



Editor: Tom Forbes

“News from the Pews” Newsletter

May 2024

Edition No. 92

Barton Stone-Mount Hope United Church

**21 Stone Church Road West
Hamilton, ON. L9B 1A1**

Church Mission Statement:

The Mission of Barton Stone-Mount Hope United Church is to be the people of God, called to respond with generosity of spirit, resources, and love; for the purpose of worshipping, nurturing, educating, equipping and caring within and beyond our church community.

Church Staff:

Minister: Rev. James Grunden
Music Director: Donna Dunn-Albert
Office Administrator: Alice Perniac

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Note: Please use the Editor’s email address listed in the Church Directory for any insertions into the newsletter.

NOTE: Submissions for the NEXT News from the Pews by the Friday following the Board Meeting that is on the Third Tuesday of each month.

From The Board Chair: John Hubber

Hello BS-MH, The vote has been counted! Remit 1, Establishing an Autonomous Nation Indigenous Organization “HAS PASSED”.

What will happen now? As is the case with all Category 3 remits, if a remit has been approved by a majority, the General Council must decide to enact it. The decision on enacting the remit will take place at the Annual Meeting of General Council, on October 19, 2024. When the remit has been enacted the change will be included in the next edition of The Manual.. John

Property Development Update:

At our AGM on February 25, 2024 the congregation voted overwhelmingly in favour of pursuing a partnership proposal from Trinity Centres Foundation (TCF) titled, “Lifting the Lid,” which will help us to think about the future of our church property and buildings.

This proposal, as well as the specific terms and conditions, have been sent to an experienced law firm in our area for review as recommended by both TCF and the Horseshoe Falls Region of the United Church of Canada. Although we don’t have any specific concerns at this time, we believe that this additional step will help to ensure that our interests are protected as we move forward.

Once they begin, TCF will take approximately four months to review our annual reports and financial statements over the last 5 years; analyze our property, building condition and rent-ability; take an in-depth look at our neighbourhood demographics; and arrange conversations with our congregation. The result will be a business plan that will include 2-3 potential paths forward, including a high-level financial plan.

Beyond this work with TCF, no decision has been made regarding the future of our property. If you have any questions or concerns at any point in this process, please do not hesitate to contact me, or any member of our Administrative Board. Thanks for your support.

-Rev. James

A Fond Farewell: (Submitted by Rev. James)

On Wednesday, March 27th we bid a fond farewell to our Outreach Leader, Steven Barabash. He was presented with a cake and gift card purchased by the Board on behalf of our congregation, gift cards from the volunteers who help with the free lunch program- and our sincerest “thanks” for all his hard work. We are extremely grateful for his help and we wish him the best in all future endeavors!



Around Hamilton Streets: (The Editor)

Upper James South extends south to Mount Hope. When travelling south, there are two entrances into the village. They are Homestead Drive and Airport Road West. In the 1850's a meeting was held to choose a name for the village. At this meeting the suggested name was Mount Hope and it was accepted. “Mount” was chosen to indicate that the village was the highest point between Lakes Erie and Ontario.

On Airport Road, the Hamilton Civic Airport opened with little fanfare as an air force training facility in 1940.



Homestead Drive sometime in the 1940's



Hamilton Civic Airport in 1962.

DATES IN MAY:

Red Dress Day, May 5th

Today is a national day of awareness for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and 2 spirit persons.

International Astronomy Day, May 12th

Is a day for all of us to understand the vastness of the universe and our place in it.

Christian Family Sunday, May 18th

Is a celebration of the parents, grandparents, siblings and children we gain when we accept our place in God's family.

Happy World Bee Day, May 20th

As populations of pollinations insects decline across Canada, we can help by planting flowers and plants in our back yard. Some of the favourites include lavender, salvia goldenrod, sunflowers and bee balm.

Lunch Program Update: (Submitted by Rev. James)

The Wednesday Free Bagged Lunch Program is continuing through the summer and for the foreseeable future. At this time, we are serving over 70 free lunches each week, in partnership with the Terryberry Library. Our success is made possible by a core group of dedicated community volunteers, congregation members

who have stepped into leadership positions and, most importantly, your kindness and generosity.

If you would like to continue supporting this program, donations of juice boxes and chewy granola bars are always welcome. From time-to-time we also have opportunities to volunteer on Wednesday mornings. For example, you could join our prep team from 8:30-9:30 am, which involves mixing ingredients and making the sandwich of the day, or the assembly team from 9:30-11 am, which includes putting the food in the bags.

If you would like to help from time-to-time, or on an ongoing basis, please contact me in advance. THANKS for your support! -Rev. James (rev-james@hotmail.com)

The Potluck: (Submitted by Joan Massey)

Church families are familiar with coming together for homemade food. 'Potluck' probably came from Europe in the Middle Ages when unexpected guests might receive the luck of the pot leftovers. The tradition became popular during the Great Depression when people with limited means could host large groups. There were protests in the early 2000's when increased safety measures could mean inspections and permits, so some exemptions were allowed. One of its benefits is that eating together builds community and strengthens relationships. –

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See you **Sunday, May 26** following the service when lunch will be provided (not potluck).

Remit Update:

The following is an update regarding the recent United Church Remit. It was presented by Lee Claus at the December 19th Board meeting and was voted in favour of Remit 1. (Submitted by Rev. James)

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Greetings from the General Council Office. Thank you for your participation in the recent remit process.

I am writing to let you know that **Remit 1 has passed.**

All 16 voting regional councils, the National Indigenous Council, and just over 80% of pastoral charges in The United Church of Canada voted in this process.

Here are further details about the voting numbers for Remit 1: Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization

National Indigenous Council and Regional

Councils: **Yes: 17 No: 0**

Pastoral charges: **Yes: 1482 - No: 93**

The voting process engaged many across the church in in-depth and sometimes challenging conversations about right relations with Indigenous Peoples in the church. Throughout this process, it became particularly clear that there is a need for deeper and ongoing work to address the issues of systemic racism which persist in the church despite our commitment to reconciliation. We will re-engage this important work this year.

Meanwhile, there is one final phase in the remit process. The 44th General Council will be asked to enact the remit at its Annual Meeting on October 19, 2024. To “enact” the remit is the final phase of approval for this remit, and is the same process for all Category 3 Remits.

In anticipation of the General Council enacting the remit in October, the National Indigenous Council, the National Indigenous Elders Council, and the Executive of the General Council will continue to work together to identify and lay out a framework for the autonomous Indigenous organization within the United Church.

Now that the voting results are in, it is time for us to travel together in a new way. May God be with us as we support one another's journeys.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Dr. Michael Blair

General Secretary, General Council

The United Church of Canada

Sundae Sunday! (Submitted by Joan Massey)

After the service on **Sunday, May 5**, sundaes will be provided in the narthex as a thank you and celebration following our three-week Stewardship program.

Are You Regular? (Submitted by Stewardship Team,

Rev. James, Alice, Joan)

It feels good to be regular. Just like going to the gym or the pool or jogging, giving regularly is a healthy habit.

Sure, giving sporadically – as you can, when you think of it – is better than not giving at all. But if you want to become a generous follower of Jesus, you need intentionality and practice.

Watching how people's faces light up when they receive a gift. The feeling of satisfaction when you give someone what they need. It feels good to be regular.

After all, when everything around you is telling you to spend or hoard, giving is not always easy or first nature. Yet, that's what a life of discipleship means: choosing instead to follow the Way of Jesus.

So, if you're not yet regular in your giving, let us invite you to consider regularity.

The month of **May is PAR month.** (Pre-Authorized Remittance). Contact Alice at the office Tuesday to Thursday from 8:30 to 12:30 at 905-385-0800 to get started.

It's a big deal. Trust us, it feels good to be regular.

History of Barton Stone United Church:

(From the Editor)

Starting in this edition, we are going to re-visit the history of the Barton Stone congregation from 1789 to 2017.

A book was published in 2019 and is out of print.

1832 to 1850

Millennialism: The Return of Christ

"Young Crowell, quick...come see. The sky is falling", cried John McKellar with great urgency. Crowell rolled out of bed, ran to the window, and poking his head out, looked to the heavens. Sure enough, McKellar was right! There was no moon, not a breath of air, no sound. And the stars kept falling like streaks of lightning until daylight. Much later in life, Crowell Smith would hold that this phantasm took place in 1831 or 1832. Rational minds explained this as a giant meteor shower, pointing to numerous, worldwide reports on meteor sightings dating from both those years. And they would have a point. But the key thing about all of this is that many of Smith's contemporaries saw this as the apocalypse: this was evidence that the end of the world was at hand.

Millennialism, the belief that Christ will reign for a thousand years before the final judgement was very real in Europe and North America. Starting about 1790 and continuing into the 1830s and beyond, it was the engine that powered the "Second Great Awakening". Here was a massive wave of Christian enthusiasm, emotion, and appeal to the supernatural that saw religious revivalism as the much-needed remedy for society's evils: the world must be cleansed before the second coming of Christ! Starting in Kentucky in 1800 at the Cane Ridge Revival Camp, this vast movement spread in all directions. Evangelical denominations sent missionary preachers and exhorters out to the people of the backwoods. Upstate New York came to be called the "burned out district" because of all the highly publicized revival events that crisscrossed that region.

By 1806, this flood of American evangelism washed over Upper Canada. At the Head-Of-The-Lake, it first took the form of a series of Methodist camp meetings. But many American, Presbyterian divines, such as Lyman Beecher (father of Harriet Beecher Stowe), Barton W. Stone, and Charles Finney, were huge figures in the Cane Ridge Camp of 1800. Through them, many American missionaries, such as Daniel Ward Eastman, were fired by the zeal of the awakening to the south. In 1831, however, the flood reached its peak for our little Presbyterian congregation at the Union Church, with the arrival of Rev. Edwards Marsh.

In many ways the years 1831-1838 were to be exciting. The congregation mushroomed, and much of the reason for this was the personality and tireless efforts of Rev. Marsh. To fully understand the depth of the revolution that happened within our congregation during the 1830s, we need to consider the ideas of Marsh's guru, Charles Grandison Finney. Finney held that humans could repent and turn to God without supernatural intervention. But there must be powerful preaching, stirring hymns sung with pathos, and fervent prayers or mankind would waiver and fall. People needed to get excited! And to bring such enthusiasm there must also be "new measures" – the altar call, the anxious seat, and protracted meetings. Men such as Lyman Beecher saw Finney's approach as demeaning to human beings. But Finney, and Marsh, saw the danger of hell's flames and firmly believed that all such manipulation was fair in the war against Satan. And so, those who struggled with conversion were centered out, put in the anxious seats, exhorted, prayed over, wept over, and pressured in order to get a quick decision. And to add to the stress and strain of the anxious seat, meetings were lengthened, or protracted, to four hours, or more at times.

Marsh gave up a comfortable position in New York preferring to "labour" in the Niagara Peninsula as a missionary of the Presbyterian Episcopal Church. Two members of the American Presbyterian Church in Montreal, Leonard and Winchester, had travelled to Hamilton and then on to Auburn New York where they "prevailed" on Marsh to visit the village of Hamilton. They also became personally responsible for Marsh's salary of \$600.00. An American through and through, Marsh came to the Head-of-the Lake where Brother Johnathon was not welcome. Yet the man's personality and character were such that when he died years later it was said that he had "friends among all classes, an enemy among none". Marsh arrived at the Barton Union Church in early December of 1831 and got right to work. At his

second service he and his immediate supporters within the congregation, men such as Stephen Leeming Blackstone, proposed a good old American style spiritual revival campaign...if indeed the congregation wanted one. At first it appeared they really didn't. After all, the idea of holding such meetings was quite new in these parts! So, when Marsh broached the subject, and asked the people to show their support by standing up, there was silence, and a total absence of movement. Well that was embarrassing for the good reverend! But then Blackstone and a neighbour stood up, and slowly others did as well. In the end, almost everyone did. Thus, with the help of William Rymal, the drama of protracted meetings with their altar calls and the anxious seat took place in late 1831 and early 1832, and continued, afternoon and evening for ten days. The revival process created an enormous buzz. Assisting Marsh in this campaign were Rev. William F. Curry of Lockport New York, A.K. Buell of St. Catharines, William O. Eastman of Gainsborough and others. It was said that, "The Lord poured out his spirit and many were hopefully converted from the errors of their ways". Indeed, there were one hundred such conversions. After one of the protracted meetings, the Scottish preacher Rev. William Proudfoot said to Marsh, "50 or 60 persons have answered the prayers of Christians during these meetings. It will take months for you to train them for admission to the Church". Ever optimistic and tireless, Marsh replied quoting scripture, "And the same day were added 3000 souls". This was the will of God. It was glorious! It was what he was called to do. After another protracted meeting, Marsh professed,

The hoary-headed and the sprightly youth, parents and their children, and whole families together, all seemed in haste to avouch Jehovah to be their triune God in their solemn and joyful attendance upon Christ's house, baptism and the Lord's Supper. It was a season never to be forgotten and the place was the house of God - it was the Gate of Heaven.

Even people like William Macklem, who on the evening of January 4, 1832, went to one of these meetings "to see what those crazy Presbyterians were up to", was gripped by a happy attack that induced him to pray all night for the salvation of his soul. His wife Elizabeth, still an unbeliever, thought her husband had gone mad. But the next night he returned to accept the altar call. In the end, his wife came to God as well. And by 1835 newcomer Macklem along with Stephen Leeming Blackstone were two of the four elders in the congregation.

But then, in the summer of 1832 tragedy struck. Immigration was going full bore and the newcomers from Europe brought the "blue death", cholera. It was said that you could catch it in the morning and die from it by supper. You dehydrated very quickly leaving your corpse a blue colour. A summer disease that thrived on heat, it ravished the village of Hamilton and surrounding areas through July and August killing mostly the young in great numbers before it eased up in September. It is estimated that 17.6% of Hamilton's population of 800 perished. To put that into perspective, if the same percentage of people in present day Hamilton were to die that would equate to 91,500 deaths! Why were people dying in such great numbers? No one knew. The Head-of-the-Lake was seized by a great panic and a feeling of hopelessness. Nothing seemed to stop the dying. Doctors' meds were evil tasting so many depended on whiskey, a problem as we will see for members of the Barton Presbyterian congregation. Some carried camphor in a bag on their chest, but it didn't work. A Dr. Rolls came out with a "sure cure" for the disease, but it didn't work. Cannons were fired in the streets to keep the air in motion and thus dissipate the "miasma", but this didn't work! And Dr. Williamson of Dundas who had ministered faithfully to the sick caught cholera and died that same day. Friends of the dead often carried the corpse to a lonely country cemetery or left it in a ditch and then ran away leaving others to do the burying. Many were confined to mass, unmarked graves as one of the prevailing beliefs held that cholera was a disease of filth and the ungodly. So, it could well be that the numbers of plague victims were significantly under reported.

Up on the escarpment, two deaths from cholera were reported at Ancaster, but there could have been others that went unrecorded. In 2004 the Cooley/Hatt Cemetery was discovered on Lime Kiln Road. There is some evidence that cholera victims were buried there in numbers. And, from the records of St John Anglican Church comes the diary of Rev. John Miller who had recently become the priest of that congregation. On Sunday September 2, 1832 Miller, "Preached at Barton. N.B.-Hamilton Court-house being considered infectious from cholera, I did not use it this day". Did he mean Barton Union Church on Mohawk Road? Remember that Marsh and our Presbyterian congregation shared the meeting hall with the Anglicans and the same was true down in Hamilton village at the log jail situated very close to the court-house mentioned above. Rev. Miller did become ill of an unknown disease and summoned his brother from Lower Canada, a doctor,

to attend him. Just a few weeks after arriving here, Dr. Miller got sick and died. Did this good doctor die of cholera? His death was never reported as such. But then again one must remember the stigma around cholera, namely that it was the disease of the ungodly. At any rate cholera was all around.

The Barton Union Church hall on Mohawk where St. Peters Cemetery now remains was used as a hospital for plague victims in 1832. No doubt then that there were deaths from the disease right in the hall where Marsh *et al.* had held their protracted meetings in the winter and spring of 1831-1832. But a search of the grave stones in the immediate cemetery turns up no death dates for those years. It then follows that the bodies were either taken elsewhere or buried in unmarked graves somewhere in the St Peters Cemetery. The Barton Union congregation did not escape the terror of that summer. If they believed that the plague was caused by “miasma”, bad air, they would not have gone anywhere near the hall or the cemetery, for it was now a place of the dead and the dying. Where then did the congregation meet? If Marsh and his flock subscribed to this belief, did they then worship outside and under the trees where the air was uncontaminated? Or did they wear camphor around their necks and brave the indoors...elsewhere?

There were too many of them to gather in someone’s parlour. Did they worship in the school house (later called the Union School) that sat on Jacob Rymal’s land to the south at the present intersection of Upper Paradise and Rymal Road? Did they resort to drinking whiskey because doctor proscribed medicines were just plain evil? Did the hope for eternity created by the revival meetings of the winter now turn to hopelessness come summer? Surely these were desperate days.

And there was another difficulty. Marsh and the four Elders of the Session had to prepare those who had answered the altar call during protracted meetings for admission into the congregation. Many of these newcomers were woefully “unchurched”. And so, Marsh started and ran no less than four Sunday schools at the Head-of-the-Lake to prepare 260 of these newly converted! Nevertheless, there was backsliding. Some who found the faith, relapsed. The congregation was founded on the temperance model - all congregants agreed to “sacrifice the traffic and use of Ardent liquors except as a medicine”. Church members who had fallen off the wagon now faced strong discipline from the church elders, Blackstone, Macklem, Frederick Hotrum and David Hess. Along with the minister of the congregation, the Session

also had the power of a religious court. This was a small community, and little could be hidden from neighbours. If you transgressed your sin was soon “common fame”, and the Elders would summon you for a visit. The list of backsliders included: John W. Secord - 1832, *intemperance*, profaneness and Sabbath breaking; Jacob Fraser - 1834, *intemperance*; Peter Hess - 1834, *intemperance*, Jacob Terryberry - 1835, neglect of ordinances; Walter Bradt - 1836, Truman Tracy and John Hunter - neglect of church ordinances and disorderly conduct. Intemperance - were these people self medicating against the plague which still hung around and which took John Brant, son of Joseph Brant in 1834? They may have tried to defend themselves by saying their alcohol intake had been for medicinal purposes. But Marsh and the Session did not buy it for one second. They were determined to fight evil alcohol to the death. Any compromise was unthinkable.

Appearing before the Elders was serious business. Indeed, Blackstone, Macklem *et al.* had the powers of a Pope – they could suspend, yes, but they could also *excommunicate* you as well! Of the people listed above, Peter Hess, J. W. Secord, Jacob Terryberry, Truman Tracy and John Hunter were suspended, while Jacob Fraser and Walter Bradt were excommunicated. And since the Barton Presbyterian congregation formed a tight, little community, being tossed from the church could have serious social or economic implications, or both.

Under Marsh there was both growth and a parting of the ways. It must be noted that the mission at the Head-Of-The-Lake was a two-point charge. There were the “mountain” people, predominantly American immigrants, meeting at the Barton Meeting Hall on Mohawk Road, and the Hamilton people who gathered down in “Hamilton village” over the log jail situated between the present-day Jackson and Main Streets. In 1833, Marsh, A.K. Buell, and D.W. Eastman had established the Niagara Presbytery. Most of the preachers here were American home missionaries. On May 17, 1835, the mountain people, led by Marsh, proudly formed their own separate church. This congregation now came to be called the Presbyterian Church of Barton, complete with 105 total congregants, four elders, a manse, and a decided inclination to sing the hymns of Isaac Watts with gusto and enthusiasm. The manse was located on the present-day Stone Church Road, east of Upper James. But the congregation would continue to use the old Barton Meeting Hall on Mohawk for another ten years. And there was one more thing. Since the Niagara Peninsula Presbyterian Churches

formed the Niagara Peninsula Episcopal Church, the organization was headed by Bishop Edwards Marsh, our pastor!

What appeared so promising with the revival meetings of 1832, and the coming of the Presbyterian Church of Barton in 1835, came to a crashing halt in 1837-1838 with the Mackenzie rebellion. Yet as we will see in the next chapter, there was another reason for the demise of the Niagara Presbytery that predated the folly of 1837-1838: the theology of Marsh and company, in that it reflected the great moral crusade and revival at work in many of the states and territories to the south rendered it inimical to Upper Canada religious traditions stemming from the British Isles.

To our troubled and divided congregation, it must have appeared that the sky *was* falling. But although Jesus did not return to transform the world, the sky stayed put. American preachers would return after the furor subsided in the early 1840's. And there would be a magnificent, new stone church!

Note: Crowell Smith was born in 1826, died in 1907 and buried at Bowman United. He was the Great-Great Grandfather to Bob and Tom Forbes.

Post-Millennialism and Barton Presbyterian Church

(Millennialism: the belief that there will be a Golden Age, or Paradise on Earth in which Christ will reign for 1000 years prior to the final judgement)

The colonel dismounted and walked toward the camp. "Halt!" commanded a youthful voice somewhere out there in the dark. "Identify yourself and give the password. Be quick about it, now. I have a loaded musket and will use it!" Unaccustomed to such treatment, the colonel drew a blank for a moment, but then gathered his wits about him and did what he was told. Suddenly the bushes parted, and a figure stepped out of the shadows. To say the colonel was surprised would be an understatement. For the solitary boy standing in front of him was dwarfed by the size of the weapon he carried. The colonel said, "What is your name, boy?"

"William, sir. William Wells."

"And how old are ye, lad?" "But ten, sir."

The older man grunted and walked on. Then, shaking his head in disbelief, he was heard to exclaim, "Damnest, littlest soldier I ever saw!"

It was 1837, and this was an encampment of loyal militia searching for an elusive rebel - one William Lyon Mackenzie. It should have been William's father who was on guard duty that night. But Joshua Wells had taken ill, requiring the boy to shoulder the heavy musket and walk the beat...or rather stagger it. Years later, William would tell this story to his own children, adding that the next day, when his father was able to report for parade, the old colonel was seen to be walking up and down the lines searching in vain for his "littlest soldier". Remember William. Later in this article, he will take part in a most important event in the life of our church.

The years between 1837 and 1850 were to be a brilliant, fascinating time for our congregation. Young William would live through it all, witnessing the rejection of all things American, then the return of three American clergymen, and the controversy brought on by their return. In the process, he would experience the high tide of post-millennialism, and the end of a remarkable era.

Inflexibility Leads to Downfall

As the Scottish preacher William Proudfoot put it, Upper Canada was an area where "a man must show a decided aversion from Brother Johnathon". And as early as 1831, Rev. A.K. Buell, a colleague of Marsh, decided to subscribe to the British Foreign Bible Society rather than its American counterpart even though the latter could supply books more cheaply. Why? Said Buell, "We must be British, or the cry is raised against us at once". Nevertheless, the Niagara Presbytery could not hide its Americanness. Fuelled by the great revivalist movement then going on to the south, it refused to deny the three main principles at the heart of its theology-revival religion, "Voluntarism" and an immovable dedication to temperance. These three, while at the heart of the Niagara Presbytery's brilliant triumphs, in the end brought it crashing down at Barton Presbyterian Church and throughout the Niagara Peninsula.

Marsh's emotional, 'enthusiastic' preaching, while it was embraced at first, proved ultimately to be too "New School". The drama of the anxious seat and the spectacle of the altar call, American to the core, soon fell out of favour. But there was something else that posed a problem, namely the hymns of Isaac Watts. Really? To this day we sometimes sing Watts' music. The simple words, although somewhat antiquated are understandable, and the tunes truly memorable. Back in the day they were cutting edge. Our congregation sang these hymns with great gusto, would not think of giving them up. That's the

point. They were charting territory that was *too* new for many who held to the strict adherence of the Psalms. To these more traditional Christians, nothing other than the renderings of Francis Rouse, and the Scottish Psalter of 1650 were acceptable. Had not King David himself written the Psalms? No other words then were sacred enough to be used in Sunday worship.

Watts rejected the practice of singing from the Old Testament alone as this, in his opinion, led to an incomplete theology: the New Testament was being ignored! This led him to infuse his poetic translations of the Psalms with New Testament ideas thereby making connections to the work of Christ as if David had been a New Covenant believer. Sacrilege said the “Old School”! Now this might seem just a little thing to us today, but back in the 1830s it most assuredly was not. For when Marsh and his fellow American ministers approached the Presbyterian United Synod of Upper Canada for admittance in 1833, they were rejected simply because they would not give up the singing of Watts’ hymns. Now they had expectations of being admitted because the American Daniel Ward Eastman was already part of the Synod. And acceptance by the Synod would have ended their isolation from other local divines. But singing Watts’ hymns was more important than acceptance. As a result of this rejection, Marsh and his radicals formed the Niagara Presbytery and went their own way. Alone.

“Voluntarism” added to their isolation. The Clergy Reserves, one seventh of all land in any township, had originally been set aside for the established Anglican Church. Money from the sale of these lands would go to fund schools and fund Anglican clergy and churches. But now in the 1830s other denominations were being offered a portion of this cash. Traditional Scottish Presbyterians had no trouble accepting government money. Nor did many Methodists. But to Marsh and company this was the “Golden Bribe” and therefore unthinkable. As a result, another wedge was placed between the Niagara Presbytery, more traditional Scottish Presbyterians and the Methodists. Instead, Marsh looked to the American Home Missionary Society for support. This just underlined the Americanness of the Niagara Presbytery, and the Presbyterian Church of Barton.

Finally, intransigence with respect to demon rum greatly irritated those who had made their peace with alcohol. Marsh, his fellow ministers and all their congregants who found spirits anathema were thus ostracized socially. Again, this had to be accepted. For temperance to the “New School” was part of a crusade to remake the whole

moral fabric of American society, indeed world society, and thereby lay the foundations for the return of Christ. The Kingdom of God was all important. Worldly success, or acceptance by others was not.

Despite Upper Canada’s aversion to all things American, revivalist methods did produce moderate progress. By 1833, the Niagara Presbytery had three preachers and about sixteen churches of congregations with 11,000 to 12,000 members. The 105-member Presbyterian congregation at the old Barton Union meeting hall was one of them. Two years later, in 1835, when we became the Presbyterian Church of Barton history was made: for the first time we were an independent charge with a church, a minister, Edwards Marsh, and a manse. This would not last long. When economic hard times hit Upper Canada in 1836, we, along with many other congregations found it hard to support a pastor. As for the Niagara Presbytery it ended, morphing into the Domestic Missionary Society of Upper Canada. It was back to a time of saddlebag ministers. But the biggest blow to the organization and to our own congregation was the armed revolt led by William Lyon Mackenzie in 1837.

1837, the Mackenzie Rebellion and its Aftermath

The Mackenzie Rebellion was to test our Presbyterian ancestors severely. In 1837, Upper Canada briefly flirted with political revolution. William Lyon Mackenzie, a sometime resident of Dundas, decided to end the power of the Family Compact and toss out all British presence by means of armed insurrection. An American style republic was needed, thought the fiery Scotsman. But the attempt was somewhat comical and ended in ignominious defeat, forcing Mackenzie to flee. As it turned out his retreat brought him right past the door of William Rymal and our little congregation. Rymal, always a reformer, provided Mackenzie with a meal and a fresh horse, thus helping him on his way to Buffalo New York and protection. In the eyes of the Family Compact and its conservative supporters at the Head-of-the-Lake, this was seditious activity. Rymal, if caught, could have been hanged. Those in our congregation, and in the surrounding area, who were caught up in the anti-American hysteria of the times would have seen to it. Indeed, to recent immigrants from Great Britain who were spooked by Mackenzie’s rebellion, even United Empire Loyalists were “Yankee revolutionaries”. To these people, Barton Presbyterian congregants such as Harmanus Smith, a son of a U.E.L. who had come to Christ in the protracted meeting of 1832, was an “annexationist” and a “Republican rabble-rouser”. As for the American ministers of the defunct Niagara

Presbytery, and that included the Rev. Edwards Marsh, well they were nothing more than “rebels”. Fearing the mobs and the armed, pro British militias, Marsh, like all the other American home missionaries, fled with his family south to the States in the winter of 1837. Also among these fugitives was Rev. C.E. Furman who had succeeded Marsh at Barton Presbyterian. By 1837 Furman’s church was under suspicion and his prayer meetings were charged as being meetings of disloyal subjects. One of his friends, J.G. Parker had been arrested, put in prison here and then sent to England. Fearing the worst, Furman hitched up his wagon with another neighbour, a Mr. Mills, and together they drove their families to Rochester New York. When the mad dash to safety was over, many churches were left without their pastors, and some were padlocked shut. No doubt our congregation was treated roughly. There is no way of knowing the details. Nothing in the way of evidence remains.

Did our Session feel the sting of this spleen? Sadly, no Session minutes between July 28 and September 11, 1841 have survived. Stephen Blackstone was decidedly an American. Were the others - Macklem, Hess and Hotrum - perceived the same way because of their association with protracted meetings initiated by Marsh and Furman? That’s not to say that they had to hot foot it to the south like Marsh, just that they had to maintain a discrete silence here in the community. For the atmosphere at the Head-of-the-Lake was certainly anti Brother Johnathon, and the Barton congregation, divided. Young William Well’s family was strongly against Mackenzie’s hated American republicanism, hence the lad’s presence in the body of armed men hunting for the fleeing rebel mentioned above.

Surprisingly we did not have to wait long for clergy. However, our next minister - Rev. David Dyer (1838-1839) - reflected this anti Americanism: Dyer was an *English*, Congregational minister. Yet the successful appointment of the student minister, Rev Ludwig Kribs (1839-1840), indicates that the anti Americans within our congregation were already losing influence. They would likely not have favoured Kribs. Was he not a product of American style evangelism? Had he not answered the altar call of Rev. Edwards Marsh on January 17, 1833? Yes, Kribs was a local boy, having been born in Barton Township in 1812. But was he not just one generation removed from his *American* immigrant parents? Did that not make *him* an American, and therefore a “rebel” like all others from that hated republic to the south? Why, Ludwig Kribs’ parents had only to open their mouths to

prove that they, and he were Yankee revolutionaries. Mercy sakes, they had that same disgusting, rebel, *American* accent so noticeable in the speech of Stephen Blackstone when he spoke! And was it not rumoured that William Rymal and family, also American immigrants, had supported Mackenzie in the late rebellion? There it was. Rev. Kribs was part of a very bad crowd. But this kind of sentiment was on the wane. By 1841, when the furor around Mackenzie had died down even more, those in our church who still leaned towards American preachers and ways prevailed. What followed was the appearance of three American divines – the reverends Rose, Rice and Fayette. Things were about to get even more interesting.

American Pastors Once More

Levi Rose was but newly graduated from the Auburn Theological Seminary in New York State when he preached his discourse to the people of our church, September 11, 1841. Then on January 25, 1842 he received a “unanimous call to settle here”. On February 17, he was ordained at the “Barton Meeting House”. By March of 1843, Rose, along with his fellow American, Rev. Abijah Blanchard from Pelham initiated a series of protracted meetings that extended to April 4. Why it seemed like to good old days of 1832 all over again. Was the Niagara Presbytery about to make a comeback? Blanchard preached and exhorted. The “anxious were requested to arise” and take the anxious seats for prayers. Session minutes give vivid details of the events of each of the afternoon and evening meetings, along with numbers of those who came forward, “rejoicing in hope”, and rising to tell the congregation of “God’s Goodness”. Those who followed through were later examined by the session before being allowed to join the church. The Session minutes of April 4 read as follows, “The protracted meeting continued to this evening under charge of the pastor. The number of anxious last evening about fifty – this, twenty.” The drama certainly led to an up tick in those who joined the church in 1843, about twenty-nine people in all. (Including one Ann Blackstone who joined in 1843 and who will be mentioned below). But, gone were the helicon days of 1832 under Edwards Marsh, when over eighty people answered the altar call and became members. And Rose’s keen desire for church discipline was to get him in hot water.

In March of 1842, Rev. Rose, the Session, indeed the whole congregation, were rocked by two very serious, separate charges of “fornication”, the first against Mary Ann Nash and the second against Mrs. Ann Smith (formerly Miss Ann Blackstone). Ultimately, Mrs. Nash

was suspended. As for Mrs. Smith, she may have repented and then was allowed back into the congregation in 1843. Was she a product of the protracted meetings of 1843? That would have been to Rose's credit. But there were to be a series of other discipline cases in a short period of time.

First there was the case of James Finton. We do not know what he was charged with. But when he requested permission to withdraw from the church in 1843, he was refused, as this was "contrary to the Presbyterian church". In addition, there were charges of "neglect of church ordinances and unchristian conduct" against John Shafer (most likely Shaver) and wife, and "neglect of worship" against Caleb Steves and Abram Horning. James Young, also reported for not attending worship, was charged with "other things unbecoming his profession as a member of this church", perhaps for "receiving and possessing the property of Thomas Powel without repaying him for it". Then too there is a record of problems with Jacob Fraser, who had been suspended, and "some alienation of feeling" between William Finton and Peter Hess.

And there were still those in the congregation who did not want any more American pastors. This element included men such as James Young and Abram Horning. In May of 1843 Young was to tell the Session that "...the church was dissolved when Mr. Marsh left it, that he joined Mr. Marsh's Church, nobody else's" and that "he would never support another American Minister" because, "You are all rebels". This last bit must have been said directly to Rose, Clerk of Session. Similarly, Abram Horning claimed that both the church and the Niagara Presbytery were dissolved when the "ministers ran off" and that he was no longer a member of our church. Both men were excommunicated. A reaction set in. It must have seemed to many that Rev. Rose had overstepped his powers to discipline - denying as he did to some the right to leave the church when they wanted, while excommunicating others.

There is a most interesting bit in the Session minutes for May of 1843. Rose, as the Clerk of Session, is reporting on the results of the current protracted meeting and writes, "The whole community was deeply serious but on account of *some disturbing causes* (my emphasis) the good resulting was small in comparison with what might otherwise have been anticipated". What exactly were these "disturbing causes"? It may very well have been members of the congregation who did not want a return to American style revivalism. Upper Canada was moving on and changing rapidly. These folks who rained on Rose's parade had liked Marsh whose personality made them

forget his Americanness. But Rose's over zealous attempts to return the congregation to the fervor of 1832 did not win him any favours in their eyes. Rose was pressured to leave, and with him went any chance for a return to the days of the Niagara Presbytery and crusade.

His successor, Rev. Harvey Rice, had been in Grimsby in 1837, and like other American pastors, was forced to flee to the U.S.A. over the Mackenzie affair. His stay at our church was as short as it was uneventful: there would be no discipline cases at all, and no more protracted meetings. Rice kept a much lower profile. Yet, big changes were in the air. Exciting things were about to happen.

Last Hoorahs of a Golden Age

Sometime in the fall of 1844 the old Barton Meeting Hall was condemned, and our congregation decided to move to a new stone church to be built on the Caledonia Road (present day location of our church on Upper James) where there was a greater concentration of people. Besides years of religious services, the old hall had been beat up by the War of 1812 when it was used as a barracks and a hospital, and then again in 1832 when it was once more a hospital for cholera victims. Salvage from the old structure amounted to the small sum of forty dollars, shared equally between our congregation and the Anglicans. It seems that Stephen Blackstone "gave" two acres of land for the new sanctuary for £10, about a third of the going rate for an acre.

The stone, said to have been donated by Blackstone, came from neighbourhood quarries and was teamed to the site by church members. Lime for mortar came from kilns on the lime ridge, just north of the site on present day Upper James. We know that Jacob Kreamer, who joined the church on April 2, 1843, was the carpenter, that Paul Kane was the plasterer, that Morris Fitz Patrick was the mason. We know also that the building was fifty-six feet long and forty feet wide. The masons started their work in June of 1845 and were done in September of that year. The base was four feet high, the walls fourteen feet, and the walls were twenty-four inches, the most substantial possible. Then, chief carpenter Kreamer went to work; and when the building was closed in, stoves were installed so that work could continue during the winter. Plasterers Paul Kane and Mr. Pike began in March of 1846 and were finished in May. Bills for labour were as follows:

Plastering	£17/4s/6d (\$69)
Masonry	£76/6s (\$310)
Carpentry	£103 (\$415)

Additional bills for hardware, lumber, shingles etc. brought the total cost to just under \$1000. Money to pay for the building came from individuals and from contributions collected by canvassers. Today, \$1000 for a building seems amusing to say the least. But at the time, and for our small, farmer congregation, this represented a great sacrifice and undertaking. Despite the problems under Rose, our congregation was optimistic. We were willing to take a chance and pay for a new sanctuary that was substantial, as solid as it was expensive. And as important as the stones and mortar was the mindset of the congregation: they chose to embark on an ambitious, community-building project that had its foundations in a vision for the future, one bright with promise. Indeed, as we will see, this same buoyant hope would reappear over a century later in the 1950s around the campaign to build our Christian Education Building.

Little did the congregation of 1844 know that their age of gold would last less than a decade. But the optimism of their time would be strong enough to bridge the down days that were to come in the later Nineteenth Century when Barton Stone struggled on as a sleepy, impoverished, country church housed in an ambitious, stone sanctuary. And there was to be one last glorious spark, one between 1845 and 1850 that epitomized post-millennialism.

Millennialism's End

By April of 1845, the congregation led by Rev. Rice worshiped in the Goodale School (also called the Glanford Line School) east of Rychman's Corners, on what is now Rymal Road. As the old meeting hall over on Mohawk had been demolished and the new stone building did not yet exist, this was where all church activities took place for approximately two years. It is possible that the new church was first used for services in the late summer or early autumn of 1846. However, it was officially opened and dedicated to "the Triune God" on February 7, 1847. The sermon that day was preached by Rev. Abijah Blanchard of the Niagara Presbytery, and the consecration prayer was delivered by a certain Mr. Fayette. John Frederick Augustus Sykes Fayette. Say each name with increasing speed, as a steam train starting to roll, and you have an insight into the man. What a glorious, freight train of a name! What a supporter of the Under-Ground Rail Road! What a man! His hair was black and crisp, his

nose slightly flattened and his complexion mulatto. Born of a Caucasian, French father and a black mother, Fayette did, at times, pass as "white". It was not uncommon for light skinned Blacks to do so at the time. His pastor and mentor in New York City, Rev. James H. Cox of the Laight Street Presbyterian Church, referred to him as "a scholar of respectable attainment and behaviour", "distinguished especially for his ability in math". Cox, who highly recommended Fayette to Western Reserve, was an important figure among N.Y.C. Abolitionists. As for Western Reserve, it was an institution of higher learning deeply embroiled in the debate over slavery. And it was situated in the town of Hudson Ohio, equally torn by that same burning issue of the day. Western Reserve was decidedly anti-slavery, and many houses in the town were stops on the Underground Rail Road whose owners sheltered runaway slaves. These desperate refugees had crossed the Ohio River, escaping the "Slave State" of Kentucky, to precarious freedom in Ohio, a "Free" state. Then, it was on to Canada. Fayette, the first Afro-American student at Western Reserve, was clearly an Abolitionist, having signed at least one petition supporting the university's anti-slavery position. He was also a friend and sympathizer of John Brown, who lived with his family in Hudson, and who was a militant Abolitionist. Whether Fayette supported the violent measures advocated by Brown is not known. Most likely though, Fayette did not.

Fayette graduated from Western Reserve in 1836, stayed on to 1837 to receive a divinity degree, was ordained in Cleveland in 1838, and then in 1839 headed north to Canada to establish a Presbyterian Church for free Blacks in Barton Township, Canada West (Ontario). By 1840 he was working as a missionary here and travelling widely. Then in that same year he established the Wellington Institute, an excellent school in Berlin. Fayette was the principal. Although the school was certainly superior to most other schools, it failed because there were too few parents wealthy enough to afford the two-dollar a month fee. The school failed by 1844 leaving Fayette in debt. When the school closed, he left to take up his position as pastor at Barton Stone Presbyterian Church on November 3, 1845.

Given Fayette's background and connections at Hudson Ohio, it would seem very likely that while he was our minister, he was also involved in, and a strong supporter of the Under-Ground Railroad (afterwards referred to as the railroad) and the anti-slavery movement here. After all Fayette's friend John Brown knew and supported Harriet Tubman, the greatest and most famous "conductor" of

runaway slaves. Fayette may have met her here in St. Catharines. He also may have met Josiah Henson, a runaway slave from Kentucky, and the model for Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom", who arrived in Upper Canada in 1830 and joined the Canadian anti-slavery movement. If Fayette were to have subscribed to any newspaper outside of Hamilton it would have been George Brown's Toronto Globe (forerunner of the Globe and Mail). Brown was Canada's leading Abolitionist, and his paper gave the movement a respected, public forum.

A destination, or safe-haven, for runaway slaves was called a "terminus". Many of those surrounded our congregation in the immediate area – The Queen's Bush in Brantford, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), Fort Erie and Toronto. But the closest one was right here – Hamilton! Most likely Fayette would have had ties with "Little Africa", the black community of approximately eighty individuals, which was situated on the Stone Road, present day Concession Street near the public library. It is not likely though that free Blacks joined our congregation at the time. Runaway slaves tended to concentrate in black settlements for protection against American bounty hunters. Having no respect for Canada's laws abolishing slavery, these men were ready to use force to kidnap free Blacks as well as runaway slaves and sell them back into slavery in the South. There was bloodshed. This got worse in 1850 when the American Fugitive Slave Act strengthened the hands of these bounty hunters.

As well, concentrated settlements helped shield Blacks against white prejudice. Not all white Canadians supported abolitionism. Indeed, there were heated debates around the issue. In nearby Chatham, the rancor that ensued divided the local Methodist Churches. Did such division exist within our congregation? Did everyone at Barton Stone support a "black" minister in the midst of this "racial" dispute? We have only the session minutes to go on, and they offer no answers to either question.

These minutes do show two things, however: first, some intention by the Session to enforce religious discipline, and second, a profound dedication to the celebration of the Lord's Supper. At the August 24 meeting of the Session at the parsonage, "It was decided that Brothers Blackstone and Hess should visit John Kreamer and wife, and if possible, bring them to repentance. They stand guilty of fornication in the view of the world". It was also decided that, "in proper time" visitations would be made to others who were "disorderly". But, as Session was composed of only Fayette, Blackstone and Hess that day, the meeting

was adjourned for two weeks. Then below this entry is the notation, "The above proposed meeting never took place". Long gone was the appetite to enforce church discipline once seen under Rev. Rose.

Discipline for Fayette took a different direction. When the new stone sanctuary was finally opened, Fayette had the pulpit placed at the east end of the church with the pews facing it so that late arrivals had to walk past him and experience his disapproval in full view of the congregation. Fayette, as sentinel at the door, also served to stop children from disrupting church services.

What was of the utmost importance to Fayette, and supposedly his congregation, was the Lord's Supper. Session minutes for January of 1845 include the following:

Friday, January 10, a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer as a preparation for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Service commenced at 11 AM o'clock

Saturday January 11, preparatory sermon by Fayette at 1 PM

Sunday, January 12, the Lord's Supper was administered Monday, January 13, and Tuesday, the 14th, "this occasion was continued"

It is quite clear that under Fayette, the celebration of communion was a bit of a marathon, one that required more than a passing commitment on the part of all engaged. And the record of the session through 1846, 1847 and right up to 1850 is full of the description of such events.

But the Lord's Supper of April 4, 1847 was extra special. All previous celebrations of this event under Fayette had taken place at the Goodale School House. But on this Sunday the bread and the "wine" (Not really wine, that wouldn't do!) were served in the new sanctuary that had been opened just two months earlier. And sitting in the congregation facing Fayette was that very same "damnest, littlest soldier" of 1837, William Wells. He was all grown up now and ready to take the elements on this historic occasion. What was running through his mind that morning, or during any of the following services presided over by John Frederick Augustus Sykes Fayette? And as he sat on that hard pew, or bench, on October 20, 1850, heard scripture being read from John 4:24, and listened to Fayette's last sermon at Barton Presbyterian, was he sad to see Fayette go?

(Fayette and his wife)

Perhaps he was not a big fan, having been so much against Americans in 1837. Moreover, our William was in the Orange Order and played King Billy during marching season. He was no lover of the Catholic Irish. With that kind of intolerance, would he have had much of a liking for Blacks? Or did he know that back in 1837, Blacks, usually barred from the militias, had finally been given the right to form a Corps of Negroes? Did he know that within four days, fifty black men had answered the call and opposed Mackenzie, thereby matching his own loyalty to the crown? And did knowledge of this incline him to embrace Fayette and the cause of abolition? We can't know the answers to any of these questions.

Finally, in 1850, did William Wells have any idea that he was witnessing the end of a golden era with the departure of Fayette? When Wells was born around 1827 there were still many in our congregation who believed that the return of Jesus was imminent. The meteor showers foretold it. And so, the world had to be cleansed, reformed, for His return. All of this had played out in our church. First there had been the protracted meetings that started in 1831-1832. This revivalism had aimed to cleanse the influence of Satan from the soul, had continued up to about 1843, but was gone now. Then there was a demanding, church discipline imposed on backsliders in the congregation, but now, in 1850, something of the past. Yet Jesus had *not* returned as predicted. What then to do? Well, the cleansing meant to set the world right for the second coming morphed into a desire for reform for its own sake. This is the essence of the transition from Millennialism to Post-Millennialism. And again, this also played out at Barton Presbyterian. The church continued to support temperance and to deal with backsliders such as a certain Mr. Shafer who, in 1843, kept "a public house where intoxicating liquors are sold". Such reform was needed for its own sake because drink ruined so many lives at the time. And Post-Millennialism existed at Barton and in the township generally in the form of support for abolition of slavery, and in the very person and presence of John Frederick Augustus Sykes Fayette.

Fayette remained with us for about six years. There must have been a majority element in the church that very much supported him. We would not see a preacher of his calibre for many years to come. He left us with this piece of scripture:

God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. **John 4:24**

Next: The Lean Years and Interesting Times 1850 to 1919

