

[Macedon, Ontario Co. NY]

Through the generosity of Mr. Lyman Bickford the land for the erection of the Universalist church of Macedon was given to the Macedon Universalist Society. The building was finished and dedicated in May 1873. The church, named "The Church of the Good Shepherd," was legally organized by Rev. Harvey Boughton on March 8, 1874. Although Rev. Boughton legally organized the church, the first church preacher was Rev. [Charles] Fluhrer, who later went to Albion, New York. There were thirty-five charter members. Mr. Joab Biddlecom was the oldest charter member. He was born November 29, 1803.

Rev. Boughton continued as pastor until 1884. He was followed by Rev. C. L. Waite, Rev. H. K. White, Rev. I. W. McLaughlin, and Rev. C. L. Paddock. The Sunday School was organized in 1873, with Henry B. Underhill as Superintendent. Mr. Lyman Bickford succeeded Mr. Underhill and continued as Superintendent. Mr. Bickford lived in the house across the street from the church at Number 10 Center Street. Mr. Bickford's home is now owned by Mr. Joseph Gravino and is occupied by him and his family.

The church building was remodeled in 1888 and rededicated in March 1889. The pipe organ was installed at that time at a cost of \$2500. The church property was valued at \$10,000 and a parsonage connected with the church valued at \$2500. "Suffice it to say that the church is commodius, beautiful and in every way adapted to the wants of the Society." (quotation from the *News Gatherer*, Macedon, New York, July 10, 1895. In 1889 there were eighty-six members.

Rev. I. W. McLaughlin was recalled in Dec. 1894, and continued as pastor until 1902. Then followed Rev. Harry Wright to October 1904, Rev. Donald Fraser to April 1908, Rev. Samuel G. Davis, Rev. Robert Kellerman, Rev. Adelbert from Sept. 1, 1915 to Dec. 1921, Rev. Capt. J. H. Judge to Dec. 31, 1922, Rev. George J. Porter from Jan. 1923 to 1925, and Rev. John [C.] Bennett to Sept. 1950. Rev. Bennett was the minister for over twenty-five years. At the time of his ordination from St. Lawrence University he was the youngest ordained minister in the United States.

Then followed Nicholas Sileo, Sept. 1950 to June 1952, and Robert Bone to June 1953. These two were students from the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Mr. Sileo was ordained while he was pastor at Macedon, N. Y. Rev. Antonio Perotta was the last regular minister. At this time the membership had decreased. Many of the older faithful members had passed away. The young members had grown up, married and left Macedon to live elsewhere. In 1959 the members decided to discontinue services and dispose of the church property. On October 7, 1959 the Universalist Society of Macedon voted unanimously to sell the Town of Macedon the Universalist church property for \$1000.00 plus all expenses and legal fees of the transfer.

On August 19, 1961 the church property became the Town Hall of Macedon at a public celebration. The first Bible used by the "Church of the Good Shepherd" was presented to the Town Hall to be kept forever in the vault by Margaret A. (Mrs. Ralph H.) Breese.

Margaret (Mrs. Ralph H.) Breese, *History of "The Church of the Good Shepherd"*
(Universalist), Macedon, New York, June 19, 1964, pp. 15-17