

History of Rockwood Chapel

At the request of Rev. David Jones of Jackman, Maine, the Rev. Rodney Roundy, Superintendent of the Maine Congregational Conference of Portland, Maine, sent a student minister, Mr. Berl A. Lewis, to Rockwood for the purpose of holding religious services in 1934.

The first worship services were held in the Community Hall of the old school building. School was held on the ground floor and the second floor was used as both a community hall and a church. Saturday evenings the community hall hosted dances and on Sunday mornings the ladies "removed the evidence" of the Saturday dances prior to the church service! The desire for a church building was born.

During the years 1934, 1935, and 1936 plans were made to erect a church building on land owned by Great Northern, the Maine Conference made Rockwood officially a Mission territory, and a fund was started to provide finances for the anticipated church building. It was also during this time that the first "yoking" of the Rockwood and Greenville parishes occurred. The Rev. Leonard Fowler of Greenville Union Evangelical Church offered to come to Rockwood to conduct the fall services after Mr. Lewis left.

Even though the Depression continued to take its toll on the area, the Rockwood Community Church was organized in 1937, under the leadership of Mr. Arlan A. Baillie, a student minister from the Chicago Theological Seminary. Mr. Baillie served as the guest minister in Rockwood that summer. Under his leadership, the organized church body applied for proper affiliation with the Congregational Church of Maine. The affiliation was approved and all present signed the Article of Organization which contained the Kansas City Statement of Faith.

To lead this newly formed congregation, three officers were elected initially: Mr. John Lamb was elected Deacon, Mrs. Nora York was elected Clerk, and Mrs. Clara Stein was elected Treasurer. Even though the church body continued to grow, the Depression continued to hamper their dreams for a log chapel. Many different student pastors served the Rockwood congregation over the next several years. However, the war years brought a severe shortage of student pastors so the Rev. Robert Mayhew, pastor of the Greenville Union Evangelical Church, helped out when possible ... "yoking" the two congregations once again.

Finally, in 1948, with the post-war promise of an improved economy and the help of many hundreds of people, the Rockwood Chapel became a reality. The little Log Chapel, which was designed to seat 70, was completed and dedicated on October 17 before a congregation of 156 persons!

During the pastorate of the Rev. Robert Mayhew (1941-1951) a yoked relationship was cemented between the Greenville and Rockwood churches. As a result, the two churches have been served by the same pastor since that time. Today, the Rockwood Church seeks to proclaim its witness to the Lord Jesus Christ through year round worship and Christian Education to its people.

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ISBN: 1-890454-10-9