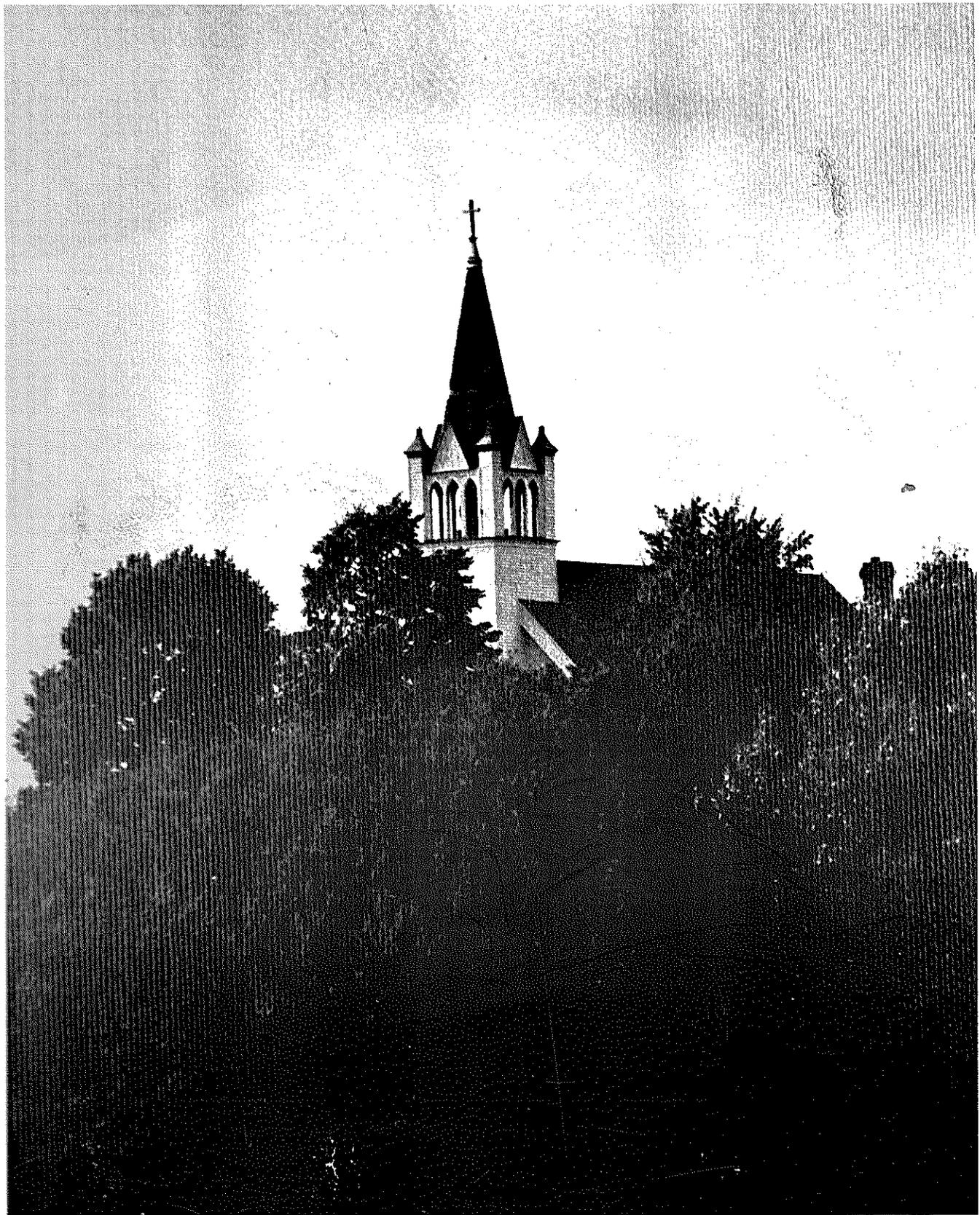


.. St. Michael's Catholic Church ..

1870-1970



Indian Creek

## *One Hundred Years at St. Michael's*



INTERIOR OF FIRST CHURCH - EARLY 1900'S

East Central Monroe County has a range of hills that helps form the edge of the Driftless Area of Wisconsin. Part of this range is the "Indian Ridge" which was once the camping ground of early Indian tribes. The Indian men brought great piles of blueberry bushes to their women who picked the berries for their food. Many Indian arrows also have been found in this area which proves that much hunting was done. One of the streams flowing southward from this range of hills is Indian Creek. This creek ran through the farm of Michael Kuhn who donated part of section 32, township 17, Range 1 East for the first church to be built in the township of Oakdale. Because Mr. Kuhn's birthday was September 29th (St. Michael's Day) as the tombstone proves, that church was named in honor of him and a high mass is observed on this day each year in thanksgiving for St. Michael's guidance and protection.

The parishioners who attended this church came from the towns of Oakdale, Clifton, Byron, Fountain, and Wilton. They were of German, Austrian, Bohemian and Hungarian descent which accounted for the fact that prayers and sermons were delivered in German for over fifty years. Before a church was erected Rev. W. F. Quigley from Tomah offered mass in the home of Peter Houn, which is now the home of Richard Degenhardt, and Rev. Michael Heiss, a nephew of the late Archbishop Heiss came from St. Mary's Ridge and offered mass at the home of Michael Kuhn which is now part of the LeRoy Rosenow farm. In the fall of 1869 a few families undertook the building of a church and during the winter and spring, lumber and timber was purchased for a building 22 ft. by 32 ft. There was enough lumber for the frame, siding, shingles, windows and door but when it came time to pay for the carpenter there wasn't any money left so five of the parishioners namely: Michael Kuhn, Joseph Pope, Sebastian Rieber, Valentine Betthausser and John Farinkop signed a note for \$100 with interest at 10%. At the end of the year each man paid \$22.00, which included principle and interest. They now had a building that was too warm in the summer and too cold in the winter. Another disadvantage was two funerals held on the same day to warrant the coming of a priest.

After eleven years St. Michael's future began to look brighter. Father John Durward was ordained and assigned to his first parish at Tomah. He visited St. Michael's on occasion along with Sparta, Wilton, Ridgeville, Black River Falls, Roaring Creek, and Remington. Father Durward referred to these places as the "Seven Sleepers of Ephesus". St. Michael's church was lathed, plastered and a chimney was built and Father still found time to build a Catholic school at Tomah. In 1884 Rev. J. B. Metzler tended our parish once a month and in 1889 an addition 22 ft. by 24 ft. was added at a cost of \$400.00. Rev. William Wecker visited our parish in 1892 until December 1893 when Rev. Louis Wurst came to Tomah and offered mass at St. Michael's once a month for twenty years. During Father Wurst's tenure the congregation had grown in size and it was necessary to build a new and larger church.

The new present structure was erected in 1910 at a cost of \$6,500.00. It was dedicated on Sunday, November 24 and on Saturday, November 23, a wedding mass for Joseph Honish and Alice Frohmader was solemnized. The parish was growing and Father Wurst's many duties in Tomah made it necessary to transfer St. Michael's to a mission of Camp Douglas in 1913 and all records had to be transferred.

From 1913-1922 our mission was served by Fathers Leo and Michael Pollack who came to Oakdale from Camp Douglas on Saturday afternoons by train and traveled by horse and buggy to the various homes where they boarded until their return to Camp Douglas on Sunday evening. Father Leo Pollack was the first resident pastor of St. James at Camp Douglas. These priests were charter members of the branch of The Catholic Family Life Insurance Society that was organized in 1915. Philip Jauch was elected president, Otto Betthausen, secretary, and Edmund Shie, treasurer. Father Charles Ocktelick and Rev. Louis Orlick served during this time also.

In 1923 a new altar and fixtures were purchased at the cost of \$600.00. The basement was cemented at a cost of \$250.00 and two new statues were donated in honor of the young men of the parish who gave their lives during World War I. For a short time in 1923 when no priest was available one of the trustees went to LaCrosse to beg Bishop Schweback for a priest to say mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi. The wish was granted and Rev. Leo Hirt was sent. This has been an annual observance since the beginning of the parish. It consisted of an outdoor procession and benediction with weather permitting. A parish dinner was also held and many former parishioners came for the observance. Later that year and until 1925 Rev. H. Vandenberg served followed by Father Felix Stromberg, 1925-1928.

Father Joseph Splinter, who served us longer than any other pastor was here from 1928-1949. During his tenure our parish grew and mass was scheduled every two weeks. Instructions for the children were now held regularly, the cemetery grounds were improved, the heating system was modernized and relocated and electricity replaced the kerosene lamps.

Rev. Joseph Udulutch served as pastor from 1949-1951 and now for the first time in history mass was offered every Sunday with 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays being the late masses here and 2nd and 4th early masses. New vestments were purchased and the interior redecorated and a stoker was installed at the cost of \$1,700.00. Following Father Udulutch's recall to the armed forces Father Joseph Wagner was assigned from 1951-1957. During his pastorate the parish with the help of the altar society, which met in the homes, purchased a new sanctuary carpet, kneeling pads, a new tabernacle, and better driveways were built up the hill to the church.

Father A. Sherfinski served us from June 1957-1958, followed by Father Donald Berg 1958-1967. On September 25, 1960 a Golden Anniversary mass was celebrated for the present edifice. The basement was paneled, classrooms were set up to accommodate the C.C.D. classes, kitchen facilities were installed for parish activities, a well was drilled and electric heat was installed. A new electric organ was purchased for the church. In 1967 Rev. Robert Perkins became pastor. The church proper was paneled, the church was insulated and electric heat was added. The choir and organ were moved to the front of the church, the old

high altar was removed and the present low altar took its place with the priest saying mass facing the congregation. A parish council and school board were set up and many committees were appointed to help carry on the ever growing responsibilities of our new full parish. A count was made of the cemetery at this time and 153 souls were buried on the platted cemetery and about 50 on the unplotted part with about 175 graves still available because in 1964 Louis Betthausser donated a 300 ft. strip addition to the present cemetery.

Father Constant Chilicki, our present pastor came in November of 1969. He has been active in helping with the many changes that have been taking place in the New Mass. Beginning with the New Year's Mass, we are now celebrating our Centennial Year. Two events took place in February; an evening mass was celebrated at the mother church at the cathedral in LaCrosse by Father Chilicki with several parish families attending. We also had Sister Mary Mildred O.S.F., our one vocation to the sisterhood in attendance. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Reiber. At present, she is an occupational therapist at St. Mary's Hospital in Sparta, Wisconsin. The other event was the "Light of Faith" walk between St. Michael's and the cathedral, made by Father and ten high school students, commemorating the faith and hardships of the former parishioners during the past 100 years. On Arbor Day, 165 pine trees were planted by the young adults to inspire us in our ever growing faith. In May a "Youth Mass" was celebrated with the "New Hope Group", a group of young seminarians from LaCrosse participating. On June 21, communicants made their first communion and on June 22, Bishop Freking came and administered the sacrament of Confirmation followed by a reception.

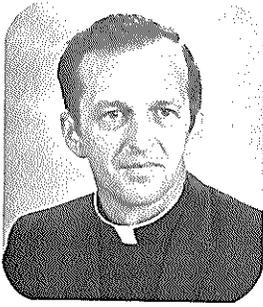


OUR NEW LOOK

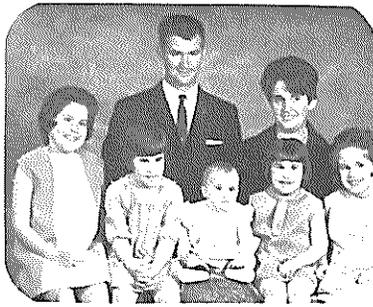
#### SENIOR PARISHIONERS

Parish members who attended the first church. Seated Left-Right, Helen Barnharst, Inez Guthrie, Mary Shie, Mayme Felber. Standing Left-Right, Frances Betthausser, Ted Tiber, Edmund Shie, Tony Betthausser, Elmer Betthausser, Louis Betthausser, Evalyn Graf. Back Row Left-Right, Sylvester Honish, Joe Blaskey, Joe Honish.





FR. CONSTANT CHILICKE



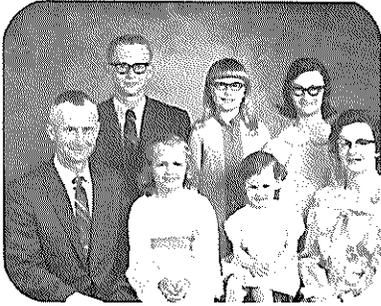
MICHAEL ARTTUS FAMILY



\*GEORGE BARNHARST FAMILY



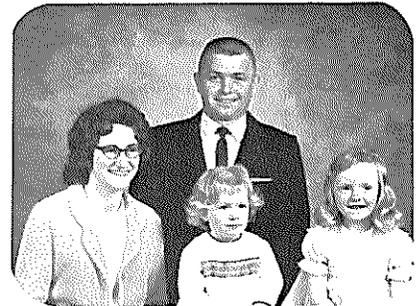
MRS. HELEN BARNHARST



HOWARD BARNHARST FAMILY



KENNETH BELCHER FAMILY



JAMES BERNHARDT FAMILY



FRANCES & TONY  
BETTHAUSER



LOUIS BETTHAUSER FAMILY



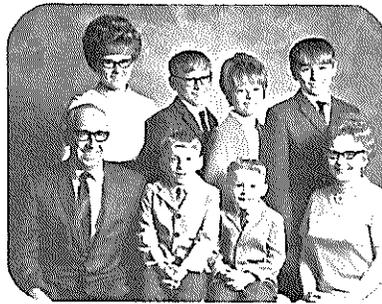
MR. & MRS. VAL BETTHAUSER



JOSEPH BLASKEY FAMILY



LEO BLASKEY FAMILY



ROBERT BLOOM FAMILY



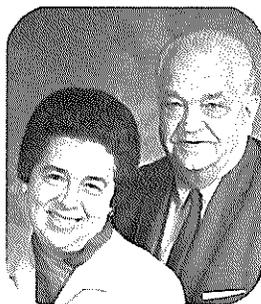
\*ROBERTA & ARLENE  
BLOOM



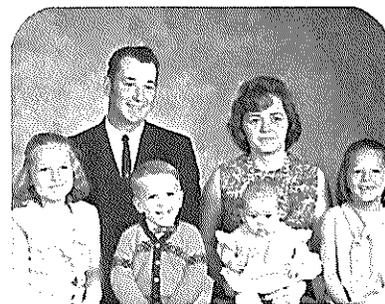
MR. & MRS. ALVIN  
CLEMENTS



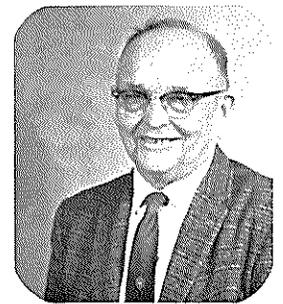
LAWRENCE COENEN FAMILY



MR. & MRS. EARL CRAM



RICHARD DAGENHARDT FAMILY



MR. GEORGE FELBER



JOHN FELBER FAMILY



MAYME FELBER FAMILY



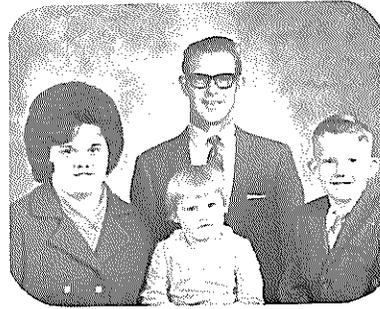
WENZEL FELBER FAMILY



\*WENZEL FELBER, JR.



\*ALBERT FELBER



DONALD FINUCAN FAMILY



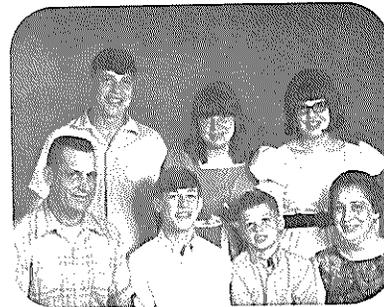
FRANCES & JEROME  
FROHMADER



HILARION GEIER FAMILY



MRS. EVALYN GRAF



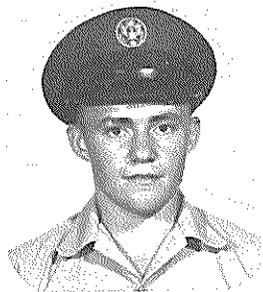
ART GREISEN FAMILY



MR. & MRS. HERB  
GUTHRIE



CLAYTON HANSEN FAMILY



\*DAVID HANSEN



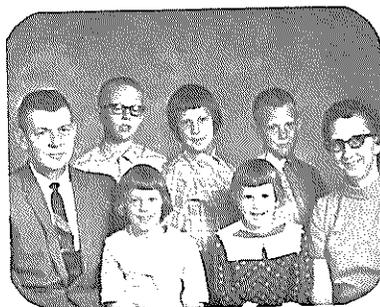
EUGENE HANSEN FAMILY



LeROY HANSON FAMILY



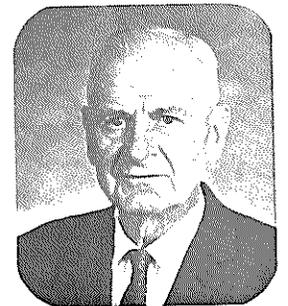
ROBERT HEFNER FAMILY



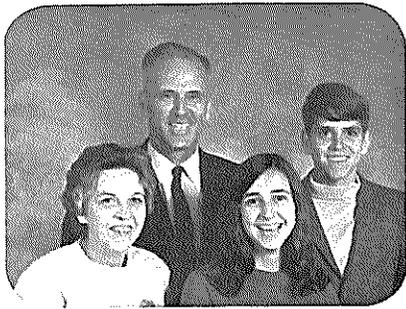
THOMAS HENTHORNE FAMILY



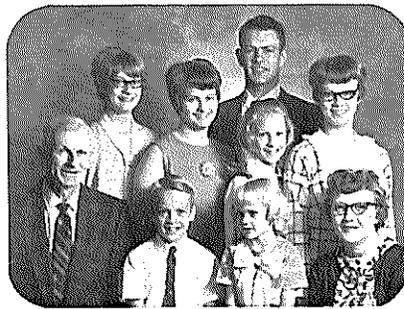
MRS. AGNES HOFFMAN



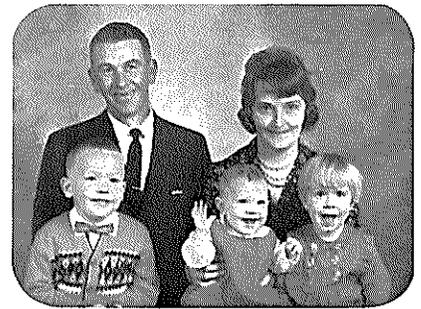
MR. JOSEPH HONISH



ELLSWORTH HONISH FAMILY



SYLVESTER HONISH FAMILY



BURDETTE LANGER FAMILY



MR. & MRS. LLOYD McCASKEY



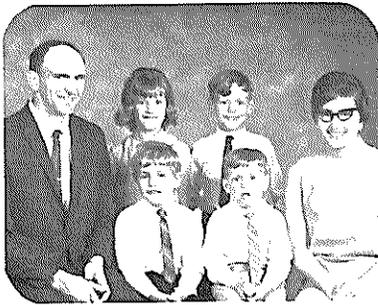
VIRGINIA & LAURA MOSKOW



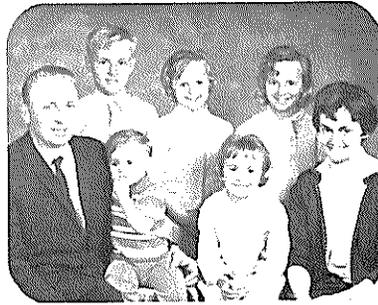
THEODORE OLLENDICK FAMILY X



HAROLD PAULSON FAMILY



LARRY PITEL FAMILY



NOREL QUIST FAMILY



SHELDON QUIST FAMILY



MISS BEATRICE RAPP



DARWON SCENDEL FAMILY



\*MISS DIANNA SCENDEL



\*MISS SANDY SCENDEL



BERNARD SEELEY FAMILY



MR. & MRS. EDMUND SHIE



EDWIN SHIE FAMILY



MR. HAROLD SHIE



SAINT MICHAEL'S PARISH LISTING  
OCTOBER 1970

A					
ARTTUS, Michael (Juanita)	Route 1, Wilton 54670	427-6682			
B					
BAKER, Patricia	Tomah-Trailer Court 54660				
BARNHARST, George (Cecelia)	Route 2, Kendall 54638	7-3172			
BARNHARST, Mrs. Helen	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-3123			
BARNHARST, Howard (Mary)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-3151			
BELCHER, Mrs. Kenneth (Marian)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	372-4577			
BERNHARDT, Mrs. James (Mabel)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6655			
BETTHAUSER, Dan	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5733			
BETTHAUSER, Rita	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5733			
BETTHAUSER, Therese	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5733			
BETTHAUSER, Elmer (Irene)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5728			
BETTHAUSER, Francis & Tony	Route 2, Camp Douglas	2-5707			
BETTHAUSER, Louis (May)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5733			
BETTHAUSER, Val (Clara)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	7-6605			
BLASKEY, John	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5665			
BLASKEY, Joseph (Irene)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5665			
BLASKEY, Leo (Margaret)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5706			
BLOOM, Robert (Rosella)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-6277			
BROWN, Mrs. Avery (Edith)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5746			
C					
CLEMENTS, Miss Marcela	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6761			
CLEMENTS, Alvin (Selma)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6761			
CLEMENTS, Donald (Penny)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6718			
COENEN, Lawrence (Doris)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5833			
CRAM, Mrs. Earl (Elinor)	Oakdale 54649	2-6137			
CRAM, John	Oakdale 54649	2-6137			
D					
DAGENHARDT, Richard (Karen)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-6867			
F					
FELBER, George	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5664			
FELBER, Mrs. Mayme	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5705			
FELBER, John (Janet)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-6293			
FELBER, Wenzel	Route 2, Camp Douglas	2-5606			
FINUCAN, Donald (Sharon)	Route 2, Kendall 54638	7-6680			
FROHMADER, Mrs. Frances	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6662			
FROHMADER, Jerome	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6662			
G					
GAMERDINGER, Ed (Maureen)	Oakdale 54649				
GEIER, Hilarion (Myrtle)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	7-6685			
GRAF, Mrs. Evalyn	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6695			
GREISEN, Art (Mary)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	7-6611			
GUTHRIE, Mrs. Herb (Inez)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5886			
H					
HANSEN, Clayton (Isabel)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	7-6731			
HANSON, LeRoy (Joyce)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6645			
HEFNER, Robert (Shirley)	Oakdale 54649	2-2217			
HENTHORNE, Thomas (Ellen)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-3160			
HOFFMAN, Mrs. Agnes	Route 2, Camp Douglas	2-5719			
HONISH, Ellsworth (Grace)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6673			
HONISH, Joseph (Josephine)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6667			
HONISH, Sylvester (Catherine)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6742			
J					
JOFFER, Mrs. Florence	Route 3, Tomah 54660				
% Albert Neulen		2-5518			
K					
KREEGER, Mrs. Walter (Marie)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6722			
L					
LANGER, Burdette (Roseann)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6559			
M					
MARTALOCK, Mrs. Grace	Route 2, Kendall 54638	7-3150			
McCASKEY Lloyd (Vella)	Oakdale 54649	2-5835			
MOSKOW, Virginia	Route 1, Wilton 54670				
MUEHLENKAMP, Carl (Genevieve)					
Route 2, Camp Douglas		7-6689			
MUEHLENKAMP, Paul (Yvette)					
Oakdale 54649		2-5702			
MUEHLENKAMP, David (Betty)					
Oakdale 54649		2-6520			
O					
O'BRYAN, Mrs. Ted (Marcie)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6502			
OLLENDICK, Ted (Hilda)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	7-6438			
P					
PAULSON, Harold (Wilda)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5602			
PITEL, Larry (Ann)	Route 1, Wilton 54670	7-6668			
Q					
QUIST, Mrs. Norel (Marlene)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-3177			
QUIST, Sheldon (Marjorie)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6751			
R					
RAPP, Beatrice	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6623			
RONDORF, Joseph (Juanita)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	7-6664			
S					
SCHENDEL, Darwon (Rosella)	Box 85, Oakdale 54649	2-2861			
SEELEY, Mrs. Bernard (Betty)	Box 63, Oakdale 54649	2-6139			
SHIE, Edmund (Mary)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5735			
SHIE, Harold	Route 2, Camp Douglas				
SHIE, Edwin (Margaret)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-2962			
SIESS, Charles (Ruby)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-4752			
SIESS, Norbert	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-6286			
SIESS, Mrs. Vera	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-6286			
T					
TIBER, Ted (Leila)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	2-5649			
TIBER, Terrence (Margaret)	Route 2, Camp Douglas	2-2321			
W					
WEISS, Benedict (Irene)	Route 3, Tomah 54660	2-5639			
WHITE, Clarence	Box 114, Oakdale 54649	2-5849			
Z					
ZIEGLER, Neil	Route 2, Camp Douglas				
ZIEGLER, Mrs. Olive	Route 2, Camp Douglas	7-6623			

NEW MEMBERS

We are grateful for the privilege given us to prepare this directory. We will welcome inquiries from your friends from other churches, locally, and throughout the nation concerning preparation of a directory.



**PICTORIAL CHURCH DIRECTORIES OF AMERICA, INC. 1706 WASHINGTON AVE.**  
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