GLIMPSES

FROM

THE PAST
Brillion’s Main Street in early 1900’s

Main Street in Brillion in 1915
CHURCHES WHO LATER BECAME PART OF THE BRILLION CONGREGATION

Emmanuel United Brethren Church –Maple Grove had its beginning in 1863-64. The church was completed in 1874 when Rev. Julius Kahl was pastor. It closed in 1944 and members transferred to Brillion.

Maple Grove cemetery-2008 after renovation and new sign made by Clarence Harms
RANTOUL EMMANUEL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

New Rantoul Emmanuel United Brethren Church built in 1916, with old church in background

Early Rantoul Emmanuel United Brethren Church which served the congregation for 46 years, and was a real landmark in the history of the community
A Story of a Christmas Eve at the Rantoul Church

“This was written by Roland Fischer, Town of Rockland, member of Emmanuel Evangelical Church of Rantoul. Clara Fischer Enneper, age 15, was the church organist mentioned in these memoirs written by Roland in 1980.” The pastor was H. G. Koten who served the Rantoul Church from 1912-1915.

“I remember Christmas Eve in a tiny Evangelical church in rural Rantoul. As a boy of eight years of age in 1913, I saw the pews being occupied by members of the congregation and visitors, including some from other denominations, all here to enjoy the traditional Christmas Program. To the right of the pulpit, stood the fairly tall, lavishly tinsel-decorated tree. One person was on a ladder now, very carefully lighting the candles near the top of the tree. On the other side stood a rather large cabinet organ and against the wall, two rows of plain wooden chairs were already being taken by some of the members of the choir, who certainly had no knowledge of what had already happened here – that the organ standing there had been “vandalized”.

Perhaps even more than the other children, I was tense with the hushed, sparkling beauty of Christmas and the anticipation of the singing of the choir, which I loved so much. After all in rural America, in 1913, music was a rare commodity. Then, I saw my father, as the Sunday School Superintendent, standing before us, wishing the audience a Merry Christmas – “Froehliche Weihnacht”. His voice was never loud, but heard by everyone in the little sanctuary, I am sure. He extended a very special welcome to the visitors. I remember him announcing the first number by the choir.

My cousin, a girl of fifteen, seated herself at the organ, placed her hands on the keys to play the introduction – “das Vorspiel”. There was a grating discord and I saw the young organist, very confused, blushing in the light of the kerosene lamp as she turned to my father. “Dis orgel—“ she began, in a quivering barely audible voice. “dis orgel ist versetzt”( German was then still the language of the church in our community). Someone. she said, had “done something” to the organ.

After a shocked moment of silence and a few more very badly augmented chords experimented on the keyboard, there was a hasty, whispered consultation and then my father told the people that the choir would have to sing “ohne die orgel”, that someone had tampered with the keys. Nothing like this had ever happened before, and it must have been a frightening challenge, of all times, on a night like this, singing without the accompaniment.

Nevertheless, the numbers by the choir, a cappella, were all rendered remarkably well; and so were even the songs by the children, with just a little vocal guidance and direction from the organist, while the organ stood there, so utterly useless. What I had not noticed at first was that there were vacant chairs, a few of the members of the choir were absent;
also that some familiar faces were not in the audience this Christmas evening. However, after the conclusion of the program, after the children’s tokens had been distributed, I have this indelible recollection, people crowded to the front of the church with their reassurances and hearty congratulations. Some incredulous visitors were asking questions, to which there were no qualified answers. Someone even wondered whether perhaps mice had gotten into the organ.

Immediately after Christmas, my father and one of the trustees went to prevail on the courtesies of the organist of Trinity Lutheran Church near Potter. He was graciously obliging, and what he discovered when the back board of the desecrated organ had been removed was that a fairly large number of reeds had been alternated, drawn out and then replaced at an upper or lower interval. Apparently a shoe-hook had been used, scratches showing how the improvised tool sometimes failed to hold.

The organ was back in service the following Sunday morning, but none of the dissident families had come to church – which darkened the shadow of suspicion. It was heard that they had become affiliated with the Evangelical congregation of Rockland, and they were not expected to be seen again in the old “meetin’ house in Rantoul. Meanwhile, people in the community wondered, what had really happened at Rantoul and why???

There had to be a reason……

Early in the advent season, a murmur of protest had been caused by some of the choristers wanting a platform built for the choir by Christmas. To this, the staunchly conservative members of the congregation objected – a “stage” seeming too secular, sacrilegious in an Evangelical House of Worship!! The choir, like the congregation, they said, should sing, not be seen, but in all meek humility, to proclaim the Glory of God.

Still, the weeks passed, the proposition remaining unresolved, the controversy waxing warm. Then, late one night, some of those determined to have a platform, had secretly brought lumber and tools and built one, as their dubious “anonymous” contribution to the church. It was a modest elevation, well oriented, perhaps a foot above the level of the floor.

So, on the following Sunday morning, there was a choir loft, carpeted, with the organ and two rows of chairs neatly, very properly arranged. It was very likely with the tacit approval of the pastor – he might even have been consulted; and the services were conducted as usual, but with the choir now in what some of the Rantoul fathers considered a “theatrical” setting, which, to them, was clearly associated with worldliness and sin. Perhaps they still remembered hearing about the Iroquois fire Chicago, all of a decade ago, which they believed to have been “punitive”. After all, I can recall my own grandmother commenting on that disaster years later. So, at Rantoul, before the next,
last, rehearsal just before Christmas, every vestige of the platform had been torn out, just as it had been installed.

It was this act of reprisal which no doubt so humiliated and infuriated the “platform people” that they were motivated to retaliate in the way they did, not only by boycotting the program, but some of them sabotaging the organ and all forthwith withdrawing from the parish.

What had been happening in the congregation was the reaction to a determined resistance to change. Precisely three years passed, and then, in 1916, a new larger church replaced the ancient little building. The new, steepled structure was elaborately “modern” for Evangelicals of that day. Ironically, among the many innovations was an elevated Alter and choir loft.”

Change has not always come easy.

![Image of a group of people](image.png)

Kids in front left to right: Wayne Piepenburg, Dennis Piepenburg, James Rusch, Amy Rusch Genske, Ken Pingel, Ellen Fischer Mirkos, Florence Fischer Behnke, Carol Fischer Matzke.

Christian Pingel & his wife, Erntine
First Sunday School Superintendent at Rantoul
Orvis and Amy (Rusch) Genske Wedding at Rantoul Church  
August 29, 1964  
(Could have been the last wedding performed at that church before it closed)

Rev. Willard Albertus officiating
The Piepenburg-Fischer Families

Otto & Adela Piepenburg
Parents of Elmer and Lydia

Emil and Emma Fischer
Parents of Bernice and Roy

Bernice and Elmer Piepenburg

Lydia & Milton Fischer
Gottfried D. and Johanna Karolina Mueller Fischer with Albert W., Leonard W., Henry Schulz, an adopted child from Brazil, South America and ? They had several other children: Robert Heinrich and Emil. Gottfried and Johanna were Milton and Clara’s grandparents.
Roy Fischer and Hilda Krueger's engagement Picture

Roy Fischer and Hilda Krueger Wedding August 20, 1938
Left to right: Anita Krueger, Carmen Fischer, Esther Krueger, Hilda and Roy Fischer, Milford Schulz, Milan Krueger and Ben Duchow
Ladies of Rantoul Church on outing

Front Row: Ruth Wesener, Adela Piepenburg, Evelyn Rusch, Hertha Bartz, Hilda Fischer, Nancy Rusch; Back Row: Rosina Behnke, Mrs. Gordon (Odessa) Core, Alice Piepenburg, Verona Pingel, Rosella Rusch, Margaret Miller, Laverne Pingel, Lydia Fischer, Rev. Gordon Core, Otto Piepenburg. Gentleman on the right could be Gene Miller or the bus driver. (Submitter did not know)

Mabel Piepenburg, Carmen Piepenburg, Viola Pingel, Bernice Piepenburg, Clara Enneper and Rev. Nickell
Rantoul Confirmation Class of 1950
All second cousins:  Standing: Shirley Rusch Schwartz, Rev. Knoespel, Julie Ann Rusch; Sitting: Jeanette Rusch

Combined Class 1950 – Brillion and Rantoul,
First Row left to right: Rev. Knoespel, Bette Zander, Kenneth Stellbrink, LuluBelle Schultz, Elliot Piepenburg; Second row: Julie Ann Rusch, Jerome Pfluger, Shirley Rusch Schwartz, Marjorie Bailey Pingel, Jeanette Rusch
Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Enders – founders of first EUB Church-1884
Services were first held in their home. Rev. Zickerick preached.

BRILLION FIRST EUB CHURCH- 1884-1920
Brillion's second EUB Church & parsonage on Water Street
Church built in 1920, parsonage in 1923

Redecorated sanctuary of Water Street Church, Service of Dedication, Sunday, May 15, 1949
Inside of Water Street Church with choirs

UMW in kitchen & dining hall of church on Water Street
THE NEW EUB CHURCH CONSTRUCTION
The local council of the Brillion EUB Church met July 1, 1964 to consider the bids received on June 22, 1964 for the erection of their Sanctuary and Christian Education building on the corner of Horn Street and Egan Street in Brillion. After some discussion, it was moved by Allen Zorn and seconded by Hilmer Johnson to recommend to the congregation to accept the complete plans for the Chancel, Sanctuary, foyer and Education Unit with two extra class rooms, at a cost of approximately $160,000 which included two wings, the third wing as future development. The residence on the property, known as the Maile property, is being razed by Lester Behnke for salvage. The Chairman of the Building Committee will be Ray Frisby. (Taken from Brillion News

Maile House

Ground breaking July 26, 1964
Rev. Willard Albertus, Mr. Senescal,
Architect, Rev. Milton Giese
and Ray Frisby, Building Chairperson
Mr. Robert Fischer, church’s oldest member on left

Building Committee of Francis Street Church – 1964
Ray Frisby, Chairperson, Elmer Piepenburg & Gilbert Wolfmeyer

Construction is started
Raising the steeple on the new Faith EUB Church. It is uniquely modern from the traditional steeples in the community in it being three sided. Its overall height is 29 feet which includes a cross and a 5 foot base.

It is made of angle iron and plywood, covered with copper. The base is louvered and will have loud speakers installed. A stainless steel cross five feet high will top the pyramid. It will be illuminated by three floodlights located on the roof of the church.

The new church on Horn Street dedicated October 3, 1965 renamed Faith Evangelical United Brethren Church
Interior of new church

Meal being served in “old Kitchen” which is presently the library/lounge

Joan Frisby—organist at Faith United Methodist Church retired October 15, 1981 after 30 years of service
Paula Johnson, Choir director
1978 to present

Joan Ebert – organist,
1981-1985
Present part-time accompanist

Terri Belanger
Organist-Accompanist

Mortgage burning ceremony - 1984

L-R: North East District Superintendent Frank Dauner, Rev. Robert Gossett of Brillion Faith UMC and Ray Frisby, chairperson of the Original Building Committee and current Treasurer of Brillion UMC, join the congregation in singing the "Doxology" at the Horn Street church mortgage burning ceremony in December, 1984. (Brillion News)
Church parsonage on Francis Street, built in 1973

Storm’s aftermath- July 23, 1987

The garage of the Rev. Robert and Jeri Gossett, was extensively damaged when the side wall was blown off the foundation during a severe afternoon storm. The garage door fell off its track and onto Gossett’s car causing slight damage to the vehicle. (Photo courtesy of Brillion News)
Faith Church Bell

The Faith Church Bell is a 32" diameter bronze bell, weighing 705 pounds. It was manufactured at the Buckeye Bell Foundry in 1886 for Vanduzen and Tift of Cincinnati, Ohio. Church bells are no longer cast in the United States. The value estimate of our bell in 1996 was $10,000.

In 1919, Rudolph C. Zorn purchased the bell from an Evangelical Church in Stockbridge, WI. That church, was believed, to have been destroyed by fire. The bell was brought to Brillion and placed on the south lawn of his home across from the Brillion School. It rested there for about a year waiting for the completion of the Evangelical Church on Water Street where it was installed in the bell tower. It served the church (and community) for 45 years from 1920-1965.

The Emmanuel Evangelical United Brethren Church on Water Street was dismantled by Vic Cherney of Brillion and the church bell was removed for storage. The bell was stored for approximately thirty years, before it was erected in front of Faith United Methodist Church on the corner of Horn and Francis Streets.
THIRD WING CONSTRUCTION – July 24, 1988

Added 9 classrooms, new restrooms, Fellowship Hall and fully-equipped kitchen. Remodeled library/lounge, Pastor’s study, office area, restrooms and repaired roof. Cost estimate: $425,000.

The Building Committee from left: Dean Wallace, Harry Weaver, Clarence Harms, Earl Herring and Harold Dunbar

Groundbreaking Ceremony July 24, 1988

Participates are from left to right: Michelle Wittmann, Clara Enneper, Sandra Pingel, Northeast District Superintendent Donna Green, Kay brow, Allen Zorn (with shovel), Clarence Harms, Robert Gossett, Robert Stebane and Harold Dunbar

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Walls are starting to go up

Completed wing
PEP TALKS AND PAINT CANS – THIRD WING
Taken from Forward with Faith Consecration Celebration Booklet

One of the key questions asked on a building survey sent out in 1985 was: “Would you volunteer your time to help paint and do other finishing work?” Twenty people said they would and later pledged 256 hours to the task. The building committee knew an undertaking of this magnitude required a lot of commitment, but they had faith that people would respond, and they weren’t disappointed.

Sixty two volunteers, spurred on by Sunday morning pep talks by Earl Herring and promises of delectable bars, candies and cookies, responded to the challenge and put in 1,043 hours of work. On November 28, 1988, the work got underway. Ladders brushes and rollers were brought in and for ten weeks, day and evening shifts of workers brushed and rolled and sanded and sealed.

Earl took charge of the evening crew while Harold Dunbar supervised the day workers. Thanks to many of you, bars, candy and cookies flowed in as generously as the paint flowed on.

Earl was clearly partial to chocolate chip cookies, proclaiming from the pulpit that they made paint go on easier! These same remarkable cookies were credited with curing a bad back, after one worker, “who had just crawled out of a bottom kitchen cupboard clutching his back, took a bite of said cookie and straightened up immediately.”

It turned out to be a great experience in fun and fellowship. Featured fashions were Cloud-white clothes, speckled hairdos and paint-splattered shoes. If sneakers could speak, what stories they would tell! The general consensus--block sealing was the absolute worst.

The Building Committee, recommending that having the congregation do the finishing work, was to cut costs. We saved about $8,000. But the real treasures we have stored away are the pride and satisfaction we can take in what has been accomplished.

What is the Church? It’s people working and celebrating together. It’s the body of Christ, the hope of the world.

The Decorating Committee consisted of Kay Brow, Chairperson, Georgia Ariens, Jo Harms, Carol Moore, Anita Rusch, Shirley Schwartz, Sharon Stebane and Betty Volkmar.
"Historical Tidings of Faith"
Written by Jan Johnson for the dedication of the third wing

The name shall be Faith for our church on the hill,
It’s a beacon to God with a plan to fulfill
A small band of worshippers, faithful to God,
Took a big step of faith when they broke through the sod.

But our family grew quickly, we trusted in grace,
There were many new people, we outgrew the space,
Can’t cook in our kitchen, cause room is so tight,
Christian Ed is important, we need classrooms all right.

A third wing is needed, a trinity scheme,
"Cause we’re not finished yet, there is more to the dream,
A Fellowship Hall, it would be such a wonder,
And Sunday School rooms in the basement down under.

The committee was Clarence, Dean, Harry and Earl,
And, of course, Harold Dunbar, he’s in our hearts still.
With Bob Gossett as shepherd, we never turned back
We depended on prayer life to keep us on track.

Were you there when we varnished & painted and sanded
All working together doing what was commanded.
There’s wonderful fellowship now ‘round the table,
When it’s time for a banquet or fun, now we’re able.

Then this year, Arline Piepenburg gave us a gift
That paid off the debt, a big burden to lift.
We give thanks for her life, though Arline is now gone,
The church has been blessed and her loving lives on.

We’re the church on a hill, we’ve got a new dream,
This time a carport is part of the scheme.
We can do it and lots more in mission, we can,
If we step out in faith, if we follow God’s plan.

Thank you Lord, for this church, for all gathered here,
Bless this family called Faith, keep it true, hold it near.
Mortgage burning-third wing - April 26, 1998

From left: The Rev. Robert Gossett, former pastor of Faith United Methodist Church, holds the burning mortgage document as the Rev. Hee-Soo Jung, the Nicolet District Superintendent, the Rev. Phyllis Averill, pastor of Faith United Methodist Church and Clarence Harms, chairman of the building committee, participate in the ceremony. It marked the final step in paying the debt on the classroom and fellowship hall wing, which was completed in April 1989. (taken from Brillion News)

The carport constructed in 1998
RENOVATION OF THE CHURCH IN 2008

Church before it was remodeled

"Martians" have arrived to take out asbestos

Stripped sanctuary
New windows & new flooring being installed

Fellowship hall was used as our sanctuary during remodeling.
This was the Altar on Easter Sunday.

Easter Sunday service in Fellowship Hall
Outside construction of windows and new sacristy addition

New sacristy from the outside

Consecration of new remodeling project
Renovated church with new windows-2008

Dedication Sunday June 22, 2008

Sanctuary Revitalization
was made possible by the generous donations of

FRANCIS & GEORGIA ARIENS
ROBERT & PATRICIA ENDRIES
MEMORIALS AND MEMBERS OF
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Dedicated June 22, 2008

Major donors for our project
One of Emil Landman’s prize possessions, which he brought with him to this country, is a six foot smoking pipe. It bears the signatures of 150 regimental companions. The carved stem has a perfect replica of his old army helmet, his knapsack, a picture of Kaiser Wilhelm II, his rifle, regimental tassels of red and white and the inscription “parole heimath” meaning “now we go home”. The pipe is carved from German wood. He paid $5.00 for the pipe and was offered many times that from antique collectors. Emil is Louise Heimke and Fred Landmann’s father. (Picture from Manitowoc Herald Times on Dec. 21, 1966)

The Fischer family
Helmuth Fischer, August Fischer, Milton Fischer and Clara Fischer Enneper
Clara was our oldest member and lived to be 102 years old
1901 Confirmation

1928 Confirmation
L-R: Lawrence Filyes, Eddie Enneper, Allen Zorn, Walter Enneper, Ross Beirne, Rev. H.P. Jordan

Confirmation Class 1943
1930-1932 Confirmation


1955 Confirmation – Brillion

L-R: Noel Zander, son of Elliot & Margaret Zander, Bonnie Halstrom Casto, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Halstrom, Gloria Roger Koeck (Rantoul EUB), daughter of Roland & Verona Pingel, Jane Behnke Leitner, daughter of Mr. & Mr. Behnke, Sandra Piepenburg Belanger, daughter of Elmer and Bernice Piepenburg, Marlene Wolfmeyer Hansen, daughter of Rueben and Mamie Wolfmeyer, Marilyn Weaver Nixon, daughter of Harrison & Jean Weaver and Rev. Gordon Core
Confirmation 1957

Herman Siedschlag family-1951-1954
Christmas in summer at church – tree is decorated with ornaments. 
(A Missionary Band) 1936-1937

Next row:  Margarit Caflisch, Mable Krueger, Stanley Heimke, Charles Johnson, Willard Wolfmeyer, Chester Zorn, Raymond Schmelter. 
Next row:  Wilma Wolfmeyer, Betty Zorn, Pearl Heinga. 
Front row:  Alice Nischik, Jeanette Radloff, June Heinga, Mary Lou Huibregtse, Louise Landmann

Sunday School class of 1959
Choir 1972

Choir directors and organists:
Joan Frisby, Joan Ebert, Alice Piepenburg and Esther Wolfmeyer
Choir 1979-1980


Choir 1984


Children’s choir about 1972

Choir director and organist:
Esther Wolfmeyer & Joan Ebert
Teach us, or Lord, to love other lands and people

United Methodist Women – 1978-1982 (Martha Circle)
Row 1: Adeline Behnke, Bernice Piepenburg, Esther Haise, Donna Winkler; Row 2: Zona Dunbar, Isabelle Bergman, Alice Becker, Adelia Habermann, Delia Gast, Ella Haise; Row 3: Hertha Bartz, Sandi Pingel, Ariene Piepenburg, Ruth Wesener, Lilly Caffisch, Marion Johnson, Georgia Ariens, Hildegard Schmelter. Last row: Lydia Fischer, Ruth Schultz, Jean Kieckhafer, Florence Winkler, Eulalia Wolfmeyer

Miriam Circle -1978-1982

Third row: Carol Moore, Ruth Spotts, Louise Heimke, Mikey Rooney
Second row: Irene Loeber, Dottie Unbehaun, Clara Enneper, Audrey Koch, Jo Harms
First row: Hilda Fischer, Joan Frisby, Betty Volkmar, Jan Johnson
United Methodist Women - 1984


2008-2009 UMW

Front row: Barb Brockman, Clarice Schultz, Sandi Pingel
Back row: Amy Genske, Renee Seiler, Jo Harms, Kathy Brockmann, Dottie Unbehaun, Shirley Schwartz, Joan Herring, Jan Stanko
HISTORY OF BRILLION FAITH CHURCH UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Our beginnings – United Brethren in Christ

The women of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ felt a special responsibility very early for missionary outreach. The first society of the denomination was organized May 9, 1872 in Dayton, Ohio.

A Wisconsin Women’s Missionary Society was formed at the 22nd annual conference session in 1879 at the Spring Hill Church (now the Gillingham Church) in Richland County. Rev. E. Bovee and D. R. Grover were the speakers who urged the formation of this society, not only on the conference level but also in the local churches. A conference society was formed with 42 charter members in 1879 with Miss Hattie Harvey as the first president.

In the summer of 1880, at Bethel Chapel, three miles south of Monroe, the first annual meeting or convention was held. The name “The Women’s Missionary Association” was given the organization. In 1884, the national organization of Women’s Missionary Society was formed in the Evangelical Association. It wasn’t until November 9, 1907, that formal organization took place in Wisconsin. This followed the formation of societies in local churches in Arcadia, Tomah, Menomonee and Prairie du Sac. The Wisconsin branch held its annual conventions in local churches around the state, although the first was only a half-day session. Bishop William Horn, who spoke in German and Miss Eyrick, a missionary among the people of Italian descent in Milwaukee, were the speakers. Beginning in 1926, the conventions were held at the Lomira Assembly Grounds until 1956 when they were held at Camp Lucerne.

The union of the Evangelical and United Brethren Churches took place in 1946 but the union of the two Wisconsin Conferences didn’t take place until 1951 and at that time the work of the Women’s Missionary Societies were also united. The new name was Woman’s Society of World Service. This union took place at the Lomira Assembly Grounds in July, 1951.

In 1969, the WSWS ceased to exist as a separate organization and was merged with the women’s work of the newly formed United Methodist Church - Its new name being Women’s Society of Christian Service. (WSCS)

THE BRILLION CHURCH

Before there was a Women’s Missionary Society in the then “Evangelische Gemeinschaft” church, there was a Ladies Aid that looked after the needs of the local church in Brillion, Wisconsin. Their minutes are beautifully recorded in German script. (I found the 1914 minutes, but couldn’t read them because they were all in German)
It is interesting to note that at the Annual Convention of the Women’s Missionary Society held in Monroe in 1913, the presiding elder challenged the local pastors to urge the organization of a Women’s Missionary Society in every congregation.

Consequently in Brillion in 1914, the first W.M.S. was organized in conjunction with the Ladies Aid. During these early years members would assume a prayer partner. As individuals they then would write to, pray for and send gifts and financial support to the missionary of their choice. Charter members of the original group are as follows: Mrs. Louise Wolf, Louisa Isack, Eliza Peglow, Augusta Korb, Bertha Haase, Ardina Zorn and Laura Otto. (In 1944, a newspaper article lists past presidents as Mrs. Otto Zorn, Mrs. Edward Janke, Mrs. F. Caffisch and Mrs. E.H. Kloehn. I’m assuming these were in order)

During the 1920’s, much emphasis was placed on missionary education by the Rev. and Mrs. H.P.Jordan. Each monthly meeting included studies of missions in Africa, China, Japan, India as well as Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, the Italian Missions in Racine and Milwaukee.

Lincoln pennies for Kentucky missions were introduced under Rev. Eilert’s leadership. Mission band, Little Heralds, and The Evangel came under Rev. Nickel’s tenure.

The Brillion church and the Rantoul Church, in the country were a yoked parish and in the early forties the Rantoul Women organized into a Missionary Society with the help of our sister church and Rev. H. Bandt, the pastor.

In 1944, the Brillion Evangelical church Women observed their 60th anniversary, (30 years of general organization and 30 years as W.M.S.) (So they did exist before 1914 – maybe since 1884.) New members were received into the fellowship in Brillion in 1944 due to the closing of the Maple Grove church by action of the conference. Under the spiritual guardianship of Rev. Herman and Melva Siedschlag, both churches took on partial support of Elaine Gasser, missionary.

The end of the era was drawing near and there was evidence in the growing Brillion church of the need for an evening circle, and one was organized. Under the leadership of Joan Frisby, two separate W.S.W.S. circles were organized in 1967. An afternoon (Martha) and an evening (Miriam) circle resulted, both circles uniting into one unit.

The celebration for the union of the conference W.S.W.S was held in Wausau in October, 1969, changing our name from W.S.W.S. to W.S.C.S. Finally we grew accustomed to being called United Methodist Women.

A spurt in the growth of mission involvement developed in 1975 when UMW member, Hilda Fischer heard a call to service at the 1974 Conference Annual Meeting for the need
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even if there was no pianist present such as Bernice Piepenburg or Leona Rienke. There were usually a few games played and “Ring on a String” became a simple favorite.

Projects included serving two summers in the park for the band concerts and serving lunch for the dart ball games. This activity was the old stand-by and lasted the longest. Sponsorship of two successful Aunt Jemima Pancake suppers was held. Impromptu birthday celebrations were occasional highlights.

A summer outing was held every summer, some of those remembered best were to Lake Lucerne, Wade House at Glenbeulah and to the Kohler City Park. (Outings or picnic dates always had to be scheduled around the Reinke-Behnke family reunion date). Losses due to death were Mamie Wolfmeyer, Hermie Bill Siedschlag and Edmer Behnke. Newlyweds were encouraged to join us, but about the only ones who did were the Eberts and Heimkes.

The original membership was: Lila & Fred Landmann, Joyce & Allen Zorn, George and Evelyn Staneks (former owners of Landmann’s house), Hilda & Ken Knoespel, and Bernice and Elmer Piepenburg.

Additions in time were: Milton & Ruth Behnke, Leona & Edwin Reinke, Adeline & Edmer Behnke, Mamie & Rueben Wolfmeyer, Louise & Stanley Heimke, Joan & Jerry Ebert, Helen & Lawrence Filyes, Laurent & Doris Behnke, Lois & Roy Knoespel, Ruby & Howard Bailey (grandparents of the older children of Armin Pingel), Janice & Eugene Redig, Irene & George Pfluger, Jeanette & Louis Pfeffer, Harry Krummels, Dick & LaVerne Gier and Norm & Madeline Lillybeck.

The club continued with Melva & Herman Siedschlag, Odessa & Gordon Core, Rev. & Mrs. Miller and Connie & Bill Albertus. The ending time is uncertain but probably was sometime between 1961 and 1969.

PEP Group

In about 2003, PEP (People Enjoying People) was formed. This is a similar group, open to members and their friends, who get together for lunch once a month. Members are generally over 60 but others can join. Joyce Behnke from Mom’s Place furnishes the meals for a free-will offering. A speaker or activity is planned after the lunch and they usually have door prizes. They sponsor a Friendship Dinner on Valentine’s Day and have a Holiday (Thanksgiving/Christmas) party.
PEP Thanksgiving/Christmas party
We have a white elephant gift exchange

WHO is the good looking blond?????
Must have been a Christmas gift!!!
Join PEP and find out!!
The Christianaires - youth group - 1984

P.U.S.H. Youth group
Mr. Jim Dahl - youth director
Some members of P.U.S.H. Group

Youth Fellowship – about 1950-2009

The Youth Fellowship (about 1950-1958) met alternately between Brillion and Rantoul churches with a joint membership. A Bible Study and discussion was held from the Church Youth Publication. Games were played and lunch was served. The main outside interest was roller skating at Green Bay and later in Manitowoc. Other activities included a trip to Lake Lucerne, hayrides, sponsoring Easter Breakfasts and a Lenten Service and UNICEF collections. In the 80s and 90s this group was known as the “Christianaaires”.

In 2001, our youth was looking for a bit more fellowship other than just Sunday School. There were only 4-6 youth involved and two activities – skiing and volleyball. In 2003,
the youth group was named P.U.S.H. (Pray Until Something Happens) and the current logo of the cross and two people holding it up was developed. The number of members doubled to 8-12 youth and the activities doubled to four. In 2004, they went to more than 30 activities per year. They started to tithe and get really active in the community, and through missions. Over those two years, ecumenically, the group reached over a 100 different youth from the Brillion area. Since 2004, money was raised for World Visions 30-Hour Famine which is an international youth movement to fight hunger. It helps several countries including the United States. Since November, 2004, the group has sponsored over $1000 to Issa Rajabu Makupa, a Compassion International child from Tanzania, Africa. Not only do they offer financial assistance, the group has a relationship through correspondence with him as well. Since 2004, they have donated to the church through tithing of their fundraisers which are brat fries, pizza sales, flower sales, etc. They purchased 6 amplifiers for people with hearing difficulties, a video projector unit and laptop computer and a digital camera for the church. They have been active in the community through a number of activities: sponsorship of a free and open swim at the community center, volunteering for a number of years to clean up after the electric parade, sponsored a free rock concert in Horn Park, raked leaves for community people, volunteered to help run Vacation Bible school, donated to local needy families, have done several canned food drives and have donated various supplies to the Outreach Center in Forest Junction. Besides all of the above, they have done a mission trip every year since 200; Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota 2005), Superior, Wisconsin (2006), Denver, Colorado (2007). They also donated money to one of our youth for her mission trip to Bolivia. In 2008, they have done several community projects through the Make a Difference program, such as helping a local man clean up his property, cleaned and set up tombstones in the Maple Grove Cemetery and have helped a cancer patient by having a fundraiser to collect money for his cause. They helped a lady move from her apartment and have helped paint and repair an elderly man’s home along with cleaning up and repairing some things in the yard of a lady cancer patient. A mission trip is being planned for out east next summer. We are very proud of this group of young people and Jim and Angie Dahl, Joe and Stacy Sinkula, Jessica and Tom Hassemer, Rev. Cathy Rennick and Rev. Susan Gaul as youth leaders.

Another youth group, for kids in 2nd through 5th grades, is called Kids in Action. They started in 1998. They meet September through May on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. On average, about 12 kids attend each meeting. They have snack time, prayer time, crafts and lots of games, Bingo being the favorite indoor game with kickball and baseball being the favorites for outdoor games. A Seroogy’s candy sale is held each year to cover expenses. Barb Boettcher and Diane Behnke are the leaders for this group.
THE ZORN FAMILY

Four generations of Zorn family 1915 or 1916 Left to Right
Rudolph C. Zorn, Allen O. Zorn, Frank G. Zorn and Otto H. Zorn

Ardina Isaak Zorn, Otto Zorn and Rudolph Zorn

Ardina Isaak & Rudolph Carl Zorn
Wedding October 2, 1890
Otto Zorn

Edna Wagner Zorn

Edna and Otto Zorn family
Vernon Zorn, Allen Zorn, Betty Zorn (in front), Chester Zorn being held by Otto

Allen & Joyce Zorn-50th Wedding
– November, 1995
Nancy (Zorn) Micke  
United Church of Christ Minister  
Daughter of Joyce & Allen Zorn

Custodians – past and present

Ruth and Milton Behnke
Served eight years as custodians at Water Street Church, thirty years at Horn St Church under seven pastors – Rev. Miller through Rev. Phyliss Averill
Roy Knoespel
Church custodian and school bus driver

Warren and Sandy have been serving as interior custodians since 2008

Warren and Sandra Belanger
Interior Custodians
Exterior custodian – Ken Behnke and his wife Kay

Other people who served, but no pictures available: Doug and Karen Neal, Roger and Cindy Behnke, Shawn McNeil, Barb Boettcher, Tom and Jessica Hassemer and Nate Reimer.

SECRETARY’S & VOLUNTEERS– PAST AND PRESENT

Rose Piepenburg, Jeanette Pfeffer and Zona Dunbar
Jeanette Pfeffer and Esther Wolfmeyer - volunteers

Lorie Lutter
Our present Secretary – Karen Neal

Present volunteers: Dottie Unbehaun, Joan Herring and Jeanette Pfeffer

Disciple Group
Miniature replicas of the three churches from 1881-2009 constructed by Clarence Harms for Brillion's parade in June of 2009.
125th Anniversary Sunday—October 11, 2009

Barb Brockmann and the banner she made for our 125th Anniversary
Shirley Schwartz – Master of Ceremony
Choir and drum section (Sandi Pingel, Jessica Hassemer, Kathy Brockmann) performing “We are singing” with the choir during the program

A feast is served at the noon dinner