

Churches

Rhodes United Methodist Church

The present Rhodes United Methodist Church consists of the Methodist Protestant Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The following information is taken from histories prepared for services dedicating the two combined buildings May 23, 1943.

Methodist Protestant Church by Lelia Rhodes

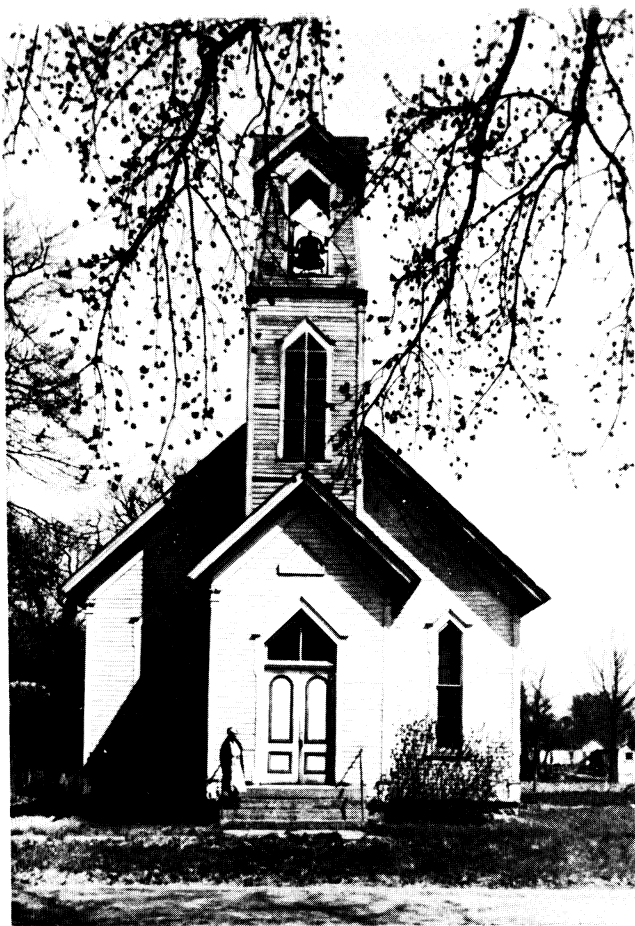
From dates given by pioneers, we place the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church here in the year 1858. This was one of the first churches in our part of the county, and it was joined in early days with a group in State Center.

Minutes of a meeting, dated March 14, 1882, state, "It was resolved by those present to build a Methodist Protestant Church, and by motion, Rev. F.D. Kreamer was instructed to solicit subscriptions for said church, and to represent that we will build the best church possible for the money received for that purpose without incurring debts that cannot be met when church is completed." The church was started in 1882 and finished in 1883. The parsonage was the present Charles Jackson home.

My mother told the story that before a minister lived there, people had to have combined funerals. By that, is meant that when an itinerate minister visited the



Rhodes Methodist Church in 1943.



Methodist Protestant Church

community, services were held for any who had passed on while no pastor was at hand. It was wondered whether this off-the scene minister always kept his remarks appropriate. It seems possible that he might have mixed his eulogies, and sorrowing relatives might have been startled by hearing of qualities attributed to loved ones quite foreign to their nature.

In point of residence here, the oldest person known to your author was Mrs. Clarinda Allen. She used to relate that "Grandpa Woolston" of Keakin, Illinois made a visit here when the country was still very thinly settled. He was a minister, although probably never a pastor here. He came this time to see his children, among whom was Harriet Culver. She, with her husband and family, was living in a cabin occupied partly by Mrs. and Mrs. Allen and their children. Grandpa consented to preach on Sunday.

Early pastors were Purvis, Remsburg and Bolton. Later came Smay, Selby, Scott, Kirkpatrick, Kreamer and Skull. Others were McCorkle, Striker, Myers, Huddleston, Betz, Remington, Martin, McCampbell, Plumb, Wilkinson, Spurlock, Gharrett, Weaver, C.J. Nutt, E.K. Parrott, J.N. Waterman, Andy James and C.R. Green, under whose direction the two churches were merged.

Methodist Episcopal Church by Louella Watson

The first account of church services held on this church site was related by our former townsman, C.R. Capron, who as a small boy moved with his parents to this community in 1866. He recalls attending church and Sunday School in the school house which was a frame building located where the Fred Cheville home now stands.

Sometime in the early 70's this building was moved to its present site where it is known as the Lester Walker place. A new and larger school building was erected on the lot made vacant. This building also served for church and Sunday School services. When the original part of our present brick school building was completed in 1883 and classes moved to it, the old building was offered for sale. After a few months a group of citizens formed a class and organized a Methodist Episcopal Church. They purchased the old school building, moved it to its present site and remodeled it for church services. The work was done by local carpenters and craftsmen, much of the labor being donated.

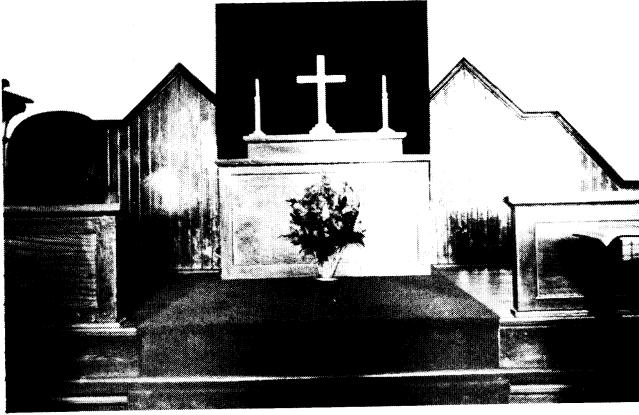
Rev. James B. Gray, known to most of the community as Grandpa Gray, served as minister during the first months. His son, J.S. Gray, was the first superintendent of the Sunday School. The first hired minister was Rev. W. Bunch.

Other ministers were Beatty, Triem, MacCormac, Spry, Goodell, Witzigman, Foster, Brackett, Lease, Warren, Metcalf, Parks, Coover, Thompson, Hill, Faris, Casper, E.H. Shuey, Carl Crouse, Bearse, Kildow, Cotchell, Galen Gilbert, Lloyd Holm and in 1943 Rev. W.H. Artman. (Following these since the dedication were Hauser, Whiteside, Arnold, D. Artman, Wilder, Nancy Nichols.)



Methodist Episcopal Church

The church grew and prospered for many years, exerting a worthwhile influence in the community. Improvements were made from time to time, a new parsonage was built, a bell was obtained, a set of pulpit chairs was donated by the State Center church and the Ladies Aid, ever active and willing, helped in providing such things as financial aid, a carpet for the rostrum, wallpaper and paint, curtains, etc.



The Altar in 1942 after the joining of the two Churches.

Time and economic conditions however, brought changes in both churches. Congregations grew smaller and financial problems increased until the United Conference at Kansas City in 1939 voted the union of all Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal Churches. In May 1942 the M.P. church building was moved three and one-half blocks south and east, and joined with the M.E. church building. The M.P. building is the present sanctuary and the M.E. building is being used for Sunday School classes and overflow audiences. The two buildings are connected by a large roll-up door. Attendance nowadays is comparable to other churches the same size, the United Methodist women and choir are active. Rev. Frank H. Schultz is the present minister, serving both Rhodes and Melbourne churches.

Submitted by
Louise Hix



Mildred Bohnsack and Pearl Baker, two of Rhodes prominent young ladies, evidently believing that "Cleanliness was next to Godliness," provided themselves with a bar of Bon Ami and the necessary cleaning clothes one day and proceeded to clean up the basin of the drinking fountain. It was a much needed sanitary precaution, according to the Public Health.

Three cheers and a tiger for these young ladies.

Universalist Church

A Universalist Society flourished at Edenville for a number of years. Just when this society was organized is not now known.

Among the early ministers of this church were Rev. Erasmus Manford and Rev. A.C. Edmonds, in 1866. Rev. Manford was a famous Universalist circuit rider. Rev. Edmonds, who preached for the church at Newton, Iowa, also had charge of the churches at Clyde and Edenville.

The society was never fellowshipped and 1882 marked its first and possibly only appearance at the State Convention. No mention of the church has been found after February 28, 1883.



Rev. C.R. Rogers, of Newton, Iowa will fill the Universalist appointment in Rhodes' hall on Sunday, March 4, at 3 p.m.

Faith Chapel

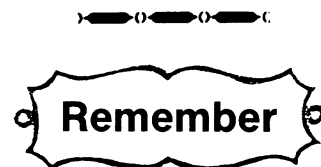
The Faith Chapel was dedicated August 30, 1964. The building was purchased from a Pentocostal group which had discontinued having church services. The families of Harold Howell and Landon Charles under the direction of the Brethren in Christ Church sought to establish an Evangelistic ministry in this community.

John Hoos served as paster from May 1, 1966 until June of 1967. Several student pastors from Venard College, University Park, Iowa also supplied the pulpit. W. Edward Richeson served as pastor from September of 1967 until July of 1969. His wife Deanna taught grade school at Melbourne for the 1968-1969 year.

A Sunday School, mid-week service and two services on Sunday were held each week. Several families of the area attended. Many lives were enriched by the ministry at the Faith Chapel.

Due to the lack of a pastor, the Faith Chapel was forced to discontinue church services in 1969.

Submitted by
Charlotte Howell



When a passenger went for an airplane ride, he wore goggles and a leather helmet just like the pilot.



St. Joseph Catholic Church

St. Joseph Catholic Church

Catholicity had its beginning in Rhodes as early as 1860, when they were a mission of Haverhill, Iowa. Mass was said in the Goodman, Bruenig and Blink homes. Rev. Brommenskenkle and Rev. Portz were among the first priests to offer Mass in the Rhodes territory until the year 1879. Then Rev. Bernard A. Schulte was the pastor.

The first and only frame structure was built in 1886. On November 1, 1886 the church was dedicated to serve the people of Edenville. It was dedicated by Rev. F.J. Brune and Rev. B.A. Schulte, the preceding pastor gave the dedicatory sermon. Rev. Brune came in those days from Haverhill and Peter Neuroth of Haverhill served mass.

Charles Richards, a former parishioner was the first baptism. Mrs. Thomas Malloy was also among the first persons to be baptized in the church.

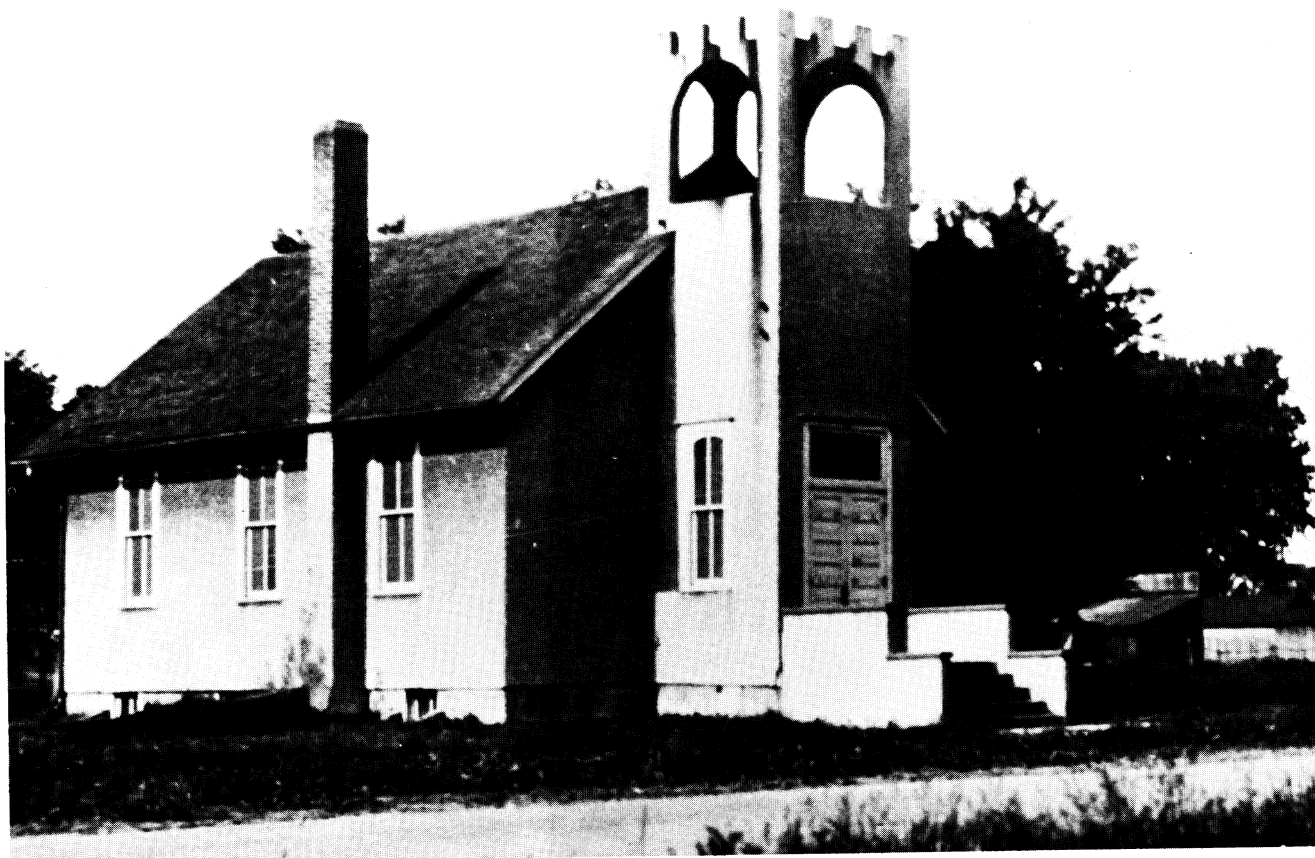
The pastors to follow were: During the years 1886 to 1893, Rev. Matthew Murphy and later Rev. John McNamara. In June of 1893, Rev. Daniel M. Gorman stayed til fall of 1894, Rev. James McKeagen then 1895, Rev. Patrick M. Loughname. Rev. John Friedmann (1904-1908) drove the best team of horses in town. During the six year pastorate of Rev. Hugh Roney

(1909-1915) 69 baptisms are recorded and there were 125 paying members. Rev. Nicholas J. Lentz (1915-1923), Rev. Mathias J. Manternach (1923-1928), Rev. John J. Buznski (1928-1934), Rev. Louis V. McDonough (1934-1944), Rev. D.M. O'Leary (1944-1944), Rev. F.L. Wolfe (1944-1944), Rev. Arthur J. Tobin (1944-1945), Rev. Gerald V. Steiert (1945-1950), Rev. Ronald J. Axen (1950-1956), Rev. Francis D. Heimerman (1956-1966) and Rev. Matthew Beelner (1966-1969).

The last Mass in the Rhodes St. Joseph's Church was May 18, 1969, when six children received their First Communion. A breakfast was served at the Rhodes Catholic Hall for these children and their parents. The parish consisted of 41 families including 98 children. The parishioners lived in a 14 mile radius of Rhodes.

Sale of the contents was held on September 17, 1974. The church building and grounds were sold on October 7, 1974 to the Elder Apartments. By April of 1975 the building was completely down.

*Submitted by
Thelma Guckert and Alice Goodman*



Latter Day Saints Church

Rhodes Latter Day Saints Church

The first record we have of the Rhodes Branch dates back to 1868 when a missionary G.E. Deuel came to Central Iowa to hold meetings. At that time it was known as the Independence branch. The Independence branch, Newton branch, and the Pleasant Grove branch in Polk County constituted the Des Moines district at that time.

In 1868, Elder Deuel, a missionary representing the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was assigned to labor in Central Iowa by the General Conference of the Church. He went to Newton in Jasper County and began preaching. While talking on the street, a neighbor of Brothers' Nirk and Smith from Rhodes, listened to him a few minutes and extended him an invitation to preach that form of doctrine in their neighborhood. Elder Deuel accepted and began to labor there. James Smith, before mentioned, attended the first preaching service and was so pleased that he invited Nirk to go and hear the new doctrine. Mr. Nirk scorned the idea because he thought that Brother Deuel was a representative of the

Utah Church. Not until Brother Deuel had made a second trip to the vicinity was Mr. Nirk persuaded to go hear him.

On the 14th of January 1868, Brother W.C. Nirk and his wife Anne, Brother James Smith and his wife Rachel, were baptized.

Five days after Brother Nirk was baptized he was ordained an Elder by Brother Deuel. He surprised his neighbors and friends with his preaching and continued to work for the Church until his death.

A branch was soon organized and was known as the Independence Branch of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Elder Nirk was chosen to preside over the young branch.

According to the records, sometime in the 1880's the branch was moved from Independence Township south of Eden Township, to the town of Edenville where the White brothers had a store. Meetings were held in the back room of the store when the weather permitted and held in the homes of the Saints during cold weather. The homes of J.W. Dumbauld, Siste

...gates and others were opened at that time. During this time Brother D.C. White was President of the Branch while Brother Nirk was President of the Des Moines District. After serving as District President a few terms in the early seventies Brother Nirk resigned and Brother I.N. White served in that capacity until he moved from the Branch and District in 1885. Elders Nirk and White labored together over the territory in the District building up several branches. After Brother White left, Brother Nirk was again appointed as District President.

(taken from Autumn Leaves - October 1906)

Brother Nirk continued to work in the Branch and District until his death. Then Brother C.M. Richeson who had been baptised by J.B. Wildermuth in 1900 and ordained by Brother J.F. Mintun, June 18, 1912, was elected Branch President following his ordination. For awhile Sister Mattie Hughes was away and after her return the Sunday School was again organized.

In 1914 a lot was purchased on which to build a church, and on June 16, 1915 it was voted to buy the Prairie Ridge Schoolhouse which was to be moved to the Church lot. On July 4, 1915 the Saints met at the schoolhouse for a picnic and all worked at taking the building down and hauling it into town. Even the children helped by pulling nails and doing the little jobs that were small enough for them to do. Work on the building of the church began right away. The men of the branch did most of the work with the help of a carpenter, Brother Frank Anway. Highway 64 now goes over the spot where the schoolhouse stood.

In March 1916, Brother V.G. Lents and his wife moved to Rhodes and in July 1917 a son, Donald Victor was born to them. Brother Richeson said that to his knowledge, Donald was the only member of the Branch that was blessed, baptised, confirmed and ordained, while still a member of the Branch.

On December 30, 1917, the church was dedicated at 11 a.m. The dedicatorial sermon was by Brother Orman Salisbury then District President and the dedicatorial prayer was by Brother Roy Epperson. Brother C.L. Nirk, son of Brother W.C. Nirk was in charge of the services. An anthem was rendered by a choir of twenty voices under the direction of the music director.

During all these years Brother C.M. Richeson was President of the Branch until his death in March of 1952. From 1928 to 1930 Brother E.G. Beye was in office. While he was pastor, many times when the roads were bad "we didn't have roads then like we do today," Brother Richeson would walk from his farm four miles to town to minister to the Saints that were unable to get out. After Brother C.M. Richeson's death, Brother V.G. Lents was elected pastor. In 1922 there were 129 members enrolled, the largest enrollment on the records that we have. From the time the branch was first organized, it had its ups and downs, such as the time Brother Richeson's family and Pearl Anway were the only ones that attended, and again when he and his wife, Sister Cheville and Sister Ethel Luig would be

the only ones at church. It was built up again and several were added to the church, through Brother C.M. Richeson's faithfulness.

On September 1, 1954 a group of the members that belonged to the Rhodes Branch, but lived in Marshalltown, organized a group meeting there and held Sunday School and Church ever Sunday. The Rhodes Church was closed in 1964.

*Submitted by
Helen Anthony Ducommun*

Latter Day Saints Church

Olden Days — August 27, 1896

Seven Saints were baptized at the reservoir Sunday afternoon. Rev. S.T. Kim officiating.



The town of Rhodes was a town you loved to grow up in. It had fairs, horse racing, baseball games, school picnics, 4th of July parades and fireworks at the school grounds. There were grocery stores; Cliff and Gladys Sween, with Nina Baker helping them; Luther Hix always had a grocery store, and Keith Mallicoat had a Jack Spratt store. Mr. Good ran the feed store, Art Roberts was Postmaster and Leila Rhodes the clerk, Wayne Hildreth had chickens and eggs. Smith's drugstore, a shoe repair by Elzia DeVault. Also a lumber yard, ran by Ollie Luttiken, Otto Sanders, Barber Shop. Kate Filier had the hotel, two oil stations and Hazel Murray was the telephone operator. Dr. Noble was the doctor, Earl and Iva Snowgren ran the hardware store, Patty Francis fixed violins and had a miniature golf course in his yard, three churches, two restaurants, (Klatt's and Malecheck's), Ray Murray had a blacksmith shop, and Pete and Lila Crawford had the milk route.

There were band concerts every Saturday night. In the summer we had shows between Klatt's cafe and the opera house. In the winter we had shows, basketball games, school plays, dances and parties at the Opera House, Saturday night was the time to get grocery's and haircuts. Halloween you'd always find the outhouse on the school yard with wagons and other things on Main Street.

The trains kept the town going too, Uncle Claude Sander's would fill the engines with water, during the war, you'd go down to the depot to see the troops going thru.

Rhodes, was a thriving town and I'd love to see the town booming again. My memories of Rhodes are precious to me, as a child, as well as a grown-up. It's still home. Those were the good old days.