

# Grace Methodist Church Is 50 Years Old

## Dinner Friday To Highlight Observance

By Laura Rawson

To have served a Santa Cruz community for half a century is the proud and happy achievement of Grace Methodist church, Soquel avenue at Cayuga street and the golden anniversary is being observed.

Friday evening, an all church dinner will be served in Friendship hall of the church. It is hoped many old time ministers and members will be present. Following the dinner will be a concert by the Fort Ord Solder5s band in the church sanctuary. The public is invited.

It is fitting that this celebration be observed at Christmas when Christian nations of the world are celebrating the birth of Christ and singing, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth, Peace and Good Will to Men."

The earliest history of Grace church dates back to the year 1907, when a Sunday school sponsored by the First Methodist church of Santa Cruz met in Lottman's hall which was on the present site of the East Santa Cruz fire house. Philip Hynes, father of Miss Bertha Hynes and Mrs. Alice Laverty, served as superintendent.

Success of the venture brought about the construction of a chapel on Pennsylvania avenue in 1891, largely through the efforts of Dr. E. D. McReary and others vitally interested in East Santa Cruz.

This chapel prospered until 1900 when interest lapsed and it was discontinued until 1905, when through the interest and exertion of Mrs. Rebecca Kaill, F. L. Heath and Rev. Lee, services were resumed. In 1906 a Sunday school was formally organized and interest in church services and Sunday school increased.

In 1907 it was deemed advisable to organize more legally and in October, 1907, the Pennsylvania avenue Methodist church became an important part of East Santa Cruz, with Rev. H. K. Hamilton as pastor and with 57 members enrolled.

Rev. Hamilton served as pastor three years and was succeeded in 1910 by Rev. O. H. Langdon.

In 1912 a little booklet was compiled with Rev. Langdon writing a record of the church history to date. Listed are church time services including a Junior league, Intermediate league, and an Epworth league. Also meetings of a Philathea Class, official board and Woman's Home Missionary society, prayer meeting, Ladies Aid society and Loyal Sons.

Music has always played an important part in the life of the church. In 1911 a choir of young people of the church was organized under the leadership of Ernest and Austin Mosher with Edward Leedham as pianist. Winona Bailey, Altha Barber, Maud Cooley, Lorene Griffin, Florence Mosher, Sara Scofield, Philip Cooley, Lewis Scofield, Ernest Mosher and Austin Mosher were members of the choir.

The little chapel was deemed too small for the growing congregation, and Dr. W. P. Grant, pastor in 1915 a great organizer and his successor, Rev. Hornaday, felt the chapel should be moved and a larger building take its place. Property on Soquel avenue and

## Grace Methodist Church Marks 50 Years Of Service



In the top picture the present day building of Grace Methodist church provides a striking comparison with the lower photo of the organization's Pennsylvania avenue edifice as it served east Santa Cruz churchgoers many years ago.

Cayuga street was purchased and the Pennsylvania avenue chapel moved to the location. Entering heartily into the plan were a group of chapel members who assisted in many ways to make the plan possible.

About that time the little Methodist church in Soquel was abandoned for services and the Soquel building was moved piecemeal to eke out material for the new church. An interesting note is that Mrs. Rose Hoover who had been a member of the Soquel church and had been married in it, moved to Santa Cruz with the church, and has given many years of service to the church and Sunday school.

Financial aid was needed and Rev. Joseph Pinney who was blind generously assisted all during the lean years, and helped to keep the church going.

Otto Kunitz, a well loved Santa Cruz musician was a most loyal member, and generously gave of his talent and his money. Upon his death provision was made in his will to turn over a large sum of money which wiped out the balance of the mortgage. With Mrs. C. L. Lucking, a devoted member of the church in charge, a Mortgage Burning program was conducted July 16, 1944.

When the church was moved to its present location, it was called the East Side Methodist church. As there was an East Santa Cruz saloon near by and other business firms named East Side, the minister and some members thought the church should have a more distinctive name. Out of several names proposed, the members voted on Grace as the name for their house of worship.

As usual, the Ladies Aid society worked diligently in all plans for the church. It would be interesting to know how many chickens, turkeys, hams and roasts helped to pay interest.

The parsonage nearby was also built in time for the Hornaday family to move into for Christmas 1928.

Highlights of the last 10 years include tower chimes ringing out the old familiar hymns at twilight. They were the gift of Irvin M. Smith.

Pipe organ with chimes strated



with a generous contribution of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Decker.

Grace Methodist church became the sponsor for and builder of the Live Oak Community Methodist church just as it had been sponsored by the parent First Methodist church. Grace church is proud of its part in the Live Oak church which is now a thriving institution on its own.

In addition to doing the greatest part of this major project, Rev. L. W. Reneau also undertook a "face-lifting" of Grace church and because of his enthusiasm, which was contagious, the sanctuary was thoroughly modernized with new pews, new ceiling and lighting and a new chancel.

During the tenure of Rev. Wayne Long, there came into being a Church School Orchestra, which is the envy of Methodist churches throughout the conference.

There is also a hard-working group of young adults whose major project is to continue the renovating, remodeling and renewing which began under Rev. Neneau's direction and flouraged

under Rev. Long's encouragement.

Grace church's greatest project for its fiftieth year has been the purchase of a brand new house on Belvedere terrace for a parsonage. This will eventually make possible the long-time dream of enlarging the church's Sunday

school facilities, through the purchase of the old parsonage on adjacent property of the street.

Many men and women have given much time and effort to the musical life of the church. This is a major part of the church's life.

Mrs. Noel Chalmers, c

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