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Wheatland Church of Christ

Thomas W. Cross was born in Louden County Virginia in 1826 and came to Ohio in 1851 - He met and married Catherine Harper and established a home. In 1869, along with a group of families. They immigrated to Michigan, locating in Wheatland Township.

He found disciples in these parts, and he, being accustomed to the work, having been a deacon in the church in Ohio. At once set about to organize and build up the work here. Where primitive Christianity, especially in its gospel purity and simplicity, was altogether unknown.



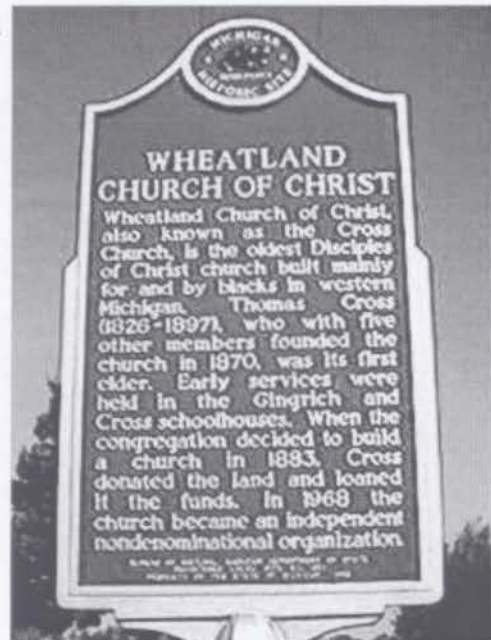
In the fall of 1869 he held the first meeting in the Ginrich schoolhouse. In a short time the congregation of the Church was organized with six members. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Cross, his daughter, Elizabeth, Mrs. Cynthia Rice and Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Harper. Thomas Cross was appointed Elder and Mr. Harper, Deacon. Services were held for a while at the Ginrich schoolhouse but later were changed to the Cross schoolhouse that became the temporary meeting place for these disciples.

As time passed, there arose the need for a more adequate building in which to worship. The men of the community proved themselves equal to the task and set about to erect the new structure. In a short time the building was well under way, then they encountered financial difficulties and lack of funds seemed to be the only obstacle that would halt construction. Mr. Cross came to the rescue and furnished the needed money to complete the building, and in turn was to take a mortgage for his money.

Names that have been recorded as among the early labor in the Master's vineyard in the role of ministry were L. C. Griffith, Hale, Massey, Danes, Gardner, Russel, Spade, Green, Judson Brown, B. D. Bright, John Grice, Midge, Curch, Sias, Hawkins and Thomas W. Cross. Among the early membership of the church the following family names and many others were recorded: Hemminger, Nisonger, Lett, Guy, Lenon, Norman, Humphry, Scott, Cummings and Harper.

Thomas Cross was ordained in 1876 by F. W. Hawkins, and

Joseph Lett was ordained a deacon the same year. Miss Abby



Fields introduced the Missionary Society and its work here in 1890.

One part of the record tells of Bro. Barr and Bro. Myers being active in the work here. Tile records show the organization of Sunday school in 1898 with Leonard Guy as president; N. C. Myers as assistant, Chas. Barr and John Myers as teachers, and Hadie Myers as secretary.

Elder Thomas Cross passed away in the year of 1 897. John Cross, Mrs. E. A. Harris and others became active in this period to keep up the work. Shortly after, from Kinberling Hts. Teno, came a student preacher by the name of B. F. Pittman. He had charge of the work here for a short time and the spirit was renewed and the church was on the move again. Schoolwork called Bro. Pittman back to college and the church was again without a minister. Bro. Boardman, another Johnson Bible student, preached here for a short time but he too was called back to school.

After completing his school term, Pittman came to us again, this time remaining several years. He was away once more, returning in 1932 to continue the work until his death in 1935.

In the absence of a pastor, elders and deacons kept the church in order until Walter Otto came to this community. After a brief and successful ministry he moved away; after which Arthur Cross, Alonzo Johnson and Amos Cross took charge of having Communion Service and Sunday each Eord's day.

In 1939, the congregation, upon the request of Bro. Will Todd, selected Arthur Cross for ordination to the ministry and to take full charge of the work. He was ordained June 3, 1939, by H. E. Curch of Mt. Pleasant. Mrs. Emma Todd, church clerk signed the ordination certificate.

Rev. Cross was installed minister of Wheatland Church of Christ immediately after his ordination. Under his care the church flourished and grew into an influential factor in the community. Rev. Cross served the local parish for 38 years and passed away at age of 78 on April 27, 1977.