



The MidAtlantic Missioner

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST



MIDATLANTIC MISSION CENTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- The Scranton Congregation Celebrates 100 Years
- How do you do History?
- MAMC Historic-Preservation Initiative: An Historian in Every Congregation

TODAY'S HISTORIES BECOME TOMORROW'S MYSTERIES

Which was the first congregation in the MAMC area and what year was it founded? What were the names of the families that first came together for a house church in southern New Jersey? When was your church building built? How did the congregation raise the money to pay for your church building? For example, Johnson City baked and sold

pies; Scranton built up their church on Welsh Faggots (a very special type of meatballs).

Farther back, no one can tell us how many years Jesus attended school. We don't know if the church at Corinth met in a house, under a tree, or in a broken down building. The final resting place of St. Patrick is lost to us and we'll never know who built Stonehenge. These are all

examples of histories that are lost because no one wrote them down.

If you've ever done genealogical research, you'll know it only takes a couple of generations for a family's history to disappear entirely. Without congregational historians, we are in danger of losing the details of our collective histories.

MAMC HISTORIC-PRESERVATION INITIATIVE: AN HISTORIAN IN EVERY CONGREGATION

Over the years, I have learned that being an historian, as a vocation or an avocation, is completely subjective. Scholar, archivist, archaeologist, genealogist, teacher, writer, leader, researcher, coordinator...when you are wearing your *historian* hat, YOU decide what that means.

When appointed municipal historian for my town, my focus was the representation of our local history in regional gatherings. As an employee of our regional historical organization, my activities centered on bringing together people and programs about county history.

For my lifelong passion with ancient and medieval Celtic

history, (which I hope, one day, to teach professionally), I study and write. In each role, I decided where to focus my energy and what activities to undertake.

What does it look like to be a congregational historian? That depends on who is doing the job and what is happening in the life of the congregation.

Traditionally, congregational historians write an annual report of their congregation's events. This can be a simple list of statistics, sometimes doubling as a recorders report, or it can be an in depth summation of the year's activities. Or the historian can choose an entirely different *modus operandus*.

Whether you want to dig through newspaper archives or

just to keep a running list of church activities, MAMC history needs you! Have you been looking for a way to serve? This could be it! Give me a call and we'll chat.

SAVE THE DATE!

Johnson City, NY
Congregation
announces plans for their
50th Anniversary Celebration
Easter Weekend 2013



Does your congregation have an historical event coming up?
Free Publicity Here!



MAMC Historian
Kimberly Gazzo
6 James St
Dryden, NY 13053

Phone: 607-844-5201
Cell: 607-592-6566
E-mail: kgazzo@juno.com

How Do You Do History?

For their centennial celebration, Scranton Saints created wonderful posters filled with photographs and memories. They also filled a wall with their 'family tree', complete with interwoven genealogic charts of member families on each branch.

In Johnson City, I'm recording the 'history' of our congregational life in pictures. Blending my scrapbooking hobby with

my faith walk, I am creating a photographic keepsake that will endure through the generations. (Always be sure to record of the *names of all people* in the pictures!)

Won't you share with us how YOU do history in your congregation? Watch this spot for reports on how others in MAMC are doing history. Mike

Bowman and Pat Bacon are among those to be featured in future editions.



SCRANTON, PA CONGREGATION CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Community of Christ in Scranton got its start in 1862. Fifteen saints were lead by brother Elijah Banta and William W. Blair, but because of many problems the membership dwindled and eventually became nonexistent.

In 1877 a number of Saints of Welsh descent moved to Scranton and with the guidance of Josiah Ellis the branch was reorganized with thirteen members. It is also recorded that Elder

Henry Jones, fluent in both English and the Welsh language, presided over the Scranton Branch. During his two year stay, the branch grew to thirty five members.

In 1882 eight Elders and one Bishop labored in the community and among the saints in Scranton. As a result of their efforts, once again the branch reorganized at a meeting on June 28, 1899. At this meeting the saints voted Tallie T. Jones President of the branch. Also elected were Adam Roberts and William Hawkins, Sunday School Teachers, sister Charlotte Jones, Secretary and Williams Stevens, Treasurer.



Our Beautiful Scranton Church

Regular services were held in Finleu's Hall on Lackawanna Ave. Later the saints met in Red Man's Hall located on the corner of Main Avenue and Jackson Street.

As in most branches in the early days of the church, Missionaries played an important part in strengthening the membership. In the summer of 1906 and again in 1907 Reorganized Latter Day Saint Missionaries came to Scranton and conducted services.

Gospel tents were erected on Academy Street.

But it wasn't until missionary T.U. Thomas, a very active and enthusiastic worker, came to Scranton, that a site was chosen for the building of the Scranton Branch. A lot was purchased at the corner of Luzerne Street and 12th Avenue for the sum of \$1,200.00.



A building fund was organized and in 1912, the cornerstone of the church was laid by the District President, Bishop John Zimmerman, who helped financially with the building project. On March 2, 1912, Bishop Zimmerman dedicated the edifice.

In the later part of the 1920s the building was physically moved across 12th Avenue to accommodate the construction of the West Scranton High School. During this move to its present location, the bell tower was relocated from the left corner of the church to the right front corner as it stands today.

The church grew and prospered for many years. In those early days many children attended Sunday School. The church had a band and a softball team.

In 1991 the church broke ground for an addition. A new kitchen, fellowship hall and classrooms were added. The main fundraiser for eighty years has been making and selling of Welsh Faggots. This is still true today.

