

Interview with Marvin Andros, Isabelle Reem Welton, Clarke Howell, and Kenneth Price

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Interviewed by Calvin Gower and John LeDoux

Gower: Let's introduce us first. This is an interview conducted by Calvin Gower and John LeDoux for the Central Minnesota Historical Center. And today which is July 7, 1978. We're talking to various individuals from, ah the, is it the Cutter Pine Lake?

Andros: No, Cutler Pine Lake.

Welton: Cutler Pine Lakes, C-U-T-L-E-R.

Andros: Yeah, Cutler.

Andros: United Methodist Church.

Gower: Cutler Pine Lake United Methodist Church. Also known as the Pine Lake Chapel or that's what your name is really?

Welton: Yeah.

Gower: Okay, so it's Cutter Pine.

Welton: No, it's Cutler.

Gower: So, it's Cutler Pine Lake Methodist Chapel.

Andros: United Methodist Chapel.

Gower: United Methodist Chapel. Okay, okay, first could we find out your names and a little bit about each one of you. We'll start with you Reverend Andros.

Andros: My name is Marvin Andros. And I grew up in Minneapolis and I went to New Jersey to the seminary then I served a couple of churches out there for three years and then came to Minnesota and served at Atwater Rosedale Oak Park for five years and from there to Slayton and Lake Wilson for four years and from there to Dodge Center for seven years and to Hastings for three and to Olivia and Osceola for three and now I am here at this church, Aitkin and Pine Lake Chapel.

Gower: Okay, now should have the lady over there?

Welton: Well, actually, I don't know a great deal more about it than what –

Gower: What's your name?

Welton: Oh, yes, Isabelle Reem Welton.

Gower: W-E-L-T-O-N.

Welton: Right, and my parents and my grandparents were pioneers here. And most of all I know about this church in particular is included in the missalette we put out for our 75th anniversary. Like Great Emma Branch gave the land here for the church and she lived just south of the church down here where, until a few years ago on the old homestead.

Gower: Have you lived in this area all of your life?

Welton: Not all of my life, my first part of my married life I lived northwest of Aitkin in Crow Wing County. Pine Knoll it's known as. And I spent 15 years, my husband and I, 15 years or so in Minneapolis. But I've always been back and forth because my parents were here.

LeDoux: We're your parents born here in the United States?

Welton: Oh, yes, um my father was born in Otsego, that's just out of Elk River. My mother was born in McGregor, Iowa. But her girlhood was spent in the southern part of Minnesota. And she was married to Dad in Anoka when she was only about 17.

Gower: May we ask the date and year of your birth?

Welton: Yes you can and I'll tell you.

Gower: Okay.

Welton: I was born May 12, 1901.

Gower: And that was right here in this area?

Welton: Yes, here in Hazelton Township. It's, I bought a store out here. Over by Greg Lake it was known.

Gower: So ah, there may be at least 50-55 years you've been associated with this church. I mean living here and then with the church.

Welton: Oh, yes.

Gower: Because you were gone.

Welton: Well, I was up at Pine Knoll a number of years and then Minneapolis 15 years. But we'd always come back from time to time and we have a summer home here for quite a while for before I move back here permanently after my husband passed away.

Gower: What is the year and date of your birth?

Price: Ah, May 8, 1912.

Gower: And you've been a member of this church all of your life?

Price: No, no, in the early days I think the church was run more like a community church wasn't it?

Welton: Yes, it was.

Price: Yes it was, it was different; it was changed probably in the last 30-35 years.

Gower: By community church, do you mean there were people from all kinds of denominations?

Price: Yes, I think there was, probably even ministers. Wouldn't that be right maybe possible even other ministers other than Methodist ministers?

Welton: Oh, yes, Reverend Dow for instance who had a home across the lake, used to preach here on occasion. And, I should be able to tell you what church in Minneapolis he was from but I can't think of it right now.

Gower: Were these, these were all, all Protestant and Methodist and--

Price: What was Reverend Hunt?

Welton: Well, he probably was Methodist from Bay Lake area. You see until, you don't mind me explaining?

Gower: No, go ahead.

Welton: Until we got automobiles we didn't share ministers with Aitkin. We had to have our own ministers or speakers. And they weren't always ordained ministers they were sometimes just speakers. So to speak.

Gower: Sure.

Welton: Including Osterhout who is somebody from Aitkin who still has descendants there. You see in looking up the history of this. Christine, Kibbey, and I went through the Aitkin Ages, 52 copies a year, to find something about Cutler and sometimes we find one article in the whole year's publication. As I can remember we've always had telephones. But transportation was something more difficult. But we did have telephone because I know my grandparents from Mille Lacs had a telephone and I, this had been where there were telephones.

Gower: Sure, okay, now then, this gentlemen over here.

Howell: My name is Clarke Howell. And my grandparents and parents were pioneers in the area here. My grandparents particularly homesteaded in here. And watched this community grow and build in the area and I was born originally, on June 1st, 1917, in the village of Aitkin. And then we moved around, lived at Chisholm, Minnesota, Crosby, Minnesota, Deerwood and then moved out here in this community where I was about 8 or 9 years old. And I started Sunday school in this church. I was baptized a Methodist in Chisholm. But when we moved in this community I started Sunday School in this church and I've been acquainted with these people, that you're

talking with this morning, all my life, and I was gone, I moved away for approximately 30 years and I always had contact with the community because my parents were here and my grandparents were here till they passed away and my parents were always here so I always had some contact but we didn't live in the immediate area for about 30 years and we moved back here about 5 years ago and of course when we come back my membership, I was formally a member of this church and, my membership had been transferred to Brooklyn Center Methodist and when we come back to the community we decided Pine Lake is where my roots were at least and we decided this is the church we wanted to rejoin and come back into the community because like I said before there is a lot of nostalgia connected with this old building and the people in the community are all people that I've known practically all my life, well all my life, and there are people that are old, of course, and have known me all my life so we've had as Isabelle mentioned, we had our 75th anniversary two years ago here, and we celebrated the 75th anniversary of this particular building. But going back in the past history of this church, we have history that shows Sunday school in this area was started in 1891, but not at this location. There was a school house now Isabelle might, might remember that school house. It was by the outlet at the other end of Pine Lake.

Welton: I believe I walked around the lake one time and saw it.

Howell: And this is where evidently, originally the Sunday school and possibly the church got started.

Gower: Did the Sunday school start in home do you think?

Welton: Right.

Howell: Yeah, I think it started in home but ah—

Welton: Yeah, but excuse me, but I think where that school house was would be where, the Price, Price family lived. Not Kenny's relation but. Yeah, a Mr. Price who was very active later.

Howell: W.P. Price.

Welton: And I presume that, that was his place.

Howell: The thing in the history mentioned that Sunday school met at the Little Lodge School at the south end of Pine Lake, better known as the Outlet. Now that about where Bershes cabin is. There now as I understand it. In that area.

Welton: And later when things weren't going so well here, ah, church was conducted, I mean Sunday school over at Bill Varshes.

Howell: Well, Yes this goes on into.

Gower: Cloud I ask a question here? When this was starting as Sunday school was it Methodist Sunday school or a community?

Howell: It said a Mr. Deacon. Do you remember him?

Welton: No.

Howell: Well, it says in the history that the first Sunday school was started 1891 by Mr. Deacon from the American Sunday school union.

Welton: You see I was born in 1901.

Gower: The American Sunday school Union? Does that mean anything to you?

Welton: No.

Howell: And then ah it says a Miss Jenny Reddick, later Mrs. William Puntney was the first school teacher and also the first Sunday school superintendent. Do you remember her?

Welton: Remember her, yeah.

Howell: Yeah, to open the meeting they sang- I don't know if that's important. The families represented at the organization meeting were the Arthur and William O'Neil, J.C. Schwab, four Hazelton families. Cutter Hazelton (the father) and Duane, Ed, and Frazier. They were sons. The Carl Taylors, Rowans, A.R. Nicols, Al Knowlens, two Kibbey brothers, Rhoys and Pringles.

Welton: Knowlens?

Howell: Yeah, Knowlens. Now ah.

Gower: Now what would you guess or maybe know was the ethnic background of these people was? Were they may be born in the U.S. or maybe they--were they immigrants? I think they were immigrants, I think weren't they?

Welton: No, I think they were born in the United States. I think our immigrants were later when.

Howell: Yeah.

Welton: When the Meyerson's and Knutson's and the Scandinavians moved over East here. Which was quite a bit later. But, otherwise like the Niches, they were English, but some of the others, I just know the names and I wouldn't really know but, I would assume they were born here.

Gower: Now like your parents ah come into this church about when?

Welton: Well, my mother would have, no, ah, she didn't live here right away. I mean they were here at Greg Lake and later they came back. But Grandmother Mrs. Tole would have been here from the beginning as was sister who gave the land Mrs. Emma Branch.

Gower: Oh, Mrs. Tole and Emma Branch were they born in the United States?

Welton: I'd have to look it up, I know they lived in Canada and were educated there by a governess, I think they were born in the United States.

Gower: Okay.

Welton: And the parents might have brought them to Canada.

Gower: We noticed, we had seen a little about the history of the Methodist, the United Methodist Church in Aitkin, and we noticed a number of those people who started out, came from Canada. I think that's where it said. But you don't know whether that involved here or not?

Welton: I'm pretty sure my grandmother and great aunt were born in the United States although I'd have to look up in the records to be sure.

Gower: Okay.

Welton: Ah, but they did reside in Canada.

Gower: Okay, but at least your impression is that this church is more a product of people born in the United States.

Welton: I would think so.

Howell: I would think so definitely.

Price: Most of the names were English.

Howell: My grandparents the Hazeltons, my grandfather's side, he came into this area originally, into this Minnesota area from, I think Pennsylvania, somewhere in the East.

Gower: He was born in the United States?

Howell: Oh yes, but of course if we start going back generations.

Gower: What we mean is in contrast to the immigrants of the 1900s.

Howell: No, no they your parents were all born in the United States too weren't they. My grandfather and grandmother Hazelton were both born in the United States. I remember following the family tree back for enough to see if you know, there's no doubt that there are some immigrants back there.

Gower: Well, you see we've talked to several people in other churches already. For example, we were at Dalbo and those people who started that were from Sweden. They were immigrants from Swede. And all the sermons were in Swedish and everything until the 1930s I think. And that's why we want to get the distinction between these different churches in this regard. This is an American church.

Welton: Right. I would say no.

Gower: Okay, okay, John did you have anything you wanted to ask right now?

LeDoux: Not, not right now.

Gower: Okay, they had this Sunday school going by 189--

Howell: 189—ah, 91, the Sunday school was started in 1891.

Gower: When did they start the church then?

Howell: Well, I imagine that was an offshoot from the Sunday school because Sunday school met from the first Easter until Christmas in the log school house until the newer school was built in about 1894 or 95 in the field just south of B.F. Reems place which is just about a block south of here, ya down that field anyway.

Gower: How did Mr. Reems spell his last name?

Welton: R-E-E-M. I'm a Reem.

Gower: Oh, you're a Reem. R-E-E-M. Okay.

Howell: And it says my first memory that my brother wrote this. My first memories of Sunday school and church were in the little white school house – now that's school house was built in 1894-95. Probably, that's probably where you started, Isabelle, in that area.

Welton: I think so.

Howell: And there.

Gower: Pardon me they were having both Sunday school and church.

Howell: Evidently, they were because on it goes on in here to say that – while having meetings at the school, the church organization was started. Now that's when the church itself got started. The Sunday school was probably a something they attended but it wasn't actually an organized at that time. And--

Gower: Did they have a minister at that time?

Howell: Yes, Wilbur Hunt. Says while having meetings at the school the church organization was started. Wilbur Hunt, who still lives at Bay Lake, at the time this was written, was out pastor at the time and was instrumental in getting things started.

Gower: Oh.

Howell: He preached at every other Sunday for many years, walked most of the time. Now, this is from Bay Lake, you're talking about 12-13 miles over here.

Gower: Was Wilbur Hunt – was that his name?

Howell: Yes.

Gower: Was he a Methodist minister do you think?

Howell: This I don't know, if what denominations he was. Is he a Methodist? Yeah.

Gower: C.W. Hund, was his name?

Howell: Yeah, I suppose that was him. Wilbur, they got here but that would be the middle name I suppose. He also preached at Bay Lake and Deerwood. Now here we're mentioning the Reems here. This is back when this started. In 1984. Not the Reems but Mrs. Towl.

Welton: Yes, my mother.

Howell: Yes, Isabelle's grandmother.

Gower: What did it say about Mrs. Towle?

Howell: Well.

Gower: Is that Towle?

Welton: T-O-W-L-E.

Gower: Towle.

Howell: Yeah, that's right Lucinda, Lucinda was her name. Well, then it goes to say this minister also preached at Bay Lake and Deerwood, Mrs. Charles Butler, Mr. and Mrs. D.C. Hazelton, Mr. and Mrs. John Harvey, Mrs. Lucinda Towl and Mrs. Emma Branch we are among the charter members. The church building and the Ladies Aid group were both started in 1902. That's when this building here was started.

Gower: This building was started in 1902.

Howell: We moved in the fall of 1904. The building wasn't finished by all means but it served out purpose. The present building we're sitting in now was started in 1902 and was moved into in 1904.

Welton: Now, you're Uncle Raymond must have been quite young because he said helped put up the lacquer up there for the plaster. Lymond Hazelton.

Gower: And how old is Lymond Hazelton?

Welton: Well, how old was he when he passed away?

Howell: I couldn't tell you how, but he was, was he as old as you Isabelle?

Welton: Oh, he was older than me.

Howell: Older than you?

Welton: Yes.

Howell: And you were born in 1901?

Welton: I was born in 1901.

Howell: So he was older than you, so ah maybe he was 10 years old, maybe the thing wasn't lacquered yet. Because she said in here the building wasn't finished by any means. Maybe it was structure or a shell and they moved into it to get in here and they worked on it all they went I don't know that deal worked out.

Welton: We've been told that the neighbors regardless of their faith cut logs that were made into lumber for the church. The logs were donated and sawed in a local sawmill to start the church.

Gower: Now what do you—what is your personal remembrance of this church. About how old were you?

Welton: Well, I lived over two miles from here I lived down by Mille Lacs Lake then at my grandmothers and I didn't attend regularly as I might have if I didn't have the two and ¼ miles to walk back and forth but I remember my mother always took an active part as soon as we lived closer and she taught Sunday school here for years and years and years. And I remember they didn't have them when I started Sunday school but later. I think they still have some--the little red chairs for the youngsters.

Howell: Yeah, I used to sit on those.

Welton: And my brothers Charlie did but I don't think they had then when I started.

Price: I can remember them too.

Gower: Oh, did you start when you were 7 years old?

Welton: Something like that. Because we lived at Long Siding where my sister Myrtle O'Neill Peterson was born. Those were the chairs we had for upstairs.

Gower: Those were for upstairs.

Welton: Yes, instead of pews we had those kitchen like chairs that we sat on. Ah, it seems like that I remember. I joined the church when I was 11 years old so that would have been in 1912. There was- there was really no formal acceptance – I think I was just written in a book.

Gower: Was it- was it a Methodist church or was it a community church?

Welton: It was a Methodist church because there was money you put it from what do you call it a diocese from Duluth. So it was just written in a book.

Gower: It was a Methodist Church.

Welton: It was dedicated a Methodist church because there was some funds from-

Gower: From the conference? Do you call it just the conference or--?

Andros: Minnesota Annual Conference.

Gower: Okay.

Welton: It was always everyone was always welcome and there were like when he was reading off some of the names there. The O'Neills were Presbyterians, the Schwabs were something else and still they were very active in this church.

Gower: So that's sort of a community church aspect to it even if it was formally a Methodist church.

Welton: Right and still had because a lot of Sunday ministers are from different faiths.

Andros: This church is very active in the summer because we have so many tourists.

Gower: Oh, sure.

Andros: Pretty full in the summer same thing with Aitkin. When other churches are having problems we are expanding.

Gower: In the summertime, right, sure, and they're from various backgrounds not just Methodist.

Andros: Oh, yes the pastor that is serving over here a little church has 60 people in it last Sunday. He asked for a show of hands and they were representing 10 different denominations.

Welton: Good, good. I remember on time we were rather low on funds here and low on attendance that was when Hanson was preaching at Graniteville? Not taking a great deal of interest in this church as far as I was concerned he wasn't. They said the church need painting so I started along the light-way here and I got a \$5 donation of paint from Urbans who were Catholics and from the Skins they were English people and belonged to an English Lutheran church in Minneapolis. All various people were glad to contribute to this little church and I got enough money to have it painted.

Gower: John?

LeDoux: I was just going to ask to clarify a date. The church was founded as a Methodist church and it always has been.

Howell: In this history it says in this history that the church was dedicated a Methodist – Episcopal church on June 4, 1905. Reverend George Calbraith was our pastor at that time and was also a student at Hamline. So you see, the church evidently we think that the picture on the top over there was the dedication of this building in 1905.

LeDoux: It was Methodist although the people who showed up could be of any denomination.

Welton: Yes.

Howell: Well, it goes on in this history a little bit here just to clarify in our new church we held services with our own pastor every two weeks and much of the time, someone else in between. The O’Neills were Episcopal and for two summers their minister come out every other week to preach to us. As the years went by, Mr. Dow, a summer resident used to preach to us quite often during the summer.

Welton: Alright, they were Episcopalian and the Ferguson’s were Presbyterians.

Howell: Any way this church actually served all dominations. It always has. This is the one thing about this church that it has been very open throughout the years that there’s no lines drawn as to your church affiliation, your, this building is for everybody.

Gower: You had ex-Communism a long time ago.

Howell: Right. And I think that’s one thing that made. I feel like this towards the church, I think that’s one of the things that has kept this church here is the fact that it’s a wide open church, our doors aren’t locked we’re here to serve anyone that walks in.

Gower: Now what would you guess was the pardon me--the size of the church there in the beginning?

Welton: Well, take a look at that.

Gower: Well, I don't mean size, I mean the number in the congregation. Do you think that would be it?

Welton: Well, I suppose that would be a good representation.

Gower: So it was quite a small number of people at the beginning.

Welton: Well, of course, they had to come from quite a long distance. We weren't as thickly populated at that time. Anyways near as now. The Knowluns, what is it, 6 miles down. People were coming with horse and buggy or walking and the Ferguson's from the other way come quite a distance.

Gower: And the church building was fairly small too? Or was it the same size?

Welton: The same size as the area here is in.

Gower: Oh, without that part over there.

Welton: They kept adding on. If you look at these pictures it, it the four different sizes, the first two my mother had and the last two I took of it. It shows the additions. This part in the back and the entrance getting bigger, and bigger.

Howell: I think the original building is what we're sitting in besides that addition wasn't there and that addition wasn't there which leaves just this in the middle.

Welton: Just a small entrance.

Howell: Top picture.

Welton: It was quite small.

Gower: Now, would the, even back then, do you think there was a swelling of the ranks in the summertime or would that start later.

Welton: No, not in the very beginning.

Howell: Now you see people didn't go very far.

Gower: Right, sure.

Howell: We would have people- there were summer people here like the Piney's and those people used to come.

Welton: Oh, yes and that was much later.

Howell: Oh yes, not in the beginning.

Welton: But not in 1900 and in 1901 or 1905.

Gower: So there you depended upon the population of this immediate area which wasn't too large really.

Welton: No.

Gower: So you had some church and a pretty limited budget I would assume. Do you have any idea about the financial?

Howell: I know in here it says our ministers were paid \$100 a year.

Gower: \$100 a year.

Howell: And it says that, right here, if they had families they would accept meat, vegetables, quilts, pillow cases, even wood for fuel towards payment of salary. There's a notion that we really had a community church, all denominations were welcome and all denominations helped to support it.

Gower: So all through these years too, you had the Sunday school and the church and a Ladies Aide in operation.

Welton: Most of the time.

Howell: The Ladies Aide was organized and acquainted with us in 1902. It says that the church building and the Ladies Aide were both started with in 1902. You see with these little churches with one off the other they had trouble surviving they had to have somebody being in funds and organizing the building fees and all this to get these churches built. So evidently the Ladies Aide was organized and no doubt it's like it is today. The Ladies pitch in here when there's something needed they pitch in and have a big sale or something and raise a lot of money and--

Welton: Yeah, I've already baked a pie this morning for tomorrow night. (Laughter)

Gower: Yes.

Howell: But you see evidently this was the thing that built this church. The whole thing working together.

Andros: whenever they'd have any kind of picnic the people come from all around the area. They'll have one in July and then they'll have an ice cream social in, tomorrow, for example, and everyone will gather around here.

Gower: Now did you say something earlier about?

Gower: Scandinavians, about when do you think they appeared?

Welton: (Indiscernible)

Gower: 1918?

Welton: The Knutsons, they were three families of Meyerson's, um, who were the others?

Howell: Well in here it says.

Gower: Were they Swedish?

Welton: George Christianson was a neighbor over there and was Danish--

Welton and Howell: (Indiscernible)

Gower: And they came from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

Welton: Right, Mr. Henderson, it amused me, I think I was in the 7th grade, he was here before that, he was here before that. He came to school to learn English he was a grown man and walking into 1st grade and seeing a grown man there it was quite an unusual experience.

Howell: Yes, your mother mentioned that too.

Welton: Yes, he picked up on the language very rapidly so he wasn't in school for very long but that was before 1918 because I was through with school.

Howell: Well, this history says it was about 1918. Our Norwegian friends moved in, and such workers you never saw. Mrs. Halvor Knutson and Mrs. Arne Medigo were exceptional. When we had a supper at the church, the Knutsons would hitch up their team, load on tables, dishes, food, cooking utensils and even the tablecloths from their part of the neighborhood while we

would do the same from the other direction, meeting without loads at the church. Mrs. B.F. Reems, that's Isabelle's mother, always cooked and mashed the potatoes as we had no stove. Lots of work, but a lot of satisfaction, too, Mrs. Knutson's still a good worker, and she is now 80 years old. Now this was 1958, so she's passed away now.

Welton: There were three families the Meyerson's from our neighborhood.

Howell: I think they mentioned somewhere in here- Mrs. John Meyerson, anyways this was, that's east of the store over here. We used to refer to it, jokingly as little Scandinavia because it was all Scandinavians, east of the store. There were the Meyerson's, the Mitchell's the Gunderson's, the Knutson's and they all settles over there. And I don't think any of those, well some of those people are members, I guess of this church. All of them weren't I'm sure.

Welton: As far as I know they weren't.

Gower: They weren't members but they came here.

Howell: Oh, you bet.

Welton: Right, I don't know if any of them were really members. They may have been. I never saw the records but I always thought they weren't.

Gower: But you had said when you became a member there didn't seem to be any formal step required. But later on though there was.

Welton: Well, do you think by this time, the 1920s?

Andros: In the 30s, it was the different pastors some would have maybe a couple sessions only up until even not too many years ago and so I would say its only in the last 10 years probably that most pastors have been very much.

Gower: Then do they have some orientation or do you call it?

Andros: We call it in the Lutheran Church Catechism or confirmation.

Gower: Oh, I see.

Andros: It is generally what is required before joining you in church, as a child but as an adult it varies with the pastor. They may just simply say “Do you believe in Christ as your Savior?” If they do they can join.

Gower: Okay, I see.

Andros: Whether they have any training or not. Now a days we have some charts we can go through with people and help them to get a basic understanding of what a Methodist church requires.

Gower: Sure, okay, John.

LeDoux: One question, we were talking about the Scandinavia immigrants, Now the services would have been in English, do the Scandinavia have any trouble understanding the sermons or the--

Welton: No, they know English when they go there.

Andros: They could speak English.

Howell: Oh, they could speak English. The Meyerson's went to school here. Because my mother said John and Gus came to school like you said.

Welton: Well, I don't know about that.

Howell: Yeah, she was in school at that time and she said they came, two grown men and they wanted to learn English. They could, they could--

Welton: When I knew them they could speak good English, of course, I was away for a while.

Howell: They, ah, they I guess could, ah, they knew enough English so they could communicate but they wanted to learn, you know, English as a language so as long as I knew any of those people which was 50 years, they could all speak English.

Welton: Oh, yes, well don't you think because they had children in school that they learned rapidly from their children.

Gower: Yeah, that was what we found out for example, down at Dalbo. The children learned the English and the right a home. Now, some of the parents still didn't learn English to any extent but others did, which was what she was saying down there. Do you have any idea why those people came here from Denmark and Norway and so on? Why did they come to this particular locality I mean? Did they homestead?

Welton: I don't think, I don't think we had homestead then. Oh, no.

Gower: Indiscernible. No, why wouldn't they go to Pine City or--

Welton: I would say that Minnesota was noted as a refugee camp if you want to call it that for Scandinavians, they came to live here because they knew that other Scandinavians lived in this

state whether it was in this spot or not. Now, Minnesota has a lot of Scandinavians in Minneapolis and various places.

Andros: We were always told that the reason we have so many Norwegians and Swedes in Minnesota was that when they were building the railroad through, these people from Norway and Sweden could take the cold weather so that's why they asked them to come over rather than people from the southern European countries because they couldn't take the cold weather.

Welton: Now, what I heard also, Fr. Andros, was a good many Irishmen helped on the railroad too. I suppose that would be for the same reason.

Andros: I think that probably that in this area, typical of a lot of areas where you find a congregation of nationalities, ah, it's impossible. It's hard to say. I know the first one's here were the Scandinavians. But I know in the Finnish community where my wife comes from the way that Finnish people founded, maybe just one family. They had relatives in Finland. Well, this one family contacted the relatives in Finland and say we found a good spot come on and we'll find a spot for you. And it grew around. I know Bel Cedar, where my wife came from. There was a man there by the name of Libeck that had a sawmill, a sawmill operation back in the limbering days, well, he would send money to Finnish people he knew in Finland, pay their way over here and they would work in his mill to work this out and of course they branched out and settled in the area around there and it just grew. I imagine something happened here probably the same way. One family moved here and found what they thought was Utopia and they let their friends and neighbors know and that we've found a spot so if you want to come over we'll make room for you in our house until you get settled and it just expanded. The lumberjack left a great population around this area. I hears about river peat. I never what river peat was before. But they

were telling that if they rub their bodies down with lard they would keep off the lice and then help keep their skin from being infected and then they wouldn't have a bath from the time started maybe, ah, in the fall maybe until sometime in the spring. And lived in the, one of these logging beds. The log drivers took baths every once in a while, whether they wanted it or not.

Welton: I went in the logging beds when I wrote for the Pioneer magazine about the Pine Knoll and the Waiggan coming down the Mississippi River.

Gower: Wiggan, is that Wigger?

Andros: That's an Indian name.

Welton: Why don't you look it up? I can't remember.

Gower: What does that refer to?

Welton: Something like that.

Andros: That's an Indian name for in reference to floating house or something like that.

Gower: Oh.

Andros: These things floated; they were on a big barge.

Gower: Sure.

Welton: They we're steered by long poles. They had a special names. And then they had little ropes that they put ashore that had a French name.

Andros: Bateaux.

Welton: Yes, bateaux.

Andros: I had a pair of oars at home now for a Bateaux. They're pretty weather-beaten and worn but they're handmade out of tamarack. They're ten to twelve feet long.

Gower: Now, would you discuss the various stages and changes this building has had, that you were talking about earlier. Was this building, was it first just this small.

Welton: I think the brochure for--

Gower: For the 75th, is that in this?

Welton: Yes, I think it's in there.

Howell: Here in 1956 we decided we needed more room, so started construction of a basement just north of the church. This is what I mentioned before the church was moved.

Gower: This was just in 1956?

Howell: 1956.

Welton: And before that they did enlarge the entrance according to the pictures.

Howell: Well, that could be, I don't know.

Welton: We probably don't have that in here but the entrance was enlarged and the sequel was that he just go done with.

Howell: But this was evidently when the basement was out in and the church building was moved. It was too close to the road and they put in the basement. Charlie Reem did the excavating for this.

Welton: That was my brother.

Howell: That's Isabelle's brother. And I don't know who did the block work. I wasn't around here at that time.

Welton: I was in Minneapolis.

Howell: But anyway in this book it says. When the basic construction was completed, the church building was moved on it. Before the finishing touches were made, we held a have supper. There goes the Ladies Aide again. And such nightmare. We had a heating stove in one corner behind which we washed dishes. People stood three and four deep around the sides of the church. It was decided there would be no more suppers there until our basements facilities were installed.

Gower: But, do you know how they moved the church?

Howell: Well, who moved it Kenny, you were around here?

Gower: Did they move it with some big trucks, I imagine?

Andros: Well, I you see, this was just from ah, the church.

Gower: Oh.

Andros: I imagine if they pulled it with a truck they would have a hollow wrench that they would pull a keg with. Would probably be on rollers.

Gower: And that was the last basic change in the building then. (Indiscernible)

Howell: Was the entrance enlarged before they moved it?

Welton: It was the one in between.

Gower: Oh, then they added the larger one since 1956?

Howell: In 1966, it says here.

Welton: Ah, but when the bathroom and the large kitchen were put on. It had to be bigger.

Gower: What about this back part?

Welton: That was the east part added.

Gower: That's been in the last couple of years?

Welton: Yes.

Howell: Well, ah, it says here in this pamphlet that thanks to a few ambitious women in 1966, we acquired a new well and water is now piped to our kitchen. When still more room was in need, we added an addition in 1967 that would enlarge our kitchen and provide space for two restrooms facilities. We still have quite a debt for our building, but with God's help, we will overcome that. Now, that evidently, that portion back there was added this time.

Gower: Why does it say thanks to the women?

Howell: Because the women, if we didn't have the women's organization this church, a lot of this stuff might not be here.

Gower: What did the women actually do in regard to this? Did they raise the money for that?

Howell: They had ham suppers, ice cream socials and they had sales. I'll tell you the women in this little church are really something else once they get going.

Gower: Of course, that was written by women too. (laughter)

Howell: I know. But past history will show that when you read through this for instance, they had this ham dinner. They need money to get this thing moved so they had a ham dinner. And they'll sell baked goods and they'll do this and that. And this is one thing I'll say about this little church if it weren't for active women organization in this church we'd be struggling for a lot of things. They just go in there like hornets and have a social and this money is definitely dedicated to something in this building, they're going to do something with it. I think it's, the Ladies in this church deserve a lot of credit. The men have done somethings too. But these ladies in here are really something else when it comes to when we need money they'll figure something out.

Andros: We just got \$5,000 donated to us by a man and who is related to one of our church members. Did he go here at any time do you know?

Howell: Well, he used to be, well he never went to church actually.

Welton: Oh, Emil?

Howell: Right. (Indiscernible)

Welton: His daughters used to come to Sunday school.

Andros: Oh, yeah, but this man, was a man who lived in the community and he has a lot of feeling for this neighborhood, he always has for his community.

Welton: Are you going to tell them about the check that we got from him one time though.

Andros: I don't know anything about that. We cashed this check already, this man is a millionaire. So we don't have to worry if we cash it right away, there won't be any problem. But anyway I'll say this the man has feelings for the community otherwise he wouldn't do this. He got, he lives. Again the ladies deserves the credit because a lady from the church went and talked

to him and said, you don't have too many years left before you die so why don't you do something good with your money.

Gower: Usually if you say that they say, no, I'm not going to give you any money.

Andros: Anyways, our ladies organization in this church gives us a lot of support.

Gower: Okay, now, how did you, how do you think the church grew as it, has it grown pretty much through the years or has it been stable in its membership? Or what would your impression be?

Andros: I know a couple of pastors that served some 20 years ago wanted to close this church.

Gower: Why did they want to close it?

Andros: It must not have, they felt maybe the Aitkin church wasn't that big either and people could just as well go from here to Aitkin. And they would only have one sermon a week instead of two. That might have been a selfish reason but I don't know. But I couldn't tell you what the recent record has been for attendance.

Howell: When did this Smith come, it started.

Welton: Well, I was in Minneapolis before they come back down here but Graniteville was given the prime time at St. Allan's TV and we would have supposedly a sermon at 2:00 in the afternoon. You can imagine how well that was attended.

Gower: This was the minister from Atkin serving three churches, was that it?

Welton: I don't know?

Gower: That was Beldeer and--

Welton: Yes, yes.

Andros: Yes, and the Atkin and Bentonville people we're given the better morning for church services. This was about when would you say?

Welton: Well, it would have to be before the others came back down here so.

Andros: It would be before 1915?

Gower: Oh, before 1915.

Howell: Oh, no. No.

Welton: No.

Howell: It was in the 50s.

Gower: In the 1950s.

Howell: I think about 1956 was when.

Welton: Well, let's say it was in 1950 or so.

Gower: Was it Reverend Hansen?

Howell: Yes.

Gower: Reverend Allyn Hansen.

LeDoux: So what developed from that?

Welton: Well there was talk about moving this church on the highway and that didn't go through at all.

LeDoux: Out on 169?

Gower: 169 here?

Howell: There was, there was a little friction developing somewhere between like frictions in communities and neighborhoods and the Bennetville people though that this was too far for them to come to church. Why should they come down there for church?

Gower: How far is Bennetville?

Howell: Well, it's only about 4-5 miles between two, these two villages.

Andros: Is it right down by the cemetery, the Bennetville Cemetery? That church?

Howell: Services held. I don't want to say this as an authority but I think – you know how these little things develop.

Gower: A little bit of a rivalry?

Howell: Yeah, just a little bit someplace.

Andros: Baseball game.

Gower: started over a baseball game?

Howell: There was a competition, Bennetville and Cutler were two different deals. You know how these little communities will get. There were rivalries here and there and so someday developed a rivalry. And this thing, one up there and one here. You see once this flipped, there

wasn't enough people to actually give good support to either one, you know, but united, in one, like we are now then, this is fine.

Gower: Was there a real danger that this would be closed down then do you think?

Howell: I never felt any real danger, I know the congregation dropped way down a lot of times with people moving away and but –

Gower: By the way down, what number would you give?

Welton: I came to church two o'clock one Sunday with my mother and we were it.

Gower: You were the only two ones in the church for services?

Howell: I was visiting at the time so that was pretty low for attendance.

Gower: Do you think that was in the 1950s?

Welton: I think it probably was.

Andros: That church at Bennetville, is that structure still standing?

Howell: Yes, it's a schoolhouse.

Welton: Yes, an old schoolhouse. I wasn't a very good place because a lot of those people were just too bit to sit in those seats.

Gower: Now, that is the size of your congregation here now?

Andros: We have about 93.

Gower: That is the permanent people here?

Andros: Church members most of them, of them are living in the area. There are a few that are living some miles away.

Gower: When you get into the middle of the summer do you have a larger number of people coming to your services because of the summer?

Andros: Oh, yes. There are good attendance. A few times will go up to a 100 or more. But we're averaging around 70 or so.

Gower: This is during the entire year, 70 is the average?

Andros: I'm not certain, it's a little bit less.

Howell: I would say the yearly average would be 70. But the, our summer average, carries over one in an average basis.

Gower: John, were you going to add something?

LeDoux: Yeah, I was wondering when he said, mentioned the size of the church and where the people were coming from, where exactly did, do you remember, come from. Like how far out?

Andros: Well, you tell him you probably know.

Gower: Within five miles or so.

Howell: No, I live nine miles north from here and there are four families in my area who come to church here.

Andros: And from the tip of the lake of Mille Lacs, too.

Howell: That's right and from Garrison and below Garrison.

Andros: From Garrison.

Howell: And Oakwood, so were growing from a pretty big radius.

Gower: So you go out 15 miles or so.

Howell: I would say so.

LeDoux: Is this the closest Methodist church down around Garrison? There's none down there to take it?

Howell: There are churches in Garrison, but no Methodist church as such. But were pulling people that should be going to Aitkin. We're pulling people that live two miles this side of Aitkin are coming down here to church which is 10 miles.

Gower: Did they come here before and then move into Aitkin?

Howell: There are people who have been in this church for this was their family's church. Like I felt when I moved back up here. I knew a few people from the Aitkin church but my roots were here. These were the people I knew, I was raised with, born here, raised in the community and knew these people and we just felt that this was where we belonged. So we didn't think anything of driving the nine miles down here to come to church.

Welton: In 1964, there was land supplied north of this church for a parking lot for \$550.

Between 1967 and 1969 the kitchen was enlarged and the bathroom were added. In 1962 the furnaces was installed. In 1971 the east entrance was added and carpeted.

Gower: That's the over there, in 1971?

Welton: In 1973, green siding was added to the outside of the church and the new back entrance. A year earlier a sidewalk had been poured on the south side of the church.

Gower: You were telling me earlier about financial matters. It had sometimes when it was pretty tight financially. Is that correct?

Welton: Yes, especially when it was divided.

Gower: Now, here you had some help. I don't know how this works. But I, have you had some help from the conference? Financial help for the conference?

Andros: I don't think so.

Gower: This has been strictly on its own?

Andros: The conference had financial help from you.

Gower: Oh, the conference had financial help from you.

Howell: This is another thing I admired from this little church. I think if you survey the churches throughout the state you're going to find out that Pine Lake Methodist Church is probably in the top group of solvent churches. That's, that's- Isn't that true?

Welton: When we started writing up this brochure I mentioned that we were a debt-free congregation, what we had acquired and what we had done and we were debt-free at that time.

Andros: And they paid their portion as far as I know every year in the past.

Howell: That's right we keep up with all our obligations and I noticed something last spring or this early in the spring before when we drew our budget up for 1977-1978. Our last year's budget

due to inflation there hadn't been enough money budgeted to cover. We, we were going in "78" with a deficit and ah, we wrote a letter, a little letter to the congregation sent it out, that we had this deficit and that we would certainly appreciate going into the new year starting with dark ink and starting over again. The following two Sunday's we, we needed eleven hundred dollars I think, didn't we? The following two Sunday's over \$600 came in in offerings. Just to bring this up.

Gower: So you raise your money through contributions and the Ladies Aide activities and so on-

Andros: Through altar, pledges, plate offerings and the ladies group and memorials add to our things that people dedicate to this a church and we use them for things that we need and sometimes we designate a certain thing we want and we get that. A man donated \$5000 I guess stated that the money was to be used to maintain this building, this is what he had dedicated.

Welton: There were strings attached on the money after he could take it off his income tax then he demanded the money back.

Gower: This was on an earlier occasion?

Welton: That was a few years ago.

Andros: A different time, yes.

Howell: Well, I wouldn't even, you know, want it in the history, because.

Welton: No.

Andros: No, we don't.

Welton: We really don't want that I suppose, but that's the way it happened.

Howell: Yeah.

Welton: The, the strings just couldn't be met. So we--

Howell: I think the way I understood it now this money was given for maintenance of this--as a monument, or as a memorial here. The maintenance of this building which is fine. We need, we need money for maintenance.

Gower: Sure, you need money for that all the time.

Welton: Is that for this church of Aitkin?

Howell: No, this church.

Welton: It is for this one?

Howell: Oh, yes.

Welton: I didn't know.

Gower: Okay, John did you have another?

LeDoux: Yeah, I have a few questions here. Okay, first of all I want to ask, now is there more than 1 conference in the Methodist church? I'm unfamiliar with--

Gower: No, In Minnesota its one conference.

Andros: Right.

LeDoux: How about nationwide is there? Is it all one conference?

Andros: No, every state has one.

Gower: Each state has its own.

Andros: Yes.

LeDoux: Every state, okay, okay.

Andros: Some states have several, well some, sometimes two states go together to make one.

LeDoux: Mmmmm.

Andros: But--

Gower: But in a state like--

Andros: Generally, its one state has an annual conference.

Gower: Even like in California, they're going over the line.

Andros: I think California and Nevada are one bishop over the two states if I'm not mistaken.

Gower: Oh, I see.

Andros: Mmmm.

LeDoux: Okay. Now for the – now you're pastor of the United Methodist Church in Aitkin also?

Andros: Yes, uh-huh.

LeDoux: How long have you been doing?

Andros: I have been at these two churches one year, so far.

LeDoux: I see. Now is –

Andros: I'm appointed now for the second year.

LeDoux: Uh huh. Has this been rather traditional over the years to have the pastor in Aitkin also have the church here?

Andros: Yes.

Gower: Has that been since 1915 or so, or--

Andros: Yeah, Since 19--

Welton: When they could come by automobile then we shared.

LeDoux: Mmmmm.

Welton: Ministers.

Gower: Gosh, 1915.

Welton: When, I was in the 6th grade.

Andros: That's right since 19--

Welton: Reverend- (indiscernible).

Andros: 15 and they're always – or right and always had the same pastor.

Welton: He had a farm, west of Aitkin and his daughter was our school teacher out here.

Gower: Who was this? Reverend –

Welton: J.J. Whitrup.

Gower: Whitrup?

LeDoux: He was a Danish minister?

Welton: Yes, he was.

Gower: That's--

LeDoux: I was going to ask about that.

Gower: --right here.

LeDoux: Was he one of the immigrants then became the minister here?

Welton: No, he moved into Aitkin for a few years, I don't know where from, ah, he has one daughter who is still alive and she is married to Peggy Wallock's brother. He married this teacher's younger sister and they had their 50th wedding anniversary two or three years ago. Clarence and Donald's.

LeDoux: Okay, I'd like to ask also about the relationship between the church in Aitkin and the church here at Pine Lake, ah, now was one kind of the mother church for the other or were they both completely separate now?

Andros: Yes, they always have been.

LeDoux: They always have been separate.

Welton: We try to return things back and forth like the activities and work together that way but we are independent organizations.

Andros: To have two churches may be necessary sometimes to support a pastor because one church alone could not do it and if there is a congregation even if a pastor could get the full salary from one church he would be appointed to serve the other church in order for that church to have a pastor. So you wouldn't appoint a pastor to just one small church he'd have to have a bigger church with it. Unless he were retiring or something.

Howell: Of course, if it wasn't such an inflationary salary in our pastors \$100 a year. This is what they were paid back in 1894.

Gower: Yeah, if they could buy things for five cents for this and that it probably be alright.

Welton: Speaking of my great-aunt again, she was Dr. Branches' wife before he passed away before she was, Mrs. Nuel. I had an old account book of his, the money that that doctor took in in a year, was two or \$300. Doctor's wages.

Howell: I was going through- see I have a copy of my grandmother's Hazelton's always kept a diary, she had a daily diary. And um--

Welton: Put in 25 cents for Sunday school and she knew that was too much. So they had this little grocery store down here and she spent five cents for crackers and five cents for a deviled ham for a little snack after Sunday school and only put in the 15 cents.

Howell: That letter that we got from Kenneth, Migell. Do you remember that from the vacation?

Welton: Yes.

Howell: This Kenneth Migell, was one of the, went to Sunday school he was about the age of Willard and myself about that age group, when he hit our 75th anniversary we sent our invitations to the former people who had anything to do with this church in case they went on vacation. This Kenneth Migell sent a, he wrote us a nice letter to say he was sorry he couldn't come but he sent a check for \$25 or--

Welton: At least \$10.

Howell: And he said, \$10 I guess, he said now this was the money that my folks used to give me to go to Sunday school with but I spent it in Reems store instead of giving it to the church. So I'll give you the check for \$10 and start making up my debt.

Gower: How did he spell his name?

Howell: M-E-D-J-O. I think they were Danish.

Gower: John, do you have some more things?

LeDoux: Oh, the other lakes around here are there also other small churches similar to Pine Lake on same--

Andros: There is a really tiny called the Maria church which is not too many miles from here, which is actually like Saturday nights they're been having worship service just on Saturday nights by the Lutheran pastor.

Gower: How do they spell Maria?

Andros: MARIA.

Welton: We had to keep pretty active to keep the cemetery up.

Howell: It's a real typical picture church, the white church on the hill with the steeple and the cemetery on the side. I don't know what domination it was there. It was a typical country church like you would see on a post card. The cemetery and the white church you had to go up, kind of step and the pulpit way above everyone else looking down on them and its all white and this little round thing.

LeDoux: Was that primarily a summer church? For, does it, Maintained only by tourists or is there a steady congregation?

Andros: No, there really isn't a congregation now, there was a regular congregation but the Lutheran's church had just started up and decided to (indiscernible) but the women use it for gatherings and--

Welton: For entertainment--

Andros: For entertainment and their clubs.

Welton: A year ago (indiscernible)

Howell: There's a poem in the back of this that might be about this church I think that is quite significant.

Welton: The one I wrote?

Howell: No, the mother wrote, so she wrote this while book this is--

Howell: Well, I can't give you the book but here is the poem-- This book belongs to my sister. We each got one of these books, I can't find mine so-- Isabel got some here. I think. Yeah, our church. This is the one Isabel wrote about our church. You know when you read one of these poems that one of these ladies wrote you can feel the dedication that, you know, these people had towards this church.

Welton: Things are moved around some but I think I can find some copies upstairs.

Andros: There aren't many copies of those.

Gower: We've got a copy of that, but we don't have one of this.

Howell: That I can't sell, we'd have to run a copy because it, this belongs to my sister, I'll take it and use it for today--

Welton: I think I can find another one of these upstairs.

Andros: Of that one?

Howell: There could be one up there someplace.

Gower: It would be nice if we would get one.

Howell: I think that is in there though. Most of that is in the anniversary in front.

Andros: Right, but this poem isn't.

Welton: But I have a copy of it here word for word.

Howell: Yeah, here it is, word for word the same poem.

Gower: Okay, fine, fine, very good.

Welton: Then I started from there to add to it.

Howell: Now a little, little of the background that I can remember about this church.

Gower: Okay.

Howell: We used to walk to Sunday school we lived a mile south and we'd walk here to Sunday school. In the wintertime the Reems lived right close here on this corner, the Boyds lived right behind here where the Bontvilles are now. Now either the Reems or the Boyds would build a fire, they had a wood stove in the corner of the church upstairs. And they would come over, I don't know what time it was, 6 o'clock, Sunday morning and build a fire in the stove because this church building would stand here 40 below all week and unless we would have a school function of something. And we would come to Sunday school and the only place it would be warm would be 10 feet around the stove. So we would gather our little red chairs. Mrs. Boyd was

the Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Reem used to teach Sunday school here and other ladies too, but the two I remember, we'd would sit around that stove with our back's freezing and our faces warm and have our Sunday school lesson and then it was all over with we'd take our penny tithes in our corner of our handkerchief, that was an old habit, you'd take a penny and tie it in your handkerchief and bring it to Sunday school, work most of the time trying to get it out but anyway these were the things, the first memories I have of this building. And then, of course, as we grew, ah there, a lot of serious things happened. My parents were married here, in this church, in this building. So you see, that's why I say my roots are here. I, I would get just as much as of the service at the Aitkin Methodist Church but I wouldn't feel as warm there as I do in this building because of the background and its part in my life.

LeDoux: I have a question related to that, and I've asked it of the other people we've talked to at other churches. Do you feel that the fact that this is small church in a rural setting adds to the feeling of stability, of having roots here? Do you get a better sense of history?

Howell: I definitely think that's what keeps the church going is the, is the dedication of the people that have built themselves into this church, not what the church had done for them but they have built themselves in here and the church had built their lives, the community life in this community was built around this church.

Welton: Even our school, our school programs are given at the church.

Gower: What is, what the age range of this congregation is do you have some younger people. So it can keep on going over this years?

Andros: Not too many really, are there?

Howell: Our history here is probable is the same as is in a lot of churches, we don't have enough, we wonder but, hopefully, somebody is going to keep us going. Maybe our parents felt the same at the time they started this thing, they thought we'll get this started and we'll hope somebody will take over and keep this going. All we can do is just hope and pray that this thing is going to stay here, this building and going to be used, like I mentioned before, this was a community, this was the center of community activity in this area. The school, which is on the corner, you passed it there, that's where I went until eighth grade, in the schoolhouse. Well, we would always have a Christmas program, we didn't have room in the school because the desks were screwed down in the floor so adult people couldn't get in those. So we would always have our school programs here and they always had a Halloween program and a Christmas program and usually a Easter program and then, there in between there, there would be a basket social, or a box social or something going on in this building and I can remember when I was young, in the wintertime when automobiles weren't being driven much in the winter time, you know, ah they used to tie their horses up along the north side. They'd, everybody come with their horse and sled and bring their neighbors of their family and they'd throw hay down along the building out there and they'd have blankets their horses would stand out there in the cold while their teams and went their way. And some people came along way, like the Prices if they come down they have about 5 miles, to come. The people over here had 3 or 4 miles to come. But they come with their horses. They were hardships connected with this. You know, you have to be dedicated to do these things. Now, you know, we think it's terrible to have to get up and drive our car, 10 miles to get here, you, that's quite a chore you know. But in those days the dedication of the people in the church.

Welton: How far did the Reigher's come, there was a big family.

Howell: They would come too, you know, and they had farther yet. You know, and like I mentioned I come 9 miles to church now.

Welton: The Reigher's now, when they come they were walking.

Howell: Yeah, they were walking. A lot of people were walking.

Gower: How did the Reigher's spell their name?

Welton: R-E-I-G-H-E-R.

Howell: It's been dedication that has kept us going. If we didn't have these people who were willing to go out and harness their teams and drive five or six miles with a sled in 20 below weather. We wouldn't be here, because that's what it takes to start things.

LeDoux: Reverend, you've served in congregations of a larger nature than this, do you sense a different there between an urban congregation and a strictly rural church

Andros: Well, the rural people are basically more friendly I think and ah maybe--

Welton: Maybe less formal.

Howell: You're putting--

Andros: Yeah, less formal, you see I had to say it right. They're really a lot more fun for people in the some of the congregation and I have served people in it. And they want it to be that way for their children, too.

Welton: Mrs. Trabor especially enjoyed our ladies organization out here. She felt more at home out here with us.

Gower: Did you, have you served in any really big churches though.

Andros: Well, Hastings. Well, that was about 500 members. And Aitkin is about 330. And then I had the Slayton church and that was about 400.

Gower: Oh, so you have had some large churches.

Ledoux: I didn't mean to put you on the spot but in a lot of cases we've found that rural vs. urban churches tend to be, have a very stable population and a deep sense of a belonging there. Of having a history there. As opposed to moving o moving to different towns and different churches. That's basically what I was getting at.

Andros: There's got to be more pride if you live in a rural area and the, that church has been a central part of your life, the people change and are only there for short time. You have more of a change of leaderships in the big churches generally I suppose.

Ledoux: Are there any customs that are observed over the ages in this church alone. Any observations that this church observes that are not commonly observed elsewhere?

Andros: Sort of distinctive things, ethic?

Ledoux: Like different ethnic groups would observe special holidays.

Welton: No, we didn't have that.

Ledoux: No, I understand that, were there any services that were special Christmas services?

Howell: I think that all our services are real special.

Welton: That's a nice way of expressing it. We do have special Christmas services, yes, but I presume they all do.

Howell: It's not a spectacular extravaganza or anything it's just, just a dedicated group of Christian people here. I'll tell you, if you ever want a, a experience something, come to a potluck dinner here sometime. If you're on a diet, stay away cause I'll tell you, you come to a potluck dinner here in this church that the women put on and anybody walks out of here hungry its certainly their own fault. Because, they really--

Gower: They still have a lot of the, the bazaar, what, tomorrow night you're going to have an ice cream social.

Welton: Ice cream social, bake sale, you still--

Gower: Ice cream social, bake sale, you still have a lot of these type of things.

Howell: There is another bake sale in August. That's a great big bake sale in August why they not only bring baked goods but they bring fresh vegetables. You know, we have tourists here in the summer who look forward to this, I think. Homemade bread, homemade rolls, homemade cakes.

Andros: I look forward to that--

Howell: You know people have their own gardens they'll bring some squash, maybe sell it for a nickel or dime a piece or cucumbers and this stuff sells, or anything they have. People from the Cities are looking for this stuff, its fresh.

Welton: Homemade maple syrup.

Gower: So this is almost like a fair.

Howell: Well, they call it a bazaar, and then they have the handiwork, the fancy work and they sell this stuff at the bazaar, you see these women will do this and give it to the bazaar and the bazaar sells it and that's money for--

Andros: Another thing that we're doing that might be a little bit different is every Wednesday night we're having a worship services. Like we would on Sunday morning. For the people who can't make it on Sunday morning. For the, they may be working, they may have company or they may be travelling someplace else.

Gower: This is every Wednesday, even during the summer.

Andros: No this is just during summer. And it's averaging about 30. So it's working out real well.

Gower: Did you just start that out this summer?

Andros: Yes, and like last Wednesday, this week we had communion services because we had communion in church Sunday morning so then we had communion Wednesday night so now and then people from Aitkin who missed the church service will come to the Wednesday night service.

Andros: Are you interested in the occupations of the area?

Gower: Yes, what are the occupations of the many people in this church?

Andros: What did you do, Ken?

Welton: What didn't he do, tell them?

Price: Farming, I worked in a lab in the mines for 10 years, timbering.

Andros: He's got his own logging, saw mill and everything.

Prince: I'm retired now.

Welton: Still working harder than ever.

Andros: He's a violinist.

Gower: Yeah, I heard that, I'd like to hear that.

Andros: He's played Sunday mornings, many, many times.

Gower: Is that right?

Howell: Yes, he's very good. He plays Sunday mornings and special services, Ken plays.

Gower: Did you take violin lessons or did you just pick it up?

Andros: He also play not an accordion but a concertina.

Price: Guitar, mandolin.

Gower: Oh, so you play a number of musical instruments and what about your occupation?

Howell: I, ah, well now, I'm retired, but I worked for 27 years as a, well a, let's put it this way. I worked 9 years as a sheet metal, sheet metal layout and then I worked 11 years as a draftsman and a designer of truck bodies and equipment and then I took my job prior to that I worked here and there. I worked as a carpenter work, I worked as a milly in a log company for a few years and what else have I done, I've done a lot of things, you know, my main occupation for almost 30 years has been in the sheet metal and then I got into layout and retired.

Andros: What are some of the occupations that you know of people in the area?

Howell: We've got small farms and berries, raspberries and strawberries.

Gower: Oh.

Andros: Carpenters and we have carpenters in our congregation.

Howell: We've got a good cross section of just about everything if you look into it.

Gower: What did your husband do?

Welton: He did a good many things too. He did a fencing, he took care of telephone lines; we owned White trucks that were black, that's a make of trucks.

Gower: Yeah.

Welton: We used to sell building lines, some of them were the same Ed Price was talking about. He had a license to run a steam-boiler. He felt that if anyone else could do something there was no reason why he couldn't do it. So that gave him a very large scope of doing things.

Howell: He had a saw-mill too, Isabelle.

Welton: Oh yes, he sawed lumber so good that when Cliff would take it to Duluth they'd know it came from the Welton mill. And he didn't even know how to saw.

Andros: I know we have a husband and a wife that are x-ray technicians and we have a mail carrier in our church and we have people that operate farm stores out here and turkey farming and ladies that work in the bank.

Welton: That's in town.

Andros: Yes, cooks in the hospital, and ladies that work in the nursing home.

Welton: You weren't going to ask what I do?

Gower: Oh, yes, what did you do?

Welton: Anyone who talks as much as I do had to be a--

Gower: A school teacher?

Welton: Telephone operator, at one time.

Gower: A telephone operator, oh, I was going to say a school teacher.

Welton: No, a long distance telephone operator, I was trained in Minneapolis for AT&T.

Gower: Oh, I see. Did you work at it for a quite a bit?

Welton: No, not really, but it sort of stayed with me. I did come back and worked in the Aitkin office after I left Minneapolis. I worked a short time in Lawrence, Kansas in their telephone office.

Gower: Lawrence, Kansas. I went to the University of Kansas there.

Welton: Oh, then you know all about the telephone office there, that was during WWII.

Gower: Sure, right, sure.

Welton: My husband at that time was working with my brother, Clinton out at the Sunflower ordinance. So for killing time I worked at the telephone office. And I've always been interested in medicine and in people. And I was at the Gillette State Hospital for a short time in training. And I've had a good many friends who were nurses included Mrs. Louis Helms, whose husband started the REA for the whole United States and I used to be at their home quite a lot and looked after their children from time to time and I still correspond with the Helms son, the only one left

from that family now but it was very interesting that the first grant was for REA here. We were the first one line in United States and the second line built.

Gower: Here, in, right in this pine lake area?

Welton: In Aitkin, from Aitkin.

Gower: Oh.

Andros: The first pole set in the Mille Lacs Lake, just south of here.

Gower: I didn't even know that.

Welton: So she trained the original Mayo brothers, and I just read a lot on medicine ever since then and on UFO because I saw one out here over Pine Lake, just on the other side of Pine Lake.

Andros: Oh, you're the lady who saw that.

Welton: Oh.

Andros: Everyone told me there was a lady who saw one.

Welton: It was big and it was beautiful.

Andros: I always said I've got to see who it is. It was you.

Welton: Yes, when I saw it, however, I thought that it belongs to us or to Russia because they had our type of legs on it which is alternation red and, ah, like this a little off white and they were all lit up over the complete bottom, the whole circle so, it can't be but there it is, so I tried to reason, it has to be our or Russia's because of the lights and it's not going to go fishing on Pine Lake I'm sure of that and is no place around here for them to take on power I guess they

just must be observing which is what they were doing. It was huge. It had to be a mothership.
And that was the 7th of June in 1970.

Gower: Okay, John do you got anything else here.

Ledoux: No.

Gower: I'd like to point out something in the pictures that you'd like to look at.

Ledoux: Okay, okay.

Welton: If you'd like to come over by it.

Gower: I think it can reach.

Andros: She's going to point somethings out. Do you need a longer cord or anything?

Gower: I think we'll be okay.

Andros: We looking at pictures of the church.

Welton: Which we think probably was the dedication.

Gower: This would have been about 1904?

Welton: Or, earlier. And this would have been the way the church looked with the first little entrance. And then you see the--

Gower: The steeple.

Welton: The steeple, and here's an enlargement and then this is the way it is at the present time.

Gower: That's with both the front and the back altered there.

Welton: Yes, yes and then I took another picture after they put the siding on.

Gower: Is that just, what kind of siding is that?

Welton: Ah, good question. It comes with, with the, the paint on it.

Gower: Right, yeah.

Welton: I don't think.

Gower: Some kind of treated.

Welton: I don't think its metal.

Andros: The church is green colored.

Welton: Yes.

Gower: Oh, and what is this picture here?

Welton: I tried very hard to find out. I found out all the names, but it's not a church group per se because she was of one congregation and she of another and some of another so it may be school.

Gower: Oh, graduation?

Welton: This is my great- grandmother's hundredth birthday.

Gower: Oh, gosh.

Welton: My sister Myrtle, and brother Charlie that dug the excavation here.

Gower: Oh, sure.

Welton: That's Charlie.

Gower: Ah, huh.

Welton: And this is Hazelton's, those are Clark's grandparents.

Gower: Um.

Welton: And then, the Butlers, they're all passed away but they were charter members.

Gower: Oh, charter members.

Welton: These were charter members. The Harvey's, they're on here someplace. They were charter members. I tried to get all of them but I couldn't, you know, locate them.

Gower: Sure.

Welton: I know the names of some of these people but a lot of them I wouldn't know.

Gower: It goes there back so far.

Welton: So, ah, there is the names of here someplace. Except this group and I'll be very happy when they look them up.

Gower: Yeah, you should do that.

Welton: I have to drill into this thing.

Gower: Oh, I see. But the names have already been typed on a--

Welton: Oh, yes. Over a year ago. And I've been yelling about it ever since and ah, you see, I guess that was an entrance before they had an entrance on there, they had just had long planks out in front.

Gower: Oh, sure.

Welton: See, that's all they had until they acquired this part. And I tried and tried to find out where we got that beautiful bell, can't find out.

Gower: Can't find out?

Welton: No, I'd like to know.

Gower: Oh, sure.

Welton: There's all these curious people whether we bought it or whether it was a gift, no one seems to know.

Gower: No one does.

Welton: We know where the organ came from and different things like that.

Andros: Do you want to take a look upstairs?

Gower: Yeah, we'll look up there sure. Okay, we'll just quit here now. That concludes this interview.