

A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF WEST LEBANON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

[By Alexander Donaldson, Pastor.]

West Lebanon Presbyterian Church, in Young township, Indiana county, where its pastor had very often preached at nights, was organized by the order of Blairsville Presbytery, by Rev. A. Donaldson and Samuel P. Bolman, with Elder Joseph Diven, march 1, 1853, with the following named 66 members: Joseph Harbison, Esq., and Rebecca his wife; Jane and Margaret Harbison; Francis Harbison and Parmela his wife; Matthew Harbison and Mary his wife; Martha A. and Sarah Harbison; Thonas Cunningham and mary his wife; Nancy and Catharine Cunningham; William Cunningham and Olivia his wife; Roberta Cunningham and Rosanna his wife; David Meers and Margaret his wife; Robert Meers; William B. Taylor and Elizabeth his wife; John Reed, Sr., and Jane his wife; John Reed, Jr., and Jane his wife; Mary J. Reed; Jesse Reed and Sarah his wife; Alexander Fulton and Catharine his wife; Keziah A. Fulton; Silas Fulton and Ann his wife; Sarah J. Fulton; John McAdoo; John Elwood and Margaret his wife; William Cruikshanks and Ellen his wife; David Blakeley and Sarah his wife; Samuel Gamble; Mary Stuchell; Catharine McGough; Thomas McGough; Mary Montgomery; John McClain and Julia A. his wife; Baptist Scott; John W. Smith and Jane his wife; John Shannon and Mary his wife; Nancy Lowry; Joseph Crusan and Isabella his wife; Martha Cruikshanks; Pauline Miller; Dr. John Edgar; Elizabeth Sylvis; Jane Stewart; Elizabeth Cochran; Joseph Collins and Rebecca his wife. All of these, except the last eight, were from Elder's Ridge. Fourteen of these are still in our communion, viz: Francis and Parmela Harbison, Mary Harbison, Mary Cunningham, Nancy Fulton, Mary J. Collins. Jesse and Sarah Reed, Alexander Fulton, Silas and Ann Fulton, Sarah Blakeley, Thomas McGough and Elizabeth Silvis, and over twenty more are living, members of other churches.

Joseph Harbison, Esq., Matthew Harbison, Silas Fulton and John Elwood were elected Elders. The first was installed, and the others ordained to that office.

A brick building, resembling a duck sitting with wings spread out – 40 feet long by 50 feet wide, with vaulted ceilings, and square windows, had been erected in the summer of 1852, at a cost of about \$1,000. As it was unshapely, and failing in roof and floor, it was torn down in April, 1878, and partly on the same ground, a very neat two-story frame building was erected by John Oliver, Esq., and James H. Diven, *contractors*, for about \$4,000 and the old church.

During its erection the Church and sabbath school had close quarters in the Baptist church for about 34 Sabbaths.

On Sabbath, November 15, 1878, the congregation used the basement of the new church and on Tuesday, 19th, the house was dedicated to the worship of the Triune God, Rev. J. J. Francis, of Freeport, Pa., preaching the dedication sermon, and Rev. Wilson M. Donaldson, of West Fairfield, Pa., preaching at night. It was a joyous, happy day, and since the congregation has been very happy in its church accommodations.

Rev. A. Donaldson, May 13th, 1853, was installed as pastor over this church for one-third of his time, and gave it his services on every third Sabbath, for five years – but since the fall of 1858, he has served on each Sabbath, at 2 o'clock, P. M., until the present.

The present session, besides the pastor, consists of Silas Fulton, John Wherry, Esq., George W. Collins and W. T. N. Wallace. The members of the church now number 55. The Sabbath school, which had commenced several years before the organization of the church, now numbers about 175, nearly all that attend the church.

Rev. Elwood M. Wherry, from this church, has been a missionary in northern India, for over twelve years, and his sister, Miss Sarah Maria Wherry, October 2d, 1879, sailed with him and his family from New York, to be a missionary teacher in the same field.

Besides an intensely interesting revival in February, March and April, of the Centennial year, in which fifty-four persons, and eleven by letter were brought into the communion, nothing of special interest has occurred in the history of this quiet going little church.