

# Baptists Have Hall for Fellowship

A family night was observed by members of the First Baptist church Wednesday evening in the newly remodeled and redecorated fellowship hall. A business meeting followed the carry-in supper.



with Harold DeBoer presiding. The Rev. John Tennyson presented the devotional period. Mrs. Sondra Ward played for singing.

Tables were arranged by Mrs. William Pearce, Mrs. Kenneth Reynolds, Mrs. George Dean and Mrs. Jack Getts, members of the Tuxis class. Arrangements of fall flowers centered the tables.

Members of the CCW class on the kitchen committee were Mrs. C. Van Domelen, Mrs. Fred George and Mrs. Francis Whitesides.

Fellowship hall and other rooms were pleasant in the new furnishings. New chairs were a gift from the Florence Peterson memorial.

The church dates back to 1834, being the first one in Ionia county. Six persons were responsible for the established organization of the first protestant church in this section of the state. Mr and Mrs Samuel Dexter, Mr and Mrs Erastus Yeomans and Mr and Mrs Alfred Cornell were among the first settlers who came to Ionia. Mr Dexter gave the land where the church now stands, the original deed is still in existence.

The first building burned, after having been erected in 1864. The present building was erected in 1870 with Orry Waterbury, Sr., contractor. Mr Waterbury was grandfather of Stanley Powell, who is an active member of the church. Mr Powell now has two generations of his family attending the church. The new church was dedicated in 1872.

The church building has since been remodeled and redecorated several times over the years. Many families of Ionia have had an active part of the growth of the church.

The Rev. John Tennyson now serves as pastor having come to Ionia from Ypsilanti in January 1961.

Erastus Yeomans

The church is served by a board of trustees, Harold DeBoer, James Roberts, Harold Signs, William Pearce and Harmon Rinker. Purl Johnson, who recently deceased, was a member of the board at the time of his death.

The recently remodeled fellowship hall has new paneling on the walls, lowered ceiling with recessed lighting, new concrete floor with tile covering, new chairs and draperies. Much of the work was done by the men of the church.

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