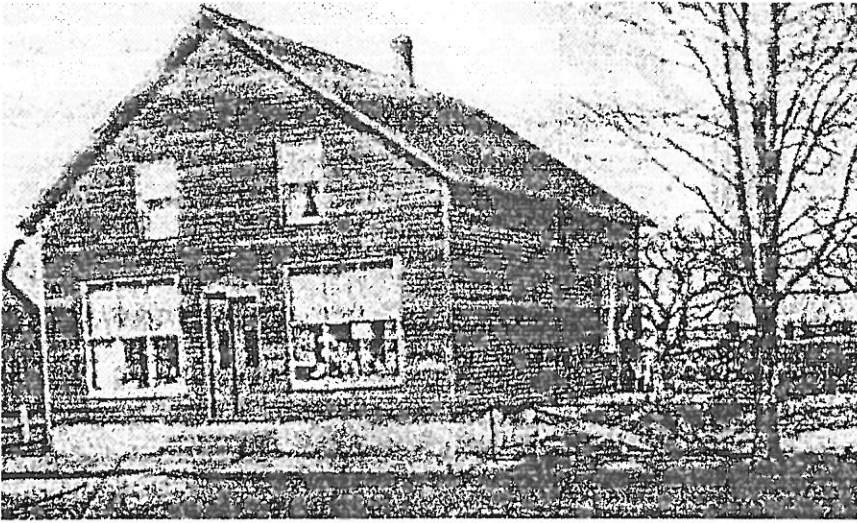


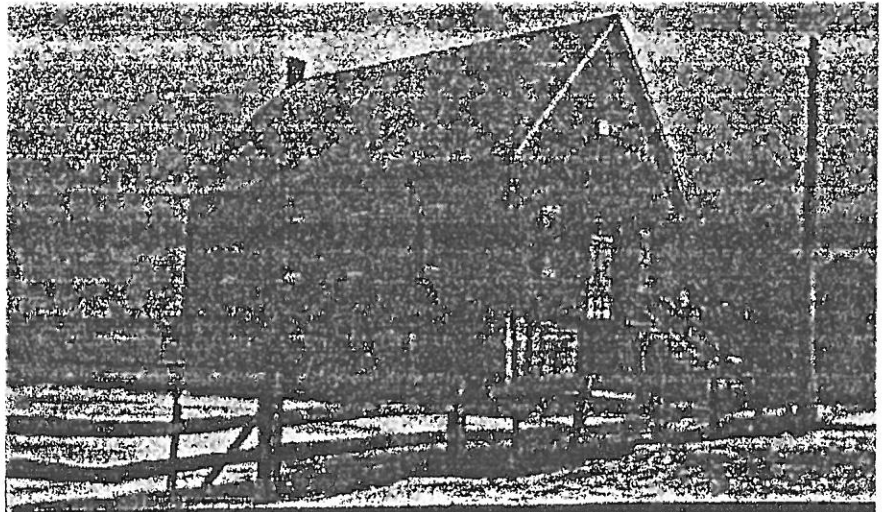
# OUR CHURCH



PAST

&

PRESENT

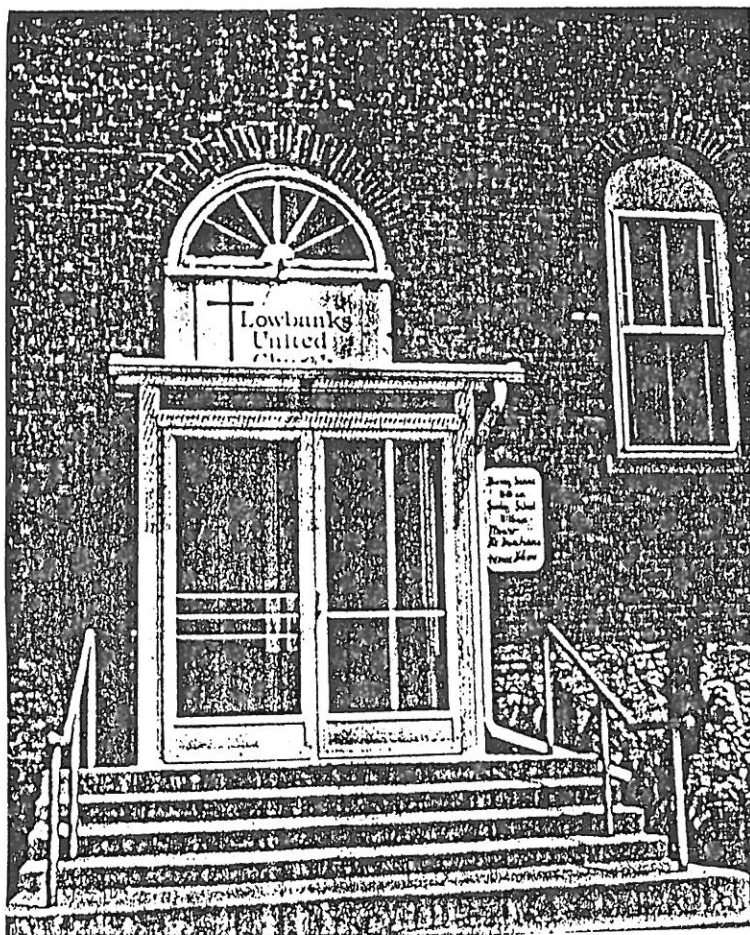


# LOWBANKS UNITED CHURCH

## PAST AND PRESENT

1866

1996



WRITTEN BY

BETTY J COLDWELL

*betty.coldwell@sympatico.ca*

## **LOWBANKS UNITED CHURCH HISTORY**

**WE gratefully acknowledge with sincere thanks all those who have helped in anyway in putting this book together.**

### **INFORMATION received from:**

**CHURCH RECORDS   Lowbanks United   Morgan's Point United**

**CHURCH DEED**

**DUNNVILLE Chronicle Files**

**EVENING Tribune Files**

<b>Ina (Speck) Hoto</b>	<b>Olevia (Speck) Minor</b>	<b>Stella (Speck) Lohr</b>	<b>Amos Michener</b>
<b>Murray Burkett</b>	<b>Nellie Furry</b>	<b>Yvonne (Coldwell) Hoover</b>	
<b>Olga Poth</b>	<b>Laverne &amp; Ellen Jones</b>	<b>Gladys &amp; Betty Coldwell</b>	
<b>Enid (Mount) Spittal</b>	<b>Percy Graham</b>		

### **PICTURES received from:**

<b>Marjorie (Eyers) &amp; Carl Speck</b>	<b>Gladys &amp; Betty Coldwell</b>
<b>Olga Poth</b>	<b>Murray &amp; Hazel (Furry) Burkett   Marjorie Hannah</b>

**I ask forgiveness if I have forgotten anyone, who has helped in anyway.**

**The following information has been given and is to the best of my knowledge a general happening in the development of the present day church**

The property was owned by Margaret & Henry Overholt. They in turned sold said property to the Wesley Methodist New Connexion Church about 16 July 1866.

The original wooden church building was on the south side of the lakeshore road. At that time there existed a grest deal of land before erosion took place.

Around 22 May 1899, a meeting of the congregation of the United Brethern in Christ Low Banks (church had changed its name by this time) was held. Rev R Jamieson was chairman, and David Dodge was secretary. It moved by Alexander McGregor and seconded by Grant Michener that a certain parcel of land and premises being south-west corner of Lot 6 Concession 1 from Lake Erie containing about a quarter of an acre of land more or less. Township of Moulton in the County of Haldimand and was known as Low Banks Church Property of the United Brethern-in-Christ, such premises for the past sixteen years has been in possession of said congregation. A place of worship without the manner of appointing Trustees or successors, now find it advisable to have Trustees appointed to care for above mentioned property. Therefore, those attending such meeting be made trustees: John Burkett, Cyrenus Chalmers, David A. Furry, Frank Speck, Grant Michener, David Uri Minor and David Dodge, in trust of church property for the United Brethern-in-Christ.

Indenture made and entered into 7 September 1903, between David A. Furry, David U. Minor, David Dodge, Frank Speck and Grant Michener, Trustees of Low Banks Church house of United Brethern-in-Christ. Mortgage of \$500.00, to erect one brick veneer church, fifty by thirty-five feet and sixteen feet high with stone basement eight feet high at Lot 6 Con 1 Lake Erie Township Moulton. To be paid off as following: November 1903, \$100.00; November 1904, \$100.00; November 1905, \$100.00; November 1906, \$100.00; November 1907, \$100.00.

Bethesda United Brethern-in-Christ Church built in 1903 was a brick building with a fieldstone basement, wooden steps lead straight up into the building. With a door leading straight into the basement under the wooden steps.

This is a brief outline of the history, we are still trying to prove some of the stories told to us, by some of the older people of the community and congregations.

**WILLIAM CHALMERS**, a Scotchman settled on the shores of Lake Erie in 1834 at a place called (not sure if he named it or not) **LOW BANKS**.

The first Church had three fair size windows on each side. This building was moved to the north side of the road. Later it as replaced by the brick building. The wooden structure was then moved to where the present day garage exists (wooden building burned). A couple named Upper bought the old church, making it into a store.

**ED LEE**, owned land on both sides of the road. He gave the property for the cemetery to the members of the church. At no cost, the members of the church could be buried there.

The church was heated by woodstoves. Men would have a wood gathering bee, bringing the wood up from the bush and cutting it, storing it in the shed at the back of the building, for the winter fires.

At one time gas lights were used which were looked after by Grant Michener. Everett Burkett looked after the church. While the women of the congregation would dust, sweep and generally look after the housekeeping of the church.

They used to build a platform for the front of the church for entertainment like plays, special music gatherings, etc. Then the platform could be taken apart and put in the shed at the back of the building till it was needed again. One time the lumber was stolen. So a few male members of the congregation went to see a mystic in Buffalo. The seer told them where to find the missing lumber. They went to this barn in Wainfleet and found the wood just exactly as they had been

told where it was. The lumber was returned and no charges pressed against the farmer.

The church held many oyster suppers, harvest lunches, bazaars, plays, musical evening to raise money to keep the church existing.

A lot of work went into these events but it brought a closeness to the families of the community. Sometimes, there were only just a few to do the work at hand, but when those called upon to do the work, never hesitated to help for it was for the work of God in their community.

From Wesleyan Methodist New Connexion to Bethesda United Brethern-in-Christ to a Congregational Church to United Church in 1925.

A special bond of friendship existed between the two churches in LowBanks. The Re-Organized Latter Saints Church of Jesus Christ and the United Church formed a fellowship that has lasted down through the years.

Around the 1930's-40's, the people would attend the morning service put on by either the Saints or the United, and in the afternoon attend the opposite church's service using the same building (the Saints did not have a building at this time for services). Both groups joining together to put on plays or suppers.

Both churches interested in the others activities. If a death occurred in on church, the ladies from the other would serve the lunch afterwards. Young Peoples Group consisted of people from both congregations plus other religions in the community.

The Ladies Aid Group of the United Church would invite the ladies from the Latter Day Saints to take part in their Christmas Parties, Easter specials, suppers, lunches, etc.

Around the time of 1832-1886, **ITHAMAR COMFORT**, a well known local preacher travelled on horseback to the small churches. He was put in charge of the Gainsboro Circuit which included the LowBanks, Elcho, Bethel, Dilts, Zion and Mount Carmel.

A few of our Earlier Preachers were: Rev. G. H. Backus, Rev. Robert Jamieson, Rev. J. Geach, Mr. West, Rev. Elmer W. Harris, Dave Dodge, Pastor D. J. Storm, Mr. Taylor, Ordained E. C. Searle, Rev. R. Trask, Mr. Duncan McCall (this takes us up to 1925, but there are many names missing):

Some of the families involved in the church: Brown, Lee, Houser, Burkett, Furry, Minor, Page, Dodge, Ranney, Hutt, Barrick, Michener, Mitchener, Speck, Williams (early years), later years Jones, Brady, Hiles, Coldwell, Cole, Minor, Barrick, Spittal, Poth, Leslie, Deamude, James, Deamude, Dilts and descendents of the original families.

In 1929 Lowbanks was with the Morgan's Point, Stromness circuit with Rev. R. Trask as minister.

In 1940 Lowbanks was with Mount Carmel, Morgan's Point circuit with Rev. R. S. Baker as minister.

In 1953, Richard Wilson, Buffalo Bible Institute, New York, conducted Sunday Services at the church.

In the next period of time, we were supplied with many different ministers from the Lay Preachers Association (students, retired ministers, teachers, people from many walks of life).

Around 1970, till about 1982, we had Florence Manning as our regular minister with ordained ministers as supervising pastors (communion, weddings, baptisms, session meetings). Due to illness Mrs. Manning semi-retired, then David Anderson took over from 1984 to Nov. 1987.

In 1988, Sept. Mrs. Marjorie Hannah, D. M. took over the duties of Mount Carmel and Lowbanks. Retiring at the end of June 1996. Rev. Keith Wettlaufer taking over in July 1996.

The church has had many choir members and leaders. Here are just a few names: 1923-Mrs. Hattie Houser, 1940-Mr. Leon Speck, 1955-Mrs. Katherine Houser, 1980-Mr. Robin



Grabell, 1983-Mr. William E. Outred.

Choir members from early times: Hattie Houser, Mrytle Houser, Evelyn Houser, Rita Houser, Isle Houser, Lloyd Houser, Grace Chalmers, Mrs. Emma Burkett, Olevia Speck, Ina Speck, Stella Speck, Gertrude Burkett, Rena Furry, Inez Furry, Mrytle Furry, Orval Furry, Mrs. William Bird, Mr. Bill Bird, Sam James, Mrs. Florence James, Hilda James, Howard Eysers, Nellie Eysers, Edna Burkett, Irene Miller, Jean Walters, Jennie Bird, Etoile Bird, Gladys Michener, Mrs. Daisy Furry, Joe Minor, Joan Furry, Corrie Furry, Cythnia Minor, Jessie Minor, Howard Minor, Ray Minor and Kate Chalmers.

Later Choir Members 1930's Ellen Jones, Ray & Olevia Minor, William & Mrs. Bird, Sam & Florence James, Mrytle & Inez Furry, Mrs. Tom Furry, Emma Burkett, Kay Houser, Lily Jones, Bertha Miller, Jean Walters and Mrs. Walters.

Choirs 1950-60-70's Member: Rita Houser, Marnie Houser, Yvonne Coldwell, Violet Coldwell, Jeanette Coldwell, Patricia Coldwell, Betty Coldwell, Barbara Brady, Danny Brady, Carol Hiles, Sharon Leslie, Arnold Leslie, Orval Houser, Sharon Gibson, Heather Brady, Robin Brady, Wendy Hines etc.

In 1980's Choir Member's: Wilma Cole, Olga Poth, Enid Spittal, Tom Post, Sharon Poth, Yvonne Parr, Helen Lowes, Robin Grabell, Bill Outred, David Anderson and Betty Coldwell.

Church Pianists & Organists early years: Leon Speck, Emma Burkett, Daisy Furry, Stella Speck, Mrs. Bird, Mrs. Mel Furry, Mrs. James, Miss Spencer, Mrs. Katharine Houser, Robin Grabell, Bill Outred, Chris Van Grieken, Karen Poth, Sunyoung Jung and Mrs. Dorothy Wettlaufer.

Sometimes we had help from: Heather Brady, Robin Brady, Marnie Houser, Barbara Brady, with guests Allen Williams, Dan Hall, Jean Robins and Donald Fargas.

Approximately from 1955-60, the church basement was used for a public school by S. S. # 6 Moulton Township School Board. Water was installed, with outside toilets at the back of the church. Mrs. Katharine Houser taught grades 1-4. A fire door was installed at the back of the church. Plywood folding doors were placed at the bottom of the stairs leading into the worship area. This was to prevent the school children from entry into the main church. This situation existed until 1960, when the school moved into a new 2 room building.

In June 1972, the approval for the re-alignment of the Lowbanks United Church joining the two-point charge of Forks Road East and Morgan's Point Churches; therefore becoming a 3-point charge with the Supervising Pastor from Morgan's Point. Special services were held with the following people involved: Male Quartet from Forks Road East and organist Kay Shafley; Morgan's Point Choir and organist Mrs. Jean Robins; each church had 1 representative say a few words; Marnie Green gave a word of welcome from the Lowbanks United Church; Shayne & Reggie Brady, Ricky & Chris Cole were ushers; with the understanding, that Mr. J. Weller would remain as minister for Lowbanks. This re-alignment lasted a few years. Then Mount Carmel and Lowbanks became a two point charge, each church responsible for its own upkeep.

The Sunday School Classes used to be held at 10:15 a. m. on Sundays with Church Services 11:15 a. m. On Dec. 5, 1977, the church and Sunday School combined to start at 11:15 a. m. The Sunday School joined in the first fifteen minutes of the service, then left to their classes downstairs. The decision to combine services was to enable the young couples of the congregation to attend church services without their youngsters sitting through both services. But the young parents still didn't attend.

The Sunday School time was changed in 1989, to 10:30 a. m. to allow the teachers to attend both church and Sunday School. It was proven that changing both services to the same time, the

couples in the community did not attend the church as regular as before.

The church has been changed to 11:00 a. m., now as Mount Carmel has closed its door, and Lowbanks United is on its own.

**DEED DATED APRIL 29, 1903**

**BETHSDA UNITED BRETHERN-IN-CHRIST CHURCH**

**YEOMEN were:**

Albert Benson (Town of Dunnville)  
Roland Angle (Twp of Moulton)  
Richard H. Smithers (Twp of Sherbrooke)  
Jacob Smith (Twp of Wainfleet)  
Daniel F. Deamude (Twp of Moulton)  
Trustees of Methodist Church in Twp of Moulton  
Sale \$40 Twp of Moulton Cty. of Haldimand L #6 Con #1  
Witness: L. Massieor (? hard to see name, not sure spelt right)

**ORIGINAL DEED IN SAFETY DEPOSIT BOX**

Three point Circuit-Mount Carmel, Zion, Lowbanks

Dec. 15, 1919-Mt. Carmel Church, two more members added to parsonage Trustee Board-  
Mr. M. C. Wohlselagel, Mr. Geo. Rockley  
Zion Circuit Congregational Churches-Trustee Board members: in Western Assoc.  
on Dec. 16, 1919, Mr. M. C. Wohlselagel, Chairman, Mr. Frank Speck, Secretary  
& Treasurer, Mr. M. L. McCombs, Mr. Wesley Marr, Mr. Geo. Rockley

**PEOPLE WHO WENT TO THE CHURCHES (CONTRIBUTED)**

1919 Lowbanks received subscriptions

Mt. Carmel received from Mr. M. L. McCombs

1920 May Mt. Carmel Mr. Storms, Mrs. Robinson

Lowbanks, Pastor Storms

Zion, Mrs. Jenas Marr, Mrs. Arthur Gilmore, Mrs. Charles Gilmore, Mrs. Robert Gilmore

1921 Jan. Zion Ladies Aid Society

Mt. Carmel-Mrs. W. K. Gracey

Zion-Wesley Marr, Harry Smith, J. G. Wills, John Lampman, Abram Snider,  
Jenas Marr, Mrs. Harry Buckner, David Brown, Miss Marion Graves, Mrs. Robt.  
Gilmore, Mrs. P. Shafley Sr., Frank Buckner, J. M. Storms, Mrs. J. Robinson

1922 May Lowbanks-Mrs. John Keorner

Mt. Carmel-Mrs. G. Smith (formerly Mrs. J. Robinson)

Dec. 23 Lowbanks Ladies Aid



1923 Jan. Lowbanks Church Tres.  
 Nov. Lowbanks Church Tres.  
 Dec. Mt. Carmel Church Tres.  
 Zion Church Tres.

1924 Apr Mt. Carmel Ladies Aid  
 Zion Ladies Aid  
 Oct. Lowbanks Ladies Aid

1925 Feb. Zion Ladies Aid  
 Mar. Lowbanks Ladies Aid  
 Apr. Mt. Carmel Ladies Aid  
 Sept. Lowbanks Ladies Aid

1926 Jan. Mt. Carmel Ladies Aid  
 Zion Ladies Aid

**\*\*NOTE**

1886-At this time Gainsboro Circuit included Lowbanks, Elcho, Bethel, Diltz, Zion, Mount Carmel

About 1907 most United Brethern Churches in Ontario became part of Congregational Union of Canada-then in 1925 United Churches.

1963-Niagara Rural Parish was a 9 point charge-Wellandport, Attercliffe, Zion, Moulton Station, Diltz Road, Elcho, Lowbanks, Salem, Mount Carmel until 1968.

## **PRESENT SESSION**

**MINISTER:** Rev. Keith Wettlaufer

**PIANIST:** Dorothy Wettlaufer

**CLERK OF SESSION:** Olga Poth

**TREASURER:** Wilma Cole

**SECRETARY:** Betty Coldwell

**MEMORIAL FUND:** Olga Poth

**MISSION & SERVICE FUND:** Olga Poth

**SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT & TEACHER:** Betty Coldwell

**TRUSTEES:** Gordon (Bud) Strachan & Ernie Crick

**ELDERS:** Carol & Gordon Strachan, Kay & Ernie Crick, Olga Poth, Marjorie Speck

**STEWARDS:** Marjorie Speck, Ethel Brady, Wilma Cole, Betty Coldwell

**PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVES:** Greta Deamude, Olga Poth

## **ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE**

**Rev. Keith Wettlaufer, Wilma Cole, Carol & Gordon Strachan, Olga Poth, Betty Coldwell**

On behalf of the Anniversary Committee, we would like to thank everyone who has helped in anyway to make this 130th Anniversary possible. Special Speakers: Jo-Ann Angle, Sam Hardman. Special Music: Morgan's Point Choir with director Jean Robins.

Organist: William E. Outred Pianist: Jean Robins The ladies of the Lowbanks United Church Women who have prepared the refreshments. Most of all to the people who have come to make this day something very special to us. A big hearty thanks.