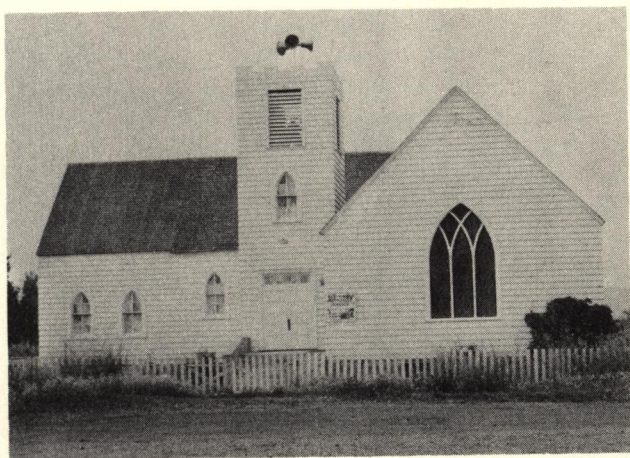


Centennial Year
1861 ❀ 1961



THE WILBUR MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH

White Swan, Washington



"THE BIBLE AND THE PLOW GO HAND IN HAND"....

-- Wilbur

WILBUR MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH

White Swan, Washington

April 16, 1961

Fred R. Owen, pastor

A Service of Worship for the 100th
Anniversary of the Church

ORGAN and PIANO PRELUDE Mrs. Robert Lahey
Miss Daisy Bond

PROCESSIONAL HYMN: No. 301 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
CALL TO WORSHIP

Minister: Let us go into the house of the Lord; let
us take counsel together.

People: Let our feet stand within his gates, and heart
and voice give thanks unto the Lord.

Minister: Blessed be the temple hallowed by his name;
pray for peace within its walls.

People: Peace to young and old that enter here, peace
to every soul abiding herein.

INVOCATION - Response (Apr '58, p. 153)

RESPONSIVE READING: page 642, For Church Anniversary
from Psalms 48 and 50

SOLO: I Need Thee Every Hour Thomas Miller
Mr. Joe Hill, accompanist

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH:

O God, we pray for Thy Church, which is set today
amid the perplexities of a changing order, face to
face with a great new task. We remember with love
the nurture she gave to our spiritual life in its
infancy, the tasks she set for our growing strength,
the influence of the devoted hearts she gathers,
the steadfast power for good she has exerted. When
we compare her with all human institutions, we rejoice
for there is none like her. But when we judge her by
the mind of her Master, we bow in contrition. Oh,
baptize her afresh in the life-giving spirit of Jesus!
Put upon her lips the ancient gospel of her Lord.
Fill her with the prophet's scorn of tyranny, and
with a Christlike tenderness for the heavy-laden and

downtrodden. Bid her cease from seeking her own life, lest
she lose it. Make her valiant to give up her life to human-
ity, that like her crucified Lord she may mount by the
path of the cross to a higher glory. Amen.

HYMN No. 244 My Hope Is Built

PRAYER - THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING for WORLD SERVICE

Doxology (3)

Prayer of Dedication - Response (Jan '61, p. 9)

ANTHEM: The First Psalm Elizabeth A. Russell
Solo, Mrs. Helen Hill

SERMON: Bishop Everett Palmer, bishop of the Seattle
Area

HYMN No. 278 Lead On, O King Eternal

BENEDICTION Response (622)

POSTLUDE

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We welcome today Bishop Everett Palmer, resident bishop
for the Seattle Area; William E. Callahan, superintendent
of the Columbia River District; former pastors and families
families of former pastors; friends from neighboring
churches; all who are interested in the past history and
in the future years of service of this church; and Chapin
Foster of the Conference Historical Society. We welcome
the ladies of our distinguished visitors; we acknowledge
Mrs. Callahan's regrets at being unable to be present.

We acknowledge the services of these people and offer
thanks to them for their help in the centennial celebra-
tion:

Mr. Victor Anderson and the school board for making
available the facilities of the school, Dist. 88.

The school cooks for the splendid dinner.

Mrs. Max Balch's W.S.C.S. committee for dinner
service and decorations.

Mrs. Ellwood Hinman ~~xxx~~ and her coffee hour committee
for their service at that function and in decorating

Mrs. Forrest Musgrove for arranging housing.

Rev. Earl Reisner for photography and many other deeds.

Mrs. Lester Pearne and Mrs. Merle Moses for historical
Rickie Hitchcock, Mrs. Tillman Sylling, Mrs. Frank Tuttle
and many others for invaluable services.

PASTORS

JAMES H. WILBUR1861 - 1882
 GEORGE WATERS
 THOMAS PEARNESIMCOE
 SHUSTERSATUS
 G. C. ROE
 S. GASCOIGNE
 J. C. TETERS
 M. R. BROWN
 JAMES WILBUR HELM1891 - 1915
 S. M. NICKLE1915
 A. M. LAMBERT
 A. H. MORTON1919
 M. L. ANDERSON1921
 M. A. SOPER1921 - 1923
 R. T. HOLLAND1923 - 1926
 JOHN McNEES1926 - 1932
 R. V. DUNLAP1932 - 1938
 C. T. HATTEN1938 - 1942
 EUGENE McGRAW1942 - 1945
 CHARLES AUSTUN1945 - 1947
 ROY S. McCULLOCH1947 - 1948
 C. S. GILLESPIE1948 - 1950
 J. E. HUNTLEY1951 - 1952
 AUSTEN RUEGGER1952
 HARRY E. GARDNER1952 - 1956
 FRED R. OWEN1956

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HISTORY

This Church was born in the aftermath of one war and the opening of another. With the appointment of Brigadier General Newman S. Clarke in 1857, as head of the Department of the Pacific, a campaign to subdue the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, who had been restive for years, was planned. Colonel George Wright, starting from Walla Walla, and Major Robert S. Garnett, setting out from Fort Simcoe, prosecuted a short punitive campaign northward that near Spokane brought the tribes to their knees. Clarke's successor, General W. S. Harney, on October 31, 1858, issued a proclamation reopening the Inland Empire to white settlement. The treaties made with territorial governor Isaac Stevens in 1855 were ratified in 1859, and the Indians were forced onto the reservations, but were provided with inadequate care by agents who were often incompetent or dishonest, and all of whom were handicapped by lack of supplies - which condition was aggravated by the uncertainties incident to the outbreak of the Civil War.

From Oregon came Rev. James H. Wilbur to Walla Walla in the fall of 1859, having been appointed by the Oregon Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as presiding elder over the newly envisioned Walla Walla Circuit, a circuit to comprise the area of our Inland Empire. Since 1847 Wilbur had been one of Methodism's leaders in Oregon. But the plight of the tribes on the Yakima Reservation claimed his attention, and he turned from his larger duties to devote the next twenty-two years of his life to them.

It must have been Nathan Olney, sub-agent at The Dalles, who first confronted Wilbur with the challenge to come to Fort Simcoe. In May 1859 the Fort was turned over to the Department of Indian Affairs as Agency Headquarters. In the same year, Father Wilbur arrived as teacher, still under appointment from the Oregon Methodist Conference. He soon organized a school for Indian children. Out of that school grew this church.

The first pages of the church roll, dated 1861, contain such names as Yakatowit and Delia, his wife; Joe and Susan Stwire; Thomas and Katie Pearne; Joseph and Susan Simcoe; George and Nancy Waters; and Coke and Sally Helm. These are some of the folks who became pillars and leaders in the new church. From their ranks came Indian preachers who carried on the work throughout the reservation and went as evangelists as far away as the Nez Perce reservation. Father Wilbur continued to give ecclesiastical leadership all the time he was Indian Agent, from 1864 to 1882. After he left these men kept alive the embers which remained from spiritual fires he had kindled. Of these men, Thomas Pearne and George Waters were ordained as travelling preachers. At Stwireville, in Medicine Valley, and at the Satus they labored, and George Waters was still responding to invitations to preach until the time of his death in 1923.

In 1891 Father James Wilbur Helm came to be preacher. He and his family lived in the original church building at Stwireville, to which had been added two rooms to serve as a parsonage. A large, stately house of worship had been erected in 1879. The village during this time, came to be called White Swan, after Chief Joe Stwire's Indian name. Wilbur, with the backing of the leadership of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Northwest, had fought to defend the reservation against the clamorous demands of white settlers for breaking it up. But in 1887, the Dawes Act offered citizenship to Indians and authorized the allotment of the tribal lands to individual Indians. Many immediately sold their lands to white settlers, and whites began to move onto the reservation and to become a part of the church. By the time Father Helm had completed his work in 1915, the congregation was pretty well divided between Indians and whites. Father Helm sometimes spoke using an interpreter. Sometimes he used the Chinook jargon. The latter was especially appreciated.

Support for the minister was principally from the Home Missions Board of the M. E. Church, together with small amounts contributed from time to time by the local

congregation. The stated salary was \$800.00 a year.

In 1890 Presiding Elder G. M. Booth expressed two concerns: the securing of title to the property on which the church buildings stood, and the establishment of church schools for the training of the Indian youth. The first materialized; the second did not.

In 1922, presumably following a twenty-five year trial period as provided by the Dawes Act, 11.4 acres of land was patented. Title is held by the Home Missions Board in Philadelphia. This land, originally allowed by the tribe to be used for church purposes, was donated by Chief Joe Stwire out of his allotment. It lies thus as a memorial to White Swan, the first duly elected head chief of the Confederated Yakima Tribes, one of the first Christians and church members on the reservation, and a local preacher from the earliest years of the church.

Thrice a month, Father Helm held services in the afternoons and evenings at the Agency School. Thus, Booth's concern for the Christian Education of the youth was partly met. After Helm left, in 1915, the practice seems to have been dropped. Thus the last strictly Indian phase of the church's program ceased. While there was talk of building a boarding home for children and youth, nothing came of it. That which the Methodists had visualized but not brought to fruition the Disciples of Christ accomplished. In 1920 they built such a home a few miles south of White Swan. Out of this has emerged the Yakima Indian Christian Church with which this church works in close harmony.

Since 1915, this church has had its up and downs. Most pastorates have been short and there has been no general acceptance of clearly defined goals, either by the denominational leaders or by the local people. There have been good leaders, but no clear-cut goal.

In 1937 the stately old building erected in 1879 burned to the ground. Against the protests of many, but with a view to a more commanding position, the present building was constructed during the pastorate of R.V.B. Dunlap. In a desperate effort to raise funds 4.7 acres of land were sold, including the grove which used to serve for encampments. With the coming of the White Swan Lumber Company's mill, new resources were made available for the building of four additional class rooms. These were completed in 195- under the pastorate of Harry Gardner.

For many years the Methodists worked this field single-handed. The Roman Catholic Church, whose mission on the Ahtanum had been established in 1847, was made unwelcome on the reservation while Wilbur was agent. Wilbur appealed to Grant's Indian policy for support and got it. When Wilbur left the agency was placed under non-church-related agents. With the change in government policy, the Catholic Church soon re-entered the reservation and a church was organized at White Swan. The Shakers, at first using the old Methodist buildings at the Satus and in Medicine Valley, built their own church east of White Swan in 1910. Both Father Helm and George Waters were friendly toward them, especially since they were outspoken foes of liquor and gambling. Waters often spoke in their church at the Satus. Many Methodists went into the Shaker movement, seeing nothing to keep them from being Methodists and Shakers at the same time.

Wilbur had suppressed the native Indian religions. Few dared question his right to do so. But the Drummers and Dreamers did not die out, and today the ancient rituals are being revived and practiced by many Indians. Pentecostal groups have from time to time been active in White Swan. The presence of all these groups means that White Swan has become like any other village in religiously free America.

Today the Methodist Church faces all these groups just as it does any other religious group anywhere in the world. While seeking to give full recognition to such truth as others may have, we seek to witness in freedom to the truth of Jesus Christ as we know Him, pressing on until all shall have been made perfect in truth and in love.

Today the membership is 168, of whom 82 are resident and active.

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