

First Universalist Society of Middleville

This society was organized on Tuesday, February 10th, 1835, by Rev. Joshua Britton, who delivered an address upon the occasion. A constitution was adopted, the preamble of which was as follows: "We, the subscribers, believing in the existence of one Supreme God, as the proper object of religious adoration and worship; that the Bible contains a revelation from Him; that Jesus is the Christ, the true Messiah, the mediator between God and man, and in the final holiness and happiness of all mankind; and being desirous of promoting the cause of Christianity by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and of cultivating peace and harmony among ourselves and our fellow men, do associate ourselves," etc.

The articles of membership read as follows: "Any person sustaining a good moral character, uniting in the objects of this society, wishing to promote the interest of pure religion and uncorrupted Christianity and desirous of becoming a member, may become such, at the discretion of a majority of the trustees, by signing this preamble and constitution." The subscribers at that time were: David Ford, Abigail Ford, Asaph Scott, Alinena Scott, Daniel Post, Betsey Post, Jonathan Potter, Jeremiah Potter, John Farmer, Ira Farmer, Bela Ward, Abigail Farmer, Benjamin Keeler and Daniel H. Eastman.

During the ministry of Rev. T.[Theodore] Cook in 1868, a church constitution was adopted and the following persons became members: Henry L. Ward, Mary C. Ward, Bulah A. Ward, Warren C. Mason, Abigail W. Ford, Irene Ford, Henry Post, Mary Post, Hannah M. Yale, Berige W. Yale, Mina L. Yale, Nettie E. Wood, Lyman Root, Achsah C. Pickett and Maria K. Phelps.

The church assumed the name of "The Church of the Messiah." The Universalists have occupied the Union church since its erection in 1827. The present membership, including those to be confirmed, is about fifty.

The clergymen who have been settled here, or ministered to this people without residing here, have been: Rev. Joshua Britton in 1835; M. B. Smith, 1843; P.[Phineas] Hathaway, 1845; T.[Thomas] J. Whitcomb, 1846-1852; D.[DeWitt] C. Tomlinson, 1853; Dolphus Skinner, 1854-58; George W. Skinner, 1858-60; C. D. Haynes, 1861-66; T. D. Cook, 1867 to May 1869; L. Holmes for one year; H. K. White from August 1870 to May 1873; H. L. Webster and S. R. Ward from May 1874 to May 1877; and R. H. Aldrich, the present pastor, from April 1878.

The Sunday-school connected with this society was organized July 5th, 1868 with nine teachers, thirty-two scholars, Henry Post as superintendent, and Mrs. M. K. Phelps as assistant superintendent. The present organization consists of eleven teachers and sixty-seven scholars, with an average attendance of forty. The present superintendent is Hon. Henry L. Ward.

Frederick W. Beers, *History of Herkimer County*, NY (New York: 1879) p. 160