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Compiled and Narrated
by
Mattie Kilborn Webster
for
The Two Hundredth Anniversary
of the
Town of Merrimack NH*

EPISODE 11 - Presented by South Village Club

UNION EVANGELICAL CHURCH AT SOUTH MERRIMACK

The name Union was chosen, because the Church drew its Congregation from the borders of Merrimack, Hollis, Amherst and Nashua.

The Church can trace its origin to the springs of Christian devotion in the hearts of a small group of people, the most active of whom were Capt. John Holden and Samson Kidder who started a series of neighborhood meetings.

The growing attendance and interest aided by a few visits from Rev. Samuel Tolman of the Cong. State Missionary Society gave the people encouragement to raise money for the erection of a house of worship, which was dedicated October 7, 1829.

Two years later Rev. Mr. Tolman was settled as a Pastor. Under his earnest and faithful ministry of five years, the membership rose from 18 to 80.

1866 - Several ministers served the church until 1905 when the Rev. Charles Haynes served as resident minister 15 years in all. On his retirement he was made Pastor Emeritus.

1923-1933 During the interval between his terms of service, services were held in the afternoon being conducted by pastors from neighboring parishes. For several years students, two of them women, were acting pastors. The Church had received financial aid; but at the present it is self-supporting.

1929 - A very successful Centennial Celebration was held in 1929. For about 20 years the YPSCE added much to the life of the Church and Community.

In brief, this Church has been a "praying Church." It has also been a working Church, raising needed finances. It has been a "Singing Church" with good musical talent. It has been a "progressive Church" recently installing many improvements, redecorations, offering plates, hymnbooks and a new heating plant.

The Women's Village Club is constantly working for Church and Community improvement. Finally it has been a "struggling Church" - never large or wealthy, it has overcome obstacles and kept the spiritual home fires burning for 119 years.