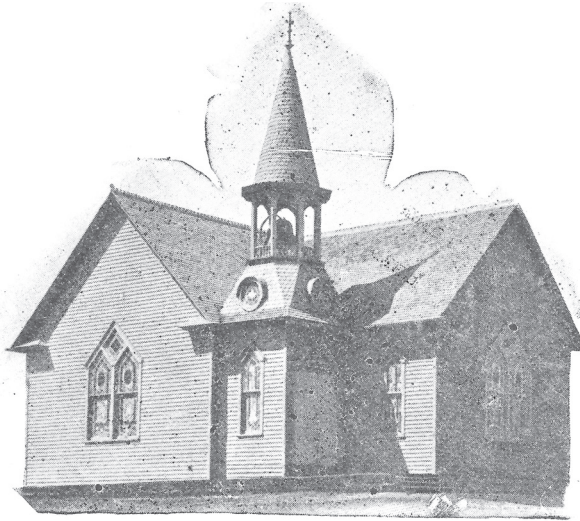


REDDING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Attending our Church's Sunday services was part and parcel of growing up. Church services and activities were woven into our weekly routine. Saturday we polished shoes under the watchful eye of Grandpa, who insisted they have a glossy shine. Dresses were crisply ironed; hair was briskly brushed and neatly styled. Coins were safely stowed away for dropping into the collection plate, and then we were on our way.

Mom said they took me to church in a market basket soon after I was born, so the habit of church-going became a lifetime one. Each of my sisters and brother made their initial visit to church in like manner.



NEW METHODIST CHURCH, REDDING, IOWA.

DEDICATED DECEMBER 24, 1905.

Church Post Card

Our church looked like many other white clapboard churches in the Midwest: tall steeple, wide welcoming entrance doors, and stained glass windows. We were proud of the window dedicated to Grandpa and Grandma Adair on the east side of the church.

Grandpa and Grandma always sat with old friends on the west side of the church. At Dad's request, we younger Adairs filled a row in the back. He knew that he easily fell asleep when sitting for a short while, and didn't want to embarrass us if or when he dozed during the service. We kept our eye on Dad, ready to nudge him if he looked too sleepy.

Grandpa was superintendent of the Sunday school for many years. Almost always he opened the session with "Let's turn to # 50, and sing "There is Sunshine in My Soul Today." He spread sunshine throughout his days. We kids joined our friends in the various classes to learn about the Bible. We also learned about Jesus as a friend and savior. The friendly warmth of those Sunday mornings and the teachings we received formed the basis of Christian living.

While Dad had always been a Methodist, Mom was brought up in a Quaker household. The influence of Mom and her quiet, private way of worship still holds. She was president of the Ladies Aid Society for many years and often led them in Bible study. We four kids joined the Epworth League with other young folks and met at Nellie Kelley's home. As well as learning Bible stories, we made items such as greeting cards, to send to the Old Folks home.

Our family attended most of the functions of the church, often hosting missionaries when they came to town. During mealtime we listened to stories about poverty and the lack of schools in the far away countries they'd served. Later, we heard their messages of God's love during the evening church service.

Bessie Ullery, a friend who grew up in Redding, was a missionary to the Navajo Indians. When she came home for a visit, her love of the Navajos was evident. She shared stories of their lives as shepherds, and of her work as their teacher. We were impressed by the beauty of the pottery, jewelry, and weavings she showed us. Because the tribe had very little income, Bessie was very thankful for the support from our church members.

Every few years, our church held nightly revival services conducted by visiting ministers. Many people attended. We especially enjoyed the singing of joyful, lively hymns and fellowshiping. During one of those services, I "went forward" to receive Christ's blessing. I still treasure the memory of warmth that enveloped me, knowing I was loved by Jesus.

We kids especially enjoyed fund raising affairs, such as the ice cream social, the fall baked bean and ham supper, and the potluck suppers. Hanging out with friends at these functions was great fun.

In June the church hosted the Strawberry Shortcake Festival. We mashed enough strawberries to fill several crocks. Meanwhile Mom and other ladies baked flaky shortcakes and whipped mounds of fresh cream. Everyone came from miles around to the town park where the men folk had set up tables and benches. Everyone enjoyed their scrumptious Strawberry Shortcake.

Later in the summer the Church Ice Cream and Cake Social was held in the town park. We joined other ice cream makers in the enjoyment of serving the ice creams and sampling each others' flavors. Mom made ours with a Junket base rather than eggs and we thought it the best. There was chocolate

syrup and strawberries for topping the ice cream, and many kinds of cakes to choose from. The evening took on the air of a holiday as families enjoyed visiting with each other and kids used the playground equipment.



Painting the Church

One summer the church was repainted. Dad and others wielded brushes to give it a new life. The women and girls spruced up the interior, polishing the pews and whatever else needed doing. The kitchen was undoubtedly filled with meal preparation and wonderful aromas, a welcome reward for the day's labors.

Members kept the church beautiful and in good repair. The kitchen was updated whenever funds were available. Outdoor landscaping was done each spring.

When we were older, we planted two linden trees as memorials to Mom and Dad. Warm memories always flood our beings whenever we return to Redding and enter our church.