How We Grew

Freeport Methodist Church
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By

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and
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Freeport Methodist Church

Freeport, New York
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Foreword

History is the recording of events and what they have meant to the world. In our case it is our desire to show to everyone the manner in which our church in Freeport had its beginning and how it grew.

Freeport Methodist Church in company with its sister churches on Long Island has, since its inception, been a leader in good works. It has never failed to let it be known as to how it stood on matters affecting the life of the community. Because of this the history of our church has marched side by side with that of Freeport and thus has helped to provide for the spiritual growth of our village.

Our church history shows a path along which many ministers and laymen have passed and in passing each one has left a mark that has helped the Freeport Methodist Church to grow. Many of those men are lost to history and exist only in name. Never-the-less to each we owe much. We are sure that as we continue to build our church, their memory will help us to maintain and keep a strong religious position in our community.
From the days of Tackapuska, chief of the Meroke Indians to our times more than three hundred years have gone by. Having bought the land from him, the white man began its development at once. These men were hardy pioneers able to cope with and solve the problems that came their way. Settling in Hempstead, they are believed to have established the first English settlement on Long Island. Many of the people who settled there were persons who were seeking religious freedom. Soon, however, the Church of England became the dominating church and other forms of worship were looked upon with disfavor.

The area about Hempstead was known as the Hempstead Plains and the Freeport area as Hempstead South. Whether because of a desire to find complete religious freedom or not we do not know, but in 1644 two men came from Stamford, Conn. and settled in Hempstead South. One was John Rock Smith and the other, Edward Raynor. Taking its name from Raynor, the area first became known as Raynor South and then Raynortown. Records show that both men prospered and at their death left many descendants.

In the year 1760, a group of emigrants left Limerick, Ireland, for America. Seekers of religious freedom they had settled in Ireland after being forced to flee from Germany by the forces of Louis XIV, monarch of France. Included in the group were Phillip Embury and his wife, also Paul Heck and his wife Barbara. Embury was a Methodist lay preacher as well as a class leader. Barbara was a devoted Christian woman. At her request Embury assumed the Methodist leadership in New York and eventually built the John Street Church in Lower Manhattan. Other Methodist Preachers were scattered throughout the colonies.

In 1784 following the Revolutionary War a Methodist Conference was called in New York. Bishop Asbury, a famous preacher, presided. He had been appointed bishop by John Wesley. During the conference it is presumed that the New York Preacher, John Dickens, requested that a preacher be stationed on Long Island. Phillip Cox was appointed and he became the travelling preacher for the twenty four known Methodists on Long Island. Cox was a well known figure in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. He gave up a prominent appointment there to assume his place in the New York
Conference as an itinerant preacher. The work that he performed on Long Island shows that he was indeed an able man.

In 1785 a second preacher, Ezekial Cooper, was named to the Long Island Circuit. It is almost certain that in that year he and Phillip Cox organized a Methodist Class in the home of Benjamin Raynor located in Hempstead South. As stated before, this area finally took the name of Freeport. The Raynor home was located on the Graffing farm not too far from the Merrick Camp Meeting grounds. For a ten year period there are no records of this class other than the names of preachers appointed by the New York Conference. Then in 1795 the records show that a collection of $2.00 was taken in Benjamin Raynor's class in Hempstead South. This class was the beginning of Methodism in the Baldwin, Freeport and Merrick area.

It is only right that we should pause and give a few thoughts to the itinerant preacher. For it was they who spread Methodism throughout, not only Long Island, but all of America. They were for the most part young men often times not over twenty years of age. They received little or no salary and depended upon their fellow Methodists for food and lodging. Many times their clothing was secured in the same way. They usually carried a small knapsack containing their clothing, Bible and Hymnal. These were their only possessions as they travelled from place to place for their preaching sessions. They usually travelled on horse back. If they did not have a horse, they walked carrying the pack on their back. They did not permit weather to interfere with their appointments. The itinerant preacher was a hardy soul, but paid for his devotion to duty. Many of them died in the early part of their lives because of the hardships that they had to endure.

As the days went by Hempstead South became a bulwark for Methodism on Long Island. Records of class leaders are few. They do indicate, however, that the home of Benjamin Raynor continued as a meeting place for a Methodist class until 1797 with him as a leader. It probably continued to a later period as some years later Benjamin Raynor was quite active as a lay preacher in the Bethel Church. From 1804 to 1809 Lester Raynor, a brother of Benjamin Raynor, was the leader of this class. Mitchell A. Bull was the circuit preacher at this time. His records indicate the members of this class in 1806 were as follows:—

— 2 —
Parker Raynor assumed the leadership in 1810, continuing until 1821. In the year 1813 Thomas Birdsall, who later became a powerful local preacher, was converted. Rev. Birdsall was responsible for much of the Christian leadership in the area.

In 1822 the leadership of this class was taken over by John Snedeker. He was a brother of Christian Snedeker, who was not only a leader in the Hempstead Church, but one who also performed much work in starting a church in Bethel now Baldwin. John Snedeker was followed by Thomas Seaman. In 1827 members of this class were:

- Thomas Seaman—Leader
- Isaac Post
- Sarah Post
- Elizabeth Williams
- Lydia Raynor
- John F. Raynor
- John C. Raynor
- Gilbert Smith

- Detman Pearsall
- Phoebe Ritchie
- Emily Smith
- Catherine Smith
- Sarah Smith
- Catherine V. Smith
- Margaret A. Smith

Thomas Seaman continued as leader of this class until his death in 1829. William B. Raynor then assumed the leadership. Born in 1801, he was converted in 1823 under the leadership of John Snedeker. Raynor was a sincere, devout, Christian man. As a class leader he devoted his time and ability to the Methodist cause. He was familiarly known as "Methodist Willie." The class prospered and grew under his leadership. It is from this class that the Freeport Methodist Church was born.
While the class from which we grew was blessed with capable leaders it is also true that the New York Conference selected good men to be sent out on the Long Island circuit. These men were faithful to the last degree and did not permit danger or anything else to interfere with their work. To these men Methodism in Freeport also owes much. Assuredly without their preaching and exhortation it would not have gone forward to become the church that it is today.

The Long Island Circuit was organized in 1784. Riders of the circuit were:

1784 Phillip Cox
1785 Ezekial Cooper
1786 Thomas Ware
1787 Peter Moriarty
1788 Robert Cloud
1789 William Phoebus — John Lee
1790 David Kendall
1791 William Phoebus — Banjamin Abbott
1792 John Raynor — James Boyd
1793 Joseph Totten — George Strebeck
1794 Robert Hutchinson — L. McCoombs
1795 Sylvester Hutchinson — John Clark
1796 James Dechon — David Buck — William Phoebus
1797 Andrew Nichols — Joseph Totten — William Phoebus
1798 David Brown — John Wilson
1799 Cyrus Stebbins — James Campbell — Samuel Mervin
1800 James Campbell — Samuel Mervin
1801 David Buck — Peter Jayne — Billy Hubbard
1802 Peter Jayne — David Buck — John Finnegan

In 1803 Freeport South was placed in the Rockaway circuit. It continued so until 1810 when it became a part of the Jamaica circuit.

1803 Francis Ward — Sylvester Foster
1804 Francis Ward — H. Earnes — Henry Redstone
1805 H. Earnes — J. Finnegan — Henry Redstone
1806 James Coleman — Mitchell A. Bull
1807 Lumen Andrews — John Kline
1808 N. V. Thompkins — Henry Redstone
1809 Francis Ward — William Phoebus — Henry Redstone
1810 Francis Ward — Isaac Candle
1811 Lumen Andrews — N. W. Thomas
1812 W. Thatcher — Theodosius Clark
1813 J. Lyon — S. Bucknell
1814 Smith Arnold — Theodosius Clark
1815 Joseph Crawford — Benjamin Griffin
1816 Thomas Ware — Marvin Richardson
1817 William Phoebus — John M. Smith
1818 Phinehas Rice — Nicholas Morris
1819 Phinehas Rice — Nobile Thomas
1820 Samuel Cochran — Nobile Thomas
1821 Samuel Cochran — Samuel Ferguson
1822-23 Elijah Hebard — Horace Bartlett
1824-25 Jacob Hall — Richard Seaman
1826-27 Samuel DeVine — Daird Holmes
1828-29 Nobile W. Thomas — D. I. Wright
1830-31 Jesse Hunt — Gersham Pierce
1832-33 Noah Bigelow — A. Hubin

These are the men who, together with the class leaders outlined earlier, made our church a reality. They sincerely wanted to see Methodism grow and grow it did.

The New York Conference continually made changes in class assignment and the preachers serving the classes. In 1827 Hempstead Church was designated as a regular church with four dependant classes, one of which was Raynor South. As stated before in 1829 William B. Raynor became the leader of the Thomas Seaman class. We have also shown that he was a dedicated Methodist. He continued to build the class which was made up with the following people:—

Willet Raynor
Abigail Raynor
Mary Ann Raynor
Isaac Post
Sarah Post
Jackson Post
Sarah Ann Post
William Smith
Catharine Smith
Jesse Pearsall transferred to Bethel
Jarvis Coombs
Maria Coombs
Elizabeth Baldwin transferred to Newbridge
Samuel Smith
Phebe Smith Received by letter

— 5 —
Rebecca Raynor
Elizabeth Valentine transferred from Newbridge

These were the people who looked forward to having a permanent church home and planned accordingly.

Apparently the majority of the people lived in the area between Raynor South and Merrick, and it was in this area they desired to establish their church. Eventually they located and purchased a small store building located on the West side of the Hempstead and Babylon Turnpike and South of Seaman Avenue. Many of the people knew this location as Powell’s Corner. Here the first church of the Raynortown district was opened to worship. It was first called the Sand Hole Church, but as Rockville Centre already had a church by this name it was finally called the Sand Hill Church.

First Church Building in Freeport — 1833
The building was a small one being, so far as we have been able to learn, about twenty feet wide and thirty feet long. It was a one and one half story building of wooden construction. The entrance was directly off the street through double doors. The doors had glass panels in the upper half. There were two windows with average size glass panes in the front of the building, one in either side of the door. The one side of the building had two windows of the same type. A chimney came through the center of the roof indicating that there was probably a wood burning stove in the center of the meeting room. The building was not painted. In all likely-hood the sanctuary was equipped with a simple altar and wooden seats. No provision for music was made other than singing. In the early churches it was not customary to use musical instruments as an aid to worship. This is an inadequate description of the first church building in Raynortown or Freeport as it is now known.

The following is a direct quotation from the Trustee Records of the Methodist Church of Freeport.

"Pursuant to an act of the Legislature of the State of New York entitled an Act to provide for the incorporation of religious societies dated April 5, 1813 (See revised Statutes vol. 3 page 292) a meeting of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Raynor District in the town of Hempstead was held at the House of William B. Raynor in said town on the 11th day of June, 1833 for the purpose of electing trustees for said church when Noah Bigelow was called to the chair and William B. Raynor appointed secretary, Willet Raynor and Jarvis Coombs, Inspectors of votes. When it was resolved that we have five trustees to this church and that the same be divided into three classes, one class to be elected annually and that the time of service of the first class to expire the first year. When the following trustees were duly elected and classed as follows:

- Willet Raynor — 1st Class
- William B. Raynor — 2nd Class
- William Smith — 2nd Class
- Jackson Post — 3rd Class
- Jarvis Coombs — 3rd Class

William B. Raynor, Sec."

This then was the birth of the Freeport Methodist Church. The
date is June 11, 1833. It was the first church in the district, then called Raynor South and now Freeport.

As has been previously pointed out the Hempstead Church was our mother church. Noah Bigelow was the resident preacher in 1832 and 1833. There is no doubt that by his advice and encouragement he gave the Methodists of Raynor South the will and power to accomplish their purpose—namely to have a church of their own. Rev. Bigelow dedicated the church at its opening service in 1833. God in His wisdom had used many people and things to create a church that would grow and become great in its service to mankind.

Services were held regularly in the new church. While records are scarce the few that do exist indicate that our church expanded quite rapidly. Preachers were supplied either by Hempstead or Jamaica. In the Spring of 1838 Hempstead, Bethel or Baldwin, and Raynortown (Freeport) became a separate charge. Services were held continuously in the Sand Hill Church for twenty-five years. During the latter part of this period, the building was moved to Main St.—North of Merrick Road. As its congregation grew it was decided to build a new church. Upon completion of the new church, the Sand Hill Church was sold and became a part of the Losee Estate. There are no records to indicate its final disposition.

During this period our church was again fortunate in the quality of men assigned to it as preachers. They were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>John Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839-40</td>
<td>Ira Ferrit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>Laban Cheney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>William K. Stofford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843-45</td>
<td>Seymour Langdon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845-46</td>
<td>E. E. Griswold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847-48</td>
<td>W. F. Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>William Dixon (died)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>William Laurence</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850-51</td>
<td>Buel Goodsell</td>
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<td>1852-53</td>
<td>Samuel W. Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>John J. Gilder</td>
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<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Ira Abbott</td>
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<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>H. J. Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>Smith Abrams</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This brings to a close the history of the first Freeport Methodist Church. Surely the men and women who worked and worshipped there performed an outstanding job—but only because it was God's will.

As the Sand Hill Church had served its members well at its location on Main Street, it was decided that the new church should be in the same general location. Accordingly a piece of property on the West side of Main Street and about four hundred feet North of Merrick Road was purchased. The church built on this property was to be the home of the Freeport Methodist for the next thirty-five years. There is no record as to from whom it was purchased or for what price.

The following is a direct quotation from the Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the Raynor District and dated August 30, 1858:—"Pursuant to an act of the Legislature of the State of New York entitled an act for the Incorporation of Religious Societies passed April 5, 1833 (See revised Statutes Vol. 3 page 292) a meeting of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church was held at the Raynor District Church in the town of Hempstead (due notice having been previously given) for the purpose of electing a board of Trustees to take a deed for a site for a new Methodist Episcopal Church at Freeport in said town and take charge of said church and property and transact the business of said church. When William B. Raynor was called to the chair and Carmen Smith appointed secretary, Elijah Raynor and Willet Raynor, Inspectors of votes. It was resolved that we have five trustees, when

William B. Raynor—1st Class  
Carmen Smith—1st Class  
John C. Raynor—2nd Class  
Hiriam H. Raynor—2nd Class  
Allen Raynor—3rd Class

were duly elected and classed as above.

Given under our hands and seals the day above written

Elijah Raynor (Seal)  
Willet Raynor (Seal)

Carmen Smith, Sec.

The above is on record in the Queens County Court House.

Work was started on the new church with the laying of the corner stone in 1858 and soon the second church in the
History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Freeport was a reality. The building was about forty feet wide and fifty-five feet long. It was twenty-five feet high. It had a peaked roof, with a steeple on the Eastern end. There were four long shuttered windows on either side as well as a porch on the street end of the building. It was raised three feet above the street level. The entrance to the church was through a double door. The building was of wooden construction and painted white presenting a very handsome appearance. There is no record as to the type of furnishings, nor is there any reference to lighting and heating. In the rear of the church there were horse sheds to take care of the conveyances used to bring people to church. The church was dedicated in February 1859 by Rev. B. Pillsbury, resident pastor at the Hempstead Church.

During the early part of 1859 ministers were supplied by the Hempstead Church, but in the Methodist Conference of that year held in New York, Freeport and Bethel, or Baldwin, became the single charge of one minister appointed by the conference. This arrangement continued until 1872 when each became a separate church with its own minister. Ministers of this period were as follows:

1859-60  M. Hammond
1861    Ezra Miner
1862-63  Albert Booth
1864    William Wake
1865    No regular supply
1866-67  C. P. Corner
1868-69  F. W. Ware
1870-71  W. W. Clark

It is to be noted that whether or not there was an appointed minister, there was ample leadership in the church to carry on its worship. Up to this time the key man in this leadership was William B. Raynor. When he died in 1869 his position was taken over by his son John Fletcher Raynor. One other thing that should be mentioned is that in 1867 the number of trustees was changed from five to nine with three in each class.

When Freeport became a separate charge in 1872 Rev. M. S. Hammond was appointed to it. He was the same Rev. Hammond who served Freeport and Baldwin in 1859 and 1860. With the coming of a regular minister it was necessary to
find him a place to live. On October 21, 1872 the building of a parsonage was authorized at a cost of two thousand dollars. For this purpose a lot with fifty-five foot frontage on Merrick Road was purchased from Mr. B. R. Raynor for five hundred dollars. Both the cost of the lot and the parsonage had been subscribed to by members of the church.

Here again records of the religious activities of this church are few, but it is known that early in its history a Sunday School was organized. William B. Raynor was its first superintendent. There is no record of attendance, but the statistical records for the New York Conference for 1873 show a report of 138 scholars and 27 teachers. From that time on the Sunday School was an important part of our worship. In the same year the church membership is listed as 119 persons. Both the church and the Sunday School membership continued to grow. In 1877 it was decided that it would be necessary to enlarge the church. Plans were drawn to lengthen the building by fifteen feet with a class room on either side of the extension, giving it the form of the letter T. These rooms were connected to the main auditorium by folding doors so that when opened a large congregation could be accommodated. The pulpit was made smaller and was backed by a fresco representative of three arches supported by columns. The building was newly painted and papered. A new heater was installed. New lighting fixtures were also installed. The committee in charge of the changes was John C. Raynor, George Wallace and N. H. Smith. The cost of all repairs was raised by subscription. There is no information as to how much money was needed.

When the church was reopened (date unknown, but in early 1878) it was dedicated by Bishop Matthew Simpson assisted by Prof. Henry A. Butts of Drew University and Presiding Elder Graves. In the days following the dedication many people were converted. Included in this group were Lather Mead, Captain John Powers and Charles Golder. Charles Golder became a dedicated Methodist worker and did much to build Methodism in Freeport.

In a church such as ours, many changes take place. This was true of the Main Street church. Little is known of the musical side of the worship, but there was a small organ which was used in the services. In 1883 a new Mason and Hamlin organ was presented to the church by the Organ Fund Society.
The Board of Trustees voted to retain the original organ. It is of interest to note that in 1884 it was necessary to rebuild the horse sheds. Later in the same year the sanctuary was redecorated.

During this period the average length of a pastorate was two years. Following is a list of pastors who served as our ministers during the period of the church on Main Street.

1872-74 S. M. Hammond
1875-76 E. S. Hebbard
1877-78 W. R. Webster
1879-81 D. S. Stevens
1882-84 J. H. Hand
1885 F. C. Hill
1886 W. C. Wilson
1887-88 Robert Wasson
1889-91 J. H. Hand

In the first portion of this period the church prospered and its membership increased, but then it began to lose its people. Many people thought that this was due to frequent change of pastors. Rev. J. H. Hand was appointed pastor in 1889. He again built up his church to such an extent that by 1890 it was felt that a larger church was needed.

The passing of an old and valued land mark is always sad. So it is with the Methodist Church on Main Street. After the congregation moved to their new location the old church was sold to Mr. Morris Miller with the stipulation that it be used as a store for at least one year. He paid $3175.00 for the building and since that time it has been used as a commercial building. At present it is occupied by Green’s Stationary Store and Paul’s Mens Store. Additions have been added so that today it is hardly recognizable as a church—but standing on Church Street and looking across the parking lot the outlines of the church are plainly visible.

The parsonage on Merrick Road was sold to a Mr. Mead for $3300.00. After selling it our church rented it as our parsonage until a new one could be built. Afterwards it was moved to Church Street. We were unable to determine its location. Thus ends the history dealing with the second Methodist Church in Freeport.
When it was definitely decided to build a new church much thought was given as to its location. Finally all of proposed sites were eliminated except three. They were:

1. Randall Park
2. The site of the Main Street Church
3. Pine Street—West of Church Street

In a congregational meeting a vote was taken. It was in favor of Pine Street. On July 15, 1889 a committee composed of Samuel R. Smith, Carman Pearsall and William E. Golder was appointed to buy the desired property. On December 9, 1889 this committee reported that an agreement had been signed with Mrs. Cecelia Holloway in which she agreed to sell to the Freeport M. E. Church 246 feet on the North side of Pine Street by 175 feet deep for $5.71 3/7 dollars per front foot. Cost about $1400.00.

Having settled the location, a committee on plans was appointed. This committee was composed of John J. Randall, George Wallace and Raynor P. Seaman. They visited many churches and finally it was decided to adopt plans similar to those for a Presbyterian church in Huntington.

On March 24, 1890 a building committee was appointed. Members were Samuel R. Smith, Nelson H. Smith, John J. Randall, Frank Pearsall and C. L. Wallace. They were instructed to engage an architect and proceed with the building of the church. They engaged an architect by the name of Mr. George E. Potter of Astoria, Long Island. He was instructed to draw up the plans using those of the Huntington Church modified by such changes as the building committee suggested. It was impossible to get definite action from Mr. Potter and after three weeks he was replaced by Miner D. Randall of Norwalk, Conn. He completed the plans and the work was started.

In order to speed the building of the church plans for the foundation was prepared before the plans of the church were completed. The contract for the foundation was given to Mr. D. Morrison. The cost was $1010.79. Plans for the building itself were completed and a contract for its building was given to Randall and Miller at a cost of $11,400.00. Various contractors supplied such items as furnaces and heating apparatus, gas machine and lighting fixtures, stained glass memorial windows, modification of the organ and other needed additions.
The total cost of the building and furnishings was $19,975.35, all of which was payed for by subscription by the members.

The building itself was of Norman Style architecture and irregular in shape. The average length was 104 feet and 65 feet wide. The steeple was 105 feet high. The exterior of the church as well as the steeple was shingled. Stained glass cathedral type windows added to its beauty. In all there were 24 memorial panes of glass given by various people. The bell for the steeple was given by Mr. A. W. Parker, Esq. of Ridge-wood. The furniture within the church was of polished oak. The chairs were upholstered in green and the pews in golden brown cloth. The Sunday School room was 31 feet by 65 feet and separated from the main sanctuary by glass doors. With the doors open it was possible to seat about 1000 people. The whole building was lighted by gas with a total of 146 jets. It will also be noted that the building has two cornerstones, one dated 1858 removed from the Main Street Church and the

Present Church Building in Early Stage
other 1890 dated for the present building. The building report for the third Methodist Church in Freeport was signed by Samuel Smith and Nelson R. Smith.

As the church neared completion, the need for a parsonage was evident. Adjoining the church property on the Western end was the Golder property. It was thought that this would be an ideal site for the parsonage and it was purchased at a cost of $1050.00. Size of this lot was 100 feet by 175 feet. On March 28, 1892 a new parsonage was ordered to be built. Jere Brown was chosen as the architect. Mr. Brown lived on Brooklyn Avenue and it was thought that a house such as he occupied would make a good parsonage. Accordingly its plans were followed to a certain extent. The contract for its building was awarded to Pearsall and Pine. Included in this contract was a barn for the parsonage and additional horse sheds for the church itself. The total cost to be $5414.56. The building was completed on December 1892 and has been occupied as a parsonage since that time.

The third church was dedicated and opened to worship services on July 5, 1891. The dedication services were performed by Bishop E. C. Andrews. He preached in the morning and Rev. George E. Reed, D.D., preached in the evening. At this time the resident preacher was Rev. J. H. Hand. It was in his time that the new church was built. While we have no knowledge of the membership we do know that in 1898 there were about 500 members in the church. The Sunday School membership was about the same.

In a history such as this some chronological order should be maintained. This we have tried to do and as near as possible we shall outline the events as they occurred:—

November 2, 1896—New walk in front of church. Authorized cost $484.00

January 3, 1898—Choir loft alterations completed.

October 3, 1898—Church, parsonage stable and horse sheds to be painted.

September 2, 1902—Organ tuned and new motor secured.

June 1, 1903—Electric lights installed in parsonage.

July 6, 1903—Electric lights installed in church.
June 6, 1904—A used organ obtained from First Presbyterian Church in Middletown, N. Y. Remodelled for our use.

July 2, 1906—Mortgage on parsonage paid off.
These items will present a few of the things that affected the worship in our church. Each is important in its own right.

The Sunday School continued to grow and soon the available space was not large enough. After much thought it was decided to enlarge the Sunday School room. In September 1909 H. E. Osborne, an architect from Jamaica, was hired to prepare plans and specifications for its enlargement. After much thought it was decided to move the rear wall in a Westerly direction for a distance of 20 feet and rebuild the room accordingly. This was done, but there is no record as to the cost. At the same time portions of the church were redecorated. Although planned in 1909 this work was not completed until 1915. The committee in charge of this work was J. E. Brown, R. J. Miller, George Raynor, R. H. Hunt and W. O. Seaman.

While our church was deeply concerned with its own growth, both spiritual and material it did not forget that of others. Two things of importance stand out. They are:

1. Roosevelt Church
2. Shell Island Mission

Sometime before July 1909 a Methodist class was formed in Roosevelt. It depended mostly on Freeport Methodist Church for such help as needed. This included financial help as well as spiritual leaders. In July, 1909 the Official Board agreed that an attempt should be made to form a church in Roosevelt. Expenses were to be paid by the Freeport church. On September 12, 1909 a church and Sunday School were organized. For the present ministers were to be supplied from Freeport. The Sunday School was opened with the following officers:

Superintendent—Mr. E. D. Seabury
Asst. Superintendent—Mrs. G. B. Robinson
Teachers—Mrs. Dykeman, Miss Mary Whitehouse, Mrs. J. L. Tessey and Mrs. Irving Marle.

From time to time it was necessary to help them financially, but for the most part they did not otherwise need assistance. Today they are a growing church.

2. South of Mill Road and along the water ways a small Scandanavian settlement had grown up. Its people were for the
most part employed on the water front. Children were numerous. Prior to 1908 a mission had been established by a Mrs. Hammond and Mrs. Charles Humphreys. It was located on St. Mary’s Place off Hanse Avenue. At that time St. Mary’s Place was known as Sigmund Lane while Hanse Avenue was called Shell Road. The mission was first known as Turks Island Mission and later as Shell Island Mission. It was primarily a Sunday School and was very successful with as many as seventy scholars present at times. Such help as was needed was supplied by the Freeport church. At first the building was rented for five dollars per month, but later on it was purchased for $465.00. The property was deeded to the church through trustees, William G. Miller, S.R. Smith, Jere E. Brown and Hiram R. Smith. It was suggested that the mission be made a part of the church school, but this was not done. Among other things an organ in the Ladies’ Parlor was donated to the mission. Hymnals were also supplied. Records of this mission are far from complete. Some of the people who worked there were:

Henry Single
Kneeland Ashdown
Miss Willis
Muriel Smith

Henry Sutherland
John Cotter
Norman Bangel
Lloyd Harrison

There were others but records do not give their names. The mission closed down in 1927 and eventually the building was sold.

In 1923 some thought was given to the building of a Parish Hall, including a new Sunday School room and gymnasium. However no progress was made until 1927. In that year the matter was again considered and an architect, B. D. Homan by name, was employed to draw up plans and specifications. This he did. Renovation to certain parts of the original building were included in these plans. On February 21, 1927 at a meeting of the trustees the whole project was considered and contracts let for the work to be done. The main contractor was Fred S. Howell, Sr., who quoted a price of $61,984.00. Additional contracts for certain work were also given out. They amounted to $23,626.88 making the total price $85,610.88. The work on the Parish Hall was completed in the latter portion of 1927. It made a worthwhile addition to our
church, not only in appearance but in enabling the Sunday School staff to do a better job.

The opening day was December 11, 1927. Both services were conducted by Bishop William F. Andrews. The dedication day services were held on December 18, 1927. The Parish Hall was presented to the church by William C. Miller. Bishop Luther B. Wilson preached in the morning and Rev. John W. Longdale in the evening. At a later date the gymnasium was converted to its present form through the efforts of the His 'N' Her Club and named the Powell Room in honor of Mervin E. Powell a lay leader in the church. This room is now used chiefly for social and other purposes by the various organizations of the church.

Because of the ownership of certain lands on the Sunrise Highway side, the church was continually asked to sell some portions of it so that business buildings could be constructed. Many proposals were made and on October 24, 1929 the trustees agreed to give to a Mr. Lewis a plot of ground described as 17 feet on the West side, 65 feet in length and 37 feet on the Eastern side. This in exchange for a plot consisting of 24.8 feet frontage on Sunrise Highway, about 13 feet on the Eastern boundary and 23 feet on the Western side. This change in ownership was consummated and today is that portion of land which we rent to the Firestone Co.

From time to time trouble was experienced with the organ being used in the church. The organ had been in use since 1904 and many repairs were made during that period. Finally in 1923 the music committee was instructed to contract for a new organ, cost not to exceed $4000.00. A Mason and Hamlin organ was purchased and is in use today. In 1958 the organ was overhauled in order that it might fit in with other changes made.

Over a period of time many changes are made. New instructions are also issued. In this History we have gone into detail about the most important events. Other changes were:

1. March 1939—Card playing and dancing approved for the Parish Hall.

2. May 1939—Notified by the District Superintendent that we were now the Freeport Methodist Church. The word Episcopal was dropped.

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3. September 1939—Arrangements were made with the high school whereby students would be released from school for one session each week for the purpose of religious education.

4. 1945—Parsonage redecorated.

5. 1958—Chancel in main sanctuary rebuilt, Church School also remodelled, modern kitchen installed. These improvements were dedicated November 16, 1958.

6. 1958—At the time the Church School was remodelled a small chapel was added. This is adjacent to the Sunday School room. It was to be used for small services of various types. The Junior Department of the Sunday School also uses it. It too was dedicated on November 16, 1958.

As shown in this history, records indicate that many things have been accomplished by our church, all important in their own right. Other accomplishments have been numerous but time and space do not permit their mention. But it is true that all that was done came about because we had as ministers, men who were dedicated. We have previously mentioned the men who served as ministers to the church on Main Street. Ministers who served the Pine Street church were as follows:

1889-1891 J. H. Hand
1892-1894 M. F. Compton
1895-1899 W. W. W. Wilson
1900-1901 J. A. Mac Millan
1902-1907 D. A. Jordan
1908-1912 W. A. Richard
1913-1917 S. O. Curtice
1918-1920 S. A. Burns
1921-1933 William E. Thompson
1933-1945 E. A. Pollard Jones
1945-1946 Hubert Jones
1946-1952 C. Newman Hogle
1952-1964 John L. Latshaw
1964- Chester E. Hodgson

Even as we close this portion of the History of Freeport Methodist Church things come to mind which should have been mentioned. One is the remodelling of the Narthex with its
beautiful panelling and furniture. Then too there is a new study for the pastor with its fine finish and furnishings, and as we write, the archway door has been remodelled giving a fine rear entrance to the sanctuary.

In any church the Sunday School is an important part. It is within this organization that future leaders are built. This has been true of the Freeport Methodist Church. Not only has it been possible to secure men and women of unusual ability to guide and direct our Sunday School, but it has also been possible to secure dedicated teachers. This has been true for over a hundred years. Men who guided our church in this phase of the work are as follows:

- William B. Raynor
- John F. Raynor
- Dr. Charles W. Bates
- Henry I. Bedell
- Sidney S. Smith
- Moses A. Bedell, Jr.
- James E. Haepleigh
- Martin M. Mansperger
- Alexander Brady
- William J. Prinsloo
- Rev. E. A. Pollard Jones
- Gordon G. Yarrow
- George Wallace
- William F. Golder
- Hiram R. Smith
- George I. Von Riper
- Harold E. Brown
- Harry Blinn
- Walter Joy
- Richard Reed
- John Knight
- Robert Musgrove
- Horace Weed

As a church grows so do the organizations that help to make it grow. In the case of our church probably the most important one is the Woman's Society of Christian Service. In the by gone days it was known as the Ladies' Aid Society. Also associated with it were the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies. These three organizations filled a wide gap in the work of the early church. Even before the day when women were able to have any part in church rule, they gave of themselves unstintingly. The Ladies' Aid Society always took care of the interior of the parsonage and in great measure the housekeeping of the church. They always participated in any fund raising and gave with good will anything that was needed financially or otherwise. The same was true of both missionary societies. Under the Methodist Discipline in 1941 the three organizations were combined and became known as the Woman's Society of Christian Service. Among this organization's interests are the parsonage interior, financial aid to the church, Missionary work, maintenance of the church kitchens,
Methodist Home and other matters of the same type.

In 1938 a group of young couples felt that there was need in our church for an organization that would not only provide social life for themselves, but at the same time fill a need in the church life. With this in mind they organized the His 'N' Her Club. Since that time they have provided good fellowship and entertainment for married couples who are members of Freeport church or their friends. They have also contributed money to the church activities and as indicated before, have been instrumental in maintaining the Powell Room. They can always be counted on to do their part.

In 1940 leaders of the church felt that something should be done for older people in the congregation. Accordingly they organized the Us Too Club. It is purely a social group formed to bring together people of like ages, many of whom have the same interests. As indicated they are purely social in their activities, but they do find the time and means to contribute to the needs of the church.

In 1958 a number of the still younger couples in the church felt that they wanted to work with people of their own age in furthering the work of the church, and organized the Two by Two Club. Since that time in addition to the social life within their group they have contributed much to the church. Among others they have taken over the handling of the nursery for young children during the worship service, have subsidized the Sunday School, taken part in the Church Fair and aided in the Library. Theirs is an important part.

One thing that should be mentioned is the Men's Club which existed from about 1925 to 1935. At one time it had more than 500 members. It was quite active in the church especially in sponsoring athletics for the young people. Its social life was also much enjoyed by all. As Freeport became more and more a commuters town with men arriving home from work later and later the club disbanded because of a lack of attendance.

With this our history draws to a close. Surely at a future date it will be rewritten because history never ends and we feel sure that Freeport Methodist Church will accomplish much and those things will be added to the ones that we have narrated.
Sources of Information

In a history such as this many sources of information are used. They have all contributed an important part. We wish to make the following acknowledgments:—

1. New York City Public Library—Manuscript Department.
2. Methodist Church Library—Church Centre, N. Y.
4. Nassau County Historical Society.
5. Freeport Historical Society.
6. Church Records.
7. Individuals in our church.

Without them this history would not have been written.