

[Independence (Whitesville), Allegany Co.]

FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF INDEPENDENCE

The First Universalist Society of Independence was organized May 25th, 1844. The first board of trustees consisted of George K. Lee, Aholiab Sawyer and Thomas Collver. The following names, many of them original members, are well known in the history of the church: Chauncey Chapin, Augusta Chapin, Isaac George, Fanny Sherwood, Joseph Hull, Daniel Eastman, Ebenezer Richmond, George K. Lee, Alexander Thomas, Anthony Foster, Alfred Harris, Anthony Barney, Thomas Collver, Lee Jones, Norris P. Jones, Edwin Harris, Edwin A. Richmond, Harvey S. Richmond, Noel Jones, Aholiab Sawyer, David N. Sherwood, Augustus Beach, Amos Eastman, Joshua Palmer, Silence Lee, Lettice Harris, Eunice Harris, Louis Richmond, Mary George, Maria Richmond, Ann Foster, Beulah Sawyer, Betsey Jones, Fanny Root, Henrietta Barney, Sarah Richmond, Lucretia Harris, Mary A. Richmond, Azubah Eastman, Pattie Woodcock, Hannah Thomas, Lydia Brown, Irad Eastman, Anna Sawyer, Reuben Kent, Jonathan Richardson, Columbus Beach, I. S. Eastman, Calvin Eastman, Nicholas Fortner, Dennison Woodcock, Asa Baldwin, Joseph Herrick, Samuel Coats, Welcome Coats, Joseph Sherwood, Thomas Moon, Jason Lewis, Sarah Eastman, Martha Thomas, Diana Eastman, Prudence Kent, Anna M. Kent, Nancy Forsyth, Betsey Coats, Jeremiah Moon, Judah Sherwood, Phebe Strobridge, Jane Herrick.

From the time of organization until 1859 meetings were held alternately at the Collver school-house, on Cryder Creek, and the Spicer school-house at Hallsport.

[On] November 1st, 1858, a building committee was chosen, consisting of Thomas Collver, Guy Forsyth and Willet Wilson, to let the contract for and superintend the erection of a church at Whitesville. When finished (in 1860) the edifice was dedicated with appropriate observances. The size is about thirty-five by sixty feet and it has a seating capacity of about three hundred. The cost was about \$1,500.

A Sunday-school was established soon after the dedication of the church and has had a healthy existence since, having a membership in 1878 of forty, which is the membership of the church also. The first pastor of the church was Rev. Jason Lewis. The present value of the church property is \$4,000 and the congregation numbers about two hundred.

History of Allegany County, New York 1806-1879
(New York: Frederick W. Beers, 1879) p. 322