

## HISTORICALLY SPEAKING (1950-1957)

Alice Baker

In the spring of 1950, the members of the Eagle Methodist Church felt that we should be separated from North Prairie. We had quite a large area to serve, ours being the only Protestant Church in the township of Eagle. We felt we needed a student pastor of our own. A delegation of our eight members went to Madison to Bishop Northcott. As a result, in the month of June of 1950, our District Superintendent, Rev. Allen, brought Rev. I. Dean Jordan to preach to us and meet our people. The Hamann family extended their hospitality for the noon meal. The pastoral relations committee decided to invite Rev. Jordan to be our pastor, and he accepted.

Our immediate problem was to find a place for him to live. We rented the home of Olive Gillard and helped Jordans furnish it. They had only been married a short time, living in a small apartment at Garrett. Mrs. Gillard's house was small and Jordans always referred to it as "The little Parsonage". We were very happy with the Jordans and our new venture, and soon had a committee hunting for a more suitable house for a parsonage. The congregation incorporated and finally bought the present parsonage. Many repairs and improvements were needed, so each year has soon considerable work done there. Rev. and Mrs. Jordan both added their voices to our adult choir, which was much appreciated. At this time we also had a youth choir. Rev. Jordan was responsible for our church adopting the policy of an "Every Member Canvass" at the beginning for each Church year. This has proven to be very helpful to our finances.

In June of 1952 we were very sorry to lose the Jordans; he was appointed assistant pastor at Waukesha. Rev. Alvin Briggs and family came to serve us. They remained

with us for five years. These were very active years for our church. The Troy Center Church became part of the charge. Several auctions were held in the village park to raise money. One year popcorn was raised and sold. During this period serious plans being started for a much educational unit. These steadily advanced during Rev. Briggs' years in Eagle, resulting the first Building Fund campaign in 1957. The choirs earned money for new Choir robes by giving several cantatas both here and at North Prairie. The church needed to be painted so about 30 members gathered there in old clothes, armed with paint brushes and buckets. The women provided a bounteous dinner, and before the sun went down the outside of the church had a new coat of paint. During this period a very active MYF developed, two of its young men becoming interested in the ministry. This was an inspiration to both pastor and members, for Eagle had never had a young man enter the ministry.

Rev. Briggs was very active in community affairs. The official board, under the direction of Rev. Jordan had tried to get a doctor to come to Eagle, for we had none. Rev. Briggs continued the effort and, after many months of planning with village and town officials, the Eagle Advancement Corporation was formed for the purpose of building a clinic as further attraction for a doctor. The people of the community invested their money, and the building became a reality. Before it was entirely completed, we had secured a doctor, Dr. Rosenkranz, who soon located here. We felt that our church had done the community a great service, and Rev. Briggs deserved much of the credit.