphant September 9, 1892. Deacon Bronson remained faithful to his duties and loyal to his office until his death, January 26, 1902. In 1879, Giles, son of Deacon Harvey Fuller, most reluctantly accepted the office, but gave faithful and consecrated service for ten years; entering into rest April 27, 1889.

Thomas Embury and George K., son of Deacon Alanson Higbie, were next chosen in 1883. Brother Higbie actively engaged in the work of the church and was faithful to his trust until moving to Brighton in 1892. After dismissal by letter he united with the Park Avenue church of Rochester. Deacon Embury continued in faithful service and loyal support of the church until his sudden death by accident, October 9, 1902.

D. S. Worden was elected in 1894, but resigned in 1897.

The present deacons are Orin Loyd, chosen March 6, 1897, and H. Willson Whalen chosen May 14, 1903.

The record of one hundred years shows a total of twenty names enrolled as deacons in the church. Of this number, six died while in active service; two on removal served other churches in the same office. Of the first five named, no farther record can be found than given; two severed connection with the church on removal to join other churches; two retained their membership until death, although unable to serve in office for some years because of distance of residence. Of the

twenty named, but four are living; seven rest in Oakwood cemetery with a great company of saints and co-laborers who made up the church on earth.

Church Clerks.

From the records it appears that no permanent clerk was chosen until the election of Aaron Quick in 1816, who served with a slight intermission until 1828. Solomon Case was next chosen and continued in office five years. Then followed the election of S. S. Millard, who served three and one-half years, and Ard Weeks one and one-half years.

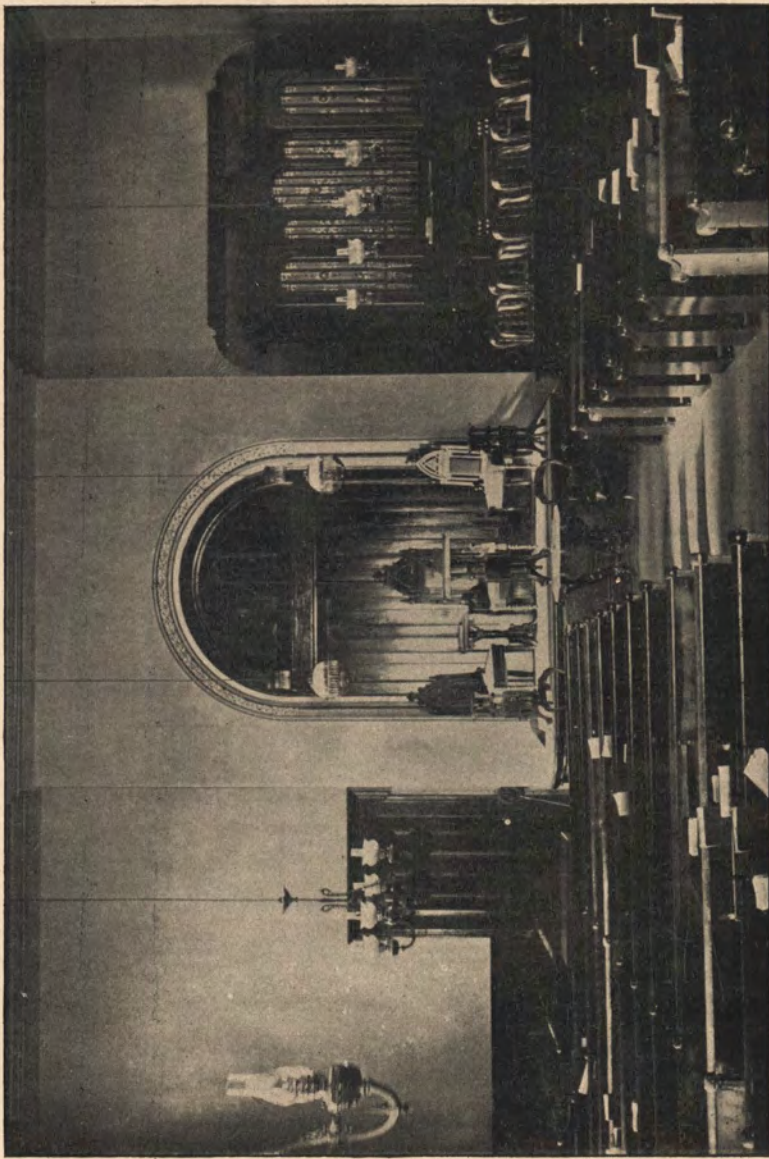
In 1838, John Southworth was elected, and continued in office until removed by death, October 23, 1853; faithful in attendance upon his duties for fourteen and two-thirds years. In November, 1853, Alanson Higbie was chosen and continued in office nearly a quarter of a century, tendering his resignation April 9, 1878, on his removal to Fairport. He was a man strong in convictions of duty, diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; of whom it is said, he was seldom absent from a business meeting.

In 1878 Eugene Covey was elected and continued in office until moving to Rochester, having served twelve years. Isaac Bronson succeeded him and served two years.

Next, Alpheus P. Thomas was elected and kept the church records for seven years.

Eugene Covey having returned to Penfield, the office was tendered him a second time and he was elected in 1901, and continues to hold the office.

Nine persons have filled the office in the ten periods named since 1816. Only two of the number are living.



INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH IN 1904.

Sunday Schools.

It is certain that Sabbath schools were held at a very early date; of the beginning no record can be found, nor until in the '50s does an incomplete report appear. Handed down from fathers and mothers to succeeding generations the methods of conducting, and time of holding the school are here given. The session was at the noon hour between the first and second preaching services. A superintendent and teachers, with the pastor, who was very often the superintendent, was the regular staff of workers. Infant classes were unknown; much of the teaching to the younger scholars was oral and fixed in the minds by weekly questions and answers. The Bible was the text-book, and the scholars were given a portion of Scripture, usually in the New Testament, sometimes in the Psalms, to memorize during the week and expected to repeat in class on Sunday, the number of verses allotted them, ranging from three to seven or more, according to the age and ability of the pupil. Scholars were encouraged to memorize whole chapters or as much of the Bible as they could. Sometimes rivalry between classes was exhibited by one or more members repeating a part or whole of a book of the New Testament. Every Sabbath the school was subject to a catechistic drill on the lesson of the day and previous lessons. In the '40s the American Sunday School Union issued question books on the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, "with the approval and endorsement of a committee consisting of members of several denominations, with a design to secure the widest diffusion of Scriptural knowledge." These were adopted to some extent as providing more uniformity in Bible instruction.

The meter hymns and spiritual songs of the church was the music first used in the schools. Later Wm. Bradbury and others wrote music and words adapted to the joyous, happy temperament of children and the Sunday School Union issued books, containing twenty or more songs especially adapted to Sabbath schools, at the price of one cent each; they were enthusiastically received by the children as the ownership of a

book was made possible, along with the brighter music. The conservative members of the church were slow to adopt the newer style of music as it seemed too worldly. Prejudice was overcome when the power of music to win and hold children in the Sabbath school became apparent.

The vital relation of the Sabbath school to the church was being recognized and thought worthy of record. In the Association minutes at their Twenty-third Anniversary "held in the meeting house of the Baptist church in Wheatland, Oct. 2nd and 3rd, 1850", the Prudential committee recommended the following resolution, which was adopted.

"Resolved. That the churches of this Association be requested to notice particularly in their annual letters the condition of their Sabbath schools and Bible classes; the number of scholars in them, their average attendance through the year, the number of pupils baptized, and the number of volumes in the Sabbath school library."

Sabbath schools were held at out-stations on Sunday afternoons during the spring, summer and fall months; one at the Bethel for more than twenty-five consecutive years, others in school houses in several parts of the town; at times three schools and even four were under the supervision of the church with preaching by the pastor once or twice a month where the schools were held.

Interest in picnics for the schools was growing and it became a matter for consideration by the church in business meeting.

The following is recorded October 2, 1852: "On motion in accordance with former suggestions,—Voted to have a S. S. celebration of the schools attached to the church in the following order: To meet at our meeting house in the village at 10 a. m.; after an address, a ride to such a place as shall be agreed upon by a committee of arrangements appointed." Again, under date of August 28, 1858, "A committee appointed to fix upon the time and place of holding the Sabbath school celebration, recommend the 8th day of September as the time for the same, and that the school go to Mount Hope and from there to the County Fair grounds; and voted

that we invite the other schools of Penfield to join us." It was a notable picnic and one long remembered. Four horse teams and decorated wagons, preceded by a brass band hired for the occasion, led a long procession driving to Rochester. A number of schools from other towns picnicked on the Fair grounds the same day. After dinner speeches by men interested in Sabbath school work with chorus singing by the children, marked the occasion.

In the '60s interest in Sabbath school work arose higher and the annual association meetings of 1866 each church sent one delegate to represent the Sabbath school interests, reports were presented, addresses on the subject were given, and of the many resolutions unanimously adopted we copy the following:

"Resolved. That the duty of more thorough, systematic and concentrated effort in the Sabbath school work is imperative and cannot be disregarded.

"Resolved. That each church in the association be earnestly requested to take immediate measures to gather into their schools every child within reach."

Following this the Sabbath school of this church reached and maintained for more than a decade the highest enrollment in its history. A complete list of names of the superintendents of the several schools cannot be obtained. The first found recorded is Arunah Mosely, appointed superintendent of the Sabbath school May 6, 1843. E. P. Ward followed. Deacon Harvey Fuller was elected April 1, 1848 and continued to serve until April, 1851, when he requested to be discharged from the duty of superintending the Sabbath school. May 18th his request was granted and Barzillia Millard was appointed. No farther record appears until in 1857, Royal B. Wright was superintendent of the school at the church; he was followed by Artemas S. Fuller in 1858. R. B. Wright again took the office in 1859.

A. S. Fuller was superintendent of the Bethel Sabbath school sixteen years in succession, and at one period this school outnumbered and out-ranked any school in the county, east of the river and outside the city.

In 1861 Orestes Case united with the church and was soon chosen Sabbath school superintendent. He continued to hold the office until a few months before his death, which occurred in April, 1871, a period of about nine years. Beside the increase in attendance during this period, large additions were made to the library until it numbered more than four hundred volumes, and the school was in a very prosperous condition. He was greatly beloved in the work and the loss was keenly felt by the school.

Jacob F. Hardick followed in office and was superintendent three or four years. Giles Fuller was then elected and served an equal length of time. After him Eugene Covey was superintendent three years. John H. Chadsey was elected and held the office four years. George K. Higbie was the next elected, in 1883, and gave five years of enthusiastic and faithful work to the school.

George F. Harris, Jr. was superintendent two years. George K. Higbie was again elected and served about one year: moving to reside in Brighton, Geo. F. Harris was chosen again and served one year.

In 1893 W. G. Eldredge was elected to fill the office. Helen Willson served one year; then Orin Loyd was next chosen and continued in office four years.

Charles N. Leonard was the next choice and was twice re-elected. Eugene Covey was again superintendent for two years. In January, 1904, Orin Loyd was again elected.

No mention is made of the great company of teachers and scholars who have been connected with the Sabbath school in the years that are past, nor is the measure of their influence and labors known, but in the great hereafter when the books are opened it shall be revealed and every name will be found recorded there.

From the nursery of the church comes largely the strength and forces that build up this great body in our own land, and will continue so long as earnest, diligent and prayerful effort is maintained to follow the wise man's counsel "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."

The Ladies' Aid Society.

The first distinct organization by the women of the church was accomplished by a call for the ladies to meet at the residence of Alvah Covey, July 9, 1857. A society was organized by electing Mrs. Almon Virgil, president; Mrs. S. A. Lincoln, vice president; Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Norman Gifford, secretaries; Mrs. Holley Mann, treasurer; Mrs. Alvah Covey, Mrs. Lewis Allen and Mrs. H. Henderson, directresses. By vote the organization was named The Ladies' Mite Society. The following resolutions were adopted:—"A plain supper shall be served consisting of tea, biscuit or bread and butter, one kind of cake, cheese, beef or pickles. The society shall meet once in two weeks, its avails to be applied to refurnishing the church." Six meetings were held the first year, and at irregular periods for several years, until the society lapsed into obscurity during the years of the Civil war. No records were preserved.

A re-organization was effected December 6, 1866, at the residence of the pastor, Rev. E. J. Foote, and the following officers elected: Mrs. E. J. Foote, president; Mrs. George Flower, vice president; Miss Emma Covey, treasurer; and Miss Adeline Dyer, secretary. A part of the former resolutions were adopted with these added. "Annual membership to be secured by the payment of twenty-five cents. Money raised to be applied to such objects as the society shall designate."

The names follow of those who have been presidents of the society--now called the *Ladies' Aid Society*. Miss Frankie Ross. Mrs. Jewitt, held office six years, and was an energetic and successful officer. Mrs. Giles Fuller, Mrs. Robert Harris. An interval of six years with blank record follows. Then Mrs. Leslie Qualtrough was president several years. Mrs. Fannie Dyer, Mrs. W. G. Eldredge and Mrs. C. E. Scutt, followed in the order named.

An enumeration of the expenditures of the money raised include carpets, chairs, cushions, dishes, lamps, cutlery, linen, silver, painting and papering assistance in repairs to church and

parsonage, and numerous incidentals. In 1867, one hundred dollars was given by the society to provide a Christmas tree and presents for the Sunday school. The same year a communion set costing thirty dollars was presented to the church.

In 1882 over four hundred dollars was raised and expended in building and furnishing the kitchen of the church. The treasurer's book, which has an incomplete record, shows a total amount raised in twenty years, to be \$3,335.66; \$200 dollars was expended by the society near the close of the year in preparation for the Centennial Anniversary. Like the women of old who "looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness," so the women of this church and congregation have ever been ready to assist in the financial and secular interests of the church.

Benevolence and Missions.

From the earliest date this church recognized the duty of contributing for the spread of the gospel. The Monthly Concert was established by vote of the church in 1819, under Elder Lamb. By later action the church voted itself a missionary body and solicitors for the different objects of benevolence were often appointed by vote. The first collections of the church were for Foreign Missions, and then for the State Convention. Contributions to Hamilton Seminary and assistance to several young men who were preparing for the ministry, with the work of the women, who made clothing, knit stockings and mittens, prepared bedding and by skill and thoughtfulness provided numberless necessities and comforts for the servants called of God. In 1838 a fund was raised for the poor of the church for which something was systematically done as long as need existed.

For several years some good brethren believed it to be their duty to show their disfellowship of slavery by contributing mainly to the Free Mission society. On the other hand a strong majority saw insufficient reason for separating themselves

from the denominational benevolent societies and protested against the spirit that called them *pro-slavery*; for pro-slavery the church *was not* nor ever has been. The amount of the earlier contributions are not on record, but it is believed they have been liberal.

The church was not then separated into departments under one head, but the body in its entirety had oversight and charge of all its workings. There is no account of any society of the women in the church, under organization or name, until 1842, Sister S. A. Lincoln, who was ever interested in charitable work and alert to the wants of the needy and suffering, enlisted some of the women of the church to united action and was instrumental in forming a Benevolent Society. Its work was more outside the church, yet with an object to draw into the church and Sunday school. The record contains the following: "February 3, 1842, cash, \$9.55, 13 pair socks and 2 pair child's stockings;" again, "cash \$5.49 and string of gold beads." It gave assistance to young men in the Rochester Theological Seminary, and had an ear open to hear and a hand ready to give assistance in any place outside as well as their home field. It was in nature and spirit a "What I can Society" in its ministrations.

This may have prepared the way for women's societies, which in later years became of importance to and a part of the church.

The Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society had its origin in 1871, as urgent request came from missionaries of the American Baptist Missionary Union for single women as teachers, and as the Union did not feel itself at liberty to undertake such educational work, some women in Newton Centre, Mass., led by Mrs. Alvah Hovey and Mrs. Gardner Colby, called together women of Boston and vicinity who formed the Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. The society was approved by the Missionary Union and became auxiliary to it. Circular letters were sent out to the large body of Baptists and at the annual meeting of the Monroe Association held in Greece in October, 1871, a letter from Mrs. Alvah

Hovey, advocating the forming of circles in all the churches of the association, was read and received hearty endorsement.

The next month, November, at the Ladies' Aid Society held with Mrs. Flower, the Penfield W. B. F. M. Circle was organized under the direction of the pastor, Rev. F. A. Marsh, with the following officers: Miss Libbie Northrup, president; Miss Adeline Dyer, secretary; Miss Sarah Rundle, treasurer. No systematic work was done for the next five years; although collections were taken each year the money passed into the general church fund for Foreign Missions and the Women's Circle lost the credit it should have had and the organization almost ceased to have a name. In 1877 Pastor Freeman's wife became an inspiration to the work, a meeting was called and the circle re-organized. The officers were Mrs. O. C. Ross, president; Mrs. G. W. Flower, secretary; and Miss Sarah Rundle, treasurer. The first few years were formative and educational. Subscribers to the Helping Hand numbered 29. In 1878 the Children's Band was organized and greater interest and activity was manifest in the work. For three years, '77, '78, '79 the collections averaged \$40 per year.

In 1877 the Woman's Baptist Home Mission Society was formed, and three years later, in 1880, the circle decided to unite the interests of Home and Foreign Missions and became a union circle, contributing to both societies. Records of the amount of money raised are not available. The amount of money raised, work done, and goods and supplies sent to mission stations, has been very creditable to the circle as it never had a very large enrollment of members.

Mrs. O. C. Ross was president of the circle for several years, until her removal to Spokane, Wash. Mrs. W. G. Eldredge followed her and was in office two years; then Mrs. M. V. Willson, three years; Mrs. S. S. Leake from 1889 to 1892; Mrs. G. W. Clark two years and in April, 1894, Mrs. L. F. Worden was elected and continues as president, having been re-elected each succeeding year.

The Christian Endeavor Society.

October 5, 1880, a call to organize a C. E. society met with a hearty response and fourteen pledged themselves as active, and six as honorary members. The organization was completed October 12, and the election of officers resulted as follows: Miss Rose E. Gibbons, president; Jay Eldredge, vice president; C. Lacy Fuller, recording secretary; Mrs. M. V. Willson, corresponding secretary; Miss Clara Higbie, treasurer. Twenty active members subscribed to the constitution, and six associate and four honoraries made a total of thirty members. For several years there was a steady gain in membership. In November, 1893, the society joined the Rochester local union. In July, 1894, Miss Rose Gibbons and Miss Mary Harris were sent as delegates to the National Convention held at Cleveland, Ohio. In the fall of this same year delegates were sent to the State Convention at Albany. December 30, 1894, a Junior Society was organized with Miss Clara Eldredge, superintendent. Rev. M. V. Willson, Mrs. A. P. Thomas and Miss Grace Thomas were sent as delegates to the National Convention held in Boston in July, 1895.

Since 1898 there has been a decline in the membership, for reasons similar to that affecting the church—the immigration of so large a number—but contributing members and strength to other societies. Interest in the society still continues and the organization exists. The society has contributed financial assistance to the church, missionary work has received considerable attention, and interest in the departments adopted has been active.

A Few Brief Notes in Conclusion.

The expenditures for buildings since 1823 exceeds \$15,460 as accurate account of sums paid for sheds, repairs, insurance, painting and incidentals cannot be obtained. The cost of the bell is not included; the first bell was exchanged in 1848 for a

larger one which was priced at twenty-eight cents per lb., weight 828 lbs., with yoke at \$18 made a total of \$249.84; the difference in exchange including cartage to and from the canal, material, labor, and hanging, was \$114.84, to be added to the above.

The total sum raised for benevolence from 1856 to October, 1904, is \$14,083.41. \$1,300 was previously contributed towards the endowment of the Rochester University. The largest amount contributed any year was \$947.32, the smallest, \$76.55.

During the past fifty years, over \$30,000 has been raised for salaries to pastors and supplies. The largest membership in the last half of the century numbered 273 in 1857; the smallest membership is 107 at the close of the century. From 1840, over 1,500 names appear on the records as having been admitted to membership.

The churches in Pittsford, Perinton, West Walworth and Webster, at their formation drew, some of them largely, from this church. The dismissals have ever been in excess of those received by letter. The church has raised up eight ministers and one foreign missionary; called councils for eight ordinations at home; has assisted in recognizing twenty-six new churches and forming two associations. The good brethren of the early times gave evidence that they belonged to the church militant, "having a readiness to avenge all disobedience" as evidenced by the records of the great amount of discipline exercised. Every species of immorality was considered, as soon as brought to notice of the church. Amusements were held as disciplinable offences; neglect of the church was immediately noticed and a committee sent to inquire the cause. No censure for these early fathers who labored so zealously, so sincerely, and so successfully for the purity of the church, and its establishment upon the rock foundation.

So much remains unwritten which can be revealed only in the great hereafter, when the books are opened and every life stands out in the fullness of its influence and power.

