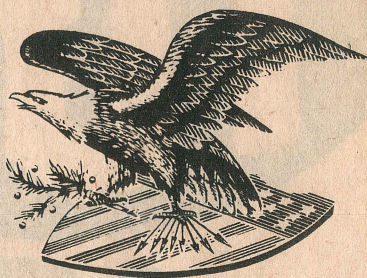


MADRID

AREA

BICENTENNIAL



1776-1976

"Remembrances of Days Gone By"

History of the Church of God

The building of the Milwaukee Railroad west of town was instrumental in the founding of the Church of God in Madrid.

It was in the summer of 1910 that some men came to work on the railroad and one man in this group was Mr. Magarell. Housing was a problem in those days. Magarell and his wife couldn't find a home, so they put up a tent on the Frank Bengston farm. This served as the couple's summer home.

Mrs. Magarell was a Church of God woman and shortly after, she started having Sunday school in their tent on Sunday afternoons.

Bengston became interested in the religion and following the Magarell's departure in the fall, he received a copy of the "Gospel Trumpet", a Church of God paper.

The name of a minister, Rev. Foresbury of St. Paul Park, Minn. appeared in the paper and Bengston began corresponding with him. Later, Rev. Foresbury visited the Bengstons and held a meeting in their home.

After the visit, the Bengstons started holding Sunday School in their home for the neighborhood children. The group continued to grow and finally they were permitted to meet in the Elk Rapids school.

This was just the beginning for others became interested in this work too. Prayer meetings began to be held in the homes of people such as Mr. and Mrs. Albert Fjaden; Mrs. Frieda Andersen and family; Mr. and Mrs. Finley Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. John Hedlund and Mrs. Currier.

About a year later, Mr. Fjaden offered to give a piece of land on which to build a church. Contributions came from Mr. Hedlund and William Lehman and

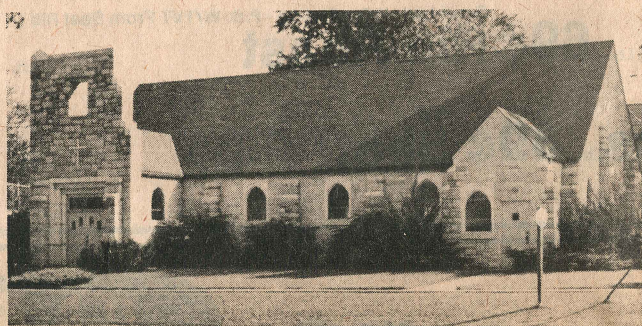
following much prayer and planning, the church building was begun.

It was built in 1912 on east First Street. Constructed of hollow tile covered with cement stucco, the auditorium seated approximately 80 people.

The church did not have a regular pastor at first, but George Green, a pastor from Cooper came once a month to hold services for the group. Green eventually moved to Madrid and became the first regular pastor.

Interest in the church continued growing and soon Church of God state camp meetings began to be held here. The first session was held in 1916 and lasted 10 days.

Down through the years, ideas of a new church building were discussed. The members felt a larger building and more adequate Sunday school rooms were needed.



This is the present Church of God building as it looks today. The building was begun in 1950 with the placing of the corner stone and was completed in 1952. Rev. Gleason Hackett is the present pastor.

The cornerstone for the new building was laid in the summer of 1950 with the stone structure completed two years later. Dedication of the new building was on Easter Sunday of 1952 while Rev. Hugh Bishop was pastor.

Around 1956, during the pastorship of Rev. Dean Flora, 80 acres of land was purchased three miles north and two miles west of town. This became the Church of God campgrounds, an area to get together for spiritual togetherness and growth.

Pastors who have manned the pulpit at the Church of God include: George Green, Elmer Lawson, Emil Krevtz, William Moore, R. A. Owens, R. V. Willey, Edgar A. Thompson, A. H. Claxton, W. R. Hutchings, Henry Cole, C. A. Longton, Hugh Bishop, Wilbert Nelson, Dean Flora, Philip Drake, Myron Myers, S. E. Ritchhart, Robert Crupper, Wilbur King and Gleason Hackett.

Rev. Gleason Hackett is the present pastor. He is a recent graduate of Gulf Coast Bible College and was officially ordained two weeks ago.

History of Hopkins Grove Church

One of the older churches in the Madrid area is the Hopkins Grove Church (formerly the Evangelical United Brethren) which dates back to 1851.

At this time, the Mexican War was going on and western home hunters were settling in the Big Creek and Big Bend region of northwest Polk and northeast Dallas County. It was these people that gave the church its beginning.

In 1849, John DeMoss, a United Brethren preacher, came into the settlement preaching to whoever would listen. Two other preachers, Josiah Hopkins and A. Pierce had already settled there.

From there it was arranged to hold union camp meetings in the Hopkins Timber, now called Hopkins Grove. It was this tiny camp meeting that eventually grew into the present Hopkins Grove United Methodist Church.

These early settlers set about to build a house of worship and after cutting trees, clearing land and making clapboards, a house was completed which served as church and school until it was supplanted by a more modern frame schoolhouse, built in the early 1860's. Hopkins gave a deed of land for the church and nearby cemetery.

The Civil War almost led to the extinction of this tiny country church. Many of the early settlers went off to fight in the mid-1860 battle, leaving the membership at an all time low.

But in January 1866, a quarterly meeting was held in the schoolhouse. A revival followed the meeting and it was here that the idea for a new frame church house was presented and approved. Warren Packard, then Sunday school superintendent, donated the land for the new building.

Methodist people expressed a desire to share the church, or build a union church. But after much consideration, it was decided to keep it a U.B. church and allow the Methodists to use the church at any and all times when U.B. appointments were not disturbed. This practice continued until 1876.

The first services in this building were held on August 30, 31 and September 1 in 1866.

The church became a part of a larger preaching circuit back in the late 1870's. One minister served between four to six churches on this route. This practice continued until 1937 when it was finally discontinued.

The first church remained for almost 38 years, but in March of 1904, it was decided to build a new church at the cost of \$2500. Contractor for the new building was John Nordgren.

It was dedicated on Sept. 4, 1904, with Rev. W. F. Cronk delivering the first sermon.

In its 124 year history the church has had almost 60 pastors with Rev. David Weible the present pastor.



The Hopkins Grove United Methodist Church is shown above. The church is 124 years old and this building was constructed in 1904. Rev. David Weible is the present pastor.

Tent meetings were an important part in the life of this church back in the early 1950's. Many probably recall the large tent situated one-half mile north of the church, on land belonging to Cliff Evans. The meetings were held in July and lasted approximately three weeks. A baptismal service in the Des Moines River climaxed the annual event.

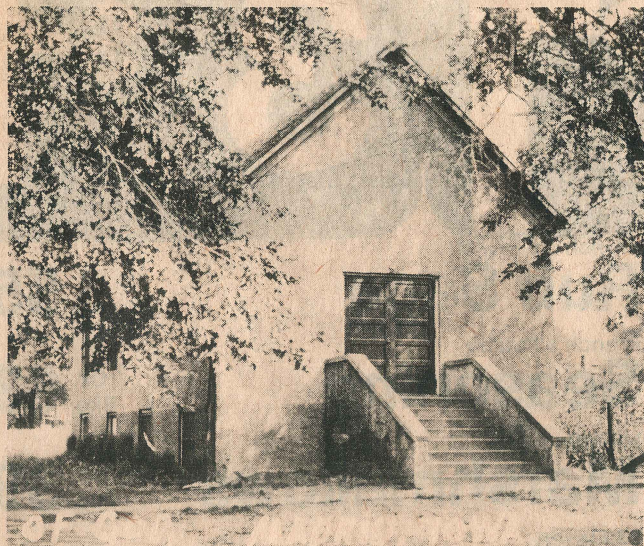
The church continued to have a U.B. affiliation until 1968, when it merged with the United Methodist denomination.

This church, located about six miles south of Madrid, like so many others in this area, has history dating back to the early 19th century, making it one of the few remaining historical landmarks in the area.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This completes the series of stories concerning the churches in our immediate area.

However, the Register-News was informed the Church of Christ desired not to have any history published at this time of their church.



This photo shows the original Church of God building built back in 1912. It was constructed on east First Street and is now the worship center for the Church of Christ.