

More than a Century of Worship and Service

United Brethren in Christ 1904 - 1946

Evangelical United Brethren 1946 - 1968

United Methodist 1968 – present

For more than a hundred years a church building has been standing on the corner of Duff Avenue and Baker Avenue, a symbol of the living presence of Jesus Christ in our midst. This building is our church home, be we, the people of Duff Street United Methodist Church -- old and young -- are the church, the Body of Christ. Our head is Jesus Christ, the founder and foundation of the Universal Church.

In 1904, thirteen men and women had a vision to build this church. We continue to carry that vision forward into the future. We pass on the heritage give to us by our predecessors and use it to inspire new visions in our children and youth so that they will lead us even closer to Christian perfection during the next 100 years.

In the Beginning... In the early years of the 20th Century, a fast-growing community known as the Stealey Addition to Clarksburg felt a need and had a vision. Believing that theirs was a God-inspired vision, they immediately went to work to do something about it. On November 8, 1904, a group of thirteen men and women met at the home of C.W. Burnside, 302 Milford Street, for the purpose of organizing a class of The United Brethren in Christ. At this historical meeting, the decision was made to build a church -- the first one in Stealey.

The Reverend S. Shanabarger, pastor of First United Brethern Church of Clarksburg (now known as the Calvary United Methodist Church, Adamston) called the meeting to order. Those in the newly organized class were Martha J. Post, John B. Post, W.C. Burnside, Ada M. Burnside, Guy H. Burnside, Frona Stutler, Ira F. Lawman, Dulcie Lawman, D. H. Taylor, R. E. Taylor, W. M. Scott, and E. R. Burnside. Thirteen persons. Unlucky number? Not in God's eyes!

At this meeting the following officers were elected: Glass Leader – W.C. Burnside, Sunday School Superintendent – I. F. Lawman, Steward – D. H. Taylor, and President of the Young People's Christian

Union – W. M. Scott. A Building Committee was appointed consisting of W. C. Burnside, D. H. Taylor, John B. Post, J. L. Stealey, and W. M. Scott. The committee was empowered by S. A. Shanabarger to "Build a church by the cheapest and best method -- either by contract or by day labor."

On November 21, 1904, the committee met and staked off the foundation of the church. The measurements were 30 feet in width by 45 feet in length. The contract for the building was awarded to I.F. Lawman and Company for \$1,497. The completed cost of the church was around \$3,000. This entire amount was raised with only \$600. in subscriptions.

On July 9, 1905, only eight months after the meeting of those thirteen men and women, the little wooden church on the corner of Duff and Baker was dedicated by the Reverend W. M. Weekley.

In April, 1906, the Board of Trustees decided to buy the lot adjoining the church, and in April 1911. I. F. Lawman was appointed to draft plans for a parsonage to be built on this lot.

The first church building served the people of the community for about ten years, but the congregation grew so rapidly that it was not long before a larger structure was needed. The Reverend W. M. Slaughter, the pastor at that time, guided the congregation in realizing this need and together they witnessed the reality of their dreams when in June of 1915 workmen began removing the old church. By the first of July of that year, excavating was begun for the building of the new structure.

But where would the people meet while awaiting the completion of their new building? A tabernacle (a temporary meeting place) was built on Stealey Avenue where services were conducted. We do not have any details on how or from what the tabernacle was constructed. However, it must not have been all that sturdy because when winter "set in," more comfortable quarters had to be found. Services were then moved to the F.I. Day building on Milford Street.

On May 16, 1916, the new church building was dedicated by Bishop William M. Weekley. The final cost of the project was \$26,500. Church membership at the time of dedication was 272. In August of 1916, Mr. I.F. Lawman, Sunday School Superintendent, reported an average attendance in Sunday School of 225 for the month of July.

For the first time in the church's history we were a station church, having previously been partnered with First United Brethren Church of Clarksburg. On July 16, 1916, a special meeting was called where, according to the minutes of the meeting. "Mr. F. I. Day introduced a resolution as follows: Resolved: That we the members of Duff Street U. B. Church desire said church to be made a station, alone, at the annual conference which convenes here September 6th, 1916 as the conditions of said church is such now as demand it. Resolution was voted on and adopted."

Then, in September 1916, the Official Board set the pastor's salary for the year at \$960. And the Benevolent Budget at \$120. They estimated that the rest of the church expense for the year would amount to \$225.

Thirty years later, in 1946, with the Reverend Clarence D. Edman as pastor, church membership had grown to 613, Sunday School enrollment was 575 with an average attendance of 290.

Christian Education at Duff Street Church

Through the years, Duff Street Church has realized the importance of Christian education in the lives of its members and has made changes in its facilities, staff, and programs to ensure the well-being of this ministry.

When a new parsonage was completed in the mid-1950's, the old parsonage was converted into an educational building. During the early 1960's, the church realized the need for additional educational space and under the leadership of the pastor, the Reverend Eugene M. Garlow, purchased the Gregory property.

As we moved into the 1970s and the need for upgrading the facilities for educational purposes became more critical, the Administrative Board on October 3, 1972, voted to build a new educational building. On May 27, 1973, a building committee was appointed consisting of Chairman, Q. V. Baker, Jr., Alice Bodenheimer, Glenn Capehart, Jack Glover, F. R. (Hance) Moffett, Ted H. Tennant, Edwin Tutwiler, J. W. Wamsley, and Ruth Williams.

The committee began the awesome task of fulfilling the congregation's dream of a new educational building. The firm of L.D. Schmidth and Son was contracted as the architect, and on August 10, 1976, Central General, Inc. was contracted to construct the unit.

One important stage of the building was the financial campaign chaired by Robert Marks and directed by D. Maurice L. Winn. The spirit generated by the financial campaign was echoed throughout the membership with everyone remembering the words of Glenn Capehart, "You can't out give the Lord." The groundbreaking service was held October 3, 1976, and the building was completed and ready for occupancy on October 30, 1977. The completed cost of the educational building was \$230,000.

Eight years later to the day, on October 30, 1985, the church celebrated our 80th Anniversary and held the Dedication Service of the Educational Building with the "note burning" – debt free! The service was conducted by the Reverend Richard L. Wright, Buckhannon District Superintendent and the Reverend Steven E. Dorsey, pastor.

Even then, God was not finished with Duff Street Church. New programs were developing, and caring ministries and teaching ministries were growing both in number and in spirit. The congregation and its Christian outreach were already exceeding the room provided by our existing facilities.

In 1984 under the leadership of the Reverend Steven E. Dorsey, the church had purchased the McIntyre property at 401 Stealey Avenue. This new step of faith was made possible by a special financial gift given specifically for this purchase.

Later on, a Building Committee was appointed by the Reverend Timothy L. Bias with Robert Marks and Dan Wheeler as co-chairmen. Plans were made for a pre-engineered metal building to be constructed on the site using P. C. Yezbak, Inc. of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, as our general contractor. The facility would include a social hall/gymnasium, kitchen, classrooms, a ground level entrance, and an elevator for total accessibility for all persons. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on August 19, 1992, with leadership by the Reverend John R. Campbell, Buckhannon District Superintendent and the Reverend Timothy L. Bias, pastor.

It takes an entire church to bring to reality a dream as big as the one the people of Duff Street Church were dreaming at this point in time and so a special campaign was begun to help build this dream. From September 20 through October 23, 1992, the church celebrated its "Building a New Foundation for Service" campaign co-chaired by Q.V. Baker and James Denny under the guidance of Stewardship Director, the Reverend John Henry Shadburn. This campaign helped to raise the initial monies to cover the cost of constructing and equipping the new building -- \$505,000. This building, which we now call our Multi-Ministries Building, was consecrated on April 18, 1993, with the Reverend John R. Campbell, the Reverend Timothy L. Bias, and Bishop S. Clifton Ives presiding.

Today -- The building on the corner of Duff and Baker Avenues has serious structural issues and is considered unsafe. Duff Street has been having worship in the Multi-Ministries Building since July 2009. The building will be demolished in the next few months, but DUFF STREET CHURCH IS STILL HERE. We have two worship services each Sunday and continue in ministry to LOVE GOD, LOVE OTHERS and SERVE THE WORLD.

A New Beginning -- Stay tuned for the rest of the story...

*Information is from our Centennial Celebration brochure which was compiled and written by Jetta C. Baker and Reverend Joyce Day, Minister of Discipleship in 2004.
