

## The Second Page of Our Story—the “60’s

They were young—this band of believers God had moved to leave the church of their ancestry and families to start a new work in a little “tin” building on US 2 between Norway and Quinnesec. How were a few farmers, a teacher, a florist, a bookkeeper, a pipefitter, their wives and a few widows to start a church---with God given help.

The 1960’s were the childhood years of the Chapel—the years of beginnings. These were the years of establishing a congregational form of church government with a slate of elected officers each year. Their statement of faith dated June 9, 1964 with the 21 signatures of the charter members would in these formative years (and through many meetings) develop into a constitution. In 1962 we would join the IFCA with the intent of reviewing that tie each year. These were the years of long monthly board meetings and all night men’s prayer meetings.

These were the years of beginnings and expansion. Picture the auditorium with a cement floor, rows of metal folding chairs (the remnants are still in our collection), shiny silver insulation walls with red steel beams, and a basketball hoop above the small podium which was the pulpit. Changes would come—tiled floors, paneled walls, tables in the back corners where the Sunday School classes met. In June of “65 discussion began on a 32x60 foot addition with a basement. (Translate it into today as our current basement and the part of the sanctuary above.) It would be the fall of 1966 before concrete was poured.

These were the years of special meetings and speakers such as: Luther Cook, the evangelist who drove an old Chicago taxi repainted light gray and covered with Bible verses; Brother Graves from California who stretched a chart of “Last Times” across the entire front of the church and preached on prophecy for a week; Brother Paul James from Chicago who could not read or write until he was an adult, reborn, and picked up the Bible; Ray Campbell a Plymouth Brethren Bible teacher from Wausau who expounded upon the Scriptures.

These were the years of growing youth work through Boys Christian Service Brigade and Pioneer Girls. There was an annual youth banquet for teens the night of the prom with a speaker and elaborate decorations. We encouraged summer Bible camp whether to Lake Lundgren or Blessed Hope Bible Camp in Sidnaw, MI where Pastor Taylor had ties with the other IFCA churches.

These years the ladies had their own beginning responsibilities much like what the women tend to now. They organized the kitchen collecting Betty Crocker coupons to buy silverware, took charge of the nursery (which is where the sound system and the coat rack currently are), organized committees for showers or special events. Eventually in 1967, a

Women's Missionary Fellowship group was established with Gloria Hulce as the first president. This group met weekly for Bible study and monthly for business meetings. A big part of their heart was missions and collecting items for missionaries. These were the beginning years of relationships still kept with some of our missionaries such as the Kendal's, Doris Bjorkman, Peggy Thomas, Gus Matero, Earl & Thelma Funderburg

These were the years of church family fellowship whether adult outings to Happy Peterson's camp or enjoying a swim at Mil Asp's cottage on Hamilton Lakes on a summer evening; we'd all be there. Or maybe it was a corn roast at Danielson's cabin or a couples' dinner at the Wildwood in Hermansville. These families were knit in heart beyond church activities.

These were the years of Pastor Taylor who was called from Bark River with a family of 5 children and promised a salary of \$90/month. This would eventually be raised to \$70/week by 1969. They rented a house on Iron Street for \$25/month until the church decided to buy a parsonage which would also be the home of the next two pastors. Pastor Taylor was an evangelist with a continual drive to witness and seek the lost for Christ. The JESUS SAVES clock in the back of the auditorium is his work.

On March 15, 1969, Pastor Taylor wrote a letter of resignation to the board. "I believe, under God, that we have moved this work along to the extent of my capabilities. Not all men would have been willing to labor in these formative years as we have labored together. With all my heart I believe that these years have been God-ordained for us..." That first pastor was loved dearly. But by August 19, a unanimous vote was taken to extend a call to Rev. Kenneth Mc Gee and a new page of our history would begin.