

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Poland United Methodist Church

Parishioner Experience

O. H. 563

DWIGHT WEEKS

Interviewed

by

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on

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## DWIGHT WEEKS

Mr. Dwight Weeks was born on March 21, 1924 in Zanesville, Ohio, to Dwight and Belva Weeks. The family moved to Poland where he was raised and attended Poland schools. He was married to his wife Hilda on September 20, 1948 and has three children: Thomas, Patricia, and Timothy. He has worked at various occupations and retired in March 1980. However, he is employed presently by the Poland United Methodist Church since April of 1981. He has been a member of Poland United Methodist Church most of his adult life and participated in the church reconstruction efforts.

- R: Can you remember some of the people's names?
- W: There was Jack Johnson, Bill List, Guy Chambers, Mr. Boyer. I would say at one time they had 20 to 30 men in that class. There was Murl Schaeffer.
- R: What was the class like?
- W: We had discussion of the Bible and like any other class discussions of politics and world affairs. Everybody enjoyed it. The only project we ever had was the spaghetti dinner.
- R: You talked about the old church, what did you feel like when it burned?
- W: The old church was homey. When we built the new one it was all together different. Eventually we would have grown out of it anyway. It's a shame, though, that we had the fire.
- R: What did it look like? How bad was it?
- W: The roof was pretty well burned and the windows. The windows had artistic designs and stuff. Grace Chapel has the only one that was salvaged that was in the church.
- R: Where did you go again after the church burned down?
- W: We went into North Elementary School.
- R: I know that they did things to raise money. Were you involved in those projects?
- W: No. I was janitor or part-time custodian when they were running the Canfield Fair project.
- R: How had the church changed?
- W: I think when you go bigger you're into bigger business. Your population has expanded and there are people that you see that you are not in contact with all of the time and you just don't know them.
- R: Is it better or worse?
- W: Progress goes on; we have no choice. Like every generation, it is changing. Usually two in a family have to work in a younger group so you don't come in too much contact with them other than on Sundays. When there are 300 or 400 in a church the minister gets in contact with them, but you usually don't see them.
- R: The 50 year anniversary is coming up, do you see the church

being any more or less important as approaching the 100th?

W: I don't know. The way things are going now you hope it is for your children to be around.

R: For myself and many organizations, if a church would have burned down that would have been it. Why didn't it fall under?

W: I think it goes back to the Amish; when their barns burned down everybody jumped in and rebuilt it for them. Everybody got together and rebuilt.

R: What does the church offer you?

W: A place to worship.

R: What has the church offered Poland?

W: I couldn't answer that. To me it is a place to worship, Sunday school, and fellowship.

R: From your point of view, who has been more involved in the church over the years, women or men?

W: I think women. They had a lot of activities, but it does take men to help out. When they ran their tent at the fair there were a lot of women in there cooking and serving.

R: How did you come to work in the church?

W: There were four janitors. I looked around and saw where they could save some money and made some suggestions. They had the janitors staggered every other night.

END OF INTERVIEW