

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

History of the Ludlow Christian Church

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The History Of The Ludlow Christian Church

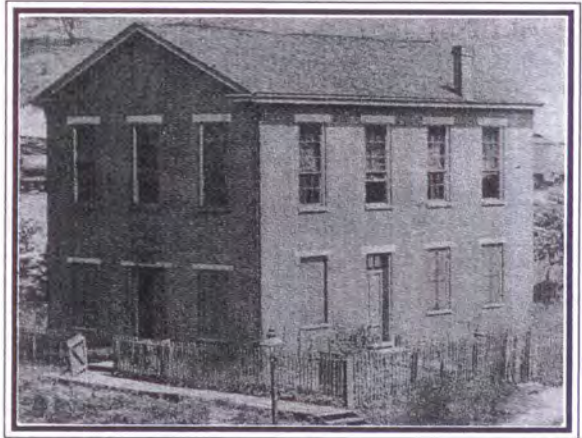
The Ludlow Christian Church, the oldest in Ludlow, was organized in 1840. The small group met in the home of Mr. J. Glaspohl, which stood on a hillside overlooking land known for many years as the Lagoon Park Company. Services were held there until 1846, when the Glaspohl family moved west to Iowa.

The congregation used a little schoolhouse on Ash Street from 1846 to 1850. Services were conducted by visiting ministers or members, with baptism in the Ohio river.

The James Downey family moved here in 1846 and built their home at the foot of Locust Street. It is still standing, an old landmark of Ludlow. Mr. Downey and his family were helpful factors in the growth of the church. He died at the age of 87 in 1891.

The first church was erected in 1851 on the site where the present church stands today at Elm and Locust Streets. Mrs. Israel Ludlow, wife of the founder of the city, presented the congregation with a gift of land. This was in gratitude for her son's becoming a Christian.

A two-story brick structure, this first building also served as the Ludlow Public School. The church was on the second floor. The old church also served as a community meeting place, and there in 1864 the city was organized. The city administration was housed there for several years.



In 1895 the old building was torn down and replaced by the present structure. Services were held during the entire period in the Odd Fellows Temple on Elm Street. The new church was constructed for \$6,000 and was dedicated on Sunday, January 19, 1896. The mortgage was burned in services on April 26, 1908.

The "old" church had Sunday School and Worship Services every Sunday, with a prayer meeting on Wednesday. For many years the Sunday School Superintendent was Mr. Hathaway, followed by Mr. Horton. The janitor was Mr. Blackburn who lived with his family on the first floor. A Christian Endeavor Society was organized in 1893 and there was a Ladies Aid Society.





The church was remodeled sometime between 1927 and 1933, during the ministry of G.A. Clayton. The first parsonage located at 453 Elm Street was purchased between 1934 and 1940. The first minister to occupy the home was Robert Matheny and family.

On July 30, 1945, the congregation approved the purchase of the present parsonage at 608 W. Linden Street. The purchase price was \$6,000 with \$1,000 down payment, balance at 5 percent interest. The old parsonage was sold on September 10, 1945, for \$4,500. The total amount was applied to the loan on the new parsonage, reducing the debt to \$1,000.

The church building was in need of many repairs, which began in 1946 and continued through the 1950's. The B&B Heating Company was awarded a contract on July 30, 1946, to install a new gas furnace at a cost of \$3,450, replacing the old boiler system. In August, another contract was let for the excavation and cementing of a full basement at a cost of \$2,640. Additional classrooms, social room and kitchen were provided with this project.

Renovation of the sanctuary began in May 1953. The ceiling plaster was replaced and the side walls patched by a Mr. Lopmiller for \$1,550. It was rewired by Regal Electric for \$410 and the existing light fixtures purchased at \$110 each. The chancel was restyled and the walls and floors painted.

The sanctuary could not be used during this renovation, so services were held in the J. Arden Hall at Elm and Davies Street. A dedication service was held on

October 25, 1953, when work was completed. The installation of an air conditioning system was approved by the congregation on June 5, 1955, for \$3,157.

A new education wing was constructed at a cost of \$29,109.83 and dedicated on April 1, 1962. The mortgage was burned in services in September 1973. In the 1980's, extensive remodeling and redecorating added to the efficiency and beauty of the building.

Many ministers have served this congregation. Some of the early ministers were Rev. Keene, George Buntin, J. Rambo, F. Butts, G. Coppage, George A. Joy, L.B. Haskins, J. Moody, and George Jones. The longest pastorate was held by P.H. Duncan from 1892 until 1926. The present minister is Dr. William D. Carpe. Following is a list of other ministers who have served the Ludlow Christian Church:

- † P.H. Duncan 1892 - 1926
- † Fred Shultz 1926 - 1927
- † G.A. Clayton 1927 - 1933
- † Robert A. Matheny 1934 - 1941
- † Byron Carlisle 1941 - 1942
- † Robert Glenn 1942 - 1944
- † George Filer 1944 - 1949
- † Ralph Miller 1949 - 1960
- † John Coyle 1960 - 1966
- † Raymond Lewis 1966 - 1978
- † Randy Clay 1979 - 1982
- † Tony Campbell 1982 - 1984
- † Dr. William D. Carpe 1985 - Present

Six members have entered the ministry: Margaret B. Hetz, a missionary to India; Harlan C. Runyan; Walter Chesterfield Gibbs, late professor at Lexington Theological Seminary; James A. Moak, retired regional minister of the Christian Church in Kentucky; Jack Dorsey, retired





Navy Chaplain; and Roger Meredith, a pastor in Ohio.

Over the course of time there have been many faithful members who have served long and well. Two current members to be recognized are Harry Rigney and Pearl Bryant. Harry retired in 1972 after 50 years of service as Sunday School Superintendent. Pearl, who is still active has been the church organist (pianist) for 67 years.

The church has always supported community organizations and activities, as well as the programs of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.) For many years the church was the meeting place of the Ludlow Rotary Club and Troop 20 of the Ludlow Boy Scouts.

In recent years the church has donated proceeds of the January fish fry to the Ludlow Volunteer Fire Department, Ludlow Senior Center, and Ludlow Youth Center. The church cooperates with the other churches of the community and the Northern Kentucky Interfaith Commission, a cooperative agency of the Catholic and Protestant churches in the area.

The existence, growth and preservation of this church for 150 years is a great tribute to the countless dedicated members, who have worked with love and vision to serve the spiritual needs of the congregation and community.

