

Sesquicentennial quilt traces church's history

As part of its Sesquicentennial celebration, the members of Trucksville United Methodist Church recently completed a pictorial album quilt. Measuring 7'3" by 5'6", it depicts historical highlights as well as a sampling of the church's life and activities.

The quilt was actually begun as part of the United Methodist Church's Bicentennial observation in 1984, but progress was intermittent during the next few years. Last summer, however, the work was resumed in earnest. Over the years numerous volunteers have been involved. Many hours were spent on the initial applique and embroidery work of each block, and the final quilting stage alone took over 220 volunteer hours.

Composed of eighteen 12" blocks surrounding a central rectangle (12" x 26"), the quilt is an attempt to illustrate the life of Trucksville United Methodist Church from 1844 until the present. Included are Rev. George Peck, Trucksville's first circuit rider; a camp meeting; the changing church structures,

the church school, the United Methodist Women's organization and the mission outreach of the church.

The central block is the quilt's focal point - the beginnings of the village of Trucksville. On the left side a traction car weaves its way down to the old Carverton Road trestle bridge, while on the opposite hill are a village blacksmith and a sawmill, typical of those that dotted the landscape in the earlier half of the 19th century.

The quilt was formally dedicated during the 11 a.m. worship service September 25, at which the Rev. Thomas Clemow preached the sermon. Rev. Clemow was pastor at Trucksville from 1980-85 and chaired the Bicentennial committee meeting when the quilt project was first approved in 1983.

The members at Trucksville are particularly grateful to Sheryl Sec, Back Mountain Quilt Works in Dallas and Marianne Williams of the Quilt Rescue in Shavertown, who both gave and continue to give valuable advice.

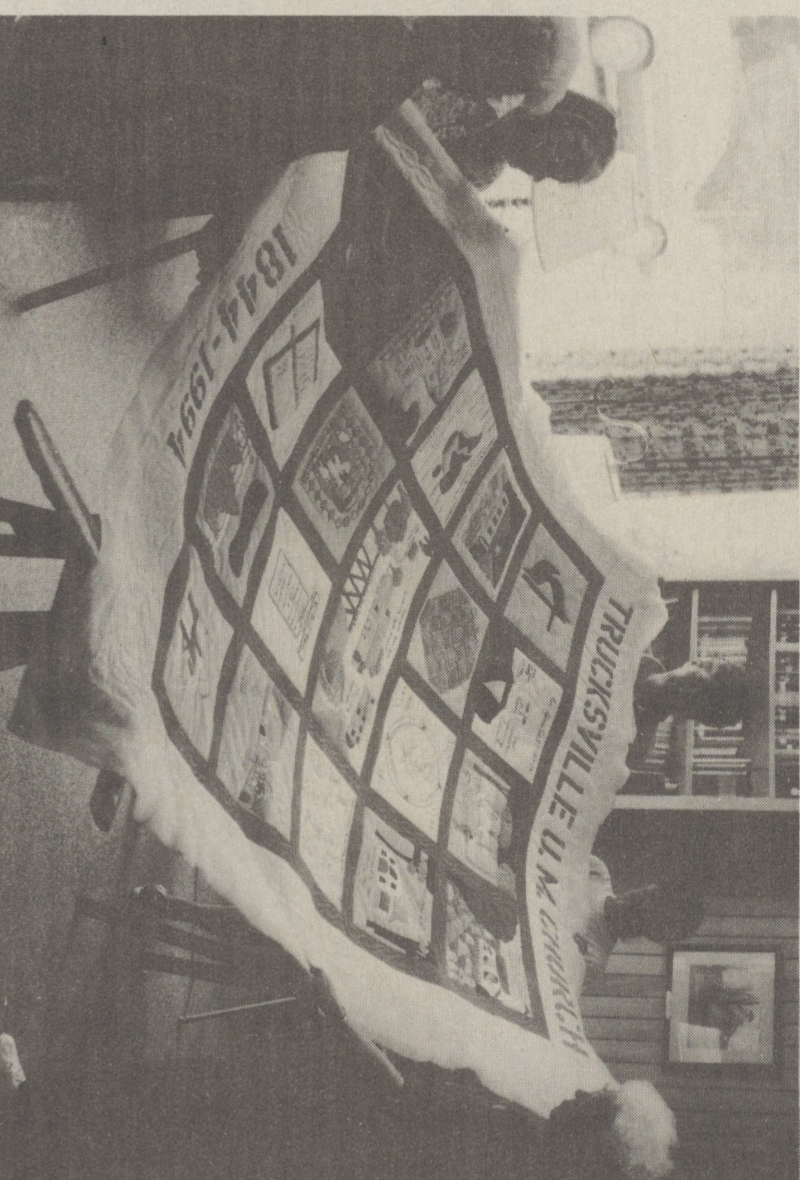


PHOTO BY CHARLES NAUGLE
Women and friends of the Trucksville United Methodist Church hand-stitched the Sesquicentennial Quilt, with blocks depicting important events in the church's history. It was dedicated during the morning worship service September 25 and will be displayed October 12-13, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. in the fellowship hall in the education building.

Special thanks are also due to the volunteers who were not members of the church, especially the Quilters from Trinity Presbyterian Church.

The quilt will be on display in the fellowship hall in the education building as part of the Sesquicentennial celebration, open to the public October 12-13 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.

Plans to print and sell note-cards featuring the quilt are underway, with the cards to be offered for sale in the near future.

by Morry Michael

Pastor sees challenges from modern life

Surviving the 150th anniversary celebration, becoming better acquainted with his new congregation and preparing for the 21st century are high priorities for the Rev. Charles Naugle, pastor of Trucksville United Methodist Church, who took over the pulpit in 1993.

"Modern churches are now facing a time of transition, with less emphasis on the church," Naugle said. "In the past, very few people worked on Sundays and few businesses were open. The 'Blue Laws' in Pennsylvania and other states prohibited many activities on Sundays - now it's practically just another business day. It's a challenge for us."

Nothing that life has changed dramatically in his lifetime, with people now becoming aware of multicultural contributions to society, Naugle added that the church must also discover its roots and its identity, as many people have begun to do.

"Our discipleship and Bible study groups, similar to the old class meetings, can also help provide different settings

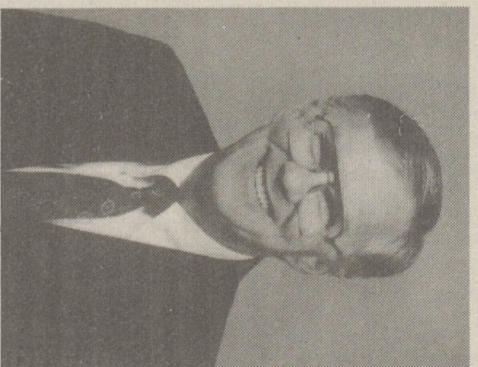
for this," he said. "In small groups, intensive study of the Bible and our own personal experiences can help us go back to our roots as a religion."

Supporting missions to black colleges, Native American reservations and foreign countries is helping members to learn more of people's interdependence, Naugle said.

"It isn't fair to run our government based on the beliefs of one church - we must take other, sometimes very different, belief systems into account," he said.

Naugle is very interested in the relationship between the town of Trucksville and the Trucksville United Methodist Church, which have developed together during the past 150 years.

"Trucksville has struggled to exist as a municipality with the expansion of the Back Mountain," he said. "The government tried to take away our address with the opening of the Shavertown post office and the 18708 ZIP code. Larger businesses and industries



REV. CHARLES NAUGLE

have basically disappeared from Trucksville. It's very special that both the church and the town have managed to retain their identities."

The church has also retained its county flavor, with members truly caring about one another, Naugle said. It has never outgrown its spirit of cooperation and close-knit relationships, a Back Mountain tradition.

"For example, each Sunday school class adopts a shut-in, a member who is unable to attend services due to age or illness," he said. "The class sends cards and small gifts and visits them to make them feel that they are still members of the church family."

Lay leaders perform important duties

An important part of the history of the Methodist Church has been the lay leaders, elected by the congregation to be a liaison between the congregation and the pastor.

"During the church's early days, we didn't have many ordained ministers," said Trucksville's lay leader Peggy Johnson. "John Wesley decided to have lay people assist the circuit preachers, who often had many miles to cover on their rounds."

In addition to leading Bible studies and worship services, lay leaders of the early Methodist Societies discussed spiritual life and reminded members who had gone against Methodist teachings to mend their ways or they wouldn't be allowed to return to meetings until they did, Johnson said.

"It was good for the spiritual support and betterment of the people," she said. Elected five years ago by the congregation, Johnson is a liaison with Rev. Naugle, whom she assists in all areas of church work.

Each year a nine-person committee nominates the lay leader, whose position is voted on by the entire congregation at the yearly change conference. (A change in the church or group of churches served by one minister.)

She also teaches Sunday school and is active in the United Methodist Women. "I must be aware of everyone's needs and make the pastor aware of them," she said. "Our clergy are here to serve the church, to empower and teach the people, but never to run the congregation."

The lay leader is a very visible expression that the laity are in leadership in the Methodist Church, Johnson said. A church may have several lay leaders, who share responsibilities, she said. Some lay leaders prefer working behind the scenes, while others enjoy working more publicly. Since her retirement from teaching science at Dallas High School, Johnson has welcomed

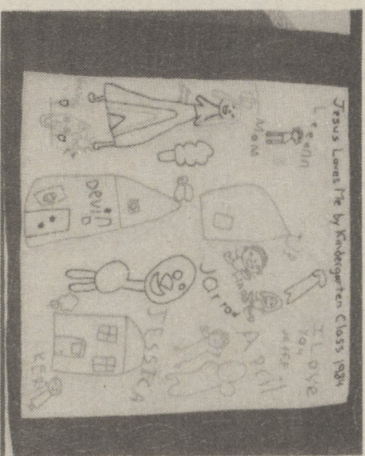
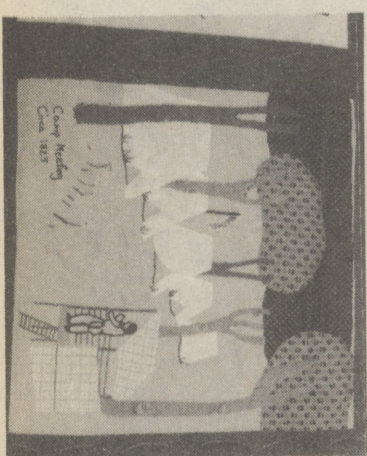
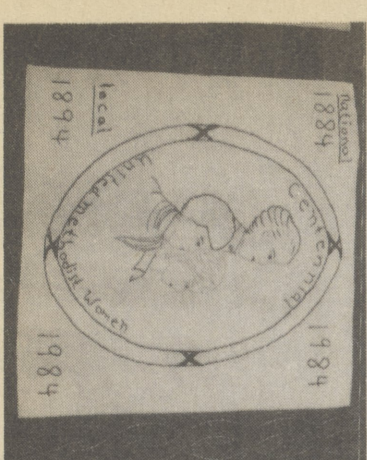


PHOTO BY CHARLES NAUGLE
These blocks in the Sesquicentennial Quilt depict significant events in the church's history. Top left: the United Methodist Church's symbol, a cross and red flame; top right: the 1984 kindergarten class; lower left: the United Methodist Women; lower right: Jacob Rice's first camp meeting in 1825.



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