

BRIGHTON WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH

Methodist in doctrine, but opposed to the Episcopal form of government, and being opposed to slavery, as was the 'Wesleyan' church in England, this group of Christians acquired the name Wesleyan Methodist. The roots of Wesleyan Methodism in the area go back to 1842 with the organization of the Milford circuit. Records indicate this was one of the very first circuits organized in the U.S. As many as 20 preaching points were included in this circuit. The Kensington, Pleasant Valley and Brighton churches were eventually formed from this group.

Several members of the Pleasant Valley Church, which had a church building on the corner of Pleasant Valley Road near Jacoby Road, lived in and near Brighton. For more convenient worship they invited Rev. John C. Martin to establish a new W.M. appointment. The Appleton Hall on Grand River was their first meeting house in the town. It was furnished with plank seats and a dry good box was used as a pulpit. Several members from the Pleasant Valley Church transferred to the Brighton Church.

When more space for worship was needed the Presbyterian society permitted the W.M. to worship in their church. With its legal organization June 30, 1874, plans were immediately made for the building of the W. M. Church in the town. Mr. E. G. McPherson, desiring to encourage plans for the building, gave two lots on the corner of Washington and Fourth Streets and a contribution of \$100. Other members gave liberally to the building fund so that dedication took place January 30, 1875, with Rev. L. N. Stratton, editor of the 'American Wesleyan', officiating. The first parsonage was built c. 1885. During the first five years the pastors served the Pleasant Valley Church also. In 1899-1901, Rev. S. A. Manwell served the congregation. Following his retirement, he built a house, with lumber salvaged from the Pleasant Valley W. M. Church, on U.S. 16 (Grand River).

Ernest Crippen and a lady referred to as Grandma Euler, bought and donated the church bell in 1885. Each paid one half the cost of \$300. In 1908, the first addition was built, which included the annex and the pulpit alcove. A paneled ceiling was made possible in 1917 through the generosity of the Fred Hyne, Srs. and the Erwin Hynes. Another addition, 1948-49, was built to provide more Bible study space. A new heating facility, new pulpit and other furniture was donated by members of the congregation at that time also.

Each new minister brought Christian education and leadership to the members of this congregation. Today's minister and congregation continue with their long tradition of evangelism and stewardship.

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