

IN OUR REARVIEW MIRROR, BY TERESA WEIXELMAN

Celebrate freedom! Happy Birthday, America! Here we are - still at the corner of 6th and Lincoln 152 years later. Pioneers arrived in the Flint Hills area of northeast Kansas in the 1860s. They asked, "Should we head west?" and the answer was "YES!". As they settled in Wamego, they joined in small groups in their homes to worship and pray together. They stepped out in faith to follow the call.



They sought ways to share their faith in a more organized community. Circuit riders came to deliver the message and words of encouragement and inspiration. The congregation grew. The Methodist Annual Conference recognized their growth in 1867 and appointed T.F. Herd as the first permanent minister.

The congregation stepped out to knock on doors that were readily opened and they found volunteers and funds to build a church, start missions and grow together in faith.

They asked, "Should we invest in our youth?". The answer was the creation of the Epworth League that has evolved into our Wednesday night connections that involve everyone from babies in the nursery to youth to adults of all ages. Everyone from 1 to 101 can be connected.

They asked, "Should we invest in the community?". The answer was rummage sales and church dinners in the basement that evolved into The Thrift Shop, July Fourth Porkburgers, a community food bank, hosting school supply distributions and the adopt a Christmas family distribution for the community.

From a small, wooden church near the corner of 6th and Lincoln to a stone church and parking lot utilizing the entire 600 block. We have gone from manual to analog to digital, from hymnals to projected screens. We have a church choir, beautiful organ music and a praise band. I believe those early pioneers would rejoice with us as we celebrate 152 years of faithfulness. And WE celebrate the courage they demonstrated to create this marvelous church alive!