

The Beginnings of Organized Religious Activity in Humboldt County  
1850-1899

*This timeline marks the beginnings of religious activity in Humboldt County. Beginnings may be marked by the arrival of a religious worker such as a priest, minister, missionary or a lay leader who begins to gather or serve the spiritual needs of a community. In some cases, these beginnings occur among neighbors and families of a particular area who start to develop a faith community and sustain it until a leader emerges among them or until they can afford to support a religious leader or a minister. From these beginnings, it may be years or decades until a congregation is formally organized. Seldom does the erection of a building mark the beginning of religious activity in a community. Because buildings are easier to date, they are frequently the most visible markers of a beginning in a particular location. Earlier histories are often lost in the fog of memory. This time-line recognizes, as best as it can, these various kinds of beginnings.*

In comparing the history of the Catholic church in Northern California to the Catholic Church of Southern California, the writer of the history in the *Centennial Book, St. Bernard's Church*, observes: "The history of the Church in the Northern counties is less organized, less systematic, less peaceful. Ours is a more rugged story, made up of resolute individual effort." In many ways this can be said of many of the other groups as well, particularly from 1850-1870.

From Time Immemorial the indigenous peoples of this area have passed on the stories of their place in the universe, observed *first fruits* ceremonies and attended to the dances of *world renewal*.<sup>1</sup> Though these ceremonies were in some cases interrupted and often disrespected and misunderstood during the time of the Euro-American conquest, they have persisted in giving meaning and coherence to the people and communities that observe them. As such, they are to be acknowledged as the oldest religious activities of this place.<sup>2</sup>

1775 June 11<sup>3</sup> .....Trinity Sunday: The Spanish stake a claim of possession to the region by planting a cross on what is now called Trinidad Head. This event is often cited as the beginnings of religious activity in what would become Humboldt County; and it is recorded that a hymn is sung and a Mass said. However, the people did not stay, and the service neither represents nor serves the ongoing communities of indigenous people or those of the people who will come in the future.

1850 .....Asa White and A.J. Huestis, both Licensed Local Preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church [M.E.] begin preaching in what is now Humboldt County.<sup>4</sup> Asa

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1. Ray Raphael & Freeman House, *Two Peoples One Place*, 18f.

2. The Indian Religious Crimes Code developed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the 1880s was an attempt to prohibit Native American ceremonial and religious practices by threatening imprisonment. These were part of a larger set of policies designed to force the adoption of Euro-American lifestyles on American Indians through the destruction of cultural identities and practices. But the practice of their spiritual traditions were already being interrupted through the destruction of sacred sites, denial of access to them, through forced relocations, private and government ownership of lands, and agricultural, mining and logging claims that were deemed of more importance. c.f. Lee Irwin, "Freedom, Law, and Prophecy: A Brief History of Native American Religious Resistance" in *American Indians and U.S. Politics: A Companion Reader*, edited by John M. Meyer.

3. This date is commonly given as June 9 but other dates are also given including the 11<sup>th</sup>, which is a Sunday. In the Western Christian liturgical calendar, Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost, which falls 50 days after Easter. In 1775, Easter fell on April 16<sup>th</sup>. The 11<sup>th</sup> of June would have been the date of Trinity Sunday. According to the journal of Miguel de la Campa, chaplain of the Santiago, June 9<sup>th</sup> is the date the Spanish ships, Santiago and Sonora, entered what we now call Trinidad Bay.

4. *Quarterly Conference Reports for the Humboldt Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church and its successors*, 26 March 1853. [Hereafter referred to as *QCR for...*]

White and family arrived in Trinidad on May 1, 1850, and he begins preaching there. He and his family moved to Union [now Arcata] in July and he preaches his first sermon there on the Fourth of July. Huestis and his oldest son (not yet 14 years old) arrive in the middle of July. It is commonly said he preached a first sermon on July 17 in Bucksport.<sup>5</sup> Huestis and White continue to preach regularly until a M.E. minister can be appointed to the area.<sup>6</sup>

- 1852 .....A congregation of Methodists is in place in Eel River [now Rohnerville], organized by Wesley Harrow, then a trustee of the Shasta Methodist Episcopal Church, and aided by Sevier Stringfield and Joel Burnell.<sup>7</sup>
- 1853 Feb. ....The California Conference of the M.E. Church appoints James Corwin to the newly named Humboldt Circuit. Union, Eureka, Bucks Port<sup>8</sup> and Eel River are the regular stops on this circuit. Port Trinidad, Mad River, Humboldt City, Table Bluff & Big River below Cape Mendocino are considered as within the bounds of the circuit and “we extend to [them]... as much preaching as our circumstances will admit, both from the traveling and local ministry.”<sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup>
- 1853 June 20 .....The second Quarterly Conference of the Humboldt Circuit of the M.E. Church considers it advisable to erect a church building in Union as soon as practicable. Joel Burnell, John Barto, J. Latham, Asa White and J. Smith are named trustees.<sup>11</sup> Land owned and donated by Asa White on the southwest corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and H streets is given for this purpose.<sup>12</sup> This becomes the first church building to be erected in Humboldt County.
- 1853/54 .....Father James Croke, a missionary priest from Oregon makes periodic visits to the area. When here, he lives with the Shanahan family of Bucksport and celebrates Mass. He is followed by Father Hugh Gallagher who continues the pattern of periodic visits due to the lack of priests.<sup>13</sup>
- 1854 Feb. ....Humboldt Circuit of the M.E. Church is divided into two appointments: Union Circuit and the Bucks Port Circuit. James Corwin is appointed to the Union Circuit. A.H. Shafer is named the preacher for the Bucks Port circuit. The Union Circuit is composed of “Union, Trinidad and adjacent places.” The Bucks Port Circuit includes “the southern part of Eureka, Bucksport, Eel River and adjacent places.”<sup>14</sup> John Bartow, Alexander Underwood and Jasper James are among the

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5. The 17th is a Wednesday. It is more likely that he preached on the following weekend, though it was common enough in those days for someone to invite a person to preach at a convenient time other than Sunday whenever a small group of people could be assembled. This was particularly true on the frontiers when established churches were not present. Common reports give the location of this sermon variously as in Bucksport and in Eureka.

6. Both White and Huestis came to California on their own and were not officially sent by the Methodist Episcopal Church [M.E.]. Others like them settled in the county and fostered the beginnings of religious communities in the county but are less well-known. Among them Sevier Stringfield, Joel Burnell, Charles Gillett, and the Harrow brothers, James, Joel, Noah and Wesley.

7. Gayle Karshner, *A Bell Rang in Uniontown*, 11, citing Coy, *The Humboldt Bay Region, 1850-1875*, 305.

8. For many years in the records of the M.E. church, Bucksport is written as Bucks Port.

9. *QCR for the Humboldt Circuit of the M.E. Church and its successors*, 26 March 1853.

10. The history of Methodist and Catholic congregations during this time is seldom precise. Both the Methodists and Catholics of Humboldt county were served by traveling local preachers (lay) and traveling priests who often responded to demand and went where there was an expressed interest or need, sometimes as regularly scheduled, sometimes as needed, sometimes as time and/or weather made possible.

11. *QCR for the Humboldt Circuit*, 20 June 1853.

12. Karshner, *A Bell Rang in Uniontown*, 14.

13. *Centennial book, St. Bernard's Church*, March 1965. A newspaper article dated 16 Feb 1948 appears in Susie Baker Fountain Papers [hereafter designated as SBF] v. 61 p. 299. It reports the Catholic church began Masses in 1853 and first resident pastor, the Rev. Father Thomas Crinnion came in 1864.

14. *QCR for the Humboldt Circuit of the M.E. Church and its successors*, 3 Dec 1853.

- first members of the Union congregation.<sup>15</sup> G.D. Wilson, A.J. Huestis and B.L. Waite are the first trustees of the Bucksport Circuit.<sup>16</sup>
- 1855 .....Father Thomas Cody, a priest in Somes Bar travels to Orleans Bar to say Mass.<sup>17</sup>
- 1855 Aug. 8 .....“On Wednesday a Camp Meeting will be held on the peninsula nearly opposite the upper end of Indian Island, and will continue until the following Monday. It is the first gathering of the kind ever undertaken in this county and it is hoped that the citizens will attend.”<sup>18</sup>
- 1856 Aug. ....Bucksport and Union circuits of the M.E. Church are once again combined.<sup>19</sup>
- 1856 Aug. 16 .....“Rev Florian, Roman Catholic priest of Weaverville, has arrived in this town [Eureka] for a visit...” He is “said to have been a jovial man of great compassion and human understanding.”<sup>20</sup>
- 1857 Nov..... Quarterly Conference of the M.E. Church recommends that preaching be extended to Table Bluff, Salt River, Bear River and Mattole Valley.<sup>21</sup>
- 1858 .....Elliott’s *History* attributes organization of a Catholic parish in Eureka in 1858 by Father Thomas Crinnion also a traveling priest.<sup>22</sup>
- 1858 Oct. ....The Rev. W. L. Jones, a missionary of the Congregational Home Missionary Society, arrives in Eureka with the intent of organizing a congregation. After preaching for some time he returns to his home in Yuba City and then is invited by “J.M. Eddy, James Hannah, Roswell Tupper, Graham Lee and John Moore to return and assume pastoral work.” In the spring of 1859 he returns to Eureka with his family. The congregation is formally organized on Oct 30, 1859.<sup>23</sup> At the time of its formal organization, Dr. Jonathan Clark is president.<sup>24</sup>
- 1859 June .....The Rev. Charles Northrup begins to raise money for a M.E. church building in Eureka. Casper and Thomas Ricks sell a quarter block of land at the southeast corner of 3rd & H to the M.E. Church for a building. A.J. Huestis, L.B. Coe and H.S. Daniels are named trustees. When completed, the Congregationalists, under the leadership the Rev W. L. Jones, are extended the hospitality of the new building, as a place to worship.<sup>25</sup>

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15. Karshner, *A Bell Rang in Uniontown*, 8.

16. Wallace W. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County California* with illustrations descriptive of its scenery, farms, residences, public buildings,... including biographical sketches. [hereafter: *History of Humboldt County*], 213.

17. *Times Standard*, April 23 1983, 6, “St. Mary’s Parish Plans Centennial Celebration.”

18. *Humboldt Times*, 4 Aug 1855. The first part of article notes: “The Rev. Mr. Arnold Presiding Elder arrived here the last week, and with the aid of Mr. Williamson, has continued meetings throughout the week and will preach at Bucksport on Sunday [5th].” Camp Meetings would continue to be a feature of the M.E. Congregations in Humboldt County for many years and were held in various part of the county. However they were not unique to the Methodists, other Protestant groups also made camp meetings a regular feature of their outreach.

19. They will divide again in 1859.

20. *Humboldt Times*, 16 Aug 1856, Father Florian Schwenninger, a Benedictine, served miners and mining communities principally in Trinity and Siskiyou counties. He also visited this area periodically to serve the Catholic community. See also *Centennial Book, St. Bernard’s*...

21. *QCR for the Humboldt Circuit of the M.E. Church* and its successors; 7 Nov 1857.

22. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County*, 214. See also, *Centennial Book, St. Bernard’s Church*.

23. *1913, Yearbook, First Congregational Church*, 34. Elliott in his history gives this date as Oct 30, 1860.

24. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County*, 214.

25. Thomas Miller, *Eighty-one Years of Methodism*, 11. Fund-raising begins in June. The building will be dedicated on Sunday, March 4, 1860. Among the subscribers to the new building were the following officers from Fort Humboldt, Major Rains, Major Hook, Capt. Smith, and Dr. Guild.

- 1859 Aug. ....A home missionary of the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Alexander Scott, comes to Arcata, to establish a Presbyterian church.<sup>26</sup>
- 1859 Fall.....The Bucksport M.E. congregation is formally discontinued. The Eel River circuit<sup>27</sup> is created to include those locations formerly served by this congregation. Some of the members of the Bucksport M.E. Church will become the core of the soon to be established Eureka congregation, while others will affiliate with the congregations of the Eel River circuit.<sup>28</sup> Eureka's M.E. services are held in the Pioneer School at 3rd and G. This building also hosted the Sons of Temperance, public lectures, a singing school, entertainment, and other public gatherings.<sup>29</sup>
- 1859 Nov. 27 .....The Eureka M.E. congregation is formally organized.<sup>30</sup>
- 1859 Nov. 30 .....A Sewing Circle which met at the Presbyterian Church of Union is organized. It is said to be the first women's organization in Humboldt County. Mrs. Sarah Nixon, Mrs. Murdock, Mrs. Cullberg, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Deming, Mrs. Wyman, Mrs. Light and Mrs. Havens are members.<sup>31</sup>
- 1860 .....The M.E. Church establishes a Society in Ferndale and shortly after at Grizzly Bluff.<sup>32</sup>
- 1860 June .....Martin Gior identifies himself as a minister with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the 1860 census.<sup>33</sup> Though it is known that this denomination pursued some outreach in Southern Humboldt, it is not clear what that history is. Gior himself had been admitted to the conference "on trial" in 1858 and asks to be discontinued in October of 1860.<sup>34</sup>
- 1860 July 17 .....Construction of the First Presbyterian Church in Arcata begins. Prior to this, the congregation used the facilities of the M.E. building.<sup>35</sup>
- 1860 Sept. ....The M.E. congregations of Humboldt County are separated into four appointments: Eel River circuit, North Centerville, Arcata and Eureka. Over the next decades the M.E. congregations in Humboldt County will continue rearranging themselves as transportation and the communities of the county grow and evolve. Some congregations will exist for only a few years and others will merge into larger congregations in neighboring communities.
- 1861 Jan. 1.....The Presbyterian Church of Arcata is officially organized.<sup>36</sup>

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26. *Times*, 27 July 1958.

27. Eel River was the name of the Post Office serving the area.

28. The larger of these locations would evolve into congregations in Ferndale, Grizzly Bluff, Mattole/Petrolia, Bear River and North Centerville. Several of these congregations eventually become joint ventures with other denominations. Eel River itself, would evolve in to the Rohnerville circuit and in time the Fortuna M.E. church. Sybil H. Lewis, *History of the Fortuna Methodist Church, with background of Methodism in Humboldt*, [Hereafter, *History of the Fortuna Methodist Church*], 16.

29. Dedicatory Souvenir: Eighty-one Years of Methodism in Eureka, California, [hereafter *Eighty-one Years of Methodism*], 9.

30. *Eighty-one Years of Methodism*, 11.

31. McGruder, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Arcata*. During the Civil War this sewing circle raised and contributed \$1,000 to the sanitary commission. By the end of the war, sewing circles are fixtures in several area churches and in most cases become significant fundraisers on behalf of their congregations. A longer list of charter members is reported in the *Arcata Union*, "Consulting Old Records," 7 Nov. 1929. These women may have represented different religious traditions.

32. Minnie Reese, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church-Ferndale*. The Grizzly Bluff folks met at Dean's Schoolhouse. The Sunday school organized there was taught by members of the M.E. Church and was considered a Union Sunday School. This congregation is sometimes attached to the Eel River [Rohnerville] charge of the M.E. Church and at other times to the Ferndale charge.

33. 1860 U.S. Census, Humboldt County, California, Pacific twp.

34. John Collinsworth Simmons, *The History of Southern Methodism on the Pacific Coast – Primary Source Edition*, p.240. Here his name is spelled Gier.

35. McGruder, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Arcata*.

- 1861 Mar. 26 .....The Arcata Presbyterian Church at 11<sup>th</sup> and G is dedicated. The Revs. Scott, Huestis, Jones and Hinkley participate in the service.<sup>37</sup>
- 1861 Nov. 2 .....The Humboldt Times [HT] reports: “Work has been commenced upon the building of a new Catholic Church... on I Street, between 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>”<sup>38</sup>
- 1862 Sept. ....The Rev. Israel Sloan, the organizing minister of the United Brethren in Christ [U.B.] work in California, locates in Eel River [Rohnerville] and begins work in the county.<sup>39</sup> Several U.B. congregations will soon emerge in the county. A number of early members, leaders and ministers of the M.E. Church in the county become involved in the work of the U.B. church. The records disagree as to whether these men & their families were U.B. before coming to CA and affiliated with the Methodists because it was closely akin to the U.B. Church or whether under the influence of Rev. Sloan and others, they become members of the U.B. Church.<sup>40</sup>
- 1863 Feb. 22 .....The building of the First Congregational Church in Eureka is dedicated without debt.<sup>41</sup>
- 1865 Oct. 7 .....The Ladies Sewing Circle connected with the Baptist Church begins posting regular notices of meetings on 7 Oct 1865 in the Humboldt Times.<sup>42</sup>
- 1866 Jan. 15 .....C.S. Ricks transfers property to the Trustees of the Humboldt Academy - A.J. Huestis, H.S. Daniels – J.O. Showers, C. Wasgatt, B.L. Wait, T.D. Felt, S. Strong, W. Codington, S. Cooper, J. Russ, B. Look, C.S. Ricks, G.D. Wilson, T. Walsh, J.W. Hines - for \$350. Block 87 is bonded on the north by 7<sup>th</sup>, on the west by F, on the south by 8<sup>th</sup>, and on east by G streets in Eureka.<sup>43</sup>
- 1866 May 23 .....Humboldt Academy opens. It will last two years and then is foreclosed on.
- 1866 June 24 .....The U.B. church in Petrolia is dedicated. That afternoon the area experiences quite a severe earthquake.<sup>44</sup>
- 1866 June 24 .....Rev. William Dresser, presiding elder for the Humboldt District of the U.B. will preach in the Presbyterian Church at Arcata, the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup>.<sup>45</sup>
- 1868 .....Father Patrick Henneberry, of the Order of Precious Blood, begins serving St. Bernard’s. His plans include establishing a monastery and novitiate for the Order. At this time the priest of St. Bernard’s also serve the communities of Rohnerville, Table Bluff, Ferndale and Arcata. The monastery will be located between 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> between G & H in Eureka.<sup>46</sup>

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36. *Times*, 27 July 1958.

37. McGruder, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Arcata*. Hinkley is C.N. Hinkley of the M.E. Church and is not to be confused with another Mr. Hinkley of Humboldt county.

38. *Humboldt Times*, 2 Nov 1861.

39. H. J. Becker, *History of the United Brethren in Christ of California*, for a period of thirty years, 17.

40. Ann Hunt, research.

41. *1913 Yearbook, First Congregational Church*, 34.

42. There is no mention of a Baptist Church in either Elliot’s or Irvine’s *Histories of early Humboldt County*. Nor is there mention of a Baptist Church in the *Humboldt Times* during this period. Mrs. J. L. Mason, Mrs. Pendleton, Mrs. R.M. Williams, Mrs. C.H. Heney, Mrs. Weck, and a Mrs. Wiggins are listed among those hosting these gatherings.

43. Miller, *Eighty-one Years of Methodism*, 14. This is the block on which the Eureka Inn now stands. Though this academy is often remembered as a Methodist institution, the trustees represent a variety of Christian traditions.

44. *Humboldt Times*, “Mattole Correspondence,” 7 July 1866.

45. *Humboldt Times*, 23 Jun 1866.

46. *Centennial History, St. Bernard’s Church*.

- 1868 Nov. 21 .....Thomas Walsh, in a letter to the *Humboldt Times*, announces that he proposes to erect an “Episcopal Church in Eureka, to be called Christ Church... I have subscribed myself the sum of one thousand dollars and from my friends of San Francisco have obtained eighteen hundred dollars...” In the April 16, 1870, *Humboldt Times*, it is announced the building at 4<sup>th</sup> and E, is “fully complete.” The building is consecrated on 5 Feb 1871.<sup>47</sup>
- 1869 .....A Catholic church is established at Table Bluff.<sup>48</sup>
- 1870 May 22.....The first service is held at Christ Church, Episcopal with the Rev. J. Gierlow officiating. Thomas Walsh serves as the first senior warden of the vestry, and Robert Searles as junior warden. John Carr, W.S. Brock, Dr. D.U. Lindsay, John A. Watson, Wm. Carson, and R.W. Brett are members of the first vestry.
- 1870 .....A M.E. Church is built in Rohnerville.<sup>49</sup>
- 1871 .....A Catholic church is established in Rohnerville.<sup>50</sup> St. Joseph’s College of Rohnerville is established on 30 acres donated by James Degan. The priests and seminarians of the Order of the Precious Blood move to Rohnerville and the novitiate for the order is closed. Plans are also set in motion for a school for young ladies in Eureka to be run by an order of Sisters from England. It would become St. Joseph’s Institute.<sup>51</sup>
- 1871 Sept. 17 .....The Latter Day Saints begin holding a series of public meetings in explanation of their faith at Mrs. Burton’s school room, corner of E & 5<sup>th</sup> in Eureka, beginning Sunday, Sept. 17, at 11AM & 7PM.<sup>52</sup>
- 1871 Nov. 18 .....“... Pursuant to published notice, a convention of spiritualists, friends of progress and free thought, was held in the high school building at Eureka, Nov. 18, 1871. Mr. Samuel Strong was called to the chair, and Dr. O.B. Payne acted as secretary. An organization was effected for the purpose of ‘Disseminating the Truth of Spiritualism & the Philosophy of Progress...’ President W.J. Sweasey, Vice President Mrs. A.A. Ricks, Secretary S. Cooper, Treasurer L. Towers. Board of directors: [?] Strong, Dr. S.B. Payne and Mr. Pickerd. Mrs. B.A. Chamberlain is engaged as a missionary for coming year.<sup>53</sup>
- 1872 .....Father Michael Walrath is appointed pastor of St. Joseph’s Parish in Crescent City. His parish includes Del Norte and Klamath Counties. He travels monthly to Trinidad to hold services.<sup>54</sup> When the county of Klamath is discontinued, the parish becomes the responsibility of the priests of St. Bernard’s in Eureka.
- 1873 .....Presbyterian missionaries arrive in the Hoopa Valley.<sup>55</sup>

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47. Andrew Genzoli, “One Man’s Faith Built a Church”, *Times-Standard*, 2 May 1970, 6.

48. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County*, 214.

49. Lewis, *History of the Fortuna Methodist Church*. 15f. Land for this building was donated by Benjamin Jameson in 1860. At the time of this donation, the trustees named were: Leander Chase [Case], Sevier Stringfield, John C. Otting, Jacob Showers, Jacob Ackerson, and Uri Williams. Though the congregation began using the building in 1870, the building was not completed until 1871.

50. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County*, 214.

51. *Centennial History, St. Bernard’s Church*. Elliott in his *History of Humboldt County* indicates these were Sisters of Mercy and their convent St. Joseph Convent of Mercy.

52. *West Coast Signal* 13 Sept. 1871.

53. *SBF papers* v61p311, handwritten note, no source cited.

54. *History of Holy Trinity Church, Trinidad, CA*.

55. Buckley, “The Shaker Church and the Indian Way in Native Northwestern California,” *American Indian Quarterly*, v. 21, No. 1, (Winter, 1997), pp. 1-14. Buckley notes, the Presbyterian work extended “up and down the Klamath and along the various

- 1873 June .....Holy Trinity Catholic Church is established in Trinidad.
- 1876 Mar. 17 .....Ferndale Congregational Church is organized. Mr. A. Berding, Mrs. J.M. Lewis and Dr. F.A. Alford are the original members.<sup>56</sup> The Rev. Ewing O. Tade is the organizing pastor.<sup>57</sup>
- 1876 Dec. ....The Catholic bishop pays for the erection of a church in Ferndale. It will not be completed until May of 1879. Prior to its erection the congregation met in the Centennial Hall. Both the priests of St. Bernard's and the Precious Blood Fathers of St. Joseph's College in Rohnerville served the community. The priests serving Ferndale also provide services to residents of the Mattole Valley, though a church will not be built in Petrolia until 1912.<sup>58</sup>
- 1877 .....United Brethren Church of Eureka is organized under G.W. Burtner.<sup>59</sup>  
 - Mattole is added to the Ferndale Circuit of the M.E. Church in 1877.<sup>60</sup>  
 - The Rev. William J. Parkhurst establishes a Baptist church in the Upper Mattole. It will disband in 1885.<sup>61</sup>
- 1881 July 24 .....Ferndale Congregational Church dedicates its building.<sup>62</sup>
- 1882 .....The Seventh-Day Adventists begin work in Petrolia and the Upper Mattole.<sup>63</sup> Port Kenyon is known to have a M.E. Sunday School during this time.<sup>64</sup>
- 1883 Jan. ....The U.B. congregation of Eureka secedes from it's former union with the California Conference and becomes an independent body under the leadership of D.D. Bowman. On January 30, the congregation is received into the ranks of Congregationalism. It becomes known as the Second Congregational Church of Eureka.<sup>65</sup>
- 1883 Mar. 24 .....The *Democratic Standard* notes: "The Feast of Purim was generally observed by our citizens of Jewish persuasion on Thursday and Friday..."<sup>66</sup>

forks of the Trinity River, by the 1890s. Conversions were few, however, and seem to have been restricted to mixed-blood Indians who were, at that time, marginal to both Indian and non-Indian societies..." Post WWI, The Presbyterian Church and other Christian religious organizations more successfully become a part of Indian communities. The Indian Shaker Church, (a movement combining elements of native spiritual practices and Christianity) grew out of the experience and teachings of John Slocum, a Nisqually Indian in the Pacific Northwest in the 1880's. It was brought to this area in 1926, by Jimmy Jack, a Yurok Indian.

56. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County*, 214.

57. From a *History and Welcome to the Ferndale Congregational Church* written for Ferndale's Sesquicentennial Celebration, August 23-24, 2002.

58. Christine Sackey, *Ferndale Celebrates Catholic Church's 100th Anniversary*, Humboldt Beacon, undated clipping.

59. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County*. 214.

60. The United Brethren and the M.E. churches were active in the Mattole Valley from its earliest days, in large part due to the presence of the Harrow and Gillette families with both families having ties to both denominations. When the United Brethren Church was abandoned in the 1890s, the Methodists became the majority religious group in Petrolia. Mattole Valley Historical Society, *The Book of Petrolia*, p. 54 and *QCR of the Bucks Port and Eureka congregations*.

61. Mattole Valley Historical Society, *The Book of Petrolia*, 55.

62. From a "History and Welcome to the Ferndale Congregational Church" written for Ferndale's Sesquicentennial Celebration, August 23-24, 2002. In 1974 it withdrew from it's Congregational denomination and became an independent congregation. The Methodist Church of Ferndale merged with it in the era of 1949-1952 and Family Ministries, a Pentecostal congregation merged with it in 1987.

63. Mattole Valley Historical Society, *Book of Petrolia*, 55. See also, William Wallace Roscoe, *The beginning of Mattole History*, 9A.

64. Minnie Reese, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church-Ferndale*. At this time they are meeting in the school house. In 1883 preaching services are held every other Sabbath in Port Kenyon. It is not clear how long these continue. Copy of typed transcript of handwritten manuscript. Original Ferndale Museum.

65. *Ferndale Enterprise*, 9 February, 1883.

66. *Democratic Standard*, 24 March 1883. It is not known to the writer, how religiously observant Humboldt County's Jewish residents were. From newspaper accounts, it appears some traveled to San Francisco for more organized religious activities,

- 1883 Nov. ....St. Mary's Catholic Church in Arcata is established after Arcata and the congregations of northern Humboldt are organized into a separate parish from St. Bernard's in Eureka. The first pastor is the Rev. Thomas Nugent. The first building was completed in 1884.<sup>67</sup>
- 1883 Nov. 25 .....A group of Baptists met in Eureka's City Hall to incorporate under the laws of the state of California. The papers were signed and sworn to on 12 Dec 1883. Signers are the Rev. R.D. Clark, John Roulstein, Mrs. R.D. Clark, Mattie A. Shinn, Nellie Clark, Mrs. J.J. Hendee, G. F. Welch, Mrs. Isabelle Fitzgerald and Mrs. John Roulstein.<sup>68</sup>
- 1885 Jan. ...."Mayor Walsh grants the 'Missionary Salvationists' permission to hold religious services on G street between First & Second..."<sup>69</sup>
- 1886 June .....A new sanctuary is consecrated for St. Bernard's Church, and the former sanctuary becomes the parish hall.<sup>70</sup>
- 1887 Aug. 31 .....First Christian Church is organized on August 31. A Sunday school begins Nov. 6, 1887.<sup>71</sup>
- 1888 .....First Presbyterian Church of Blue Lake founded.<sup>72</sup>
- 1888 May 27.....The building of First Christian Church at 7<sup>th</sup> & K, Eureka, is dedicated.
- 1890 .....A Scandinavian Methodist Episcopal Church is organized in Eureka.<sup>73</sup>
- 1890 June 30 .....The First Presbyterian Church of Eureka, is organized by the Rev. J.S. McDonald, with 54 charter members. Their first building is located on the 900 block of F Street.<sup>74</sup> (At the time, many of the charter members were members of the Congregational church, though they had been Presbyterians.)
- 1891 .....The First Congregational Church of Eureka and the Second Congregational Church unite.
- 1891 .....The articles of incorporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Eureka are filed with the County Clerk on July 1, 1891. Seven trustees are elected on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to serve until the first Wednesday in April, 1892. Among them are J.S. Murray, N.S. Phelps, Andrew H. Long and S.B. Foster.<sup>75</sup>

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including marriages, during this period. According to Temple Beth El's website, no organized Jewish activities began in Humboldt county until the 1940s. <http://templebetheleureka.org> viewed Aug. 30, 2015. At the time of its organization, Temple Beth El was the only synagogue on the west coast between Ukiah and Portland. Nan Abrams, "The Jews of the Gold Rush," <http://jewsofthegoldrush.blogspot.com/2009/10/nan-abrams-jewish-merchants-of-humboldt.html>, viewed Aug. 30, 2015, identifies many of these early families. The first Rosh Hashanah observance in California occurred in San Francisco on Sept. 26, 5610 [1849], <http://www.sfhistoryencyclopedia.com/articles/j/jews.html>, viewed 30 Aug. 2015.

67. Debra Webster, "St. Mary's Parish plans Centennial Celebration", *Times Standard*, 23 April 1983, 6.

68. First Baptist Church, Eureka, CA, *100 Years Contending for the Faith, 1883-1983*, 12.

69. *SBF papers*, v61p309, referring to an unsourced newspaper clipping.

70. *Centennial History, St. Bernard's Church*.

71. *SBF papers*, v61p308. Unsourced newspaper clipping dated 5 Oct 1958.

72. Humboldt Times, 28 Sept. 1958. An unsourced mimeographed sheet in HCHS GIF files indicates a Mrs. James Greenwood is credited with teaching Sunday School prior to that time. It was held in Chartin's Hall. She was assisted by Mrs. Ezra Brown and Mrs. Joseph Cartright. The *Northern Advocate*, 15 May 1888, announces "There is a new building in Blue Lake that is nearly finished having been set apart as a public place of worship... regular Protestant Church services will be held on the Sabbath Day for the propagation of doctrine of Christianity," On 3 June 1888, Rev. James S. McDonald organized a Union Church which grew out of the Sunday school. The first pastor was a Congregational pastor.

73. Miller, *Eighty-one Years of Methodism*, 25. The Rev. C. Christofferson is said to have been the organizing pastor.

74. *Humboldt Times*, April 1958.

75. *SBF v61p287*, unsourced newspaper article.



- 1892 Feb. 25 ..... Pastor O.N. Gronsberg organizes the Ladies Aid of the Norwegian-Danish Lutheran Church, Eureka. On Dec 5<sup>th</sup> the Rev. O. Ottersen, the first pastor, officially organizes a congregation. Jens Overgaard, Haakon Hansen and C.W. Pettersen are elected as trustees. Services are held in Norwegian.<sup>76</sup>
- 1893 ..... St. Marks Lutheran Church, Ferndale, is founded.<sup>77</sup> The first work of the German Lutheran Synod of Missouri begins with a visit of pastor J.H. Theiss of Oakland to Ferndale. He stayed 12 days in the area visiting Fortuna, Scotia, Eureka, Arcata, Blue Lake, and Riverside. The first resident pastor arrived 1903.<sup>78</sup>
- 1896 Jan. .... A Christian Science Society is formerly organized. They began meeting together weekly in the 1880s, beginning in the home of a Mrs. Mary G. Hannah and later in the home of Mrs. Lottie Berry. They will be recognized by the Mother Church in 1898.<sup>79</sup>
- 1896 May 5..... Calvary Presbyterian Church, Bayside, is organized. It has roots in church services, a Sunday school and a young people's Christian Endeavor organization, which had met for some time in the Good Templars Hall. Rev. Todd of Arcata and Rev. Baesler of Blue Lake preached for several years at Bayside.<sup>80</sup>
- 1897 ..... A church is organized and built in Garberville. It relates to an association of Baptist churches.<sup>81</sup> It is the first recorded church building to be built in Garberville.

Note: If you have questions, additions or corrections to this time-line, please contact Ann Hunt at [ahuntca@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ahuntca@sbcglobal.net)

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76. *60th Anniversary, Calvary Lutheran Church, 1892-1952*, 1.

77. *Humboldt Times*, 29 June 1958, "First Pastors Came By Sea to Ferndale Church." The first resident pastor arrived 1903.

78. *A History of St. Marks Lutheran Church*.

79. Bob Libershal, research notes made from records housed at First Church of Christ Scientist, Eureka. The original core group consisted of Mr. John G. Graham and Mrs. Jennie Clyborne, Mrs. Mary Hannah and her sister-in-law, Charlotte Hannah, Mrs. Emma Young and her sister Mrs. Elizabeth Jones. Among those who were charter members were Mrs. Lucy C. Betterley, Mrs. Clyborne, Mrs. Ellison, Mrs. Elsemore, Mrs. Ella Georgeson, Mrs. Martha Jameson, A.C. McArthur, Mrs. Zipporah Russ, Mrs. Annie Sweasey, and Mrs. Emma Young.

80. John F. Stubbs, *History of Bayside Community Presbyterian Church 1896-1996*.

81. Diane Hawk, *Community Presbyterian Church of Garberville*, 4. A regular Sunday school had existed for many years previous to this. Preaching happened sporadically as circuit riders would pass through. Lewis in, *History of the Fortuna Methodist Church*, 17, indicates Garberville was on the Ferndale circuit of the M.E. church as early as 1876.