



the Copper Hill Connection

May 2016—Special History Edition

Pastor's Postings

Reoccurring Renewal Builds the Church

by Rev. Dr. Kelvin S. Jones

We have made an interesting discovery in reviewing our church's history. We've noticed that revivals of faith played a huge role in growing our church. A revival is a time when God's presence seems unusually real in the services, when strong conviction of sin moves people toward repentance and commitment to Christ, and when many begin taking an active part in the local congregation. Our 19th-century historical record reveals five such renewals: 1823, 1833, 1839 (when the sanctuary was built), 1869 and 1885. These movements of God were responsible for growing the church from its simple beginning with six people in 1816, to 121 members by the 1870s.

However, congregations do not stay built up. Demographic factors, job relocation, and spiritual apathy all can result in loss of members. The record reveals that by the mid-1920s, Copper Hill Church was struggling. Around 1941, the trustees wrote a heart-felt letter to the community appealing for support through attendance and finances in order to keep the church open. Robert Loomis remembers that the church strengthened significantly in the post-war boom of the 1950s, but by the 1970s attendance was only in the teens, with the church building in disrepair.

I noticed that there were no reports of revival in the 20th-century records. A key word for that century could be "survival." Our church was in danger of closing multiple times. Yet it held on by God's grace and the faithfulness of a few to pass down to us the spiritual heritage that we enjoy today.

This year we begin the third century of our church's ministry. I am completely convinced that God has special purposes for this church for years to come. More people have moved into our community. Gradual strengthening of our church is happening. We are upgrading our facility little by little, while keeping the historical appearance of our sanctuary.

Most of all, we are praying that "times of refreshing" (Acts 3:19) would come from God to build His church. That is the most essential thing. I invite you to pray with us and come be a part of what God is doing in the 21st century in and through Copper Hill Church.



SPECIAL EVENTS

An Afternoon with **The Victorian Lady**
On **Sunday May 15**, 2 PM, in the church Fellowship Hall, Kandie Carle will offer a demonstration on fashion and etiquette of the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

Light refreshment and tea will be served. Suggested donation is \$10.

Bring your friends!



History Moment

On **Mon. June 13** at 7 PM, Denis D. Picard, director of the Storowton Village Museum in West Springfield, MA, will offer a presentation on "**The Meeting House, The Church and the People.**" The program tells how theologies and church buildings have changed over the years. Beverages and old-time desserts will be served as refreshments. Donations are welcome.

Community Concert

"Sacred American Music, 1816—2016"

will be the theme for a concert of vocal, choral, and instrumental music on **Sun. September 25**, at 2 PM. Music selections will include brass renditions of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "God of Our Fathers" and a flute/harp arrangement of "Simple Gifts." Members of the community are cordially invited to participate by contacting coordinator JoAnne Jones at 860-653-2891.





Copper Hill Church — 200 Years Ago — A Brief History

- 1816 First Organizational Meeting—6 People
- 1821 Circuit pastor now comes twice a month
- 1823 “A powerful revival swept the place...”
- 1828 Spiritual advancement
- 1833 Revival!
- 1839 Revival and NEW BUILDING
- 1840 First Sabbath School—40 members



- 1844 Copper Hill has its own minister
- 1856 Parsonage built
- 1859 Extensive church repairs
- 1862 Dispute over Civil War
- 1869 Spiritual Awakening begins
- 1876 Sixty-Year Anniversary
- 1878 New Bell & chandelier added



“The ruling hand of an all wise Benefactor may be plainly traced . . . in the dispensation of those Providences which have been directly for the advancement of the most glorious interests of the Church and the maintainance of the cause of Christ in this immediate locality.”

Gervase A. Veits, 1877

“Goings On” at Our Church

Come enjoy a delicious **Ham Dinner** on Saturday, **May 21**. Menu will include: baked ham, scalloped potatoes, carrots, green peas, pickled beets and cherry pie for dessert. The cost is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children under 12, and preschoolers eat for free. You can call Mary McCorison for reservations at (860) 653-2834.

Again this year, we will participate in a “**Skeeter Walk**” to raise funds for the Methodist Church’s “Imagine No Malaria” program. Funds raised go to purchase bed nets for people in Africa. All are invited to walk or donate to others in the walk. We will meet at the church at **2 PM** on **Sunday, May 22**, then walk on the rail-trail.

A fall **Tag & Bake Sale** will be held **from 9 AM – 2 PM** on **Saturday, September 17**. Drop-Off will be on Saturday, September 10, from 9 AM – 1 PM.

Grassroots Community Prayer



Our church will be welcoming other area churches to pray for our community, state, and nation on Sunday, **June 26** at 6 PM. This will be the fourth community prayer service in eight months. (We were pleased to also host a National Day of Prayer Service on May 5.)

Please join us as we seek God’s heart, forgiveness, and guidance for His church, the Body of Christ, in our area and beyond.



Old-Time Ballgame and Picnic

Coming in July is another chance to celebrate our church heritage and family with some summer fun. Details will be available soon!



200th Anniversary Theme Verse

“For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations”

Psalm 100:5 NIV

Through the Years at Copper Hill

Our oldest member, Louise Hierl Holcomb, who turns 100 in June, shares some early memories.

Louise first began attending Copper Hill Church when she and Wilbur were married in 1940. Two years later they moved because Wilbur changed jobs. In the years that they were away, Louise began attending West Suffield Congregational Church, near their home. She took their children—Dick, Judy, and Jerry—with her, and also taught Sunday school. They later moved back to the Copper Hill area, while still attending the Congregational Church.

In 1955, after a visit from Pastor Paul Blanton, Louise and Wilbur returned to the Methodist Church, along with their children. They already knew many of the people there, and received a friendly welcome from the folks at Copper Hill.

The church was active in the community, doing suppers for various organizations. For the Firemen’s Supper, they transported cooked food to the old fire station in East Granby. After the station burned, the yearly suppers moved to the church. The women held food sales at a Granby grocery store and fundraiser dinners at church, including strawberry and turkey suppers. Dinners were more of a challenge when the kitchen was much smaller than today. There was no running water—milk cans of water were brought in. They had one stove and only two standing cupboards. The fellowship hall had a stage at the end of the room, where extra tables were set up. They used handmade tables (sometimes just boards on sawhorses), and wooden folding chairs.

Louise was involved in the WSCS group—Women’s Society for Christian Service. She started helping with a quilt for a Christmas sale. “That’s what got me interested in quilting,” she said. After that she often made children’s quilts for the annual sale.

During these earlier years, the children’s Sunday school was large enough to divide into four classes—three in the fellowship hall, with preschoolers in the kitchen. The older children had take-home study booklets for preparing Sunday’s lesson. Judy and

Dick attended the Sunday-evening youth group and activities.

Wilbur served as Lay Leader and in other positions, and attended Bible studies. He even filled in for the pastor one Sunday. He helped with projects such as making room dividers for classes in the fellowship hall and painting the church. One year the church organized a visitation program. Wilbur and Louise called on three different families, one of which responded by coming to church.

The folks at Copper Hill were a caring family, just as they are today, spontaneously showing God’s love in times of need. Some made hospital visits. Others helped with funeral dinners at church or dropped off food at the family’s home. At Christmastime, carolers visited in various homes, including “shut-ins.”

Louise was encouraged in her Christian walk by the pastors’ sermons. Bible studies were very important to her. It was a time when people could interact and encourage each other. The pastor often taught weekly Sunday-night or mid-week studies, which met in parishioners’ homes. One year the evening study group met together at the West Granby church.

Louise still attends church regularly and helps with tag sales. People are amazed to see someone of her age drying dishes at church suppers. “You have to keep doing it or you won’t be able to do it,” she responds. “It’s the good Lord that’s doing this, not me.”

Looking back over the years, Louise sees the good things in her life—family, being healthy—as blessings from the Lord. She adds, “When things are rough, or there are problems in the family, it’s a blessing to be able to pray and to think that some prayers are answered. Some not in the way you’d think, but the Lord knows what’s better for us.”

“We are sincerely mindful of the heroic labors and sacrifices of the past. This heritage from our fathers rests upon us as a moral obligation . . . We are convinced that it would be no less than a moral and spiritual calamity to close its doors. . . Hence, we seek your counsel and cooperation.” Church Trustees—circa



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Copper Hill Connexion

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Regular Meetings/Activities

Worship Service: 9:30 AM Sunday mornings

Communion: first Sunday of each month

Coffee Hour: second Sunday of each month, after morning service.

June 19: Fathers' Day: Recognition of Fathers—Celebrate Dad!

"Fathers...bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
Eph. 6:4, NRSV



Find us on the **web:** www.CopperHillChurch.us

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