Historical Permanent Record
of the Jessie Lee Memorial Church
East Readfield
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<td>J. L. Hoyle</td>
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Historical Record of the
East Readfield Methodist Episcopal Church

From an Article in the Lewiston Weekly
Journal, April 19, 1894 written by C.A. Moore.

We learn from the history of
Kennebec County that the New England
Conference of August 6, 1793, appointed
Jesse Lee to the Province of Maine,
which consisted at that time of
fifteen or twenty thousand square miles
of forest dotted with settlements, connected
by roads, and inhabited by 97,000 souls
with not a single member of the Methodist
Lee set foot on the unexplored territory
on the sixth of September and on the
tenth preached his first sermon in
Maine at Sass. Passing from settlement
to settlement he reached Readfield on
the nineteenth and preached the first
Methodist sermon ever heard in that
town. Before the month was out he had
completed the first circuit. He returned
and met the Class in Readfield Sunday
November 16th, the second class was
formed, the first being formed in Monmouth.
December 12, 1794, he preached again
in Readfield, but the most memorable
event occurred June 21, 1795, when he
came and preached the dedication
sermon of the East Readfield Meeting
House, the first Methodist Church.
dedicated in Maine.

In 1798 The New England Conference held its session here. Bishop Asbury, who presided made this entry in his Diary, "Sat Aug 25 we left & took through the woods between Wirtwasp and Readfield which was as far as the Alleghany mountains and the shades of Death. From 1800 to 1807 attended public worship and ordination.

The church at that time stood on the crown of the hill which was indeed an exalted spot.

After it had been on this spot for thirty years, and had been in constant use, it was necessary to repair the church, and it was decided to move it some thirty rods to the south thus bringing it to the country road leading from Readfield to Augusta. It is said that fifty yoke of oxen were attached and with a strong pull all together Jesse Lee's first church was hauled to the position it occupies today and was repaired and rededicated the same year. The church at this day was two stories in height standing with its side to the road. A porch was built on the side next the main road and contained a hallway and twipans.
of stairs, leading to the gallery.

The latter tree, on either side of the house, the front being furnished with seats for the singers. While, back of these were the old pews taken from the body of the old house, while new pews of more modern form were inserted below.

In those days, the ministers preached two good long sermons every Sunday, while the Sunday school came between meetings and the prayer meeting in the evening.

This middle period of the old church's existence, as it may be appropriately termed lasted for thirty-two years. Then it was found necessary to again reconstruct the building. The last public exercise held within its walls was a very appropriate one, being the funeral services of Mr. Samuel Milroy, one of its oldest and most valued members.

The trustees of the church were chosen as a building committee and consisted of J. A. Sanderson, B. H. Thomas and W. H. Hopkins. The contract was awarded to George E. Dudley and Charles E. Mace, two local carpenters.

In accordance with the plan, the porch was removed and the interior
was taken out. The building was lowered, and turned so that the end faced the main road. A steeple was added and a fine-toned bell put in place. The organ gallery is situated between the doors and is on the level with the pulpit. The church has always been kept in good repair and the interior was recently painted and the walls and ceiling papered. As presents a neat appearance. The new carpet was put down and was the gift of Mr. C. C. Vanuss.

The church is fortunate at the present day in its limited membership. Many of the old and influential members have died or moved away. One of the first to move away was Mr. S. M. Hunt. Besides being an active church officer, Mr. Hunt was leader of the Choir for many years. His son, C. C. Hunt, cap, who is an accomplished musician and a member of the famous Winthrop Street Quartet of Augusta, began his performance on the organ in this church when he was a mere boy.

Mr. B. H. Thomas, another reliable member and church officer, moved to the west. His family of children were active workers in this church.
W. H. Hopkins died and his family moved to the West. The venerable and well-remembered form of Henry Grisly for a lifetime a faithful member passed away.

The church and neighborhood sustained a very loss in the removal of the Lanborn families & Kallpack, although their interest and aid was never wholly withdrawn from its support. The daughters of the late E. T. Lanborn recently gave a valuable organ to the Church inscribed to the memory of their father and mother, and they have made many contributions of gold books to the library.

But what seems the hardest blow of all is the Church's support and prosperity is the death of Mr. C. C. Verme, who for many years had been the leading spirit in its welfare and work. His home has always been open to those who labored here as pastor, and he has contributed largely in their support. And as his wife remarked he never felt happier than when entertaining a minister of the gospel. Mr. Verme remembered the old church in his will, and the income from $100 is to be expended for the support of preaching.

Probably no church in the
state has been more fortunate in its preachers, who have labored for the people's good. In its early history the congregations were very large, coming from miles of surrounding territory. And able men presented Bible truths to eager listeners.

One of the earliest recollections is the picture of Rev. J. Lull as he ascended to the high pulpit on a cold winter day. Clad in his overcoat, and wearing his mittens through the exercises. Heated as the old house was, by only one stove, situated on one side of the room, with the cold air coming down from the galleries on extreme cold days, the church was far from comfortable. Rev. J. Ambrose and C. Mugford are kindly remembered by old residents of long ago as resident pastors. Rev. John Allen lived in the parsonage for several years. His son taught the winter school and his daughter Miss Clementia taught the summer term. The family were fine singers and their music contributed largely to the interest of the meetings. Rev. D. I. T. Randall also labored here.

Extended meetings were sometimes held, the services lasting for three
weeks with preaching every afternoon and evening. The minister usually was assisted by preachers from other places. There were seasons of great interest and great good resulted from these meetings. Rev. W. H. Frost was the last pastor to live in the parsonage.

Dr. Stephen Allen after he retired from more active work supplied this church for two years. The people greatly enjoyed the ministries of Dr. Allen, and he was beloved by all.

On account of its nearness to Kents Hill, the old in more recent years has been able to secure better preaching service than it could otherwise have enjoyed in its present condition. Many of the teachers at the seminary who are preachers have been willing to supply the pulpit on the Sabbath. Dr. Bolin in his day always had an interest in the church and preached for several seasons. President Smith, while studying at the seminary, preached for one season and after coming back to Kents Hill often supplied the pulpit during his vacation. The late Prof. P. A. Robinson for several years was pastor here.
while A. T. Chase, J. L. Morse, and J. V. Rich are remembered as successful laborers in this church. Of the young men, whose students at Kenyon College prepared for the ministry and have supplied the pulpit very successfully, and with much success may be mentioned, Rev. W. F. Berry of Waterville, Rev. C. K. Jennex, Rev. W. B. Dukeheue, of Brunswick, Rev. William Wood of Cornish, and Rev. J. L. Hoyle of Madison.

Because the people and pastors kept the records which can be read in the notes of the Quarterly Conference in 1879 when the District Superintendent asked, "Are the records properly kept?" and the answer is, "They are not," it is impossible to find the few records.

The following are clippings from the newspapers of historical events that have happened.
Marker for Site of First Methodist Church in Maine

Dedicated at East Readfield—Church More Than 130 Years Old—Rev. D. B. Holt and Rev. H. E. Dunnack Speakers

READFIELD, Sept. 2. (Special).—A bronze tablet marking the site of the first Methodist church in Maine was formally dedicated at the East Readfield Methodist church this afternoon.

For more than 130 years this little white church has called the community to come and learn of God and find comfort and strength for the daily cares of life. In the early days of its service, it was the center of a thriving and busy little village now reduced to a few farm homes, for the industries which it supported have long since vanished.

The tablet was made possible by gifts from Methodist preachers, friends and former residents, as well as those who now reside in East Readfield. It proclaims to all who pass that at this place, Methodism has a shrine. At this place, the first Methodist church in Maine, the first annual conference written "the province of Maine" was held and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed for the first time by the Methodists of Maine. Here also was the scene of the first quarterly meeting ever held in the State.

The tablet is mounted on a large boulder, and set in a cement foundation, facing the road.

The following program was carried out:


REV. H. F. ALDRICH
Pastor of Church


The words of the closing hymns were written especially for this service by Mrs. Lowe. Owing to lack of space in today's issue the historical statement will not appear until Saturday.

The summer school of theology being in session at Cobbosseecontee, a large representation of Maine Methodist preachers were present.
Rev. A. D. Parker on Evening Program at M. E. Observance

Many Highlights to Annual Conference of Augusta District and Sesqui-Centennial Program at Winthrop and Readfield Churches

WINTHROP, Oct. 28. — A very interesting and educational program was held at Winthrop Methodist Church on Tuesday evening, following the annual conference of the Maine Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The program was attended by many members of the church and the community, and was well-received.

The session included greetings, prayers, and reading of the lesson of the day. After the session, a special devotional service was held in the church's sanctuary. The service included a reading of the Bible, singing of spiritual songs, and a prayer for peace.

The Rev. Robert E. Smith, pastor of the church, delivered the sermon during the devotional service. He spoke on the importance of faith and love in our daily lives, and encouraged the congregation to be good citizens and active members of their community.

The program ended with the singing of hymns and prayers. The service was well-attended, and many in the congregation expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to pray and worship together.

The Rev. Robert E. Smith was the leading figure in the session, and he delivered a powerful and inspiring message to the congregation. The session was a success, and it left many feeling uplifted and renewed.

The program was a great success, and it served as a reminder of the importance of faith and love in our daily lives. It was a wonderful opportunity for the congregation to come together and worship as one.

The Rev. Robert E. Smith is to be commended for his leadership and dedication to the faith. He is a wonderful pastor, and we are grateful for his guidance and wisdom.

The session was a wonderful experience for all who attended, and it left many feeling renewed and renewed in their faith. It was a great day, and we look forward to attending more sessions like this in the future.

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Words used in presenting a gavel to Bishop Burne by Rev. F.F. Poulle, pastor, April 3, 1937.

"Bishop Burne and Brothers, and sisters of the conference, I hold in my hand a copy of the minutes of the conference held in 1793 at which time Jesse Lee was appointed Bishop of the province of Maine. Under the direction of Jesse Lee, the first M.E. Church built in the state, was erected at East Readfield in 1794, and dedicated in June 16, 1795. This was the first place where the Methodists of Maine held a communion service, with eight folks participating. As pastor and in behalf of this historic Church, I present this gavel made from the wood, taken from one of the girders, and the back of one of the pews. It is my desire that the desire of my people, who is loyal, cannot be called, that someday we may have the privilege of hearing you bring us a message in our historic church.

On May 30, 1937, the district superintendent was present at the morning service, and the pastor, Rev. F.F. Poulle, presented him with a gavel made from the same piece of wood as the Bishop's.
At the Methodist Church Oct 3, 1937
at East Readfield, this historic old church was filled when the toiling bell announced the opening hour, many coming from long distances to witness the rededication and to listen to the cheerful message brought by Bishop Charles Wesley Burks.

The church, the oldest Methodist church in Maine, and possibly the oldest Methodist Church still active in New England, has been redecorated and presented a bright pleasing appearance, glistening with new paint and varnish, decorated with flowers and autumn flags, ready for rededication after 144 years of service. Also Bishop Asbury spoke in 1792 and on this occasion again the church was honored by the attendance of a Bishop.

Mr. Forrester played upon a new organ by Mr. A. A. Callaghan, solos were “Open the Gates of the Temple” by Eady Achor and “Rockport,” and “The Lord is My Shepherd” by Myra. Agnes Seddon of Winthrop. Mrs. Leah Bell preceded the organ. Maine Conference Historian Rev. E. W. Lowell of Hallowell gave a brief historical statement of the church’s history.
Bishop Burns held the closest attention of his audience for a full hour, with his dramatic address upon the words, “Why this waste?” This oration might have been sold the words of this cynic, deciding the gift of love as cynics of every generation have done.

The building was presented for rededication by the pastor & the district superintendent, and by them in turn to the Bishop, the audience joining in the service of rededication which closed with the singing of the hymn, “Faith of Our Fathers.”

Ashes for the service were George Howell, Cletis Cotton, Everett Mace, Repile, and Burton Gay. The offering was received upon new collection plates presented to the church at this time. Mrs. Harry Gay, Mrs. Willys Bourne, and Mrs. Alka Mace had charge of the decorations.
Maine's First Methodist Church Renamed at Readfield

READFIELD — Maine's first Methodist church, erected 143 years ago, which for many years has been known as the East Readfield Methodist church, was rededicated Sunday and named the Jesse Lee Memorial church in honor of the Rev. Jesse Lee who preached the first sermon in the church.

This church edifice is located in East Readfield on State highway 17. It is upon one of the high hills of that section and its white spire can be seen for miles around. The story of Methodism in Maine begins with this church; and yet, it is a question if one of the many members of that faith who ride by it each year give more than passing thought to the modest little white church on the hill.

A bronze plaque set in a small stone, near the road, in front of the church gives this brief history of the church:


Had Been a Class

Those who have attended the New England Conference of today, after reading that inscription, can readily understand how Methodism has grown in Maine and all New England. The little church would nowhere near accommodate those in attendance, while it takes a week to attend to all the matters of the conference in those times.

This is the first church edifice of the faith in the State, but it does not necessarily follow that at that time there were no believers in Methodism in the State other than in Readfield. There probably were.

From early records it appears that the first appearance of the Methodist faith here was in the form of a small class in East Readfield, which grew in numbers until it was deemed advisable to erect a church home. This class, as nearly as can be determined started about 1793, for the records show that on Sept. 19, of that year, Jesse Lee preached the first Methodist sermon in the town. By some it is claimed that this was the first sermon of the faith to be preached in the State. This may be true. Whether that was the start of the class is not quite clear; neither does it appear that Lee was an ordained minister. None of the references to him which are now available carry the prefix "Rev." but that does not prove he was not a regular clergyman.

This church remained upon its original site until 1825, when it was moved 50 rods to its present site where it was rededicated. In 1857 the building was remodeled, but from that time to the present except for necessary repairs and upkeep, it has remained unchanged.

Important Center

At the time this church was erected and dedicated Readfield had been an incorporated town only three years and a settled place for only about a score of years. East Readfield was an important part of the town and it remained so for a great many years. There, at the time, was located a saw mill, grist mill, carding mill and in the course of years other industries such as flourished in most Maine towns in those years.

It was in East Readfield that the oil cloth factories, now located in Winthrop, were first established. They flourished for years. The Baileys, who built them to the present size, were not the originals of the business. When the mills were destroyed by fire the part Baileys moved them to that part of Winthrop known as Baileyville, where they flourished for years. Destroyed by fire there the business was again moved to the present location in the town of Winthrop.
One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary
of
The Dedication
of the
First Methodist Meeting House in Maine

June 24, 1945
Jesse Lee Memorial Chruch
East Readfield, Maine
We, of the Jesse Lee Memorial Church at East Readfield, invite you to unite with us for the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the dedication of Maine’s first Methodist meeting house.

In order that we all may enjoy the inspiration and fellowship of the occasion, we ask you to bring your own lunch. We will serve coffee or a cold drink.

Plan to come for the day. You will receive inspiration both from the beauty of God’s world and from the services conducted in honor of those who have served our Lord in Maine since the beginning of Methodism in this state.

Reverend Alfred H. Ives
Program

Morning Worship 10:30 A.M.
Worship  Rev. Alfred H. Ives
Sermon  Rev. Herbert F. Aldrich
Special Music  Readfield's Young People

Afternoon Service 2:00 P.M.
Worship  Rev. Cymbrid Hughes
Historical Address  Rev. Elwin L. Wilson
Sermon  Bishop Lewis O. Hartman
Special Music  Green Street Choir

Evening Service 7:00 P.M.
Worship  Rev. Louis S. Staples
Communion Meditation  Rev. G. Vaughn Shedd
Communion Service  Winthrop Choir
Special Music  Winthrop Choir
A FEW HISTORICAL NOTES

On September 10, 1793 Jessie Lee preached the first Methodist sermon to be given in the province of Maine, in "a little village called Saco".

Lee says, "Although I was a perfect stranger and had to make my own appointments, I preached almost every day and had crowded assemblies to hear. After viewing the country I thought the most proper place to form a circuit would be on the west side of the Kennebec river. This circuit was accordingly formed, extending from Hallowell to Sandy river and called the Readfield circuit."

Jesse Lee met "the recently formed class" at Monmouth on Nov. 13, 1794. This was the first Methodist class in the State and was made up of about fifteen members.

On Saturday, Nov. 15, 1794 he arrived in Readfield and preached four times on Sunday, staying over until Monday when he "went to look at our meeting house", finding that, "it was almost covered in". "Through my influence the people began the house last summer", he said, "and now it is nearly ready to preach in. It is the first Methodist meeting house ever built in Maine".

On Dec. 12, 1794, Lee was again in Readfield, where he stayed for a few days and on Sunday, Dec. 14th he administered the Sacrament of Communion for the first time in Maine, to eight persons.

Early the next summer Lee was again in Readfield, arriving in season to preach the dedicatory sermon of the Readfield meeting house, on the twenty-first of June, 1795, this being the first Methodist Church dedicated in Maine.
One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary
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June 24, 1945
Jesse Lee Memorial Church
East Readfield, Maine

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Rev. Alfred H. Ives
Rev. Herbert F. Aldrich
Readfield’s Young People

In honor of the occasion we extend our cordial invitation to the members of our church and friends to take part in the festivities of the day. We will serve coffee at 10:00 A.M.

Reverend Louis S. Staples
Chairman, Memorial Church

Jane M. S. Sherrill
Chairman, Church Activities

C. E. Garretson
Secretary, Church Activities
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June 24, 1945

The Jesse Lee Memorial Church of East Readfield Celebrated its One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of The Dedication of the First Methodist Meeting House in Maine

Rev Alfred H Ives called us to worship.

Prayer by Bishop Lewis Hartman, Virginia Welch, Marilyn Averne, Marion Luce, and Priscilla Gorden passed the offering plate.

Music by young folks of East Readfield sang "In My Heart Rings a Melody." Mrs. Margaret Elwin, organist, and Mrs. Audrey Gray, Choir Leader. The young folks were:

Robert Welch
Burham Ragan Jr.
Burleigh Lucas
Charlie Weymouth
Maynard Gordon
Kenneth Lucas
Charlie Landa
Juan Gray
Foye Luce

Rev Alfred H Ives read

greetings from former pastors Rev. Forest F. Forre and Rev. Edward Welker

Rev. Herbert F. Adrich, summer was
“Enduring Temple.” He said the place the Memorial Church had
indeed be dedicated because though
the year there have been men and
women who have cared the spirit
of God in their hearts.

There were 94 present for the
morning service.

Coffee and soft drinks were
served at noon by Lila Boy, Alice Mace,
Alice Dudley and Mildred Gordon. We
ate our prime lunches on the prime
back of church.

Folks kept coming after dinner.

There were around 200 people in the
afternoon service.

Rev. Cambriel Hugh called us to
Worship in afternoon.

Music for afternoon was.

member of choir from Winthrop
with Leah Bell at the organ.

Bishop Edwin O. Hartman delivered
the sermon. "I must work the work of
him that sent me while it is day. The
night cometh when no more worketh
The Evening Service called to order by Rev. Lewis S. Staples. The Winthrop choir furnished the music. Rev. O. Vaughn Smith had the Communion Service.

Winthrop Choir
Jacklyn Godfrey
Dorothy Godfrey
Doris Dow
Clara Jeaton
Mrs. Tillam
Reta Trauer
Flora Mitchell
Ethel Hunt
Ruth Stimson
Aline Harris
Dorothy Gray
Thelma Godfrey

FIRST METHODIST MEETING HOUSE IN MAINE—Bishop Lewis O. Hartman, resident bishop of the Boston area, will speak at the Jesse Lee Memorial Church at East Readfield next Sunday when the 150th anniversary of the dedication of Maine's first Methodist meeting house will be observed.
Oct 9, 1847
A Fourth Quarterly Conference was held at the Church.
Rev. C. D. Wentworth, D. S. had charge of the meeting, Pastor Rev. Dwight McMahon.
At this meeting, Charlie Clinton and Heman Gordon gave report of the condition of the church roof.
A motion was made and recorded on the agenda.

Heman Gordon, Charlie Clinton and Roy Mass committee to get the shingles and money to be taken from the treasury.

Oct 16th, 1847 The men of the community got together and shingled the roof in 2 days.
Volunteer labor has made a very valuable contribution to the welfare of the Methodist Church at East Readfield in putting a new roof on its church building. The oldest church in the town and reported to be the oldest Methodist Church in the state, the contribution which volunteers in the town actually made becomes the more impressive. It is known as the Mother Church of Methodism in Maine, the Rev. Jesse Lee, famed as the home missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church of early days, having gathered together a group on his first visit to Maine the latter part of the 18th century. He had been assigned to the Maine area at the annual session of the New England Conference in Lynn, Mass., and after making his way on horseback through wilderness area named Readfield as the headquarters for the first Methodist preaching circuit in the Maine territory. This he named the Readfield Circuit, and after placing a younger preacher, the Rev. Philip Wager in charge, Elder Lee pushed eastward into the wilderness.

The two pioneer ministers lived in the saddle, as was said of many pioneers in various lines of work in those days. They gathered together a small group of people who formed the Methodist Church at East Readfield, Elder Wager returned frequently to encourage the members, while Elder Lee was able to look in upon the group at longer intervals. The frame church was built of hewn timbers in the Winter from logs contributed by citizens and hauled on the snow to the site on the road to Mt. Vernon. The structure was raised at a bee in the Spring of 1795, this being an event in which residents of the town joined in a notable festivity for the little village. Of simple type, the building was ready for the dedication in early Summer, in fact, this took place on the first day of the Summer, June 21, 1795.

Elder Lee preached the sermon of dedication, a notable occasion, not only for the members of the small parent church but to others, and within three years the Methodist organization in Maine comprised nine ministers of circuits serving under a presiding elder and with a membership of 936. On Aug. 29 and 30, 1798, the East Readfield Church was host to the New England Methodist Conference, the business sessions being held in the church building and the preaching services in an open field. Bishop Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishop in America and then just past his 53rd birthday, preached to an estimated 1,800 people in a mowing field. The occasion reflected the work of Jesse Lee, in his leading in the spread of Methodism in New England.

In Lynn, Mass., Lee Hall, a business block owned by the late Edwin H. Johnson and situated opposite the City Hall, has stood for many years as a memorial to Elder Lee, founder of the First Methodist Church in the Shoe City, of which Mr. Johnson was a leading layman until his death half a century ago. The Readfield church has been known many years as the Jesse Lee Memorial Church. Bishop Lewis O. Hartman of the New England Area spoke at the 150th anniversary of the East Readfield Church in 1945.
July 21, 1948

At a Board meeting of the church. Decided to hire the inside of the church redecorated.

Motion made & seconded, we hire Cory Mitchell to do the work.

We are making plans for the 150th Anniversary of New England Confrance held in the Jesse Lee Memorial Church.

Sunday, August 29, 1948
August 29, 1948

The 150th Anniversary of New England Conference opened at 2 o'clock.

Mrs. Elizabeth Pudlston played the organ.

Rev. Dwight McMain gave prayer.

We all sang "Beth Be The Tie That Binds" all 4 verses.

Responsive Reading Commemoration Service.

Solo by Mrs. Maria Stanley accompanied by Miss Mildred Wheeler at the organ. She sang "Teach Me To Pray".

A brief historical sketch given by Rev. Forrest T. Tool.

Scripture Reading by Rev. Dwight McMain.

Solo by Mrs. Maria Stanley. "The King Of Love My Shepherd" with Miss Mildred Wheeler at organ.

Greetings from Bishop John Wesley Lord and former pastors Rev. Edward Wilkes.

The offering taken by John Owen and Robert Pudlston Jr.

Hymn sung by all "A God Beneath Thy Guiding All" all 4 verses.

Our District Capt. Chauncey

Wentworth gave the sermon using the text as Bishop Francis Asbury used. Therefore engage in mercy of God we do not live heart.
The D. S. C. D. Wentworth spoke how new our church looked since it was painted inside. The first time walls were painted instead of papered.

Rev. Alfred Dow came in late.

There were 60 present at their gathering.

Psalm: Take The Name of Jesus
Remediction given by George Beng
Supt Christian Aid League.

Mr. George Beng had a record player that made a record of the happenings.

Methodist Church, Readfield, to Have 150th Anniversary

Readfield, Aug. 26 — The East Readfield Methodist Church, oldest Methodist Church in the State, will hold a 150th anniversary program at 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 26.

Exactly 150 years ago Sunday, the Bishop Francis Asbury presided over the New England Methodist Conference in the same church building now used for worship every Sunday.

The people of East Readfield have had their historic church redecorated inside. Ceiling, walls, and pews in their new finish will be seen for the first time at the anniversary service.

The Rev. C. D. Wentworth, district superintendent, will preach the sermon. Mrs. Marnia Stanley will sing two solos and Miss Mildred Wheeler will be the accompanist. The East Readfield girls' choir will sing, with Mrs. Betty Pendleton as organist and director.
Readfield Methodist Church Observes 150th Anniversary

Readfield, Aug. 30—Sunday, Aug. 29, at 2 p.m., the East Readfield Methodist Church held a special service, observing the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the New England Methodist Conference under Bishop Francis Asbury, held in the same church building that is now used for Sunday worship. The interior was completely redecorated at a cost of $550 for this anniversary.

The pastor, the Rev. Dwight H. McMahon, opened the service with the invocation. The congregation sang Blest Be The Tie That Binds, with Mrs. Betty Pendleton as organist. Mrs. Marnia Stanley of Winthrop sang two solos, accompanied by Miss Mildred Wheeler of Reading, Mass. The solos were Teach Me To Pray, and The King Of Love My Shepherd Is.

The Rev. Forrest F. Fowle, Wilton, who was pastor at East Readfield from 1936 to 1939, gave an historical sketch of the conference under Bishop Asbury in 1788, and of some significant gatherings in the church in modern times.

D. Wentworth, Augusta District of the Methodist Church, gave a sermon, with the same text as used by Bishop Asbury from the same pulpit 150 years before. The text was II Corin., 4: “Seeing we have this ministry, we faint not.”

Greetings from Bishop John Wesley Lord, of Boston, were conveyed by the pastor to the people. Bishop Lord wrote in his letter: “It is a high honor for me as Resident Bishop of the Boston Area, to extend Episcopal Greetings to a church of the area that stands in the historic Methodist tradition of service and sacrifice. To bridge the past with the present over a period of 150 years, is to span changing social tides and currents with an Eternal Evangel. Amid the changes of time, the Church stands with its proclamation of faith and works in the name of her Lord Christ. It is my hope and prayer that such a witness shall continue undiminished in the years that lie ahead, years fraught with promise and peril for all mankind. May Christ dwell in your hearts by faith.”