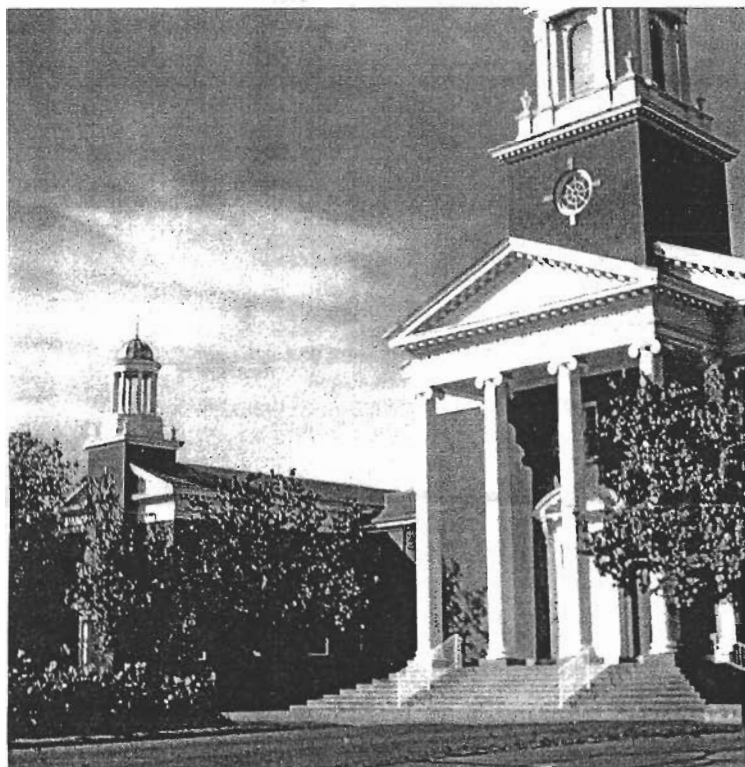


# *The Indiana United Methodist Historical Society Newsletter*

P. O. Box 331, Greencastle, Indiana 46135

Spring 2007

## **One County's Story**



**Meridian Street United Methodist Church**

The Indiana United Methodist Historical Society will hold its next annual meeting at Meridian Street United Methodist Church in Indianapolis on Saturday, April 28, 2007. This meeting marks the first time the society has examined the growth of Methodism within an entire county. Taking on a task of such scope will be Rev. Howard Boles, who is particularly well qualified, having earned an M.A. degree in church history from the University of Iowa. Rev. Boles also holds degrees from the University of Evansville and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

The Rev. John Wantz will present the history of Meridian Street UMC, which was born

within Wesley Chapel, the first religious congregation of any kind in the city of Indianapolis. Migrating along Meridian Street, from which the congregation took its name in 1871, the membership adapted to the expanding population of Indianapolis and continued to offer its leaders to the city, the state, and the nation as the biographies in this issue of *The IUMHS Newsletter* attest.

Registration for the second annual meeting of IUMHS will begin at 9:30 a.m. Indianapolis time. Greetings and invocation will follow at 10:00 a.m.

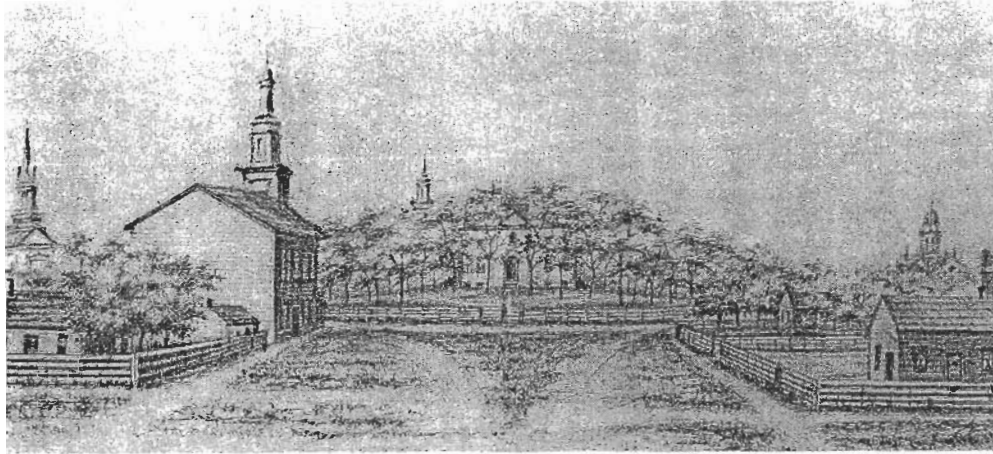
Registrants will gather in Fellowship Hall at 10:30 a.m. to hear Rev. Boles describe how the Methodist Church adapted and survived in an increasingly commercialized community. At 1:00 p.m., Rev. Wantz will present the history of Meridian Street UMC. Comparative views of a shared history will emerge as Rev. Wantz of Meridian Street UMC and Rev. Boles, the pastor of Roberts Park UMC, look back in free-flowing discussion on Wesley Chapel, the mother church of both congregations.

A business meeting will separate the morning and afternoon programs at 11:30 a.m., with a catered lunch following at 12:00 noon. A tour of the tandem worship areas of Meridian Street UMC will close the day at 2:00 p.m.

The registration fee will cover both registration and lunch. Registration is \$12 for members of IUMHS, \$15 for non-members. (See the registration form on page 9, opposite the map of the pertinent portion of the north side of Indianapolis on page 8.)

Ample parking is available in a large parking lot to the west (or behind) the Meridian Street UMC facility.

# Methodism in Indianapolis



The Circle looking east on Market from Illinois Street  
 Far left, Christ Episcopal Church; Left foreground, Second Presbyterian Church;  
 Center, Governor's Mansion; Background, First Presbyterian Church;  
 Far right, First Court House; Right, Wesley Chapel; (Drawing by Christian Schrader)

**Indianapolis Methodists** – including members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as the United Methodist Church – have through two centuries helped create community for an African-American minority, a German-speaking minority and, quite prominently, a white middle-class majority.

Following in John Wesley's heritage, with its emphasis on religious experience and moral conduct over the observance of ritual and doctrinal sophistication, itinerant preachers built a network of frontier circuits. One of these Methodist Episcopal preachers, William Cravens, organized a local society or class meeting in Indianapolis in 1821 as part of a central Indiana circuit. This society, enlarged through the work of John Strange and other camp meeting evangelists, was taken off the circuit and given its own minister in 1828. The congregation built Wesley Chapel on the Circle, the center of Indianapolis, a year later.

As Methodism came to represent the values of an upwardly mobile middle class, rough frontier evangelism was replaced by a

quieter, more formal religiosity. Churches acquired choirs, organs, and stained-glass windows; and congregations began to demand an educated clergy. At the same time, many worshipers attempted to preserve old-fashioned Methodism by finding a new home in Holiness churches.

From the 1880s through the 1920s, Indianapolis Methodism espoused causes from public education to Sabbatarianism. Methodists became very much identified by their involvement in the temperance and prohibition movements. Methodists were prominent in the activities of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Anti-Saloon League, and the Prohibition party.

Concern for the welfare of the community was also shown in the establishment of Methodist Hospital of Indiana in 1908, Goodwill Industries of Indianapolis in 1928, Fletcher Place Community Center in 1937 and, more recently, Brightwood Community Center.

*Article continues on page 3.*

## Methodism in Indianapolis

(Continued from page 2.)

The Methodist Episcopal Church accommodated persons outside the majority by creating ethnically distinct congregations. In the late 1800s, several all-black congregations were formed, each responsible to its own conference organization. This separation continued until 1968 when the African-American churches came into the South Indiana Conference, joining the other Indianapolis United Methodist churches.

Essential to the creation of a United Methodist Church was the Methodist Episcopal Church's merger in 1968 with the Evangelical United Brethren. The Evangelical Church (formerly, the Evangelical Association) and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, two German denominations, combined in 1946 to become the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church merged in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church.

The United Brethren had demonstrated their concern for education when they founded Indiana Central College (now, the University of Indianapolis) in 1905.

The Methodist Church has become identified with the liberal policies of the National Council of Churches of Christ, in which it has been actively involved, and has also been an important member of the Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis.

The first black church in Indianapolis was Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was founded in 1836 as a station on the AME Church's Western Circuit. The church is reputed to have been a station on the Underground Railroad. Serving its special community, Bethel AME started a school for local blacks in 1867.

Three African-American denominations – the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church – have all demonstrated growth. Collectively, they have maintained an emphasis on evangelism. Black Methodist clergy of all three African-American

denominations and black clergy of the United Methodist Church came together in 1990 in the Black Methodist Ministerial Forum to speak to such issues as police shootings and racism.

All Methodists, despite denominational division, share a common history and a religious commitment to solving community problems.

## A Footnote on the Holiness Movement

The aim of the Holiness Movement is sanctification, a second instantaneous work of grace. Sanctification is a step into holiness or "perfection," taking the worshiper beyond conversion and forgiveness into a purification of the heart. In John Wesley's words, the experience relieves the "sin in Believers," who profess to be saved, but whose actions fail often to correspond to their words.

The camp meeting gave the Holiness Movement its driving force, allowing it to reach the common man. Camp meetings were emotional affairs, given to passion-driven preaching and tearful conversions. Penitents would sometimes be stricken down, falling into unconsciousness, while those around them shook, shouted, and sang. In the obvious presence of the Holy Ghost, it seemed possible to receive, beyond salvation, the gift of perfection (or sanctification).

Indiana campgrounds were formed during the 1860s and 1870s by the Methodist Episcopal Church, namely, at Beech Glen (Deputy), Battle Ground, and Bunker Hill.

Prompting the Holiness Movement was a growing feeling on the part of many Methodists in the South and Midwest that religion had become formal, staid, and dominated by those with wealth and a strong business ethic, introducing an uncomfortable and unfitting commercial feel to religious enterprises. A "separation" movement began, and holiness sects formed outside the main church body. Out of the separation emerged the Church of the Nazarene, Pilgrim Holiness, the Church of God, and the Holiness Methodist Church.

# Methodist Politicos



*Senator Albert J. Beveridge*



*Governor Winfield Taylor Durbin*



*Vice President Charles Fairbanks*



*Governor James Frank Hanly*

# Laity of Meridian St. ME Church

## U. S. Senator Albert J. Beveridge

Born in Ohio, Albert J. Beveridge came to Indiana to attend DePauw University, from which he graduated in 1885. He practiced law in Indianapolis after his admission to the bar in 1887.

Known as a stump speaker in various campaigns, he won election from the Indiana legislature in 1899 as a Republican to the U.S. Senate. He won re-election in 1905. After serving in the Senate, he joined the Progressive or "Bull Moose" party under Theodore Roosevelt, serving as a chairman of that party's national convention in 1912.

Beveridge wrote several books, including *The Art of Public Speaking*, the four-volume *The Life of John Marshall* (the U.S. chief justice), and *The Bible as Good Reading*. This last title was hardly a surprise to those who knew him. Beveridge had long advocated and promoted the study of the Bible.

Albert J. Beveridge was a trustee of Meridian Street United Methodist Church for more than thirty years and a member for about forty years.

## Governor Winfield Taylor Durbin

Winfield Taylor Durbin was born in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, in 1847, one of seven children in a Methodist household. Many of Durbin's relatives were clergymen. In fact, his uncle was chaplain of the U.S. Senate. In his early years, Durbin divided his time between working in his father's tannery during the summers and teaching school in Washington County during the winters. He attended a commercial college in St. Louis for a year.

In 1869, he worked for a dry goods company in Indianapolis. Then, in 1879, he moved to Anderson, Indiana, where he worked in his father-in-law's bank.

Winfield Durbin opened a century for Indiana, being elected governor in 1900. His administration promoted the building of better highways, reflecting Durbin's realization that improved transportation would further industrial growth. He also advocated more state regulation of automobiles. Significantly, Durbin took firm action against lynching.

In 1912, Durbin was defeated in Indiana's gubernatorial election, a fate shared by A. J. Beveridge, the Progressive party candidate.

## Vice President of the United States Charles Warren Fairbanks

Charles Warren Fairbanks grew up in the Methodism of his parents' farm home in Ohio. He attended Ohio Wesleyan University, graduating in 1872. Fairbanks moved to Indianapolis in 1874. As an attorney, he amassed a personal fortune that allowed him to become a co-owner, with his uncle William Henry Smith, of the Indianapolis *News* in 1893.

By 1894, Fairbanks was the acknowledged leader of Indiana's Republican party. In the 1904 national Republican convention, Fairbanks was nominated as the vice presidential running mate of Theodore Roosevelt. The Roosevelt-Fairbanks ticket won, thanks in part to Fairbanks' national campaign tour, which included 1,500 miles traveled in Indiana alone.

After leaving the vice presidency, Fairbanks' name was once again being considered, this time as a presidential candidate in 1916. Republican State Chairman Will H. Hays said of Fairbanks that "he had an untarnished reputation."

In his final years, Charles Warren Fairbanks served as a trustee of several educational, religious, and philanthropic institutions and pursued a rapidly growing interest in forestry and conservation.

## More Laity of Meridian Street Methodist Episcopal Church

### Governor Hanly and Demon Rum

James Frank Hanly was born in a log cabin (so he told the members of the press), the son of poor but honest Illinois parents. He taught himself to read using a Civil War history book and was so moved by Fourth of July oratory that he started working toward mastery of an oratorical style at the age of thirteen. J. Frank Hanly walked into Indiana in his bare feet (so he claimed) in 1879, settling near Williamsport. Enrolling in short school sessions, Hanly gained enough proficiency to pass Indiana's teacher examination, and he started teaching in the public school system. A short summer session at Eastern Illinois Normal School in Danville closed off Hanly's formal schooling.

Judge Joseph M. Rabb encouraged Hanly to study law. Teaching and ditch digging (the physical skill for which Hanly was best known) became mixed with reading law with a Williamsport attorney. Admitted to the bar in 1889, Hanly became a junior partner in Judge Rabb's Williamsport office. Hanly then proved himself effective as a political canvasser. In 1894, Hanly was elected a U.S. congressman. On returning to Indiana, Hanly established a law partnership in Lafayette. Dividing his time between the practice of law and oratorical forays, he asked audiences to find inspiration in history and the lives of national heroes, most especially in the life of Abraham Lincoln.

J. Frank Hanly was urged to enter the Indiana gubernatorial race. Responding, he proclaimed his candidacy for governor, won the party convention, won the subsequent election, and took office in 1905. During Hanly's administration, the Indiana Railroad Commission was created; state charities and correctional institutions were expanded; and private banks were opened to state examination. Reform was internal when Hanly introduced uniform bookkeeping for the reporting of public accounts and when he attacked political corruption, prosecuting members of his own administration for embezzlement. Hanly also attempted to close

gambling casinos in West Baden and French Lick and end wagering on horse races. Most notably, he forced through a county option law to forbid the sale of liquor. J. Frank Hanly's personal pressure to pass this law began with a four and one-half hour speech in the 1908 Republican convention, which was said to have left hard-faced men weeping.

After leaving the governorship, Hanly was thrice chairman of the National Committee on Temperance of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He held high position in the Anti-Saloon League. Indeed, he was asked to announce the league's endorsement of a constitutional amendment intended to annihilate liquor traffic. He started a newspaper promoting "the abolition throughout the Republic of beverage liquor traffic." He was a fervent speaker in the Flying Squadron. Its members, many thought, were more revivalists than lecturers. In 1916, Hanly led the Prohibition party ticket as its candidate for President of the United States. The Prohibition party was a full-blown party organization which had addressed woman suffrage in 1884, the final extirpation of polygamy in 1904, child labor in 1908, as well as waging battle against alcohol, which the party viewed as its paramount responsibility.

J. Frank Hanly truly came to see the consumption of alcohol as a practice which endangered America's status as God's promised land. As slavery had menaced the U.S. a half century earlier, so liquor traffic, as Hanly perceived the matter, threatened America in his day. While having no illusions of the Prohibition party's real chance of victory, Hanly believed, if voted in, the party would render a service unmatched since the abolition of slavery.

Even after passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, Hanly brought his renowned oratorical abilities to the U.S. Supreme Court, where he argued so vehemently for the temperance cause that he was able to rebuff an attempt to invalidate the constitutional ban on the possession of alcoholic spirits. The noble experiment, thanks to J. Frank Hanly, could proceed.

## VISUALIZE OUR HISTORY

The *vhs* (videocassette tape) items listed below are available from the Media Resource Center, South Indiana Conference, 1520 S. Liberty Drive, Bloomington, IN 47403. Phone (812) 336-0186, ext. 115, or (800) 919-8160, ext. 115. Fax to (812) 336-0216. E-mail Mary Barnes, Media Director, at [mbarnes@sicumc.org](mailto:mbarnes@sicumc.org). Or, go to [www.sicumc.org](http://www.sicumc.org), select Media Resource Center, and use the fill-in order form. Note (below): *jh* means recommended for junior high; *ad* means adult. Most bridge that gap.

**BLACK METHODISM: LEGACY OF FAITH.** vhs jh-ad (28 min.) Guide

This video explores the 200-year history of Blacks in Methodism. The viewer will get a rare glimpse into the lives of important historical figures like Harry Hoosier, Richard Allen, C. A. Tindley, and Mary McLeod Bethune.

**E.U.B.-METHODIST UNION, 1968.** vhs ad (11 min.)

Highlights of the Uniting Conference of the E.U.B. and Methodist denominations into The United Methodist Church, which was held April 21-May 4, 1968 in Dallas, Texas, are presented.

**FROM THE WORD GO.** vhs jh-ad (30 min.)

Narrator Alex Haley gives a variety of glimpses into the history and tradition of the Methodist Church. The presentation covers formation from an infant church on the frontier to an established church.

**HERITAGE OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN WORSHIP.** vhs jh-ad (46 min.) Guide

Schuyler Sackett visits places where our faith took root and grew, from Boston's African Meeting House (1804) to Birmingham and Montgomery in the 1960s. This video features Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, and Absalom Jones, who became the nation's first ordained black clergyman.

**JUBILEE: 200 YEARS OF AMERICAN METHODISM.** kit jh-ad

Key documents and photographs in American Methodist history are reproduced for display.

**LEGACY OF FAITH II: CHURCH FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY.** vhs ad (32 min.) Guide.

This program presents the legacy of the African-American United Methodist Church – a legacy rooted in heartfelt worship, rousing music, vital preaching, merciful care, and work toward justice.

**LOST HISTORY.** vhs jh-ad (60 min.)

Narrated by Lynn Redgrave, the presentation focuses on Harriet Tubman, Maggie Van Cott, Marjorie Matthews, Mary McLeod Bethune and their struggles as Methodist women.

**METHODIST CAMP MEETINGS.** vhs jh-ad (48 min.) Guide

Host Schuyler Sackett revisits the time of rustic Methodist camp meetings, which were marked by firebrand preaching, strident hymn singing, and emotional testifying that might last for days.

**OUR UNITED METHODIST HERITAGE.** vhs jh-ad (35 min.) Guide

Part 1 is a biographical introduction to personages from both Methodist and E.U.B. backgrounds. Part 2 continues the story with the American Revolution and ministry on the early American frontier.