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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

History Written by Rev. A. S. Cole. Read by
Rev. E. G. Gilbert, June 28, 1903

The First Baptist Church of Warsaw, as it is now called, was organized Nov. 25, 1810, by Elder David Irish, a pastor in Cayuga County, while on one of his preaching tours. It consisted of the following eighteen (another authority says fourteen) members: Joseph Porter and wife, Josiah Boardman and wife and daughter, Noah Wiseman, John Truesdell, Levi Stearns, Hannah Stearns, John Brown, William Brown, Miriam Brown, Levi Rice, Hannah Rice, Jeremiah Truesdell, Elijah Hammond, Rhoda Reed and Joanna Beardsley. Middlebury being then a part of Warsaw, and a Baptist church having been formed there, this church was first known, though only for a few years, as the second Baptist Church of Warsaw. Joseph Porter was the first deacon, chosen in April, 1811, and Jeremiah Irons the first pastor engaged in the autumn of 1811. The church was born in a revival. During the first few months of its history, at least twenty-eight were baptized, so that at the end of its first year the church numbered forty-nine members.

In 1828 the church was incorporated under the name of the "Baptist Church and Society in Warsaw." The meeting for incorporation was held June 9, 1828, and the certificate was filed in the office of the county clerk at Batavia on July 7, 1828. The first trustees, elected at the meeting for incorporation, were David Fargo, Samuel Salisbury and Seth Higgins.

The church joined the Holland Purchase Association in 1812, when its name appears in the first published minutes of that organization. In that year it reported forty-four members, and Joseph Porter was the delegate.

The next year three delegates are mentioned, Elders William Pattison and Jabez Boomer, and Elijah Hammond. Other delegates whose names are recorded in

these early years are William Wiseman, Nehemiah Fargo, Aaron Lyon, David Fargo, Shubel Reynolds, and Jonathan F. Hibbard. Other prominent names, found in the early minutes of the church, are Samuel Salisbury, John Truesdell, Sylvanus Hawley, Seth Higgins, and John Windsor, the last being elected treasurer of the Church and Society 1833. In 1827 the church withdrew from the Holland Purchase Association, and the next year joined the Genesee Association, with which it is still connected.

On September 15, 1827, the following members were dismissed to form a Baptist church in Gainesville: William Wiseman, William Devoe, Noah Wiseman, Dennis Wiseman, Warren Thorp, William Pattison, Susau Parker, Lydia Thorp, Lucy Pattison, Sally Pattison, Polly Wiseman, Ann Stocker, Thankful Page, Sally Ann Wright, Susanna Barber, Sally Stocking, Mary Ann Wiseman, Sally Munger. This church was recognized on October 6, 1827, but has since become extinct.

An interesting item in regard to the pastor's salary is found in the church minutes under date of January 19, 1828, and reads as follows: "Voted to give Elder Bernard a call to preach with us two-thirds of the time for one year to commence next May, 1828, and to give him for his services, two hundred dollars and find his firewood. It was a unanimous vote."

At first the church met for worship in barns and school houses, John Truesdell's barn being a frequent and favorite place of meeting. A Union Society had been organized, and in 1817 "A house of worship was erected in the village, principally by the joint efforts of the Baptists and Presbyterians. It was only inclosed, however, and could be occupied only in the summer season. In March, 1819, the Baptists sold out their interest to the Presbyterians, by whom it was finished in the spring of 1821." (Young's History of Warsaw). In 1828, while Elder David Bernard was pastor, the Baptist church erected its first meeting house on what is now the west side of the cemetery. This was used until 1842, when it was sold, torn down, and built over again into a dwelling house, which still stands on North Main Street near the Methodist church. In 1842 the second house of