

HISTORY OF ORLEANS COUNTY CHURCHES

by
Helen E. Allen

Town of Albion

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Town of Albion

The Town of Albion is the smallest and the last to be organized of the ten towns which make up the County of Orleans. It was set off from the Town of Barre in 1875, after long opposition by the residents of the central and southern parts of the town who did not wish to lose the County seat, or the satisfaction of requiring residents of the Village of Albion to come to Barre Center to vote in town elections.

Before the building of the Erie Canal and the resulting growth of the village of Newport, later renamed, Albion, the population of this area was quite small. As in other parts of the County, however, religious services were held by the pioneers. Records show that Daniel Shepardson, the first preacher appointed to Methodist Episcopal Ridgeway Circuit, set up a preaching station at Brown's settlement in the northeastern part of the present town of Albion, in 1816. In that same year a Congregational Church of 10 members was organized in the home of Joseph Hart. During 1818 occasional M. E. services were held and a class formed at Riches Corners and Jotham Morse organized a Christian Church in the southwestern corner of the town. The Congregationalists later moved to Barre Center, so the Christian Church was the earliest to remain active and the only one established in the town outside of the village.

During the nineteenth century, 9 protestant and 2 Roman Catholic Churches were established in the village. The Presbyterians were the first to form a Church in 1824, four years before the village of Newport was renamed Albion and incorporated. The Baptists, Methodists and Catholics organized strong Churches within the next few years and the others were formed at various times in later years.

Fourteen church edifices were erected during those years, one building was given to a small Church and another group rented rooms for their services. Ten of those nineteenth century edifices are still in use in 1968, all but two standing near the center of the village. One small church is located a short distance away and St. Mary's Parish property is in the northeastern section. Three of these original buildings were replaced by larger edifices as the need arose. The old Christian meeting house was torn down after that Church went out of existence.

In 1968 eight of the twelve early Churches are still active and members of three others attend other services. Three religious groups have been organized during the present century. Of these, Jehovah's Witnesses have erected their own building in the southeastern part of the Village, St. Paul's Baptists have purchased the former A. M. E. meeting house and the Christian Science group which held meetings for some years no longer meets in Albion. There are now a number of Mormon converts in the area who are not organized as a local congregation. From early days there have been in Albion and vicinity people of Jewish faith but they were never been numerous enough to organize. Those who were strict in the observance of their religion, worshiped God in their own homes and went to synagogues in Rochester or other cities for special occasions.

First Christian Church

The earliest Church to be organized within the present area of the Town of Albion was the only one formed outside of the village of Albion. It was organized as the First Christian Church of Barre before either the town or village of Albion existed.

According to the memoirs of Jotham Morse, founder and pastor of this Church for fifty years, it was organized in 1818. In addition to Mr. and Mrs. Morse, the first members of the Church were Jonathan Ferris, —Cooke, — Bonner, Dr. Williard Eaton and —Witheral and their wives. Services were held for some years in the homes of members, barns or the schoolhouse near Porter's Corners, which was the intersection of the road from Eagle Harbor with the County House Road. About 1830 a meeting house was built a mile west of Porter's Corners. The building was dedicated by a Rev. Rogers, according to a County History but there is no record of where Rev. Rogers came from.

The Rev. Jotham Morse who served as pastor for half a century, was one of those pioneer farmer preachers who took up land and worked like the other settlers to clear and cultivate his farm in order to support his family, and in addition, preached every Sunday and performed other pastoral duties. He also served for a time as pastor of the West Shelby Christian Church.

In 1879, pastors who followed Rev. Morse were listed as the Revs. Copeland, F. J. Smith, — Tryon and James Whitmore, who was pastor at that time and must have continued for a number of years. Mrs. Fred Thompson of Albion, a very remarkable lady of 95 years, in 1967 remembered attending a wedding in the Christian Church in which Miss Hattie Ferris became the bride of William Callard. The Rev. Whitmore performed the ceremony. She recalled that a Rev. Borden was the last pastor of the Church.

Mrs. Thompson also remembers attending socials at the Christian Church. There was no dining room in the small meeting house.. A Miss Bennett lived in the house next door and she always allowed the Church ladies to set up tables in her house for such affairs. The program would be given in the Church and the supper served in the Bennett house. Mrs. Thompson thinks the old Christian Church closed soon after 1890. Most of the older members had passed away by that time. Children brought up in that Church had either moved away from the community or preferred to attend larger Churches in nearby villages. So the old Christian Church which had been the religious and social center of the community for more than 70 years went out of existence. Some years later the meeting house was torn down.

First Presbyterian Church of Albion

The First Presbyterian Church of Albion was the earliest to be formed in the village of Newport, later named Albion. Its roots go back to the First Congregational Society of Barre which was organized in the home of Joseph Hart in 1816. Some members of that Church had always preferred the presbyterian form of government and by 1824 there were a number of people in the growing village who wished to start a Presbyterian Church. Accordingly, the Rev. Andrew Rawson was invited to meet with the group on July 22, 1824 in a school house which stood on the west side of Main St., near the present Railroad crossing. He formed the First Presbyterian Church with the following charter members; Jedediah Phelps and wife, Joseph Hart and wife, Ebenezer Rogers and wife, Harvey Goodrich and wife, Franklin Cowdry and wife, James Smith and wife, Artemas Thayer, Fay Clark, Lavina Bassett and Miss Betsey Phelps. Five of these people had helped to organize the Congregational Church seven years earlier. That Church now changed its meeting place to Benton's Corners about two miles farther south.

Membership increased and when the school house became too small, services were sometimes held in a barn. In 1827 arrangements were made to hold services in the Court House. The first regular pastor had been engaged in 1825. The following year the congregation had legally organized as a religious Society. At that time sixty-six persons signed their names to an agreement to support public worship in connection with this Presbyterian Church.

In Feb. 1830, at a meeting of Church and Society it was voted to erect a brick church edifice at a cost not to exceed \$4,000. A lot on the west side of Main St., between State and Park Sts. was purchased and work begun. The basement was finished so that services could be held there beginning in October. The building was completed the following year and the dedication service was held in the autumn of 1831. Congregations filled the church from the beginning. High standards of Christian conduct and knowledge of the Bible were required for membership in the Church. In spite of these requirements, or perhaps because of them, membership increased rapidly. By the end of a decade the building was outgrown. It took some time to consider how to meet the problem and raise the necessary funds.

An interesting solution presented itself in 1844. The newly organized Christ Church was working energetically to increase membership and to raise building funds. The society had purchased a desirable site on State street, opposite the Court house, and some construction supplies. But it would be necessary to secure more money before starting to build. Early in 1845 the two societies arranged an exchange of properties, the Episcopalians taking over a church ready for immediate use and large enough for their congregations, and the Presbyterians receiving a valuable lot where they could erect the larger edifice they needed, and some building material.

The Presbyterian Church again held their services in the court house while their new brick house of worship was being built at a cost of \$12,000, including the bell and organ. This fine edifice of Greek revival architecture was dedicated in November 1846. The Historic American Buildings Survey, in 1966 selected this church and four other buildings in the Albion area, as outstanding examples of historic and architectural value to be recorded in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Data placed in the archives of the li-

details and historic facts. After the present stone edifice was erected in 1875, the brick church has been known as the chapel. The 45-foot bell tower surmounting the roof was removed at that time and the interior remodeled for the educational and social programs of the Church.

Returning to the early history of the Presbyterian Church, a Sunday School was started soon after the Church was organized. During the first years the pastor had charge of the school but as attendance increased it was soon staffed by consecrated and well qualified officers and teachers. The Church was also concerned with the world outreach of the denomination. Here, in 1827, the first Women's Missionary Society in Niagara Presbytery was organized, and continued with minor changes for about an hundred and thirty years. The ladies raised money for missionary work, made garments and other supplies needed on the mission fields and studied about the Presbyterian work in many countries of the world.

A story is told in the centennial history of the Church of the results of the interest of one member of the Missionary Society. For a number of years prior to 1850, a Miss Maria Ledyard was a member of the Church and teacher of a class of young ladies. She became interested in the work of a small mission station in China. She gave generously herself and influenced members of her class to contribute to support a native teacher sent out by this mission. Some years later word came that the station had been closed and also that the native teacher had died. At about that time Miss Ledyard moved to Brooklyn. Years afterward, a missionary returning home from China told a most unusual story. He said that during his travels in a remote part of China he came upon a small village where the people worshiped God. They told him that many years before, a native christian had come to their village to teach them. He had persuaded them to throw away their idols. After his death one of his converts, who had memorized part of the New Testament, kept repeating the teachings of Christ to them and persuaded them to continue living by as much truth as they knew. They said that the village had been named "Ledyard" for the Albion woman who had sent the first teacher "to tell us about the good Jesus".

The Presbyterian Church like many other nineteenth century Churches had a very full Sunday schedule. There were preaching services and Sunday School sessions in the morning, another preaching service in the afternoon and evening meetings. As the congregation always included a number of musical people there was an excellent choir and good organ music to enrich all services. On the first Sunday evening of each month the Missionary Concert was held. At this time reports of Christian work in home and foreign fields were given by the men of the Church. Until late in the last century, women seldom spoke in public. Sometimes a visiting missionary would tell of the work in his particular station. The Sunday School Concert was given on the second Sunday evening each month. These programs by the pupils and teachers were somewhat similar to Children's Day services of later years but probably the children memorized many passages of scripture which they recited. Prayer meetings were held on the remaining Sunday evenings of the month. At this period a frequent Sunday entry in the diary of a faithful member who lived out on a farm was: "All went to meeting. Staid all day." One wonders if families from the country carried lunches to eat between services or were entertained by friends in the village.

Services were conducted with dignity and reverence but sometimes

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there were interruptions. One Sunday in the eighteen-sixties the congregation was startled by the sounds of shouts and the ringing of bells outside. The minister quickly dismissed the service and everyone rushed out to find the business section of the village in flames. There were no well equipped Fire Departments at that time and it was the men from all the nearby congregations who quickly formed bucket brigades who played a large part in saving some buildings. Some^{one} said later that the Presbyterian pastor was hardly out of the pulpit before he appeared on top of one of the buildings emptying pails of water on the flames.

A very different interruption occurred one Sunday in 1890. The congregation was listening intently to an eloquent sermon by their beloved pastor, the Rev. George Cain, when suddenly he ceased speaking and slumped, lifeless, to the floor.

The first manse was a house on Park St. which was purchased in 1857. It was used until 1872 when the Church was able to buy adjoining property on State St., which extended to Platte St. The house on this lot was used until 1894. In that year the old house was replaced by the present large stately stone residence, at a cost of \$20,000, most of which was given by descendants of Joseph Hart who was active in founding the Church.

The Presbyterian Society took advantage of the opportunity to purchase, in 1873, a lot next west of their church, on the corner of State and Main streets. Here, the following year, the erection of the present large edifice of buttressed Gothic architectural design, was begun. It was built of Medina sandstone from Albion quarries and surmounted by a tall symmetrical spire. It was completed at a cost of \$80,000, including the fine organ, and was made possible by a bequest of \$50,000 in the will of Elizur Hart, son of Joseph Hart. The first service in the new Church was on Sunday, July 4, 1875.

While the village was growing rapidly membership in the Church increased greatly. Records show that by 1850, 738 new members had been added to the 16 constituent members. Of course, during those same years many older members died and others moved away with the constant westward migration. The largest membership was reported in 1865 when it was 519. Later the membership stabilized at about 400 which was reported in 1879,, 1894, 1924 and 1967.

Two sons of the Church have been ordained to the Christian ministry, John Hamlin and Donald Thiel.

During the present century there has been no need for the Presbyterian Church to enter into any extensive building project but the members have worked to keep their buildings in repair, redecorated and improvements made as required to meet changing programs. Members of the Church have always taken an active part in community affairs. The Church has had many fine pastors who have also worked for the welfare of the whole community.

For a century the Presbyterian and other Churches considered their task to be to instruct the children and adults of their congregations in the Bible and the teachings of Christ and inspire them to carry out these teachings in their daily lives to the end that personal integrity, self discipline, respect for government, a willingness to give, in areas of need and support of worldwide programs of the Church and other helpful agencies, would provide conditions

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possibilities. Then gradually a change came ^{in the U.S.A.}. The old virtues of self discipline, respect for authority, patriotism and personal integrity were sneered at, moral values removed from education. Suddenly truth and honesty seem rare and even the small towns are nearly overwhelmed with crime, illiteracy, poverty and lack of ambition unknown in times past. Massive government programs multiply, often with small results.

The Presbyterian Church carries on the effort to hold fast to that which is good through Sunday worship services, Sunday School, Youth groups, the sponsoring of a Boy Scout Troop and Cub Scout Pack, and the programs of the Westminster Club and the Signor Class. The Church continues to support Presbyterian Mission Programs. In this connection in 1960 the Albion Church paid for the building of the residence for the president of The Theological Seminary in Chiang Mai, Thailand and in 1967 assumed the cost of building new cottage dormitories at the same institution. In dealing with other local problems the Church supports the Albion and Vicinity Council of Churches, United Church Women and The Orleans Chapter of the Ministry of Concern. The pastor's wife organized a Mother's Club from Welfare rolls and works with them to raise the level of child care. Pastor and individual members give of their time to various projects in these areas of concern.

In 1968 the Rev. Howard J. Rose is the pastor and has served since 1964. Session consists of : Thomas E. Heard Jr., Charles C. D'Amico, Levi L. Woodcock, Roy T. Merrill, John E. Bradley, Dr. James G. Parke, Raymond G. Gardner, W. James Halstead, Donald B. Ross. Chm. Board of Trustees - Arnold A. Tower, Chm. Bd. of Deacons - Le Vere W. Cook, Chm. Bd. of Deaconesses - Mrs James G. Parke, Treas. - Walter E. Brown, Sec. - Mrs. LeVere W. Cook, Organist - Mrs. Moses H. Sherman, Choir Director - Moses H. Sherman. S. S. Supt. Mrs. Dale Burdett.

Pastors of the Church have been the Revs. William Johnson, Lewis Cheeseman, B. J. Lake, Luke Lyon, Gilbert Crawford, F. D. Ward, E. R. Beadle, John Keep, John Buckridge, W. G. McHarg, A. L. Brooks, J. T. Coit, B. R. Welch, H. E. Niles, Lyell T. Adams, S. F. Bacon, A. G. Chester, E. B. Walsworth, George F. Cain, Edward H. Rudd. Since 1895 - W. H. Cornett, Frederick Lewis, D. F. Pickard, Godfrey Chobot, Earle I. Hamlin, F. L. P. Donaldson. **Howard Rose Mar. 1964 -**

First Methodist Church of Albion

The First Methodist Church of Albion traces back to a little gathering of pioneers, in 1816, who came to hear the first Methodist preacher in the area which later became Albion. In that year Genesee Methodist Episcopal Conference set up Ridgeway Circuit and appointed Daniel Shepardson as the first preacher to ride the circuit. County historians record that he came to this vicinity to preach. A group of about twenty is said to have started meeting regularly in 1818 at Brown's schoolhouse which stood at the place later known as Rudd's Corners. In September 1818, nineteen year old Zachariah Paddock of Herkimer County was appointed to the Circuit.

This Methodist class had moved its meeting place to the village schoolhouse located on the west side of Main Street near the present railroad crossing by 1826. Circuit Preacher, John Copeland was conducting the services at that time. Attendance increased and Gideon Hard, a young lawyer who had recently settled in the village, secured the use of the court house as a meeting place three years later.

Eleven of the group then decided they were ready to organize as a Methodist Episcopal Church. These charter members of the Church were James Noble, Keziah Noble, Abigail Townsby, Eliza Townsby, Philip Brown, Polly Brown, Smith Lawrence, Abigail Lawrence, Jonathan Hitchcock, Polly Hitchcock and Martha Stevens. This was in 1830.

Soon afterward, revival services were held which resulted in a hundred conversions and Ridgeway Circuit held quarterly meeting with the new Church in the court house. Encouraged by their increased membership and the inspiration of the Conference fellowship, the members decided to build their own meeting house. As a first step they voted to adopt the name, First Methodist Episcopal Church of Albion, New York, and elected trustees in order to legally hold property. The five trustees registered at the county clerk's office on Dec. 6, 1830, were: James Noble, Philip Nichols, Gideon Hard, Jonathan Hitchcock and Daniel Brown. During the entire life of the Church, members of the family of Trustee Daniel Brown have been active. In 1968 his descendants on the Church roll are Mrs. Loraine Parmalee Wahl and her daughter, Mrs. Joan Wahl Ireland. Miss Elizabeth Wickham is the present representative of a family who began attending those Methodist meetings in Brown's schoolhouse 150 years ago.

Early in 1831 the members raised money by subscription for building their church edifice. At this point, Nehemiah Ingersol, owner of large tracts of land in the area, gave the Society a building lot on the N. E. corner of State and Platte Streets. Mr. Ingersol was not a Methodist but was a public spirited citizen interested in the development of the village. Work was begun in 1831 and the building completed and dedicated the following year. Ridgeway Circuit preachers had continued to conduct services for the Albion Methodists but in 1833, Conference appointed the Rev. Philo Woodworth as the first resident pastor of the Albion Church.

The Methodist Church grew rapidly as did the other Albion Churches of that period. In less than three decades the membership increased from 11 to about 300. Then in 1859, dissension which had been building up for some time erupted in the denomination. The bishops, who held complete authority over pastors and members in the Methodist Episcopal Church, had ordered that there should be no discussion of slavery from

from the pulpit. Most clergymen and congregations were strongly antislavery and some of them refused to keep silent. Because of this violation of orders and some doctrinal differences, a number of ministers, including the pastor of the Albion Church, were expelled from Conference. The majority of the members was outraged by this action of Genesee Conference. About 200 members withdrew and followed the Rev. Loren Stiles, Jr. in the organization of the Free Methodist Church. The bishop promptly appointed a new pastor for the M. E. congregation.

About 100 members remained loyal to Conference and carried on in spite of the greatly weakened condition of the Church and the loss of many officers. In fact, the following year they raised \$6000 and replaced their original building with a new edifice on the same lot. This is the brick church still in use by the Methodists, but with so many alterations and improvements that it would not be recognized as the building which was dedicated in 1861. At that time the pulpit was at the north end and the choir loft at the opposite end of the auditorium. The comparatively small membership continued the usual program of worship, religious education, support of local projects and Methodist missions and the improvement of their property. In 1864, the old parsonage which had been purchased in 1845, was exchanged for a lot joining the Church property on the east. Here, a new parsonage was built at a cost of \$3500. It was first occupied by the Rev. E. A. Rice and family. The accomplishments of the Church at this period were the more amazing as there was no continuity of pastoral leadership. In the seven years following the loss of two thirds of the membership there had been eight different pastors. Also during that period many of the young men of the congregation had gone to fight in the Union army and all of the people of Albion had helped to provide for ~~many~~ families of soldiers.

Later, after a few years of more stable leadership, the Rev. Samuel McGerald was appointed to the Albion Church in 1876. He immediately began holding revival services which added 232 probationers, during his three year pastorate, and brought the membership up to 329. With the greatly increased congregations, more space was needed and the transept was added and alterations made under the leadership of Rev. McGerald at a cost of about \$8000. At this time, the Hon. Gideon Hard gave a fine pipe organ to the Church. Rededication services were held on April 11, 1878, by Bishop E. O. Haven.

The spirit of evangelism continued and membership increased during the closing years of the century and on into the new. Soon after the coming of the Rev. H. C. Woods to the Albion Church in 1911, the idea of again enlarging and beautifying their church edifice began to be considered. Architects plans were studied, a financial campaign made to meet the cost, and arrangements made for again holding services in the Court house before work was begun in April, 1914. Members of the building committee were: George A. Sprague, John Bowles, W. A. Howard, Harry D. Waldo and Mrs. A. W. Woods.

An addition was built on the east side to provide space for the organ, choir loft and pulpit and adjoining rooms. Roof lines and bell tower were altered to enhance the beauty of the edifice and a large art-glass window placed in the west wall at the back of the sanctuary. This window was the gift of the pastor and family. The interior of the

church was rearranged and redecorated. The cost of the project was \$30,000 which was covered by pledges payable over a five year period. The dedication was held on March 7, 1915 with District Superintendent Rev. Ray Allen officiating. The pastorate of Rev. Woods was terminated by his death on August 26, 1917.

The centennial of the First M. E. Church of Albion, N. Y. was celebrated March 8 - 15, 1931, during the pastorate of the Rev. Elmer E. Jones. Bishop A. W. Leonard of Buffalo and District Supt. Earl D. Shepard of Rochester took part in the services. An interesting history of the Church was written by Russell Braley and published in a booklet prepared for the occasion. Membership at that time was 495.

During the 37 years since entering her second century, this Church has continued to carry on a Christian witness through changing times. Some minor changes have pertained to names and forms of organizations. After several branches of the Methodist denomination were reunited in 1939, the word, "Episcopal" was dropped and the name became First Methodist of Albion. The Epworth League in which young people had worked for many years was disbanded. The youth of the Church were organized as senior and junior Methodist Youth Fellowships. The women who had worked in Missionary and Ladies Aid Societies were reorganized as the Women's Society of Christian Service.

The property has been kept in repair and improved as dictated by modern needs. The parsonage which was enlarged in 1907, has, in more recent years, had hardwood floors, new heating and kitchen appliances installed. In connection with interior redecoration from time to time, furniture and rugs have been replaced. The cost of most parsonage improvements have been met by the ladies of the Church. In addition to routine repairs and redecoration of the church edifice, a new heating system has been installed, the kitchen remodeled and new lighting installed on the lower floor. Within the past decade a large building project has been completed.

Because of changing social and educational programs the need for expanded facilities was first suggested by the Rev. Frank Q. Beebe in 1956. Consideration of the problem during the next two years, resulted in the Church voting approval of plans for a two-story addition to the north end of their edifice, on September 21, 1958. A financial crusade to raise the necessary funds was then launched with the result that the goal of \$30,000 was surpassed by \$11,500.

The following January, a Building Committee appointed to carry out the plans, included Jacob Schanhals as chairman, Holt Andrews, Richard Bloom, Leslie Canham, Harlan Harvey, Milton Kast, Jay Levan, Mrs. John Ellis, Mrs. Charles Vick and Miss Dorothy Weeks, with the pastor, the Rev. W. H. Jessop, as ex-officio member. Balcerzak Contractors of Medina were engaged as architects and builders. The addition, containing seven class rooms, a lounge, kitchenette and toilet facilities was completed and consecrated for use on Sunday, September 27, 1959. Pledges were paid up so that the final notes were burned and the building dedicated on October 6, 1963, by Bishop W. Ralph Ward, Jr.

While increasing in membership and improving their property, spiritual values were not neglected. The Albion Church joined the Methodist Crusade for Christ, 1944-48 with its emphasis on evangelism, deeper spiritual life and increased Missionary giving. The crusade

was continued for another four years with advanced goals. The Church has always cooperated with other denominations in the village in various Christian projects. A union Daily Vacation Bible School was held for the children for a number of years. In 1948 the pastor, the Rev. C. Lacy VanNorman, attended the Conference in Amsterdam, Holland, of the World Council of Churches. The trip was sponsored by the Protestant Churches of Albion.

In 1968 the Methodist Church has a membership of 525, under the pastoral leadership of the Rev. Herbert W. H. Cory. With the exception of non-resident and invalid members, the majority are involved in the work of the Church as officers, members of various boards and committees or in the Church School, Choirs, Women's Society of Christian Service, the Wesleyan Service Guild, Youth Fellowship groups, Boy Scout Troops, Cub Pack and Girl Scouts.

The Church is in the Batavia District of Western New York Methodist Conference. It is a member of the Albion and Vicinity Council of Churches and supports the Orleans Chapter of the Genesee - Orleans Ministry of Concern. The women are involved in U.S. W. projects. Church facilities are open to all. Members volunteer much time in helping with present day problems. Sunday services include morning worship at 10 a. m., Sunday School at 11 a. m. and MYF meetings at 5:30 p. m.

Officers, Mar. 1, 1968: Trustees - Chm. Richard Bloom, Roland Kast, Mrs. Richard Appleton, Sidney Cleveland, Ralph Hurlburt, Norman Ireland, Mrs. Harlan Harvey, Ray Stoddard, Robert Stuerzebecher; Lay Member to Annual Conference - Rho B. Mitchell; District Steward - Milton Kast; Lay Leader - Arnold Vick; Financial Sec. - Mrs. Lloyd Engle; Treas. - Mrs. Clarice Hill; Recording Steward - Miss Dorothy Weeks; Chm. of Commissions, Membership and Evangelism - Mrs. Howard Vick, Education - Nelson Bond, Missions - Mrs. Kenneth Smith, Finance and Stewardship - Earl Harding, Social Concern - Mrs. Nelson Bond; Organist - Mrs. Marie Follett, Choir Director - Earl Cole.

Pastors 1833 - 1899: Philo Woodworth, Stephen P. Keys, W. J. Kent, E. B. Fuller, D. F. Parsons, C. C. Davis, Asabel N. Fillmore, D. Nutten, J. T. Arnold, H. N. Seaver, P. E. Brown, A. D. Wilbur, J. M. Fuller, C. D. Burlingham, Philo Woodworth, W. C. Kendall, B. T. Roberts, Loren Stiles, Gilbert De La Matyr, S. Seager, S. Hunt, G. G. Lyon, Allen Steele, H. R. Smith, E. A. Rice, Schuyler Seager, A. D. Wilbur, R. C. Brownlee, S. McGerald, E. E. Chambers, E. H. Latimer, J. W. Sanborn, Thomas Cardus, C. E. Millspaugh, L. A. Stevens, L. D. Watson; John Adams 1899 - 1906, W. A. V. E. Pattyson 1906 - 1908, J. F. Hartman 1908 - 1911, H. C. Woods 1911 - 1917, W. A. Harris 1917-'25, Elmer E. Jones 1925 - 1932, Mark Shenton 1932 - 1944, James Buikema 1944 - 1947, C. L. VanNorman 1947 - 1953, F. Q. Beebe 1953-1957, W. H. Jessop 1957 - 1962, H. W. H. Cory 1962 - 1969 - Earl H. Bell 1969 - then 1972 Wesley F. Kofahl from 1972 -

First Baptist Church

The first Baptists in the Albion area were members of the Baptist Church at Gaines. As the settlement by the Erie Canal grew, more Baptists came, some of whom also joined the Gaines Church. The settlement first called Newport, was incorporated as the Village of Albion, New York, April 21, 1828. About that time the local Baptists arranged with the Rev. Arah Irons, pastor of the Gaines Church, to preach occasionally in Albion. These services were held in the same schoolhouse where the Presbyterians and Methodists had held their first services a few years earlier. After a year or so the congregation wished to hold more regular services. A proposal was made to the Church at Gaines that the Albion Baptists pay half of the pastor's salary and that he divide his time between the two congregations. That Church would not agree to such an arrangement.

Realizing that the canal town was certain to continue growing, the Albion Baptists began to make plans to organize their own Church. On April 2, 1830, they held a meeting at the home of Alderman Butts, to discuss the matter. A committee was appointed to call on the Gaines Baptist Church and request letters of dismission for members who lived in Albion. This request was granted. Earlier that year, the Rev. Irons had been succeeded by the Rev. Hervey Blood as pastor of the Church at Gaines.

The First Baptist Church of Albion was organized at a meeting at the court house called for that purpose on April 17, 1830. The 26 constituent members were: Arah Irons, Phineas Briggs, Barnuel Farr, Hannah Farr, Eddy B. Paine, Sallie Paine, Alderman Butts, Lydia Butts, Isaac Leland, Rachel Leland, Veluria Leland, William Irons, Jesse Mason, Hannah Mason, Eunice Mason, Jesse Bumpus, Sarah Bumpus, Alpheus French, Nancy French, David Dunham, Sarah Dunham, Robert Beaver, Eleazer Risley, Lydia Loomis, Matilda Loveland, and Phoebe Loveland.

A formal call was extended to Rev. Arah Irons to serve as pastor of the new Church. Also at this meeting, invitations were sent to a number of Baptist Churches to sit as a council to consider recognition of the Church according to Baptist tradition. The Council met in the court house on May 6 and formally recognized the First Baptist Church of Albion. The Medina Church was among those whose delegates formed the Council and their pastor, the Rev. Eleaser Savage, delivered the address to the new Church.

The congregation continued to hold their worship services in the schoolhouse for some months. Then the growing Church asked for the privilege of meeting in the court house until the members could build their own meeting house. The court house must have been a busy place on Sundays in those days, for the Presbyterians and Methodists had been holding their services there for some time. It is probable that the Baptists did not begin meeting there until the Presbyterians moved into their partially completed edifice in October 1830.

As a first step toward acquiring property, the Church legally incorporated on December 22, 1830. The board of trustees elected at that time consisted of: Alderman Butts, Lewis Warner, Barnuel Farr, Roswell S. Burrows and Sidney Barrell. A building lot was purchased March 30, 1831. It was located on the west side of Main Street, just north of the Burrows residence, which is now the Swann Library. Here the Baptists built their first meeting house which was completed and dedicated in 1832.

Farr as superintendent on January 1, 1831, while they were still meeting in the court house.

Membership had increased gradually from the time the Church was organized. After moving into their own building programs were expanded and growth became more rapid. In the spring of 1858, as a result of revival meetings, so many new members came into the Church that the meeting house was overcrowded. Plans had to be made to build an edifice adequate for present and future needs of the growing Church. In August of that year, a lot on the south east corner of Park and Liberty Streets, extending south to Beaver Street was purchased at a cost of \$3000. The following year building funds were raised and plans decided on for the present brick edifice. It was built at an expense of a little over \$22,000 and dedicated in 1860.

When the Albion Baptist Church celebrated her fiftieth anniversary in 1880, membership had grown to 460. Records show that during that half century, 1,734 persons had united with the Church, many of whom had, of course, been removed by death, others by moving away from Albion and some by being dropped from membership for failing to live a Christian life. During the nineteenth century Baptist Churches and most other denominations expected their members to follow the teachings of Christ in their daily lives. The pastor, aided by the deacons and an advisory board, known at that time as the Prudential Committee, was the leader of the religious life of the Church. The property was held and maintained by the legally organized society made up of Church members and other contributors, with government vested in a board of six trustees.

During the following twenty years programs of worship, religious instruction, evangelism and support of missions were continued and improvements to the property made from time to time. A pipe organ was installed in 1883. Four years later an addition was built on the south end of the edifice which contained a chapel and Sunday School rooms with kitchen and dining room below. These improvements, with the required equipment and furniture brought the cost of the building up to \$40,000 by the end of the century.

The first parsonage, which was on State Street, was procured in 1850. Fifteen years later it was sold and property facing on Park Street, directly across Liberty from the new Church, was purchased. This parsonage was used for nearly fifty years. The parsons cultivated the large garden, either for the sake of exercise and a love for growing things, or to stretch their salaries by providing food, depending on the size of their families. About 1912 the old house was moved to the back of the lot and set up, facing Liberty Street. An attractive new parsonage was built on the old site.

The First Baptist Church of Albion grew steadily until near the close of the nineteenth century, during most of which time of course, the village was increasing in population. The high point was reached in 1894 when 337 members were reported. Thereafter membership declined gradually for two decades. Then during the winter of 1915-16 the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians joined in sponsoring evangelistic services which were held in a large temporary building erected for the meetings. More than 70 new members came into the Baptist Church and enrollment was again above 500 for a few years, after which it again went ^{down} a little and then remained about the same for 20 years. In 1947 the membership was sharply cut to remove all inactive

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members and the following year a membership of only 330 was reported but at the same time increased giving was reported. Additions soon brought the membership to above 400 again with continued small additions nearly every year.

During the present century the members have kept the Church edifice in repair and made many improvements. In connection with redecoration of the sanctuary in 1913 the lovely Burrows and Swann memorial windows were installed. A new Mollar organ was installed in 1923. At mid-century the addition built in 1887 was completely remodeled to meet present religious educational and social programs. The newly furnished chapel-parlor was dedicated as a memorial to Mrs. J. R. McGregor who was a devoted member of the Church for many years. A few years later a new heating system for the sanctuary was purchased. The sanctuary was redecorated in 1955 and new lighting fixtures and new drapes in front of the baptistry were included in the project. Later memorial gifts replaced the communion table and pulpit furniture. On May 24, 1959 the Church celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of their imposing brick edifice.

In addition to their own local programs the Albion Baptists are active in the Niagara Baptist Association, the New York Baptist Organization and the American Baptist Convention, whose missionary programs the Church supports. In 1967 the Albion Church accepted a goal of \$10,000 in the A.B.C. World Mission Campaign for \$20,000,000 for capital needs of mission programs at home and abroad. In their local canvass the members pledged \$12,600 to be paid in a three year period for this cause.

In 1968 the pastor of the Albion Church, who has served since 1963, is the Rev. Lawrence L. Plumley. Membership is 41, Sunday School enrollment 100. The work of the Church is directed by the pastor with the assistance of the Board of Trustees, the Diaconate and the Board of Christian Education. Organizations are: the Women's Fellowship, Philathea Circle, Dorcas Circle, Yakclub,, Guild Fellowship, SR. and Jr. B. Y. F., The Sunday School and the Choir. The Church sponsors Boy and Girl Scout Troops. The Church supports the Albion and Vicinity Council of Churches, Church Women United and the Orleans Chapter of the G.- O. Ministry of Concern and other programs attempting to deal with present day problems and the pastor and many members donate much time to these projects. Regular Sunday worship services are held at 10:00 a. m. Sunday School at 11:15 a. m., BYF meetings at 5 p.m.

Officers: Moderator - William Hudson, Clerk - Miss Lucy Fancher, Treasurer - Mrs. Wallace Forder, Financial Sec. Mrs. LeVere Brown, Benev. Treas. - Mrs. William Hudson, S. S. Supt.-Mrs. Richard Fenton, Chm. Bd. of Trustees - Ernest Smith, Chm. Diaconate - John Archer, Chm. Bd. Christian Ed.- Mrs. Lawrence Plumley

Pastors: 1830 - 1968 Arah Irons, Whitman Metcalf, John Maxwell, Eleazer Savage, Aaron Jackson, John Smitzer, J. N. Murdock, Silas Ilsley, A. C. Barrell, J. B. Jackson, E. R. Sawyer, J. W. B. Clark, W. H. Sloan, A. C. Osborne, A. E. Waffle, David Jamison, W. J. Ford, W. C. Taylor, J. S. Everton, Ward Hurlburt, H. LM. Rice, William Nixon, Albert Bristol, C. T. Holman, J. P. Faust, L. L. Plumley 1963-Sept. 1969, Donald Robinson Intirim Pastor 1969 -'70, Jarvis G. Schwarz 1970 -

Christ Episcopal Church Albion, New York

Members of the Protestant Episcopal Church do not seem to have been among the early settlers in the Barre and Gaines area. The Rev. Samuel Bowles, Rector of St. James' Church in Batavia, brought an Episcopal missionary, the Rev. Oren Miller, to the village of Albion, on June 7, 1844, with the intention of organizing a Church. Diligent inquiry disclosed only two members of that faith in the village. However, the missionary was not easily discouraged. He rented a house that day and one week later moved his family to Albion. The day after his arrival, Rev. Miller obtained permission to hold services the next day, Sunday, June 16, in the assembly room of the Academy. He scattered printed notices of the meeting throughout the village and by persistent search found a few more people who had been members of Episcopal Churches before moving to Albion.

The small but growing congregation continued to meet at the Academy until July 21, when they arrived to find that without any prior notice to Rev. Miller, the trustees had locked the building. The congregation assembled on the grounds and then went to the home of one of the group to hold the service. The reason for the action of the trustees is not clear. Perhaps they thought the zealous missionary was attempting to recruit members from the established Churches in the village. If it was their purpose to discourage the organization of an Episcopal Church, their action had quite the opposite result. Public sympathy for the small congregation was aroused and money was quickly given to enable them to rent a room and procure suitable furnishings for their meetings before the next Sunday.

The day after their first service in their new quarters, Monday, July 29, 1844, the parish was organized and incorporated under the name, "The Rector, Wardens and Vestrymen of Christ Church, at Albion, New York." Those elected to office at this time were: Rev. Oren Miller, Rector; Marsena Ballard and William Walker, wardens; T. S. Clark, Joshua Rathbone, James Mattison, Edwin Wilbur, C. A. Harrington, G.W. Bedell, Hercules Reed and Charles Thurston, vestrymen. It is interesting to note that the congregation was legally organized as a parish before there were any communicant members of the Protestant Episcopal Church. On August 18, the Rector received 33 communicants into the Church and baptized 3 infants. At the diocesan convention on August 31, Christ Church was admitted as a member of the diocese.

Membership increased as new families came to Albion. One who came soon after the Church was formed, was Zephaniah Clark who had been active in an Episcopal Church in Troy. He served as senior warden of Christ Church for forty years and some of his descendants have always been among the members of the Church.

The Episcopalians were anxious to own their own meeting house and worked so devotedly with their enthusiastic rector, that within four months they had purchased a desirable lot and some building materials. Realizing that it would take some time to raise enough money to erect a suitable building, the parish, in 1845, took advantage of the opportunity to acquire the Presbyterian edifice. They exchanged their lot and construction supplies for the substantial brick on Main St. which was ready for immediate use. The

interior of the building was plain and quite unsuited to the Episcopal form of worship. They began holding services there at once, however, and gradually remodeled and refurnished the church to their own taste.

Christ Church celebrated her fiftieth anniversary in 1894. The congregation then had a beautiful place of worship with white marble altar, a lovely font, stained glass windows, an artistic altar rail and many other suitable appointments, most of which had been given as memorials of early members of the parish or of beloved children of members who had died in childhood. The original building had been enlarged by the addition of a guild house at the west end, the bell tower remodeled and other exterior improvements made. The Church owned a rectory facing on Liberty St. with grounds joining the church lot at the rear. A pipe organ had been installed at an unknown date and a surpliced choir introduced in 1888. Membership had increased during the half century to 208 and there was a Sunday School with an enrollment of about 100. Two women's Societies, the Guild and the Auxiliary, had been organized a few years earlier.

Improvement of the property continued as the parish entered into her second half century of growth. An annex built onto the guild hall in 1898, provided space for dining room and kitchen. Members then appear to have rested for a few years from their labors on the property. In 1916 new lighting was installed in all of the church buildings. Three years later alterations were again made on the bell tower and the front of the church. In 1923 Christ Church finally gave proper recognition to the devoted women members of the parish. They were invited to attend business meeting and allowed to vote.

The Rev. Francis B. Dunham, who had served as rector for 25 years and did much to build up the parish, retired in 1908. He remained in Albion and when he died in 1920 he bequeathed his Platt St. home to Christ Church. Three years later the vestry sold the old rectory and for 14 years the rector lived in the former Dunham house. In 1937, when the Rev. John Sanborn came to Albion, the Liberty Street house happened to be vacant. The new rector and his family moved into that more conveniently located house. Later the vestry repurchased the place and it has since belonged to the parish.

Because of the increasing difficulty in securing rectors for small town Episcopal Churches, the Albion and Holley parishes united in calling the Rev. Ralph M. Davis in 1931 and have since that time been served by one rector. In 1931, also, the interior of the Albion church was completely redecorated and somewhat remodeled.

In 1960, under the leadership of rector Jack H. Smith, the undercroft of the original church was entirely rebuilt, providing class rooms, office and rest rooms. The cost of this extensive project was kept down by the large amount of skilled labor contributed by men of the parish. The bell tower ^{was} again rebuilt in 1963. The Rev. Jack Smith resigned as rector in the early fall of 1967 and the family moved to Syracuse on Nov. 1. While the rectory was vacant it was completely redecorated, repaired and the kitchen modernized.

Through the years the women of Christ Church have worked devotedly to help support the parish. Their earliest organizations, the Women's Guild and the Women's Auxiliary were responsible for supplying choir vestments, hymnals and prayer books, altar cloths, dishes and other supplies for the dining room. They also often raised money for

for larger projects such as a new furnace for the parish house and redecoration of the interior of the church. After many of the older members had passed away, the two societies were combined. In 1931 younger women organized the Bishop Brent Guild which has contributed generously to the upkeep of the parish. In 1955 this group began sponsoring Saturday dancing classes as a fund raising project. The present Altar Guild was organized during the rectorship of the Rev. John Sanborn, with Charlotte Stevenson as chairman, a position she has held since that time. The Women's Annual Thank Offering adds considerable to the benevolence giving of the Church. In recent years all women of Christ Church, as in other Episcopal Parishes, are members of the new organization known as Women of The Church. Mrs. B. F. Rumsey is the President. In 1968 women of the Episcopal Church have a new importance, as, for the first time, they now may be elected to the vestry.

This Church has often been active in projects outside of her own membership. In 1943, under the leadership of the Rev. G. F. Dutton, the parish worked with the Episcopal Church of Batavia to minister to young men from Jamaica who were living in a work camp in Elba. A Nursery School for small children of the area has been sponsored by the Church since 1960. Rooms in the building are used as a meeting place for Boy Scouts and were used for some time by a local chapter of the NAACP.

The Rev. Owen J. Dice accepted a call to the rectorship in December and moved his family to Albion to begin his work in January, 1968. Present membership is about 190 with a very small Sunday School. The new rector started at once to build the Church School and other Youth programs. The congregation still worships in the oldest church edifice in Albion, built in 1831, which is now a part of the modern religious plant of Christ Episcopal Parish. They belong to the Diocese of Western New York. The Church is a member of the Albion and Vicinity Council of Churches, supports the Orleans Chapter of the Ministry of Concern and other projects for the benefit of minority groups.

1968 Officers : Sr. Warden - Burr B. Trumble, Jr. Warden - Ashley R. Ward, Vestrymen - Elsie Callard. Agnes Rumsey, Hamilton Doherty, Sr., Cary Lattin, Franklin T. Butts, Hubert W. Standish, Sr., Francis H. Blake, Jr., Harold A. Farnsworth, David Stevenson; Clerk - Ross Sanger, Treasurer- Dorothy Ross.

Rectors: Revs. Oren Miller, Pembroke Kidder, Malcolm Douglass, W. M. Carmichael, Andrew Mackey, Robert N. Park, Levi W. Smith, G. W. Southwell, Edwin Coann, Michael Scofield, Reynold M. Kirby, Francis Gelhart, Elihu T. Sanford, James H. Barnard, Francis S. Dunham, 1883-1908, 1908 - 1910 No rector, 1910 - 1918 - Glenn W. White, 1918 - 1919 No rector, 1919- 1921 - George J. Bamsfield, 1921- '22 Interim pastors, 1922 - 1929 - Charles P. Burgoon, 1929 - 1931 - No rector. 1931 Joined with Holley. 1931 -1937 - Ralph M. Davis, 1937 - 1940 - John T. Sanborn 1940 - 1942 - Elmore C. Young, 1942- 1943 No rector, 1943 - 1947- George F. Dutton, 1947 - 1949- no rector, 1949 - 1952 - Vicent R. Brown, 1952 - 1955 - Harold F. Woodcott, 1955 - 1958 - William J. Youngman, 1958 - 1967 - Jack H. Smith, 1968 - '72 Owen J. Dice, Robert W. Temple 1972 -

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First Free Methodist Church
Albion, New York

The Free Methodist Church of Albion was organized in the fall of 1859 with the largest charter membership of any nineteenth century Church in the area.

The Rev. Loren Stiles, Jr., pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, did not comply with Genesee Conference rules that the subject of slavery must not be mentioned in the pulpit during those bitter pre-Civil War years. He also differed with diocesan authority on some other matters of doctrine and discipline. As a result, Genesee Methodist Episcopal Conference summarily removed Rev. Stiles from his pastorate and dismissed him from Conference. Nearly 200 members of the Church followed their pastor out of the M. E. denomination and organized a new Church which they named the "Congregational Free Methodist Church of Albion." The controversy had been in Genesee Conference and the members who remained in the Albion M. E. Church maintained friendly relations with the new organization.

An available lot on the southeast corner of State and Platte streets, directly opposite their former church home, was promptly purchased. Here, the Free Methodists began to build their meeting house. They arranged to hold services in the old academy until it was possible to meet in their partially completed building. The new church was ready for dedication on May 18, 1860. Sheds were soon afterward built to shelter the horses of worshipers who came from a distance. The site and buildings cost about \$10,000.

A number of other ministers had been expelled from Genesee Conference at this time and a few others had withdrawn in sympathy with them. All or a part of the congregations of these pastors had withdrawn from the M. E. Churches involved and joined with their pastors in forming independent Methodist Churches. On August 23, 1860, about 80 laymen and 15 preachers from these Churches met at Pekin, Niagara County, N. Y. to form the Free Methodist denomination and adopt a Discipline to guide them. The episcopacy and the office of presiding elder were abolished. It was planned to hold annual and quadrennial conventions to be composed of an equal number of laymen and ministers. Doctrines set forth in the writings of John Wesley were included. A general superintendent was elected to have oversight of the Churches. The word "Free" in their name stood for many things; free pews in a time when many churches charged pew rent, freedom of the clergy from the absolute authority of a bishop, freedom of laymen to have a voice in Conference and their strong desire for the freedom of the slaves.

The first session of the Eastern Convention of the Free Methodist Church was held in Rushford, Alleghany County, N. Y. in November of 1860. It was composed of fourteen preachers and an equal number of lay delegates. The Albion Church united with the Convention at this time and dropped the word "Congregational" from their name. A committee of five clergymen and five laymen made the pastoral appointments. Rev. Stiles was returned to the Albion Church. Free Methodist Conventions were also organized in Michigan and other midwestern states.

The Free Methodists in Albion carried on a very active program but never increased the rather large membership with which they started. They were a singing Church and loved to sing the gospel hymns. Simplicity in all things was one of their distinguishing

characteristics and for many years no musical instrument was allowed in the church. At about the turn of the century a piano was used to accompany the singing. For many years now, a fine organ has assisted the congregation in singing praise to God.

Through the years the members have worked to improve their property. A house on the west side of Platt St. some distance south of the church was purchased in 1875 to serve as a parsonage. When the church edifice was built the auditorium was upstairs from the main entrance and above the Sunday School and Prayer rooms. In 1900 the building was extensively remodeled. The auditorium was placed on the main floor and made smaller to allow for two rooms at the south end of the building for use by the Sunday School and prayer groups. The State Street entrance to the church was moved from the center to the west corner to permit people to enter at the rear of the sanctuary which faces the pulpit on the east. Other repairs and improvements to the building were made at that time.

In 1957 the property next to the church on the south was purchased to replace the old parsonage which was not so conveniently located. The Rev. Marvin Sweezy, who came to the pastorate that year, and his family, were the first to occupy this parsonage. At about this time, also, the pastor and some of the men began to excavate under the church in order to construct a good useable basement. Work progressed slowly at first. When the Rev. W. A. Mason became pastor in the early fall of 1963, he went to work energetically on the project himself and soon a number of the men of the congregation joined in the work whenever possible. Before the close of his ministry with the Albion Church, in August, 1966, the basement was available for use but the rooms were not finished. The Rev. Bruce Easterling who came to the pastorate in August 1967, and some of the men have been working hard to complete the project. The interior will soon be entirely paneled and attractively finished. Rest rooms, kitchen and large dining which can be divided into class rooms, are located there. Building materials and equipment were, of course, purchased, but the cost of the project has been kept down because most of the labor was donated.

When the Free Methodists organized as a denomination more than a century ago, the titles, Bishop and Conference, were very distasteful to them. After some years, however, the names, General Superintendent and Convention, were replaced by the old familiar Methodist terms. The Albion Church is a member of Genesee Free Methodist Conference with the Rev. Myron Boyd serving as Bishop. The Free Methodists have not departed from the belief of the founding fathers that the task of the Church was to lead people to personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour and to so teach and inspire them to follow His leadership in their daily lives. Each member would then be an influence for integrity, justice and brotherhood in all circumstances. The motto of the Albion Church is, "Enter to Worship - Depart to Serve."

First Free Methodist Church of Albion, in 1968, has a membership of about 50 which is only a quarter of the number of members who founded the Church. This small membership, however, by tithing and consecrated service, carries on a very active program. The Sunday schedule includes Sunday School at 10: a. m. with an enrollment of 100 and average attendance of 80; worship services at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. and Free Methodist Youth meeting at 6:45 p. m. A younger

group, the Christian Youth Crusaders, meets Wednesday evenings at 7 p. m. Adults also have a Bible Study and Prayer Meeting at the church that evening. Other organizations are the Women's Missionary Society and the Couple's Club. In addition to their local and missionary budgets and Conference expenses, the Church supports the work of the Orleans Ministry of Concern and members help with Church Women, United, projects and other community programs. The present pastor is the Rev. Bruce J. Easterling.

March 1, 1968 Officers: Trustees - Lynn Parsons, Robert Matson, Leon Miller, Kenneth Walters, and Paul Staines; Sec. Mrs. Bruce Easterling; Treas.- Mrs. Paul Staines; Sunday School Supt. - Robert Matson; Jr. Church Leader - Mrs. Lynn Parsons; Organist-Miss Phyllis Parker.

Pastors 1859 - 1967 Revs. Loren Stiles, Jr., Cornelius D. Brooks, John D. Reddy, A. O. Curry, James Matthews, George W. Coleman, George W. Marcellus, William Jackson, Anthony N. Moore, Joseph Travis, Samuel K. J. Chesbrough, Wilson T. Hogg, M. D. McDonald, J. G. Terrill, A. H. Bennett, C. C. Eggleston, John O'Regan, Emory A. Taylor, J. S. Bradbrook, A. H. Bennett, W. J. Wiffen, E. C. Reber, J. H. Harmon, J. J. Kelley, L. A. Southworth, J. H. Wheeler, Samuel Rogers, L. J. Clark, H. L. Smith, L. E. Seeley, T. S. Simpson, G. B. Bates, A. J. Walters, E. J. Cook, A. J. Miles, Stanley Magill, Thomas Hamilton, Harry Girts, L. E. Fletcher, Leland Bowman, Marvin Sweezy, Robert Johnson, W. A. Mason, Richard Fairbanks. *Bruce Easterling Aug. 1967 -*

Rev. A. K. Bacon, a charter member of the Church, served as local preacher for many years, when ever the pastor was absent.

African Methodist Episcopal Church

The Albion A. M. E. Church had its beginning in a Mission which was started for the colored people of Albion in 1873. It is not known exactly when they came here as there is no record of any Negroes being among the first settlers who took up land. It is probable that some were among the many laborers who came to work on the construction of the Erie Canal. The earliest Negro resident of the county of whom there are records was Richard Gordineer who came to Medina in 1823. He was said to be the cook on the first boat that passed through the canal. He also worked as a cook in hotels and for wealthy families and at other occupations. Mr. Gordineer was a member of the Orleans County Pioneer Association for many years. In 1892, at the age of 98 he was asked to speak at the annual meeting and gave an interesting account of his life. The following year he was honored as the oldest member present. He was very feeble at that time and died soon afterward. By the latter part of the nineteenth century there were quite a few colored people in Albion. They were industrious people who worked at various occupations, a number being tinsmiths, at least one a plumber and some doing janitor work. Many owned their own homes. They were welcome to attend any of the Churches in Albion and a few did but most of them had no Church affiliation.

Judge Arad Thomas, a man who was interested in all the people of the community, became concerned about the religious needs of the Negro residents. Learning that they would like to have a Church of their own, Judge Thomas took the initiative in starting a Mission for them in 1873. The first colored preachers who conducted services at the Mission probably came from Lockport, for two A. M. E. Churches had been started there at an earlier date. Like many earlier Christian groups in Albion, the colored people at first held their services in a schoolhouse. The first trustees elected by the congregation were Stephen Dickus, William McIntyre and Jacob Carter. After meeting as a Mission for fifteen years the people decided to organize a Church.

Albion African Methodist Episcopal Church was formed on October 11, 1888. The Orleans Republican of October 17, 1888, gave the following account.

Pursuant to the notice given last week by Rev. T. E. Franklin, the colored people of Albion met on Thursday evening to take into consideration the need of organizing an A. M. E. Church. The meeting was called to order by Rev. T. E. Franklin, the State Missionary, who led in singing and prayer. J. W. Peterson was then elected president, and M. R. Sheldon was elected secretary. The president then stated the object of the meeting and after discussing it, it was moved that we have an A. M. E. Church, and it was carried and the following committee were appointed on lot: G. S. Cone, G. L. Myers, Jacob Carter, Perry Smith, Eli Wilson. The following persons joined as charter members: Mrs. R. Sheldon, Mrs. Lizzie Myers, Mrs. J. W. Peterson, Mrs. Liddy Morris, Mrs. E. L. Morris, Mrs. C. Beecher, Mrs. J. Carter, Mrs. Mary Morris, Mrs. E. Wilson, Miss Hattie Morris, J. W. Peterson, R. Sheldon, A. B. Myers, Eli Wilson, J. Carter, G. L. Myers, Perry Smith.

Bethel A. M. E. Conference soon afterward recognized the new Church and accepted it as a member of the Conference. The Rev. Peter Stewart was appointed as the first pastor. In 1891 the local papers carried many items about the A. M. E. Church, and the Rev. D. K. Jackson who was the pastor at that time. March 19, "The pastor of the A. M. E.

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"Rev. D. K. Jackson of Albion was given a benefit last week in Medina where he has been holding services among the colored people." June 17, "The L.M. U. A. Society of the A. M. E. Church will hold their annual lawn social at the residence of J. W. Peterson on West Bank St. Tuesday evening June 30."

In 1893 the Society purchased a house and lot on the East side of Ingersol St. just north of the canal. The house was used for a parsonage. The following spring it was moved a few feet south in order to allow space on the lot to build their meeting house. Trustees of the A. M. E. Church when the deed to the property was received were; Stephen B. Spencer, William Spradley, W. A. Cone, Perry Smith and John Peterson. The small frame church was built in 1894. The Rev. William J. Johnson was then pastor and the membership had grown to 60.

It has been impossible to locate later records of the Church. A 1903 Directory of Orleans County, lists the Albion A. M. E. Church as being without a pastor and holding no services at that time. An Albion Directory published in 1908, names the Rev. L. Walter DeShields as pastor, Sunday services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. and Sunday School at 12 m. During the early years of the present century the last of the early members of the Church passed away and most of their descendants seem to have left Albion during the following years. There is one former member, Miss Laura Wilson, who is now a member of the First Methodist Church and sings in the choir. Miss Wilson is the niece of several of the charter members of the Church and remembers most of the others. She also recall the names of some of the pastors. She remembers the Rev. Allyne as a well educated, cultured gentleman who served the Church many years ago. Others were a Rev. Chapelle and Rev. Harris who served faithfully for a number of years. Miss Wilson also remembers when the Albion Church entertained a meeting of Bethel Conference. The local members worked hard to provide a big dinner for all who attended. Miss Wilson mentioned that a granddaughter of her uncle, A. B. Myers who was a charter member of the Church, graduated some years ago from Albion High School as valedictorian of her class. This was Miss Bettie Myers, who, after continuing her education, had an excellent position in Washington D. C. She later married there.

Miss Wilson said that after the membership of the A. M. E. Church became too small to support a pastor, the property was taken over by Bethel Conference and pastors of other Churches were sent to conduct services for a few years. Albion A. M. E. Church probably finally closed about 1940. The parsonage and church building still stand.

St. Paul's Baptist Church of Albion

St. Paul's Baptist Church was organized in May, 1964, by a group from Bethel Baptist Church of Medina. The organizer and present pastor is the Rev. Andrew Bennett of Buffalo. The Society purchased the A.M.E. property on Ingersol St. from the Conference on May 22, 1965. The following year they painted the church and erected a neat sign giving the name of the Church and the pastor and the time of services on Sunday. Morning worship is at 11 a. m., Sunday School at 10 a. m. Membership of the Church is 10.

Officers in 1968 are: Secretary - Mrs. Queen Brandon of Albion, Treasurer - Rubie Fribbley, Albion, Trustee - Ethal L. Thomas, Medina. The Society is planning to repair and redecorate the parsonage in 1968.

St. Jacob's Evangelical Lutheran Church U. A. C.

Few German people came to Orleans County until late in the nineteenth century and then most of them settled in Kendall. Some families did come into the Albion area during the early eighteenth century and a somewhat larger number settled around Medina at about the same time. The Rev. A. T. Hanser of Lockport organized the first Lutheran Church in Medina in 1885. The following year he came to Albion to visit the Lutherans in this vicinity. He conducted the first service for them in the Presbyterian Sunday School chapel in October.

Rev. Hanser continued to come occasionally to Albion to conduct services and before the close of 1886 he formed an Evangelical Lutheran Society. The Medina Church was growing and in 1887, the Rev. George Bartling was appointed pastor and also given the care of the Albion group. Apparently at this time the Lutherans changed their place of meeting to a building on East State Street near the stone quarries. A year later they organized as a Church and incorporated under the name, St. Jacob's Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, U. A. C. The incorporation was recorded in the County Clerk's office as follows:

"St. Jacob's Congregation, U. A. C. Evangelical Lutheran Church, which has heretofore for about a year past held their services in the Y. M. C. A. Mission School, the so-called Quarry Chapel of Albion, assembled there November 28, 1888, for the purpose of organizing themselves into a Church and to elect officers.

George Bartling, pastor, Christian Gladow and Louis Pangburn, nominated to preside. Trustees elected - Wm. Benthin, Christian Scharping and Christian Gladow."

Regular services were maintained in this building and in 1889, according to LANDMARKS OF ORLEANS COUNTY, the village of Albion gave the so-called Quarry chapel to the Lutherans for their place of worship. It was dedicated by St. Jacob's Evangelical Lutheran congregation in December of that year. This Church was certainly unique in being presented with a house for worship. Early members of other Churches had to work hard to raise money to build their meeting houses. The origin of the Quarry chapel remains unknown. Considerable research has failed to reveal when, by whom or for what purpose the building was erected. Also, no record has been found of a deed being given by the village to the Trustees of the Church. However, when St. Jacob's sold their church to another organization, the deed was recorded.

The Rev. Paul Graupner succeeded Rev. Bartling in 1892 as pastor of Trinity Church in Medina and St. Jacob's. No Church records are now available and few facts about it can be found. It is known to have continued holding services for about 35 years. But St. Jacob's Evangelical Lutheran Church is not listed in an 1903 Orleans County Directory or an Albion Directory for 1909. In 1903 the Church was probably without a pastor, for the Medina Church is listed as being without a pastor at that time.

Among Albion and vicinity families who were members of St. Jacob's were the Benthins, Gladows, Longs, Scharpings and Schmackpfeffers. Mrs. Louis Smith remembers attending the church during her childhood and until she left home to live in Rochester for some years. She was confirmed in St. Jacob's Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1913. Two pastors whom she recalls were Rev. Peckler who was also pastor of

the Medina Church and a Rev. Klien who came from Oakfield to conduct services. Trinity Church in Medina was growing and needed a full time pastor. The number of Lutheran families in Albion did not increase and as older members died and young people moved away the congregation became too small to keep the property in repair and maintain services.

In 1925 St. Jacob's trustees, Edward Benthin and Fred Long deeded the building to Chiesa Christiana Inc., which is the organization of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Western New York. This organization arranged for the pastor of the Lutheran Church in Brockport to hold services for the Albion group on Sunday afternoons. These arrangements were continued for a decade or more until too few members of St. Jacob's Church were left to make a congregation. Those who wished to attend Lutheran services could drive to Trinity Church in Medina.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Salvatore purchased the Quarry Chapel from Chiesa Christiana Inc. November 9, 1946, and have remodeled it into a very attractive home. Today, few Albion people are aware that St. Jacob's Evangelical Lutheran Church ever existed.

525 East Center St

ST. Mary's Assumption Church

The pioneer settlers of Orleans County were by no means unique in their desire to build places of worship as soon as possible after establishing their homes. Many years later Polish families settled in Albion. At first they worshiped at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, which was then located on North Main Street. Few of them understood English and they longed for a Church of their own. They worked hard and gave generously to establish St. Mary's Polish Parish.

People had come to America from Poland since colonial days. It was not until about 1880, however, that a few chanced to come to Orleans County. Near Albion they found work in the stone quarries. About 1885, Gilbert Brady, who had become the sole owner of a quarry located a mile and one half east of Albion on the south side of the canal, purchased adjacent land and planned to increase his operations. Polish men who worked for Mr. Brady wrote to relatives and friends in the homeland telling them of the opportunity for work here. Many came. Among a group who came in the spring of 1887 was Ignatius Rajs and family. A daughter, Valeria, was born during the voyage on March 25. They found places to live in the northeastern part of Albion and the men and older boys went to work, most of them in the quarries. Life was hard, for most of the people had used all of their resources to pay for the long journey. The quarries could not be worked during winter months so the men did not have year around employment. Many of the women worked in the bean houses which at that period employed bean sorters in winter. Older girls found employment in private homes or hotels. They were industrious, thrifty and religious. Soon they had gardens, chickens, pigs and a cow to help provide abundant food for their families. The men took pride in their work and after a short time some of them became able to perform the skilled labor required in certain quarry jobs at higher wages. They worshiped at St. Joseph's Church.

It was not a lack of love for their native land that caused the Polish people to come to America. Indeed, they are a very patriotic people. But Poland has for centuries been the victim of aggressive neighbors, and at that time was entirely ruled by hated conquerors. Through the years many have left their beloved country to seek freedom in America. Those who came to Albion in the latter part of the nineteenth century were from the area held by Germany. They soon applied for citizenship in this country.

A Mission for the Polish people in Albion was established in 1890 and a priest came from Buffalo to celebrate mass for them twice a month. When the 1890 census figures were published they showed that there were nearly 200 Polish families in Albion and vicinity. Bishop Stephen Ryan of Buffalo then appointed the Rev. Bartholomew Swinko as pastor and gave him the task of organizing a parish. He came to Albion immediately after his appointment on August 12, 1891.

Father Swinko promptly arranged to hold regular services in St. Joseph's school hall on North Main St. and then carefully considered the needs of the parish. Property on Brown and Moore Streets was purchased which included in addition to a fine site for a church, ample grounds and two buildings which could readily be converted for use as rectory and parochial school. the name " Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish" was chosen. Plans for the erection of

Albion, on August 14, 1892, was the scene of a great demonstration of devotion to God and brotherly love. Older members of the Church remember their parents telling of large delegations coming from Polish Parishes in Buffalo, Tonawanda, Niagara Falls, Lockport, Syracuse and Rochester to join their Albion brethren in the ceremony of laying the cornerstone of the church. Special trains brought the visitors to Albion where they were met by the local Polish families with a band. They marched in parade through the village to the parish property on Brown Street. Several of the delegations had also brought bands. It was said that the parade was so long that the leaders reached the site of the ceremony before the last of the marchers left the Railroad station on Clinton Street.

The construction begun with such enthusiasm was carried on expeditiously. The attractive brick edifice was dedicated on February 8, 1893. The people of the parish had given generously of their slender resources to make their wish come true and they rejoiced to have their own church with the beautiful altars, statues and paintings they held in such reverence. One of the men, Joseph Cichoki, had cut the font for holy water from a stone out of the quarry where he worked.

The Rajs family, soon Americanized the spelling of their name to Rice. Valeria, who was always called Fannie, later became Mrs. Frank Noreck. She remembers that she and other children of the parish attended the school which was taught by the priest and the organist, Marek Dudo. Many Polish people have musical talent and St. Mary's always had a good choir. Mrs. Noreck said that her father brought several instruments with them on the long journey from Poland, and they always had music in their home. Her brother, Stanley Rice, was an eager pupil, both at school and at lessons on the Church organ. While still a boy he became the first local organist, a position he held for fifty years. His son, Leonard Rice, succeeded him. Stanley Rice also taught in the parochial school. At an unknown date, two Sisters of Mercy were brought to the parish to help with the teaching. Mrs. Noreck remembers that Father Swinko trained at least six boys to serve as acolytes. Among these first Altar boys were Frank Daniels, Frank Romanski and her brothers, Anthony and Stanley. She could not recall the names of the others.

During the pastorate of the Rev. Leopold Stein the old schoolhouse was sold and moved off the property. The present building, erected to provide both school facilities and living quarters for the Sisters, was blessed on April 17, 1907. The following year the Rev. Stanislaus Bubacz, who was then pastor, petitioned Mother Mary Jerome, the Provincial Superior of the Felician Sisters in Buffalo, to send three sisters to teach in the new parochial school. September 29, 1909 the school opened under the administration of the Felician Sisters with a registration of 123 pupils.

The present rectory was built under the direction of the Rev. Charles Mioduszewski in 1912. The slate for the rectory roof and for the roof of a house being built at the same time on the Ridge Road near the end of Brown Road, was brought to Albion by canal boat and unloaded under the Brown Street Bridge.

Many improvements were made to the church edifice during the thirteen year pastorate of the Rev. Adam Borowiak. His was the longest period of service in the history of the parish. Father Borowiak supervised a complete renovation of the building. The brick walls were

were faced with stonework and a new entrance added which enclosed the front steps. Interior walls were repainted, altars and statues refinished and paintings restored. New pews and kneelers were installed and memorial gifts provided lovely new windows and stations of the Cross. A modern low altar and new pulpit were also given. Members and organizations gave generously to provide the money for the improvements.

The present pastor of St. Mary's Assumption Church, as it is now usually called, is the Rev. Walter J. Waligora, who assumed his duties in October, 1966. A recent project has been the construction of a large parking area across the street from the Church on property bequeathed to the parish.

In 1967 the seventy-fifth anniversary of the parish was observed as the Parish was incorporated on February 3, 1892 and the Church edifice built that year. There are 170 families who belong to the parish with about fifty children in the school which is taught by three Felician Sisters. The quarries around Albion have long since ceased to be operated, as beautiful stone work has been almost completely replaced by concrete, wood, brick and other building materials which can be used with greater speed and less labor. Descendants of the quarry workers for whom the parish was formed, have moved to all parts of the U. S. A. Those who have remained in Albion are engaged in business, work at a great variety of occupations, commute to work in nearby cities or are retired. Many of the young people are serving in the U. S. A. armed forces or are attending college.

Organizations helping with the work of the Parish are the Rosary Society, which was the first society to be organized, St. Mary's Mother's Club which is especially concerned with supplies for the school and the Holy Name Society for men. Also affiliated with the Parish is St. Mary's Athletic Club and St. Mary's A. C. Auxiliary. All of these groups donate gifts to the Church occasionally and raise money to help with special projects

Sunday Masses at St. Mary's Assumption Church are at 8 and 10:30 a. m. and weekday Mass at 8 a. m.

Pastors who have served the Parish: The Revs. Bartholomew Swinko 1891 - '96, Peter Basinsky 1896 - 1900, Michael Dyminski 1900 - '03, Adam Marcinkiewicz 1903 - '6, Leopold Stein 1906 - '07, Stanilaus Bubacz 1908 - 1911, Charles Mioduszewski 1911 - '14, John Szmykowski 1914 - '19, Ladislaus Brejski 1919 - '20, John Paul 1920 - '21, Anthony Haremza 1921 - '25, Ladislaus Hordych 1925 - 1929, Peter Pitass 1929, John Melinski 1930 - '40, John Hyreyna 1940 - '48, Ignatius Wojciechowski 1948 - '52, Joseph Kopacz 1952 - '53, Adam Borowiak 1953 - 1999, Walter J. Waligora 1966 -

VILLAGE OF ALBION

Pullman Memorial Universalist Church

The Pullman Memorial Church in Albion was organized and incorporated on August 18, 1891 with about 100 members. Mr. George Pullman of Chicago had promised to erect a church as a memorial to his parents, if the Universalists in the area would form a society and raise sufficient funds to support a Church. The old Church at Fair Haven, now known as Childs, no longer held regular services at that time. Universalists from that vicinity joined with Albion people to form the new Society. By December 1892 the members had raised \$5000.00 to fulfill their part of the agreement. Officers of the new Church were: Trustees - Charles A. Danolds, John Lattin, Mrs. Joseph S. Hart, Sheldon E. Warner, Mrs. S. S. Spencer, William A. Tanner, J. D. Billings, Adelbert P. Chapman and Mrs. F. E. Kittredge; Treasurer - George Reed and Clerk - F. E. Kittredge. It is interesting to note that women were among the first officers of the Pullman Church.

Mr. Pullman bought the Burrows property on the south east corner of Main and Park Streets as the site for the church. He hired S. S. Beman, a well-known Chicago architect to draw plans for the church. Construction was begun early in 1894.

The corner stone was laid with Masonic ceremonies on May 19, 1894. High ranking Masonic officers from New York City, Rochester, Lockport and Medina, assisted by acting Grand Deacon G. W. Fitch and Grand Chaplain F. S. Dunham of the Albion Lodge performed the rituals. The crowd then went to the court house where the Rev. Royal H. Pullman delivered an address. In closing he said: "The desire of my brother in the erection of this church is to establish a memorial of our father and mother who believed in the doctrines of the Universalist Church and who lived their religion among the people of this community."

Rock-faced sandstone from Eagle Harbor quarries was used in the construction of the beautiful edifice of old English Gothic design. The pipe organ, installed by the Thompson Organ Company of Westfield Mass., was considered to be one of the finest in western New York. The building was completed at a cost of more than \$60,000. When the church was dedicated, Jan. 31, 1895 George Pullman deeded the property to the Universalist Society in Albion.

In 1904 the trustees purchased the house and lot adjoining the church property on the south. The house was removed and a large residence built there for the use of the pastor. The Rev. Charles H. Vail was the first to occupy the fine new manse.

Through the years ~~the years~~ the Universalists have kept their buildings repaired and improved as needed. In 1946 a 21-note set of Degan Chimes was added to the organ. It was decided to have the organ rebuilt in 1955. The Erie Organ Co. was engaged to do the work and Mr. Allen McHose, of the Eastman School of Music was hired as a consultant for the church, to keep in touch with the work. A new console was installed and 1255 new pipes were added during the rebuilding. Mr. McHose tested the organ when the work was completed, before it was accepted by the Church and every one was well pleased with the organ.

After the Unitarian Universalist merger took place the Pullman

Memorial Church became a member of the Unitarian - Universalist Association in 1964. An addition to activities in recent years has been an annual Art Festival. In June 1967 there were 161 entries and 89 persons participating in the festival. Some redecoration of the Church and renovation of the manse was done during the past year. In public notices, the phrase, "Albion's Liberal Church", is now used beneath the name, Pullman Memorial Universalist Church.

The Rev. Warren B. Lovejoy resigned from the Albion pastorate to become minister of the Universalist Church in Orange, Mass. in late 1966. During the following year the Pulpit Committee, of which Mrs. Wallace Detweiler was chairman, kept the pulpit supplied with speakers and selected the Rev. H. Kelsey Bicknell of Geneseo as their choice for the leadership of the Church. At the annual meeting of the congregation in October, a unanimous call was extended to him. The Rev. Bicknell accepted the call and began his duties as minister of the Pullman Memorial Church, Sunday Nov. 5, 1967.

In 1968 membership is about 75. Women's Societies are the Get-together Club, Mrs. Florence James, President and the the Pullman Guild, of which Mrs. Arnold Williams is President. Both groups are now members of the U. U. Women's Federation. There is a youth organization, LRY, which meets Saturday evenings at 7:15. The Sunday service of worship and religious education is at 10:30 a. m.

Pullman Memorial Universalist Church cooperates in programs of Albion and Vicinity Council of Churches and supports the Orleans County chapter of the Ministry of Concern. Members participate in projects of the United Church Women. Head Start Project was given the use of the church kitchen and dining room for several weeks in the fall of 1967 until the Project building was completed.

Present officers: President, Board of Trustees - Mrs. Wallace Detweiler, secretary - Mrs. Antoine A. Nassar, Treasurer - Mrs. Jean Bistoff.

Pastors of the Church: the Revs. Charles F. Flührer, Arthur W. Grose, Charles H. Vail, Edwin P. Wood, Lewis H. Robinson, Edgar R. Walker, J. Murray Gay, Donald W. Lawson, Joseph L. Sullivan, Warren B. Lovejoy, and since Nov. 1967, H. Kelsey Bicknell.

April 1, 1968.

Albion Gospel Mission - Christian Church

The Gospel Mission was the last nineteenth century religious Society to be organized in Albion. It was founded by a group who withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the latter part of 1897. There seem to be no records of this organization in existence so there is no complete list of the charter members. But a few people once connected with the Mission who are still living remember Dr. John Hartman, Arthur Vick, George Mills, Isaac Marvin, Joseph Feathers, William Gage and Isaac Stebbins as being among the first members. It is not known exactly why these people withdrew from the Methodist Church but the name they adopted gives one clue. Also the purpose of the Mission, as stated in the Souvenier Book of Albion, published by the Chamber of Commerce in 1905, would indicate that they felt that their former Church was neglecting the many people in the village who did not attend any Church. The statement is as follows: "The Albion Gospel Mission was started in 1898 with extensive rooms in the Bordwell Block on Bank street, for the purpose of reaching those who neglected other Church opportunities. It has met with signal success and is a strong and efficient member of the Church family."

At the time the organization of the Gospel Mission was being considered, there was a young woman in Rochester who sometimes gave religious talks to groups of factory workers there. She worked in a shoe factory and was not highly educated. But she was a consecrated Christian and exerted a good influence over her fellow workers. She was an intelligent person and an earnest student of the Bible. She had a pleasing personality, a love for all people and a natural gift for speaking. Some of her friends felt that she should go into full time religious work. One family of the Albion group had heard Miss Nicol speak when they were visiting Rochester relatives. These people suggested that Miss Nicol be engaged as the leader of the Albion Mission.

In 1898 Albion Gospel Mission was organized with Miss Sarah E. Nicol as Superintendent and preacher. Dr. John Hartman secured rooms for the Mission services in the block where his dentist office was located. Miss Nicol and her widowed mother moved to Albion and she capably began her duties.

The pastor of the Methodist Church of Albion at that time was a very scholarly man. He was quoted as saying of Miss Nicol; "She is ever ignorant person. She can read neither Hebrew nor Greek." Nevertheless the Mission prospered and many attended the services and became Christians who had never before attended any Church. The congregation soon numbered about one hundred and Miss Nicol was beloved by all. Some who attended at that time are remembered as the Henry Newing family, Mr. and Mrs. James Leslie, Ben Franz, Louis Bull and a Mr. Hall.

The Albion Gospel Mission was listed with other Albion Churches in the 1903 Orleans County Directory with services on Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and 7 p. m. and meetings on Wednesday and Friday evenings. A fire in the Mission rooms at one time made extensive repairs necessary. During the time they could not meet in their own rooms, the Fire Hall was used for services. Miss Nicol served the Mission for eight or nine years but about 1907 she married and moved away from Albion.

as still holding services at 28 E. Bank St, with the Rev. Oliver Sisson, pastor. In addition to the other services the Mission now conducted a Sunday School at 12 m. Earlier the emphasis of the Albion Gospel Mission had been on taking the Christian message to adults who were not members of any Church. It had at this time become more of a family type Church with children to be given religious instruction. Rev. Sisson is remembered as a good pastor and services were well attended.

A few years later, the Gospel Mission reorganized as the Christian Church of Albion. No records of the reorganization have been found but some who attended at that time think it was about 1911. At that time a house on the west side of Main Street, on a lot now occupied by the theater block, was purchased for use as both church and parsonage. The pastor, Rev. Scolfield, lived in the upright part of the house. Partitions were removed from the one-story wing to form a large room in which services were held. Rev. Scolfield was a consecrated and able pastor but the Church never prospered. Some member of the former mission had passed away by this time, others had become inactive because of ill health or old age. Not many new members joined, for the Christian Church was similar in doctrines to several older well established Churches. After Rev. Scolfield closed his ministry, a Rev. Gunther served the Church for a short period. The Western New York Conference of Christian Churches held the mortgage on the building and the small congregation had difficulty keeping up payments.

The next pastor called to lead the Church was a Mrs. Price. She was a person of impressive appearance, a good speaker and very zealous. It was hoped that she could win new members. However, it soon turned out that she considered herself a faith healer and also believed in certain noisy manifestations of devotion to God which were distasteful to most of the members and to the Christian Conference. A number withdrew from the small membership and Conference sold the mortgage to an Albion man. The Albion Christian Church, successor to the Gospel Mission, ceased to exist about 1917. Sheret Post of the American Legion bought the building, taking over the mortgage in 1922. The deed was signed by Augustus W. Behrend, only surviving trustee of the Church. Later the building was torn down to make room for the Rialto Theatre Building.

Jehovah's Witnesses

The Albion congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was organized during the present century. A few people in the area who had accepted the teachings of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society met with the Medina group of Jehovah's Witnesses for some years. In 1943, Martin L. Hartman of the Medina Congregation, who had been appointed by the Watchtower Society to do missionary work the surrounding communities, came to Albion to build up the local group.

In April 1943 the Albion congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was legally organized by Martin Hartman. Raymond Schuck was appointed as servant minister to preside over the congregation, with Walter Howes as his assistant. The meeting place was at 113 A. East Bank Street in the Karns building. During the following years the congregation increased and after about sixteen years the need for a meeting place of their own became urgent.

Work was begun on Kingdom Hall in 1960. Construction was carried on by the voluntary labor of the presiding minister and members of the congregation. They were assisted by volunteers from other Jehovah's Witnesses congregations from as far away as Batavia, Lockport and Niagara Falls. Kingdom Hall was dedicated on November 7, 1966. John W. Steufloten of Brooklyn, from the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society was the dedicatory speaker. Martin Hartman was also a guest speaker. Work is still continuing to complete all details of the building, grounds and parking area of Kingdom Hall which is located at 560 East Avenue. Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in elaborate ornamentation so the building is designed simply to meet the needs of the congregation as they assemble together for Bible study, service training and worship of God.

As their name implies, members of the congregation are expected to actively witness for Jehovah. Those who volunteer to give 100 hours of service a month under the direction of the congregation are called Pioneers. They serve without pay calling on people of the area and seeking to teach as many as possible their interpretation of the Bible, or doing whatever tasks they are assigned. Special Pioneers volunteer to serve 150 hours a month, under the direction of the Watchtower Society and are sent to work wherever the Society decides they are needed. They also serve without pay but since obviously cannot continue their usual occupations, they do receive a small living allowance. Eight members of the Albion congregation have served as Special Pioneers. At the present time Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Schuck Jr. are doing missionary work in Calais, Maine. They have previously served in several other places.

The Albion congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is a member of Circuit no. 8 of New York District. This Circuit takes in the area from Rochester to Niagara Falls, and has semi-annual assemblies which are attended by most of the Albion congregation. The District holds annual assemblies. International Assemblies used to be held at regular intervals but due to the difficulty of securing a place large enough to accommodate the thousands who attend, none have been held in recent years. In 1963 the International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses was held in Yankee Stadium and Polo Grounds and the delegates overflowed these huge accommodations. At that time the U. S. government sent a committee to study the assembly's very efficient organization for mass feeding. When the meetings were over the delegates left the buildings and grounds in complete order and in better

condition than they found them.

In May 1968 the presiding minister of the Albion congregation is still Raymond Schuck who has served for 25 years while also working to support his family. No titles such as "reverend" are used by Jehovah's Witnesses but Ray Schuck officiates at weddings, funerals and meetings of the congregation and performs all the usual duties of a pastor of a Church. His present assistant is Arvester Matthews. Members with special duties are known as servants. Bible Study servant is Howard Losey. These three servants make up the governing body of the congregation. The Account servant is Charles L. King, Literature servant is Myron Park, Magazine territory servant, Henry DeMeyer. All appointments are made by the parent Society on the recommendation of the Committee of three. No offerings are taken at meetings and no canvass for funds is ever made. The work is supported by voluntary contributions made as members wish by placing them in a contribution box which is in the meeting place. There are no separate organizations, all work being conducted on a personal, family or congregational basis.

Sunday meetings consist of Public Discourse at 3 p.m. and Watchtower Bible Study at 4:10 p. m.; Tuesday at 8 p. m. Bible Book Studies; Thursday 7:25 p. m. Theocratic Ministry School. Attendance at this study and training school is entirely voluntary. Service meeting at 8:30 p. m. Thursday.