

HISTORY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL



Early Days of the Congregational Sunday School by Mrs. Lenore Harms

The Sunday School held its first meetings upstairs in the court room of the old Court House. Rev. Daniel Dexter was its first superintendent, for the ministers in the early history of our church assumed also the duties of Sunday School Superintendent.

The teachers in 1898 were Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Dennett, Mrs. Eugene Turner, Mrs. C. F. Eckel, and Mrs. Julian Zillier. At that time it was the custom for each teacher to keep her own class of pupils year after year, until they graduated in fact, or were just too grown up to be Sunday School pupils any longer. This fact prevents the gathering of much material about those long gone years, for each pupil of that early time recalls only her own class and her own teacher, utterly oblivious now of the existence of the others.

Mrs. Zillier's class of primary girls remained with her until the time that some of them were old enough to become Sunday School teachers themselves. This class, with some variations and additions, consisted of the following girls:

Viola Boerner	(Mrs. Supper)
Grace Boerner	
Mabel Bolens	(Mrs. Jaffe)
Bessie Bolens	(deceased)
Hazel Smith	
Azalea Bolens	(Mrs. Shearer)
Ada Towsley	
Irene Scott	(Mrs. Kittsley)

Irene Scott, a pupil in the 1898 primer class, reports that she found the judiciary benches 15

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much too hard and too high in contrast to the little red kindergarten chairs that were used in the basement of the Methodist Church. She feared the mice that also insisted on attending Sunday School in the old Court House. However, these inconveniences were not of long duration, for on Christmas Day, 1898, the lower story of the Congregational Church was ready for occupancy.

Mrs. Eckel's class of girls consisted of the following members, who had the honor of joining the church with her:

Claire Ingersoll	(deceased)
Jessie Ingersoll	(Mrs. J. E. Gilson)
Mary Murphy	(Mrs. T. Selmer)
Ella Guy	(Mrs. J. Tietjen)
Lenore Scott	(Mrs. L. Harms)

The latter remembers being the summer Sunday School accompanist for the Rev. Jose. Weiss.

The members of Mrs. Eckel's class felt that they were favored beyond all others, for who else could present their bible lessons in such interesting fashion, keep the reverence due to the occasion, and yet shed over it all such a spirit of joy and happiness? There was no thought of "I don't want to go to Sunday School" in her classes.

As the Sunday School continued growing, new teachers offered their services. In the early nineteen hundreds they were Mr. Zillier, Jessie Dennett, Lenore Scott, Mary Bostwick, and undoubtedly many others. In 1904 Mr. Clarence Hill assumed the Superintendency a duty which he performed faithfully and well for eighteen long years.

Mr. Zillier for many years acted as Treasurer of the Sunday School.

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During 1911 Azalea Bolens, Irene Scott, and Jeanne Dennett took over the duties of teachers. At Christmas time, under a gorgeous tree, were gifts for each pupil, expensive gifts, for this was before the days of the "five and dime".

The Sunday School picnics were gala affairs. Everybody went. Originally they were held at "The Falls", Grafton, but after the advent of the Milwaukee Northern R.R. that spot was abandoned, for it was too staid and prosaic taking a street car to a picnic. But it was the height of adventure to drive together seven miles through the country on the drays of the Wisconsin Chair Co.

Mrs. A.D. Bolens' continued devotion to the Sunday School, both as teacher and music director, will long be remembered by large numbers of pupils who performed under her skillful direction. Mrs. Bolens served in this capacity for more than twenty years.

(signed) Lenore Scott Harms

While there are no Sunday School records of the earlier days, through the years 1904-09, the results of an attendance contest were given at the Annual Meetings. The names of these good attenders at Sunday School were inscribed in the record book of the church and include the following names.

Barth, Martha	Chapleau, Elmer
Boerner, Marie	Chapleau, Pearl
Boerner, Frederick	Dennett, Jeanne
Boerner, Lulu	Follett, Minnie
Boerner, Martha	Follett, Martha
Boerner, John	Follett, Pearl
Couch, Joe	Henze, Roy
Couch, Tim	Henze, Eva

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Johnson, Mabel	Steineke, Floretta
Johnson, Marie	Scott, Irene
Jones, Gretchen	Stone, Elsie
Leck, Frederick	Stone, Florence
Lewis, Grace	Stoller, Archie
Lenke, Harold	Thers, Lambert
Ramsey, Butler	Thers, Earl
Ramsey, Anna	Thompson, Wendell
Ramsey, Mary	Wagner, Alfred
Ramsey, Margaret	Zillier, Helen

Miss Irene Scott's class in 1911 consisted of:

Louise Stephany	Mary Ramsey
Marie Johnson	Marceline Stephany
Pearl Follette	Martha Follette
Pauline Reuther	Elizabeth Bostwick
Ida Bostwick	Charlotte Bostwick
Hildegard Reuther	

Mrs. Zillier was idolized by all her Sunday School pupils. One Sunday she promised a surprise to the girls who would not miss Sunday School for a year and came with their lessons prepared. Hazel Smith and Irene Scott were anxious to win. Hazel was taken ill so missed a few Sundays, but Mrs. Zillier entertained the class at a six o'clock dinner at her home. Irene Scott was presented with a bible, dated

"Irene Scott
from
Mrs. J. Zillier
1903"

EXCERPT FROM:

