

NEW MEXICO CONFERENCE
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HISTORICAL JOURNAL



Raymond Atchison Stewart
1886 - 1974

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Walking with and Holding the Hand of God

By R Malcolm Stewart, MD

Raymond Atchison Stewart had a long, warm, active, mutually respectful and beneficial relationship with the Methodist Church. It lasted for more than 50 years until he passed away in 1974. During this time he was variously church member, Sunday school teacher, lay speaker and held several leadership positions: President of the Board of Christian Education at Trinity Methodist, Chairman of the Board of Stewards, Trustee, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Chairman of the Trustees for the El Paso District, New Mexico Conference.

Raymond's first encounter with Methodist Church occurred when Raymond traveled from Mexico and Mary traveled alone from Indiana and were married in Tucson, Arizona, by the Methodist minister, Rev. Logan W. Wheatley on July 16, 1910 before returning to Mexico. For Raymond, this was like marrying the girl

next door. Their son Raymond Malcolm Stewart was born in Ameca, Jalisco in 1911.

Raymond was fluent in Spanish, having practiced as an itinerate dentist along the west coast of Mexico from 1908 to 1913, going from one small village to another on horseback unfurling a large banner inscribed with Dentista Americano and staying about a month at a time before moving on.

In 1913, the Mexican Revolution forced all the Americans to leave and Raymond and his family moved first to Los Angeles. Raymond then moved to El Paso, from Los Angeles, California, to set up his dental practice in 1918.

Raymond's brother, Robert Reed Stewart, DDS, trained at the University of Southern California Dental School and after a year in Los Angeles joined Raymond in 1919 to form the Stewart Brothers Dental practice.

They all became long time members of Trinity Methodist. Reed was on the radio committee and sang in the men's quartet at Trinity Methodist. Reed was a trustee and vice president for the Southwest Children's Home. He also served as the Chairman of Board of Trustees for Trinity Methodist Church and was on the Board of the Methodist Mission Home in San Antonio, Texas. Both brothers found the tone of Methodism more moderate than that church experience of their youth...

Shortly after joining Trinity Methodist, Raymond began teaching the young ⁵men's Sunday school class. He taught this class from 1919 to 1924. The average

age was 21 to 22, and there were usually 16 to 18 young men each Sunday. The members came from The School of Mines, high school, the Junior College, or worked in the banks and businesses in El Paso.

Mary taught for many years in the primary department of Trinity Methodist.

In the late 1920s, Raymond began his career as a much sought after lay speaker. This activity spanned more than 40 years of his life. He gave his last talk in 1972.

Raymond gave numerous speeches at Trinity Methodist as well as to other Methodist churches in the district, and was called to give talks by churches of other denominations as well.

The themes and contents for his talks were distilled from real life personal experiences and could resonate with the audience. His knowledge of the Bible allowed his messages to be grounded and supported by the appropriate biblical references.

One of his most popular talks was entitled "Packing your grip for the trail of life." This talk focused on moderation in conducting one's life affairs.

As a prop, Raymond used an old discarded hand bag which he had strapped to the fender of the open air automobile when he had driven to Los Angeles. Mary had wrapped the packages inside the bag representing the various points Raymond would be making in his talk. Raymond would take out a package as he spoke about each point about what you should and should not include for your trip.



“I would take this package of truthfulness and honesty as ballast.” He included a package of good health.

“Now in your teens and twenties try to be storing up that good health to carry over the rough places of the trail when you are in the forties and fifties.”

[The average life expectancy in 1934 was 58 for men and 62 for women].

He was wary of tricky business deals. “Throw that package over and try to keep it out of your grip.”

He recommended avoiding gossip. He mentioned that women are guilty of gossip, but continued, “I have heard worse than gossip among the men. The only difference is: I could not repeat what I heard. What the men pass out is just a different brand of gossip and we label it pusillanimous slander.”

After giving the talk over a 30 year period, Raymond modified the title to “Packing your suitcase for life’s journey” and added some more boxes.

One box is for bandages. One is Love and the other Sympathy. “Reach down and bind up a broken heart...get the broken pieces and bind them together to care for a stranger in distress...”

Another box was for a life partner. "If you team together for 'better or worse, for richer or poorer' a few Hard Knocks won't Matter."

One should also take a road map and guide book. Raymond added, implying the Bible to be that guide book.

Raymond served as Superintendent of the Trinity Methodist Church School for nine years and became President of the Trinity Methodist Board of Christian Education. In 1938, Raymond participated in the ground breaking ceremony for the new \$60,000 education building along with Allen R. Grambling, Rev. W. H. Mansfield and Lloyd P. Bloodworth.

In 1939, Mary and Raymond's son Raymond Malcolm Stewart, graduated from the University of Southern California Dental School and also joined the Stewart Brother's Dental Practice in El Paso.

Soon, Raymond and Mary became grandparents with a granddaughter Betty Rachel Stewart from Vaughn and a year later a grandson, Robert Malcolm Stewart from Malcolm. Life was beautiful, but this was not to last.

The United States entered WWII after bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Raymond's son Malcolm rushed to sign up for service but was turned down, being told that he was needed in community.

1943 was not a good year for the Stewart family. Both Stewart brothers lost their first born sons that year. Malcolm died at age 32 in August. Rev. L.L. Evan presided over the funeral with a beautiful eulo-

gy. This loss put Mary into a severe depression and tested the faith of both Raymond and Mary, but they both continued their activities and commitment to the church from which they derived great comfort and strength.

Adding to this grief, Reed and Marie's son, 1st Lt. Waldon Reed Stewart, was shot down in a bombing raid over Italy in December 1943.

Raymond was invited to give the 1944 graduation address at Lydia Patterson Institute. Mrs. Patterson had been a member of Trinity Methodist. The primary purpose of the Institute, founded in 1913, was to train Christian leaders for the Mexican Methodist Church. Raymond's talk for the graduation was "Gratitude" and focused on how we should be thankful for what we have, that we should express our thanks to each other for what we receive and also to God, and what happens when we do not express our thanks.

In 1949, Raymond became Chairman of the Board of Stewards at Trinity Methodist for two years under Rev. Leland Clegg. Raymond also served as a trustee on the activities committee, and became Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Trinity Methodist Church.



Rev. Leland Clegg

In 1950, Raymond accepted the position of teacher for the Wedding Band

Class at Trinity Memorial. Mary was responsible for the many backyard dinners for the class at their home on Mesa Avenue, often serving more than 50 guests at a time. One of the big draws was the excellent authentic Mexican food (enchiladas, tacos, tamales, and beans) which she served and which she had perfected from her experience in Mexico.

In 1952, Raymond was appointed Chairman of the Trustees for the El Paso District New Mexico Conference and served until 1968 when he resigned.

In 1953, Raymond and Mary took their 12 year old grandson, Robert Malcolm Stewart, who attended the St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico, to Roswell, New Mexico, for his confirmation by Bishop Angie Smith.

Raymond taught the Wedding Band Class until 1955 when he retired from his dental practice and moved to Anthony, New Mexico. He changed his membership to the Anthony United Methodist Church at that time.

In Anthony, Raymond continued a part time dental practice until 1965 when he was 79 years old. He continued to be active in the church, give lay speeches, the last one being in 1972.

Raymond's primary church work during this time was to serve as the Chairman of the Trustees for the El Paso District, New Mexico Conference. During his 16 year tenure as Chairman, he and his committee were instrumental in selling the old District Parsonage in 1955 and building a¹⁰ new one in the Mission Hills area. In 1967, the note on the parsonage was

paid off and a savings account was opened.

Unfortunately, age and illness were taking their toll. Raymond submitted his letter of resignation as chairman in 1968 which was accepted on August 28, 1969 with the plea that he would remain on as a trustee.

Mary became frail and progressively debilitated and died in 1973. Raymond held fast to his faith which sustained him through nine lonely months, before he too passed away in 1974 from loneliness and a broken heart.

The couple had departed their earthly life but were not forgotten by the church. A new stained glass window was given to Trinity Methodist Church in honor of Raymond and Mary Stewart by Mrs. Blanche Horn. The window, dedicated in November of 1978, is number six on the North side of the Sanctuary.

RESOURCES

Stewart, R. Malcolm, MD.
"Walking With and Holding the
Hand of God." 2021. MS. NM
Conference Archives, Albuquerque,
NM.





The First United Methodist Church Of Alpine, Texas

By Delia Hill

In 1884 a minister of the Mexican Border Mission helped to organize a small congregation in Alpine. Five years later the church was formally housed in a sanctuary of its own with fifty-two charter members – the First Methodist Church.

Money for the building was raised from all of Murphyville (later called Alpine), and it was used by several denominations. It was built of adobe and cost fifteen hundred dollars.

Records of that first church are rather scanty, but it is evident that on the whole its pastors were "fine,

splendid" Christian men. One that must have been held an exception to the rule was a mesmerist who found the people of the church "too wild" to be mesmerized. Also during that early period there came an evangelist who "turned the town upside down. Nearly everybody got religion."

In the year 1906 or 1907 the Annual Meeting of the West Texas Conference was held in Alpine. The church was dedicated about that time. It had taken eighteen years to pay the fifteen hundred dollar debt. The building was remodeled once.

"The people were proud of the old church," said Mr. W. B. Hancock, father of Mrs. Baines, in speaking at the farewell service on September 14, 1924. On that same occasion another speaker reported that a Rev. Sawders drew to his services "saloon men and all".



Rev. J E Sawders

One of the most astonishing events to be recorded from those years was the baptism on Christmas Eve, in freezing water, of a pastor who left the Methodist Church to become a Baptist. The records show there were also expulsions in that first church.

Among the preachers were a dentist, a peace officer, who, it was said, arrested Billy the Kid; a plasterer who saw ghosts; and a "great" young preacher from the slums of Philadelphia who died shortly after his return there. Another preacher is said to have had

a bad boy, and there was a bald presiding elder who wore a skull cap.

It is not surprising that a spirit of levity crept into the farewell to the old church the congregation had known for nearly forty years. There was the thrill of anticipation at the thought of a new church building, but a note of sadness when the demolition of the old came to their minds. The weddings, baptisms, memorial services - all crowded into their minds.

The witness for which the church had been founded and had stood those forty years was so much a part of each one, that no one felt the urge, or need, to reminisce about those kinds of services of the church. Much sentiment was, though, attached to the old building, so much that the altar in the church of 1925 was built of the lumber from the 1889 structure. The old timers also asked that the bell from the old church be installed in the new - the bell that had the distinction of having "rung in" the twentieth century.

In 1923 there came an impetus for building a new church. From the estate of Annie Lackey, a name still familiar to United Methodist Women, came the sum of ten thousand dollars toward a new church.

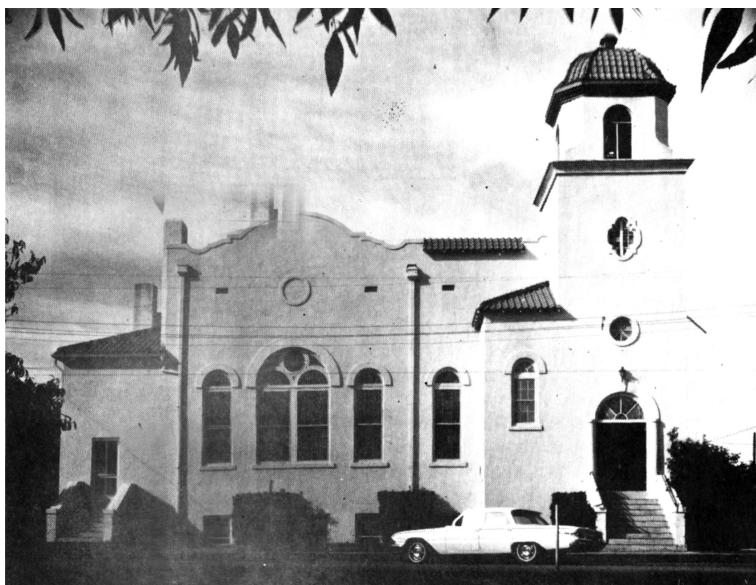
At the Quarterly Conference of April 16, 1923, it was moved by T. A. Beard and seconded by C. E. Davidson that a new church be built. Mr. Beard is presently on the Board of Trustees. Mr. Davidson will be remembered by many in the church. He died in 1970 in Alpine.

A sum of ten thousand dollars was given by the

Board of Church Extension toward the church structure. The Building Committee was made up of C. F. Kimball, Clarence Hord, and Dr. J. E. Wright. (Others appointed on the committee had, for one reason or another, not served.)

The Board of Church Extension lent the church an additional six thousand at four per cent interest. These sums added to that from the Lackey estate amounted to enough to start building.

The Board of Church Extension claimed the right to select the plan for the new church even though V. J. Smith of the Sul Ross faculty had been chosen resident architect. Mr. Smith did all in his power to change the plan, objecting especially to the many steps and the large amount of waste space. The Board of Church extension yielded on only minor details, except that it did adopt Old Mission architecture for the exterior suggested by Mr. Smith.



The first service was held in the new church late in the year 1925, at which time, or close to that, fourteen people were taken into the church. One of those who joined that day was Norman Beard, a member of the present Administrative Board. Also among those joining were Helen and Elizabeth Baines, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. George Baines.

In 1938, though the church had raised five thousand on the one hundredth anniversary of Methodism's wide response to the missionary call here and around the world, the debt on the church remained. The Woman's Society of Christian Service had served the Lions' Club weekly luncheon and kept the interest paid on the Board of Church Extension loan.

A decision was made to hold an every member canvass in an effort to clear the church of debt. The money was raised in one month, and in September, 1938, the church was dedicated. Mrs. Baines, President of the Board of Trustees, read the lines from the ritual tendering the church "to be set aside for the worship of God and from all unhallowed things."

Among the members of the Board of Trustees at that time were Roy Whiteside, C. B. Casey, T. A. Beard, A. J. Bierschwale, and Marie Shepperd.

As beautiful and worshipful as the new church (1925) was, it would show wear and would not answer needs for very long. All would agree, surely, that this was as it should be. It was built to be a house of God for worship, Christian education, and fellowship - to be worn out with use. 16

In 1946 an improvement program was undertak-

en. A three-story educational unit was added and the sanctuary was remodeled and refurbished.

On November 20, 1949, there was held in the bright and shining sanctuary the Sixtieth Anniversary Celebration of the Alpine Methodist Church. The church was exquisitely decorated. The Annie Lackey Circle of the Woman's Society of Christian Service made a beautiful floral offering in memory of the charter member whose name it still bears. Bishop Angie Smith preached at the morning service and Hubert Johnson, Superintendent of the Waco Home at that time, brought the evening message.



Again, in 1964 the church had occasion to celebrate. Its diamond anniversary occurred that year. Bishop Smith was the guest speaker at the morning service on October 4. The Superintendent of the Carlsbad District, M. Buren Stewart, was also present.

On November 22, the consecration of the Methodist Student Center took place when Bishop Smith was again the speaker.

In her history written in 1949, Mrs. Baines stated that she had dealt largely with facts and figures relative to organization and with the building of the two church plants. She continued with this comment:

These are only means to an end and that end is

the development and cultivation of spiritual consciousness in people. The finest and best organized church in the world is a complete failure if it does not improve the spiritual state of the people it serves...

It is only by dedicated sacrifice and untiring loyalty of church men and women that any church is able to fulfil its divine mission on earth.

RESOURCE

Della Hill. First United Methodist Church of Alpine, Texas, 1889-1975. May 16, 1976. Pages 1-6.



Annual Conference Photos of the MECS

By Will Steinsiek

The oldest photo we have in our archives from an Annual Conference gathering of the MECS is one from 1893. This was only their third session. That year the New Mexico Conference of the MECS met in Eddy, NM. That community had only come into existence in 1888 and was only organized as a municipal organization that year. It was named after Charles B. Eddy, the co-owner of the Eddy-Bissell Livestock Company. Later on it would be renamed Carlsbad.

Bishop Joseph, the man in front with the longest beard, presided over the meeting. Appointments were made as follows;

El Paso District: W. D.¹⁹ Robinson, Presiding Elder

El Paso Station: C. J. Oxley
La Mesa: J. M. Stevenson
Deming: TBS
Silver City: J. A. Crutchfield
San Marcial: H. M. Vinson
Socorro and Magdalena: Mark Hodgson
Albuquerque: Robert Hodgson
Gallup: W. A. Govett
Cerrillos: W. D. Clayton
Las Vegas: TBS
White Oaks: Thomas Hodgson
Bonita: B. B. Scoggins
Penasco: TBS
Roswell: C. H. Govett
Eddy: TBS by C C Eddington
Pecos City: J. E. Sawders
Alpine: J. M. Crutchfield
Hope: TBS by J. C. Gage

Sunday School Agent: J. D. Bush

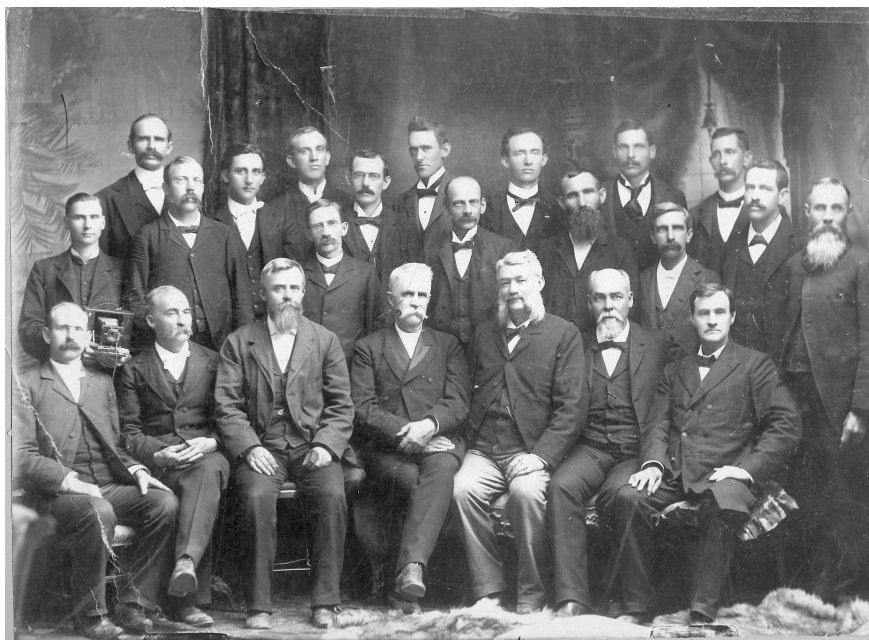
The largest church at that time was in El Paso, with 188 members. The smallest was Gallup with 12 members. The Conference Journal for that year was only 13 pages long, including the statistics. A grand total of 867 members were reported, which was actually an increase of 299 over the previous year.

The Conference began on Thursday July 16th, at 9am. Two visiting pastors, Rev Chew and Rev. Bartlett from the MEC were recognized and also invited to sit in with them.

The usual business was conducted, which in-

cluded a resolution to confer with the North West Mexico Conference with a view of uniting that Conference with the New Mexico Conference.

There was also a note in the minutes that said, "The time of year in which it was held made it unpleasantly warm. The date for holding the next session should be changed to October or November." The manner in which all of them were dressed leaves one to wonder how they survived at all.



The next photo comes from 1899, six years later, and was included in the Conference Journal for that year. By that time they were able to report 1552 members, down 2 from the year before. There were now two Districts, the Albuquerque District with 8 churches, and the El Paso^{2d} District with 9 churches. The Conference roll consisted of 16 pastors in all.

One issue that captured their attention during this Conference was the War Claim of the Southern Methodist Publishing House.

By order of the President of the United States their building in Nashville, Tennessee had been seized on May 24, 1862. The accusation had been that the property had been used for “insurrectionary purposes.” During the war, the presses of this institution had been used to print a manual on military tactics for the CSA, which justified the seizure and disposal of the property under the confiscation acts passed by congress during that time.

For decades thereafter their claim of loss, amounting to about \$312, 000, continued to be pressed forward to the Committee on War Claims that was set up by Congress later.

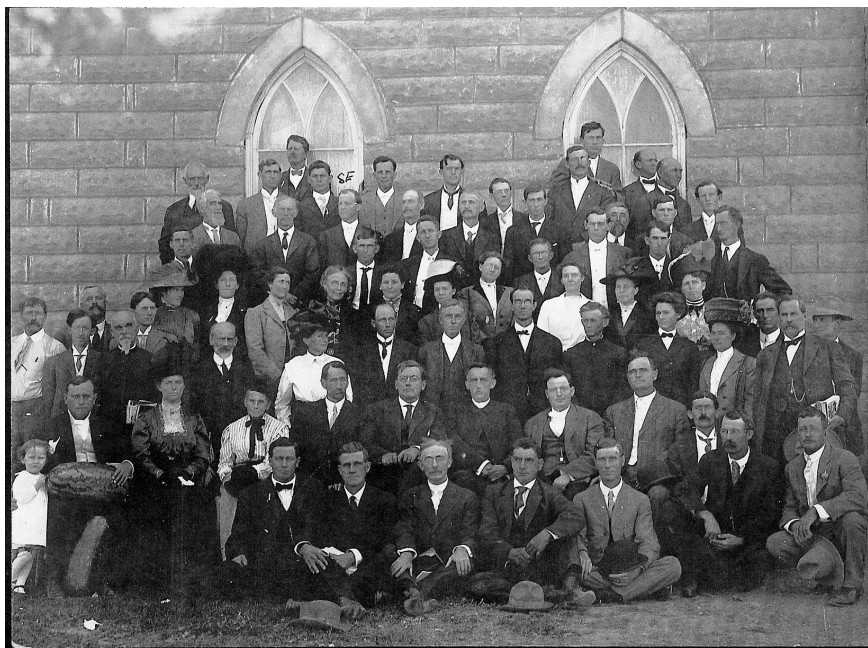
The New Mexico Conference of the MECS, called for a General Conference “that it may take in hand and adjust the unfortunate conditions which have arisen from the process employed in collecting the claim of the Publishing House against the United States Government.”

The election of Brigham H Roberts, an avowed polygamist from Utah, as a member of the House of Representatives also prompted a fierce outcry from them and they called upon Congress to change the Constitution of the United States to “define legal marriage to be monogamatic and making polygamy and polygamist cohabitation, under whatsoever guise and pretense, a crime against ~~the~~ the United States...”

Then finally, the Committee on the Lord’s day al-

so advised them all that

The Sunday newspaper is a great evil. We recommend that all our preachers in places where one is published to use bulletin boards in hotels and at railroad depots for the purpose of advising the public of their Sunday services rather than the Sunday paper.



The final picture here is believed to be from 1905. That year they met in Deming. Only the handwritten journal from that year has survived intact. 14 clergy members were present, with two more arriving the next day. Bishop Lambuth presided over the meeting.

One resolution that was²³ passed during this session noted that

Whereas the two great Methodist bodies the M.E. and the M.E. So are seeking by a plan of federation to eliminate all friction and to prevent the waste of men and means in the territory occupied by both churches and whereas there are some conditions within this territory that do not come within the limits of the articles of federation and yet it is likely by brotherly conference they could be easily adjusted, therefore Be it resolved that we hereby request our Presiding Bishop to appoint a committee of those preachers to confer with a like committee from the M.E. Church, with reference to any points of friction not settled by our existing articles of federation.

While there was already hope of one day coming together as one church again, the true reunion of the Methodist Church was still 34 years away.

RESOURCES

NM Conference Archives, Media Cabinet

Minutes of the NM Conference MECS, Microfilm



LAS VEGAS FEMALE SEMINARY

A School for Young Ladies and
Children begins its third Session
September 8, 1884

GEO.T. GOULD, A.M, Academic Dept.

Mrs. S.W. FOSTER, Intermediate.

Mrs. W.M. WHITELOW, Primary

Senoir R.C. GALLEGOS, Spanish

Prof. F.L. BRISTOW, Music and Art

Tuition from \$5 to \$10 per term. Music \$5 per month:

Drawing or Painting \$3 per month

Teachers all competent and experienced.

Young ladies prepared for senior year of best eastern
female colleges.

Especial attention given to Manners and Morals. No extra
charge for Latin, Greek, and German: Spanish and French
extra.

By the opening of the school the seminary will be thoroughly fenced, separating the boys and girls playgrounds and giving to each privacy and comfort not before known. We shall also have three of the handsomest and best furnished recital rooms in the territory. A few pupils taken to board in the family of the principal.

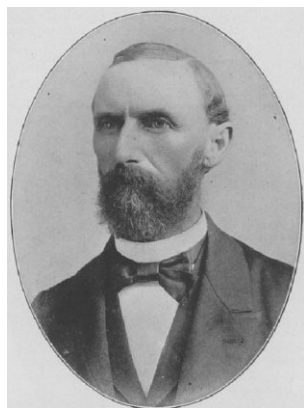
Address

GEO T. GOULD, D.D.

The Las Vegas Female Seminary

By Will Steinsiek

The Nashville Christian Advocate shared the news in late 1881 about plans to establish a "Female Seminary" or girl's school in Las Vegas, New Mexico. This was a project of the Denver Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.



That same year James R A Vaughan joined the Colorado Conference, having just spent 4 years at Fayette, Missouri, where their Central College was located. His health at that time necessitated a change of climate. He was appointed to serve Colorado Springs.

The minutes of the Denver meeting in August of 1882 included this report by the Presiding Elder of the Conference, W. W. Welch.

At this place (that is Las Vegas), we are building a female seminary, one apartment of which is intended to be used for religious services until we can build a church edifice. The site of the building is very commanding and beautiful with an area of half an acre and an additional quarter of an acre extending into the street for which we hope to get \$500.00, to be used for street purposes. The half acre is valuable. Our seminary building is 52 x 52 feet, two stories high, divided into four recitation halls, two vestibules and four anterooms, it will be a brick

finish. The building is enclosed, floored, covered with tin and the apartment to be used for church purposes will be ready for occupancy soon. The building when completed, together with the lots, is estimated will be worth \$10,000.00. This would be the first Protestant female school in New Mexico and will doubtless be a popular institution. Everyone seems favorable to the enterprise. The means for the purchase of the lots and the erection of the building so far with the exception of about \$800.00 had been contributed by the citizens of Las Vegas.

Welch served as their principal at first while construction was underway, and the first pastor of the church located in the same facility. He reported about 20 members at the end of the year, but was given a supernumerary status at their Conference in 1883..

James R A Vaughan was then appointed to the church in Las Vegas in 1883. He was also named the "Agent" for the Female Seminary. The trustees by that time had already signed a contract with E W Fowler of Edina, Missouri, "turning over to him the entire control of the school for the term of five years."

Meanwhile James Vaughan used his connections to the Missouri Conference to convince them to provide support for this endeavor.

One interesting side note, reported by the Las Vegas Optic in December ~~of~~ 1883 was the following;

The concert given by the pupils of the Las Vegas Seminary at the opera house last night was attended by only a small number of people, owing to poor advertising. The program was very long, and while some of the numbers were very entertaining, it cannot be said that others were not tiresome in the extreme. It is the merest folly for teachers to suppose that children scarcely out of clothes, can interest an audience of grown people from the stage of a public theatre. In the first place, the children are frightened until they cannot do themselves justice, and their voices, not being matured, are too weak and unreliable to be pleasant. The little people did very well last night and in a few instances surprised everybody. This is especially true of Maudie Keller. Her family did not know that she could sing at all, yet she is a veritable nightingale...

At the 1884 Conference the Board of education reported;

The reports of the Board of Curators and of the Agent of Las Vegas Seminary have been referred for our consideration, which show most gratifying progress of the institution for the past year under the principalship of Rev. J. R. A. Vaughan. Three assistant teachers have been employed. One hundred and thirteen pupils enrolled during the year. The school has made a good reputation for thoroughness and order in the whole community²⁸. There is an imperative demand for a new boarding hall, which should

cost about \$5000. We rejoice that Bishop Hargrove has undertaken to raise said amount, which we hope will be secured at an early day.

It was in fact James Vaughan, through his encouragement and solicitation, who convinced Bishop Hargrove to submit a long article in the Nashville Advocate for May 31, 1884, which called upon Missouri Methodism to contribute to this cause.

Sometime during the year, however, J R A Vaughan was appointed to Trinidad and Purgatoire. He later returned to the Missouri Conference in 1886.

In 1885 The Board of Education reported;

Dr George T Gould took charge in August 1884, made extensive improvements, rented the Hotel Buckingham for a boarding department and bought near \$300 worth of furniture for Boarding house. The school opened very promisingly, but unforeseen difficulties came near to breaking it up. At the instance (sic) of Bishop Granbury and by election of the board, Rev George Needham took charge of the institution as temporary principal Nov. 1st. He was confronted with some \$1000 indebtedness, but he managed to keep the institution going, and to materially reduce the indebtedness. On June 5, 1885 Rev. J A Brooks of Atlanta, Georgia took charge as P C and principal. He did well, but his wife's health was such that he could not remain at the close of the term. At the Conference in July, Rev. W B Wheeler was put in charge. He at once began to arrange for teachers and

for finishing the building. The present indebtedness is about \$1200, which the Board of Curators think best to consolidate by giving a mortgage on the property.

In July of 1887 George Needham reported;

The school has been conducted during the year by Rev. W B. Wheeler, who will make his report to you. There was good attendance, but the rates of attendance were so low that the institution is not yet self sustaining...

Rev Wheeler's report was a little more discouraging.

The attendance did not reach so high a number as during the two preceding years, averaging about forty... The Public school has been the best ever taught, and more largely attended. The Academy has been well manned and well attended. The Presbyterian school has been well attended, and the two Catholic schools, so we congratulate ourselves and making ends meet – which is better than some others have done.

He also noted,

I am sorry to say that a considerable amount of furniture – about \$100 worth – was lost in the Buckingham Hotel. The parties buying the premises and furniture would not surrender it and it could not be recovered.

Professor F W Chatfield²⁰ and his wife, who had been hired in January, 1887, did agree to stay and

help build up the institution in the year to come.

The following school year, 1887-1888, was one of their most successful years ever, reporting 165 in attendance, and nearly paying off their previous indebtedness. Still needed now was the means to become a Boarding school.

The minutes of the 1889 Denver Conference are missing from our collection, and by 1890, the New Mexico District had become now the New Mexico Conference of the MECS. It is not mentioned in either the minutes of the Denver Conference or the NM Conference in 1890.

In the Board of Education report found in the 1891 NM Conference Journal we catch up with what is happening and discover that the school has been thriving under the leadership of Rev. Chatfield.

Your board would congratulate the church on the success of our Female college at Las Vegas, N. M., under the able management of Prof. F. W. Chatfield, A. M. The roll numbered the past year 183 scholars, six of whom graduated. This shows a healthy increase. Property to the amount of \$10,000 has been added to the institution. It is almost unnecessary to call attention to the unexcelled climate of the Las Vegas, making it one of the most desirable locations in the United States. Prof. Chatfield with fifteen years of experience at the head of such institution, and his well selected faculty, guarantee as good advantages as can be found anywhere. The expense at Las Vegas (of Education) is very

low and we recommend those having pupils to send to Prof. Chatfield for a catalogue.

The Board of Education continued to praise Rev. Chatfield for his success in their report in 1892. By 1893, however, the situation had changed.

Whereas the Parent Board was not able to meet the indebtedness of Las Vegas Female Seminary, which was overdue at the meeting of said Board, and whereas F. W. Chatfield, President, of said school had involved himself in personal expenditures to the amount of \$400. and whereas the trustees of said property and Financial Agent having no means of relief in sight and the mortgages refusing to extend the time any further without partial payment; for the above named reasons the Board of Trustees conveyed said school property to F. W. Chatfield, he assuming the entire indebtedness, our Committee therefore respectfully request that this annual Conference give its endorsement to the action of said Board of Trustees as per the request in the letter of F. W. Chatfield as heard before this Conference.

With that the Conference ceased to have any involvement with the institution.

RESOURCES

Carpenter, J. (1981). *Las Vegas Seminary*. ms, Transcript from Tape Recording.

IN MEMORY

From the 2021 New Mexico Conference Journal

(includes all those who passed away through June 3 , 2021)

48. Deceased (List alphabetically in the spaces provided)

a) What associate members have died during the year?

Lowell H. W Swisher Sept 13, 1934 Nov 20, 2020

c) What elders have died during the year?

Retired:

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death
Joseph Barthlow	April 19, 1941	Dec 11, 2020
Ross Dunn	Jan15, 1936	Feb 25, 2021
Norman Wesley Grigsby	Jan 2, 1929	Dec 20, 2020
Lawrence Richard Krueger	Oct 18, 1946	June 3, 2021
Robert Eugene Whitis	Feb 21, 1935	Aug 29, 2020
Erwin Lee Van Essen	May 15, 1937	Aug 15, 2020

e) What local pastors have died during the year?

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death
Judith Marie Romero-Oak	Oct 23, 1938	Aug 5, 2020

The following pages are meant to share some of the historical record of those names most recently added to our roll of the Honored Dead. We can not hope to tell their full story of sacrifice and service in so few words, but here is where they left their footprints in our story...

Lowell H W Swisher

North Carolina: 67 LP;

New Mexico: 90 AM; 97 RA

APPOINTMENTS

W North Carolina: 67 Reidsville Circuit; 70 Mt. Carmel/Greers; 73 discontinued

New Mexico: 89 Tularosa; 92 Morning Star; 95 Leave; 97 Retired



DOB: Sept 13, 1934

DOD: Nov 20, 2020

EDUCATION:

Sterling High School

Wesleyan College, West Virginia, Religion

Duke Divinity School

MARRIED:

Barbara Swecker 6/2/1967

CHILDREN:

Connie, Stephen

NOTEWORTHY:

Swisher served for 27 years in the United States Air Force. He is a Veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars. During that time he was awarded 33 military commendations including the Purple Heart. Before joining the W Carolina Conference, he served with future United Methodist Bishop Dr. John Wesley Lord as an Associate Pastor of the historic Congress Heights UMC in Washington D.C. Later, while serving as a pastor in North Carolina he was a pivotal force³⁴ in integrating Churches and standing up for justice for African American Clergy and Lay persons.

Joseph Barthlow

New Mexico: 90 LP; 94 AM; 98 FE; 06 RE

APPOINTMENTS

New Mexico: 90 Santa Rosa; 95 Hillcrest/Loving; 98 Van Horn/Sierra Blanca; 03 Anthony; 06 Retired



DOB: Apr 19, 1941

DOD: Dec 11, 2020

EDUCATION:

North Vernon High School
University of Maryland

MARRIED:

Dorothy Hammaker 4/2/72 DOD 4/18/2018

CHILDREN:

Alfred, Billy, Kimberly, Isaac, Bryan, Lisa

NOTEWORTHY:

He spent 26 years in the US Air Force, a time period which covered the Vietnam War. After retiring from the Air Force, Joseph's life path took a new spiritual direction. He was granted a License to preach in 1990, became an Associate Member in 94, and a full elder in 1998.

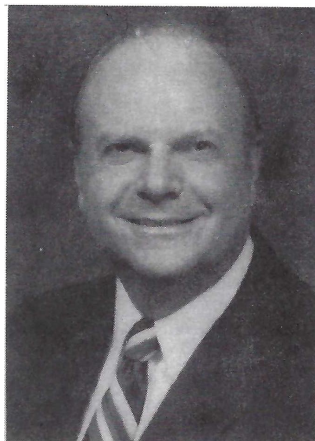
Officially, Joseph retired with 15+ years of service in 2006, but then in 2011 he became the part time pastor at Tobin Park in El Paso, where they were living at the time. He served this church for 7 more years, until 2018.

Ross Irwin Dunn

Northwest Texas: 59 PM; 61 FE; 01 RE

APPOINTMENTS

Northwest Texas: 59 AAS; 61 St. John's, Lubbock, associate; 62 Northridge, Lamesa; 64 Trinity, Snyder; 66 Vega; 67 Follett; 70 Wheeler; 71 Wheeler/Allison; 74 Stamford
New Mexico: 79 Lovington; 83 First, Carlsbad; 86 Monahans; 88 Kingswood, Clovis; 95 Portales; 01 Retired



DOB: Jan 15, 1936

DOD: Feb 26, 2021

EDUCATION:

McMurry, BA 1958

Duke Divinity

MARRIED:

Nita Gay McKelvain 8/16/62

CHILDREN:

Mark, Tim, and Daniel

NOTEWORTHY:

Ross had an infectious smile and never met a stranger. His deep love for God and others drove all of his passions. He served many churches in Northwest Texas and New Mexico Annual Conferences over his 49-year career, starting a church in Lamasa, TX, and building it up to 200 members. Along the way he served on a number of Conference Boards and Committees, including the Board of Trustees. After retirement he went on to serve the Forest Heights UMC in Lubbock, TX. as their pastor from 2008 to 2012, He loved to sing in the church choir, paint and create stained glass art, and he was also active with Kairos Prison Ministries, leading many there to follow Christ.

Norman Wesley Grigsby

NW Texas: 55 PM; 57 FE

New Mexico: 93 RE

APPOINTMENTS

Northwest Texas: 55 AAS; 56 St. Luke, Quanah; 57 Follett; 59 Kingswood, Amarillo; 65 Gruver; 67 Means Memorial, Andrews; 72 First, Dumas

New Mexico: 74 Grace, El Paso; 76 First, Odessa; 83 St. John's, Albuquerque, 93 Retired



DOB: Jan 2, 1929

DOD: Dec 20, 2020

EDUCATION:

West Texas College (WTAMU), BA1951

Perkins School of Theology, Master of Theology1957

Doctor of Divinity, McMurry

MARRIED:

Von Dell Hommel 11/22/50

CHILDREN:

William Wesley, Mark Hamlett

NOTEWORTHY:

He Joined the U.S. Army after HS, and was deployed to Japan. Already ill upon arrival in Japan, he was taken to a hospital and diagnosed with Rheumatic Fever. He answered the call to ministry in 1953, serving many churches in NW Texas and NM, and also serving on many committees in both Conferences, and the South Central Jurisdiction. After he retired in 1993 he served on the staff at Central United Methodist, Albuquerque, and later as the interim Senior pastor of St. Paul United Methodist Church, in Amarillo, Texas.

Lawrence R Krueger

Disciples of Christ: OE 1979

New Mexico: 83 PM; 85 FE; 12 RE

APPOINTMENTS

Disciples of Christ: 1979 First Christian Church, Nowata, OK

New Mexico: 81 Aldersgate, Roswell/Dexter; 85 St. Paul, Socorro; 92 Bethel, Moriarty; 97 Ft. Stockton; 02 Crane-Grandfalls; 05 Chaplain Landsun Homes; 12 Retired; 14 Monte Sinai, Carlsbad

DOB: Oct 18, 1946

DOD: Jun 3, 2021

EDUCATION:

Phillips University in Enid, OK, BA 1968

Phillips Seminary MDiv 1979

Graduate Theological Foundation DMin. 1992

MARRIED:

Anita Grace Fuss 8-19-67

CHILDREN:

Lee, Amy Grace, Timothy

NOTEWORTHY:

First ordained into the Disciples of Christ Church, family health needs prompted his move to the Roswell area in 1981 where he served the Aldersgate/Dexter Charge as a minister in good standing from another denomination. He was elected a Full Elder in 1985 with his previous ordination fully recognized. Served on the Archives and History Committee, becoming Chairperson in 1990, and as Chaplain at Landsun Homes from 2005 to the time of his retirement. Although retired, he was serving the Monte Sinai UMC in Carlsbad at the time of his death.



Robert Eugene Whitis

New Mexico: 58 PM; 60 FE; 99 RE

APPOINTMENTS

New Mexico: 55 Roy Circuit

Central Texas: 56 Graham/Crestview

New Mexico: 58 AAS; 60 Springer; 63

First, Odessa; 66 Hagerman/Lake Ar-

thur; 67 Epworth, Carlsbad; 71 Belen;

78 Christ, Albuquerque; 83 Asbury,

Odessa; 86 Tobin Park, El Paso; 93 Monahans; 96 University, Las Cru-

ces; 99 Retired



DOB: Feb 21, 1935

DOD: Aug 29, 2020

EDUCATION:

Los Alamos High School, 1953

McMurry College, 1957

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 1960

MARRIED:

Nelda Dunn 8/1959

CHILDREN:

Michael, Douglas, Anne

NOTEWORTHY:

He served as a United Methodist minister for over 42 years including appointments to First United Methodist Church in Belen from 1971-1978 and Christ United Methodist Church in Albuquerque from 1978-1983. He retired in 1999 and he and Nelda moved back to Belen, where he was named Pastor Emeritus in 2008. In retirement, he volunteered for several years with Crossings Prison Ministries at Central New Mexico Correctional Facility.

Erwin Lee Van Es- sen

New Mexico: New Mexico: 92
PM; 95 FE; 05 RE

APPOINTMENTS

Missouri West: 91 Miami

New Mexico: 92 AAS; 93 First,
Roswell, associate; 96 Iraan; 97 Chaplain Landsun Homes; 05 Retired

DOB: May 15, 1937

DOD: Aug 15, 2020

EDUCATION:

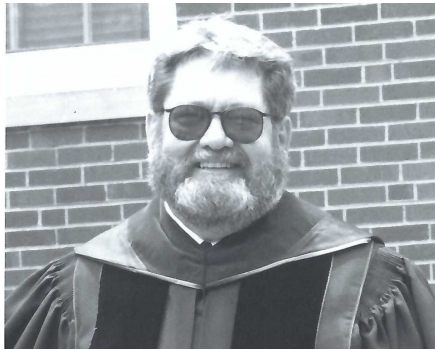
Parker High School, 1955 (Parker, SD)

Westmar College, Degree in Elementary Education, 1959

St Paul School of Theology, 1993 M Div.

NOTEWORTHY:

Following graduation from college he became a missionary with the Evangelical United Brethren Conference of South Dakota, and came to Espanola, New Mexico to be an art teacher at McCurdy School. He taught art at McCurdy for thirty-one years. During this time he continued his learning earning Masters in Counseling and Masters in Gerontology, and almost a Masters in Pottery. In 1987 he left McCurdy to attend St. Paul's School of Theology. He began his ministry as Associate Minister at First United Methodist Church Roswell, New Mexico in the summer of 1990. In 1997 he became the first full time chaplain at Landsun Homes in Carlsbad, New Mexico. During this time Erwin also served on the worship team for the New Mexico Conference and on the boards of other ministries in the Southcentral Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church. Erwin never lost his eye for beauty in the world nor his love for people. He was a life long learner and it is said that there was not a room in his home that did not reflect his love for books.



Judy Romero-Oak

New Mexico: LP 1997; RL 2005

APPOINTMENTS

New Mexico: 97 El Rito; 98 Socorro;
05 Retired

DOB: Oct 23, 1938

DOD: Aug 5, 2020



EDUCATION:

Studied at Claremont School of Theology
Course of Study Perkins
Studied at Oxford

MARRIED:

Gene Oak 1984

CHILDREN:

Elisa, Timothy, Joy, Kim Romero-Oak (stepson)

NOTEWORTHY:

Journalist, and reporter for the Taos News, whose articles frequently appeared in the New Mexico Magazine as well. Author of two books. First became a local pastor in 1997. Completed Course of Study at Perkins in 2003. Served on the Committee for Spiritual Formation, offering workshops such as "meditation through music." Also served on the Committee on Missions, the Committee on Hispanic Ministries, and on the Board of the Wesley Foundation at UNM. Served St Paul UMC in Socorro for 7 years. She spent her later years counseling the sick in hospitals and helping anyone who needed a friendly ear.

Other Memoirs

The Memoir section of the 2021 New Mexico Conference Journal also includes the following names:

James Matthew Williamson June 9, 1959 - March 30, 2021

Matt Williamson was a force of nature and a preacher perfectly suited to his environment. Armed with a Bible and a guitar he could be the praise and worship leader and then step to the pulpit and deliver the gospel in a powerful way. He had only just begun his journey toward full time ministry in the United Methodist Church when tragically his life was cut short.

Heath Andrew Husted August 2, 1970 – November 25, 2020

At the Annual Conference in 2018 Heath Husted was elected to be an alternate delegate to the 2020 General Conference. No one knew of course that the 2020 General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference would be delayed. Heath passed away on November 20, 2020. Unable to complete this last assignment on behalf of the Conference and the United Methodist Church, he nevertheless left his mark

Jackie Beach Bader March 6, 1943 - September 25, 2020

Jackie Bader was a hard worker, a pastor's wife, and an advocate for the advancement of women, serving as president of the local chapter of the P.E.O Sisterhood from 2014-2015. she worked as an office administrator in the public school system, and elsewhere. She and her husband, Rev Charles Bader, founded Mesa View UMC, staying there for 10 years.

Betty Jo Spence Shaffer May 9, 1925 – May 9, 2021

Betty Jo Spence was the only reason Charles Spence Jr was able to continue serving as a pastor. After he became ill Betty would drive them to the three services so that he could conserve his strength to preach. He died in 1981. She later married another pastor, Rev. Irvin Shaffer.

Archives and Historical Society

Preserving our History

Purpose: The purpose of this Society shall be to aid in the collection and preservation of facts, documents, reports, records, relics, memoirs, books, periodicals, reminiscences, etc. which may be of historic value relating to the origin and growth of the United Methodist Church and its historic antecedents within the bounds of the New Mexico Annual Conference.



Membership in the NM Conference Historical Society is open to all interested persons.

Officers for the Historical Society shall be chosen annually by a ballot mailed to all members. Only members in good standing shall be eligible to vote.

Annual dues are \$12.00 per calendar year, which shall include 2 copies of the New Mexico Conference United Methodist Historical Journal to be received by mail in May and November.

Archives and History Endowment: A fund has been established to benefit the NMAC Archives. Donations to this fund are tax deductible. An amount will be allocated from this fund each year to purchase supplies for the day-to-day operations of the Archives, and to carry out projects to preserve photos, books, documents and historical objects found within the Archives. We welcome any and all donations. Please consider supporting this fund to help preserve and share our history.

Donations can be sent to

Archives and History Endowment
NM Conference of the UMC
11816 Lomas Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87112

Sharing Our Story

Heritage Tour: The NM Conference Historical Society sponsors an annual Heritage Tour, highlighting places and events in our NM Conference History.

Kate Warnick Award (TUMHS) for the Best Local Church History written during the past year. Guidelines are available and entries should be addressed to W. J. Bryan III, P.O. Box 750133, Dallas, TX 75172 by January 31. Copies of the guidelines can be obtained by emailing wbryan@smu.edu.

Recognizing Service

Living Archives Awards are presented at the Annual Conference. The purpose of the award is to lift up and honor exemplary individuals of the conference whose work and/or spirit provide hope and inspiration. The full criteria for this award can be found in the 2011 Conference Journal, page 214, and is available on request.

Nominations may be made either by letter or EMAIL to the Archives at the NM Annual Conference Office, prior to February 15th. The nomination should describe the reasons you believe that the individual deserves consideration, sharing their spiritual journey, any offices held, recognition or honors received, and their contribution to the life of the NM Annual Conference.



A Word to Our Own

Don't be disheartened. Don't be discontented with your church. It has as fair a record as any church in the world; its growth and success is a marvel of the times. You have a good home; stay with it. But if in your moving you get to where your own have not or cannot come, do the best you can; be a working Christian at all events. If in reach of your own church, join it and do your utmost for it. If they are weak and despised they need you, and you should crush a pride that would cause you to shun them. If they are a poor lot, God bless you; you can do nothing better than to turn in and tenderly tone them up. If they are not society people, why bless your soul; it may be all the better for you for that, for society folks seem more set on this world than the next, poor things. The soul is more than money and stocks and silver, and your first work is to save your own, and then help to save others. You can soon make your church respectable by sticking to it and working. You don't help it by going away, and you don't help yourself as much as you think.

George Needham, NM District Superintendent,
Colorado Conference, MECS, 1886.