

Then & Now: Chelsea United Methodist Church

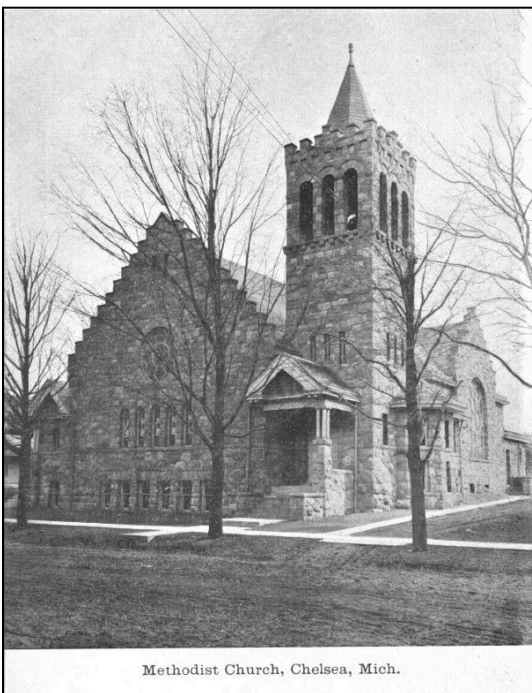
From the Chelsea Area Historical Society/Jan Bernath

A Methodist Society was founded in 1853 and became part of Lima Township with services held in a school. The congregation grew and Elisha Congdon donated land for a church in 1858, and a wooden church was built on Park Street the next year. Following the Civil War, a parsonage was built in 1866 next door. Forty years later, the wooden church building burned to the ground in 1899.

The current stone church building, designed after an old Scottish church, was built of fieldstone donated by local farmers and was dedicated in 1900. The building was funded primarily by the prominent men of Chelsea at the time--Frank Glazier, William Bacon, John Schenk, and George Palmer.

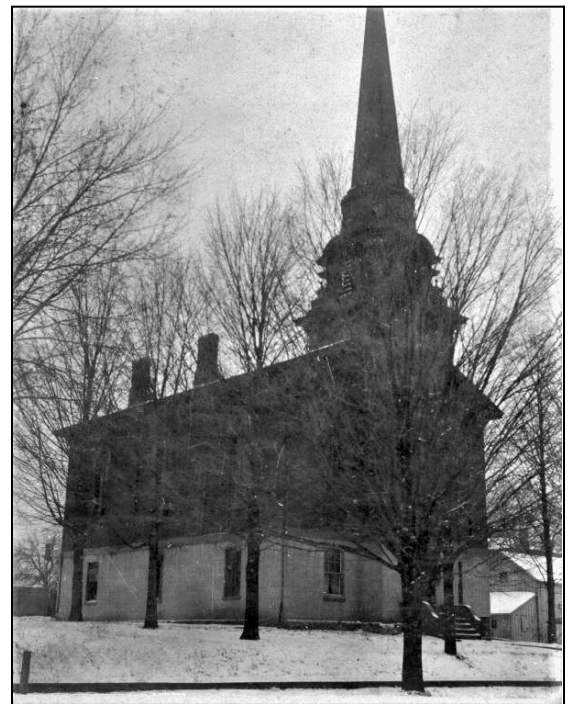
Both the membership and church building grew over time and a two-story educational wing was added sixty years later. In 1992, the expansion continued with the addition of a main entrance including an elevator, coatroom and restrooms. Another wing was added in 1996 to complete the impressive building as it appears today on Park Street.

Unless otherwise noted photos courtesy of CAHS



The stone church that was dedicated in 1900

The original wooden structure.



Standing strong and still looking great. The building as it looks today. Photo: Doug Marrin.