

History of Mt Zion United Methodist Church

The following history was researched and written by Leona Kay Armacost in the 1940's. She was a faithful, life-long member and a former organist of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church. "Aunt Onie", as we called her, was born October 17, 1909 and died January 21, 1992. She was married to my Dad's brother Charles, and was the sister of Melvin Kay who graced us with his music here for many years. Her daughter June, son-in-law Twigg and daughter Lois are still members here.

Leona Kay Armacost's researched history:

My church, Mt. Zion was originally built across the road from where it now stands. The old church that had been built in 1856 and had lasted for 40 years was getting rather small for the amount of people that were beginning to attend. Therefore a new church was built. Plans for the new church building were drawn up and the foundation was started under the direction of Mr. Frank Hering, Mr. William Hater, and Mr. Thomas Shilling. Mr. John Armacost, and Mr. John Blum in 1896.

But, in September of that year, the new building was blown down, due to a very severe storm, just as the rafters were being erected by the workmen. Immediately the work on the new church building was resumed and this time it was completely finished. There was a marble cornerstone placed on the southern side. This cornerstone contained the names of some of the babies whose parents wished to have their child's name placed inside the cornerstone for a contribution of \$1.00. On the face of the cornerstone is inscribed "1896". Aunt Leona's father, at that time, was the youngest child whose name was placed inside the cornerstone. Inside the church, a marble plaque can be seen which states the speakers of the first Anniversary service and the founder's names. These included Joshua Hering and Rev. J.T. Ward, as the speakers and Francis Hering, George W. Horner and George Armacost listed as the founders.

Since that time, an annual Anniversary service has been held, usually the third Sunday of June. The bell that was placed in the tower weighed half a ton and had a tone of "A flat", but it cracked and subsequently a new bell was bought. The beautiful, stained glass windows were placed there by the Rev. J.T. Ward, Frank Hering, George Armacost and Abraham Leister. A marble step was given by Joshua Williams.

June Kay Twigg's remembrances:

As I look back over the years, I remember how much this little church played an important part in our family's lives. Mother and Dad (Aunt Glova and Uncle Sherkie) were "church-going" people, so naturally my sister Lois and I were in church and Sunday School every Sunday from the time we were babies. As we grew older I began to appreciate the church services even more. Back in the 20's and 30's, going to church and the church activities were our main source of entertainment. Anniversary was a very special day. There were two services, morning and afternoon, with two separate speakers. There was always special music for both services and of course, it was always one of the hottest days of the year. We were given fans to help cool ourselves, which did help somewhat.

I remember how many of the past members, friends and relatives would return to join us on this special occasion. Those attending usually would make a contribution to our Sunday School in memory or honor of their loved ones to help fund our Sunday School for the coming year. After the collection, near the end of the service, we were given the grand total. Whatever amount a person gave was deeply appreciated. Then, all together, we would go to lunch in the social hall. Now the years have passed and the traditional Anniversary is again taking place. Today we have a congregation composed of many good people, and special families, all who are playing an important part in the life of our church.

Relevant History:

Our **church Social Hall**, where we have many Fellowship dinners, Caring Friends luncheons, AA and NA meetings, Boy Scouts, Bible School and the weekly fellowship after church service was built in 1962 and consecrated under **Rev. Buddy Pipes - WHO IS HERE TODAY** - My dad, Ed Armacost and his men of Armacost General Contractors, built the addition. Claude Armacost did all the backhoe work, Jimmy Mann got all the flooring from Congoleum at cost and Donald Frick did the brickwork.

In **1973 Mt. Zion became a "station"**, or a church on it's own, under Rev. Charles Wallace.

Now we are celebrating our **139th Anniversary of Mt. Zion's Sunday School Association** and we can all enjoy our blessings together on this special Sunday.

Our church may be small in size and number, but the important thing it is a church that is filled with caring. As our numbers grow, so does the caring and outreach. This church helps special needs groups to enrich their lives, through AA and NA meetings. It helps grieving families with The Caring Friends luncheons. Our youth group is very active and go to several youth oriented programs each year, plus have sleep-ins. Our "outreach" programs to Food Pantry, Shepherds Staff and others, keeps growing. Our pastor and others committee members interviewed for an organist/ music director and we employed Shelby MacFarland who has the choir up and running again and has introduced new music into Mt. Zion.

Bible School is coming up soon. Our twice-yearly Pancake Breakfasts are growing. Our special drama programs, new members joining, meetings to keep up with the evolving role of the church and the people within it

But, our biggest news and an answer to many prayers, is that we have been blessed with a new pastor and his wife. Lou and Judy Piel have infused this church with new life. They are both high-energy people with much to offer and tons of enthusiasm.

Under the Building Fund committee's guidance and the congregation's financial support, energy and help, we have done MAJOR renovations to this old building.

Visitors are always amazed at the warmth the Mt. Zion congregation exhibits. We may be small but we are mighty.

Our "Purpose" in MY mind is to "Feed the People ... however they may need to be fed.

There have been marriages, births, deaths, baptisms, transfers, new members, confirmations, graduations, guest speakers, music and always BIRTHDAYS.... from the oldest to the youngest.... here we are Lord we are here Lord.

Mt Zion goes on ... into the future.