

Lost Creek Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery granted the request, but great controversy ensued over the church properties.

Matters came to a head in 1879 when a violent storm wrecked the roof of the old brick church here in Mifflintown. The congregation relocated its place of worship first to the courthouse and then to a temporary structure called "the Chapel" located on Washington Avenue. We grew in numbers and developed plans to purchase this piece of property at Third and Lemon for the construction of a new and handsome place of worship.

Some things never seem to change. The initial meeting of the congregation on building authorized the Trustees to commit to a new building costing less than \$10,000. But when the last piece of work was completed the total cost exceeded \$17,000. One of the leaders moving the congregation ahead with the new building was Ezra Parker, President of the Board of Trustees. Ezra and his brother, Elder E. Southard Parker were most generous in contributing to the cost of the new building. Ezra's sudden death only a couple of months before the building was completed was a great loss to the congregation.

The contractor for the building was James S. Shollar of Blair County with a final bid of \$12,376. The architects were Pursell and Fry of Philadelphia.

A century ago we raised local expenses and the pastor salary quite differently from our stewardship campaigns of today. Annual pew rentals covered those local expenses. As you look around the sanctuary today you can see the original porcelain markers on the ends of each pew. The pews varied in the number of people each would hold and in location to both the pulpit and the heating grates! The trustees set a yearly rental for each pew ranging between two and forty dollars. On the Friday before the dedication the sheriff auctioned off the pews for additional premiums to help defray the cost of the building. For each pew the highest bidder was given that pew or any other pew not yet sold! John S. Graybill paid the highest premium of sixty dollars. Every pew was sold for a premium and the total raised to finance the new building was \$1550. In addition, the chapel with its pews was sold for \$222 to the local G.A.R. Post.

The events surrounding the dedication of the new building have left their imprints on the life of the congregation. On the day of dedication the congregation was still approximately \$2400 short to pay for their new building. The idea of a long-term loan or mortgage was unthinkable. On the day of dedication we worshiped three times, morning, afternoon and evening. The pastor, L. Y. Hayes, had the gift for raising funds. After the morning service "Rev. Hayes presented the question of the

extinguishment of the church debt." In the course of some thirty minutes Rev. Hayes garnered additional pledges to cover the total cost of the new building.

We also remember fondly the afternoon ecumenical service. The Methodist and Lutheran worshippers pledged twenty-five dollars to purchase a communion table for the new church. That table is still in use at Westminster and today holds our cross and crèche.

According to the original specifications "the building [was] to be heated by two wrought iron furnaces, built in brick work [and] capable of heating the whole building at once to 70 degrees above when the thermometer is 30 degrees below zero." Several iron grates were set into the floor for this purpose. These have been removed and replaced with the steam radiators. However, you can still find the various openings for the grates in the unfinished basement.

If you could visit the unfinished basement beneath the sanctuary you would see the twelve by three inch floor joists, some of which span over seventeen feet. These joists in turn rest on nine by twelve inch timbers set on stone pilings.

The roof of the sanctuary is upheld by the two cast iron pillars that are directly embedded in large stone pilings. In the center of the ceiling are four summer ventilation doors. The doors are operated by long ropes and a series of pulleys in the attic above the Sunday School rooms.

The framing for the windows is the best white pine and the windowsills are of yellow pine. "The best hard oil finish" was used to seal this pine wood. Wood indeed darkens with age! All the exterior windows except the basement were to be "glazed with stained glass, diamond panes in body of work of plain roll Cathedral glass with an ornamental border of bright colors, the tops to be ornamentally decorated to cost 60 cents per square foot in the sanctuary and 40 cents for the chapel [fellowship hall]!"

Since the south memorial window consists of 185 square feet of glass, the congregation was credited with \$111 on the total bid price for the church. However, since the Trustees did not notify the builder in a timely manner about the memorial window, the builder received 25 dollars for his expense!

A local newspaper had this comment on our leaded large south window: "A magnificent and most beautiful Memorial window has been placed in the South end of the church by Mr. B.H. Warner, Esq. of Washington City [D.C.] in memory of his wife who was a sister of Ezra D. and E.S. [Southard] Parker and before her