

R.J. Van Valkenberg	1871
F.C. Millington	1871-1872
C.E. Cline	1872-1873
C.J. Milnes	1873-1875
J.F. Coffman	1875-1876
H.L. Beardsley	1877-1888
L.J. Hall	1878-1880
T.J. Musgrove	1880-1882
J.F. White	1882-1884
A.C. Peck	1884-1886
T.A. Brooks	1886
J.R. Madison	1886-1887
J.A. Long	1887-1888
E.J. Wilcox	1888-1890
H.B. Cook	1890-1891
C.H. Koyl	1891-1896
D.B. Vosseler	1896-1898
A.A. Johnson	1898-1900
H.M. Mayo	1900-1905
A.L. Chase	1905-1908
J.F. Porter	1908-1910
C.A. Rowand	1910-1911
A.J. Waller	1911-1915
F.J. Krueger	1915-1917
W.D. Waller	1917-1922
O.K. Maynard	1922-1924
R.S. Dum	1924-1927
FR. Hollenbeck	1927-1934
P.E. Snider	1934-1937
B.H. Christner	1937-1941
M.L. Jackson	1942-1946
C.R. Kinsley	1946-1947
G.S. Upton	1947-1953
D.J. Grooters	1953-1962
K. Rice	1962-1966
B.G. Martin	1966-1972
B. Kimbrough	1972-1986
K. Watson	1986-1994
G. Smythe	1994-Current

1871: Longmont Methodist Episcopal Church was incorporated on August 19
 1872: Construction of building at a location south of Third Avenue, on Main Street

1883: Second building dedicated on May 27. Now the Ahlberg Funeral Chapel.

And every day in the Temple and in people's homes they continued to teach and preach the Good News about Jesus the Messiah.
Acts 5:42

1903: Third church dedicated at 4th and Terry

1924: Fellowship Hall added to church at 4th and Terry

1946: Sanctuary remodeled and new pipe organ installed

1959: Present church building dedicated

1971: 100th anniversary celebration

1996: 125th anniversary, Longmont First United Methodist Church

First United Methodist Church

1871-1996

Honor the past
 Inspire the future

125 Years Of Service To The Longmont Community

First United Methodist Church
125th Anniversary Committee

Bea Malchow, Chairman

Fae Burgess

Mitch Burgess

Rev. Don Grooters

Nadine Hill

Rex Hill

Esther Lutz

Gene O'Donnell

Beverly Peterson

Ray Potter

Becky Schol

Rev. Gran Smythe

Shirley Thompson

Ann Yoder

Editor's Note: Completion of this memento hinged on the efforts of two people: Bea Malchow and Bill Peterson. We are deeply appreciative of Bea's painstaking search for accurate historical information, and Bill's patience and generous gift of talent and labor in design and production.

125th Anniversary Logo designed by Roger Hinz



Rev. Don Grooters
Senior Pastor 1953-62
Pastor Emeritus 1996

Among the many anecdotes that I could share, regarding the relocation and building of the present United Methodist Church building, is one that stands very vividly in my memory.

In 1957, after the congregation officially voted to relocate "way out beyond the city limits," the oldest member of the Board of Trustees submitted his resignation from that Board. He had built his home just one-and-a-half blocks from the church, and stated that he was sure there would eventually be another church at the former location, and he would be able to continue walking "to church."

His resignation was accepted with "loving regret," however with the assurance that transportation would be provided to the new location. This suggestion was declined.

During the construction period, we became aware of a particular car going by every so often. Later on, here was Scott Longstreth walking around the area, inspecting the foundations, early construction, and later developments.

To make a long story shorter, *Who would you guess was the very first Family officially seated at the first worship service?* Yes! It was the Scott Longstreth family!

This has been the level of cooperation, commitment and support throughout all these years in this church.

(Permission to share granted by daughter, Florentine Brennan.)



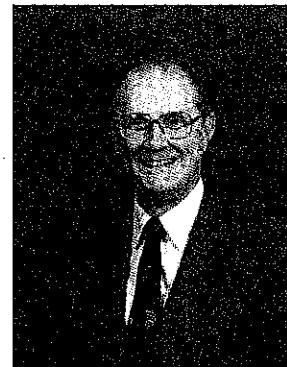
Rev. Billie Martin
Senior Pastor 1966-72

There were many outstanding events that happened during our ministry in Longmont United Methodist Church. I will mention only three.

The decision to have a 9:30 Sunday morning service, in addition to the traditional 11:00 service, played a major role in our church's history. This service was to be very informal, offering the congregation an opportunity to respond to the sermon. I would take the microphone and walk up the aisle to receive questions and comments. The 9:30 service was so successful that participation soon eclipsed that of the original 11:00 worship. It was a real joy to be a part of that flourishing new experience!

Secondly, I recall the great joy for our entire congregation upon the occasion of retiring the church's mortgage. Of course much planning and dedication on the part of my ministerial predecessors, and the congregation, had taken place, but it was our privilege to be there to join in this celebration. The church was now debt-free and new opportunities lay ahead for the active and dedicated congregation.

Thirdly, we were here on June 20, 1971, to celebrate one hundred years of service, as a church, to the Longmont community. Reflecting on the experiences and successes of the past, the congregation sounded a note of expectancy to begin the second one hundred years.



Rev. Smythe served pastorates in Loveland, Limon, and Parker prior to moving to Longmont in July, 1994. He suggests the following scripture as central to Christian faith:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2: 8-9

"Honor The Past—Inspire The Future"

Throughout this year we are celebrating the one-hundred-twenty-fifth anniversary of this church. Our Anniversary Committee has chosen as our theme, "Honor The Past—Inspire The Future."

This celebration provides us with a wonderful opportunity to remember. We remember the men and women of the Chicago Colorado Colony who started this church. There were five different locations in this community which served as the home of this congregation. This church has had numerous pastors who provided spiritual guidance and leadership. Thousands of men, women, youth and children have worked long and hard in this church. They have given us the rich heritage that we now enjoy.

However, this celebration also provides us with the opportunity to influence the future of this church. I wonder what this church will "look like" upon the occasion of her one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary? We can only guess. However, we can begin to influence that direction now as we continue to be sensitive to the needs of those about us, and as we reach out beyond the walls of our church, and as we "share the good life in Christ."

I pray for God's blessing upon our celebration as we remember our past, and influence the future.

Granville D. Smythe, Jr.
Senior Pastor



The entire Sunday School in the early 1900s

Christian Education has been an important facet in the life and work of the church. Earliest records tell that, as early as 1865 when the "Burlington Circuit" was formed, there were "three Sunday Schools, with seven officers and teachers, and fifty scholars..." A union Sunday School was organized at once when Longmont was founded, with a full contingency of officers, including such prominent citizens as Seth Terry, Chauncey Stokes, C. Bliss, A.W. Coffman and Miss Isadore Terry.

Years later, Ben Christner—the church's new minister—notes that the

first thing attended to as part of his ministry was to "care for the Christian Education Program." New classes and departments were added. "Do the work with children and youth and you will win the parents" was an old adage even then, and holds equally true today. In 1995, a special children's program, Godly Play, was begun, and remains a special time for children's worship during the adult worship time.

Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF), known as Epworth League in earlier times, meets regularly on Sunday evenings, and is the mainstay

of youth activities. High Nooners and Homesteaders are corresponding adult fellowships.

With the changing times there has been a growing need for children to have a secure place to spend time before and after school. CATS Corner (Children Are Tender Spirits) provides a home-away-from-home for more than 20 children daily. Funded and housed by our church, this program typifies our service to God and the community.

Our church's library has become a special resource for enhancing church



Typical Sunday School class in the 1950s.

Services were held in Library Hall until a building could be completed in 1872. The first church building, of two-storied frame construction, doubled as a business establishment. Services were held in the upstairs hall—the lower floor was rented out for business. (Of no small surprise, many of the early entrepreneurial Methodist pioneers became established leaders in the business community!) The early building burned in the 1880s, but by then, had been sold and a new church constructed.

This new church, dedicated on May 27, 1883, was built on Terry Street between Third and Fourth Avenues. Ahlberg Funeral Chapel currently occupies this building. Recently remodeled, the integrity of the original architecture remains intact. An early-day member recounts that "it was lit by three beautiful brass chandeliers, all fueled by kerosene." Another account relates that the "auditorium" was heated by a central floor furnace, which, at times, "provided much entertainment

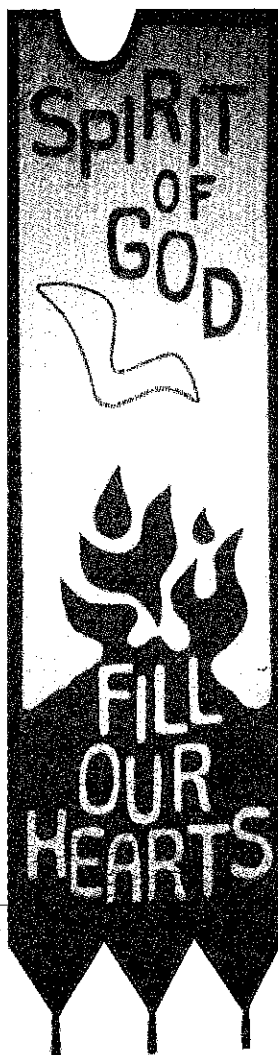
for children. During Christmas rehearsals, to the consternation of parents and clergy, they floated feathers in the rising hot air above the furnace."

By 1902, in less than 20 years since the move to Terry Street, and in its first 32 years of charter, membership had exceeded the 300 mark. Larger quarters were again needed. Ground-breaking ceremonies were



The 1903 Methodist Church stood on the southeast corner of 4th and Terry, where the Longmont Daily Times-Call stands today.

held in May of 1903, at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Terry Street, where the Times Call newspaper building stands today. The first of two additions—Wesley Hall—was added in 1924 to accommodate the growing membership. It also served as the community recreation center. According to people who remember this time, basketball was highly ranked among favorite activities.



The continuing need for new facilities, over time, has arisen from increasing membership as our church's ministries and outreach have impacted the community.

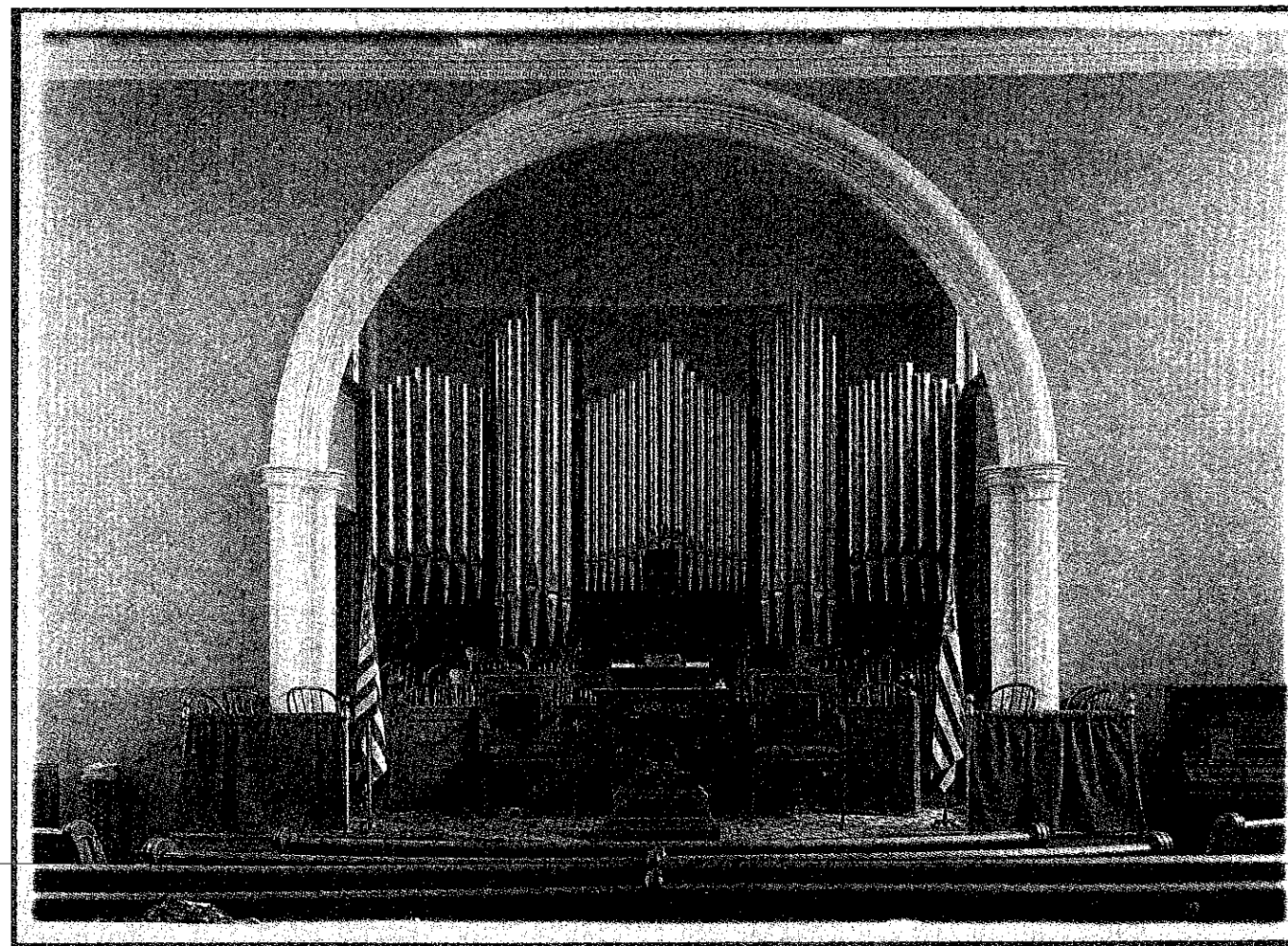
In the words of Paula Johnston, long-time member of our congregation and Conference lay leadership, *"the church is not just a building; the church is the people. We have to make the church so that the people can use it best. We need to make it important to each individual person."*

Through the devotion and efforts of countless members of this congregation, the ministries of the church have responded to needs of people in the church, the Longmont community, and world-wide.

Music ministry has been a strong tradition in the Methodist church, and from the earliest days, has been superb. An account relating the dedication services of our first building, on May 27, 1883, indicates that the

"singing was led by a select choir, consisting of five ladies and four gentlemen...it is not too much to say in praise of the music, that we have never heard its equal in Longmont. The voices harmonized most charmingly and the time was nearly perfect as is ever heard, excepting in choirs composed of professional singers."

Almost from the beginning, music for services has been enhanced by marvelous organs and gifted musicians. An early recollection, dating prior to 1916, recalls an *"old-fashioned organ behind which a strong boy or young man worked, turning a great crank to supply air to the great bellows of the organ."* An electric organ, sponsored by the Matron's Society, was installed in the sanctuary in 1916, at a cost of \$2,400. One of three pipe organs remaining in Longmont, our present organ first saw duty in the 4th and Terry church during 1947. With additions and modifications to fit the existing sanctuary, this wonderful instrument has seen service



Dedicated to the Glory of God, and all who liked to sing the hymns, this beautiful pipe organ was added to the church, then located at 4th & Terry.

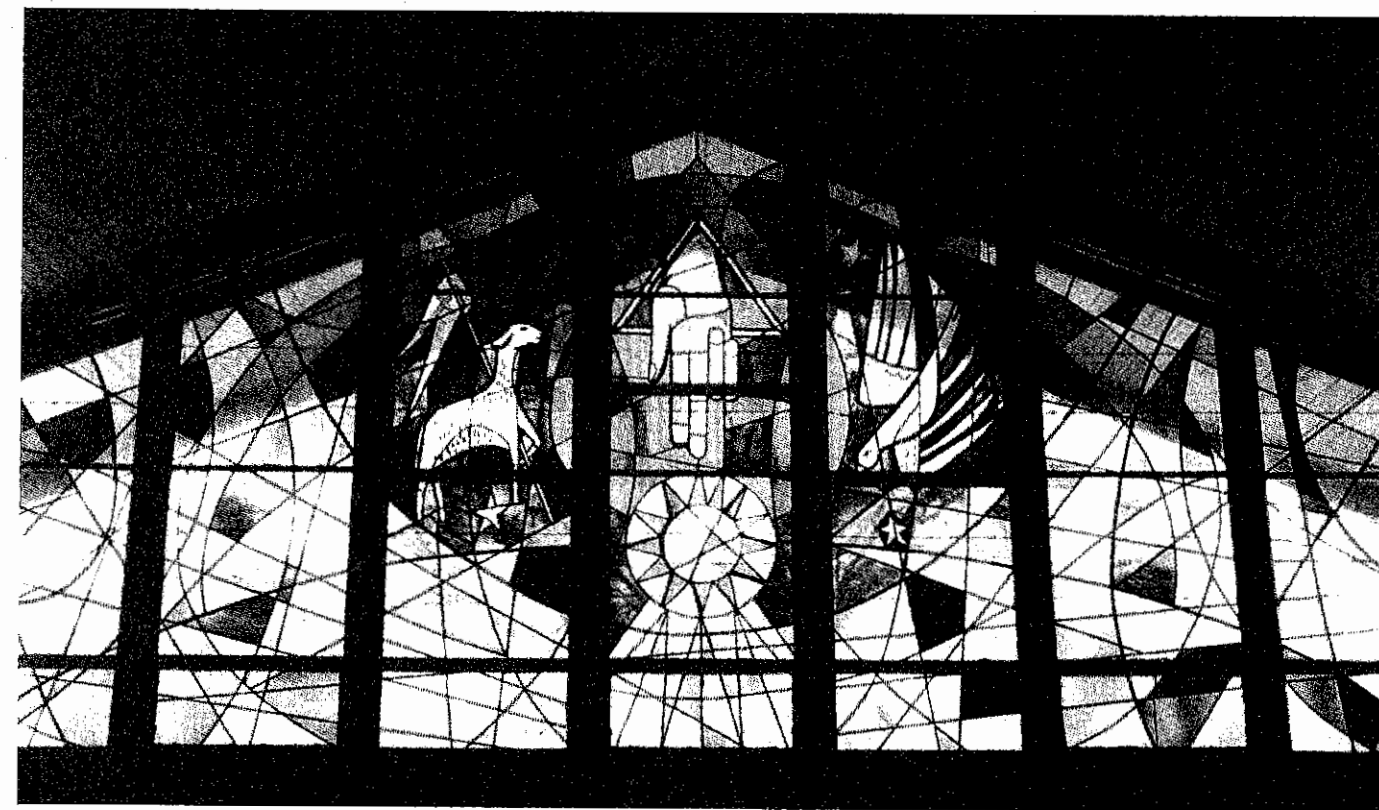
In 1959, with the new building almost complete, members of the congregation began the Herculean task of moving almost 60 years of accumulated heritage from the 4th and Terry location, to the new 11th and Emery location, some fifteen blocks away. At the Consecration Service and Open House for the new church, held on

November 22, 1959, parishioners were greeted by the special stained-glass balcony window. Unseen by the congregation prior to that day, the "Miracle Window" (designed and built in Germany) was installed overnight before services, much to everyone's delight. Astoundingly, the mortgage on this building was retired

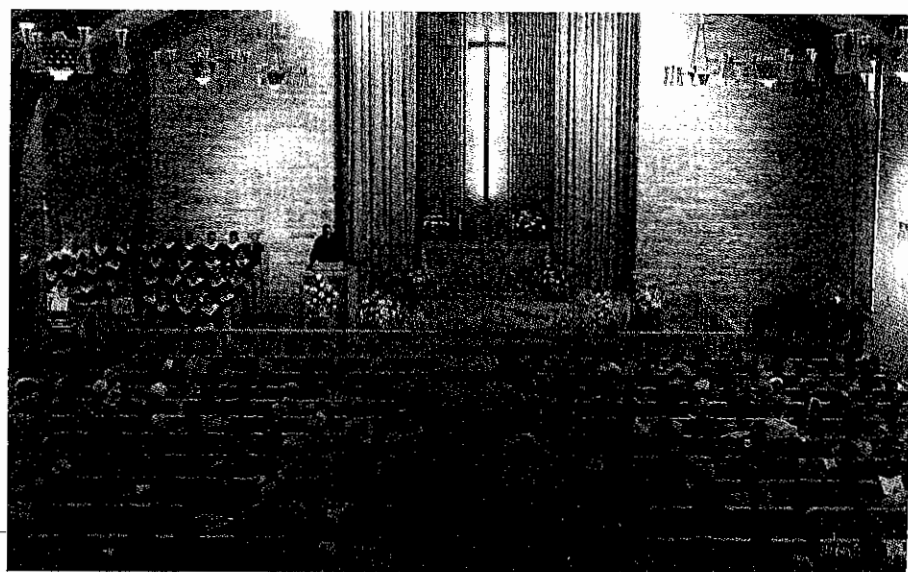
in only 10 years! How richly God blessed us in making it possible to overcome our indebtedness so quickly!

Since 1959, the building has undergone several renovations. Major construction, undertaken in 1980, provided us with an additional education unit and new music room behind the sanctuary. In 1990 the narthex and gallery were enlarged, providing added room for Sunday morning fellowship and enhancing the church's welcoming atmosphere.

Of note, the very special stained-glass windows now hanging in the gallery, were almost destroyed when the Terry Street church was demolished. Wrecking crews had arrived; the windows were saved only through the timely intervention of Dr. M.N. Burgess. Recently, they were "rediscovered." Refurbished after decades of storage in a local lumber yard, they now enjoy a prominent place in the church gallery.



Rich with Christian symbolism and beautiful colors, the "Miracle Window" graces the west end of the sanctuary above the balcony.



The first Sunday services in the present 11th and Emery building were held on November 1, 1959.

Late 1945 saw the close of World War II, and the reluctance to spend money here at home was reversed. For almost a decade, all the nooks and crannies of the church and Wesley Hall had been overflowing from the Sunday School and various religious education programs. Four major capital improvements were undertaken: excavation and completion of a basement below the sanctuary; purchase and installation of a pipe organ; installation of a modern gas heating plant; and enlargement and improvement of the sanctuary. With these improvements, the 4th



Parsonage at 4th and Pratt. Purchased in 1920, it was later sold in 1963.

and Terry location served the needs of our congregation for most of another decade. Also during this time, beginning in 1920, when a beautiful house on the corner of 4th and Pratt Street was purchased, we were able to provide a comfortable home for our ministers and their families. This house was sold in 1963 when another parsonage was purchased.

A driving force behind yet another move came in 1954, when a survey by the Iliff School of Theology noted that "although the membership was composed of exceptionally high educational abilities and interests, the church lacks facilities to care for the varied needs of its large membership."

Rising to the challenge, our congregation initiated a complete relocation building project. Five acres of farm land were purchased at the present church's site, and plans were

drawn for a building budgeted at \$350,000. The groundbreaking, fund-raising, and construction of the present building are within the memory of many current members of the congregation.

There was lively, vocal debate—and disagreement—over the new site's location! Church officials received many complaints from older members of the church because the proposed site was "way out in the country," and they would "never" be able to attend religious services. This resulted in the organization of "a free taxi service" by car owners, so anyone needing transportation to any church service or meeting could call the church office and request assistance. It is true that change is in fact tumultuous; it is equally true that God and Christ have seen us through changing, challenging times.

for almost 50 years.

Our music program continues to expand, and in 1996 includes a Chancel Choir, Wesley Anns, three youth choirs, 3 handbell choirs, and a handchime choir. These groups involve over 150 participants each year. Intermittently, instrumental soloists and groups also grace our worship services. Archived church bulletins record titles of anthems sung since the early days—a Chancel Choir has sung most Sundays, for at least one service, for 125 years!

Wesley Anns, a women's singing group formed by the United Methodist Women in 1974, sings periodically for worship services, and performs a special Christmas program for the church and various community groups.

Few records of youth choirs remain. We are quite certain, given the large Sunday School attendance, that youth choirs have existed

through the years. A children's choir sang during the church's 100th anniversary celebration, and over the past 25 years, choirs have involved children and youth from kindergarten through high school ages. In 1995 the *Good Life Singers*, composed of middle school and high school youth, were chosen to sing for the Youth '95 Convocation in Salt Lake City.

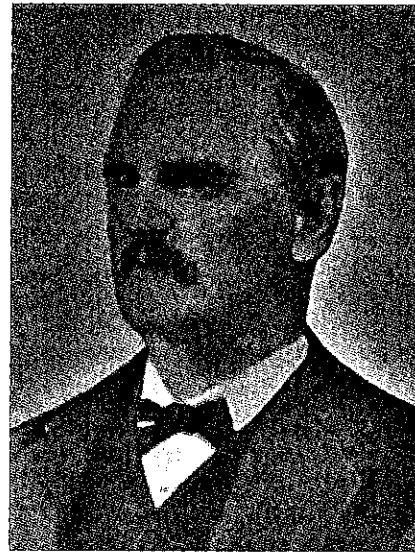
Since handbells were first rung for Easter services in 1977, many have become acquainted with the joys of ringing handbells. The church is blessed with a five-octave set of Malmark handbells, purchased with gracious gifts of memorial money. Handchimes, used to prepare children for the handbells, are also rung for church services.



Wesley Anns Choir, from the 1970s.

6

First United Methodist Church
Longmont, Colorado
The First 125 Years

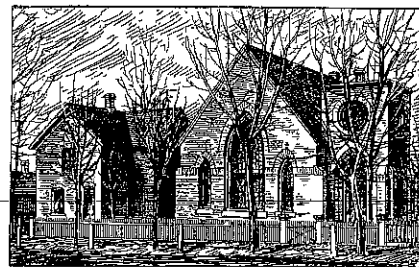


R.J. Van Valkenburg, of the Burlington Circuit, preached Longmont's first sermon and led the community's first Sunday School.

LONGMONT'S FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH is profoundly rooted in the Longmont community. From the early settlers and subsequent Chicago Colorado Colony, to the present day, the development of our church closely parallels the growing Longmont community.

Local pioneers, with ministerial guidance from Circuit Riders, held services in their cabins, and later in the schoolhouse. The area was first served by the St. Vrain Circuit, and later the Burlington Circuit.

In the spring of 1871, when Longmont was founded, these Methodists discontinued their Burlington services, and convened their first Quarterly Conference. R.J. Van Valkenburg was serving the Circuit at the time, and is formally credited with delivering the first sermon in Longmont history; likewise Longmont's first Sunday School was conducted under his guidance.



Longmont's 1883 Methodist Church and parsonage, as they appeared when built. The church still stands at 326 Terry Street.

educational programs. The early library, dating to 1865 and the Burlington Circuit, boasted 300 volumes! In 1995 the ever-expanding library was moved to its present location, and holds a multitude of books and multi-media resources.

Women's groups formed early in our church's history, and have been



Methodist women meeting at Mrs. Lutes' cabin in Estes Park, late 1940s.

known by many names: Ladies' Aid Society; Young Matrons; Women's Foreign Missionary Society; Women's Home Missionary Society; Women's Society of Christian Service; Wesleyan Service Guild; and at present, United Methodist Women.

Supporting missions has been of

prime importance to the women in these organizations, and extensive fundraising activities have been directed to this end. Eunice Porter was sent as a missionary to India, and Grace Banner Shawhan to China. More recently, UMW has helped our church support Jim and Doris Long in their Mexico mission; Red Bird Mission in Kentucky; and McCurdy School in Mexico.

Women's service involvement in the church's activities include serving for funerals and other events, providing refreshments for the day-care program, and many other responsibilities. A noteworthy event sponsored by the UMW is the Holiday Fair. Since its inception in 1963, it has featured thousands of handcrafted items, accompanied by the annual brunch. Prior to 1963, events of similar style and scope were also held, but under different names.

Men's groups have traditionally gathered for Saturday morning

breakfast and fellowship. Programs in recent years have related closely with current events; activities in the church's early history centered largely around recreation! Times have changed! Of noteworthy interest, a yearly event held in the 1930's was the "Game Dinner." *"The men contributed their hunting successes; the women prepared the tables and most of the meal, while the wild game was cooked by a restaurant. The meal was open invitation to fathers and sons of the church. All was gratis. At one annual event we had elk, venison and bear on the menu. The restaurant cooked all together and it was difficult to tell the bear from the high-jumping bacon (venison)."*

The men of our church have sponsored Boy Scout Troop 64 since the troop's charter in 1921.



*Rev. Barry Kimbrough
Senior Pastor 1972-86*

It is indeed difficult to lift up a special memory because there are so many. As Barb and I reflected, the church's adopted Cambodian families kept returning to us, over and over. The memory of these families, the Ungs, then the Ear, Man and Auns who were one extended family, and how they established themselves in such a short time is especially wonderful. I think that within five years they had purchased homes, and within a very short time had paid for them in full. I fondly remember the way our congregation looked after them in loving ways.

An experience with the Ungs is particularly special. On a Thanksgiving weekend they departed the plane at Stapleton with all possessions on their backs. We brought them to the church, then to the small house that we had rented for them. They were so full of gratitude, yet there was also a sadness—they had left a son in Cambodia, not knowing if he were alive or dead. As time went on we heard nothing more; it was assumed he had been killed by the Khmer Rouge or had perished in the jungle. Later, word was received that he was alive, and was attempting to join his family in the United States! After clearing channels and red tape, we were finally cleared to bring him "home."

A few days later, Keng, the father, came into my office with a check, a sacrificial offering of gratitude. As we talked, I could not help but remember a passage from Luke; the parable of the Prodigal son. *For this my son was dead and is now alive again.*



*Rev. Keith Watson
Senior Pastor 1986-94*

It was my privilege to be part of the history of ministry carried out by the First United Methodist Church of Longmont from 1986 to 1994. And the church provided a wonderful Christian environment for our family and the growth of our girls at a very important time in their lives.

I have many rich memories of people and events, but there are two that stand out in my mind as being especially important in the life of the congregation.

One is the remodeling and expansion of the church facility, with the expanded narthex and gallery area, and handicap-accessible bathrooms. This addition had a significant impact on the church's fellowship activities, which was the desired result.

The other significant event brought to mind was the church's enrollment in the Stephen Ministry program, and subsequent Stephen Leader Training and first class of Stephen Ministers. The Stephen Ministry has had a great impact on many people's lives, and will continue to do so for years to come.

Congratulations on 125 years of ministry to the Longmont community. I pray for God's richest blessings in the next century as we minister together for Jesus Christ!