

Cucumbers pluck church from financial pickle

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer

At one time it was nearly impossible to schedule a day for the church picnic because of the pickle harvest.

Because many members of the Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Acton worked in agriculture, Ladies Society outings also faced the same constraints set by the growing season.



Last
in a series



Bethel Christian Reformed Church

a larger home for the parish bought on Queen Street East in Acton.

It was in June, 1955, that the consistory put down an offer of \$5,200 for a church lot. The bank rolls of the church had grown with fund-raising campaigns and weekly contributions from members. The consistory had early on decided that each family was to contribute \$2.25 a week toward the church budget. Now,

families contribute \$17 a week to meet expenses.

In January, 1967, the basement was opened on the church lot. However, just three years later the basement roof was leaking and palls were set out to collect the water squirting in. In a vote, the majority supported constructing an upper building to the basement.

After several meetings, plans for the Acton Christian

Reformed Church were accepted in June, 1962. Of five names submitted by the congregation, Bethel was chosen by vote to be the name of the new church. The name Bethel derives from the Old Testament where Jacob, son of Israhel says "Bethel is the House of the Lord."

Besides emptying their piggy banks to cover the cost of the new church, building, youngsters went out pop bottle

hunting. Every fourth bottle would buy the church a brick. By December of the following year, the upper structure was completed.

DRIVE PAST
You may not realize it but when you drive past Bethel church, what you're seeing from Highway 7 is actually the back of the church. The front faces onto a private roadway just off Churchill Street.

The Bethel church belongs to the Guelph District Council which is made up of seven churches. It has Sunday school classes for children from four to nine years old.

When children reach the age of ten they become Cadets if they are boys and Calvinettes if they are girls. The two clubs were formed in 1964, requiring boys and girls wear uniforms and scarves much like the scouting movement.

With most of the parish coming from a Dutch background, problems developed in communication. The Dutch language was slowly being lost and the younger generation didn't understand or speak it any more.

When one of the Sunday school teachers offered her resignation because she was unable to teach the children in English, the parish resolved the language problem by splitting the children into two

groups. One group of children was taught in English and the other in Dutch.

Services started out in Dutch, recalled Wilma Barends, an Acton resident for 27 years and a church member. She said that gradually English services were conducted for the parish until today all are in English.

AGE GROUP
"We have nothing really Dutch," Mrs. Barends said. "It's just the old age group that speaks Dutch. Everybody speaks English and most of our young people don't speak Dutch."

She said that none of her six children speak Dutch although they have a limited understanding of the language when it's spoken. "They're sorry they didn't learn it," Mrs. Barends said.

From the U.S., Rev. John Cooper, current minister at Bethel church, is on a three-week trip to Holland. "Most of the ministers can't preach in Dutch anymore," Mr. Huismans said. "Rev. Cooper is learning Dutch from us."

The need for an English-speaking Ladies Society arose in 1965 as several women in the

congregation wanted to join the existing Ladies Society, "Sursum Corda", but couldn't speak Dutch very well.

Organizing their own society in September, 1965, the group called itself "Forward in Faith". They work co-operat-

ively with their Dutch-speaking sister society at fund-raising activities and banquets.

Rev. Cooper has been with the congregation for two and a half years and cares for 84 families, close to 400 people.

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CLERGY COMMENT

The real cure

By PETER RALPH
Georgetown Alliance Church

"I'd be okay if I had my money".

That was a smart crack to make when I worked on the loading dock. In a world that marks its calendar from lottery to lottery, doesn't everyone believe that money will cure us? And lots of money will keep us well? So if everyone believes it, it must be true, right?

So imagine my surprise to find in Proverbs 30: 8 and 9, the prayer of a man pleading with God to KEEP him FROM riches! Don't make me rich, or I'll forget you, Lord. Don't make me poor or I'll steal and shame you. Give me just enough for my needs.

The Bible's ideal is balance. The Scriptures call a man wealthy whose life has the right blend of material and spiritual goods. Food? Clothing? Housing? Yes, but he also shares with the poor and treasures his children over his daily interest account. And his greatest prize is that he knows God. Jeremiah 9: 23, 24.

A Christian has God's things on earth to do God's will. He will give an account one day. He jealously seeks and guards the balance of life. His God has pledged to provide his needs; indeed that He is aware of the needs before the Christian himself is.

There is a priceless freedom to be found in learning to trust God and love life balanced as He wants it to be. Freedom from fear of tomorrow, and from covetousness

today. Freedom to cheer when someone else prospers. Christ, who became poor for us, calls us to be converted from a grasping world to a balanced freedom in Him.

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Downtown Georgetown

Spring Fair here May 8

Members of St. John's United Church in Georgetown have derived special benefit from the past two months' preparations for the church's elaborate Spring Fair coming May 8.

As well as working toward a good cause that should prove exciting as well as profitable for Spring Fair visitors, congregation members have found particular delight in drawing together in a spirit of fellowship and fun.

The all-day event starting at 10 a.m. May 8 at St. John's will feature several concurrent events highlighted by a "silent auction".

Bidders receive a list of items up for auction and a chance to peruse those on display. If they drop off the highest bid on the receipt provided, they could receive such fascinating "items" as free window washes, a home-cooked dinner for four or even room and board at someone's cottage.

Bidding continues all day, but the auction itself opens at 7 p.m.

As well as coming up with unique and exciting items for the auction, St. John's members have been busily searching their homes for articles for the giant yard sale.

If you haven't gotten too full at the heavily-laden bake table, you might want to try the special lunch of tea, soup and ham on a bun.

Organizers predict a very interesting day full of friendship at St. John's. Come out and bring the whole family. All proceeds to church work.

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