

150th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

When Reverend Spear retired, Reverend Donald A. Wells was assigned to us (May 1944-June 1947). He was a student pastor and it was during his pastorate that the 150th anniversary of the founding of our church was observed (October 1944). Dr. Daniel Marsh, then President of Boston University, preached the anniversary sermon on Sunday, October 1, at 4:30 p.m. The schedule of events for this observance was as follows:

- Sept. 30 Anniversary Dinner at the church
Oct. 1 10:30 a.m. - Address by Reverend W. M. Gunter, District Superintendent
Nov. 8 Harvest Supper
Nov. 17 Play - Peabody Pew
Nov. 19 10:30 a.m. - Old Time Religious Service
Dec. 6 Ladies Aid Anniversary Fair

150th Anniversary



WESTON METHODIST CHURCH
WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS
1794 - 1944

THE CHURCH GROWS

The war having ended during Reverend Wells' pastorate, church attendance and church membership were again on the increase. Average attendance at morning worship in 1946 was 90. The budget was met and there was a surplus of \$800. This was probably the first time in the history of the church that the budget was met with no difficulty.

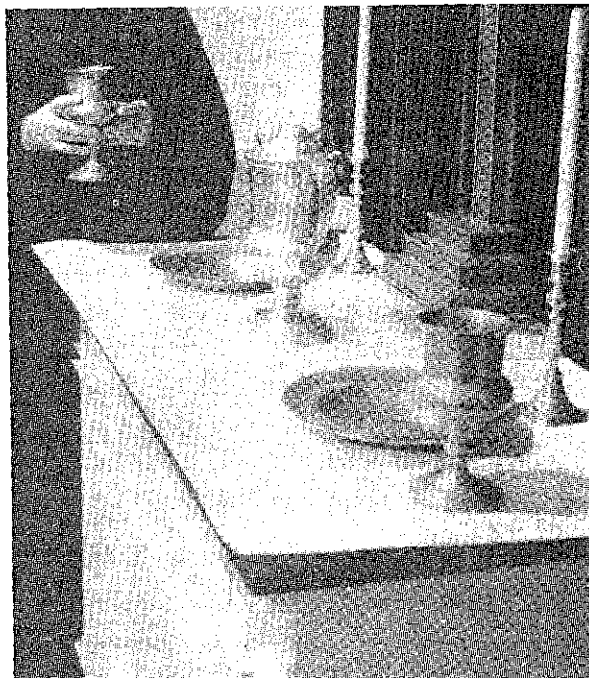
In June 1947, Reverend Donald Wells resigned as pastor to accept a professorship at Oregon State College. He and June, his wife, and his family moved to Pullman, Washington, where Reverend Wells became the Associate Professor of Philosophy at the State College of Washington, but he still remained a member of the New England Conference.

Reverend Wells was replaced by Reverend Tyler Thompson, also a student at Boston University School of Theology. Reverend Thompson was a pastor in Singapore when the island fell in 1942, and he was in a prisoner-of-war camp for three and a half years until his release at the end of the War. Under his leadership our church continued the growth which had begun under his predecessor's leadership. Reverend Thompson left in 1949, ultimately settling in Illinois where he pursued an academic life. In 1960 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the United States Congress from the 13th District (north of Chicago).

Historian Note Raymond Harrington

Earlier I remarked that you would hear more of the antique pewter communion set. The existence of this set was not remembered or even suspected until, while poring over the records of the Town of Weston, I came across a paragraph to the effect that the town had requested a loan of an antique pewter communion set from the Methodist Church, to be displayed with other objects at the 200th anniversary of the town. The records of the Trustees showed that this was done and that Reverend Abercrombie was to have charge of the loan. This seemed to indicate that this set must have been saved from the fire at the turn of the century. I inquired of all the old members of the church as to the possible location of the set, but though some remembered there had been one, nobody knew of its whereabouts. The most logical place to look then was the bank vaults. This presented some difficulty as three of the possible banks had gone out of business during the depression (including the one where it had been kept).

Eventually, however, in 1947 I located it in the Waltham Trust Co. vault and, after some conferences with bank officials and notes from the Trustees, we were able to prove ownership. The thrill I got when first it was placed in my hands I shall never forget. An old broken wicker basket, and inside a treasure,



*Antique Pewter Communion Set
(more than 200 years old)*

*This set was originally used
in the Bemis home and later
in all three church buildings
for communion services.*

a treasure of remembrance used by the "Saints who from their labors rest." It is on exhibition at the church and may you have that same thrill and feeling of kinship and fellowship with those who used it and who are not with us in body, but are still with us in Spirit.

Reverend Thompson was followed by the Reverend Robert W. Huston, also a student at Boston University School of Theology. Reverend Huston's ministry (which was to last nine years) was filled with excitement. Soon after his arrival a new Baldwin organ was purchased; the chancel was reconstructed, uncovering beautiful cherubims at the front of the church which held draped ribbons inscribed "God Is Love" and "The Lord Is In His Holy Temple"; new lighting fixtures were added; and a general redecoration of the sanctuary and narthex was completed.

On June 29, 1952, Reverend Huston became the only minister ever to be ordained in our church building, and one of the few ever ordained in a special ordination in the church of which he was pastor. Bishop John Wesley Lord and District Superintendent H. Daniel Hawver were among the participants in the ordination.

Reverend Huston introduced Silent Communion, a practice still occasionally observed on Christmas Eve, and established study classes in homes in Weston and Wayland. The town was growing and, with dynamic leadership, the church grew dramatically. When Reverend Huston arrived in 1949, church membership was 162. When his ministry ended in 1958, the membership had grown to 390--increasing by more than 140%. This growth is all the more remarkable when we consider that Reverend Huston was a student minister (half-time) during his first years in Weston prior to receiving his doctorate from Boston University School of Theology. Young families flocked to our church attracted by outstanding preaching, an excellent Church School and a remarkable Couples Club. A major feature of this era was the variety show put on each spring by the Couples Club which attracted more than 600 persons.



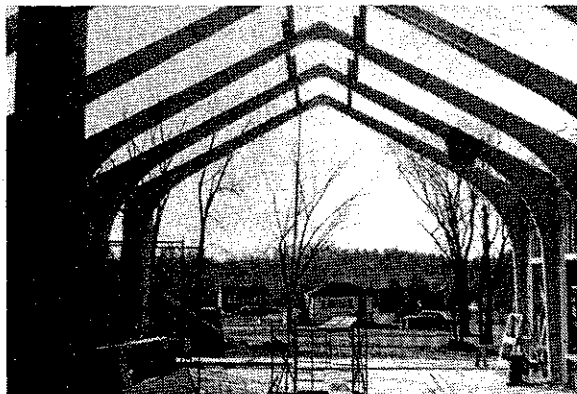
Ground Breaking Parish Hall - 1957

The church prospered. In 1956, 37 new pledges were received and the Church School enrollment was nearing 250. The Building Fund had grown to over \$20,000 and the next step was clear.

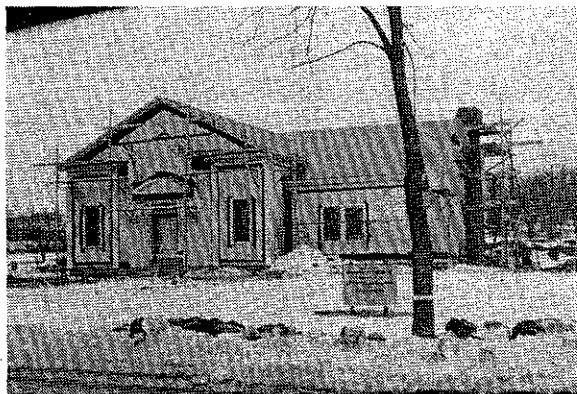
THE PARISH HALL IS BUILT

After extensive research and planning, bids were received in 1957 and ground was broken on August 8, 1957, culminating a six-year program which had begun in 1951 with the purchase of additional land adjacent to the church. In 1954 the church engaged an architect and plans were developed for a Parish Hall. Based on these plans, a Building Fund was established and, with financing committed by The Waltham Federal Savings and Loan Association, George Cheney, Inc., of Wellesley was awarded the contract at an estimated cost of \$87,000.

By the spring of 1958 the Couples Club was able to have its annual variety show in the almost-completed Parish Hall! A second Building Fund Drive was conducted and \$43,050 was pledged to be paid between 1958-1961, which would leave only \$7,000 of the \$50,000 mortgage, which, it was anticipated, would be paid off in 1962. Aimo Teittinen, Church Lay Leader, was Chairman of the Fund Drive and Charles Law was Chairman of the Building Committee. The cost of the building was just over \$90,000 of which \$10,000 was received as a grant from The New England Conference. On Sunday, May 4, 1958, just nine months after ground was broken, the new building was consecrated.



Parish Hall Construction



*Parish Hall Complete
(1957 - 1971)*

In June of 1958, Dr. Robert Huston ended his long and happy ministry in Weston. After brief service at one of the area's largest churches, Dr. Huston was invited to become the top Ecumenical Executive for the United Methodist Church with offices in New York City. He served our denomination with great distinction in this capacity and was one of the best known and most highly respected figures in his field.



Reverend Alan H. Moore

GROWTH CONTINUES
UNDER REV. MOORE

Our church was fortunate in the appointment of The Reverend Alan H. Moore to replace Dr. Huston. The growth which had characterized Dr. Huston's nine years was to continue throughout the ministry of Reverend Moore. The Couples Club also continued to be a strong force in the life of the church and the church budget continued to increase.

In 1958 Lee Bothast, a senior pre-ministerial student in the School of Business Administration at Boston University, became the church's first "Assistant Minister" or "Youth Assistant to the Minister", as he was formally called. Mr. Bothast was the first in a long line of fine young men and women who were to serve our church in the capacity in subsequent years.



Couples Club

ACQUIRED PRESENT PARSONAGE

In 1959, the Sawyer property became available and was purchased for use as a Parsonage for \$25,000. Subsequently, the North Avenue Parsonage was sold for \$18,000, leaving an indebtedness on the new Parsonage of \$7,000.



Conant Road Parsonage

In 1962, one of the great spirits of the church, Mrs. Carrie Brooks, died having served her church faithfully for more than sixty years! It should be noted that 1962 also marked the death of Mrs. Fannie Woodbury, whose bequest was the most generous the church ever received.

Also, in 1962, J. William Murray, Chairman of the Development Committee of the church, reported the following growth pattern of the church during the past decade:

1932	50 members
1942	100 members
1952	200 members
1962	400 members

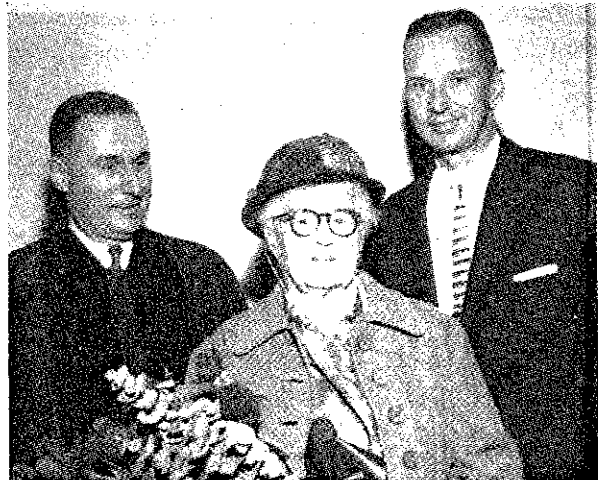
He projected continued growth if the church could build a new structure adequate to the needs of the community. He lamented the decline in building-fund giving reported that year and said:

"At this rate the Parish Hall mortgage will be with us for a long time and the prospects for financing a church expansion seem rather dim."

He went on to say

"Perhaps our goals should be a new, exciting, inspiring beautiful building by 1970."

How prophetic were those words!



Carrie Brooks