

First United Methodist Church Historic Timeline

Note: Key sources for this chronology are as follows:

- *“Circuit Riders of the Middle Border, A History of Methodism in South Dakota”* This book was authorized by the South Dakota Conference of the Methodist Church and prepared by Historical Committee. It was published in 1965 and copies are available in our church library.
 - *“Yankton, The Way It Was”* written by Bob Karolevitz. Bob was a well-known local author and story-teller. This publication was a collection of weekly articles that appeared in the Yankton Press and Dakotan newspaper over the years.
 - *“History of South Dakota”* by Doane Robinson.
 - Many historic documents are preserved in our church, including handwritten letters and journals by early church founders. These are referenced by document numbers.
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- Around 1859: Among the earliest arrivals [in what was to become Yankton] was Downer T. Bramble, a 25-year-old Vermonter, who erected a frame structure near the riverfront and opened a general store. Capt. John Blair Smith Todd built a small office at Second and Broadway, and a block farther north Henry Clay Ash put up a log house and began operating a tavern. Captain Todd's office was later to be the location of the first Methodist sermon in Yankton. [*Bob Karolevitz, “Yankton, The Way It Was”*]
 - Mid 1860: The newly appointed presiding elder of the Sioux City District, Reverend C. E. Clifford, had become convinced that the Methodist Church should begin work in Dakota and urged that a missionary be sent to the new area. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border”, op cit.*]
 - August 29, 1860: Bishop Osmon C. Baker, presiding at the Upper Iowa Conference held at Dubuque, Iowa, appointed the Reverend Septimus Watson Ingham to the “Land of the Dakotas” connecting this circuit with the Sioux City District. The bounds of this circuit included all of North and South Dakota east of the Missouri river, much of which was still in the possession of the Sioux Indians. This would be the beginning of Methodism in the Dakota Territory. Mr. Ingham was a young man (age 23), unmarried, and a graduate of Cornell College, and had only recently entered the ranks of the Methodist ministry. This was the beginning of work in South Dakota under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. [*“History of South Dakota” by Doane Robinson*]
 - About September 1860: The appointment of Reverend Ingham was made too late to secure an appropriation for his salary from the Mission Board of the Methodist Church. Reverend Clifford revised his district budget and by cutting \$30 from his own meager salary and smaller sums from some of the other consecrated brothers, he was able to promise Reverend Ingham the sum of \$130 as salary for the first year and start him on his great adventure. [*“Circuit Riders of the Middle Border”, op cit.*]
 - October 12, 1860: The Reverend Septimus began his journey into Dakota Territory. In his report to his presiding elder, he stated, “On the 12th day of October, 1860,

I left the residence of Brother S. P. Yeomans in Sioux City, en-route to my new field of labor, having received numerous injunctions to be careful of my horse and to watch out for Indians. I had soon crossed the Big Sioux River, and having inquired if there were any religious persons in the neighborhood, I found that there was none, and consequently that I was not to be greeted on entering my work by the friendly grasp and smiles of kindred spirits.” He continued, “Remounting my horse, for I was traveling primitive style, with my saddle bags and umbrella, I pushed on for Vermillion, my destination; passing Elk Point, where there were one or two inferior cabins with dirt roofs standing and two of the better class being erected. Arriving at Vermillion about one-half hour after sundown, I put up with a Mr Mulholland, who was keeping a tavern at that place. I soon found out that he was not a Methodist and did not know of any in the area. The next morning, my bill being one dollar, I paid Mr. Mulholland ninety cents and told him I would pay him the other dime when my missionary draft was paid as I had no money with me.” Reverend Ingham added, “He very kindly trusted me for two months, as that time elapsed before I received any addition to my 'cash on hand.'” [From *“Circuit Riders of the Middle Border, A History of Methodism in South Dakota,”* prepared by the Historical Committee of the South Dakota Conference of the Methodist Church and published in 1965. Also reflects information from the General Records for Dacotah Mission]

- October 14, 1860: Reverend Ingham preached what he considered the first Methodist sermon ever preached “above the mouth of the Big Sioux River, or at least in the Missouri Valley.” He had about twenty persons at the services which were held in the dining room of Mr. Mulholland's tavern. His sermon was from Romans 1st, 16. [“Circuit Riders of the Middle Border”, op cit.]
- October 21, 1860: The Reverend Septimus Watson Ingham preached the first Methodist sermon in Yankton. His congregation consisted of two women and five men. The sermon was nearly broken up by the arrival of a steamer. The subject of his sermon was, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Reverend Ingham reported, “At night I again preached in Yankton, to about twenty-five men, who gave very good attention. Services were held in the office of Captain J. B. S. Todd, who was one of the proprietors of the town, and who told me that his office would be open whenever I desired to use it. At this time there were five houses in Yankton, three log cabins with dirt roofs and two frame (of which the office of Captain Todd was one). During the evening services we were interrupted by a call for someone in the room to go out and settle (as I afterward learned) a drunken quarrel.” [“Circuit Riders of the Middle Border” op cit].
- 1860-1862: As of this writing, it is not clear where Reverend Ingham resided. He apparently made Vermillion his headquarters for the entire two years of his stay in the territory. He does write in his later report that, “I found no Methodist home in which to stop, and so until May, I paid my board as would any other traveler or lodger.” [“Circuit Riders of the Middle Border”, op cit.]
- January 13, 1861: The first religious organization of any kind in Dakota Territory was formed at Vermillion, SD. The occasion was the first visit of the presiding elder, the Rev. George C. Clifford, at which time a meeting of two days' duration was held, the first of the kind in the territory. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was also administered for the first time. . [“History of South Dakota” by Doane Robinson]

- March 2, 1861: President James Buchanan signed the bill creating Dakota Territory just before he was succeeded by Abraham Lincoln.
- June 16, 1861: Reverend Ingham's duties were not confined to Yankton. On this date, he preached twice at Fort Randall, and in the afternoon baptized the infant daughter of Captain J. B. S. Todd. This was the second baptismal service performed in the territory among the new settlers, and the first to be performed by a Methodist minister. During the two years of his labors in Dakota, Mr. Ingham visited Richland, Fort Randall, Sioux Falls, Canton and other points where settlements had been made and held services. . [*History of South Dakota" by Doane Robinson*]
- March 17, 1862: The first territorial legislature convened in Yankton. A dozen Representatives were present at Rev. Melancthon Hoyt's log chapel on the northwest corner of Fourth and Linn streets. An unidentified pioneer's diary on that date revealed that Yankton "contains nineteen buildings, comprising one hotel, two boarding houses, one saloon, one store, two legislative halls, a secretary's office, one printing office, one law office, two blacksmith shops, a Surveyor General's and Governor's office and seven log buildings, six of which are occupied." [*Bob Karolevitz, op cit*]
- Fall 1862: Following the 1862 Indian scare, Charles Picotte and Captain J.B.S. Todd acquired lumber and a two-story structure was erected on the corner of Capitol and Fourth streets. The building measured 24 x 60 feet. When the legislators were not in session, the capitol served interchangeable as a church, a school, a dance hall, a theater and the meeting place for Dakota's first Masonic lodge. [*Bob Karolevitz, op cit*]
- Abt September 1862: Reverend Jason L. Paine was appointed to continue the circuit established by Reverend Ingham. He and his wife crossed the Sioux River but soon were deterred by an Indian attack near Vermillion. Reverend Paine and his wife returned that fall along with other Methodists of the Brule Creek. He made Richland, as the region was called, his headquarters and lived in a sod fort during the winter of 1862-63. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border, op cit*]
- January 1, 1863: A Methodist Class was organized by Reverend Jason L. Paine at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bligh E. Wood where friends of religion had gathered for prayer. The names of thirteen charter members appear on the list. The names of the settlements pioneer Methodists in Yankton were: Mr. and Mrs. Bligh E. Wood, Hammet P. Wood, Josiah Whitefield Davis, Ann Mathieson, William Thompson, James Witherspoon, L. T. Lotspeid, Jacob Kyler, Rhoda Gifford, Samuel M. Crooks, Lucy Crooks, and S. C. Fargo and wife. Reverend Paine was appointed Chaplain of the House of Representatives at the second session of the Territorial Legislature but accepted a position as a teacher outside the territory before the end of the year. The presiding elder, the Reverend Daniel Lamont visited the stations weveral times during Paine's absence. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border" op cit*]
- 1863: Reverend Almond Gore, a supply pastor, was sent to the territory for the year 1863-64. He began the year hopefully, but during the summer the grasshoppers drove out many of the settlers who had returned after the Indian scare. Reverend Gore returned to Michigan before his yearly appointment had terminated. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border" op cit*]
- For several years, the Methodist Mission continued to struggle for existence. The work of several local preachers was the saving element in a few places. Mention is

made of Martin D. Metcalfe meeting with some success at Yankton. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border* op cit]

- Fall 1865: The First Methodist Episcopal Church of Yankton was organized by Rev. C.W. Batcheller. The Des Moines Conference appointed Reverend C. W. Batcheller to the Yankton circuit. Reverend Batcheller was described as one of the ablest, most zealous circuit riders who ever came to Dakota. On his arrival, Reverend Batcheller found that the class organized by Reverend Jason L. Paine nearly three years before had almost disappeared. There were only three Methodists in Yankton and a few outside to form a nucleus for Reverend Batcheller's congregation. He began to reorganize vigorously. His group began to meet in the Episcopal Church which also served as the meeting place for the Territorial Legislature. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border* op cit]

- Fall 1865: In a letter written by the son of Reverend Batcheller, we learn that, "Rev. C.W. Batcheller had been stationed at Fort Dodge, Iowa as pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church, but at the conference at Boonsborough that fall 1865, Bishop Ames asked him if he would be willing to go to Yankton, Dakota Territory, and organize a Methodist church society there. From father's notes I read: 'With my little family I crossed the Big Sioux on October 10, 1866 and arrived at Yankton on the 11th. Drove up to Brother S.C. Fargo's corner of 3rd and Douglas. We were kindly received by the whole community. Dr. Prish passed a hat in Chas. Wamboe's saloon and in three minutes raised \$10.00 for our presiding elder, same being his claim for the Quarter. Elder Melancton Hoyt and I preached in the old capitol building alternately until the Episcopal church was completed, after which I conducted both morning and evening services in Yankton. There was no organized M.E. Society at Yankton when I came but shortly we had the following membership: S.C. Fargo; Sarah Fargo; Anna Batcheller; Mary Brisbane; Lucy Bunker; Mrs. Byron Smith; C.W. and Mary Foster; C.H. McIntyre (leader); Ann McIntyre; C.W. and Mary Jane Taylor; Chas. and Amelia Mischke; Margaret Hay; Henry and Amelia Ferber; Wm. and Eliza Gyte; Henry Jr. and Mary Ferber; J. and Anna Sears; John Reeves; W.W. and Adeline Benedict; H.H. and Jane Smith; Mrs. H.J. Bronson; Ethlando Reed; Emily J. Hagen; Henry and Sara Morton; F.C. and Clara Porter; Henry Morton; Elizabeth Sanders; Mary Parker" [Document D0003; Document D0155]

- November 10, 1866: The First Quarterly Conference of Yankton Station met at Yankton. Preacher in charge was C.W. Batcheller. This is the first recorded meeting and follows a standard format for quarterly conferences, e.g. "1st Question: Are there any complaints?; 2nd Question, Are there any appeals?, etc." Amount estimated for support of the pastor is listed at \$800 for the current year. In that meeting, Rev. Batcheller was listed as the sole member of most committees. At the time of the meeting, there were no church records. [Handwritten Ledger]

- Winter 1866: By the end of his first year, Mr. Batcheller was able to report twenty-five members and eleven probationers at Yankton and six outside stations. Progress is indicated by the following statistics: pastor's salary \$800 (\$250 of which was missionary money); Missionary Collection \$41; Fifth Collection \$205; Sunday School Union \$2.25; Bible Society \$2.60; Freedman's Aid Society \$1.35. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border* op cit]

- January 19, 1867: The Yankton Methodist Episcopal Sabbath School was first organized. At that time, there were twelve officers and teachers; and 37 scholars. Reverend C. W. Batcheller reported, "The school is in a prosperous condition. Peace and harmony prevail." [Minutes of the Second Quarterly Conference, Feb 23, 1867]
- 1869-1870: The best known Methodist circuit rider of the seventies was Charles Wesley Batcheller. He was the well beloved pastor of the Yankton church from 1865 to 1867. The next year while stationed at Bon Homme, he began his career as an itinerant circuit rider on the Dakota prairies. At first he traveled the western circuit. The next two years he made Yankton his headquarters as shown by the fact that he served on a building committee for the Yankton congregation. But he was not the pastor there and the presumption is that he was visiting a larger circuit nearby. ["Circuit Riders of the Middle Border" op cit]
- 1869 (Unknown Date): The Yankton congregation of Methodists was growing, but had no meeting place of its own. They had continued to meet in the Capitol building. The Reverend W. E. Smith was appointed pastor at Yankton in 1869. He found the church suffering from the neglect of the previous year when it had been abandoned by the pastor B.W. Coe. The first Sunday that Brother Smith attempted to conduct a service, only one person attended. The next Sunday there were ten and within three months, the attendance averaged forty in the morning and seventy-five in the evening. Within nine months the conditions were so encouraging that plans were secured for a church and subscriptions amounting to three thousand, six hundred dollars were raised. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border* op cit]
- 1869 (Unknown Date): The First Quarterly Conference for 1869 was convened. At this meeting, W. H. H. Beadle was confirmed as Superintendent of the Sabbath School. Reverend W. E. Smith was the preacher in charge, and he reported, "We found our church at the opening of the conference year, in a disorganized and chaotic state. By the blessing of God, we have been enabled to bring the scattered elements of Methodism together. The first Sabbath, our congregation was exceedingly select, being composed of but one auditor. The second Sabbath, the number increased to ten and from this upward until our congregation numbers 40 in the morning and 75 in the evening. We have organized a Sabbath school and secured the services of Gen W. H. H. Beadle as superintendent. The social means of grace have become operative among us, and under the circumstances fairly attended. We have not organized children's class as yet, but will accomplish this at the most practicable moment. We have received during the quarter the following members upon certificate, W.H.H. Beadle, Mrs. Mary S. Smith; and Turner M Wilkins, W. Bunker, and Miss Mary Bronson as Probationers. Numerically we are weak. We have but 8 members and some of them are not positively identified with us. Spiritually we are flourishing. The omens of good are numerous and we fondly cherish the hope that before the next quarterly meeting we shall be rejoicing in an extensive work of grace among us." [Document D0016, Service of Consecration for the Education unit.]
- 1870: The earliest Ladies Aid Society mentioned in the official records was at Elk Point in 1870. Shortly after this time Ladies Aid Societies were organized in Yankton and Vermillion. The exact dates of these two societies is unknown. [*Circuit Riders of the Middle Border* 1965]

- May 2, 1870: The Third Quarterly Conference of 1870 met at the parsonage. An order of new business related, "We need a committee to estimate the expenses to erect a house of worship according to the plans of Trustees." To this committee were appointed W. H. H. Beadle, A. J. Faulk, and Geo. Bemker(?). [Minutes of the conference]

- August 6, 1870: Fourth Quarterly Conference. Reverend W. E. Smith reported, "We would respectfully report to this Conference that the Yankton Charge has been enjoying a limited degree of prosperity during the past quarter. Our place of worship being poorly ventilated – has remained almost unoccupied. We are gaining ground again however and awaiting with patience the return of cool weather. Our membership has increased as follows – By letter Miss Walker – Mrs Gray – and Job DeSol (??) – By W. Bronson, Ellison Bronson, and Mary Bronson, by advancement from Probation. We now number 21 members in full connection – with one probationer. We commenced the year with a small and scattered membership and with Methodism far below par –We close this year with our church interests in fair condition with \$3600 subscribed to build a new church, and with reliable assurances of additional assistance. Our Sunday School is enjoying a fair degree of prosperity, and yet this extreme heat of the season has limited our attendance and retarded our growth. We trust in the Providence of God that the past year has not been in vain and that our church and her institutions will have been strengthened by the feeble efforts of W.E. Smith, Pastor." [Conference minutes]

- November 21, 1870: First Quarterly Conference of 1870 was held in the office of Gen W. H. H. Beadle. New business included the following, "On motion a Com(mittee) consisting of W. H. H. Beadle, C. W. Batcheller and (?) Bunker was appointed to procure lots for the erection of the church building." [Conference minutes]

- December 8, 1870: The earliest mention of the Ladies Aid Society at Yankton, when the Press & Dakotain reported, "The Ladies of the Methodist Church will hold a Festival on the evening of the 8th of December 1870.

- 1871: The bright prospects of the congregation were dashed by the storm and stress of 1870. Although W. E. Smith was returned to Yankton for another year, he abandoned his charge in the spring of 1871. The Reverend A. T. Mattison was sent as a supply pastor for the remainder of the conference year and a small congregation struggled for existence. The new pastor, the Reverend J. T. Walker, who came to Yankton that fall, faced a discouraging situation. The building enterprise had failed and the people were indifferent. ["Circuit Riders of the Middle Border" op cit]

- March 1, 1871: An article in the Yankton Press and Dakotain stated, "The revival of the M. E. Church in this city continues. We have been informed that quite a number of our citizens have been reclaimed from the path of sin, and promise to try to live a better life in the future. May the good work go on."

- March 24, 1871: The Ladies of the church gave a festival in the old Capitol Building for the benefit of the church. A

newspaper article preceding this event advised, "Every delicacy of the season will be provided. Let the lovers of good cheer be present in force."

- July 22, 1871: Fourth Quarterly Conference of 1871. The Pastor's Report stated, . "We are in process of organization. When I came here there had been no meeting for fully two months. The affairs were very phlegmatic. The class book showed several names but many of them were distant in the country far from pastoral care or help with church. Not many members in town. I talked with brethren (??) and we had about a dozen auditors at the start. We are getting a few SS chadless (??) together. We organized a little school. Bro Beadle was elected Supt. The school has met three times & has a little hope."

- November 20, 1871: First Quarterly Conference of 1871. The Reverend J. T. Walker reported, . "There is really no organization in the charge and owing to the shortness of want of appropriate data (??) no disciplinary form has been prepared. The spiritual state of the charge however is quite hopeful and the general outlook is good. The number of persons received the past Quarter is four. By Letter, A.A. Basye, M.A. Marshall, Brother Fitch, Brother Ketchum on probation." Reverend Walker presented the prospect of a new church and urged, "prompt and immediate action looking to the erection of such a church building at the earliest possible day." [Conference minutes]

- 1872: The railroad was extended from Sioux City to Yankton.

- August 20, 1872: The Board of Trustees of the Methodist Territory elected by the Fourth Quarterly Conference for the ensuing year, met by call of the pastor at the office of W. H. H. Beadle. The pastor, the Reverend J. T. Walker, temporarily presiding. Trustees Beadle, Marshall, N.M. Bayse, P.K. Faulk, and Reeves were elected officers from this group. [Document D0015. Church bulletin, Service of Consecration.]

- August 22, 1872: The Methodist Episcopal Church purchased land from Bridget and Alfred Osborn, consisting of fifty feet off the rear end of his two lots. The land is described as, "The west one third, being fifty feet off the west end of Lots Nos. Ten (10) and Eleven (11) in Block number Thirty Three (33) in the city of Yankton" to be used, "as a place of Divine worship, for the use of the ministry and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Signing for the church were Wm. H. H. Beadle, J. H. Burdick, A. J. Faulk, M. A. Marshall, F. J. Magee, John Reeve, Phil. K. Faulk, N. M. Basye and H. A. Copeland as Trustees of the church. The price was to be \$400.00 cash. [Document D0007, Warranty Deed; Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]

- August (?) 1872: Specifications for the new church were written as: "The Basement Walls shall be built of good Hard Stone to the height of 7 ft on the smooth level bottom of the excavation. The walls shall be 62'-4" x 38'-4" exterior measurement at the base. It shall be battered on the out side of wall to the height of 7 ft to the following dimensions 60'-4" x36'-4". The remaining 3 ft of Basement story to be built of Chalk Rock faced and coursed. The main wall shall be set back from the face of basement wall 4 into form a water table as shown in drawings. The inside to be laid plumb and true to line. To be laid in of good line mortar with openings as per drawings the stone to be faced and coursed on out side. The pilasters on the main front to be chamfered on the corners and laid as per detailed drawings. The window caps as shown by detailed drawings." [Document D0133, Building Specifications]

- August 28, 1872: The Yankton Press & Dakotaian reported, "The Methodist Society has purchased a portion of two lots on the corner of Fourth Street and Douglas Avenue and have commenced digging for the foundation of a church building which they hope to occupy around the coming winter."
- September 7, 1872: A contract was made between Thomas Finnegan (contractor?) and Wm. H. H. Beadle, J. H. Burdick, A. J. Faulk, J. J. Magee, John Reeve, M. A. Marshall, N. W. Basye, Phil K. Faulk, and H. A. Copeland as Trustees of the Church. Contractor is to furnish all materials and perform all work except the hauling of chalk rock. Work was to commence on or before the ninth day of September 1872, and be completed ready for the roofs on or before the tenth of November 1872. Amount cited is "Four dollars and fifty cents per Perch for hard stone and four dollars and twenty five cents per Perch for Chalk Rock. Payment was to be made \$200 at the end of the first weeks work and \$100 at the end each subsequent week until the hard stone is done and \$150 per week while laying chalk stone. (other terms are illegible in the document.) The Church was responsible to move the chalk stone from the quarry, "as fast as needed by the builders." The document is signed by all parties. At the bottom of this contract is written, "The foregoing contract is this day made void by mutual agreement of both parties named & known in said contract." The added note is signed by Thomas Finnegan (with an X, his mark) and F. J. Magee. No date is provided for this added note. [Document D0011, Contract]
- December 9, 1872: Fourth Quarterly Conference. In his report, Rev J.T. Walker stated, "Owing to the failure of the church building enterprise so that it couldn't be occupied during the winter, a second spiritual apathy seized the church from which it seems very difficult to rally them to take hold of any of the duties of the church. The School small in numbers tardy and dull in its exercises it is nearly impossible to get teachers enough to teach the classes that are organized. Average attendance about 25. There are fifteen over fifteen years of age. About twenty five that are over fifteen years of age. Have not preached to the children during the year." The minutes also reflected that, "General Beadle offered his resignation as a member of Bd of Trustees. On motion his resignation was accepted. W.A. Marshall tendered his resignation as a member of Bd of Trustees. On motion his resignation was accepted." [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]
- March 10, 1873. Second Quarterly Conference. The meeting was held in the office of J. H. Burdick. At this meeting, W.H.H. Beadle was approved as Sunday School Superintendent. Pastor J.T. Walker reported, "The beginning of the quarter was a time of fear and despondency in the church. The Qr has brought tokens of encouragement. The spirit of unity is growing in church fellowship. Our prayer and clap meetings are more spiritual and largely attended. There is still great want of unity of effort in the workings of the church and too much neglect in attendance on the social means of grace. Public service (preaching) has been well attended, and with more stated congregations which we can call our own than heretofore. The S.S. during this quarter has been more encouraging than ever before. The school is lively, regular, and active in its duties. Teachers generally by volunteering and have been more prompt. The officers have been at their posts. School has grown in numbers. Many of the adult members of the congregation are in attendance. Attend in past by the advantages and excellencies of the International L?irs (?) of Lessons. Average attendance of S.S. about 45. There are 30 over fifteen years old. The manner of catechizing the children has

been in general reviews of S.S. lessons, in the committing of the "Ten Commandments" and the "Memory Series" etc. The benevolent collections have not been taken. About 75 pastoral visits have been made. Subscriptions for periodicals, as follows: ??? Advocate, ten (10), C.C. Ad. Two (2), Christian ?? Three (3), Q? Review, one copy, Ladies Repository, Twelve (12) copies, S.S. Journal, 8 copies, Miss Sol? (5), H.W.F. (14) copies, Glad Tidings (25), Every Bodies Paper 25 copies, Golden Hours 1 copy, Methodist ? Guide to Holiness 1, Bible School Helper 2, Whole Member (111) one hundred and eleven." The minutes also report, "On motion it was carried that Brothers W.H.H. Beadle and M.A. Marshall be added to the Board of Trustees. [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]

- April 25, 1873: Petition was filed with the Department of Justice, District of Dakota, to use the U.S. court rooms for church purposes. Use was requested until October 1 of the same year, at which time the M.E. Church expected to occupy their own church building. Petition was signed by J.T. Walker, pastor. The petition was allowed. At that time, the Capitol was located at Fourth and Capitol Street. [Document D0006. Department of Justice petition.]

- May 16, 1873. The Third Quarterly Conference was again held in the office of Judge Burdick. Reverend J. T. Walker reports, "The church building matter seems dark, but the officary of the church seemed determined to rush it on to completion." [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]

- July 16, 1873: The following was published in the Yankton Press & Dakotaian newspaper: "A CARD TO THE PUBLIC. As Pastor I have been requested by the Trustees of my charge to give the public, in brief, the financial condition of the Methodist Episcopal Church edifice now building in our city, giving such accounts and exhibits and showing of cost and expenses already paid, and the liabilities which will accrue in the completion, and appeal to the public for a response to assist in meeting the expenses necessary to carry it forward, to a point that we can occupy the auditorium. The lot, excavation and completion of the basement, have cost almost \$1,800.00. So far we have paid for all the work done; but with a limited amount of money now at our disposal we cannot complete it sufficiently to occupy, unless aided by the citizens of Yankton and vicinity to the amount of \$1,000. Believing that it is necessary that our wants be known to be met by the public spirited citizens, a committee appointed for the purpose will call upon those who have not hitherto aided on Saturday next. We trust our hearts shall be made glad in being assured that our enterprise shall not fail. Signed: Reverend J. T. Walker" [Press and Dakotaian newspaper]

- July 16, 1873: In the same day and edition as the appeal from Reverend J. T. Walker, the following editorial comment was printed: " We direct attention to the card of Reverend J. T. Walker published elsewhere and take pleasure in commending the very worthy undertaking for which he is so zealously laboring to the favorable consideration of our people. The church edifice when completed will be a moral and architectural ornament to Yankton; it will enhance the value of our town in the estimation of all and in fact will be a paying investment for those citizens who are identified with the material as well as moral growth of our town and improvement of the city. We sincerely hope the Methodist Society will be speedily successful in its efforts." Church records show that nearly \$2,000 was donated by the people in the Yankton community. This came from people outside the Methodist Church and allowed the work to continue on finishing the church building. [Press and Dakotaian newspaper]

- July 18, 1873: The Ladies of the church played an important role in the construction of the church. A newspaper article of this date reported, "The ladies of the M. E. Church will give a festival at the Church hall, to which everyone is cordially invited. Preparations for the affair are complete and all who attend will be fully repaid for their expenditure of time and money. The proceeds of the festival will be devoted to the construction of the Church edifice now in the course of erection." [Yankton Press & Dakotain newspaper]
- August 18, 1873. The Fourth Quarterly Conference convened at the Dakota Territory Court Room. Reverend J. T. Walker reports, "The spiritual interest has increased. The spirit of family is prevailing in an encouraging degree. The Ladies Aid Society have resumed their work and are having regular meetings of interest. The church building has been engaging the mind and labors of the church membership and at present seems more encouraging than at last Quarterly Meeting. Our class meetings have been much better during the last quarter than for some time past. Some still neglect these essences of grace." He adds, "The S.S. has increased in numbers and interest. We need a spirit of unity among our people, more charity each for the other, more of the spirit of sacrifice and love of Jesus' love." [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]
- 1873 (Unknown Date): As evidence of their interest in the frontier region, the Northwest Iowa Conference agreed to hold their second session of their Annual Conference in Yankton using the fine new church that was then under construction. That hope could not be realized for the work lagged behind schedule and the new building was not ready in time. To cap the climax, the pastor fell ill and the burden of entertaining the Conference fell on his wife. At this juncture the members of the Congregational church hospitably offered the use of their edifice for the Annual Conference and the dilemma was happily resolved. The members of the Conference had to be satisfied by having their picture taken in front of the unfinished building. ["Circuit Riders of the Middle Border" op cit]
- August 18, 1873: A missionary journey was undertaken to Yankton, Dakota Territory, by the Reverend Wm Stegner President Elder, and Reverend Wm Ochier of the Evangelical United Brethren from a Mission of their church located near Luverne, Minnesota. On the 20th of August, they reached Yankton and soon found two families who were members of the Evangelical Church. [FUMC History Book]
- November 23, 1873: The first Evangelical United Brethren sermon was preached by Reverend Stegner in the Congregational Church. It was the first service of record on the soil of Dakota Territory by the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB)
- December 25, 1873: Gen Wm H. H. Beadle provided a handwritten note to Rev R. W. Thornburg. In it, he writes, "I leave necessarily in the morning, and cannot be present at Quarterly Conference. I had expected to give personal and more full attention to what I now hastily write, but the (??) duties have prevented, I send with this the (??) of the papers relating to the finances of the Church – all that have come into my possession. Some are with the books at the Church - I have never written a word in the Treasurer's Books because I had not done the business and did not have the necessary data. The duties were mainly discharged while I was absent. The only money that has ever come into my hands was the proceeds of the \$300 note & that was paid to Mr. W. B. Valentine & his receipt is herewith; and \$80 also receipted by him.

This latter amount was recd. From two sources \$75 – from Bro. M.A. Marshall and \$5 from Col G. C. Moody. That from Marshall was borrowed & is long past due. I paid him \$40 upon it out of my own funds. This should be charged to him, and may be audited to me upon subscription. The other transactions are not monetary & are in the minutes of our meetings. There are two amounts, viz \$74, and \$14 = total \$88 I believe paid by Bro J.H. Burdick to (??) with Valentine – Acct to be credited Burdick on subscription & charged Valentine. I hand in account of E.P. Wilcox showing balance due. For this he asks that the Trustees give him their note – so as to liquidate the account & put it in debt form. The debt due the iron workers for the rods should be paid. They have suffered from need of it. They have been so often to see me & I had no money that I advised suit as the only other resource – for which they asked me. The balance due Valentine should be definitely and precisely fixed. He asked my order as Treasurer upon Bro. F. B. Dunlap for \$100 & seemed anxious for it. I declined absolutely, and would not give it knowing of no fund that should be there (?). The first thing to settle is whether that amount is due Mr. Valentine. There are other claims that should be audited or disallowed re settled – such as that of Brs Adolph Basey (?). There is one small payment made by me upon an order of the committee for \$3.88. That should be credited to me on subscription. Please present these books, papers and accounts to the board for my successor. Yours, Wm H. H. Beadle.”

The handwritten note continues, addressed by Gen Beadle to the First Quarterly Conference tendering his resignation as a member of the Board of Trustees and as Treasurer. The text of the letter follows: “Brethren: From the most careful and long continued consideration, I respectfully tender my resignation as a member of the Board of Trustees and consequently also as Treasurer. I shall positively decline to serve in either capacity. I trust this may not incur animadversion because ‘nobody can see any good reason for it’ or does not understand it. I do not desire controversy or anything at all like it. I have been long a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church from choice. If it is necessary that I go through any amount more like the last 4 or 5 years have as a condition of membership, I should not hesitate one second to leave. I have given the Church such as I had & could get, but I do hope the day may soon dawn which will bring some Church privileges as that phrase is usually employed. If any brother sneers at this, let him first pay and go through a quarter what I have, half as long. In any event my resolution is fixed that I will decline all official service. With my ideas now my service would not be of any value to the Church.” [Document D0008. Handwritten note from Gen Beadle.]

- Unknown date, January 1874. The dedication of the first church finally came the latter part of January, 1874. Bishop Thomas Bowman returned for the event. The new church was dedicated, in spite of lingering financial problems. The Honorable Bartlett Tripp, who later became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Dakota, told the following story: “We all went down to see the church dedicated. I don’t suppose we lugged very big pocketbooks, for we didn’t have them in those days. We entered the church and Bishop Bowman was to preach the sermon. We were attracted by his name. He called for the financial report and found that the house he was to dedicate was between two and three thousand dollars in debt. “Usher,” he says, “lock the doors and let no man go from this room,” and he said to the people present, “Not one of you leaves this room until the debt is lifted.” He then preached one of the best sermons on giving I ever heard. General Beadle sat beside me and says, ‘You give fifty dollars and I

will give fifty more.' Before I had a chance to reply he says 'fifty dollars,' and I had to say it, too." An adequate amount was subscribed to cover the indebtedness. ["Circuit Riders of the Middle Border" op cit]

- Unknown Date, 1874: First Quarterly Conference. Minutes reflect that a motion was made, "that a committee be formed to make estimates of cost and draw plans for a parsonage." Brothers N. M. Bayse and F. J. Magee were give the responsibility for this task. It is not clear from records what action was taken. [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]
- September 11, 1874: The minutes of the First Quarterly Conference mention briefly, "Resignation of W.H.H. Beadle accepted. Also J. H. Burdick's." [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]
- February 20, 1875: Second Quarterly Conference. Perhaps not a significant date in the history of the church, but the minutes reflect that one of the brothers was appointed as solicitor to raise money to buy a cow for the Pastor." [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]
- May 8, 1876: Third Quarterly Conference with Rev. A. Jamieson, Pastor. Minutes indicate that W. H. H. and others were nominated and appointed as Trustees. [Minutes of the Quarterly Conference]
- May 4, 1877: Grasshoppers continued to beset much of the region, and especially Yankton County. It got so bad that Governor John Pennington – in response to a petition from territorial clergymen – proclaimed May 4, 1877, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer to Almighty God for "assistance without which all human effort is made vain." Yankton ministers supporting the heavenly plea included Joseph Ward of the Congregational Church; J. A. Potter, pastor of the Methodist Church; James Buchanan, the Baptist minister; Gilbert Higgs, pastor-rector of the Episcopal Church; John Hauck, missionary among the Germans of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and Melancthon Hoyt, dean of the Episcopal denomination in Dakota. The day of prayer was widely observed; even the banks and some of the business houses suspended operations during the prescribed time. And then a seemingly miraculous thing happened! A small red parasitic bug appeared on the scene, destroying embryo hoppers with such rapidity and completeness that the annual crop disaster was almost totally averted. Whether or not it was a miracle – as some truly believed – the grasshoppers nonetheless were overcome, and Dakota farmers enjoyed a bountiful harvest for a change." [Bob Karolevitz, op cit]
- May 26, 1878: Dedication of the first Evangelical United Brethren (E.U.B.) church, built at the corner of Fourth Street and Douglas Avenue. [FUMC History Book]
- December 19, 1879: An article in the Yankton Press and Dakotian reported, "The Methodist Episcopal Society of Yankton has, the past few weeks, conquered its financial difficulties and secured the church property from the threatened danger of foreclosure and sale. Debts which were pressing have been paid and the more remote obligations placed in a shape where the society can control them. This is a gratifying relief from past complications. The church once more is on its feet."
- September 23, 1880: The Dakota Mission Conference held its first meeting in Yankton. (The second meeting was held in Sioux Falls on October 6, 1881; the third on

October 11, 1882 in Parker; the fourth meeting on October 11, 1883 in Huron; and the fifth on October 10, 1884, in Mitchell). [FUMC History]

- January 30, 1882: Articles of Incorporation filed for the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Yankton. [Document D0005, certified copy of the Articles of Incorporation filed with the Secretary of State on April 18, 1949.]
- 1882: The first auxiliary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) in Yankton was formed by Mrs. Isabel Whitfield, wife of the pastor Wilmot Whitfield of the First Methodist Church. She was president and Mrs. Simms was elected Corresponding Secretary. This society with 12 members existed for two years. [*Circuit Riders...* op cit]
- 1884: *The first report of Home Missionary work by the Woman's Home Missionary Society (WHMS) was in 1884 in the Yankton District. This woman's organization continued until 1939.* [*Circuit Riders...* op cit]
- May 9, 1884: The Dakota Conference of the Evangelical Association (as it was then called) was organized with 21 ministers and 1248 members, of whom 764 belonged to the Yankton District.
- 1888: Reverend F.A. Burdick, Pastor, reports that construction of the church in 1867-68 resulted in a "burdensome debt" which continued to be a "source of annoyance." Reverend Burdick reports, "Several times efforts have been made to remove the incubus, but never has there been complete success. Each time improvements were added which further involved the society. Last year a final effort was made, and it was thought that at last the church was free, and it was so reported at last Conference; but not so, for there still remains a \$200 mortgage on the property." [Document D0003, Report by Rev Burdick to "Palmer's Directory" of the Methodist Episcopal Church for Dakota Conference 1888]
- October 25, 1893: The First Methodist Episcopal Church purchased a parsonage from a Mr. L. L. Tyler for \$1500, with a deed being recorded on this date. The new parsonage was located at 609 Capitol in Yankton. [Records filed at the Yankton County Register of Deeds Office]
- October 27, 1893: The First Methodist Episcopal Church obtained a \$1400 loan from the Yankton Building and Loan Association. [Document D0004, Promissory Note]
- October 18, 1909: Records show that the city water, sewage disposal facilities and a bath tub were installed in the parsonage at 609 Capitol, for the first time, at a cost of \$172.00. [FUMC History]
- May 4, 1910: A committee was appointed to see about a new church. (Four such requests appeared in board minutes up until March 1925.) [FUMC history]
- July 3, 1923: A committee was named by the Trustees to plan for the 50th Anniversary of the Yankton Methodist Church. The committee was composed of Mr. A.D. Christensen, Mrs. Frank Pyncheon, Mrs C.E. Rivola, Mr. W.C. Olander, and Mr. Max Whited. [FUMC History]
- September 21, 1923: The church celebrates the 50th anniversary of the church building. This was a three-day event which included a pageant. Pastor of the church was Ralph C. Shearer. [Document D0122 – 50th Anniversary bulletin]

- March 8, 1925: In his report to the Second Quarterly Conference, Reverend Ralph C. Shearer wrote, "Steps looking to the erection of a new church should be hastened. Perhaps the work cannot be undertaken now, but a careful, faithful courageous study should be made, in which mounting needs of the kingdom and the almighty power of God given to people of faith shall be given audience." [FUMC History]
- April 8, 1930: A movement for a new church surfaced again, and a site committee of Sam Gilliland, Harry Box and W.C. Olander was appointed to look for a suitable location. They reported that they had found such a site, two lots at the corner of 4th and Linn streets. The official description was, lots 1 and 2, block 23, Wither-spoon addition. They were authorized to proceed with the purchase. The price was \$2,200 with a down payment of \$300. A drive for funds was okayed. (The lots were eventually added to the church properties, but nothing ever happened as far as a new church was concerned. Records further show that on June 28, 1939, the lots were sold to R.D. Hill, a member of the congregation.) [FUMC History]
- October 20, 1935: Beginning of a week-long Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the First Methodist Preaching in Yankton. M. A. Chase was pastor of the church. Also participating was Rev Mr. Dickerson, pastor of the African Methodist Church. Celebration was through a Former Member's Night; Musical Night; Historical Night; Former Pastor's Night; a Diamond Jubilee Banquet; and a Memorial Sunday. [Document D0135, Diamond Jubilee brochure]
- June 28, 1939: Building lots purchased at 4th and Linn Streets were sold to R.D. Hill, a member of the congregation. Lots were intended for a new church, but never used. [FUMC History]
- November 15, 1943: The Yankton Press and Dakotan newspaper carried the note that, "It was announced today by the Reverend Frank W. Cannon, Pastor of the First Methodist Church, that a building permit has been granted by the Yankton City Commission, at their meeting of November 10, to construct a new front and main entrance to the church on 4th street." According to Reverend Cannon, "The construction plans and specifications which have been received from the architects will materially change and improve the front of the church while new pews, which are to replace the opera chairs now in use, will enhance the appearance of the interior." [FUMC History]
- December 22, 1943: The minutes of the Official Board of the Church states, "It was reported by the Building Committee that Keller Brothers bid of \$3,673.20 for remodeling the church front was low and that it was accepted by the Committee."
- July 23, 1950: The parsonage at 609 Capitol Street was sold to Gordon Pates for \$8,000, less the commission of \$400. [FUMC History book]
- October 11, 1950: At a meeting of the Church Trustees, it was reported that the old Walsh home at 4th and Pine had been purchased from Robert Cihak for a parsonage. The price was \$16,500, with a down payment of \$12,000.00 at 4.5 percent interest. The balance was to be paid at the rate of \$1,500 every six months. [FUMC History]
- July 18, 1954: At an official board meeting, a Findings Committee was elected to look into the possibilities of future development of the church. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]

- September 12, 1954: A Building Fund was started with plans for the Christmas offering to go into the fund. On December 30, the first \$100 was placed in that fund. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- February 16, 1955: A letter and questionnaire were sent to all members of the church asking them in what direction they would like the church to go. [FUMC History]
- March 20, 1955: Dr. John V. Madison, District Superintendent, along with Reverend L. W. Sachse, called an all-church conference. At this meeting, the church decided by a very large majority vote to start a finance campaign. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- April 20, 1955: Two-hundred-forty-five plates were served at a Loyalty Dinner with Mr Allen Byrne of Wells Organization in charge. Pledges received totaled almost \$70,000. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- May 18, 1955: By a vote of 116 to 36, it was decided in favor of a new site for a new church edifice. The site at 11th and Cedar Streets was selected. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- September 25, 1955: Eight lots were purchased at a cost of \$7,500 and paid for in cash. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- October
30, 1955: The First Methodist Church celebrated the 90th anniversary. The observance began at the morning services with the Reverend John V. Madison, District Superintendent of the Southern District, as guest Pastor. Following the services, a fellowship dinner was served to an overflow crowd in Wesley Hall. At the afternoon program, greetings were read from former members and pastors. Several former members and friends of the Church from out of town were present and were introduced. Many longtime members were recognized with Sam Gilliland having the longest record of church membership in the local congregation, 68 years. The Reverend Rueben A. Tanquist of Parker, a former Yankton resident and member of the church who left in 1935, gave the Anniversary Address. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.; Document D0123 – 90th anniversary bulletin. Also, FUMC History book]
- June 10,
1957: The Building Committee selected William A. Beuttler, Sioux City, Iowa, as the architect and held their first meeting with him on this date. [FUMC History]
- January 13, 1958: The Official Board signed a contract with Dr. John Henry Soltman, a retired minister and former member of the Methodist National Board of Missions, to head a second three-year crusade for funds. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- May 23, 1958: The second three-year crusade for funds began. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- June 1, 1958: This Sunday was declared “Victory Sunday” with a total of over \$45,000 pledged toward the new church. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- August 25, 1958: The congregation voted to go ahead with construction of the new church. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]

- October 1, 1958: The Board of Trustees approved a loan from First Dakota National Bank for \$40,000. On the next day, the architect was authorized to proceed with detailed drawings. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- January 14, 1959: Bids were opened and the contracting firm of Fred Jones and Son was selected as general contractor for the new church. The cost of this first unit of the construction program was to be approximately \$120,000, to cover most of the furnishings and professional charges. At this time, plans were already underway to build an education wing as soon as the initial construction was paid for. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- February 1, 1959: A groundbreaking ceremony was held, followed by a jumble luncheon. At that time, Dr. Morris Kildall, District Superintendent, stated that a new church for Yankton had actually been in the conference minutes as early as 1921. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- March 3, 1959: Construction was initiated on the new church. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- May 3, 1959: Laying of the cornerstone of the church at 11th and Cedar. [Document D0015, Service of Consecration bulletin.]
- September 27, 1959: Final worship services were held in the old church on 4th Street. After the Sacrament of Holy Communion
- October 4, 1959: A Service of Consecration was held at the First Methodist Church on 11th and Cedar Streets. Reverend Leonard W. Sachse was pastor.
- March 13, 1960: A special meeting of the Board of Trustees was held after the church services. Those present were Chairman W. S. Couch, Arthur Mathis, Dean Finch, R. D. Hill, W. C. Olander, Dr. T. D. Bowman, John Wilson, A. R. Bedner, and Reverend L. W. Sachse. The meeting was called to consider an offer from the Assembly of God, a church organization, to buy the old Methodist Church on 4th Street. The price was to be \$10,000 cash. After much discussion, Dean Finch moved and R. D. Hill seconded the motion that the church bell and the window glass memorials be sold with the church. On being brought to a vote it carried unanimously. President Couch appointed R. D. Hill and himself to follow through on the sale and report back to the Trustees. [FUMC History Book]
- June 27, 1960: The sale of the old church was completed and the Congregation of the Assembly of God Church took title to the church building at 4th Street. [FUMC History Book]
- April 11, 1961: At the Fourth Quarterly Conference, the Trustees were authorized to sell the parsonage at 4th and Pine and to procure a replacement. Soon after, a deal was made with Iner Anderson, a local contractor, to build a new parsonage on a lot he owned at 1702 Cedar Street. Mr. Anderson agreed to accept the old parsonage, plus a difference of \$8,148.00. The deal was completed which gave the church a new parsonage with a valuation, at the time, of \$20,000. [FUMC History]
- June 29, 1965: The Assembly of God congregation sold the old church to the City of Yankton. The City had made the purchase for the purpose of adding to their downtown parking.

- October 24, 1965: The First Methodist Church celebrated Centennial Sunday, with Rev. Howard F. Jones presiding. This event celebrated the 100th anniversary of the date that the First Methodist Episcopal Church was organized by the Rev. C. W. Batchellor. [Document D0012 – Centennial brochure]
- Unknown date, December 1965: The old church at 4th street was demolished by the City of Yankton, and the space was used for parking. When the church was demolished, the minister from the Assembly of God Congregation saved the old bell and stored it at his home. It was through the efforts of Andy Thompson, Frank Branaugh and Lawrence Huntley that the bell was secured and placed on the church property at 207 West 11th Street.
- October 1, 1966: The first unit was made debt-free. The preliminary building plan and cost were unanimously approved by the congregation, and detailed plans were begun by the architects. [Document D0016, Service of Consecration for the Education unit.]
- October 30, 1966: A Building Fund Crusade was conducted the last week of October with a goal of \$75,000 to be given over a three year period. Under the direction of Dr. Wesley McKelvey, of the Department of Finance of the National Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, this goal was reached and surpassed. Some \$24,000 was willed the church by the late Olive R. Learned, a long-time member of the church, which made it possible to begin construction within the year. A joint participation loan for \$140,000 was negotiated with First Dakota National Bank of Yankton and the National Board of Missions of the Methodist Church. Thus, with all requirements met, the advertisement for construction bids was made in the spring of 1967. The will Nellie Reeder marks, another loyal member of the church, provided a bequest which reduced the principle indebtedness on the church by at least \$30,000. [Document D0016, Service of Consecration for the Education unit.]
- February, 1967: Due to declining membership of approximately 50 members and inability to financially survive, the members of the Yankton Evangelical United Brethren voted to close their local church. District Superintendent Kruenkenberg called an Administrative Board meeting to discuss the church closing. After much meditation and prayerful concern, Reverend Monette, Superintendent Kruenkenberg, and members of the Administrative Board knelt at the Church Altar in prayer and officially closed the Church. Open memberships were given to all members and several families chose to join the First Methodist Church of Yankton. [FUMC History Book]
- May 26, 1968: A Service of Consecration was held for the Education Unit.
- Unknown 1968: Prior to their respective annual 1968 South Dakota Conferences, the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church agreed to a plan of union to unite their memberships into one, to be known as the United Methodist Church. They agreed:
 - As of January 1, 1969, all churches and ministers of the former South Dakota Conference of the Methodist Church and the former Evangelical United Brethren Church which are located in the State of South Dakota, shall be members of the South Dakota Conference of the United Methodist Church.

- Ministers serving under special assignment of the former Dakota Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church shall be assigned to one of the new conferences by the joint cabinets after consultation with the persons involved;
- Retired ministers of the former Dakota Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church shall be assigned to membership in one of the new conferences after consultation with the persons involved.
- June 1974: At the Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church South Dakota, authorization was granted to apply for an “Historical Site” designation for the Yankton Church. The request was sent to the Commission on Archives and History in North Carolina. The effort was successful and the marker was received by the Church. In this designation, the Yankton Church was named, “Mother Church of Methodism in Eastern South Dakota.” [FUMC History Book]
- June 27, 1976: A Service of Dedication was held for the Education Unit at Eleventh and Cedar Streets. The sermon was given by Bishop James Armstrong. Also in attendance was the District Superintendent Dr. Earl Butz. Dr. Robert Vessey was the pastor of the Methodist Church. [Document D0014 – Church Bulletin]
- Purchase of Cedar Street Parsonage
- Purchase of Walnut Street Parsonage
- Loss of associate pastor position
- Sale of Cedar Street parsonage
- Purchase of west lots
- Paving of west lot
- 2000: A church task force identified the need for a more accessible building, additional classrooms and increased office space. Two options were eventually considered, the one actually built, and a second that included a large activity center.
- Fall 2005: Planning began for a church addition and a financial campaign was launched.
- Award of contract on addition
- April 27, 2006: Ground breaking for the \$575,000 addition.
- December 2006: The new church addition was completed with a spacious lobby entrance, elevator, new offices and a conference room.
- Consecration of new addition
- Construction of garage
- Purchase of new parsonage
- Sale of Walnut Street parsonage
- September 16, 2011: A hardy group of about 100 people met at the Riverside Ball Park in Yankton on a cold, misty and windy evening to share our Methodist history. The evening included horse-drawn wagon rides, a free picnic lunch, musical entertainment, dedication of the new parsonage and building addition (to include a

symbolic burning of the mortgages), shared memories by a few past ministers either in person or reading of letters, and memories of a couple 50+ year members of our church. The church choir led the singing of hymns. In attendance were the District Superintendent, Roy Caudill; pastors Robert Vessey (1974-1983), Peary Wilson (1987-1992) and Deborah Larson (1992-1999). Earlier in the day, an open house of the parsonage was offered.

- September 17, 2011: The church celebrated 150 years of Methodism in Yankton, observing the first Methodist sermon preached in Yankton by the Reverend Septimus Watson Ingham on October 21, 1860. (The anniversary was observed in 2011 to coincide with Yankton's observance of a 150th) The morning began with tours of the church. A single service was held at 10:00 AM with Dr. Bruce Forbes of Morningside College as guest speaker. Following the service, a catered meal was served in Wesley Hall followed by an historic skit. The event concluded with a hymn sing led by the chancel choir.