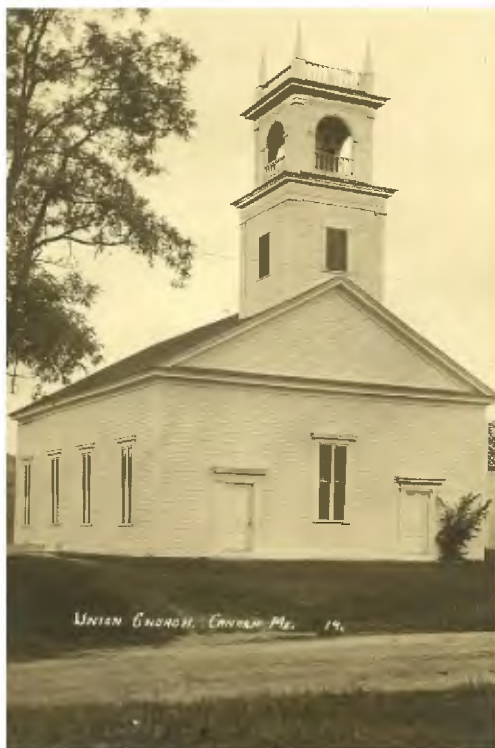


The History of Ministry in Canaan, Maine and how the Canaan Union Church Came to Be

A Compilation of Information
Gathered From our Townsfolk



Put together by: Liza Hale
A Canaan resident and Member of
the Canaan Union Church

Completed works with found information
until our current time
June of 2013

When reading the history of ministry in Canaan which led up to the erection of what is now known as the Canaan Union Church a couple notes to keep in mind:

- That nearly all ministers in the early days had multiple job titles in town : Leader, Counselor, Physician, Teacher as well as their ministry ; their job was no easy task...
- The job of a minister meant often waiting for your salary ; dual control of religious activities by the people that attended the Church and the parish represented voters resulted in frequent controversies...
- Canaan experimented with different sects and able ministers, some with powerful influences for good advancement and others who caused violent quarrels and arguments amongst the people

1611 Oct. The first mass in Maine was said by Father Beard
On an island at the mouth of the Kennebec

1646 Father Druillettes became a missionary to the Indians of Norridgewock

1688 Father Bigot erected a Church at this place, which was improved by the distinguished priest Father Rale

1689 Oct. 13th Rale ; Priest of the Jesuit order ; Comes from France, he stays in the Abnaki village for 2 years

He has a gentle way with the Indians ; he spoke of the Great Spirit ; it was agreeable to the Indians ; they demanded to be Baptized

1691 The English send Rev. Joseph Baxter to establish a school to instruct the “children of the Indians”
He failed at gaining any scholars ; thus ended the efforts of Protestants to establish on the Kennebec

1710 During the time of Queen Anne’s war the Indians were trouble to the English ; they attacked the 20 leagues of the territory
These outrage were attributed to Rale ; a reward was offered for his head

1713 A treaty was signed

1717 Arrowsic Meeting ; the government offered an English Bible and an Indian Bible and Rev. Baxter as Minister
The Indians refused and chose to keep the Catholic Creed

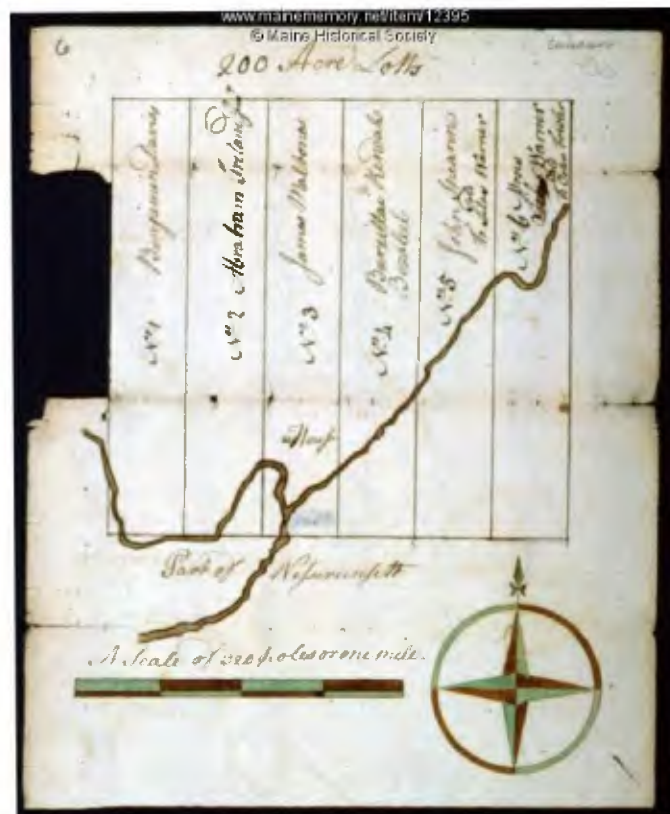
- 1769 Kennebec Co. granted a strip of land ; several acres ; through Fairfield, Canaan, Norridgewock, and Starks
- 1770 “Canaan” was settled
- 1771 First serious efforts of settling the 5 towns
- 1777 A society was formed originally called the Presbyterian Society
- 1777 Rev. Ezekial Emerson ministered (a.k.a. – Parson Emerson, called this by the first settlers) ; he was ordained in 1765
He preached ½ the time in Canaan and the other ½ in Norridgewock
He was Minister for approx. 6 years, until he returned to Georgetown
He disliked the Methodist ; religion styled as vilest essence of Arminianism
He was a pious, learned and most estimable man
- 1779 “Canaan” was surveyed by John Jones esq.
Settlers styled their plantation at first to honor the oldest man and most prominent settler Peter Heywood -
* Heywood’s Town *
For some unknown reason the name was changed to –
* The Plantation of Wesserunsett *
Both names were too long to speak and to write, the name was again changed to its final and current name –
*Canaan * - named for the religious character and habits of that of the primitive settlers
The level of beauty, rich fertility and charming appearance everywhere visible
Bearing a faint resemblance to those “Sweet fields arrayed in living green which they saw at the end of life’s pilgrimage”
- 1783 Aug. The first meeting were held in Peter Heywood Jr.’s house ; 1st Plantation action ; “Do make choice of him, the Rev. Whitaker to be our Minister”
- 1784 Rev. Nathaniel Whitaker, D.D. of Salem, Mass. ministered (member of the Salem Presbytery)
During his Ministry he joined Orcum the Indian Preacher on a voyage to England ; to obtain royal patronage for Dartmouth College ;
He would have ranked high, but for his moral character
- 1787 During incorporation of Canaan ; 19 settlers were desirous of belonging to Norridgewock ; the people of Canaan objected
Dr. Whitaker drew up a brief narrative explaining the necessity of that they be bounded agreeable to the “Petition”
Whitaker argued that 19 joined in settling a minister over the people of Norridgewock and Canaan Plantation and that all public affairs had been shared by them ; from 1777 through 1784 when they agreed to petition incorporation
He contends that Norridgewock had no minister and if the 19 leave Canaan, as they are more than 1/3 of the settlers, “The residue will be utterly unable to fulfill their contract with their minister ; and they must break up”

Hence the 19 did not leave ; and the Church stayed in place ; and Canaan kept it's ministry in tact

1789 Oct. Committee chose to ascertain the relations existing between Dr. Whitaker and his Parish
Proposed to him to dissolve his connection (remunerated)
After his 10 year tenure ; they did not "favor him" and the people "cast him off"

1790 Jan. 25th The town voted "A declinature from the Presbyterian form of Church government
"Receive the Congregational form of church government agreeable to the Cambridge Platform"

1790 Committee was chosen to negotiate a settlement
A proposal was made that Norridgewock employ Mr. Calef ½ the time for 3 years
Norridgewock replied ; they would employ him for ½ the time for 2 years and after that for 1 year if provided they had not found a candidate for themselves



A map of Wessurunsett Stream 1790 – 200 acre land lots

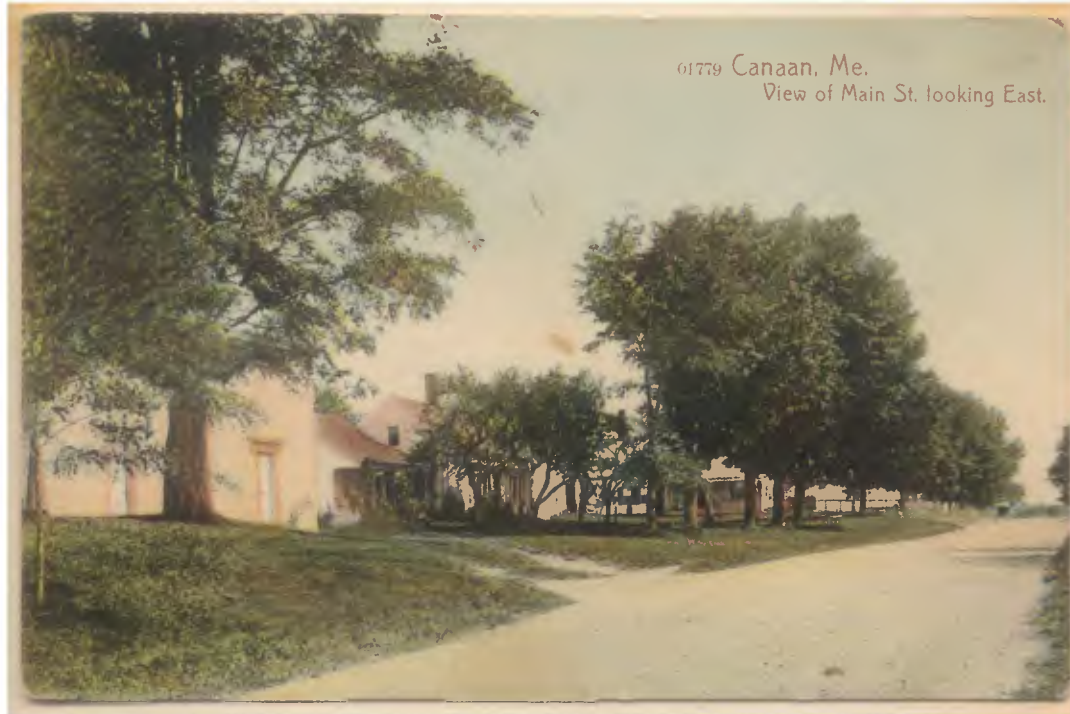
1794 June 11th Mr. Calef was ordained
The congregational Church was formed that same year ; in result of the Presbyterian Church having been disbanded

1796 9 people from Canaan were released from supporting Rev. Calef ; this was granted with the proof that they would aid the Baptist Church

1799 May Rev. Calef was usefulness was being questioned as a Gospel Minister

- 1799 Aug. Rev. Calef presented a receipt, discharging all from aiding in his support, accepting those who voluntarily chose to do so
- 1799 Nov. The council recommended they would pay Rev. Calef \$100.00 within 1 year if the church and himself would dissolve the connection as church and pastor
- 1801 Oct. Mr. Calef requested a dismissal after difficulties continued to increase
This was granted ; willingly ; he then moved to Lyman
- 1811 Rev. Joseph Merrill commenced the work of Ministry in Canaan Village and other towns in the vicinity
He is known to have said, "The Christians of Canaan are among the best of the people"
- 1818 During this time the state of religion was low
A Church was formed of 9 members
A season of revival was enjoyed ; Hope was obtained
The meetings were first held in barns and private dwellings
Mr. Merrill has preached to this people for ¼ of the time ; generally for 38 years
- In the next era there was much sharing of the the Church Ministry in Canaan there were several Preachers that spoke ; Reverends include:
M. Mcfarland
Daniel Young
F.A. Hodsdon
John B. Dodds
Fayette Mace
Alanson St.Clair
L.P. Rand
C.S. Hussey
John A Henry
And others as well ; others are listed with in this text
- 1819 Calvinistic Baptists gained a small group of 19 members in a small church in Canaan
Rev. Cain, of Clinton, preached ¼ of the time ; 1819-1834, 15 years
Rev. Samuel Knox, Ministered 2 years in Canaan from 1834-1836
Rev. L. Packard preached a portion of the time ; 1837-1842
Nathaniel Hubbard and S.Cook were licensed in this time frame
1842 the number of members number between 30 and 40
- 1823 The beginnings of Universalism enters Canaan
Rev. Sylvanus Cobb was for a long time the only believer in the doctrine in the town
- 1831-1832 Canaan Village Church was erected
It was dedicated in November of 1832
Rev. C.H. Leonard, a Universalist led the sermon
- It is owned by 4 denominations:
Universalist
Christians

Methodists
Calvinistic Baptists



Year of postcard – unknown – Canaan Union church is visible on the left

- 1835 Rev. Samuel P. Blake preached ; he was united with Skowhegan
- 1836 Rev. E, Hotchkiss preached ; he was united with Skowhegan
- 1837-1838 Rev.s D. Hutchinson and P.P. Morrill preached ; they were united with Skowhegan
- 1836-1843 Rev. C.H. Hussey is the present Pastor and occupies the Canaan Village Church ¼ of the time
By June of 1836 the church consisted of 35 members
A Sunday School called the Union Sunday School consists of 60 Scholars
The Church library consists of 100 volumes
- 1839-40 Rev. Sullivan Bray, L.P. French and J.C Murch preached ; they were united with Winslow

By late 1843 the church now numbers 90 members
A Sunday School of 60 Scholars attend
The Church library consists of 200 volumes
- 1841-1844 Rev. Zebulon Manter, C.L. Browning, Joseph Gerry and F.A. Soule preached ; they were united with Palmyra
- 1845-1846 Rev. Joshua Nye preached ; he was from Canaan
- 1847 Rev B.F. Sprague Murch preached ; he was united with Winslow

1848 Rev. J.W. Dow Murch preached ; he was united with Palmyra

1848 By now the number of Methodists in Canaan number 40
The Methodist religion held strong for nearly 22 years in Cannan ; between the years
1826 - 1848



1849 Arial view of Canaan

1849 Free Will Baptists gained a small church of in the Eastern part of town ; numbers were few

1849 Congregationalists never made many efforts in modern Canaan
It is not known if they ever gained a following within Canaan

(1850-1911) Unknown Information of this timeframe...

1911 Around this time Rev. Mrs. S.W. Treworgy was the Pastor at the Church, A female Pastor was unusual in the olden days

(1911-1960) Unknown Information of this timeframe...

1960 "The Friendship Circle" was created by the ladies of the Canaan Union Church

1960 Unknown the Pastor at this time...

(1960-1995) Unknown Information of this timeframe...

- 1994 Dec. 1st A contract was signed with the officers and trustees of the Canaan Union Church Association to allow the "House of Prayer and Praise" the use of the church building ; it is expected that the members of the congregation pay the heating and utilities expenses ; there is to be no rental fee involved
- 1995-current Diana Perkins and her husband Leroy Perkins are the current pastors of the Canaan Union Church ; currently the congregation numbers are small, between 10-15 local townfolk and children combined ; a Bible Study is conducted at about 9:30am; it varies on the length it lasts, per our in depth discussion, sharing of personal experiences full of laughter and learning, then singing of several Hymns and finally the sermon led by our wonderful Pastor Diana and Blessings led Leroy
- 1998-current Mrs. Steph McGinnis has been our Sunday School Teacher for nearly 15 years now ; she is so loved by her scholars ; she teaches the children a daily lesson of the Bible and incorporates a craft to learn the lesson ; recently she has begun bringing her puppy, Ruby, she has become a sort of Church mascot

Biography of Our Current Pastor - As written by herself:

Diana Perkins was born in Dexter, Maine. She grew up in Dexter and was mentored by her parents who were the pastors of a church called "The Full Gospel Mission." She held positions in this church for many years and was ordained to the ministry and served as an assistant pastor for several years. Diana felt the call of God on her life from childhood and in 1992, she along with her husband, Leroy Perkins, started a house ministry in their home in Pittsfield. Desiring to further her education, she enrolled in a Bible training program through The United Christian Church and Ministerial Association located in Cleveland, Tennessee and was ordained through this organization in 1993. She enrolled in Freelandia Bible College and Seminary located in Virginia and earned a Master's Degree in Ministerial Theology.

In December, 1994, Diana was voted in as pastor of Canaan Union Church, located on Main Street, Canaan, Maine. The church was called "The House of Prayer and Praise." Barbara Sanders was the Secretary and Treasurer of the church and signed the contract for us to hold services in the church. The name was later changed by members to "Union Gospel Church of Canaan". We have served as pastors for the last eighteen years.

Our focus and mission have been to reach out to the families of the surrounding area with the gospel of Jesus Christ and to help unify and build up families within the community.

During the years that we have been pastors at the Canaan Church, we have actively reached out to prisoners around the country by sending church newsletters, sermons, and Bible puzzles weekly to those who have requested them.

Our congregation members are active in the community and seek opportunities to help people who need a helping hand. Whether it is serving meals at the soup kitchen, delivering meals on wheels, knitting mittens and hats for a school program, or giving donations to prisoners on their re-entry into society, our church family is willing to lend a helping hand.

We welcome anyone who is looking for a family oriented home church and who is interested in studying the Bible with other believers. We are not associated with any organization; we are a community church who strives to fulfill the commandment of God to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Diana is the author of a newly released book called, "Delightful Stories from the Heart of Maine."

Added note:

I, Liza Hale, have read Diana's book. It is a wonderful book full of laughs, tears, amazement and pure joy. Her book includes stories of those in our community, which brought me great joy to read of those I knew. I felt blessed that she was willing to share the stories of her family and others as well who touched her life and inspired her to write her book.

I have recommended this book to others and my copy is currently lent out to a friend, which I shall pass onto another to share the delightful writings of my wonderful Pastor Diana Perkins.

Sincerely,

Liza Hale

A member of our quaint Canaan Union Church

I wanted to add The Prayer of the Universal Church in with this information as well. Our current congregation at the Canaan Union Church have read aloud and had a lovely discussion about this wonderful prayer: (I have written it in its original form)

Our Faith

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary;

Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried;

The third day he arose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

I believe in the holy universal church, the communion Of saints; the forgiveness of sin; the resurrection of the Body;

And the life everlasting.

-author unknown

This is a compilation of known information as written by Leland L. Jewell, dated October 18, 1958 of the many persons who blessed the church with donations of money, time and effort since the early days. The exact date of each giving to the church was not available within Mr. Jewell's writings.

"According to the history a devoted group gave freely of the time and energetic privileged to worship God in our own way."

"Many old records have been either lost, or destroyed; it is beyond our power to report the names of the founders."

"Dating from the first plans up to the present day, there has been an exceptionally large amount of faithful workers."

"Many families have been active in the church improvement and welfare, and I would like to mention the following:" (I have shortened descriptions)

*The original church building was situated nearer Rt. 2, but later was moved to the present location, it is unknown who completed this task

*Richard Harris, an excellent carpenter gave the hand-made bookcase

*Shellie Harris, gave the offering plates; in memory of her parents, Richard and Mabel

*Harry B. Harris and wife Merle L. Harris gave their time in counseling and guidance

*Harry B. Harris re-decorated all pulpit furniture, in memory of his wife

*The mother of Lillian Reed gave the shrubs at the corners of the building (now since gone)



(Mr. Moses Furber – b. 1813 d. 1893)



(shrubs dedicated by Mrs. Reed are shown in this photo)

*Moses H. Furber made the name plate on the front of the church, and Mrs. Furber painted it

* The Furbers purchased 14lbs of putty and repaired broken windows

*The Furbers for many years served as custodians; building fires, mowing lawns, and kept the interior clean

*Mr. Furber along with plans drawn by Mr. Mansfield completed the cement walk project; which was financed by the town people

*Mr. Wallace Brewer landscaped the church

*The mother of Lillian Reed gave the shrubs at the corners of the building (now since gone)

*The towns people made possible the gift of the memorial Stones and the plaques commemorating those 76 men from Canaan who gave their lives while serving during WWI & II

*Mrs. Bertha Furber and Mrs. Merle Harris commenced the dedication service and unveiled the stones

- *Ralph Jewell, of Waterville, gave the wood-burning furnace and the electric organ in memory of his mother and father
- *The Morrill sisters gave the pulpit lamp, in memory of their parents
- *Mrs. Hiram Bearce gave the Pulpit Bible
- *The Foster Libby Camp Sons of Veterans Auxiliary presented the American Flag
- *The Kaus-We-Like-It Club was responsible for the installation of Electric Lights and the Metal Ceiling
- *Oliver S. Dow made and presented the Cross
- *Mrs. Bragg sewed and gave the Union Sunday School Banner
- *Percy H. Williams donated \$25.00 to buy Paint for the North end of the church
- *Local women sold Christmas Wreaths they made and the money was given to purchase Choir Robes
- *The Older Hymnals were given in memory of Fred D. Nelson and Louise B. Nelson
- *Lillian R. Purrington gave the Christian Flag
- *Henry Crowell periodically gave donations of money for the church welfare
- *Ola A. Maxfield gave the Piano in memory of her husband George A. Maxfield
- *Rev. A.R. Swanson and others donated sums of money which purchased the Picture behind the Pulpit
- *Dr. Marian Strickland gave the portrait of Our Savior and the little children
- *The following person have seen fit that the work of the church go on and have left bequests to aid in the benevolent program of the church: Addie Nason ; Roscoe Nelson ; Edith Maxwell Thomquist ; Mabel Gardner ; Lillian Purrington
- *CDs were donated to aid the church by: Bertha Fusher ; Lillian Purrington ; Addie Nason ; Alice Buswell Watson ; and another unknown
- *Mr. Judson A. Jude is here noted for the expert Legal Services concerning the church
- *The Lillian Purrington Trust Fund furnishes an annuity sufficient to cover most of our operating expenses (in 1968), such as: Heating, lighting, janitorial, and snow removal in winter.
- *An Organ Fund was established and a committee was appointed
- *The Ralph A. Jewell memorial organ was turned in toward a modern Hammond Electric Organ
- *New Chairs were purchased for the entire choir at this time, under the organ committee
- *The Board of Deacons installed a railed, raised platform for the choir
- *Harold L. Gower donated the oil burner when the wood burning furnace was converted over
- *The Somerset Oil Company built the oven and oil for the church is purchased through them as they assume responsibility for maintenance
- *The ladies of Church became known as the "Friendship Circle" (around 1960), they gave freely of time, talents and financial aid
- *The Board of Deacons were obliged in aiding in the Interior repairs of the Belfry, they curtailed expenses for a short period of time
- *The Friendship Circle funded the redecoration of the interior of the church
- *Walter Farnham along with the Board of Deacons installed racks on the back of the pews for the New Hymnals that were purchased; new Hymnal Boards were placed in the Sanctuary at this time also
- *Mr. and Mrs. Leland Jewell gave the communion silver and cabinet in memory of his parents Mrs. Susie E. Jewell and Clifton E. Jewell
- *Pastor Leland Booker and wife Bertha gave the Pulpit Bible, the portrait of The Savior behind the pulpit as well as an outdoor bulletin board and mural
- *The Friendship Circle gave the Bulletin Board now mounted on the outside of the building
- *Pastor Robert Merrill gave \$100.00 of his salary and circle the balance for outdoor permanent lighting
- *Harold L. Gower donated the picture of Christ which hangs in the entryway
- *The Board of Deacons assisted by The Friendship Circle in 1967 gave the steeple a new carpenter job and painted the entire exterior and donated cushions
- *Mrs. Bertha Furber gave her assistance to Leland L. Jewell in completing this report to the best of their combine abilities

*Please be forgiving if other donations of any type were not included

Since the information within Mr. Jewells report further donations, gifts, labor and time have been given – I will try and add as complete information as I can.

*The Church steeple restoration took place in July 1983; church maintenance funds were used to pay for this - Ken Frost, of Winslow, was one of the workers that took part ; Ironically Ken is Uncle to Steve Hale, whom now resides in the home next to the church, last occupied by the Burrill's

*The Church Granite steps were rearranged in 2009 ; Mr. Craig Heavey and Cyrus Carter

*The Stained Glass window that hangs now in the front windows was purchased by Mr. Heavy from the Soll's Antique Shop here in Canaan

*Mr. Craig Heavey has done miraculous restoration of the churches exterior during the summer of 2012; repairing the window framework, decorative molding/trims , replacing rotten boards, and scraping and repainting the exterior; also on the interior painting the window frames and mending any putty fixes needed

*Steve Hale and Liza Hale assisted Mr. Heavey some with the exterior scraping and painting of the church the summer of 2012

*Continuation and hopefully finish of the exterior restoration is to resume this summer, 2013 ; Craig Heavey, Cyrus Carter, and Steve Hale have the scaffolding set up and ready to go

*Mr. John Slowe maintains the lawn in the summers and shovels the walk and stairs in the winters

*Liza Hale and children Kali and Jaycee planted the garden out front; Liza maintains the garden

*Small donations gathered each Sunday within the Giving Plate as well as Sunday School offerings are blessed additions to funding maintenance and replenishing of supplies for Sunday School