

OUR HISTORY

SECTION I

The year our church was organized: 1861

What led people to establish your church?

Baptist of Menasha had been holding prayer meetings in homes. In March 1860 they decided to consult with the Neenah church as to the advisability of organizing a Baptist church in Menasha. A committee visited the Neenah church and found that Neenah church wished them to organize stating that they would join Menasha or assist in supporting a pastor who would serve both churches

Who are the people (laity and ministers) who stand out in the story of your church? What contributions have they made?

April 24, 1860 a committee composed of J. Turner, J.W. Fisher, and H.C. Mowry presented to the Menasha Baptists for adoption a revised version of the New Hampshire Declaration of Faith

Rev Oliver Babcock was again called to be pastor. Interest in the church activities was renewed but to the great sorrow of the church Mr. Babcock was taken ill and died in 1885. His daughter, Edna, married young George Whiting who in time became a wealthy paper manufacturer. The mill still carries the name of Whiting. George Whiting and his family have contributed largely to this church through the years.

Whiting Family

1. In November of 1916 Mr. George Whiting presented the church with a deed to the lot at Commercial Street and High Street in Neenah, and also with a gift of \$11,000 toward a new edifice. Including a large stained glass window.
2. May 15, 1922 A gift of a house on High Street, next door to the church building to be used for a parsonage
3. In 1925 Mr. Whiting made a further gift to the church of a fine pipe organ
4. In the September 24th, 1933 minutes we find that once again the church was the recipient of a gift from the Whiting Family. A special service was held on account of the redecoration of the church auditorium
5. 1938 Mr. Whiting came to the aid of the church with a gift of \$890 for painting and putting the buildings in shape
6. Mr. Frank Whiting, son of George Whiting, has kept an interest in the finances of the church, even naming it a beneficiary in his will. The will established a trust from which the church receives monies from each year, providing the name Whiting is part of the name.

Mr. Charles Velte

1. June 3, 1917. One point of interest or reference is it was during this time that we see Mr. Charles Velte chairing or leading the church meetings for the first time.
2. Throughout the history of the church he was a very active leader, both spiritually, and in business

3. Tree Farm- Mr. Velte paid \$2,000 for the deed to the land on August 1, 1958. The property was deed to the church in October 1958 by Charles Velte.

U. E. Gibson

1. Always loyal to our denomination and to the societies which made up the Northern Baptist Convention, he led the church to follow its leading. The duplex envelope system was adopted and our contributions to state and national work increased. When the New World movement was proposed by the convention, following the First World War, Mr. Gibson led us in raising some \$4,000 besides our regular benevolence of \$400. During the pastorate of Rev. Gibson, the denominational Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board was put on a sound financial basis. Our church, largely through the leadership of Mr. Charles Velte, raised the amount required for the initial payment and Pastor Gibson was enrolled as a member.

Rev Rex Woods

1. One of the things the church body was looking for was a way to expand the local mission and outreach in the local community, and one of Rev. Rex Woods' desires was to establish a day care service or preschool. To that end, in 1975, The Learning Tree under the guidance of Mrs. Florence Emerich was organized under the name of Whiting Community Pre-School Center. It was planned to meet the needs of Neenah-Menasha and Oshkosh families having children 3, 4, and 5 year old. 41 children were present the first week. Mrs. Judy Wiese assists Mrs. Emerich; both are fully qualified and licensed teachers. The school is required to meet certain educational standards under State supervision. The church membership provided most of the equipment and labor to get the pre-school started.

There are significant turning points in the life of every church, identify your turning points with a statement of their significance and an approximate date. Some examples follow:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| (1) Building burned | Natural disaster in community |
| Building program | (2) Pastor anniversary/ordination |
| Change in the community | Person entering the ministry |
| (3) Church Anniversary | (4) Relocation of facilities |
| Church split/s | Roll call/homecoming |
| Evangelistic crusades | Staff development |
| Federation | Started a new church |
| Founding | Yoking |
| Growth explosion | Unyoking |
| (5) Mission projects | (6) Community Involvement |
| (7) Mortgage Burning | (8) Name Change |

1. **Building burned.** Sometime in spring of 1922 there was a disastrous fire in the Memorial Baptist Church, doing significant damage to the basement. While repairs were being made, church services were held in the Armory. Because so much of the repair work was done by our

members under the leadership of Mr. Harvey Jasperson, chairman of the trustees, the amount collected from the insurance companies covered the cost of hired labor. The church was re-dedicated October 15, 1922. Dr. A. Le Grande of Milwaukee, Secretary of the Wisconsin Baptist Convention preached on "The Peace of the Church in the Community". The Presbyterian and Methodist people closed their evening services and met with the Baptist Church for evening worship. Both Dr. Jones of the Presbyterian and Rev. J. E. Schlaganhauf, pastor of the M E Church spoke. It should be noted that both had offered their churches and or parish house during the rebuilding of the church

- 2. Pastor anniversary/ordination** Rev. P.S. Calvin. Who had just graduated from the Chicago Seminary, became pastor in 1899 and was ordained here. The motion for ordination is recorded in the minutes of April 13, 1899. The Ordination service is recorded as being held April 25, 1899. The following is found in the minutes of June 29, 1899 Mr. Calvin then spoke of some of our members who did not feel acquainted or at home among us, and suggested that we have a fellowship meeting in connection with our next Thursday evening prayer meeting all the members and their families, thus affording an opportunity for all to get acquainted. This is note worthy as it helps to understand some of the adversities facing the new Union Baptist church in relationship to the former churches, and even though they are now one there is still some of the we/they relationship/feelings. It should also be noted that even though the former two churches had formed one, that services were still conducted at the Danish Baptist church at least 10 times a year, this lasted into the 1900's

3. Celebrations

- a.** Sunday November 22, 1936 was an exciting day in the life of the church, as that was the day the church celebrated the 75th anniversary of the joining of the Neenah and Menasha Church's. The day started with a special Sunday service with lots of singing and the sermon by Dr. A. Le Grand. The afternoon found the membership again gathered for prayer and music, along with the reading of letters from former members, letters from former pastors along with a report on each pastor that was given by different members. There was also a history of the church given by various members
- b.** March 29 and 30 1952 Saturday a Centennial Banquet was held. Festivities included, Greeting from Green Bay Association, singing, and two historical sketches. Sunday morning service was held with Rev. W.L. Harms D.D providing the sermon. A reception was held from 2 to 4 PM with a Vesper Communion at 4:30 PM. The communion sermon was again given by Rev. W.L. Harms D.D
- c.** The kick-off of the 150 year celebration began at 8:00 am Saturday September 29 with nine holes of golf at Westridge Golf Course followed with breakfast at the 4 Season's restaurant. On Saturday at 5:00pm the Waushara Community Church Praise Team provided leadership as we lifted up our praises to God. Following the Praise Team there was a formal Reception in the Fellowship Hall, with a large number of former pastors and members present. On Sunday, Sunday School was held at 9:00am, followed by Worship at 10:15am with the message being delivered by, Arlo Reichter, Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin. Starting at 12:30 pm program moved to Germania for a Chicken and Ham dinner Followed by a program of remembering, sharing and meeting new and old friends and pastors.

4. New Church Buildings

- a.** Memorial Baptist Church was dedicated June 3,1917

- b. The really big event of 1969 happened on May 11, 1969, when the membership meet at the church on the corner of Commercial and High Streets in Neenah, started the service, each family/member taking one item to their cars and formed a motorcade to 1020 Tullar Road Neenah Wisconsin, where they carried in their item and finished the service.

5. Mission Projects

- a. The church has a long history of missionary involvement, some of which includes White Cross work, support to areas in need after a disaster with both financial and material support.
- b. In the record dated November 27, 1900 we find the followingat the Thanksgiving service in the Methodist church a collection was taken for the poor, the collection was split between the three churches to be used as they thought best, our share was \$8.17 Mrs. Calvin made a motion which was carried, that this money be placed in the hands of the deacons to start a poor fund, and that we take a collection ever Lord supper to increase the amount. This was the start of the Deacons Fund we still have today
- c. One of the things the church body was looking for was a way to expand the local mission and outreach in the local community, and one of Rev. Rex Woods desires was to establish a day care service or preschool, to that end in 1975 The Learning Tree under the guidance of Mrs. Florence Emerich, was organized under the name of Whiting Community Pre-School Center. It was planned to meet the needs of Neenah-Menasha and Oshkosh families having children 3, 4, and 5 year old. 41 children were present the first week. Mrs. Judy Wiese assists Mrs. Emerich; both are fully qualified and licensed teachers. The school is required to meet certain educational standards under State supervision. The church membership provided most of the equipment and labor to get the pre-school started.
- d. Once a month Witting Community Baptist Church serves a meal for community table, this is very well received by the participants.

6. Community Involvement

- a. In the May 19, 1901 meeting notes we gain some insight into the concerns the members had of things going on in the community that could affect their Christian life as well other Christians in the area, this was expressed in the form resolution to His Excellency Governor La Follette that was unanimously passed.
 - i. There was scheduled to occur in the city of Oshkosh on Thursday evening May 16,1901 a pugilistic contest (*A bare handed Boxing match*) in open violation of the laws of Wisconsin and to the disgrace of the fair name of our state
- b. Early in the formation of SHARE in Wisconsin Witting Community Baptist Church became a distribution point in Neenah. This continues to this day.

7. The church burned the mortgage of the Tullar Road Church November 9, 1980

8. Name Change

- a. 1861 Menasha Baptist Church. 1867 Menasha – Neenah Baptist Church. 1890 Doty Island Baptist Church. December 1898 Union Baptist Church. January 7, 1925 annual meeting a motion was made and carried to change the name to Whiting Memorial Baptist Church. 1969 changed to Whiting Community Baptist Church

Turning points lead to celebrations. What events does your church celebrate?

OUR HISTORY

SECTION II

The Story of Pastor/Church Relations

List the last three installed pastors of your church and their tenure.

Name	Date Served From	To
Rev. James Schmitz	1992	2011
Rev. Don Brown (Interim)	1990	1991
Rev. William B. Daylong	1985	1990
Rev. V. Rex Woods	1972	1984

Name the primary strength each of these pastors brought to the ministry of the church:

Rev. James Schmitz

Was instrumental in updating the church constitution, vision statement, mission statement, and church business structure. Promoted several mission trips involving the membership.

Rev. Don Brown (Interim)

The Rev. Donald E. Brown served as interim pastor just before the Rev. Jim Schmitz was called to Whiting Community Baptist Church. Rev Don Brown was just what Whiting needed. He offered stability and sound values to the congregation in a time that it was truly needed. Rev. Brown had a great love of the children; this was one of his many assets

Rev. William B. Daylong

Rev Daylong was a very intelligent individual, and as such provided spiritual leadership that was hard for the congregation to understand/relate. While at Witting Rev Daylong received his Doctorate, after which he moved on to a Methodist church in Iowa. His departure was one of much resentment by the membership; they felt betrayed after paying for much of his Doctorate.

Rev. V. Rex Woods

Rev. Rex Woods served as Church Pastor for 12 years; Rev. Woods was very committed to local missions and was instrumental in establishing a pre-school in the church. The family of Rev. Rex Woods was an active part of the church. Rev Rex Woods had a personal passion when dealing with the sick and shut-ins. After retiring as Pastor, Rev. Rex Woods became one of the clergy at Theda Clark Hospital for several years.

In addition to financial support describe how your church encouraged and supported the most recent Person who held the position you are now seeking to fill: Encouraged him in further education, taking part in personal assessment surveys, offering feedback, both positive and negative.

If a Previous pastor is currently a member of the church, describe his or her role in the life of the Congregation: No

OUR HISTORY

SECTION III

Have any of the last three installed pastors left involuntarily or under pressure?

Yes

X No

If Yes:

1 Choose the issues that may have contributed to termination. You may check more than one.

Conflict of personalities in the church

Inadequate performance

Pastoral style inappropriate for this church

Ethical issues

Financial stresses

Other

Specify

2. Indicate, if you can, which of the following best describe the congregation's behavior toward a minister prior to her or his leaving. You may check more than one.

civil

kind

compassionate

supportive

harsh

indifferent

happy

sad

angry

hurt

(other)

(other)

3. Describe what your church has learned from the experience about itself and its relationship with persons who provide ministerial leadership.

PASTORS of OUR BAPTIST CHURCHES

NEENAHA BAPTIST CHURCH 1851 – 1861

- Rev. Peter Prink 1851 – 1853
- Rev James Andem
- Rev. James Follett 1853 – 1857
- Rev. Lucke Davis

MENASHA BAPTIST CHURCH

- Rev. B.J. Boynton 1861 – 1873
- Rev. D. H. Cooley 1863 - 1867

MENASHA – NEENAH BAPTIST CHURCH	DANISH BAPTIST CHURCH
➤ Rev. O. W. Babcock 1867 – 1873	❖ Rev. Lars Knudson 1870 – 1875
➤ Deacon. Benjamin Freeman 1874 – 1875	❖ Rev. J.C. Nasby 1885 – 1888
➤ Rev. H. T. Gilbert 1876 - 1876	❖ Rev. J.A. Ohrn 1889 – 1890
➤ Rev. T. T. Potter 1877 – 1880	❖ Deacons Nels Nielsen & C.P. Olson 1891 – 1895
➤ Rev. Benjamin Freeman 1880 – 1884	❖ Rev. J.A. Fridell 1896 - 1897
➤ Rev. O. W. Babcock 1884 – 1885	
DOTY ISLAND CHURCH	
➤ Rev. N. F. Clark 1890 – 1897	

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

- Rev. S. M. Beaman 1897 – 1898
- Rev P. S. Calvin 1899 - 1901
- Rev. Alfred Goodwin 1902 – 1909
- Rev. W. L. Clapp 1910 – 1912
- Rev. J. W. Johnson 1913 – 1914
- Rev. F. L. Holden 1915 – 1918

MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

- Rev. U. E. Gibson 1918 – 1937

WHITING MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

- Rev. W. L. Harms 1937 – 1949
- Rev. A. G. Sinclair 1950 - 1952

- Rev. Theodore F. Krause 1953 – 1956
- Rev. K. Art Van Dam 1957 - 1965
- Rev. John Davey 1966 – 1971

WHITING COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

- Rev. Leroy Gardner 1969 – 1971
- Rev. V. Rex Woods 1972 – 1984
- Rev. William B. Daylong 1985 – 1990
- Rev. Don Brown 1990 – 1991 Interim
- Rev. James Schmitz 1992 – 2011