

## THE COURTENAY GAZETTE

the ordinary ever did, or could happen. The winds slumbered, incaved, and the snow drifts lay in quiet repose. Betimes the portentous storm clouds banked and rolled against the northwestern horizon and overcast the sky. The flaky, fluffy, icy snow-crystals precipitated in profusion and the liberated winds rushing forth from their imprisonment, caught them in their chilly embrace and furiously and pitilessly drove them in eddying whirl and twisting swirl over the unprotected plains in wild confusion and relentless blizzard, which suggested that nature had broken forth in its angriest fury, to take compensation for real grievances. The sparse settlement was metamorphosed into snuggler quarters for comfort and safety. The flocks and herds lulled their bleating and lowing and hibernated in stalls, before well filled mangers, munching fodder and chewing their cud, in the rude, temporary, straw, sod or board shed, safely sheltered from the rigors of an arctic winter. The wife reduced the horizon of her duties to housekeeping and the husband to doing the chores. The children no longer gambled over the unlimited lawn spread out before them, but snuggled up close to the sometimes cold fire in the hut.

Such were the conditions of scant and privation and toil, summer and winter, in primitive days in North Dakota. They were days crowded with pleasure, hardship and anticipation. Early came the Sabbath school. The settlers were a motley people but by no means men of motley, intelligent, courageous, manly, heroic, for the most part sober, industrious, ambitious. Not a few had forgotten, or had never learned, not to take the name of God in vain. Not a few, or at least some, who were church members and Sunday school superintendents in the east neglected to bring their robes of righteousness along with them to the west and became industrious Sabbath breakers during the busy seasons. For one reason and another, perhaps to break the monotony of life in the absence of labor, perhaps to see and be seen, perhaps from a respect for the day and the love of the truth, in goodly numbers the settlers were wont to congregate in the now and then school house, to sing hymns and to study the bible. Sab-

bath schools never stand still, rarely retrograde, usually advance. So with the Corinne Sunday school. It grew and in natural time representations were made to Synodical Missionary F. M. Wood, that a successful Sabbath school was working in the Corinne school house in Congressional township 144-62, and that the way seemed open for the organization of a church. Not long afterwards a Sunday school missionary dropped in on us. Doubtless he reported the situation. At any rate, in 1888, out of the Corinne Sunday school was organized the Corinne Presbyterian church, by Rev. F. M. Wood. Its charter members were twenty-three in number. Three elders, William Bradford, John McGibbon and C. A. Sanford, were elected and ordained. They were also charged with the duties of trustees. The sparseness of population and distances to church are fittingly illustrated by the fact that shortly after the church was organized two of the elders and their families lived twenty miles apart and about a baker's dozen

members were located between these extremes. In the early life of the church theological students from the seminaries occupied its pulpit for a few months each summer. Sermons were frequently read by lay members. Later, regular supplies were secured. In the fall of 1892, the Soo railroad built its road a mile south of Corinne township and Courtenay was located. In 1893, the society held services in the waiting room of the station at Courtenay and was re-christened the Courtenay Presbyterian church. The ladies of the church and neighborhood had not been idle. Under the name of the Church Furnishing society they had industriously collected \$175



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in the faith that some day the society would erect a church edifice. From 1894 to 1896, Presbyterian services were held in a commodious school house which had been moved into town from the country. A board of trustees was elected. E. F. Horn was president, C. A. Sanford, secretary, James Reid, treasurer, and C. M. Kribbs, John Bradford, Frank Merritt and T. J. Atwood were also made trustees. The membership and public voiced a desire for a house of worship. The trustees were in concord with the general wish, and set themselves so zealously to work that the problem of ways and means