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The Joint Archives Quarterly, Volume 26.02: Summer 2016

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Recommended Citation

Repository citation: Kramer, Eldon R.; Reynolds, Geoffrey D.; and Longfield, Nathan, "The Joint Archives Quarterly, Volume 26.02: Summer 2016" (2016). *The Joint Archives Quarterly*. Paper 98.

<http://digitalcommons.hope.edu/jaquarterly/98>

Published in: *Joint Archives Quarterly*, Volume 26, Issue 2, Summer July 1, 2016. Copyright © 2016 Hope College, Holland, Michigan.

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The Joint Archives *Quarterly*

Volume 26 Number 2

Summer 2016

“The thriving little city of Holland is no more...” ***The Story of the Great Fire of October 8-9, 1871***

By Eldon R. Kramer

The words in the headline above appeared in a story published in the *Daily Morning Democrat* in Grand Rapids following the great fire of October 8-9, 1871, that destroyed much of Holland. I discovered it while doing genealogical research that later became the basis of a book I wrote about the hardships faced by my great grandparents while settling in Holland. It led to the subtitle I chose for my book, *The Trek: How the Isaac Kramer and Onne Peterson Families Overcame Hardships to Help Settle West Michigan's Hollandsche Kolonie*. It was then that I learned that the home of my great-grandfather Isaac Kramer, his wife, Antje, and seven children on Ninth Street near Pine Avenue, was one of some 200 homes destroyed as a massive blaze swept across the city. Abraham was the oldest child at 14, while the youngest, Cornelia, was just two months old. My grandfather, John, and his brother, Cornelius, were not yet born.

Much has been written about the fire. Newspaper articles and eyewitness accounts are included in many bylined writings. Prominent among them is Holland historian Gerrit J. Van Schelven, “The Burning of America;” and the works of Van Raalte Institute historians Robert Swierenga, *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*; and Elton J. Bruins, “Holocaust in Holland,” for *Michigan History* magazine.

Henry S. Lucas devoted much of the content of his book, *Dutch Immigrant Memoirs and Related Writings*, to the fire, and Donald van Reken published *The Holland Fire of October 8, 1871*, an accumulation of newspaper reports, Van Schelven’s account and anecdotes.

For the purpose of recounting events around the fire for *Quarterly* readers of this tragic event that took place 144 years ago, I have selected excerpts from the detailed “A Contemporary Account of the Holland Fire,” included in a number of books about Holland.



HOLLAND'S DISASTROUS FIRE - 1871

When I originally read this account, I was impressed with the detail that included the names of all the families and the businesses destroyed by the fire. For example, the following is one paragraph covering the

devastation on just one street, the street where my great-grandfather Isaac Kramer and his family lived:

“On 9th Street, on the north side, were burned Cappon and Bertsch’s large steam tannery, the dwellings of I. Kramer, G. Boot, two rented houses of F. van der Veen; I rented house of H. Wiersema, S. Reidsema, M. van Regenmorter, J. Verplanke, J. van de Roowvaard, J. Kramer (no relation), J. Nibbelink, W. C. Nibbelink, W. Verbeek, A. Meerman; rented houses of H. Boone and R. R. Oostema, and K. van Haafen.”

(continued on page 2)

From the Director



This issue features one article about a Holland family and the 1871 fire that destroyed most of Holland and one that follows up on the history of religious life of students at Hope College. The first story was written by Holland area descendant Eldon Kramer and the second story was researched and written by 2016 graduate Nathan Longfield, who will soon be attending Western Theological Seminary. I hope you enjoy both articles.

Geoffrey D. Reynolds

Holland Fire (continued from page 1)

Miraculously, there was just one death attributed to the fire. An aged widow, Mrs. J. Tolk, it is believed resided in one of E. van der Veen rented homes on Ninth Street.

Hope College escaped serious damage from the fire. President Phillip Phelps organized a fire brigade of students to douse small fires that started from sparks flying through the air. The beautiful Pillar Church was also spared. Elton Bruins wrote that it “seemed to give a purpose for survival and rebuilding.”

I believe the following brief excerpts paint a vivid picture of this sorrowful time in Holland:

“Holland was, and is no more. Holland’s a catastrophe. Days of anguish, need and suffering! We are confronted with one of the most sad and difficult tasks which has ever been laid upon us.

“It can be said that our beloved city of Holland no longer exists. The entire business district lies in ruins. Entire streets have disappeared; every businessman has lost everything, and between 200 and 300 houses have been destroyed by fire. The most beautiful part of our city has become an unsightly level plain full of smoking and smoldering ruins.

“Throughout the past week large forest fires raged in our vicinity, particularly in the direction of Graafschap). Since that time the fire continued to advance, destroying barns and houses here and there. However there did not appear to be any danger for us. On Sunday afternoon, however, it became very stormy south of the city, and before the afternoon services were ended the alarm was sounded.

“ ... between 11 and 1 o’clock the wind turned to the west and increased in intensity so that in violence it resembled a hurricane. The so-called creek, a low spot,

which was filled with trees which had been cut down, trees which were dead and partially decayed, and all kinds of brush, soon became a sea of flames.

“The wind drove the rain of sparks toward the tannery ... of Cappon and Bertsch, which immediately was ignited, together with 2,000 cords of bark. From there the fire leaped over (Pine Avenue) toward 8th Street, beyond River Street and several side streets, sweeping away everything depending on the direction of the wind.”

It was at this point that my great-grandfather Kramer’s home was engulfed.

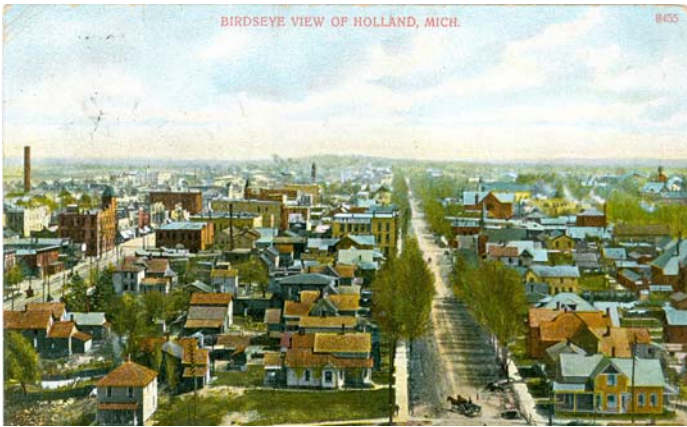
“The flames spread with unbelievable rapidity, and in less than an hour the longer and more beautiful parts of Holland had been reduced to ashes. We can say that the entire business district has been destroyed by the fire, and seven eighths of the city has been laid to waste. It is impossible to calculate the loss, but it is somewhere between \$800,000 and one million dollars. Between 150 and 200 families are homeless, having lost everything, their clothes, their furniture ...”

My great-grandparents’ home was valued at \$400 and their clothing at \$350. While our family doesn’t have any details, we know they rebuilt on the site of their burned home.

“That night from Sunday to Monday, that night when Holland was destroyed, and will never be forgotten. That was a night of deadly anxiety and unspeakable suffering.

“Holland was, and is - and we can say this from many points of view – no more. The city is gone and only a few houses on the outskirts remain. The entire industrial fabric and business have been swept away, and everything must be rebuilt from the ground up. The scene is eerie and heartbreaking. Where the city once stood there is a level plain covered with the ruins and rubbish and people digging through the ruins in the hope of finding something and looking for something that had been hidden in their houses. This prosperous place has been made poor in a moment. They are helpless and are bereft of all income, and are dependent on the surrounding area for the necessities of life. The labor of 25 years has been swept away.”

My great-grandfather was one of those pioneer settlers who raised a family of seven children and helped build Holland over those 25 years only to face the hardship of losing everything. At just 20 years of age when he left the Netherlands aboard the ship *Henry Shelter*, he arrived in New York on June 7, 1845.



Holland ca. 1900 looking east on 9th Street at Pine Avenue

He did rebuild and brought two more children into the world—my grandfather John Kramer in 1874 and Cornelius in 1877. (John Kramer was appointed clerk in the Holland Post office at age 21, and became superintendent of mails in 1924 at age 50. He held that position until his retirement in 1933.)

For those unfamiliar with the last great hardship in my great-grandfather’s life, it began with the death of his wife, Antje, in 1895. It had a devastating affect on him; sending him into a deep depression. His children found it necessary to have him committed to the Ottawa County Poor Farm at Eastmanville, where he passed away on January 22, 1899.



Eastmanville Poor Farm, ca. 1895

He was buried on the farm, as were two of his sons, Abraham and George. On July 10, 2010, the Poor Farm Memorial Cemetery was dedicated in the memory of Isaac Kramer.

A side story to contemplate

There are those today who support the climate change theory that the wildfires in California are a direct result of greenhouse gases, caused by the burning of fossil fuels. A number of studies of the Holland fire in 1871, and many of those in the years that followed, point to the drought conditions that existed at the time.

Climatic Conditions Preceding Historically Great Fires in the North Central Region, by Donald A. Haines and Rodney W. Sando, and Huug van den Dool’s *Weather and the Fires of 1871*, provide a picture of the precipitation and temperature in Holland in October 1871. “The most striking factor in the climatic conditions preceding the seven historic fires in the north-central region (including Holland) is the decreased precipitation over a 3 to 8-month period,” the Haines-Sando report concluded. “A prolonged and abnormal moisture deficiency began in Lansing and Grand Rapids in May 1871.”

“It is rather obvious, and not new, to assume that drought preconditioned an unusually large part of the United States for the possibility of wildfires in the late summer and fall of 1871 – the season when fires are most common in any year,” van den Dool said in his piece.

While the burning of wood for cooking and heat certainly contributed pollution, there were no automobiles or trucks and coal-burning locomotives were just introduced to Holland. The cross cut hand saw was the popular tool of the loggers, and the sawmills scattered throughout the state, it would seem, contributed little to dirty the atmosphere.

It’s safe to say that the 1871 population contributed little to climate change. Studying the cyclical changes in climate, before the advent of the combustion engine, is instructive, and as the Haines-Sando report states, “There is no reason why the unusual climatic conditions could not recur in the future.”



*Eldon R. Kramer is the great grandson of Isaac Kramer, one of Holland’s founders. The author of a self-published book, *The Trek: How the Isaac Kramer and Onne Peterson Families Overcame Hardships to Help Settle West Michigan’s Hollandsche Kolonie*, he currently resides in Scottsdale, AZ.*



Misconceptions of the Religious Life of Hope in the late 20th Century

By Nathan Longfield

Preface: Following my previous article in the Fall 2015 Joint Archives Quarterly on compulsory chapel and its end, I received some follow-up from a couple of students who were attending Hope College during this change. These two Hope alum, Wes Michaelson and Barbara Timmer, were part of the Student Church (SC), a student-led group that conducted and organized ministry opportunities on campus and hosted a worship service on Sundays for students. As I began to delve into the archives' resources on this topic and talked to another former student, Don Luidens, who, like Michaelson, played a role in the Student Church, a new light was cast on the latter third of the 20th century and what the religious life of Hope College was during those years. A common conception, and perhaps misconception, of Hope during those years was that the religious vibrancy of the campus and students was non-existent and that when Ben Patterson was hired the chapel was suddenly filled with students and a "Great Awakening" occurred on the campus. However, this paints an inaccurate picture of what the religious scene was at Hope over the nearly two decades between when mandatory chapel ended during the academic year of 1970-1971 and Ben Patterson's hiring in 1993.

Many of the services that are associated with today's campus ministries program include facilitating mission work in the community, spring break immersion trips, Sunday worship, and Bible studies. However, in the late '60s these were all services not facilitated by campus ministry, which consisted of one chaplain, Bill Hillegonds (founder of the Hillegonds plan, or 2100 plan, for ending mandatory chapel mentioned in the previous article), and his



Rev. William Hillegonds, 1967

part-time secretary. It is striking how much more equipped the campus ministry staff is today in comparison. Today's staff includes the Hinga-Boersma Dean of the Chapel Rev. Dr. Trygve Johnson, Leonard and Marjorie Maas Senior Chaplain Rev. Paul Boersma, chaplain of worship and arts Bruce Benedict, chaplain of

integral mission Nancy Smith, and Rev. Lauren Taylor, chaplain of discipleship, along with a number of assistants. Now this well-equipped campus ministries team is blessed with an ability to facilitate these programs and provide for the spiritual life and growth of the students. With these resources, this team is able to provide these services and the spiritual vibrancy of Hope can be easily seen in chapel and a number of other programs conducted by campus ministry and students. This increased visibility of religious activity allows for chapel attendance to serve as a measure of Hope's religious life that suggests the vitality was low before the "revival" that occurred with Ben Patterson's arrival. However, maybe it is not that Hope's students lacked vibrant faith and faith lives, but that this vibrancy was not most prominently seen in chapel, but through other student-led and initiated organizations. Today Hope students have the privilege of not only having campus ministry provide them with a plethora of options to grow in and discuss faith, but also opportunities to do what students in the '70s and '80s did, organize their own faith communities and participate in a variety of activities.



Wes Michaelson, ca. 1967

Hope student Wes Michaelson was central to the formation of the Student Church at the urging of Hillegonds. In 1966 the Holland Classis and the Hope College Board of Trustees approved a trial run for "the student church which was initiated by Chaplain William Hillegonds last year." The previous year Hillegonds had started a series of Lenten services which, since they had a high attendance, he continued through the rest of the year before receiving approval from the classis and board for continuation during the 1966-1967 academic year. The *Anchor* reported that: "The campus church is designed for Hope College on-campus students, and services are held every Sunday while the college is in session." Hillegonds was responsible for preaching most Sundays, but other ministers would also be invited to participate in worship. Apart from Hillegonds however, the Student Church was primarily led by a student board who, given the ecclesial structure, were often called student elders and deacons. This student leadership was not limited to the regulating of various programs, but also active planning and participation in the service itself.

The Student Church continued to develop programs and participation increased as more members entered into the church and the planning and work. The November 4, 1966, *Anchor* article reported that the church was having services at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday morning that, unlike

chapel at that time, was not mandatory. However, despite this non-mandatory component, the student church had an attendance of about 600 students every Sunday, attracting students who previously were not attending a church, as well as drawing students away from churches in town, to the noted chagrin of those churches. Michaelson, who by this time was the chairman of the board of trustees in the Student Church, was reported as believing that the SC was “the most constructive thing in the religious life of the college in years.” After the Religious Life Committee (RLC) approved the church they also elected the first student board of trustees, of which Michaelson was chair. In this formative year of the SC, the student board spent much of their time trying to determine the nature and organization of the church and discussing the possibilities.

Among the conversations surrounding worship were possible Sunday night services featuring alternative worship styles, the formation of discussion groups, and raising money for a village in India. The church broke their tasks into subcommittees to facilitate production, including a worship committee that considered what outside speakers would be invited and how the service should be structured. A second committee focused on a variety of service projects for Hope, Holland, and the greater western Michigan area. Additionally, a third committee undertook deciding a permanent structure for the church including members, a permanent minister, and church government. The fourth committee looked to create groups and space for discussions of important issues and, within the first few months of the church, they had already created a “study group for couples interested in discussing love, courtship and marriage with the chaplain.” Surprisingly, the church was also financially equipped apart from the school since they had received student support in the offering.

This offering was necessary as the church hoped to become self-supporting and not need the funding originally granted by the school. The September 23, 1966, *Anchor* reported that in order to be self-supporting, money would be required to cover the cost of bulletins, expenses for guest speakers, and support the work projects for the student organizations. Though the Student Church was given a tentative budget of \$4,800 by the school for its first year, they expected the attendees to provide enough financial support through the offering for financial support in the future. Following the completion of this first trial year, the Student Church Board of Trustees would be required to report to the college on the effectiveness and degree of participation in the church, and if they believed the church should continue operating. Finally, the new board would be elected by the students in the church for the following year rather than by the Religious Life Committee.



Student Church members, 1967

The 1967 *Milestone*, Hope College’s yearbook, was the first edition to include the Student Church, and provided an apt description of the church:

Hyper-active has become the synonym for the Student Church in its first year of existence at Hope. Since its conception in the spring of 1966 on a trial basis, the Student Church has grown to be one of the leading organizations on campus. One of the greatest tasks of any church is challenging its members. This the Student Church has tried to do under leadership of its student board of trustees. The Student Church presented the student body with much more than a Sunday service; it provided opportunities for discussion and dialogue with outside speakers, faculty, and other students; opportunities to see the challenge of the church’s task in places like Harlem and Appalachia on spring vacation trips; opportunities to work and give help in a wide range of areas. The student church is the one organization where anyone who wishes to give of himself can participate.

This description, which in many regards could be used to describe campus ministries’ work today, embraced what the church had set out to do. In a letter to the faculty in February 1967, Michaelson spelled out what the church had accomplished: “Besides the Sunday morning worship services, the Student Church has organized tutorial projects, sponsored student faculty discussion, brought in Sunday evening speakers, initiated student dialogue-discussion groups, written its own creed, considered the establishment of a coffee house, and conducted Wednesday and special Sunday evening worship services, to name a few activities.” Michaelson, without even exhausting all that the SC has undertaken and accomplished, lists the numerous accomplishments of a program born in under a year from trial Lenten services and a challenge to Michaelson from Hillegonds.

In Michaelson’s memoir he recounts his experience arriving at Hope College and learning about, and in turn lamenting, the separation of the Reformed Church in America, which Hope is affiliated with, and the Christian Reformed Church in North America. His introduction to

reformed theology changed how he understood Christ and the church. He recalls what Hillegonds once said to him, “Wes, you’ve got this nice spiritualized idea of the body of Christ. But the thing is, it’s got to get concrete. It has to translate into a group of people together in a place on a corner somewhere who are actually being the church, trying to live as Christ’s body.” Wes took these words to heart and as he and other students, discontented with the local churches and required chapel, formed the Student Church.

However, the second part of his letter shows where the Student Church had failed to embrace the intergenerational aspect of the Body of Christ. He requested faculty members, whom he acknowledged mainly worshipped elsewhere on Sundays, be involved in other areas of the Student Church’s work and mission, be it in dorm discussion, Sunday evening activities, or other ways. He included the minutes of the last meeting to provide faculty with an idea of ways to participate. This letter revealed some of the internal discussions of the Student Church concerning time and style of worship from the worship committee, discussion of the Franklin school tutoring program, the ward and Fort Custer State Home, and the campus coffee house ministry. Additionally, the study committee showed growth with dorm discussion groups, play readings, talks, and dialogue groups, many of which are services offered by campus ministries today. Another aspect that is also present in campus ministry today is similar to the three spring break trips provided for service to “expose students to needs in other areas and give them a chance to actually participate in worthwhile projects,” a goal similar to today’s immersion trips.



Don Luidens, 1969

One of the more surprising aspects of the student church was that, even though a student would only attend for the four years they were in college, they developed a process for students to become members. Despite the approval by classis, there does not appear to be any record of the church within the RCA records so the members would not, seemingly, be members in the denomination but only to the student church. The board

of trustees developed multiple methods for how students could become members of the church. The first was through confession of faith and, reportedly, baptism. Don Luidens said he does not ever recall a baptism happening, and it would be surprising if the classis did indeed approve that, especially since classis minutes

show no record of this approval being given. However, before confession of faith the candidate would need to learn about the church and undergo a survey study of the Apostle’s Creed and Heidelberg Catechism, study the mission of the church, be examined by the Holland Classis and the chaplains, write a confession of faith, and publicly confess their faith during worship. Students who had already made a confession of faith elsewhere but desired to be members of the Student Church were required to take the above classes and then be received into the Student Church and a notice would be sent to the church holding their membership (this also suggests a denominational affiliation even though there seems to be no record of that from the denomination’s side). Alternatively, the student church also allowed for affiliate membership where the student would only be required to study the mission of the church and, possibly, the Apostle’s Creed.

The proposal for members also included the Student Church’s stance on the sacraments, noting they would “be available to members of the SC and other students who are members in good and regular standing in some Christian congregation and who choose to worship with the SC.” This report also noted that trustees would be selected from the members of the SC and that the plan for adding members would move forward upon approval of the Holland Classis. Notably the Holland Classis minutes from this time lack any mention of the formation, structure, membership, or sacraments of the Student Church even though the minutes and *Anchor* make mention of classical approval and the church seemed to continue with classical approval.

As the Student Church continued, the separate committees were restructured into “task forces” in 1968. Each task force was compromised of 2-35 students who were focused on a specific task. The groups were organized by the Student Church and the leaders of each group would report back to the board. These task forces were not long standing committees, and were dissolved once a task was completed with the goal of keeping “the Student Church a dynamic, changing, relevant, part of the life of the Hope College Community.” One of the task forces had undertaken and accomplished the opening of the Student Church Coffee House dubbed, “The Coffee Grounds, No Place to Hide.” The coffee house was located in the basement of Durfee Hall, reinventing a room to give it a new atmosphere and provided a variety of refreshments.

“The Grounds,” as it became known, offered weekend programs that were designed to create space for dialogue about a variety of topics for “an expression of a relevant Christian perspective on Hope’s campus.” In a similar vein, the Student Church created a variety of sensitivity

groups to discuss a wide range of topics. The Student Church also created the “Friday-Nite Kletz Happenings” to create a place for students to relax and “discuss issues or feelings with those outside their immediate circle of friends.” These nights would generally involve movies, singing, and time for games, holding certain similarities to today’s women’s and men’s nights out.

These activities by the church continued into 1969 as they maintained organizing spring break work trips, sponsored by the Student Senate as well as the chaplain’s office, to Alabama, Holland, and Cleveland. The Student Church also continued working on new task forces, including one focused on students who were “down on their religious up-bringing” for introspection and determination for what those students wanted to be different. They also continued the discussion groups with one focusing on Malcom-X and created an inner-city task force to discuss the problems in inner-city America. Lastly, the Coffee Grounds continued to flourish as students used it for performances, meetings, discussion groups, and outreach.



Student Church members, 1969

The 1969 *Milestone* had already begun to see the Student Church as something of a fixture which, given that students are only at college for four years, is not surprising. It noted:

In addition to its now almost traditional Dimnent and Kletz services, the Student Church successfully experimented with the task force organizational system this year. Small groups of students were mobilized to work on specific campus problems until they were solved. The Coffee Ground Task Force fulfilled its mission of establishing an inexpensive on-campus scene for dialogue and entertainment. Another task force was concerned with small group encounters such as the sensitivity groups and the Malcom X discussion group. Student Church sponsored spring trips took students to Brewton, Alabama, New York City and

Holland to promote understanding of the people and diversity of the church. Retreats at Camp Geneva and Cran-Hill Ranch, and weekends at the Ecumenical Institute in Chicago offered students a change to reassess themselves, their role in the church and the church’s role in contemporary society.



Student Church members, 1970

The 1970 *Milestone* noted similar action continuing and the 1971 *Milestone* contained pictures of the Student Church Board. However, by 1972 the Student Church was no longer included in the *Milestone*. While I have not been able to find any record of the end of the Student Church, Luidens confirmed that by the time he returned to Hope as a professor in 1977, the Student Church had ended, suggesting that it had lasted two or three years, guessing its end was in 1971, fitting with what the *Milestone* and *Anchor* suggest.

However, the significance, both real and symbolic, of the Student Church’s existence did not end with it. Rather, this embodies how the time of the late ‘60s, and indeed up until the revival, was not a “desert period” in the religious life, vibrancy, and concern of Hope students. Luidens pointed out that though students disliked mandatory chapel, despite loving the chaplain, they were deeply involved in discussions and actions pushing for social justice and understanding issues such as Vietnam and the civil rights movement. This reached the level where students traveled to DC to protest, had impromptu student-led class cancellation to discuss social issues, were deeply involved in the life of the campus, and at one point, even had articles and petitions pushing for the president’s dismissal.

This vibrancy did not disappear with the end of the student church, though there does seem to be some drop in vibrancy in the ‘80s as one student who attended Hope during that time noted that the religious life of students during that time was a little lower and less visible. However, there was still a strong level of involvement in activities such as Intervarsity, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Fellowship of Christian Students, Creative

Worship, and the World-Hunger Committee. The numbers involved in these groups seem comparable to student participation in similar groups today. Through the years until the revival there is evidence of a continued number of student groups that were focused on serving and discussing topics of the Christian church. The *Milestone* also notes other groups during this time such as Campus Crusade for Christ and Ministry of Christ's People (in which Hillegond's was involved). So, while the religious vibrancy may not have reached the same level as during the time of the student church or that is visible today, there was still a high level of involvement and interest. It is worth noting, that many of the organizations that existed during this time are still active on campus, but the chapel program today is notably more vibrant.

However, the chapel aspect of the "revival" may in part be less a result of the religious interest and concern of the student body, and more a result of shifts in the finances and operation of campus ministries. The hiring of Ben Patterson was facilitated by the generous endowment of the Boersma family, Paul's beloved parents, creating the endowed position of Hinga-Boersma Dean of the Chapel that Trygve Johnson now holds. This unprecedented increase in financial resources allowed campus ministry to develop from a single chaplain and a part-time secretary into today's structure that is much more equipped to serve the student body. Additionally, changes in the time and the rest of the campus' activities schedule also played an important role.



Chaplain Gerard Van Heest, n.d.

Luidens believes a large component in the increased chapel attendance was the change in time. He noted that Hillegonds preached very intellectually and, for many students, an intellectual sermon at 8 a.m. was not very helpful (though almost any sermons at 8 a.m. would not be well received by many college students or draw a large attendance). Chaplain Gerard Van Heest, who followed Hillegonds, managed to get the

registrar and school to approve moving chapel to 10:30 in his last year and there was a noticeable uptick in attendance because students were already on campus. However, Luidens also noted that during this time the dining halls were still open, drawing students away from chapel for lunch. As a result, the next year when Patterson was hired, one of the first adjustments he made was to close the dining hall so that if students were on campus nothing else was available during chapel time

since classes were not meeting and the dining halls were closed, encouraging more students to attend.

While this by no means should diminish the work and what campus ministry has accomplished over the last few decades, Luidens suggested that the idea that Hope was in a spiritual desert before the "revival" that Ben Patterson ushered in is a misconception. During these years, while chapel attendance was low for a variety of reasons, students were actively involved in religiously-centered discussions of social justice and issues, formed study groups, created groups like the Student Church to encourage religious involvement and a number of other religious groups to create community and discussions for interested students. Ultimately, there is no definitive way to measure the "religious vitality" of a campus, and chapel attendance is only one way to measure the religious interest of the student body. While this metric provides a helpful, albeit not conclusive, measure of student religious interest after the end of mandatory chapel, the student church embodied the passion that students had for providing other options to discuss religious interest and grow in faith. Though the student church only lasted for a few years, other groups over the next 20 years continued to demonstrate that the religious vibrancy of the school never died out completely before the "revival." While the drastic shift in structure and programming that occurred with Ben Patterson's arrival has undeniably helped the school and aided Hope student's by facilitating events and opportunities for students to be nurtured in their faith and has reinvigorated the chapel program, the narrative that before this there was no religious vitality on campus is a misconception. By many measures students were not as involved, and the majority of the student body was still active and engaged in Christian ministry and discussion.



Dean of the Chapel Ben Patterson, ca. 1993



Nathan Longfield was born and raised in Dubuque, IA. He graduated from Hope College in 2016 with a BA in Religion with a focus in Christian History and Theology and minors in Mathematics and Management. He is starting at Western Theological Seminary in the fall to pursue a Masters of Divinity with the goal of becoming a pastor.

COLLECTIONS NOW OPEN

H16-1910. Den Uyl, Paul A.

Papers, 1867-2016. 1.00 linear ft.

Local historian and writer. The collection contains the published and unpublished history and research materials on the Holland Fire Department, 1867-2016, collected and written by Den Uyl.

H15-1898. Judge Family.

Photographs, ca. 1900-1930s. 0.25 linear ft.

The collection contains seventy-eight publicity photographs from Austria and Germany, ca. 1900-1930s, that resided with the Judge family for many years. The photograph subjects address various aspects of life in those two countries. A note in the collection states that the photographs were received from the Austria National Tourist Office in New York City, New York, about 1935. Some photographs of Austria and all of those of Germany list a Three Lions Publishers of New York City, New York.

W12-1398. Beckering, Raymond E. (1910-1996).

Papers, 1939-1997. 1.50 linear ft.

The Rev. Dr. Raymond E. Beckering, Sr. was born in Oostburg, Wisconsin. He graduated Central College (A.B., 1931), Western Theological Seminary (Th.B., 1934), and Central College (D.D., 1931). He was licensed and ordained by the Classis of Chicago in 1934. He served as pastor at a series of churches connected with the Reformed Church in America (RCA): Ross Reformed Church, Gary, Indiana (1934-1939); Hope Reformed Church, Chicago, Illinois (1940-1944); Hope Reformed Church, Los Angeles, California (1944-1949); Hope Reformed Church, Chicago, Illinois (1949-1954), Park Hills Reformed Church, Los Angeles, California (1954-1958); Second Reformed Church, Zeeland, Michigan (1959-1967); Garden Grove Reformed Church, Garden Grove, California (1967-1977). He was elected vice-president of the General Synod of the RCA at its 159th conference in 1958. At that time, he was also serving as secretary of the executive committee of the Board of Trustees at Western Theological Seminary. He also served on the Board of Education, RCA and the boards of Central and Hope Colleges. After working with the Reformed Church, he became pastor of the Crystal Cathedral. While there, he founded the New Hope Counseling Center. Beckering passed away in 1996 in Holland, Michigan. The collection includes biographical material, correspondence, letters of call to churches, photographs, images of plaques received for service, prayers and sermons he wrote, and audiotapes

and videotapes of him speaking and his funeral service. Audiotapes and videotapes are available in digital form.

W13-1407. Palen, Ernest Raymond (1899-1973).

Papers, 1934-1972. 7.50 linear feet

Minister of the Reformed Church in America (RCA), 1929-1972. The collection consists of sermons he preached during his pastoral career in the Johnstown, New York Reformed Church and at the Middle Collegiate Church in New York City. Significant sections of the sermons were messages given on several New York City radio stations. One series of radio messages was entitled, "Gems for Thought." His collection also includes messages for special occasions, such as his Easter message delivered at the Radio City Music Hall.

Save the Date!

Ottawa County Poor Farm Sesquicentennial

Saturday, October 1, 2016
11:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

- *Historic exhibits and vignettes reflecting the place and the people*
- *Display of period farm vehicles*
- *Reenactors portraying the lives of Poor Farm residents and staff members*
- *Farm Market and Ice Cream Social*
- *Many more fun and educational activities*

Beginning at 5:00 p.m. there will be a happy hour, program, and authentic recreation of an 1899 dinner served at the farm. (Reservations are required for the evening.) For more information, contact Jessica VanGinhoven, Communications Specialist at the Ottawa County Parks, (616) 738-4000.



Holland Area Historical Society 2016-2017

The Holland Area Historical Society focuses on the history and heritage of the Holland area. Its programs are designed to inform the membership through a series of quality presentations, tours, and other events focusing on the area's past. If you are not a member, we encourage you to join our group and participate in an exciting year of programs!



Georgian Bay Line Remembered

Tuesday, September 13, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College

264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Holland played host to the three Georgian Bay Line ships, the *South American*, *North American*, and *Alabama* for many years. Come learn more about the Georgian Bay Line and the ships that sailed the Great Lakes for decades from maritime historian Robert Campbell through his research, images, movies and artwork.

Eastmanville Poor Farm History

Tuesday, October 11, 2016 - 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College

264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

What do a reformer, an aerospace executive, and a man saved by a beer have in common? They all lived in Holland and at the Eastmanville Poor Farm during their lives. As county citizens celebrate the sesquicentennial of this important site, come learn more about Ottawa County's home for the poor and needy from local historian and author Marjorie Viveen through her ten years of research.



Carousel Mountain: The Dream and Reality

Tues., Nov. 8, 2016–7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium,
Hope College

264 Columbia Avenue, Holland
Many Hollanders, including the presenter, spent lots of their winter season leisure time at Carousel Mountain and have fond memories of the former

Laketown Township ski resort. Presenter Robert Sligh will help us remember that magical time from 1963-1973 through his memories, interviews with the founder's daughter and local skiers, and archival documents, artifacts, and images from the founder's family.

150 Year History of Third Reformed Church and Christmas Dessert

Tuesday, December 13, 2016 - 6:30 p.m.

Third Reformed Church

111 West 13th St., Holland, MI 49423

Come hear church historian Mark Walvoord talk about this important downtown church and its part in our community's long history of worship.

150th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the City of Holland

Tuesday, February 14, 2017 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College

264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

The year 2017 marks the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of City of Holland. In honor of this event, Holland historian and author Dr. Robert Swierenga and the mayor of Holland, Nancy DeBoer, will present the controversy with the city's founder A.C. Van Raalte leading up to this event and what is to come for the Tulip City.



History of Herrick District Library

Tuesday, March 14, 2017 - 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College
264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

The City of Holland opened its first library in 1867 to serve the intellectual needs of area residents. Come learn about the history of the library and its many homes from past director Robert Sherwood and current librarian Mary Vander Kooy.

The Warm Friend Turns 92

Tuesday, April 11, 2017 - 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College
264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

The Warm Friend Tavern and Hotel opened in 1925 as a premier hotel of the Midwest. Built by the Holland Furnace Company, it brought entertainers, sports figures and hundreds of visitors to downtown Holland. The Warm Friend, now operated by Resthaven as an independent living center, continues to be a Holland landmark. Join Glenn Lowe and Susan Etterbeek DeJong as they present the 91 year journey of the hotel.

Public Art in Holland

Tuesday, June 20, 2017 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College
264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Did you know that there are more than 68 works of public art just in Holland? Come find out what those pieces of art are, their history, and where to find them through images and comments from Lorma Freestone, executive director of the Holland Area Arts Council.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS	TERM EXPIRES
Lois Jesiek Kayes, President	2018
Brenda E. Bos, Vice-President	2018
Bill Van Dyke, Treasurer	2016
John Hoogstra, Secretary	2016
Harold Gazan	2017
Kristi Knoll	2017
Geoffrey Reynolds, Director	ex-officio

HAHS MEMBERSHIP FORM

The major goal of the Society is to bring together persons with an interest in history and at the same time promote awareness in the general public of the cultural heritage of the Holland area. In accordance with this goal, the Historical Society sponsors, on a regular basis, a variety of lectures, field trips and other historical activities. Monies collected through membership fees and fundraising activities go towards financing the activities of the Society. For more details about the meetings or membership, contact Geoffrey Reynolds at the Joint Archives of Holland (616-395-7798).

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual: \$15 per year - entitles you to vote, hold office and participate in all activities sponsored by the Society.

Family: \$20 per year - covers all members of family; benefits same as Individual with one vote per family.

Sustaining: \$30 per year - this category is for individuals who would like to provide greater financial support for the Society.

Life: \$300 - enables you to enjoy regular membership benefits on a continuous basis.

Student: \$5 per year - benefits same as Individual.

Senior Citizen (55 years and older): \$10 per year - benefits same as Individual.

Non-Profit Institutional: \$15 per year.

Corporate: \$50 per year.

.....
Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Membership Type _____

Make check payable to HAHS and mail to:

Holland Area Historical Society
c/o The Joint Archives of Holland
Hope College
PO Box 9000
Holland, MI 49422-9000



Contact us at (616) 395-7798 • Fax (616) 395-7197 • E-mail: archives@hope.edu • www.jointarchives.org



Holland Historical Trust

According to the August 19, 1937, Holland City News, this photograph of Holland's first band was taken shortly after the big fire of 1871. The background of the photo, taken on 8th Street, shows the aftermath of where fire had swept through the area. The building in the back is the saloon, which was quickly rebuilt after the fire.